

A SOURCEBOOK FOR VAMPIRE: THE MASQUERADE

PLAYERS GUIDE

VAMPIRE
THE MASQUERADE



CHILDREN OF CAINE

The children of the night – what games they play! And what games can we play with them?

Vampires have lurked among us since the first cities rose nameless by the Euphrates. They command mighty powers and strange magics, they hunt in singular ways, they even flock together when times demand it.

This book collects new character-building options, powers, guides for playing together and alone and virtually, and new ways to use the old rules. The perfect companion to *Vampire: The Masquerade*.

The *Vampire Players Guide* includes:

- ▷ Profiles of seven clans of Kindred: Banu Haqim, Hecata, Lasombra, The Ministry, Ravnos, Salubri, and Tzimisce
- ▷ Expanded rules for playing castoffs: Caitiff, Thin-Bloods, ghouls, and mortals
- ▷ New and Consolidated Discipline powers, Blood Sorcery rituals, and Thin-Blood Alchemy formulae, plus the Oblivion Discipline and its ceremonies
- ▷ Systems and Advantages for coteries, including a coterie record sheet
- ▷ Guidelines and advice for non-traditional chronicles, including: all thin-blood, troupe-style, virtual play, and one-on-one play
- ▷ Updated rules for Touchstones, Memoriam, and Projects



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Mature Advisory: contains graphic and written content of a mature nature, including violence, sexual themes, and strong language. Reader discretion is advised.



VAMPIRE

THE MASQUERADE



**PLAYERS
GUIDE**

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PLAYERS GUIDE

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Hector Carson – Victim



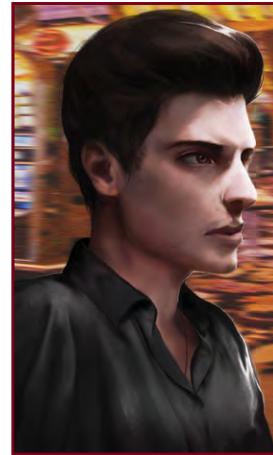
Suspect 1 – “Jeri”



Suspect 2 – “Ava”



Suspect 3 – “Dalton”



Suspect 4 – “Barry”

DETAILS

On February 13, 2022, Hector Carson, age 44, was serving as security for the Tangier Casino in North Las Vegas, Nevada. When he did not check in, his supervisor discovered his body behind the casino with his neck broken and other injuries consistent with a murderous assault.

Investigators have distributed casino surveillance photos (shown above) of four individuals known to have confronted Carson earlier that night. They have since not been seen in any Nevada casino. Based on witness testimony, investigators have pieced together the following profiles of the suspects.

Suspect 1 is a Hispanic or Asian-American female, 20s, around 5'6", wearing a large leather jacket. She may go by the name “Jeri” or “Gerri” or the nickname “Smoke,” possibly from her smoking habit.

Suspect 2 is a White female, 30s, around 5'10", 100–105 lbs., snake tattoo on left arm. She may go by the name “Ava” or “Eva” or the nickname “Snake.”

Suspect 3 is a Hispanic or Black male, 40s, around 6'0", 120–125 lbs., wearing a black suit and tie. He may go by the name “Dalton,” first or last unknown.

Suspect 4 is a White or Hispanic male, 20s, around 5'10", 150–165 lbs. He may go by the name “Barry” or “Prez.” His photo matches the description of a person of interest in the slaying of casino executive Heron Stavridis on December 7, 2021.

Based on surveillance footage and details gathered by investigators, the unknown suspects are likely traveling together.

Anyone with information is requested to call the Tip Line at 304-622-9069 or submit tips online at cjisdbb-tips@sad.fbi.gov. All information will be taken and followed up on by investigators. Callers can remain anonymous.

You may also contact your local FBI office or the nearest American Embassy or Consulate.

Field Office: Las Vegas, NV

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MK
2022

Introduction:

BLOOD SPATTERS

*The outlaw, the revolutionary, the cabballist or member
of a secret society, indeed heretics of all kinds are of
a highly associative if not sociable disposition, and a
certain element of play is prominent in all their doings.*

— JOHAN HUIZINGA, *Homo Ludens*

Welcome to the **Vampire Players Guide**. Note there's no apostrophe in the title. This isn't just a book for one player (a "Player's Guide") or even for the players alone (a "Players' Guide") but a guide to play itself, including every kind of play we've seen in these newest nights. It's for players and Storytellers, watchers of games online and simmers on Discord, and everyone who simply engages with **Vampire: The Masquerade** play to explore personal and political horror.

That's a lot of new players and new kinds of players. This book is for all those new players and for all players curious about some of these new ways to tell vampire stories.

It's for players of vampires. And it's always and forever about players of **Vampire**, who now have all the remaining clans gathered in one place, which sounds very dangerous when written out like this. If that's too many vampires, we also provide guides for playing mortals and ghouls and thin-bloods, as well as mixed chronicles with all of the above.

That said, we've tried to keep the focus of this book on the vampiric rather than the mortal — new Discipline powers, Rituals, Alchemical formulae, and the like, instead of lists of guns or computers. You all have Wikipedia now, anyway.

When using those new powers, or guns or Wikipedia for that matter, think first and foremost about what they should feel like in the story. We put drama first, and we suggest you do the same. Our shared goal should be to deepen and improve every player's experience, and also to deepen and improve players' common experiences, not to expand player power-gaming.

That's why we include more in-depth guidelines for considerate play, including some new guardrails around some serious topics.

That's also why we focus a lot of page count on coteries, something of the red-headed stepchildren of **Vampire** in the past. (Fun fact: in many parts of the Balkans, red-headed stepchildren were thought to become vampires after death.) The roots of coterie play go deep into the past of **Vampire** and

building a story in common remains a powerful, economical way to get both buy-in and pay-off from players.

Story in common: what we're all still doing when we play. And ideally, this book helps all of us players do it.

Words to Unlive By

The Kindred use many words that either have additional meaning to them or acquire a distinctly different meaning among their ilk. This isn't another lexicon of Camarilla argot or Anarch slang, but a way to frame the words you already know through their eyes. Keep them in mind when using dialogue in character and perhaps while thinking about the chronicle between sessions.

LIFE, LIVED, ETC.: Vampires are undead. They *lead unlivess*. They *exist*. They *make their havens* in certain places. They don't *live* anywhere, and they don't see what *life* has to offer.

DAYTIME: Your vampire escapes to fight another *night*, not *day*. She awakens three *nights* from now. Daytime applies only to literal daytime, like when the ghouls do their thing and the banks are open.

HUMAN: The Kindred believe themselves to be human: a purer predator, perhaps, or a more corrupt animal, but they cling to their humanity as long as they can believe in any shred of it. They use the word "mortal" to refer to non-vampire humans.

KINDRED, CAINITE, THE V WORD: The Camarilla says *Kindred*, as do most vampires older than a few decades. With the return of the Cainite Heresy and the Sabbat's atrocities driving the Lasombra back into Kindred society, the term *Cainite* has made a resurgence. "Shilling shockers" made the term "vampire" too vulgar for the Camarilla's self-image after about 1800, used almost entirely by Caitiff ironically or as a goad to their so-called betters. In modern nights,

increasing numbers of Duskblood reclaim “the v word,” yet another reason for the older Kindred to despair of the new generation.

CONTROL: Vampires *influence*. They are manipulators, not dictators. Vampires can’t even control their own Hunger. Fundamentally, control indicates a complete power over something. You control your car or a character in a video game. Could anyone truly *control* a police force or the local media? Unlikely, but it’s possible to have significant sway over those institutions. Influence. That’s a better word, and it also allows for degrees and nuance.

MANIPULATE: We just said that vampires manipulate, but they (or at least you) should narrow it down a bit: they manipulate everything they can, after all. What, in this conversation or this context, did they just manipulate, and how? Don’t just say “the Prince manipulated the protesters.” Did she have agents provocateurs in the crowd? Did she pay their organizing committee? Did she suborn a local cop into doing something outrageous that she knew the protesters would riot over? Even if the Prince keeps her own counsel, others can see the ripples she left.

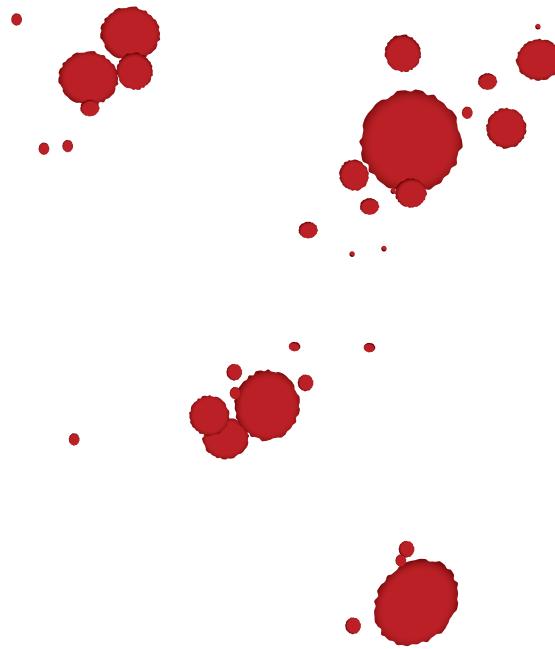
CORRUPT, CORRUPTION: Like “manipulation,” corruption seems like a default setting for vampires. Thus, the word means means ... well, nothing in this context. Who corrupts whom, and for what? Does corruption come from outside: a cop on the take? Or from inside: a casino manager skims? Or from the system that only allows access with clout? Think about who the vampires need to out-bid and in what currency.

SERVES, SERVING: This applies only to literal minions: people such as Retainers, ghouls, and others who do exactly what you tell them. A waiter serves you. Assets with more free will may unknowingly serve *an agenda*, but if a vampire claims the police serve him, he’s being grandiloquent at best and vainglorious at worst. Either way, he’s

vulnerable to an enemy with a better understanding of power relationships. And on that note ...

SERVE THE CLAN: What’s your last name? Do you serve your family? What’s your nationality? Do you serve your nation? No, you’re just a person. That’s what your clan is — it’s just another characteristic. Even Justicars serving the Camarilla serve the Ivory Tower, not their bloodline. The Tremere made the mistake of putting clan above all other considerations and paid for their mistake after Vienna fell.

CLANS: Clans aren’t defined or bounded by geography, national borders, or mortal cultures, they’re different things entirely — but both insiders and outsiders often make the mistake of conflating them. Your clan is not your employer or your military commander. At best, it’s your extended family, and after a few decades of your sire’s whims, you probably try to keep it fairly extended. ■





Chapter Two:

CLANS

Every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.

—LEO TOLSTOY, *Anna Karenina*

The new century has not been the best the Kindred have ever seen. Governments and vigilantes resume the hunt for vampires in a Second Inquisition. The Camarilla and Anarchs have flown once more at each other's throats, and those outside the battle fare even worse.

The Banu Haqim, like the Tremere, saw their own invulnerable fortress fall to enemies without and within. Those who invited them into the Camarilla out of panic and need now selfishly question their value and even their presence. The rising fires of the Second Inquisition burn through the Hecata, and Gehenna claiming their progenitor tore the ground from beneath the already rootless Ravnos. Gehenna's fury has further driven the Sabbat into religious mania of such twisted intensity that even many Lasombra and Tzimisce flinch away from the Black Hand.

Resentful of their renewed rejection by the Camarilla, vampires of the Ministry invest in the new chaos, hoping to reap from the Anarchs the fruits the Ivory Tower refused to grant the Followers of Set. Precious few Salubri survived already, and as the world of mortals turns against all Kindred, the Kindred increasingly turn against those who counsel reconciliation.

But the clans still survive. Somehow their Blood still flows, cutting channels and shifting currents, heading down the stream of time and destiny, to tomorrow night and every night after.

CLAN SHEET

VAMPIRE

THE MASQUERADE

**BANU HAJIM** THE JUDGES

Judge, adjudicate, punish, execute, discipline

BANE: Blood Addiction**COMPULSION:** Judgement**DISCIPLINE****Brujah**

THE REBELS

revolt, protest, fight, oppose, resist

BANE: Violent Temper**COMPULSION:** Rebellion**DISCIPLINE****GANGREL**

THE BEASTS

shapechange, fight, stalk, prowl, endure

BANE: Bestial Features**COMPULSION:** Feral Impulses**DISCIPLINE****HECATA**

THE NECROMANCERS

resurrect, summon and bind ghosts,
investigate, research, surveil**BANE:** Painful Kiss**COMPULSION:** Morbidity**DISCIPLINE****LASOMBRA**

THE MANIPULATORS

command, persevere, achieve, cheat, puppeteer

BANE: Distorted Image**COMPULSION:** Ruthlessness**DISCIPLINE****MALKAVIAN**

THE ORACLES

perceive, comprehend, confound, soothsay, foretell

BANE: Fractured Perspective**COMPULSION:** Delusion**DISCIPLINE****THE MINISTRY**

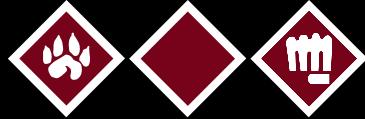
THE TEMPTERS

influence, entrap, sway, deal, cultivate

BANE: Abhors the Light**COMPULSION:** Transgression**DISCIPLINE****NOSFERATU**

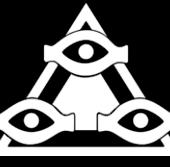
THE MONSTROSITIES

spy, hide, investigate, lurk, observe

BANE: Repulsiveness**COMPULSION:** Cryptophilia**DISCIPLINE**

CLANSHEET

VAMPIRE
THE MASQUERADE

	RAVNOS elude, trick, bluff, deceive, wander BANE: Doomed	THE NOMADS COMPULSION: Tempting Fate	DISCIPLINE 
	SALUBRI seduce, hide, resist, survive, redeem BANE: Hunted	THE FUGITIVES COMPULSION: Effective Empathy	DISCIPLINE 
	Toreador seduce, lure, obsess, perform, charm BANE: Aesthetic Fixation	THE SEDUCERS COMPULSION: Obsession	DISCIPLINE 
	TREMERE study, perfect, learn, scheme, perform rituals and sorceries BANE: Deficient Blood	THE WITCHES COMPULSION: Perfectionism	DISCIPLINE 
	CZIMISCE grasp, possess, transfigure, modify, control BANE: Grounded	THE DRAGONS COMPULSION: Covetousness	DISCIPLINE 
	VENTRUE rule, lead, influence, endure, govern BANE: Rarefied Tastes	THE ARISTOCRATS COMPULSION: Arrogance	DISCIPLINE 

DISCIPLINE LEGEND

					
ANIMALISM	AUSPEX	BLOOD SORCERY	CELERITY	DOMINATE	FORTITUDE
					
OBFUSCATE	OBLIVION	POTENCE	PRESENCE	PROTEAN	



MK
2023



BHNU HETQIM

*The Clan of the Hunt
Children of Haqim
Mediators
Judges*

*Your Blood has found you wanting, but I'm
sure I can find a suitable purpose for it.*





The Judges of the Banu Haqim are torn between their hereditary thirst for vampiric Blood and their passion for justice. Stern adjudicators fiercely devoted to upholding a moral code, they Embrace mortals capable of assessing and handling threats, enforcing laws and traditions, and punishing transgressors.

The Blood is a law unto itself from the Banu Haqim perspective, communicating a sense of duty to those who bear it in addition to the curse of forever standing guard against the Beast. Banu Haqim from all cultures and legal traditions in life find that their Blood binds them to stringency and honor.

Banu Haqim gravitate toward an orderly society — by their reasoning, the Damned need structure (and therefore judges...) lest they lose themselves to their baser urges and domains become blood-spattered hellscapes. Which isn't to say that Banu Haqim are blindly loyal bootlicks for any of the sects specifically. The Camarilla is flawed at best, the Ashirra is too often bound by unquestioned tradition, the Anarchs set themselves up as false idols, and the Black Hand is less sect than ongoing disaster. The most pragmatic among the Judges find themselves favoring the most appealing option amid a panoply of troubled institutions, each domain being its own unique situation. And, Blood being law, sometimes the best option for a Banu Haqim is to seize the mantle of just leadership, in the idiom of their progenitor.

Understanding and structuring the Kindred condition goes beyond notions of interpreting laws and punishing insurgents for the Banu Haqim. Key to understanding the laws of the Blood is understanding the Blood itself, inclining no few Children of Haqim to discovering and commanding its properties. And what more elegant structure than the triangle for extruding order from disorder? Thus a common motif among the Banu Haqim as a tripartite lineage consisting of judges, blood-sorcerers, and killers-of-killers. The last thing a Kindred condemned by a powerful rival may see is the face of their assassin — should they

choose to reveal themselves.

This perspective doesn't always earn them easy allies, for the Banu Haqim often assume that they should themselves adjudicate the structure of Kindred society, making for an outsider's view of them as holier-than-thou. Of course, the Banu Haqim response here is to remove those who would place themselves outside of the structures and protections of Kindred society. The hunters in these nights of rekindled Inquisition need only a trail to follow, and the sin of the First Vampire practically invites depravity.

Who Are the Banu Haqim?

The obvious choices for Banu Haqim Embraces are judges, police, lawmakers, and litigators, but there's more to their philosophy than dragging random authoritarians under the veil of night. Most important to the discerning sire is a potential childe who has the vision to realize the need for order and the means to build something that deserves to stand forever. Philosophers and poets, sorcerers and scientists have as much place among the Children of Haqim as do the popular notion of assassins and undead magistrates.

The Judges also have a reputation for humorlessness and stoicism, finding no room to enjoy themselves, bearing the curse of Caine as an unrelenting burden and insisting that others do the same. There's some truth to this, for the Banu Haqim regard the Kindred condition as nothing less than what it is, an unholy combination of predator and parasite. The most insightful thinkers among the clan, though, look at every facet of being Damned, and can appreciate the sublime mystery of their tarnished eternity, much as a mosaicist can conjure greater wonder from fragments of colored stone. Banu Haqim might build an expansive library on a misremembered floor of a skyscraper, or maintain a smoky gentleman's club that trades in the

most delectable vessels.

Banu Haqim sires seek childe with a special talent that would serve their visions for an ordered society well, whether it corresponds to the powers that be in the domain, or a private agenda of the sire-to-be. In many cases, this talent revolves around removing obstacles, including a facility with on-demand target liquidation or a less violent aptitude for making sure plans run smoothly.

Although they aren't predisposed to seeking out positions of import, Banu Haqim often take pride in titles or honors they accumulate, whatever the sect in which they find themselves. Unsurprisingly, the Camarilla seems to be the home to many Judges, who find its traditions and undying hierarchies in line with their own. Indeed, the most renowned lineages of the Banu Haqim have pledged themselves to the Ivory Tower, and there's little love lost between Camarilla Children of Haqim and the "wayward bastards" of the clan among the Anarchs.

Disciplines

BLOOD SORCERY: Various Haqimite methods and philosophies regarding Blood Sorcery inflect the practical applications of the Discipline, from providing its practitioners murderous abilities to more versatile ritual aspects, gleaning secrets from their own Blood and others'.

Celerity: The Children of Haqim use Celerity to terrifying effect. Many are skilled in its use before all other Disciplines, to rely on speed of judgment before doubt can slow a blade to the throat. When feeding, some Banu Haqim become a veritable blur, darting in and taking their fill from their favored vessels before disappearing as quickly as they appeared.

OBFUSCATE: Banu Haqim stalk their prey unseen, whether as a means to feed discreetly or deliver final death to a target without the needless risks of going toe-to-toe. Some Banu Haqim employ this Discipline to observe a target performing an act of transgression before delivering judgment.

Bane

Banu Haqim are drawn to feed from those deserving punishment. This is especially true for vampire Blood, the very essence of transgression. When one of the Judges tastes the Blood of another Cainite, they find it very hard to stop.



Slaking at least one Hunger level with vampiric vitae provokes a hunger frenzy test (See **Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 220) at a Difficulty 2 + Bane Severity. If the test is failed they attempt to gorge themselves on vampire Blood, sometimes until they perform diablerie upon their Kindred victim. This presents many problems for the Banu Haqim, as many Kindred see the Amaranth as anathema, and greatly at odds with the sort or orderly behavior the Judges presume to uphold. And of course, no few Banu Haqim excoriate themselves over the hypocrisy of their own failures.

Compulsion: Judgment

The vampire is compelled to punish anyone seen to transgress against their personal code, taking their blood as just vengeance for the crime.

For one scene, the vampire must slake at least one Hunger from anyone, friend or foe, who acts against a Conviction of theirs. (Remember, Convictions aren't necessarily connected to any mortal culture or sect; they can be purely personal to the vampire.) Failing to do so results in a three-dice penalty to all rolls until the Compulsion is satisfied or the scene ends. (If the one fed from is also a vampire, don't forget to test for Bane-induced Hunger frenzy, as above.)

Banu Haqim Archetypes

Executioner

Heeding the order of the domain's most august personages, the Executioner brings final death to those who have irredeemably breached the Kindred's ways, be they the Traditions or the decrees of domain luminaries. With prestige backing their "license to kill," the Executioner is also willing to take on... unsanctioned contracts, so long as they agree with the case the wronged Kindred makes. It may seem at odds with the twisted justice of their title, but judging the guilty is more important than respecting a process.

Charming Host

The Charming Host runs a card game out of a ballroom in a prestigious hotel, which is the closest thing to a pop-up Elysium that one might find, given the table's clientele (both Kindred and kine). It's no fly-by-night endeavor — the game's been running nonstop for five years, attended by trusted flunkies during the daylight hours, and so long as the Charming Host sends tribute to the proper parties, there's no reason the game need ever end. Fortunes come and go, and luck plays a part both at the Charming Host's table and among whom they favor with an invitation.

Union Boss

Knowing when to put feet to the streets, when to arm and take down the man, and when to hold back and simply refuse to aid a domineering Primogen sets this Child of Haqim apart from their hidebound sire. The Union Boss came from a background where knowing legal loopholes and how to encourage others into action was integral to their success. And they've been amassing a growing contingent of supporters who see the opportunity to make a change that might benefit them all, which the Union Boss is having trouble balancing with some of the expectations that established Kindred society has of them.

Esoteric Architect

The Esoteric Architect sees their role as the construction of things of lasting importance. They've planned numerous havens of their own, from a nondescript bolthole safe house to a comfortable condominium in the city's hottest neighborhood. More than that, however, they've constructed numerous false graves around the city that hold the torpid forms of Kindred who have gone missing. Some were on the outs with one Primogen or another; others were up-and-comers in these tumultuous times in domain politics. The question remains, what determines who the Esoteric Architect sends to the oubliettes, and how do they decide where to build them?





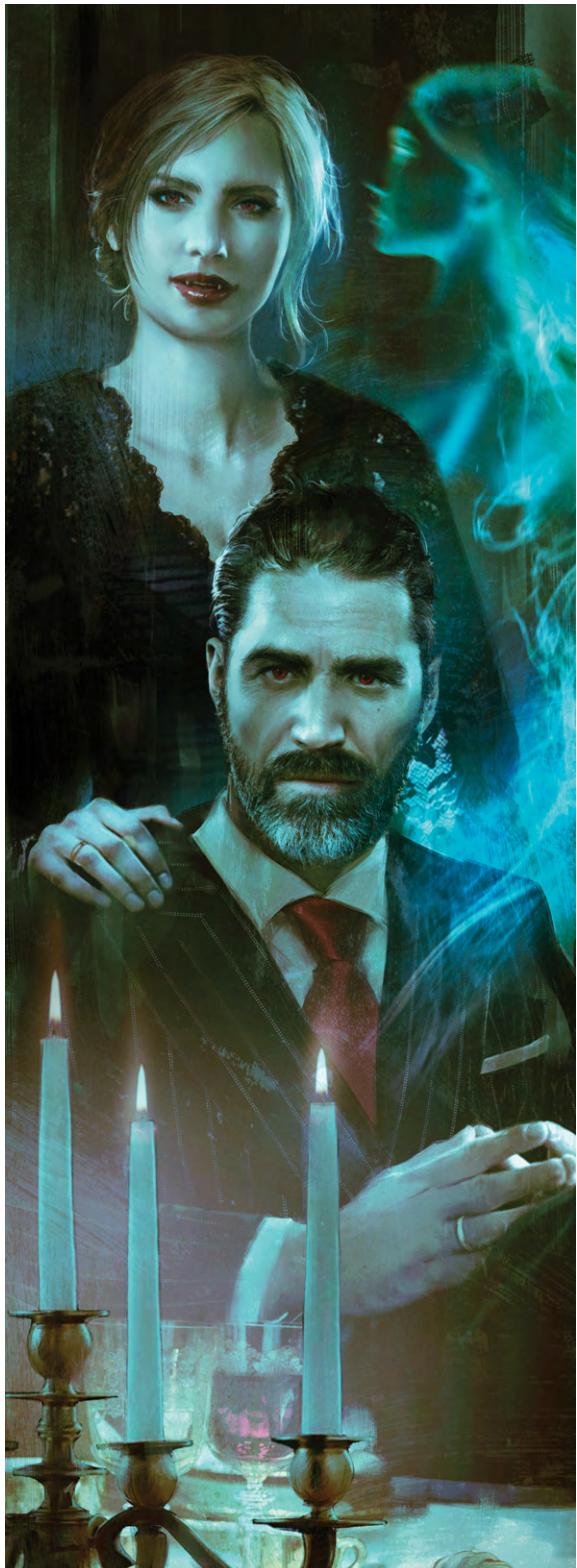
MK
2023

HECATE

Necromancers
Devil-Kindred
Lazarenes
The Clan of Death

*The Kindred are simply one expression of death, a still-vital consciousness
clad in a flesh of fading lividity, or even vitality... and such expressions
can be reinterpreted, as it were.*





A motley collection of necromantic vampire bloodlines, the Hecata clan are united in the pursuit of a single subject: Death. They are students of the afterlife and resurrectionists of the dead — or worse. Selling their services to the highest bidder, or acting in their own interests, there are few who can hide from the surveillance of those who can summon and command the very spirits of the deceased.

The Unclean. Flesh-eaters. Those who commune with the dead, and those who convince the dead to speak on their behalf.

The Hecata are anomalous among the Kindred clans, in that they are practically a sect unto themselves, a clan consisting of strange bloodlines and even some genuine familial ties, all built upon the reverence of and occasional subjugation of death itself. Comprising everything from ancestor-worshiping Old World crime families to effigy-wielding priests to degenerate flesh-eating monsters, the Hecata clan has an unwholesome fascination with the mortal coil in common among its member bloodlines.

A morbid ritual recently bound together these disparate consanguinities into a “united” clan proper, and those disparate bloodlines make the clan seem more like a sect than a traditional lineage. Neither the clan’s impure predilections nor its penchant for playing all other sides against one other earn them much favor with Kindred society at large. And yet they have endured to bedevil the modern nights with their undeniable necromantic acumen.

Who Are the Hecata?

Being Hecata often means inheriting an almost superstitious catechism of proscriptions, ancestral guilt, and ritual that informs not only how clan members deal with each other, but also how they deal with the dead. To outsiders, it’s incomprehensible, but to the Lazarenes, it’s familial tradition. What the elders say, goes, because the very foundations of the clan reside with a patriarch who yielded up his

own mortality so that his family *and every generation after him, mortal or Kindred*, would command the unhallowed gifts of the Damned.

This monstrous “family” has grown prodigiously since then, inviting — or perhaps binding — into its ranks other vampires whose facility with the mysteries of death rivals their own. The clan has absorbed several fringe and funerary bloodlines and cults into its sect-like structure, spreading like necrosis throughout the periphery of vampire culture.

Hecata subscribe to a cyclical philosophy in regards to the Embrace, which they symbolize by the three faces of Death, Rot, and Rebirth. Hecata share an aptitude in bridging the distinctions of life and death (and its nuances, like undeath). Hecata command spirits with the same skill that they “resurrect” corpses and the same passion that they divine the causes of death... and its culprits. This gives them not only an ability to learn secrets presumed safely gone and buried, but also to surveil ongoing activities through the servitude of ghosts.

Needless to say, this is all the sort of stuff that less grotesque societies find taboo, so the Hecata have spent no little effort in cultivating a self-sufficiency that would be the envy of the most well-to-do. Indeed, their insight into death and command over it yields significant profit when wielded wisely: forever sealing the secrets of fortune-spawning crimes, investigating the location of long-forgotten hoards, and sending forth the restless dead to coax or compel secrets from the still living and those close enough to count.

Hecata sires favor mortals either from their own mortal families or factions, or who provide links to outside groups from which the prospective sire would benefit. They prefer kine of a morbid, black-humored, or pragmatic bent, and few sires see much need for the compassionate or empathetic, unless it serves to satisfy a particular need they seek to fill. To some Hecata, the clan — the *family* — is all, while others pay this lip service at best, though many sires lean on guilt, obligation, and a sense of familial duty to force their childer into line, regardless of their own true feelings on the matter.

BLOODLINES OF THE HECATA

Clan Hecata includes numerous distinct bloodlines, from the ancient Cappadocian to the resurgent Nasyon san an. Some Hecata think these bloodlines were once full clans, but tonight nobody knows or cares when there’s profit to be made and macabre mysteries to plumb. See pp. 223-229 for Hecata Bloodline Loresheets.

Disciplines

AUSPEX: Hecata often regard Auspex as perception of fate. Reading an aura becomes an exercise in discerning how the individual’s attitudes steer them toward their fate; taking possession of a body places the vampire at that tiller. It’s also a Discipline that requires a degree of finesse, from sensing unseen ghosts to reading the spiritual history of an object... and often neglected among the more brutish members of the clan.

FORTITUDE: Who better to exalt the physical durability of the undead form? Fortitude may manifest as the futility of hacking away at an already-dead corpse to a grand mastery over — and avoidance of — Death’s very laws.

OBLIVION: Oblivion is among the most mysterious of Disciplines, as it can reach past the veil of the afterlife. Through its use, the Hecata might interrogate a ghost or set it to torment a rival. They might rot a mortal’s flesh with a touch or practice a debased ceremony to drive a meddling kine to a bleak reward. Oblivion risks the user’s connection to their humanity, but the Hecata see it as a necessary tool for understanding the relationship among life, death, and undeath.

Bane

The Hecata inflict a notoriously *painful Kiss*. The fangs of the Lazarenes bring not bliss, but agony. Victims caught unawares will violently



resist unless restrained, and few people submit willingly to the torture that is the Hecata Kiss. When drinking directly from a victim, Hecata may only take harmful drinks, resulting in blood loss (**Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 212). Unwilling mortals not restrained will try to escape, and even those coerced or willing must succeed in a Stamina + Resolve test against Difficulty 2 + Bane Severity in order not to strain against the pain. Coerced or willing vampire victims of the Hecata bite must make a Frenzy test against Difficulty 3 to avoid falling into a terror Frenzy.

Compulsion: Morbidity

The vampire experiences an immediate need to move something from life to death or vice versa. Any action not dedicated to ending or resurrecting something is taken at a two-dice penalty. This subject doesn't have to be a person, or even a living thing, but can include objects or even more abstract things such as an idea or a conversation. The Compulsion lasts until the vampire manages to kill or return something to life (figuratively or literally).

Hecata Archetypes

Re-Animator

You bring them to the slab and the Re-Animator will get them talking again. Hell, if you want, the Re-Animator will have them up and dancing around, a veritable *totentanz*. You wanna find out what the corpse knew before they died, no problem. You want them to shamble back home and point an accusatory finger at someone, you got it. The Re-Animator makes no judgments,



pal. Just one last thing, though; you gotta leave the corpse with the Re-Animator when it's all said and done. They know just what to do with it.

Forensic Specialist

Before their Embrace, the Forensic Specialist was always one of the first to crime scenes, and post-Embrace uses their field expertise to alter evidence, misfile reports, or spin a narrative of death that protects their coterie's interests, all while coming face-to-face with death on a regular basis. Of late, they've felt conflicting loyalties, sometimes siding with those young Kindred with whom they spend many of their nights, and sometimes siding with the strange family that adopted them into its gruesome but powerful ranks. These last, though, make dangerous demands and rely on guilt and familial custom, and harbor among them more than a few vampires whose ways would have the Forensic Specialist called up before a supervisor had the details of their behavior made it into a field report.

Natural Necromancer

Having discovered a genuine interest in, and aptitude for, death magic through exposure to Dark Web seances, ghost hunting on vlogs, exorcisms, and subsequent study of occult rituals, the Natural Necromancer found themselves less Embraced and more blackmailed into the Hecata. Their sire plans to see whether their knack for ceremony is worth cultivating, or if they'll simply serve forever as a more-competent-than-average retainer. The Natural Necromancer has plans, though, and doesn't intend to play backup to some second-rate vampire who didn't even have the initiative to learn the tricks of the trade before getting undead.

Unscrupulous Banker

A scion of the Giovanni or Dunsire bloodlines of Clan Hecata, the Unscrupulous Banker acts as a neutral party for fellow Kindred "investors" in any number of illicit fiduciary concerns. They position themselves as being "just business," a perfect voice for mediation and guaranteed to protect assets due to their unswerving dedication to non-involvement

in the Eternal Struggle. The Unscrupulous Banker is willing to do anything to cut a profit, whether that means investing in unethical concerns, accepting laundered funds, or playing guard to investments most banks wouldn't touch — including blood, special kine, or a torpid Kindred "parcel" arriving from an Ashirra domain.







LASOMBRA

*The Clan of Night
Magisters
Keepers
Shadows*

*For certain, I am ever your ally, but I must
resign myself to the shadows, otherwise
they'll know the true threat our combined
might presents.*





Creatures subtly at odds with mundane reality, Lasombra vampires are expected to triumph at any cost. Ruthlessness is a sought-after trait in progeny, making their reputation as betraying interlopers well deserved. Most do not seek attention, preferring to act as puppeteers, powers behind the proverbial throne. To a Shadow, the ends justify any means.

Vampires are often associated with darkness, being creatures of the night, forsaken by the sun. Even among the Kindred, however, an affinity with darkness belongs to one clan in particular: the Lasombra. And from these shadows, the Keepers orchestrate their schemes, pulling the strings of “lesser” Kindred, manipulating them as they would marionettes on strings, enacting the shadow-play of the Eternal Struggle. Any Kindred can claim power, title, and influence, and heavy hangs the head of would-be Princes and Barons — but who has the ear of those Princes and Barons, and who speaks from the unseen backrooms and halls of Kindred power, petty and great? The Magisters of Clan Lasombra.

Lasombra greatly esteem accomplishment, especially in matters by which they might gain power over others. They do not enjoy risk, and Keepers have quite rightly earned a reputation for shrewd planning and cold calculation. Whether hammering a stake through the heart of an obstinate enemy or socially eviscerating a rival before an assembly of elders and ancillae, a wise Lasombra knows the odds. What’s more, Magisters know how to lead fellow Kindred — or an unwitting dupe — into their own desired outcome. And of course, one of the most important strategies of manipulation is knowing when one doesn’t have the advantage, so therefore, it’s simply best to cheat. Claims of honor may play well at Elysium, but honor is only a single weapon in the Shadows’ portfolio.

Historically, the Lasombra have influenced every sect: early rebels in the Anarch Revolt, warlords of the Sabbat in the Americas, and redoubtable recruits into the Camarilla during this modern era of the Second Inquisition. Theirs is a clan with storied members and long histories,

but it's also a clan mistrusted as manipulators and feared for what unseen things move in the shadows that they coax forth.

Who Are the Lasombra?

Perhaps more than any other personality factor, Lasombra sires favor ambition on the part of their childer, and Magisters see themselves as examples of excellence. Precisely what form that excellence takes spans broadly, as the web of personal ambition may have multiple generations of Lasombra Kindred acting to fulfill (knowingly or otherwise) a sire's agenda. Politically savvy individuals, criminal masterminds, individuals with military or law-enforcement experience, and even survivors of tragedy all find their place among the ranks of the Shadows. Some Magisters have been Embraced to one night lead, while others are like the Shadows of their sires, serving in perpetuity.

Speaking more broadly, many Lasombra have wealthy, powerful backgrounds or experience among religious institutions (though they are not themselves necessarily devout). Some are even from semi-aristocratic lineages. Whatever the case, Lasombra sires seem drawn to mortal lives spent cultivating power, an environment in which the Magisters' excellence blooms like a shadow at twilight. As a member of a coterie, they almost always consider themselves the most important one. Just ask them.

A Lasombra's ambition may drive them to seek out a position of leadership, in Kindred society or of significant (if discreet) mortal influence. The clan has included Ivory Tower Princes, Anarch warlords, seneschals, priests, and even maritime raiders. By contrast, Keepers also make excellent spies, infiltrators, and even assassins, given their ability to hide in shadow and collect information or lurk unseen in preparation for a powerful strike. If caught, they can bully or brawl their way out of a difficult spot.

Disciplines

DOMINATE: The Lasombra rely on their ability to crush wills and command obedience without the

genteel affectations to which some of the Damned pretend. The callous way in which they exert this Discipline on victims often earns antipathy from other Kindred, yet few deny the Magisters' ability in brainwashing and subjugating prey. A Lasombra uses Dominate without hesitation to tell a victim to bare their neck and prepare for feeding.

OBLIVION: The ability to manipulate shadows allows the Lasombra to observe, strike, and escape without ever having to confront their victim, or to employ entities darker than death for the same purpose. Many claim there's a cost to one's soul for using Oblivion, or that overindulging it is why the Lasombra appear strangely in reflections and modern media formats.

POTENCE: When forced to resort to physical violence, Magisters may favor popping an enemy's skull with their hands, driving a boot through a punk's stomach, or ripping a door off its hinges to command respect and fear in other circumstances. Few Lasombra use Potence for the purpose of assisting their feeding, considering it a vulgar exercise to manually grab and hold a vessel — but sometimes the Hunger demands instant gratification.

Bane

Anyone seeing the reflection or recording (live and otherwise) of a Lasombra vampire can instantly recognize them for what they are, provided they know what they're looking for. People with no prior knowledge will know something is wrong, but likely attribute the distortion to irregularities in the reflecting surface or recording errors. Note that this will not hide the identity of the vampire with any certainty: the Lasombra are no less likely to be caught on surveillance than any other vampire. In addition, use of modern communication technology, including making a simple phone call, requires a Technology test at Difficulty 2 + Bane Severity as microphones have similar problems with the voice of a Lasombra as cameras with their image. Avoiding electronic vampire detection systems is also done at a penalty equal to Bane Severity.

Compulsion: Ruthlessness

Lasombra despise failure, associating it with poor planning or a personal declivity. When affected by this compulsion, their Blood urges them toward any act conceivable to reach their goals, whether in the moment or via Byzantine plots lasting centuries.



The Magister feels any setback profoundly and they quickly escalate to the most ruthless of methods until they achieve their aims.

The next time the vampire fails any action they receive a two-dice penalty to any and all rolls until a future attempt at the same action succeeds, or the scene ends. Note that the above penalty applies to future attempts at the triggering action as well.

LASOMBRA AND TECHNOLOGY

All vampires lose something profound upon their Embrace, but the Lasombra exhibit especially telling signs of the Curse of Caine. When viewed in a reflective surface or a recording medium, their image appears distorted, sometimes even almost invisible. They may appear to be flickering, twisted, or transparent, and thus their reflection betrays their undead state and possibly their clan. Similarly, modern technology relying on touch or other forms of direct interaction, such as voice activation, touch screen, or use of a stylus, tends to glitch or act unreliably for Magisters, and electronic detection systems easily pick up the damning signs of their passing. It's as if they exist on a slightly different frequency from other beings, flickering in and out of light.

While Lasombra fledglings despair at technology's refusal to work to their wills, resourceful Keepers swiftly recruit mortals or enthrall ghouls to handle such busy work as taking calls and driving them where they need to be. In some domains, this trend is so pronounced among the Magisters, that a Lasombra who conducts their business without a personal attendant is considered embarrassingly out of fashion or even disadvantaged.

Lasombra Archetypes

Mentor

“Always trade up,” so goes the old saying, and that’s especially true for the Mentor, who has managed to parlay a Prince’s barest acknowledgement into one of the most prestigious hunting grounds in the domain.

As they teach their protégés — taking on a new one every decade or so, with the promise that they'll move to a different domain to help “extend the web” — prestation is the key to accomplishment, as so many other Kindred are willing to pay later for what's offered tonight. And tonight, the Mentor sits pretty, atop a mountain of boons and secrets that would cause no end of havoc if they emerged from the shadows into the light of Elysium.

Provocateur

Originally Embraced to die as a sacrifice to the Second Inquisition, the Provocateur outwitted their sire and led Special Affairs Division to their sire's haven. Thus began a campaign of hunter-baiting-for-hire, planting evidence and thereby drawing out the FBI's elite to strike down their employer's foes. It's all part of a grander effort, though, as the Provocateur hires out their services only to those Kindred whose aims align with their own — and the risks increase nightly as the SAD learns ever more about how the city's vampire threat operates.

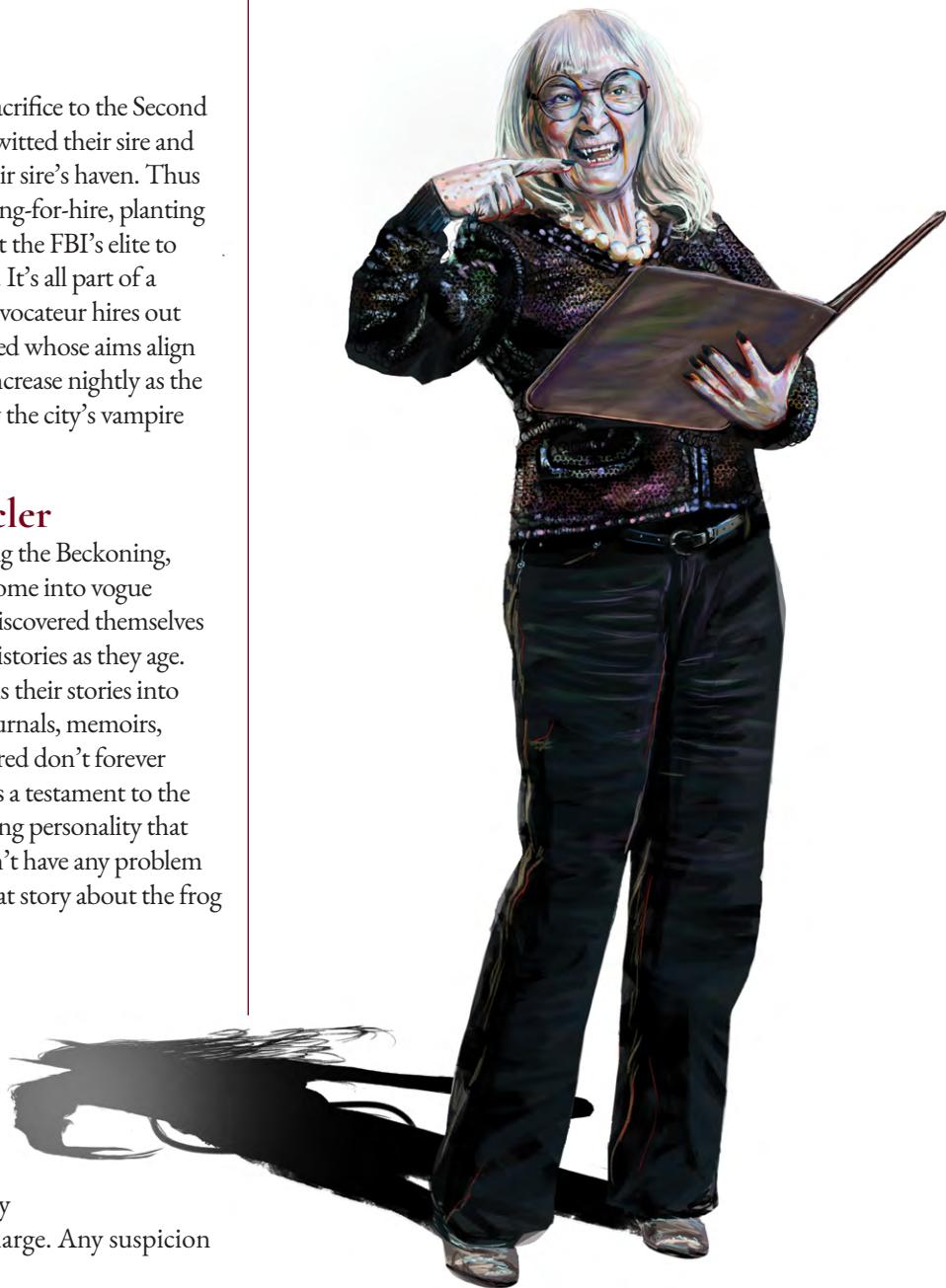
Fashionable Chronicler

With many elders recently heeding the Beckoning, the Fashionable Chronicler has come into vogue among rising ancillae who have discovered themselves forgetting bits of their personal histories as they age. The Fashionable Chronicler turns their stories into tangible mementos — poems, journals, memoirs, apologetics — so that these Kindred don't forever lose their own memories. And it's a testament to the Fashionable Chronicler's disarming personality that these self-important Kindred don't have any problem confiding their secrets. What's that story about the frog and the scorpion?

Valet

Traveling in the apparent service of an affluent but slow-witted aristo, the Valet moves invisibly among the classes that never take notice of “the help,” gleaning high-society secrets as they attend to their charge. Any suspicion

directed the pair's way quickly moves on, as the lordling proves too stupid to be behind whatever misdeed earns the duo attention in the first place. And with late-night hours spent among the service staff that frequently resents the inherited privilege of the gentry, the Valet finds willing accomplices when some arrogant member of the idle rich needs a bit of comeuppance.





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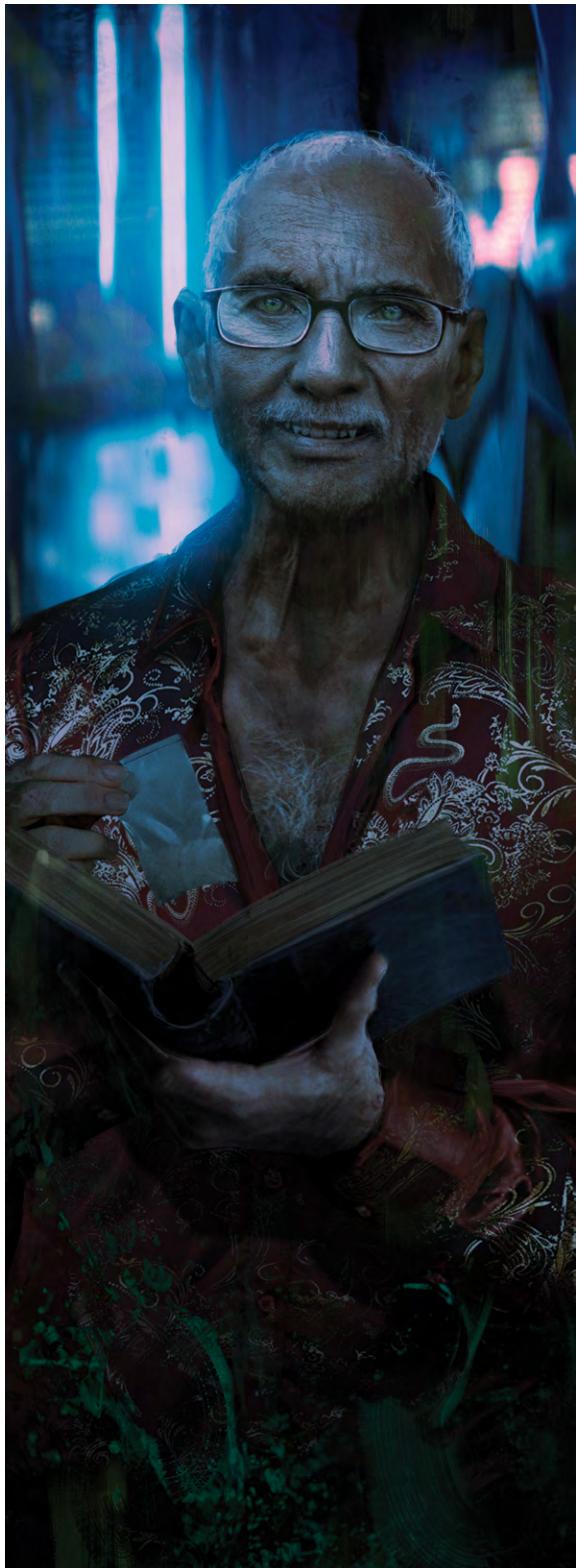


THE MINISTRY

Serpents
The Clan of Faith
The Clan of Lies
Setites

*You call me a liar, a tempter, and a degenerate, but all of
your supposed insults are simply the weight of the chains
in which you have continued to shackle yourself.*





The Ministry always has something to offer. This often cult-like clan recruits those able to employ temptation as a weapon. They Embrace those with the will and means to sway, entrap, and ultimately liberate their targets from whatever they seek: the victim's possessions, allegiance, or even faith. To the Serpents, everything has a price.

Part clan, part cult, the Ministry occupies a strange niche in Kindred society. To their own minds, the Ministry serves the purpose of liberating individuals from uncritically accepting the burden of "sin" that has been put upon them, whether in the form of religious doctrine, social stigma, or even the Traditions of the Damned. Detractors have no such high-minded opinions of them, often regarding them as degenerate agitators wielding an arsenal of self-serving heresies.

The smiling priest offering an easy forgiveness, the grubby pusher selling a quick chemical escape, the burlesque impresario offering a night of abandon, the charismatic smuggler offering to make one's problem just go away: All of these and more represent Ministers in a demimonde where one's troubles and solutions are their own ecosystem. You've got a problem? A Minister is happy to help solve it... and to help convince you that it's not really a problem to begin with, so long as you have the proper perspective. Of course that perspective likely puts you in the same position again, where the Minister helpfully ratchets you along their chosen spiral. Unsurprisingly, this frequently earns them the ire of those who benefit by the prevailing customs, or who maintain their own prominence by dictating societal mores.

None of this is to say that the Ministry is amoral, precisely — quite the opposite. To the Ministry mind, questioning is itself a sacrament. Without sin, what value has righteousness? And what is condemning sin but a method of control? The way of the Ministry is to challenge a prevailing morality, to ask "Why is this forbidden?" and to test the merits of what can be gained by subverting default morality. If it just so happens that challenging what's forbidden can expose a weakness in others that a Minister can turn to their

advantage, well, that's practically creating a divinity in one's own image.

Many Ministers set up shrines, temples, churches, or other places that at once mock traditional religion and demonstrate the piety of the individual Serpent. This might be anything from an alcove in an apartment with a few candles, sticks of incense, and icons of personal significance to a genuine temple where many esteemed Ministers fraternize and worship. Indeed, perhaps the largest faction of the clan has appropriated the Egyptian god Set, with whom the elders of the clan claim a connection or even consanguinity.

Who Are the Ministry?

Ministry Kindred often Embrace first for the confidence and willingness of a potential fledgling to go against the majority in *something*, whether a religious, social, or other authority. Indeed, some Serpents never make it past a sort of adolescent rebellion, given the power of the Blood and numerous shadow hierarchies to thumb their noses at. As Ministers come to grips with the reality of the Kindred condition, however, they see in the Blood an opportunity to remake vampire society by turning its taboos against it. Other Kindred may see them as agents of destabilization or corruption, but most Ministers know exactly who they're countervailing and why, whether high-Status Prince or a gutter Lick who might be a useful tool or patsy some night soon.

The Ministry favors those with the confidence, temerity, or the *absolute fucking balls* to call into question what others exalt as "the greater good." The greater good, according to whom? It's not like monsters who drink the blood of innocents to sustain themselves have the moral high ground, after all.

Issuing a challenge to a prevailing set of beliefs doesn't automatically make one a paragon of a contrasting perspective, however, and Ministry Kindred frequently — very frequently — succumb to the temptations of the transgressions they present as liberations. The clan harbors any number of blood-junkies, thrill-seekers, and other hypocritical self-

aggrandizers. Easy moral judgments cast these transgressions as sin, but too often what they do represent is unsustainable conviction. If a Serpent practices inadequate vigilance against the costs of "liberation," they may find themselves prostrate before the Beast with only expensive habits to show for it. The Ministry knows this, however, and it's just that sort of weakness itsmore opportunistic members seek to weaponize against other Kindred. The Serpent isn't a peddler of vice, they're the personal orchestrator of *your* fall to indulgence and into their thrall, an allegorical Devil with whom reckless Kindred make a deal.

The truly devout among the Ministers sometimes see themselves as guardians, protectors, and even soldiers against some dark force greater than that perceived by the world's current spate of myopic faiths. Much as the Kindred indulge the riddle "A Beast I am, lest a Beast I become," so do these Ministers tempt and degrade those beholden to them to protect them from greater damnations. Better to while away one's deathless nights in the VIP section of a nightclub, numbed by the drugs provided by the Serpent purveyor than to serve forever, losing oneself to the Eternal Struggle. It's for your own good, of course.

Ministry Kindred often favor jewelry, accessories, and other abstract expressions of religious motifs or concepts, such as symbols of eternal life, or snake theming. Such symbols may be worn with a hint of irony, or as a statement of earnest faith. Serpents are aware of the relationship between their sobriquets proclaiming them the Clan of Faith and the Clan of Lies, as these can be two sides of the same coin.

Disciplines

OBFUSCATE: Ministry Kindred use this Discipline to discover the beliefs, outlooks, and vices of vampires and mortals alike, to facilitate their exploitation and liberation. Powerful Ministers also often wear the faces of trustworthy figures and friends to better lure prey to into their shrines and temples, or just to the nearest secluded spot.

PRESENCE: For many Ministers in the modern nights, this is their favored ability, offering a power with a finesse that satisfies even the self-styled enforcers of the Masquerade. Serpents use Presence with great prowess, wielding majestic gestures and resounding speeches that cut to the hearts of a congregation assembled in worship or to the lone wayward outsider.

PROTEAN: The Ministers use this ability to awe observers but also have use of its many novel ways of escaping harm. They will often adopt the form of a snake over that of a wolf, but can meld with the earth to avoid the sun alongside any Gangrel.

Bane

The Blood of a Minister abhors the light. When exposed to direct illumination, whether natural or artificial, members of the clan recoil. Ministers receive a penalty equal to their Bane Severity to all dice pools when subjected to bright light directed straight at them. Also, add their Bane Severity to Aggravated damage taken from sunlight.

THE CULT OF SET

The Ministry's influence takes root throughout the world in various places of faith, from inside the walls of vast religious institutions to strange ceremonies performed by a few desperate believers in tenement storerooms and abandoned mountainside cabins. Where blood can be found, so too can Kindred, and therefore the Ministry. Its cults are many and varied and widespread.

Inarguably, the largest faction within the Ministry is the Followers of Set, whose name is often used as a synonym for the Ministry as a whole, as evidenced by the clan's sobriquet of the Setites. The Setite perspective builds on (or corroborates...) some of the mysteries of the Book of Nod, identifying one of the dreaded Antediluvians by the name Set. It seems blasphemous at best to conflate the ancient Egyptian deity Set with the progenitor of the Ministry, but the cults of the Clan of Faith are obviously no stranger to courting such blasphemy, heresy, or any other dogma they can use to subvert the notion of sin.

In many domains, the Setites are the sum of the Ministry's presence, in that they may be the only Ministry faith present. In other domains, the Cult of Set is but one or none of the Serpents' faces, and Ministers may have infiltrated existing congregations of the faithful as well as establishing their own.

As an aside, be respectful when it comes to matters of real-world culture and its use in the society of vampires. If your troupe prefers not to use this element of Egyptian culture as having been appropriated by the undead, the Ministry has plenty of other subversions that could turn up in a chronicle with less exception.

Compulsion: Transgression

The prevailing wisdom of the Clan of Faith (or Lies...) is that everyone's mind and spirit are bound by invisible chains of their own making. Their Blood chafing at these bindings, the Minister suffers a burning need to break them. The vampire receives a two-dice penalty to all dice pools not relating to enticing someone (including themselves) to break a Chronicle Tenet or personal Conviction, causing at least one Stain and ending this Compulsion.

Ministry Archetypes

Faith Healer

The Faith Healer has always found it easiest to build trust with people through the power of words and faith. While mortal, they were a priest, convincing others with their kindness and strength of conviction that all ills can be believed away. As one of the Damned, they aren't too different. Now, the sin they preach against is the Beast instead of

simple mortal urges. And it has paid off — with Status in the domain, their believers, supporters, and penitents are numerous.

Lifetime Fraud

Frauds, con artists, and charlatans quickly find a place among the Ministry, given any proficiency in relieving other vampires of burdensome guilt and deviance. As a mortal, the Lifetime Fraud had a fake name, a job for which they weren't qualified, and a series of in-default contracts with partners across the country, telling their "colleagues" more lies than truths. The Blood has given them aptitudes that make it easy to move from city to city with just a suitcase in hand, hawking an opportunity that they promise will pay off at least twice what their latest mark puts into it, surely.

Speaker for the Divine

This Minister was able to hear the voice of God before the Embrace. Ardent in their belief and skilled in channeling visions into action, they succeeded in life, raising a family, running a business, and they were well-regarded throughout their hometown. After the Embrace, the Speaker for the Divine has found the voice of God has multiplied. Among the many voices within them — the Beast and the Blood and any number of their victims' lingering resonances — the Speaker for the Divine has become even more convinced that they are a conduit for a consciousness greater than life or death.

Bit-Part Actor

A career on daytime TV, mostly, with a few parts here and there in prime-time shows and limited-run movies brought the Bit-Part Actor into the Ministry. They had a certain air of interest, an ability to make people feel familiar with them and comfortable around them. That bit of not-untouchable fame makes the Bit-Part Actor a good face for the cult, offering a way to mix with the semi-famous set, oh, and while you're here, I want to show you something....







RAVNOS

*Rogues
Ravens
Daredevils
The Haunted*

*To dazzle and fade – forever in motion and
always on the run.*





Masters of misdirection, the Ravnos prefer not to fight or bleed for something they can obtain through subtler means. They can charm and vanish within the same mortal breath, and those once fooled quickly learn to question their very senses when in the company of Ravens. Always on the move, the Ravnos can never rest in the same place for long lest their curse light them on fire as they slumber.

A clan almost annihilated in the opening salvo of the Gehenna War, its embers now grow brighter with each passing night. Others know them as message-bearers, wanderers, and mind-fuckers. But the Ravnos know their legacy to be far greater, a flame of capricious divinity simmering in their Blood. Their methods are not brute force, adoration of crowds, or meticulous centuries-spanning plots, but rather wit and panache, artful charm, and outright illusion. Confidence artists, confidantes, venture capitalists, performance artists, and plain wayfarers all contribute to the manifold cast that is the Ravnos clan in the modern nights.

The Ravnos' relationship to mortals varies. Historically, they have latched on to various subaltern societies, seeking protective coloration among the fringes already suspected by the respectable majority. Numerous Ravens have even attached themselves to itinerant commercial groups such as traveling carnivals, where they not only have a steady cycle of prey, but might even be able to turn their talents to a profit. As with most relationships of the Kindred to their herds, the Rogues' vampiric influence is rarely benign, and while some Ravnos genuinely care for their charges, others see them merely as tools or vessels, to be used and disposed of. A ship of refugees is as likely to see port, delivered safely by a mysterious benefactor, as to arrive at port empty, a ghost ship with bones and bloodstains as the only signs of its past passengers.

Who Are the Ravnos?

Masters of misdirection, the Rogues prefer not to fight or bleed for something they can obtain through subtler means. They can charm and vanish within the same mortal breath, and those once fooled quickly learn to question their very senses when in the company of Ravens. For that reason, Ravnos vampires seldom advertise their nature, and once their cover is blown they are quick to make their escape. Not that they have much choice in the matter, as inexorable doom lurks in their vitae, threatening to consume them if they ever come to rest. But as the flash-over of the supposed destruction of their progenitor burns through the clan, new generations have managed to stay a step ahead of this blood-borne conflagration and quietly re-establish the lineage.

Which isn't to say that they're harmless or even sympathetic, as much risk-taking requires a heart hardened to the plight of others, and more than a few Daredevils were "self-interested" even before they became blood-drinking night-haunts. Still, that makes for an easier transition, and many Ravnos fledglings do take to the undead state with more ease than those of other clans, having already cut their ties to friends, family, and society.

While the nomadic habits (and even requirements) of the clan make any kind of proper organization difficult, something like a Ravnos revival is forming, taking root among the more communal members of the clan. A complex set of signs and signals, known and taught only to members of the clan, helps them find and identify each other, as well as set up occasional gatherings to swap rumors and trade information on the state of Kindred affairs across domains. Storytelling is popular, and a mythology of sorts emerges among young Ravens in which they identify as descendants of various mythological trickster deities, going so far as to form coteries or Embrace broods devoted to one clever god or another. Lacking still-active ancestors, they make up their own, elevating their craft to divine mandate.

An increasing number of Daredevils make do on their own, or fight their curse in an attempt to settle

in established domains. To avoid their curse they set up multiple havens and frequently employ an equally impressive number of mortal masks. No clan is as adept at blending in as the Ravnos, and many operate under the radar of the Kindred community of the domain, or present themselves as innocuous Caitiff. Those who do fly the colors of their heritage tend to adopt a staunchly independent position, selling their services as spies, saboteurs, and negotiators to the highest bidding sect. Few Ravens can maintain this for long, though, and most eventually find themselves packing. Whether due to an accumulation of enemies, vengeance-driven victims, or the doom seething through their very Blood, a Ravnos vampire always ends up on the run. This is fine with most other Kindred, who can't help but see a cautionary lesson in the Ravnos, as they represent the most final outcomes of the Gehenna War.

Disciplines

ANIMALISM: The Ravnos maintain an almost affable relationship with animals, especially ravens, foxes, coyotes, spiders, and monkeys. (At the Storyteller's discretion, reduce the Difficulty for Animalism tests involving these animals by one and increase it for all other kinds of animals.) Employing these familiars as spies, distractions, and the occasional companion, a Ravnos is never truly alone on the road.

OBFUSCATE: While many Rogues are able to vanish from sight and remain hidden, the clan is also adept at extending the use of Obfuscate to craft elaborate and sustained hallucinations, effectively using their Presence to propel the properties of the Discipline to encompass more than their own visage.

PRESENCE: The go-to method when natural charm and persuasion isn't enough. Few Daredevils are without at least some measure of this Discipline. They make frequent use of Presence to procure victims in a pinch, and the Discipline also has a part to play in hallucinatory powers.

Bane

The Ravnos are doomed. The sun's fire that incinerated their founder rages through the Blood of the clan, erupting from their very flesh if they ever settle down for long. If they slumber in the same place more than once in seven nights, roll a number



of dice equal to their Bane Severity. They receive Aggravated damage equal to the number of 10s (critical results) rolled as they scorch from within. This happens every time they spend the day in a location where they've already slumbered less than a week before, and applies to Ravnos in torpor as well.

What constitutes a location in this regard depends on the scope of the chronicle, but unless otherwise stated, two resting places need to be at least a mile apart to avoid triggering the Bane. Furthermore, a mobile haven, such as a movers' truck, is safe so long as the place where the truck is parked is at least a mile from the last location. Ravnos characters cannot take the No Haven Flaw at character creation.

Compulsion: Tempting Fate

The vampire is driven by their Blood to court danger. Haunted as they are by righteous fire burning its way up their lineage, why not? The next time the vampire is faced with a problem to solve, any attempt at a solution short of the most daring or dangerous incurs a two-dice penalty. (Suitably flashy and risky attempts can even merit bonus dice for this occasion.) The Daredevil is free to convince any fellows to do things their way, but is just as likely to go at it alone. The Compulsion persists until the problem is solved or further attempts become impossible.

Ravnos Archetypes

Midnight Motorcycle Courier

When the package absolutely needs to be delivered in one piece, on time and in the dead of night, the Midnight Motorcycle Courier is on the job. The Courier isn't listed on any known website, but those of note, mortal and undead, have their number on speed dial. The Courier knows which routes to take when the sect war flares up, whose palms to grease when domains are to be crossed, and where to lay low when it all comes tumbling down. Above all, they have options. Playing the

players of the city like a concrete Yojimbo, they nevertheless have a gassed-up unregistered cross-country dirt bike ready. Just in case.

Operative for Hire

The Operative is a rare breed among Rogues: discreet, professional and above all, trustworthy. They perform their mission according to spec, whether it involves espionage, diplomacy or the occasional assassination. On payment, they disappear until called upon again. Everyone knows the Operative works for all sides, but they're just too damned useful to move against. And besides, nobody wants them as an enemy. Most keep the Operative on a small retainer, to guard against that risk. The Operative likes it that way.

Travel Agent

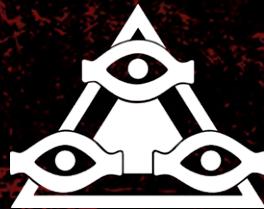
Seeing the world can be a daunting proposition for those who spontaneously combust in sunlight and have the scattered eyes of global intelligence looking for them. That's where the Travel Agent comes in. Operating a discreet agency with contacts in the far corners of the globe, nowhere is unreachable. Their clients know what they sign up for, or they're out of options anyway. Whether it means spending 13 days in a refrigerated truck trailer or playing the part as cargo raided by pirates from the Gulf of Guinea, the Travel Agent gets them to their destination. The client might not be quite the same when they get there, but that's a risk they'll have to take.

Antiquarian

With a keen sense of history, an eye for detail, and personal reasons to seek out forgotten artifacts, the Antiquarian seems forever on the verge of another significant discovery. Sometimes these translate into personal gains, such as by selling artifacts to museums or private collectors. In other cases, though, the Antiquarian specializes in unearthing items of distinct interest to Kindred, whether bibelots exalting individual lineages or relics of import to the Damned as a whole. If it's worth finding, the Antiquarian can find it and dig it up (or at least convince you that's what you're seeing).







SALUBRI

*Cyclops
Soul-Thieves
Dajjals
Saulot's Progeny*

*To make one's haven in the vale of sorrows
and forever tread a path of thorns.*





Most of their kind lost to undead usurpers, the highly desirable Blood of the hunted Salubri is a prize to other vampires. This, and their reluctance to Embrace, makes them rare in the modern nights. They often recruit those on the edge of death, believing their curse can provide the worthy a second chance, and they count some of the most humane vampires among their ranks.

The schemes of the Kindred yield winners and losers, and each winner demands a loser to pay the price of that success. Such is the case with the Salubri, centuries ago renowned for wisdom and erudition, but now little more than a despised footnote in the schemes of the Damned. Tonight, the Salubri are arguably no longer even a clan, their progenitor, so it is told, having succumbed to the fangs of a more ambitious usurper who built his own Clan Tremere with that purloined Blood. Theirs is a legacy of tragedy but also a bitter lesson in the millennia-spanning Eternal Struggle. In their destruction, their rivals laid the guilt upon the victims, spreading tales of soul-stealing and worse truths hidden behind pious cant. As if to compound the recognition of this guilt, every Salubri bears a third eye in the center of their forehead, the indicator of their lineage.

Who Are the Salubri?

Salubri childer are few — it is whispered that only seven ever exist at one time, but whether or not that remains true in the modern nights cannot be confirmed. According to their custom, Salubri sires Embrace only when they reach Golconda, thereby passing on their curse anew each time, but again, the current state of Kindred affairs calls this into question. Thus the choice of childe is an even more intensely personal decision for the Salubri than for other Kindred. To Salubri sires considering progeny, a potential childe must have a problem to solve; Salubri do not Embrace on whim. They may Embrace the terminally ill, those who have endured a family tragedy, or those with an unquenchable drive to right a worldly wrong.

It is believed that the progenitor of the clan,

the enigmatic Saulot, was in fact the first Kindred to attain Golconda, and his lineage still attempts to walk that path centuries after his destruction. They often lead troubled unives, weighed down by the Kindred condition but buoyed by the promise of redemption, however elusive it may seem. Undaunted, the Salubri pursue the answer to Caine's damnation, and have even helped others find their own personal absolution.

Or have they? With the power to grant aid comes the power to harm, especially to hear the tales of soul-stealing and congress with unholy entities that swirl in the wake of Clan Salubri's ruin. This, combined with details of the aggressive stance some Salubri take toward their fellow Kindred — hunting and destroying those they deem dangerously proximate to the Beast — have muddied the reputation of the clan to those few who know of them. But is this credible or hearsay?

Few Princes want them in their domains, because they're usually on the outs with somebody. Anarch Barons may feel sympathy for the Salubri, but rarely to the extent that they're willing to harbor a fugitive in their territory. Much of the Salubri lot is being hated and hunted for something their sires may or may not have done centuries ago.

The fate of the Salubri in these final nights is grim, but they face their lot with a perspective rare among the Kindred. Willing as they are to help others walk the difficult path of Golconda, many Salubri seem to actually want to "solve" the problem of being a vampire rather than indulging or evading it. Some others vow to destroy the more blatant transgressors of the Kindred condition and enlist the aid of others to pursue them, redeeming or destroying Wights, low-Humanity vampires, and those who otherwise revel in their damnation.

Disciplines

AUSPEX: Much of the storied wisdom of the Salubri comes from being able to perceive beyond the ken of less observant Kindred. Considered by a philosophical mind, the hidden truths of the world reveal themselves.

DOMINATE: The Salubri use Dominate to unburden others of the horrors of being a vampire or from witnessing the atrocities Kindred may commit. Whether erasing troubling memories or bolstering individuals against the undesired consequences of their actions, the Salubri have developed the ability to on occasion apply this Discipline as a balm.

FORTITUDE: A clan so despised needs every advantage it can to survive the modern nights, and the Salubri have also learned to will forth their own hardiness as a boon to others' well-being.

Bane

The Salubri are hunted: Kindred of other clans are especially ... appreciative of Salubri vitae. When a non-Salubri partakes of the blood of a Cyclops, they often find it difficult to pull themselves away. Consuming enough to abate at least one Hunger level requires a hunger frenzy test (**Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 220) at Difficulty 2 + the Salubri's Bane Severity (difficulty 3 + the Salubri's Bane Severity for Banu Haqim). If they fail the test, they just keep consuming, to the point that they may have to be physically fought off.

Additionally, the third eye that Saulot opened while on one of his many journeys passes down through the bloodline every time a Salubri Embraces. This third eye is not always recognizably human in origin, and rumors persist of vertical, serpentine pupils or even worm-like eyespots. While this third eye can be physically covered, such as with a headscarf or hood, it is always present, and no supernatural power can obscure it except those that hide the entire Salubri. Any time a Salubri activates a Discipline power, the third eye weeps vitae, its intensity correlating to the level of the Discipline being used, from welling up to a torrential flow. The blood flow from the third eye triggers a hunger frenzy test from nearby vampires with Hunger 4 or more.



Compulsion: Affective Empathy

When a Salubri suffers a Compulsion, the Kindred becomes overwhelmed with empathy for a personal problem that afflicts someone in the scene, and seeks

to further its resolution. The scale of the personal problem isn't important; the Salubri understands that sometimes suffering is part of a cumulative situation and not an isolated stimulus. Any action not taken toward mitigating that personal tragedy incurs a two-dice penalty. The Compulsion persists until the sufferer's burden is eased or a more immediate crisis supersedes it or the end of the scene.

Salubri Archetypes

Very few Salubri exist in the modern nights. In some senses, each Salubri is their own archetype; if a Salubri appears in the chronicle's domain, they're there for a purpose.

Seeker of the Truth

Whether because of their sire's influence, or the sole reason of a third eye mysteriously appearing on their forehead — coming back even after being surgically removed or extracted — the Seeker of the Truth just knows there's deeper meaning in *all of this*, and dedicates their unlif to a grand search for answers. Once a philosophy student, a self-proclaimed researcher of the unknown, and a "spiritual influencer," this Cyclops focuses on the nature of the undead by examining their own body and observing its reactions to external stimuli (does the third eye behave just like the other two?), seeking enlightenment in written or spoken words of other Kindred, and starving their Beast to uncover the mysteries of Golconda. Where others see things mundane or risks not worth taking, the Seeker of the Truth sees opportunity to learn, even at the cost of their own safety.

Unwilling Healer

Some are born to help others, wishing for nothing else but to cure the ill, soothe the afflicted, and offer a caring hand to all in need. Some end up doing this because their family paid for a medical degree (the salary prospects aren't too bad). Whatever their motivation was, the Embrace has given them new tools: Now, they're able to restore the living —and

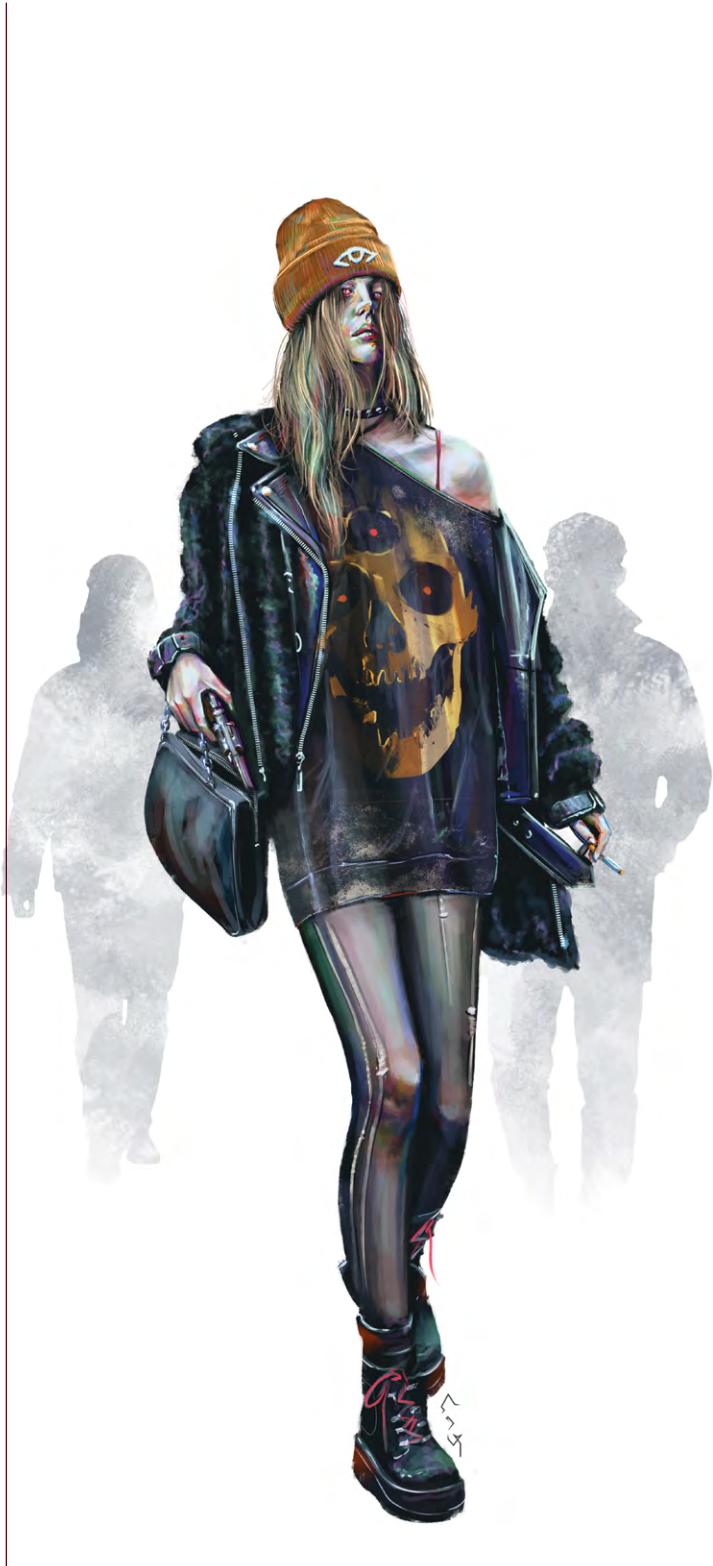
even the undead — with their Blood. Unfortunately, this isn't what they signed up for. Torn away from their old job and life they only *thought* they hated, the Unwilling Healer finds themselves loath to continue their craft, yet forced to do so by their sire, other Kindred, and their own empathetic Compulsion. Jaded, they do what they must, all while looking forward to anything that could make their job feel rewarding again.

Monster Against Monsters

Let's face it: The prospect of spending eternity disguising one's forehead and battling the Hunger is not entirely a dream come true. Forever in hiding, never understanding why anyone would subject another to the punishment of the Embrace, the Monster Against Monsters forges their resentment into action. Unwelcome in Kindred society, they actively work against it, serving as the anonymous informant for the local police or keeping a close eye on other predators on their own, sabotaging their feeding attempts whenever situation allows. The prospect of culling the undead population is tempting for them, but whether it's done by their own hands or through cooperation with mortal forces working against Kindred, it's an incredibly dangerous game to play.

Spy for Hire

Hiding the eye (and the blood that tends to ooze from it in the least convenient moments) takes practice and dedication. Bandanas, hats, bandages and patches, absorbing textiles meticulously taped to one's skin and hidden under garments, realistic silicone masks, staying away from lit up areas and cameras.... With a nightly routine consisting of so many precautions, it's no wonder the Spy for Hire forever stays in disguise, working undercover and leaving no trace behind. Hiring an alleged soul-sucker for a silent job might sound like the last resort for many, but with their existence so dependent on lying low, the Salubri might as well be the most reliable candidates for any tasks requiring an incognito approach. So long as they're guaranteed protection and discretion, the Spy for Hire is up for any task — for a good price, of course.





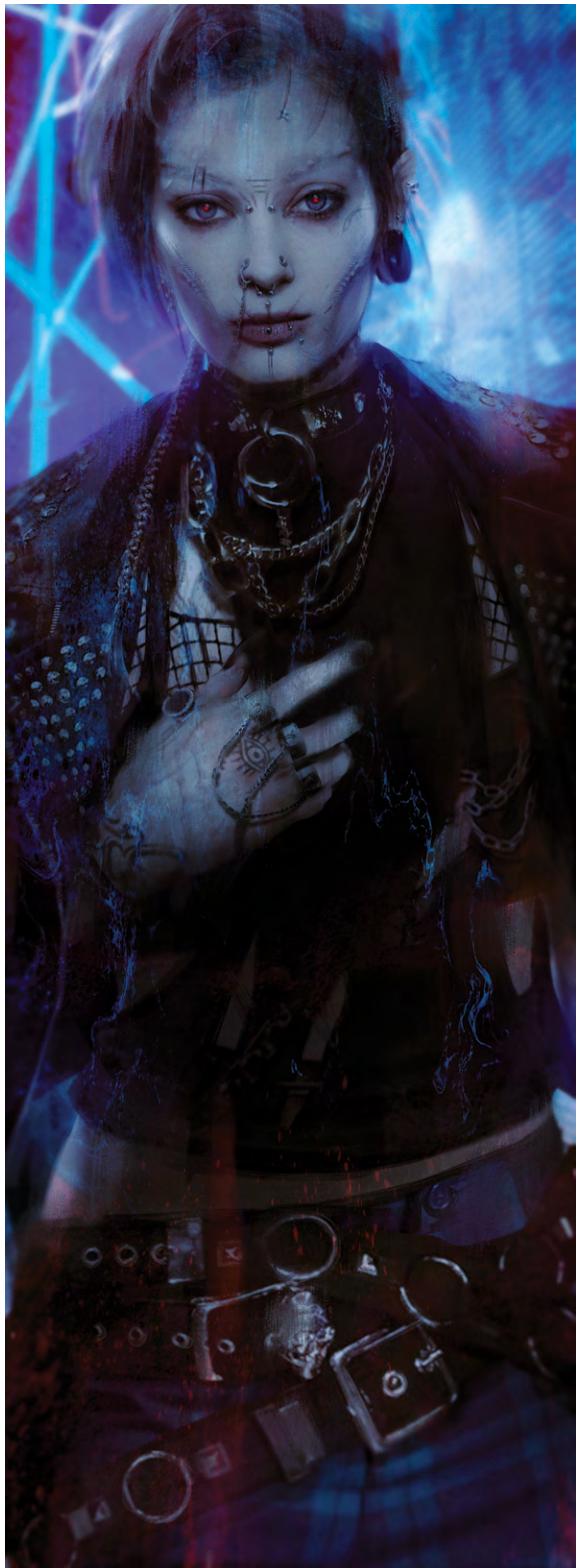


CZIMTSEE

*Dragons
The Old Clan
Voivodes
Stokers*

Not to lead, not to triumph, but to rule — to own utterly.





To the Tzimisce, possession is all. They aim to dominate and own the subject of their possessiveness, jealously guarding it like their namesake dragon would its hoard. Everything from land, people, cults, companies, or gangs can fall under the covetous claws of a Dragon. This relentless possessiveness extends as well to their own bodies, and they often rework themselves into flawless, hideous, or utterly alien forms, all the better to display their utter control of all things theirs.

The clan's charges have traditionally been defined geographically, such as a land or a regional people, but as Transylvanian properties dwindle they extend their obsession to gangs or business chains or even military units. Their covetousness limited only by lack of opportunity, they are exceedingly hard to dislodge once they've sunk their claws in.

Few carry a grudge or hate an elder like a Tzimisce, and the clan has numerous members in both the Sabbat and the Anarchs. Among the Black Hand, a nigh-medieval mindset drives the grasping Dragons to destroy the pawns of the despised ancients. Similarly, being shut out of the most desirable domains often drives young Tzimisce into the modern ways of the Anarchs, as they redefine themselves and their charges to claim holdings relevant to the night. Some few Tzimisce, generally arch-traditionalists, find a familiar (some would say anachronistic or even stagnant...) comfort in the neofeudalism of the Camarilla, but these are comparatively rare, and most Camarilla courts have little love for their avarice. Few Tzimisce see sect as much more than a means to a personal end, and the Camarilla gives them little trust in return. At their worst, the Tzimisce are tyrants, without the sense of obligation or duty that nobility usually conveys.

Who Are the Tzimisce?

To have been Embraced a Tzimisce means to own for the sake of owning, and to keep it out of the hands of others at all costs. In fact, many Tzimisce regard the Embrace itself as an act of ownership,

and have decidedly traditional relationships with their childer, whom they may even regard as property in extreme cases. If pushed to the edge they'd rather burn with their charge than let it fall into the hands of others; as Dragons, they are utterly familiar with the meaning of "scorched earth." Even tonight, they are the iron fist, with the velvet glove entirely optional. In a few cases their subjects are willing, but in most cases these subjects live in fear of an aloof master caring not about the happiness of its prize — only that it stays theirs. Visiting members of other clans are occasionally shocked to see Tzimisce domains that are run-down, neglected, or barren, until they remember that the Dragons don't necessarily care whether their charges flourish, only that they are wholly owned. A decrepit tenement is just as likely to be a Tzimisce holding as an opulent estate on ancestral lands.

This relentless possessiveness extends as well to the physical form — and beyond — of the Tzimisce, who consider themselves the ultimate owners of their bodies, even beyond the limitations of the Curse of Caine itself. Many Dragons practice a specialization of the Protean Discipline known as Vicissitude that allows them to rework their bodies and those of subjects and even less-willing victims. Indeed, those steeped in the lore of the clan recall the early nights of Vicissitude, when the Tzimisce refused to heed Protean limitations of wolf and bat forms, and pushed their mastery even further. In those nights, they created their fleshcrafted servitors, the hideous *szlachta* and the terrifying composite beasts known as the *vozhd*. (See *Consolidated Antagonists*, p. 241, for their statistics.)

Even beyond the practice of physical Vicissitude, the Dragons eagerly extend that mastery into the realm of the mind and spirit. These Tzimisce practice a form of transcendentalism that concerns itself with the very limits of vampirism itself. They transform themselves into statues or ikons, or alter the traits of gender (such vestigial mortal trappings...), or cultivate retinues of lookalikes to subsume their

own individuality. To hear the hoariest tales, some Voivode lords have themselves become one with their havens, or even suffused themselves into their homelands, merging their consciousness with the very soil of the domain. What better way to show ownership of the land and its folk than to become that very land and sustain the generations to come?

As might be expected, this makes for harsh divides between young Tzimisce, who often have little that would be considered property in the traditional sense, and older Dragons, who have had time to claim and redouble their precious holdings, and this has been true since time out of mind. No surprise, then, to learn that the Tzimisce participated vigorously in the Anarch Revolt, and were one of the founding clans of the Sabbat, rebelling against the tyranny of elders. Even tonight this wariness exists, and Dragons are exceptionally cunning when it comes to defining the charges over which they claim ownership, lest a more-covetous Voivode seize the charge for their own.

Disciplines

ANIMALISM: Some Tzimisce cultivate Animalism as an extension of their oneness with their domains. Others see it as a tool to better command hosts of lesser beasts in order to claim those domains. In any case, Tzimisce have long felt an affinity with the more bestial denizens of their ancestral lands.

DOMINATE: The perfect Discipline for enforcing one's edicts through sheer mental force. Dominate not only helps the Dragons seize the object of their obsession, but also conditions long-term servitors into extensions of the Fiend's unquestionable will.

PROTEAN: As masters of their own physical forms, the Tzimisce use Protean to force themselves into other shapes, especially those associated with many of the ancestral lands of the Old Clan, such as the bat and wolf. Beyond



these traditional Kindred guises, many Tzimisce practice the methods of Vicissitude (see p. 81), which allows them to transcend the rote forms of Protean and treat their own bodies and those of their subjects as primal clay.

Bane

The Tzimisce are grounded: Each Tzimisce must choose a specific charge — a physical domain, a group of people, an organization, or even something more esoteric — but clearly defined and limited. The Kindred must spend their daysleep surrounded by their chosen charge. Historically this has often meant slumbering in the soil of their land, but it can also mean being surrounded by that which they tonight rule: a certain kind of people, a building deeply tied to their obsession, a local counterculture faction, or other, more outlandish elements. If they do not, they sustain aggravated Willpower damage equal to their Bane Severity upon waking the following night.

Compulsion: Covetousness

When a Tzimisce suffers a Compulsion, the Kindred becomes obsessed with possessing something in the scene, desiring to add it to their proverbial hoard. This can be anything from an object to a piece of property to an actual person. Any action not taken toward this purpose incurs a two-dice penalty. The Compulsion persists until ownership is established (the Storyteller decides what constitutes ownership in the case of a non-object) or the object of desire becomes unattainable.

Tzimisce Archetypes

Landlord

Since time immemorial, the Tzimisce have been the lords of their domains. In the modern nights, however, the lord on the mountain has all but vanished. The Tzimisce are a crafty clan, though, and though they may no longer be manorial lords

in ancestral Old World estates, they find ways to exert control over urban domains and rural territories where they may. Landlords may own tenement slums or fashionable high-rises, but the result is the same: They bleed their tenants for their wealth just as they bleed their victims for their blood, and they consider both to be extensions of their property.

Gang Leader

It's not a gang so much as it is a way to make sure everyone's watching everyone else's back when the rest of the world has written them off. The Gang Leader goes out of the way to show how everyone working toward a common goal, that society tells them they can't have, simply needs to reach out and take it. If they weren't running a drug cartel or a protection racket, the gang leader would be hailed as a captain of industry.

Grudgebearer

So long as the Tzimisce have claimed domain, they have been in conflict with those who seek to take it from them, which is often everyone to the covetous Fiends. In particular, the Tzimisce have longstanding hostilities toward the Tremere, Gangrel, and Nosferatu, whom they see variously not only as usurpers of the Blood but also as interlopers in territories that rightfully belonged to them or their sires. Grudgebearers rise each night to exact some small mote of cold revenge against those they perceive to have slighted them, and against the childer of childer of hated rivals.

Special Forces Commander

Possessed not of a traditional land domain, the Special Forces Commander has instead the nigh-fanatical respect of their unit, and their soldiers would follow them into Hell itself. So the Special Forces Commander bides their time and trains their troops, for when they can perhaps parlay an insurrection or police action into a greater claim of domain.



CLAN BANE VARIANTS

One of the fundamental traits of the vampire clans is their Bane. While there is overlap between Disciplines, stereotypes, and the mortal spheres toward which they gravitate, each Bane is unique — as much a characteristic as a curse. Due to the nature of some stories, not all Banes will have much of an impact, or conversely might make a clan completely unplayable. A nomad-style chronicle makes the Ravnos Bane inconsequential, while a story focused on survival in the gutter might blow the Toreador Bane out of proportion. This chapter presents alternative Banes for all clans, allowing troupes to switch them out in order to keep the setting fresh or to make sure that all clans stay playable. Any Bane variants should apply to clans as a whole, though, as they are a lineage's signature trait and not an individual quirk. (This does not apply to the Twice Cursed Flaw on p. 121, as it represents an extension of the Bane, not a swap.)

Banu Haqim: Noxious Blood



Death lurks in the Blood of the so-called Assassins. While its effect on other vampires is the same as any vitae, it is poison to mortals and risks the life of anyone the Banu Haqim would try to make their ghoul or Blood Bond.

A mortal drinking the Blood of a Banu Haqim vampire suffers Aggravated Damage equal to the Bane Severity of the vampire for each Rouse Check's worth of Blood ingested. In addition, Banu Haqim vitae cannot be used to heal mortal injuries (see p. 139). Banu Haqim vitae does not have any other toxic

properties; in amounts below the quantity needed to create a Blood Bond, it inflicts no damage even if injected directly into the bloodstream, for example.

This variant is useful when the chronicle is focused on mortal society and interaction over that of other vampires. Banu Haqim ghouls will be rare, with only the hardiest mortals able to survive the tainted power they provide.

Brujah: Violence



Unliving vectors of revolt, the Brujah cannot help but change things — often violently and not always for the better. While all vampires harbor a capacity for destruction, a hungry Brujah always does some kind of damage.

On a messy critical result on any Skill test, a Brujah vampire causes damage (physical or mental, depending on the situation) to the subject of their interaction equal to their Bane Severity, in addition to any other result of the Hunger dice. The damage is Aggravated unless the player spends a point of Willpower, making the damage Superficial instead.

This variant makes sense in a chronicle where Frenzy — including the regular Brujah Bane — rarely comes into play either because of the narrative or the troupe going for a more rules-light approach.

Gangrel: Survival Instincts



Nothing matters more to the Animals than survival. Among the most tenacious of all vampire clans, the Gangrel can endure almost anything and thrive in the harshest conditions. Where the Beast can often put a vampire in unfavorable situations, a Gangrel's instincts are calibrated foremost to make sure they see another night.

Subtract dice equal to the Bane Severity of the Gangrel from any roll to resist fear Frenzy. This cannot take the pool below one die.

This variant is good for danger-filled chronicles where fire and sunlight are constant threats but where mental and social conflicts are less common, or if the troupe just doesn't want to bother with tracking temporary dice penalties.

Hecata: Decay



The Hecata connection to death and entropy cause them to practically radiate decay, slowly eating away at things both living and inert in their vicinity. Their havens turn decrepit in a matter of nights, plants wither around them, and even mortals grow haggard and sickly from prolonged exposure. Some Hecata come to terms with this, making do with dilapidated havens and few, if any, mortal servants. Those who don't must spend considerable time and effort to keep their assets from decaying around them.

Hecata vampires suffer additional dots in Flaws equal to their Bane Severity divided as they see fit among Retainer, Haven and Resources Flaws. These can either be taken at character creation or "bought off" by paying twice the amount of Background dots. In addition, purchasing dots in these Advantages costs an additional amount of experience points equal to Bane Severity.

If the chronicle does not emphasize feeding scenes or the characters are able to procure vessels in more controlled ways, this variant can provide an interesting angle on the Hecata.

Lasombra: Callousness



Whether from their tendency to select particularly ruthless mortals for the Embrace or that *something gnawing* at their psyche, Lasombra vampires tend toward the inhuman, regardless of sect or unlifestyle. Something just seems off about them and Lasombra who care about their sanity must be extra careful, lest their Beast take another bite out of their Humanity.

When making a Remorse roll, deduct a number of dice equal to the Bane Severity of the Lasombra vampire. This cannot reduce the dice pool below one die.

Chronicles that focus on Humanity and the loss of it can benefit from this variant, as can chronicles in historical settings that are light on technology.

Malkavian: Unnatural Manifestations



Even the most mundane-seeming Oracle raises the hackles of those around them when they tap into the powers of their eerie Blood. Although they rarely recognize the source of these sensations, mortals respond with notable unease when a Malkavian uses their powers, and other vampires can readily recognize the presence of a fellow undead.

Whenever a Malkavian uses a Discipline power, mortals in close proximity (roughly in the same room or equivalent) are spooked and any social interaction with them apart from intimidation suffers a dice penalty equal to the Malkavian's Bane Severity. This sensation isn't Masquerade-breaking, but the mortal is struck by a sudden fear or dislike of the vampire, lasting one scene. Other vampires experience a similar sensation, instantly recognizing the Malkavian as a vampire, though no penalties apply to interactions with them.

If the troupe wants to emphasize the discomfiting nature of Malkavians and highlight their weirdness, this variant can fit the bill.

Ministry: Cold-Blooded



Often compared to that of serpents, the Blood of the Ministers runs cold in more ways than one. Without fresh, warm blood in their veins they find it impossible to mimic the breath and heartbeat of a mortal, and even then the act requires considerable effort.

A vampire of the Ministry can only use Blush of Life if they have recently fed from a living vessel (in the same scene or up to roughly an hour ago, at the Storyteller's discretion), and when they do it requires a number of Rouse Checks equal to their Bane Severity rather than just one.

Social and subtle chronicles where smooth interaction with mortals is at a premium can add tension to this variant.

Nosferatu: Infestation



No matter where they go or try to hide, swarms of vermin follow the Nosferatu. Some are plagued by swarms of rats, others act as a beacon to roaches, while still others cannot get rid of the damn pigeons or their leavings. In many cases all of the above and more. No matter where they make their haven, they soon drive all other inhabitants away. Even a quick stop can provide unwelcome guests that stay long after the Sewer Rat leaves.

A Nosferatu Haven is always infested with vermin, causing a penalty equal to two plus their Bane Severity to any attempt at an activity (by anyone) that requires concentration, as well as social tests at the Storyteller's discretion. In addition, any time a Nosferatu vampire spends a scene at an enclosed location, the vermin infestation yields a similar effect, though the penalty is equal only to the vampire's Bane Severity. Any attempt to (temporarily) control the vermin with Animalism is done at a penalty equal to Bane Severity.

Note that with this Bane, Nosferatu are not necessarily deformed, though they can still be weird-looking, if desired.

Try this variant Bane if you want your chronicle's Nosferatu to be repulsive in ways other than how they look, and to provide them with a more visible presence. Be aware that Nosferatu in this chronicle are unlikely to be invited to Elysium, unless they bring their own pest control crew.

Ravnos: Unbirth Name



Ravnos vampires rely on a single inviolable truth to anchor them as they ply their trade on the edge of the real: their name. Whatever name they went by at the time of their Embrace, the Tricksters take great care in hiding it, for anyone who knows this "unbirth name" gains power over them.

Anyone who speaks a Ravnos' unbirth name to their face receives a bonus equal to the Ravnos Bane Severity to resist their Discipline powers, and the Ravnos suffers an equal penalty to resist supernatural powers used by the name-wielding opponent.

If the regular Bane would be too oppressive or insignificant (in very stationary or nomadic chronicles respectively) this variant can help define the Ravnos clan instead.

Salubri: Asceticism



Something in the Salubri resists the vampiric condition, and the more they indulge their Hunger, the less inclined their Blood is to obey them. Only in abstinence are they free to employ the full extent of their powers, as a Salubri vampire needs the pangs of starvation to avoid stymieing their supernatural abilities.

When their Hunger is below three, Salubri vampires suffer a penalty equal to their Bane Severity to any Discipline dice pools. This is in addition to the third eye, described on p. 47.

This variant provides characterization of the Salubri in chronicles where their hunted status isn't practical or interesting to focus on, such as when the player coterie provides the majority of the vampires in the domain.

Toreador: Agonizing Empathy



The curse of the Toreador is that they feel too much — sometimes literally — of the sensations around them.

Especially in intimate moments such as feeding, a Diva physically suffers the agony they inflict on a mortal, damage to their dead bodies mimicking the harm inflicted on the vessel.

When a Toreador vampire feeding causes damage to a mortal, the vampire suffers similar (usually Aggravated) damage in return, though a single feeding cannot cause more damage than their Bane Severity. The damage takes the form of involuntary internal bleeding, the vampire exhibiting vivid bruising in whatever spot matches the bite location on the victim.

With the regular Toreador Bane being subject to a lot of Storyteller adjudication, this variant can fit troupes that desire stricter systems.

Tremere: Stolen Blood



Descending from vampires who appropriated the curse of Caine, Tremere vampires are unable to utilize their Blood as effectively as Kindred of other clans. While they are able to call on it for Disciplines and animation, the inherent ability to perform superhuman feats is far harder for Tremere.

When a Tremere vampire performs a Blood Surge (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 218) they need to make Rouse Checks equal to their Bane Severity. If these Rouse Checks raise the vampire's Hunger to 5 or higher, they can choose whether to back off their Blood Surge or to perform it and then immediately hit Hunger 5 afterward.

This variant is useful when the chronicle focuses on vampire society and interaction over that of mortals, or if Blood Bonding is rare, such as in some Anarch domains.

Tzimisce: Cursed Courtesy



Just as many Tzimisce are deadly serious about their own haven and property, so are they compelled to treat that of others. A Tzimisce vampire entering someone else's home uninvited suffers severe distress and an almost physical desire to leave.

A Tzimisce vampire wishing to enter a place of residence (homes and havens alike) uninvited must spend Willpower equal to their Bane Severity and also suffers a similar dice penalty to their Discipline pools during their stay. The invitation must be made by someone who lives (or unlivs) there, and thus only actual inhabited homes or havens fulfill this condition. The Tzimisce can freely enter public or abandoned buildings; and flats or apartments count as separate homes for this purpose. Edge cases are left to the Storyteller's discretion.

Tzimisce using this Bane cannot take the corresponding Folkloric Block as a Flaw.

If the chronicle is set in an established domain with few, if any, changes of haven, this variant Bane shines another spotlight on Tzimisce characteristics.

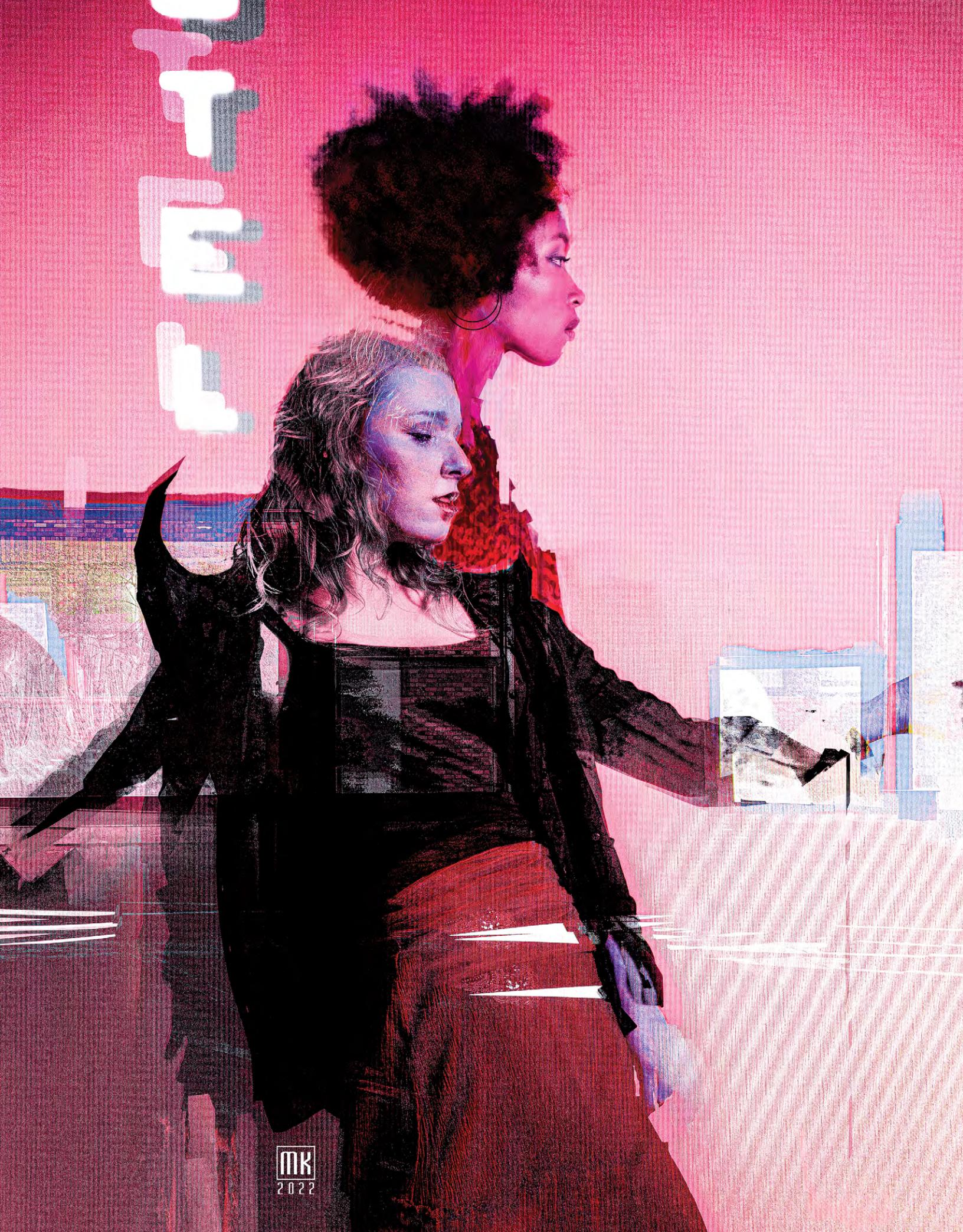
Ventrule: Hierarchy



While many Ventrule seek to lead, they are also swift to obey their superiors. In many cases chosen for a pragmatic mindset, Ventrule childer learn to heed their sire, and their Blood-borne instincts often make them yield in a similar way to any vampire of older Blood.

A Ventrule vampire suffers a penalty to their Discipline dice pools equal to their Bane Severity when attempting to use their powers on a vampire of lower generation. They must also spend Willpower equal to their Bane Severity if they wish to directly attack a vampire of lower generation.

If the chronicle does not focus on feeding scenes or the characters can procure vessels in more controlled ways, this variant helps define the Ventrule as everything from honoring anachronistic feudal social codes to being unabashed bootlickers. ■



MK
2022

Chapter Three:

CHARACTERS

Although I possessed the capacity of bestowing animation, yet to prepare a frame for the reception of it, with all its intricacies of fibres, muscles, and veins, still remained a work of inconceivable difficulty and labour.

— MARY SHELLEY, FRANKENSTEIN

Characters hold up the world. They give it a reason to exist. The world of the story rotates around them, even if they seem to be confused fledglings out of their depth or ancillae out of their element. They center the story because they have the players behind them. These paper characters drink vitality and originality and flavor and personality from the players, and become something different, something better. If they weren't vampires, we'd say they come to life.

But even vampires need skeletons to hold them up. These rules take the bones of the mechanics, rotate them a few directions, show off some possibilities, and then ... well, what happens next is up to you. You're the players, after all. Your characters are getting Hungry.

VAMPIRE THE MASQUERADE

For a complete list of Advantages and Flaws, see the Appendix, p. 232.

Vampire Traits and Types Summary Sheet

Predator Types

ALLEYCAT: You take blood by force or threat. (Celerity or Potence)

BAGGER: You acquire preserved or dead blood, rather than hunt. (Blood Sorcery or Obfuscate)

BLOOD LEECH: You feed from other vampires. (Celerity or Protean)

CLEAVER: You take blood covertly from your mortal family. (Dominate or Animalism)

CONSENSUALIST: You take blood with consent. (Auspex or Fortitude)

EXTORTIONIST: You force mortals to pay you in blood for your services or protection. (Dominate or Potence)

FARMER: You feed from animals. (Animalism or Protean)

GRAVEROBBER: You hang around hospitals and morgues looking for victims. (Fortitude or Oblivion)

GRIM REAPER: You feed on those about to die. (Auspex or Oblivion)

MONTERO: Your retainers drive the prey to you. (Dominate or Obfuscate)

OSIRIS: You feed from your cult or followers. (Blood Sorcery or Presence)

PURSUER: You study and stalk your victim before striking. (Animalism or Auspex)

SANDMAN: You feed from sleeping victims. (Auspex or Obfuscate)

SCENE QUEEN: You feed from your subculture or exclusive group. (Dominate or Potence)

SIREN: You feed by seducing your victims. (Fortitude or Presence)

TRAPDOOR: You lurk in your nest and lure prey into it. (Protean or Obfuscate)

Attributes

Mental Attributes

INTELLIGENCE: Memory, reasoning, intellect

WITS: Quick reaction, intuition, spur-of-the-moment decision-making

Resolve: Focus, concentration, attention

Physical Attributes

STRENGTH: Muscular power, close-combat damage

DEXTERITY: Agility, grace, reflexes

STAMINA: Toughness, resilience, endurance

Social Attributes

CHARISMA: Charm, magnetism, strength of personality

MANIPULATION: Verbal finesse, social guile, smoothness

COMPOSURE: Self-control, cool, calm head

Skills

Physical Skills

ATHLETICS: Running, jumping, climbing

BRAWL: Unarmed combat of all types

CRAFT: Crafting, building, shaping

DRIVE: Operating vehicles

FIREARMS: Using ranged weapons, such as guns and bows

LARCENY: Breaking and entering, guarding against the same

MELEE: Armed hand-to-hand combat

STEALTH: Not being seen, heard, or recognized

SURVIVAL: Remaining alive in adverse surroundings

Social Skills

ANIMAL KEN: Animal handling and communication

ETIQUETTE: Politeness in social settings

INSIGHT: Determining states of mind and motives

INTIMIDATION: Getting another person to back down

LEADERSHIP: Directing and inspiring others

PERFORMANCE: Expressing art in person to an audience

PERSUASION: Convincing others verbally or emotionally

STREETWISE: Understanding the ins and outs of criminal and urban spaces

SUBTERFUGE: Tricking others into doing your will

Mental Skills

ACADEMICS: Humanities and liberal arts, book-learning

AWARENESS: Senses, being aware of your surroundings, spotting threats

FINANCE: Handling, moving, and making money

INVESTIGATION: Following clues, solving mysteries

MEDICINE: Healing injuries, diagnosing disease

OCULT: Secret lore, both real and unreal

POLITICS: Diplomatic and bureaucratic acumen

SCIENCE: Knowledge and theory of the physical world

TECHNOLOGY: Understanding and using modern technology, computers, and online activity

Disciplines

ANIMALISM: Supernatural affinity with and control of animals (Gangrel, Nosferatu, Ravnos)

AUSPEX: Extrasensory perception, awareness, and premonitions (Hecata, Malkavian, Toreador, Tremere, Salubri)

BLOOD SORCERY: Use of the Blood to perform magic (Banu Haqim, Tremere)

Celerity: Supernatural quickness and reflexes (Banu Haqim, Brujah, Toreador)

Dominate: Mind control (Malkavian, Salubri, Tremere, Tzimisce, Ventre)

Fortitude: Monstrous toughness (Gangrel, Hecata, Salubri, Ventre)

Obfuscate: Remain obscure and unseen (Malkavian, Nosferatu, Ravnos)

Oblivion: Necromancy and shadow shaping (Hecata, Lasombra)

Potence: Supernatural physical strength (Brujah, Lasombra, Nosferatu)

Presence: Attract, sway, and control emotions (Brujah, Ministry, Ravnos, Toreador, Venture)

Protean: Mastery over form (Gangrel, Ministry, Tzimisce)

Thin-Blood Alchemy: Mixing blood, emotion, and other ingredients to create powerful effects (Thin-Blooded)

Backgrounds

Allies: Mortal associates, usually family or friends

Contacts: The information sources you possess

Fame: How well known you are among mortals

Haven: A place to sleep safely by day

Herd: The vessels to which you have free and safe access

Influence: Your political power within mortal society

Loresheet: Your connection with the secret history of the World of Darkness

Mask: A false identity, complete with documentation

MaWla: Kindred who advises and supports you: a mentor, patron, or confederate

Resources: Wealth, belongings, and income

Retainers: Followers, guards, and servants

Status: Your standing in vampire society

1 CORE CONCEPT

What is your character's name?

Their Concept may come from who they were in life, or from what they do now after their Embrace. The Archetypes in each clan write-up exemplify typical Concepts. A Concept might be a job, a social role, or an attitude (*V:tM*, pp. 141, 148).

2 CLAN

This is your vampire's supernatural lineage, from which they inherit powers and weaknesses. See the *Clan Summary Sheet* on p. 12 for a list of the clans and their Disciplines and Banes. The vampire who Embraced you – your Sire – was a member of your clan.

In addition to those clans, your character might be a Castoff vampire, with a Sire of any clan:

Caitiff: The Clanless (Pick any two Disciplines for starter powers)

Bane: Outcast; they improve Disciplines slower than other vampires.

Thin-Blooded: The Duskborn (Thin-Blood Alchemy available,

Discipline matching the Resonance of the last blood they drank) **Bane:**

None, but see *V:tM* (pp. 111–113) for details on their weaknesses and strengths compared to other vampires.

Based on your clan, record your Bane.

Name your Sire or leave it blank for now. If you've named your Sire, add them to the Relationship Map.

VAMPIRE SECTS

Your clan may involve you in a global sect of vampires. While any individual vampire can belong to any sect, the majority of the clans break down as follows:

THE CAMARILLA: Banu Haqim, Lasombra, Malkavian, Nosferatu, Toreador, Tremere, Ventre, dissident Brujah and Gangrel

THE ANARCH MOVEMENT: Brujah, Gangrel, The Ministry, some Caitiff, dissidents from Camarilla clans

OTHERS: Hecata, rogue Lasombra, Ravnos, Salubri, Thin-Blooded, Tzimisce, some Caitiff

A coterie usually belongs to a single sect, at least “officially,” so make sure that the entire troupe agrees on the choice of sect.

3 PREDATOR TYPE

How does your vampire feed? This is your Predator type and defines how they survive. See the list of Predator types on p. 62.

Pick your Predator type (*V:tM*, pp. 175–178, and p. 106), and apply it.

Add one of the listed Specialties.

Add one dot to a listed Discipline.

Apply any associated Advantages or Flaws.

Thin-Bloods and other newly fledged vampires have not yet figured out a Predator Type. Thin-Bloods never get dots in Disciplines from Predator Type.

4 ATTRIBUTES

These are your vampire's core capabilities such as Strength, Charisma, and Intelligence (*V:tM*, pp. 155–157). See the list of Attributes on p. 62. Each type of Attribute (Mental, Physical, Social) has a “power” Trait, a “finesse” Trait, and a “resistance” Trait; something to keep in mind when deciding how you want your character to approach situations.

Take your best Attribute at 4

Take your worst Attribute at 1

Take three Attributes at 3

Take the rest of your Attributes at 2

Secondary Attributes

Health: Stamina + 3

Willpower: Composure + Resolve

5 SKILLS

These are your vampire's learned and natural aptitudes such as how well they punch and how astute they are with modern devices (*V:tM*, p. 62). See the list of Skills on p. 62.

Pick a Skill distribution:

- **Jack of All Trades:** One Skill at 3; eight Skills at 2; ten Skills at 1
- **Balanced:** Three Skills at 3; five Skills at 2; seven Skills at 1
- **Specialist:** One Skill at 4; three Skills at 3; three Skills at 2; three Skills at 1

Four Skills come with free specialties: Academics, Craft, Performance, and Science. If you have dots in any of those Skills, choose a specialty (*V:tM*, p. 159).

Take one more free specialty in any Skill in which you have dots.

VAMPIRE THE MASQUERADE		
1	Concept	Predator
Chronicle	Ambition	Clan
Sire	Desire	Generation
ATTRIBUTES		
Physical	Social	Mental
Strength ○○○○	Charisma ○○○○	Intelligence ○○○○
Dexterity ○○○○	Manipulation ○○○○	Wits ○○○○
Stamina ○○○○	Composure ○○○○	Resolve ○○○○
Health Willpower		
○○○○○	○○○○○	○○○○○○○○○○
SKILLS		
Athletics	Animal Ken	Academics
Brawl	Erisquette	Awareness
Craft	Insight	Finance
Drive	Intimidation	Investigation
Firearms	Leadership	Medicine
Melee	Performance	Oculi
Larceny	Persuasion	Politics
Stealth	Streetwise	Science
Survival	Subterfuge	Technology
DISCIPLINES		
○○○○	○○○○	○○○○
○○○○	○○○○	○○○○
○○○○	○○○○	○○○○
○○○○	○○○○	○○○○
Resonance Hunger Humanity		

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PICKING SKILLS

If you're not sure which skill distribution is best for your character, then it's often good to go with Specialist. Not only is it the easiest to use, but it ensures you'll have a solid die pool in at least four Skills. Skills aren't used to activate Disciplines but some Skills become much more effective when combined with certain powers. A good rule of thumb is to pick Skills that match your Predator type, and that complement your Discipline: Animal Ken and Animalism, Brawl and Potence, Stealth and Obfuscate, or Awareness and Auspex.

6 DISCIPLINES

These are your vampire's supernatural powers. See the list of Disciplines on p. 62.

Choose two of your clan Disciplines. Put two dots in one and one dot in the other.

For Caitiff, choose any two Disciplines. Put two dots in one and one dot in the other.

Pick one power from each Discipline level you have, for a total of one power per dot (**V:tM**, pp. 244–287, and pp. 69–106). You can exchange a power of higher level for one lower, but not vice versa. (A character with two dots in a Discipline can take one level 1 power and one level 2, or they can take two level 1 powers. They cannot take two level 2 powers, however.)

Thin-bloods have no intrinsic Disciplines, but can put a dot in Thin-Blood Alchemy if they take the Thin-blood Alchemist Merit (**V:tM**, p. 184).

Chronicle Tenets	Touchstones & Convictions	Clan Bane													
8															
Advantages & Flaws ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○ Notes															
Blood Potency ○○○○○ ○○○○○ <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Blood Surge</td> <td>Mend Amount</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Power Bonus</td> <td>Rouge Re-Roll</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Feeding Penalty</td> <td>Bane Severity</td> </tr> </table> Total Experience Spent Experience <table border="1"> <tr> <td>True age</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Apparent age</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Date of birth</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Date of death</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Appearance</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Distinguishing features</td> </tr> <tr> <td>History</td> </tr> </table>			Blood Surge	Mend Amount	Power Bonus	Rouge Re-Roll	Feeding Penalty	Bane Severity	True age	Apparent age	Date of birth	Date of death	Appearance	Distinguishing features	History
Blood Surge	Mend Amount														
Power Bonus	Rouge Re-Roll														
Feeding Penalty	Bane Severity														
True age															
Apparent age															
Date of birth															
Date of death															
Appearance															
Distinguishing features															
History															

7 ADVANTAGES

Backgrounds that tie you to the mortal world, Merits, and Flaws (**V:tM**, pp. 179–194, plus the new Merits and Flaws on p. 118, the Caitiff Merits and Flaws on p. 126, and the Clan Coterie Merits on p. 171). See the master list of Advantages on p. 232.

Spend 7 points on Advantages, and take 2 points of Flaws. Advantages and Flaws gained from your Predator type do not count against this limit.

You may want to save some of your Advantage points for your Coterie Pool (p. 171).

Thin-bloods must take between one and three Thin-Blood Merits and the same number of Thin-Blood Flaws (**V:tM**, pp. 182–184, and p. 134).

Add any Allies, Contacts, Mawali, Retainers, or other supporting cast to the Relationship Map.

8 BELIEFS

Convictions are the guiding principles that help your vampire cope with their bad decisions. Touchstones are the mortals who ground you in your Convictions.

Select one to three Convictions. (**V:tM**, pp. 146, 172; p. 205) You can select zero Convictions (p. 212), but your character may burn out their Humanity much faster.

Create an equal number of Touchstones (**V:tM**, pp. 146–147, 173; p. 207), each connected to one Conviction. Add your Touchstones to the Relationship Map.

9 HUMANITY AND GOALS

Your **Humanity** is 7. Check to see whether your Predator type modifies that number.

What is your long-term Ambition? (**V:tM**, pp. 148, 173–174)

If you like, pick a short-term Desire for this session. (**V:tM**, pp. 174–175)

10 GENERATION

The default age for characters is Childer, but if the Storyteller and other players agree, you can choose to play an older group of vampires (**V:tM**, p. 151). Note your Generation and Blood Potency based on your age.

Childer

Embraced within the last 15 years. **Generation:** 12th or 13th (Blood Potency 1) or **Thin-Bloods:** 14th, 15th, or 16th Generation (Blood Potency 0).

Neonates

Embraced between 1940 and a decade ago. **Generation:** 12th or 13th. (Blood Potency 1)

Each player spends 15 experience points.

Ancillae

Embraced between 1780 and 1940. **Generation:** 10th or 11th. (Blood Potency 2)

Each player adds 2 dots of Advantages and 2 dots of Flaws, subtracts 1 Humanity, and spends 35 experience points.

TRAIT COSTS: EXPERIENCE

TRAIT

Increase Attribute

New level x 5

Increase Skill

New level x 3

New Specialty

3

Clan Discipline

New level x 5

Other Discipline

New level x 7

Caitiff Discipline

New level x 6

Blood Sorcery Ritual

Ritual level x 3

Thin-Blood Alchemy Formula

Formula level x 3

Advantage

3 per dot

Blood Potency

New level x 10

Instant Vampires

Every vampire is as individual as the mortal who died creating them. There are no generic vampires. That said, maybe you really want to get started with the game and you don't mind letting the individual details emerge in play.

This section allows you to quickly create an archetypal vampire character in just three steps: style, motivation, and Embrace. While this system creates a full character ready for immediate play, it leaves open the Relationship Map, coterie details, and chronicle Tenets for the players to determine together.

If you get the same Discipline Power from your Predator Type and your Embrace, replace one with another power.

Play Style

How do you approach problems? Pick one:

The Brute

Let's get to breaking shit. All this talking is making me fangry.

Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3
 Charisma 2, Manipulation 1, Composure 2
 Intelligence 2, Wits 2, Resolve 3
 Health 6, Willpower 5, Humanity 6
Skills: Animal Ken 2, Athletics 3, Awareness 1, Brawl 4 (Grappling), Firearms 2, Intimidation 2, Leadership 1, Melee 3, Intimidation 2, Streetwise 3, Survival 1

Predator Type: Alleycat. Gain Potence 1: Lethal Body and Contacts (Criminals) 3 Background

The Mastermind

First we need a plan, so nothing blows back on us if things get messy.

Strength 1, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2
 Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 3
 Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 3
 Health 5, Willpower 6, Humanity 7
Skills: Academics 1, Awareness 3, Investigation

4, Larceny 2 (Lockpicking), Occult 3, Politics 1, Firearms 2, Stealth 2, Streetwise 1, Technology 3

Predator Type: Bagger. Gain Obfuscate 1: Cloak of Shadows, the feeding Merit: Iron Gullet 3 and the Enemy Flaw 2

The Face

Let's keep it cool and let me handle the talking. Nobody ever says no to me.

Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2
 Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Composure 3
 Intelligence 1, Wits 2, Resolve 2
 Health 5, Willpower 5, Humanity 7

Skills: Awareness 1, Drive 2, Etiquette 1, Firearms 3, Insight 2, Larceny 1, Leadership 3, Persuasion 4 (Seduction), Politics 2, Subterfuge 3

Predator Type: Siren. Gain Presence 1: Awe, the Looks Merit: Beautiful 2 and the Enemy Flaw 1

Motivation

What drives you to keep going? Remember that Ambitions need to have specific targets, not just generic goals. Touchstone names are placeholders. Pick one motivation, and customize it:

Revenge

Now I can make them pay.

Ambition: Destroy those who hurt me (pick someone very powerful)

Advantages (Flaws): Haven 2, Herd 2, Retainers 3 (Flaw: Adversary 2)

Convictions (Touchstones): Nobody crosses you (Prof. Seams), Always punish the guilty (Elizabeth Fund), Never put money before family (Khalid)

Coterie's Domain: +1 Chasse

Power

Everything I've ever wanted is within reach... I just have to grasp it.

Ambition: Take control of my domain (pick something large and well-defended)

Advantages (Flaws): Influence 2, Mawla 2, Resources 3 (Dark Secret: Coup Plotter 2)
Convictions (Touchstones): Nobody tells me what to do (Mr. Alkassim), Better to be dead than a liar (Judy Kramer), Always stand up for the weak (Dr. Kashani)
Coterie's Domain: +1 Portillon

Redemption

I've been given a second chance and I'm not going to waste it.

Ambition: Make up for your past mistakes (pick something extremely broken to fix)
Advantages (Flaws): Allies 2, Mask 2, Haven 3 (Haven Flaw: Compromised 2)
Convictions (Touchstones): Never harm the innocent (Mrs. Turner), Always take what's yours but no more (Bes), Nobody gets left behind (Fran Serrani)
Coterie's Domain: +1 Lien

Embrace

Why did your Sire pick you for the embrace? These templates have a tarot arcana theme, as shorthand. Pick one:

Justice

They judged me worthy of their gift. Now I must justify their verdict.

Clan: Banu Haqim, 12th Generation, Blood Potency 1

Disciplines and Powers:
 Celery 1: Cat's Grace,
 Celery 2: Fleetness;
 Obfuscate 1: Silence of Death

The Chariot

We were going to change the world together. I'll do it alone if I have to.

Clan: Brujah, 13th Generation, Blood Potency 1
Disciplines and Powers: Potence 1: Lethal Body, Potence 2: Prowess; Celery 1: Rapid Reflexes

Death

They chose me from among their living blood kin. What do the dead know of our Blood?

Clan: Hecata, 13th Generation, Blood Potency 1
Disciplines and Powers: Oblivion 1: The Binding Fetter (p. 84), Oblivion 2: Where the Veil Thins (p. 87); Level 1 Ceremony: Summon Spirit (p. 92); Auspex 1: Sense the Unseen



The Empress

I'm ready to take on the world. They gave me freedom and I'm never going back.

Clan: Gangrel, 13th Generation, Blood Potency 1

Disciplines and Powers: Protean 1: Eyes of the Beast, Protean 2: Feral Weapons; Fortitude 1: Resilience

The High Priestess

I was to be their strong left hand, hidden but deadly. I must stay strong and prepare to strike.

Clan: Lasombra, 13th Generation, Blood Potency 1

Disciplines and Powers: Potence 1: Soaring Leap, Potence 2: Relentless Grasp (p. 79); Oblivion 1: Shadow Cloak (p. 85)

The Moon

I see why they needed me now. It all makes sense but it's all too horrible to explain.

Clan: Malkavian, 12th Generation, Blood Potency 1

Disciplines and Powers: Auspex 1: Sense the Unseen, Auspex 2: Premonition; Dominate 1: Cloud Memory

Hanged Man

He called them to Embrace me, that I might perceive his truths.

Clan: Ministry, 12th Generation, Blood Potency 1

Disciplines and Powers: Presence 1: Eyes of the Serpent (p. 80), Presence 1: Awe; Protean 1: Eyes of the Beast

The Hermit

They wanted me to learn a lesson about myself, but I'm not sure I'm ready for it.

Clan: Nosferatu, 13th Generation, Blood Potency 1

Disciplines and Powers: Obfuscate 1: Silence of Death, Obfuscate 2: Unseen Passage; Animalism 1: Bond Famulus

The Fool

They met me on the path, and killed me. Reborn, I can follow the path anywhere.

Clan: Ravnos, 13th Generation, Blood Potency 1

Disciplines and Powers: Obfuscate 1: Cloak of Shadows, Obfuscate 2: Chimerstry (p. 76); Presence 1: Awe

Temperance

They chose me to heal a wound within themselves, and to mend the scars our kind leave behind.

Clan: Salubri, 12th Generation, Blood Potency 1

Disciplines and Powers: Fortitude 1: Unswayable Mind, Fortitude 2: Invigorating Vitae (p. 75); Auspex 1: Sense the Unseen

The Lovers

They said we'd be together forever. How will I face this alone?

Clan: Toreador, 12th Generation, Blood Potency 1

Disciplines and Powers: Presence 1: Daunt, Presence 2: Lingering Kiss; Celerity 1: Cat's Grace

The Tower

They chose me to be a part of something greater. Now I must rebuild it.

Clan: Tremere, 12th Generation, Blood Potency 1

Disciplines and Powers: Blood Sorcery 1: A Taste For Blood, Blood Sorcery 2: Scour Secrets (p. 98); Level 1 Ritual: Bloodwalk; Dominate 1: Compel

The Devil

They said I was free... I just need to discover who I want to be.

Clan: Tzimisce, 12th Generation, Blood Potency 1

Disciplines and Powers: Protean 1: Weight of the Feather, Protean 2: Feral Weapons; Dominate 1: Compel

The World

Everything is ours. I'll show them I can rule, as well.

Clan: Ventrite, 12th Generation, Blood Potency 1

Disciplines and Powers: Dominate 1: Compel, Dominate 2: Mesmerize; Fortitude 1: Unswayable Mind

Discipline Powers

◆ Animalism

Level 2

ANIMAL MESSENGER

Amalgam: Auspex 1

The vampire's Famulus can carry a short message to a person designated by its master, assuming they can reach them. Those within earshot hear the message as if the Famulus was speaking with their master's voice.

Cost: One Rouse Check for each night.

Dice Pools: None, though the Famulus must test Resolve + Streetwise / Survival (or equivalent) if the target's location is unknown.

System: The vampire whispers a single sentence to the Famulus and states the target. If the location of the recipient is unknown the Famulus must track them down, making a tracking test (see above) at a Difficulty of 2, or resisted by the target's Intelligence + Streetwise / Survival if they are actively trying to hide (from the famulus or from other perceived threats). The attempt can be made once per night. The message is delivered as soon as the Famulus makes eye contact with the target, at which point they return to their master.

Duration: One or more nights depending in length of search

Level 3

MESSENGER'S COMMAND

Prerequisite: Animal Messenger, Compel or Mesmerize

Amalgam: Dominate 1

The vampire is able to use Compel or Mesmerize with a command carried by the Famulus, enforcing their will upon the target of the message.

Cost: None

Dice Pools: See Compel or Mesmerize, but the

Dominate rating cannot exceed the user's Animalism.

System: See Animal Messenger, above. Make the Compel or Mesmerize test as soon as the Famulus makes eye contact with the target.

Duration: See Animal Messenger

Level 3

PLAQUE OF BEASTS

The vampire can mark an individual, making them the target of focused animal attention. Whatever beasts or vermin are in the area seek the target out to bark, peck, scratch, and generally make their night miserable. While the animals retain enough instincts to not entirely threaten their self-preservation, they make it very hard for the victim to do anything but fend them off.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pools: Manipulation + Animalism vs Composure + Animal Ken

System: The vampire picks a target within their line of sight and tests Manipulation + Animalism against the target's Composure + Animal Ken. On a win the target becomes the focus of attention for all animals in their vicinity for the rest of the night, suffering a dice penalty to all Skill pools equal to the margin on the win unless they can physically isolate themselves from the local wildlife. The target also becomes easier to track, with any pursuer receiving a bonus equal to the same margin. The Skill penalty does not apply to physical conflicts, as the animals aren't suicidal enough to stick around when fists and bullets start flying, though they return once the dust settles.

Duration: One night



Level 4

SWAY THE FLOCK

The vampire can influence the general mood of animals over a wide area. While they cannot control the specific actions of the beasts, they can steer their behavior toward anything from sleepy indifference to indiscriminate aggression. Use of this power can be



subtle, with nothing to show but a lack of birdsong, or it can be pure bedlam, with people barricading themselves indoors, carcasses littering the ground as beasts rip anything that moves apart in a frenzy.

Cost: One or more Rouse Checks

Dice Pools: Composure + Animalism

System: The vampire decides on the behavior they want to encourage in the local animals and makes a Composure + Animalism test. The effect scales with the number of successes: At one success animals aren't noticeably affected, while at five their behavior will be completely dominated by the desired impulse, with calmed animals falling asleep or riled ones attacking anyone or each other with no provocation. Any mundane attempt to control the animals increases in Difficulty equal to the number of successes on the test. The size of the area affected is roughly the size of a football field, though it can be extended with additional Rouse Checks, up to five for a small town.

Duration: One night

Level 5

COAX THE BESTIAL TEMPER

The vampire exerts a subtle influence on the Beast of all vampires present and is able to rile or subdue the vampiric instincts on all Kindred in close proximity. By singing, humming, or growling softly the user plucks at the strings of all Beasts, and tempers rise or fall depending on their whim.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pools: Manipulation + Animalism

System: The vampire decides whether they want to agitate or calm, hums a wordless melody or similar subtle sound, and makes a Manipulation + Animalism test at Difficulty 3. Each success in the margin raises or lowers the Difficulty to resist frenzy by one for all other vampires within earshot. If the difficulty is lowered, all vampires already in frenzy can make a new test to resist it, snapping out of their Frenzy if they succeed.

Duration: As long as the user keeps humming

Auspex

Level 2

PANACEA

Amalgam: Fortitude 1

The vampire soothes the mental or emotional turmoil of their subject, restoring to them a modicum of steadfastness. It is especially effective when used on mortals, either to help them through momentary agitation, or to calm them before feeding on them.

Cost: One Rouse Check and additional Willpower depending on circumstances.

Dice Pool: Composure + Auspex

System: The vampire rolls Composure + Auspex against Difficulty 2 and restores a number of superficial Willpower damage levels equal to the margin on the roll. Alternatively, the user restores one Aggravated Willpower damage level for every three successes in the margin.

If successfully used on a mortal, Panacea similarly calms them if they're in a turbulent emotional state, or puts them otherwise at ease.

Use of this power takes a whole turn. If the vampire spends an entire scene instead, reduce the Difficulty to 0. Panacea must be used on someone other than the vampire invoking the power. A subject can be affected by the power only once per night.

If the user soothes more than one subject per night, the user suffers superficial Willpower damage equal to half the number of successes in the margin for every additional subject, as they take on the burden of so many charges.

Duration: N/A

REVEAL TEMPERAMENT

The vampire can smell the Resonance of the target, as well as any Dyscrasia they harbor in their blood. They can also smell if another vampire has recently fed as well as the Resonance (if any) of their latest victim.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pools: Intelligence + Auspex vs Composure + Subterfuge



System: When the power is active the user can test Intelligence + Auspex vs a target's Composure + Subterfuge. A win reveals the Resonance of the mortal observed as well as any other particulars of their blood, such as Dyscrasias. On a critical win the user also gains a two-dice bonus to interaction with the target for the duration of the scene as they are able to adapt their approach to the emotional state of the mortal. Versus a vampire, a win reveals the Resonance of the last mortal they fed upon, and a critical win provides a more nuanced picture of the vessel at time of feeding, revealing the method and Predator Type of the vampire.

Duration: One scene

Level 3

FATAL FLAW

Amalgam: Oblivion 1

Everything breaks, and the vampire using this power can see the signs before they happen. By observing the subtle work of entropy the vampire can glean the Achilles' heel of a target, whether it is a crack in their mental facade or a weakness in their actual armor.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pools: Intelligence + Auspex vs Composure or Stamina + Subterfuge

System: The user spends a turn intently observing the target, looking for a flaw in their defenses, and

tests Intelligence + Auspex against the target's Composure (for mental weaknesses) or Stamina (for physical ones) + Subterfuge. A win shows how they best attack their target, revealing the lowest defense pool in either category, and provides a two-dice bonus to attacks against that pool. If the user informs anyone about said weakness they gain a one-die bonus.

Duration: One scene

Level 5

UNBURDENING THE BESTIAL SOUL

Amalgam: Dominate 3

Prerequisite: Panacea

As seekers of the promises of Golconda, some vampires explore ways to remedy the turbulent souls of their fellow Damned. This power shares some amount of the vampire's moral serenity with a repentant Kindred, allowing some semblance of remorse to be restored while also keeping the Beast at bay. It does require the user to take on part of the mind and spirit of their subject, shackling their will to that of the user. (Most often seen among the Salubri, this power has no doubt contributed to their reputation as monstrous soul-thieves.)

Cost: Two Rouse Checks, gain one Stain

Dice Pool: Composure + Auspex vs. Humanity

System: The vampire spends a scene in seclusion



with the subject and rolls Composure + Auspex vs. the Humanity of the subject. For every success in the margin, they can remove one Stain from the subject, or erect a psychological “shield” that protects the subject from future Stains on a one-for-one basis. For example, a margin of three applied to a subject with no Stains would effectively “cancel out” up to three Stains acquired later in the session.

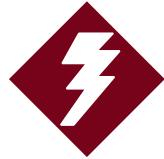
On a critical win the user can choose to forgo the above benefits, instead restoring a single point of Humanity to the subject, but no vampire can gain that benefit more than once, ever.

Unburdening the Bestial Soul works only on vampires, and automatically fails if the subject has a higher Humanity than the user.

No matter the benefits received, for the rest of the session the subject is numbed, having part of their mind merged with the user, and any Dominate powers used on them by this power’s user succeed automatically with no eye contact necessary.

When the power expires, all psychological “shields” not used up are lost, though Stains removed or Humanity gained on initial application do not revert.

Duration: One session



◆ Celerity

Level 2

RUSH JOB

The vampire can perform time-consuming tasks with blinding speed, their fingers and hands blurring as they write, repair, or build things in record time. While the concentration required prohibits them from employing this speed on the offense, it does allow them to achieve non-violent ends faster when under duress or outright attack.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pools: N/A

System: When active, this power lets the vampire complete Skill-related tasks that would otherwise take whole turns in the span of a few seconds, and

can treat a full action as a minor action (**Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 298). The power cannot be used to speed up attacks, defenses, or to perform any other actively resisted task but it does allow the vampire to, for example, jimmy a lock *and* fire a gun (the latter with a two-dice penalty, as per the minor action rules.)

Duration: One scene

Level 3

WEAVING

Prerequisite: Rapid Reflexes

A vampire with this power moves fast enough to perceive projectiles such as throwing knives or bullets as slow, and can sidestep them at leisure.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pools: N/A

System: The user does not suffer diminishing dice pools when defending against multiple ranged attacks using Dexterity + Athletics. They can also add their Celerity rating to *all* such attempts while this power is active.

Duration: One scene

Level 4

BLURRED MOMENTUM

The vampire’s movement becomes a jittering blur, making it extremely difficult to land attacks on them even when they are not aware of the opponent or actively defending.

Cost: One Rouse Check per turn

Dice Pools: N/A

System: Attacks that achieve fewer successes than the user’s Celerity rating always miss, no matter the result of a defense or dodge test (if any). This also works against surprise attacks or other attacks that disallow defense tests, such as Lightning Strike. Activating this power requires one Rouse Check and extending it requires an additional Check for each turn it is kept active.

Duration: Until the user lets it lapse

UNSEEN STRIKE

Prerequisite: Blink

Amalgam: Obfuscate 4

This lethal power not only allows the vampire to vanish from plain sight but to instantly move to an enemy and deliver a fatal strike. A vampire skilled in this art can quickly turn the tables as they disappear in front of pursuers, escaping not only with their lives but with that of their prey as well.

Cost: Two Rouse Checks

Dice Pools: Dexterity + Celerity vs Wits + Awareness

System: This power combines effects of Blink with elements of the Obfuscate power of Vanish.

To onlookers the vampire appears to disappear and the target is caught unawares, becoming subject to surprise attack. Unless the victim can react by beating the user's Dexterity + Celerity with their Wits + Awareness in a contest, they are unable to defend against the attack and it is made against a set Difficulty of 1. (See Surprise Attacks in *Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 300). If the attacker fails this test they still perform a regular attack, as per Blink power (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 253), and Unseen Strike is also subject to the same movement restrictions as Blink.

Duration: One turn

◆ Dominate

Level 1

SLAVISH DEVOTION

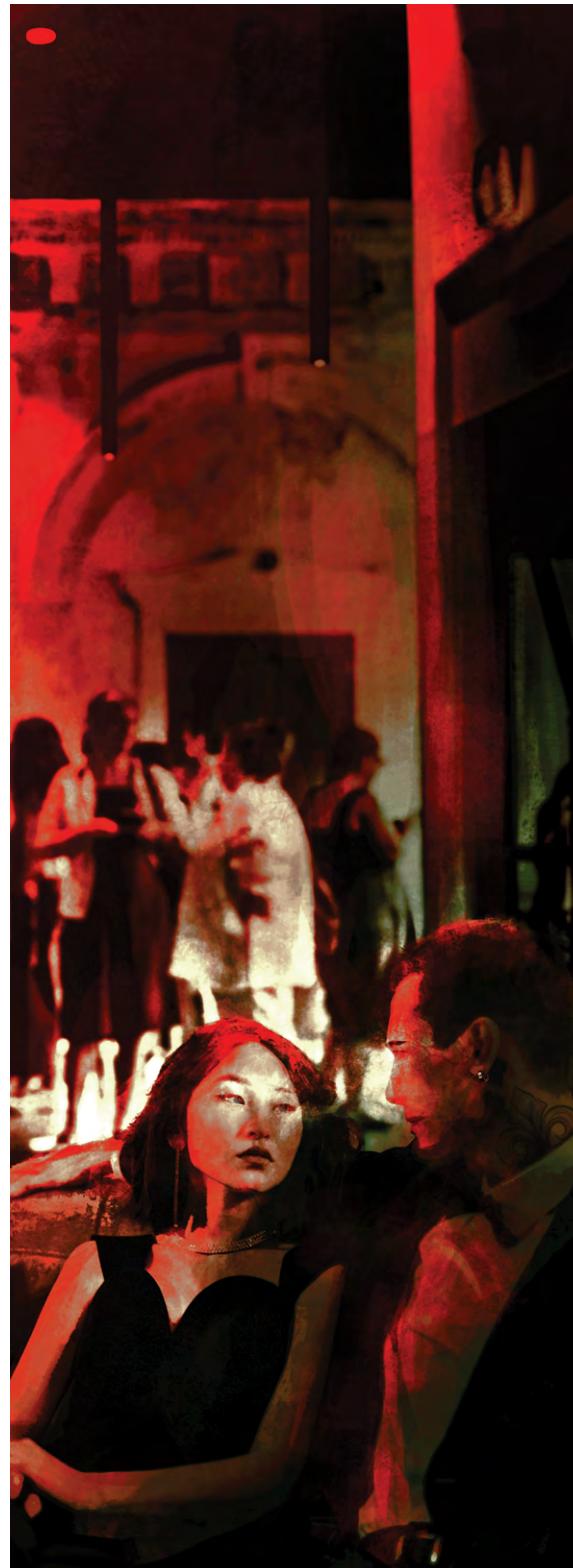
Amalgam: Fortitude 1

Those already under the mental dominion of the vampire have their minds strengthened against interference from other Kindred.

Cost: No additional cost

System: Any attempt by a third party to use Dominate on a character already under the influence of the vampire's Dominate suffers a dice penalty equal to the Fortitude of the vampire.

Duration: Passive





Level 2

DOMITOR'S FAVOR

Kindred are creatures of cruel irony, and the name of this Discipline power is one such example. While conditioned with the Domitor's Favor, a thrall with a Blood Bond to that vampire finds it much more difficult to act against their master. Domineering Tzimisce especially relish this power, using it to ensure the loyalty of their servants.

Cost: One Rouse Check

System: Defiance rolls for willful thralls under the effects of Domitor's Favor are made at a three-dice penalty and thralls may not spend Willpower on them. Additionally, total failure on a defiance roll means that the Blood Bond does not weaken that month. (See *Vampire: The Masquerade*, pp. 233–244.)

Duration: One month

Level 4

ANCESTRAL DOMINION

Prerequisite: Mesmerize

Amalgam: Blood Sorcery 2

Vampires of great age and potency find it possible to exert their will via the Blood, without the traditional need for eye contact and verbal communication with their target. This power enables a Kindred to compel a descendant by Blood to take an action on their behalf, even if it's one the target would normally be opposed to. Vampires instinctively know an ancestor is manipulating them when subject to this power.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pools: Manipulation + Dominate vs. Resolve + Occult

System: On a successful test of Manipulation + Dominate against Resolve + Occult, the victim acts to fulfill the dominating ancestor's request, provided it doesn't entail harming themselves. For every generation separating the user of this power from their target, the resisting vampire gains an additional die to their roll. For example, when a ninth

generation vampire attempts to use this power on an eleventh generation descendant, the descendant gains two extra dice in defense. The power needs neither eye contact nor verbal command — the request is silently transmitted from Blood to Blood — but it is subject to all other Dominate limitations.

Duration: Until the command is carried out or the scene ends, whichever comes first.

IMPLANT SUGGESTION

Amalgam: Presence 1

The vampire possesses the power to change the very personality or opinions of a subject, at least temporarily. While other powers enable them to puppeteer mindless victims, this power lets them alter the intents or passions of a victim instead. They can make someone desire a stranger, abandon their family, distrust their own beliefs, or simply want a beer. Vampires known to utilize this power indiscriminately often find themselves shunned by their peers, whether from disdain or utter fear.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pools: Manipulation + Dominate vs. Composure + Resolve

System: No test is required against an unprepared mortal victim, but a prepared mortal or another vampire requires a test of Manipulation + Dominate against Composure + Resolve. Radical changes to core beliefs — making a vegan crave a steak or making a pacifist violent, for example — also merit an attempt to resist, even by unprepared mortals. The suggestion remains in effect for a scene, at which point the victim snaps out of it.

Duration: One scene

Fortitude

Level 2

EARTH'S PERSEVERANCE

A vampire with this power is almost impossible to move when it is active. The vampire draws upon the strength of the earth, grounding themselves and

drawing upon its permanence to keep them rooted in place.

Cost: One Rouse check

System: When this power is activated, the only way the vampire moves is if they choose to do so independently. This doesn't make them resistant to damage, and a vampire can still be crushed, ripped apart, or torn to shreds, as can the floor they're standing on.

Duration: One scene or until lapsed by user

INVIGORATING VITAE

Amalgam: Auspex 1

The vampire is able to strengthen their Blood's capacity to knit mortal flesh and heal ailments. Living beings that partake of their vitae recover their health at surprising speed.

Cost: None beyond Rouse Checks for giving Blood

Dice Pools: N/A

System: Using vitae to heal the living (see p. 139) heals three levels of Aggravated Damage per Rouse Check rather than just one. Other effects (becoming a ghoul, risking Blood Bond) remain unchanged.

Duration: Passive

Level 3

VALEREN

Amalgam: Auspex 1

The vampire projects their Fortitude outwardly, willing the power of their Blood to mend the injured body of another vampire.

Cost: One Rouse Check and additional Health depending on circumstances

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Fortitude

System: The vampire rolls Intelligence + Fortitude against Difficulty 2 and mends a number of superficial Health damage levels equal to the margin on the roll. Alternatively, the user mends one Aggravated Health damage level for every three successes in the margin.

Use of this power takes a whole turn. If the vampire spends an entire scene instead, reduce the Difficulty to 0. Valeren must be used on someone other than

the vampire invoking the power, and can be used only on vampires. A subject can be affected by the power only once per night. If the user mends more than one subject per night, the user suffers Superficial Health damage equal to half the number of successes in the margin for every additional subject, as they take on the burden of so many charges.

Duration: N/A

Level 4

GORGON'S SCALES

The Resonance of the blood in the vampire's system grants them various defenses against the powers of other Kindred, or protects them from common vampire weaknesses. Finding the right vessel to respond to an immediate defensive requirement is not always easy, but especially callous vampires have been known to keep vessels with different Resonances in ready supply, using elaborate manipulative schemes or plain drugs to keep their emotions vivid and ready to tap.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pools: N/A

System: On activation the vampire gains a set of immunities or resistances dependent on the Resonance of the blood they most recently fed upon.

- **Choleric:** A stake driven through the vampire's heart is consumed with decay or turns to ash at the end of the scene, immediately freeing the vampire from paralysis. The Resonance is then lost.
- **Melancholy:** Aggravated Health damage caused by fire is reduced to Superficial. The Resonance is lost after reducing four levels of damage.
- **Phlegmatic:** The vampire gains a four-dice bonus to resist Auspex powers that would reveal anything about them or what they know. Once the power is activated it lasts for a scene, at which point the Resonance is lost.
- **Sanguine:** Aggravated Health damage caused by sunlight is reduced to Superficial. The Resonance is lost after reducing four levels of damage.



Duration: Until the scene ends or the Resonance is lost, whichever comes first.

◆ Obfuscate

Level 2

CHIMERSTRY

Amalgam: Presence 1

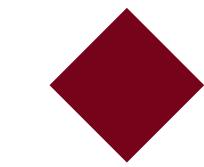
The vampire can create brief but vivid hallucinations, distracting and drawing the attention of those affected. A hallucination can affect any single sense — it can be visual, auditory, tactile, etc. — and occurs long enough to make an impression before ceasing. The user decides on the specifics of the hallucination, though due to its brief nature it cannot convey more than something glimpsed in the corner of the eye or a voice faintly heard (it cannot be employed to create a fake ID, for example).

Dice Pools: Manipulation + Obfuscate vs Composure + Wits

Cost: One Rouse Check

System: The vampire rolls their Manipulation + Obfuscate. Anyone unprepared and within eyesight of the vampire and eligible to experience the hallucination (by being in line of sight of its projected appearance, or by being the target of a tactile sensation) is distracted, losing two dice on their next action. Additionally, those who fail to resist using their Composure + Wits lose their next active action if they fail. (However, they can still defend and resist as normal, with a two-dice penalty.) Unlike most Presence powers Chimerstry can be used during a stressful physical conflict such as combat, but targets can only be affected once per conflict.

Other effects resulting from the hallucination are up to the Storyteller, but they are advised to err on the side of caution.



These hallucinations can never be recorded or transmitted (such as by using Ghost in the Machine).

Duration: One turn.

Level 3

FATA MORGANA

Amalgam: Presence 2

The vampire can craft elaborate hallucinations, making any subjects in their vicinity see, hear, and feel whatever the user can devise. From seeing and tasting a takeout container filled with maggots and rice to a thunderous torrent of reeking, rancid blood boiling out of the sewers, Fata Morgana causes witnesses to experience circumstances that just aren't real.

There is no limit to the number of victims who can be affected simultaneously, but in order to be affected by Fata Morgana a subject needs to be able to see the user or vice versa, though they do not need to be actively aware of them. The vampire does not need to remain present once a victim is affected.

Visual effects are always separate objects. They cannot be used to "mask" or otherwise disguise items or individuals, and can never entirely block line of sight. Fata Morgana hallucinations cannot appear to affect the surrounding reality: The torrent of blood won't wash away cars parked in the street or pedestrians, and an explosion created with Fata Morgana does not cause any damage, hallucinatory or otherwise. A collapsing staircase won't tumble anyone currently descending the staircase. Sensory effects created by Fata Morgana cannot blind or deafen or in other ways overload senses, not even those supernaturally augmented. Similarly, hallucinations are not caught on camera or other kinds of recording devices.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Obscure

System: The user makes a Manipulation + Obscure test against a Difficulty equal to one plus the number of senses the hallucination targets. (An

audio-visual hallucination would thus be Difficulty 3, while a complete five-sensory experience would be Difficulty 6.) The easiest visual hallucinations to create are fairly small or discreet — increase the Difficulty by one for room-sized hallucinations, two for house-sized hallucinations, and so on. Further complications may add additional Difficulty at the Storyteller's discretion. Any attempt to mimic the appearance of a specific individual or in other ways deceive can require additional Performance or Subterfuge tests as appropriate.

Vampires and other supernatural creatures have a chance to disbelieve the hallucination, but mortals can do this only if they have reason to suspect it to be fake. In both cases they roll Intelligence + Awareness against the user's Manipulation + Presence. A success means that the individual in question is no longer affected by the hallucination, and it effectively disappears for them. Any attempt to interact with the hallucination also causes it to lapse entirely, as everyone present becomes aware of its unreal nature (as with the collapsing staircase example, if someone is using the staircase). Note that the use of this power is not overt, so even if the hallucination is revealed, it is not obvious from whom it originated.

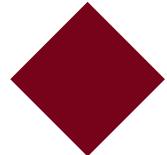
These hallucinations can never be recorded or transmitted (such as by using Ghost in the Machine). If the hallucination could cause Frenzy or similar reactions in its targets, apply the same test at a Difficulty of one lower than the real thing.

Duration: One scene, unless the vampire chooses to let it lapse before that.

MENTAL MAZE

Amalgam: Dominate 1

Mental Maze is the ability to remove all sense of direction and location from a victim, allowing the vampire to make their target a prisoner in their current environment, such as a home, a nightclub, or a vampire's cellar. The victim finds their location folding back on itself, subtly altering their perception of previously visited rooms, convincing them that an actual exit only leads deeper into the



maze, and eventually breaking them down into a state of panic and fragility.

Cost: One or Three Rouse Checks

Dice Pools: Charisma + Obfuscate vs. Wits + Resolve

System: The vampire makes eye contact with their victim and rolls Charisma + Obfuscate versus the target's Wits + Resolve, with lower Generation

vampires being able to negate the roll with a Willpower point as per Dominate's characteristics (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 255). On a win, the victim struggles to find their way out of the building they're in. An additional two Rouse Checks allows this power to be used in a single room or a densely packed outdoor environment (such as a construction site or forest).

Mortals cannot attempt to escape but supernatural creatures can make a Resolve + Awareness test each scene using the vampire's initial successes as the Difficulty, suffering a point of Superficial Willpower damage for every missing success if they fail. This roll cannot benefit from Teamwork, as any guidance given does not match what the victim sees. This power ends if the environment becomes dangerous (e.g. the building catches fire), unless the vampire has Terminal Decree (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 257).

Duration: One night

MIND MASQUE

Amalgam: Dominate 2

The vampire can craft the illusion of a completely different persona, hiding their true thoughts and feelings to anyone who uses supernatural abilities to read their mental state, aura, thoughts, or similar. Those who look into their mind see only what the user wants them to see, and only the most accomplished scryers can pierce this elaborate facade.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pools: Intelligence + Obfuscate

System: The user rolls Intelligence + Obfuscate against a Difficulty of 1 to 3 (or more), depending on the sophistication of the ruse they want to enact, with 1 representing a simple masking of their emotional state to 3 and beyond for elaborate alternate personas complete with false thoughts and memories. The margin on the win is added as Difficulty to any attempt to "read" them. Failing to reach the added Difficulty lets the reader see only the false personality the user has crafted, without any hint that the reader is being misled. (Failing to



reach even the standard Difficulty yields nothing, as normal, so as not to let on that a false personality is present.)

Duration: One scene

Potence

Level 2

RELENTLESS GRASP

The vampire's grip becomes impossibly strong and once they get a good hold of something they are almost impossible to dislodge, short of dismemberment.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pools: N/A

System: The vampire adds their Potence rating as automatic successes to any attempt that involves holding on to something. This includes attempts to maintain a grapple, though the initial grapple test does not benefit from this bonus.

Duration: One Scene

Level 3

WRECKER

Prerequisite: Prowess

The vampire is able to exert violent, indiscriminate force on a static object in order to shatter, smash, and destroy it. While the lead-up time to summon this strength makes the ability useless in a fight, it comes in handy whenever a door bars the way, a car needs immobilizing, or an example needs to be made of an offending statue.

Cost: Free

Dice Pools: N/A

System: The user counts their Potence rating twice when using Prowess for feats of strength that involve damage or destruction of an inanimate object.

Duration: As Prowess

Level 4

CRASH DOWN

Prerequisite: Soaring Leap

Having honed their capabilities, the vampire now sticks the landing on their *Soaring Leap* in a big way. The vampire can come to an unstoppable halt at their location, causing damage to anyone they land on or around.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pool: Strength + Potence

System: Upon using *Soaring Leap*, the vampire may activate *Crash Down*, and deal damage to a small area of effect. Anyone within a three-meter radius is subject to an attack roll of the user's Strength + Potence against their Dexterity + Athletics, suffering Superficial Damage equal to the margin. Anyone suffering three or more levels of damage or a total failure on their defense test is knocked down (see **Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 122).

Duration: N/A



Level 5

SUBTLE HAMMER

Suffused by inhuman prowess, every part of the vampire's body becomes able to project the sum of their strength. A flick of their finger can be made to convey the power of a full-body punch, and a punt of the toe becomes a concrete-shattering kick. Note that this power does not make the vampire stronger, but they are able to use what strength they have through minor, subtle movements.

Cost: Free

Dice Pools: N/A

System: Performing unarmed melee attacks or feats of strength now counts as two-dice minor actions (see Minor Actions in **Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 298). A character can perform only one *Subtle Hammer* minor action per turn, though, and cannot make further attacks in the



same turn. The ability to concentrate one's full strength into any part of the body also has other benefits, and any feat of strength where the user's movement is limited (such as breaking out of bonds) receives a four-dice bonus or more, at the Storyteller's discretion.

Duration: Passive

◆ Presence

Level 1

EYES OF THE SERPENT

Amalgam: Protean 1

The eyes of the vampire turn into slitted, serpent-like orbs able to freeze a mortal meeting the vampire's gaze in place. The user can even mesmerize other vampires with this power, though the effect is short-lived and likely to rouse the victim's ire.

Cost: Free

Dice Pools: Charisma + Presence vs. Wits + Composure

System: By catching the eye of a mortal (**Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 255) the vampire can immobilize a victim, keeping them frozen in place as long as they themselves maintain eye contact. The effect can only be maintained on a single victim at a time, and ends if they suffer damage or are forcibly removed. The victim is still capable of speech, though not shouting.

In order to paralyze a vampire in the same way, the user must win a contest of Charisma + Presence vs. Wits + Composure. The vampire victim can escape paralysis on any turn after the first by spending a point of Willpower.

Duration: Until eye contact is broken or the scene ends.

Level 2

MELPOMINEE

The voice of the user becomes like that of a siren,

able to entrance or terrify by itself, without the user having to be present. The voice can affect anyone within earshot but does not retain its ability if recorded or electronically transmitted.

Cost: Free

Dice Pools: N/A

System: The vampire is able to use *Awe*, *Daunt*, *Dread Gaze*, *Entrance*, and *Majesty* through their voice alone. They do not need to see the target, and the target does not have to be in their presence save to be close enough to hear their voice.

Duration: N/A

Level 3

THROWN VOICE

Amalgam: Auspex 1

The vampire can cause their voice to emanate from any point within sight, whether as a whisper or shout. The voice is audible as if the vampire was standing in that spot and can be heard by anyone within earshot, depending on strength. The voice can also be left in a location, continuing to lure or terrify those who stray, depending on the power used.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pools: N/A

System: No roll is required, apart from the Rouse Check. If using this power in combination with *Irresistible Voice*, *Melpominee*, or similar powers, they must roll as usual.

Duration: One scene

Level 4

SUFFUSE THE EDIFICE

While present in a building or similar locale the vampire is able to extend the powers of *Awe*, *Daunt*, and *Majesty* through the very structure of the building. Anybody in the building or looking at it will be affected by these powers, reacting to the building as if the vampire themselves is present.

Cost: N/A

Dice Pools: As power transmitted
System: Anyone seeing the building from outside or who are present inside it needs to resist the power used as if the vampire was present, unless the vampire is within eyesight, at which point they themselves becomes the focus. As a building does not generally make Skill checks, apply the bonuses instead to any reaction the victim has to the place. A nightclub under the influence of Awe will have queues stretching around the block, while a haven under Daunt will turn away all but the most staunch investigators. Use of Majesty has to be done with extreme caution, as the results can be spectacular and volatile, far exceeding the effect of the more subtle powers.

Duration: As power transmitted

◆ Protean

Level 2

VICISSITUDE

Amalgam: Dominate 2

Rare outside clan Tzimisce, this power allows the vampire to demand obedience of their own flesh. Skin, muscles, and even bone can be sculpted or warped out of shape, the end result sometimes unnervingly beautiful but just as often monstrous. Skilled users can craft bizarre characteristics or reshape their entire bodies, though larger transformations exact a heavy toll on their physique. Kindred who use Vicissitude create everything from useful body-tools to... *expressive ornamentation*.





Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pool: Resolve + Protean

System: Roll Resolve + Protean. Every success on the roll allows a single Vicissitude change to be made to the user, though the total number of changes cannot exceed the user's Protean rating, no matter the number of applications or successes. Each change causes the loss of a single Physical Attribute dot of the user, as the body mass must come from somewhere. (No Attribute can be taken below 1.) Each use of the power takes one full turn to perform.

Potential Vicissitude changes are listed below:

- **Redistribution:** Add a single dot to any of the user's Physical Attributes. This cannot cause any Attribute to exceed 5 dots. These changes are visible, but not Masquerade-threatening. Note that player characters need to keep track of their original values as these are still used to calculate experience cost for Attributes.
- **Weapons (*Once per subject only*):** The user gains the equivalent of a light piercing or heavy impact weapon (+2 Damage) in the form of bone spurs or bludgeons of dense cartilage. (In contrast to *Feral Weapons*, the damage caused by these weapons is mundane, but *Feral Weapons* employed by a vampire proficient in Vicissitude often take the shape of similar osseous spikes and blades.)
- **Armor:** One Attribute point can be turned into two points of armor value (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 304), with an upper limit of six points of armor. This often takes the form of reinforced sub-dermal reinforced bone or layers of fat and cartilage, and appears increasingly inhuman as the points so allocated increase. While vampires gain little benefit from this, apart from a disturbing appearance, it serves a purpose on mortal and ghoul retainers. (See *Fleshcrafting*, below.)
- **Appearance:** The user can change their appearance, either for the sake of hiding their identity, enhancing their Looks Merit, or to

mimic someone else. This is a time-consuming affair, taking an entire scene to perform, and requires a Dexterity + Craft test in order to succeed. Difficulty is 3 to hide one's identity, 4 to increase Looks (each level of the Merit counts as one change) and 5 to mimic a specific person. A failure on the test yields no result (but the Attribute dot is still lost) while a total failure causes the Looks Merit to drop one level, potentially turning into a Flaw if at baseline. Nosferatu are unable to use this aspect of the power for anything but hiding their identity.

- **Other changes:** More creative uses of this power, such as creating a secret pouch somewhere on the body or moving eyes around, are beyond the scope of these mechanics, and the Storyteller needs to decide on the number of changes (and Attribute points lost) required, and the Difficulty and time required for the operation. Dexterity + Craft or Intelligence + Medicine rolls may be required in these cases.

Changes can be mended as Aggravated damage, with each change equivalent to a single level of damage (restoring lost Attribute points accordingly).

Duration: Permanent

Level 3

FLESHCRAFTING

Amalgam: Dominate 2

Prerequisite: Vicissitude

Extending their mastery over flesh, the vampire can inflict their ministrations on the bodies of others. The power is rightly feared, as many of its users have a reputation for inhuman torture, though some employ it to great effect to enhance and adapt their servants and allies.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pools: Resolve + Protean vs. Stamina + Resolve

System: In order to use this power, the user must be able to work undisturbed on the subject, who thus either needs to be willing or restrained. For a

willing subject, follow the same system as Vicissitude (above). An unwilling subject can resist with their Stamina + Resolve, with the user's margin counting as Vicissitude successes. Each use of this power takes a full scene to perform. Again, the total number of changes cannot exceed the user's Protean rating, no matter the number of applications or successes. In case of multiple users working on a single subject, only count the highest Protean rating.

Changes can be mended as Aggravated damage, with each change equivalent to a single level of damage. (Mortals thus require extensive surgery.)

Duration: Permanent

Level 4

HORRID FORM

Amalgam: Dominate 2

Prerequisite: Vicissitude

With a mastery of the body so complete that it surpasses natural limitations, the vampire can take on a truly monstrous form, complete with vicious claws, protruding fangs, ridged features, and corded muscles. Although its exact traits can vary between occasions, the form often has an individual, specific appearance that manifests every time this power is used, a vision of the user's Beast made flesh. Some look like hellishly malformed animals, some look demonic or atavistic, and some defy any sense of worldly familiarity. Many incorporate the traits of other vampires in nature, such as leeches, bats, ticks, and mosquitoes, magnified to grotesque proportions.

Cost: One Rouse Check

System: Horrid Form takes a full turn to activate, during which time the vampire can only defend, using their pre-Horrid Form dice pools. It then grants the vampire a number of free Vicissitude changes (no Attribute dots are lost) equal to their Protean rating. These can be spent on *Redistribution*, *Weapons*, and *Armor*. Generous Storytellers can also consider other changes such as wing-like membranes allowing the vampire to glide,

extended limbs for reach, or other creative (but fair) uses. However, with the Beast so close to the surface, *any* criticals rolled while using Horrid Form for any reason are considered messy criticals, and any frenzy test taken is at +2 Difficulty. The vampire also assumes an unmistakably inhuman appearance and is unable to communicate in anything but grunts, hisses, and roars.

Duration: One scene, unless voluntarily ended sooner.

Level 5

ONE WITH THE LAND

Amalgam: Animalism 2

Prerequisite: Earth Meld

The Kindred possesses such mastery over their own form that they may extend it even into their domain itself. Not only may the vampire sink into the very earth, they maintain a preternatural awareness of events transpiring within the domain.

Cost: Two Rouse Checks

System: As with Earth Meld (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 270), except the vampire is not limited by the makeup of the surface where they take their rest. Some vampires have been known to suffuse themselves into the walls of their manors while others secrete themselves beneath the warped floorboards of a squat, or even hide beneath a shallow pool of “dead water.”

Additionally, in a distance of roughly one kilometer in any direction from where the vampire's body has become One with the Land, the vampire may elect to experience any sensory stimuli within that area, such as listening to a conversation therein, physically enjoying a lovers' tryst, or catching the scent of a fire that an unruly mob may be stoking. The vampire experiences these senses through the presence of animals, however minute, in the vicinity of the events. If the events are discreet or intentionally hidden, a Wits + Animalism test vs. the relevant opposing dice pool used is required.

Rising from this state before nightfall the day after



it has been entered requires a Resolve + Protean test at Difficulty 4, and even then it can take up to an hour for the vampire to fully reemerge. A critical win allows them to rise instantly, however.

Duration: One day or more, or until physically disturbed.

Oblivion

The sudden blast of heat from the gasoline-steeped Cardinal Renate made Talley step back, shielding his eyes. A very mortal gesture. Talley corrected himself to watch the body burn. Tracking Renate, seizing her, and staking her ultimately came down to which of them was better skilled in the Lasombra arts. It had been a grueling task, but not an unpleasant one.

As his ghoul started typing “It is done” into Talley’s phone, the few lights in the alley blinked off one by one. The shadows drew in, plunging the entire area into blackness. Talley cast about, looking for their source, but found nothing. A sound made him turn toward the fire. The Cardinal’s body was gone, nothing left but the flames dying down. A stump of the stake was resting in the ash. “Maybe we’ll meet again sooner than planned, my dear.”

Talley dusted ash from his jacket as his accomplice at the other end of the alley spoke up. “By order of the Friends of the Night, you’re next to go, Sir Talley.” Shadows throughout the alley rapidly converged on the Templar, snaking along the walls and across the ground while his assailant maintained their distance. Talley watched as the lengthening shadows approached, and considered for a second before nodding respectfully at his murderous childe, and vaulted into the dark.

Nicknames: Obtenebration, Necromancy, Shadowboxing, Abyssal Mastery, Tenebrae Imperiosae, Mortis, the Dark Arts, Black Magic, Entropy

Few Kindred outside Clan Lasombra and the Hecata know the Discipline of Oblivion, and as far as the Camarilla is concerned, this is a good thing. While the Lasombra favor the Discipline’s raw power, the more necromantically inclined Hecata explore its ritual uses. With this power, vampires wield the very stuff of shadows and unlife as weapons. Some call the power’s source the Abyss, while other practitioners refer to it as the Labyrinth. The one certainty is

Oblivion channels the darkest arts, from where the dead go to die.

The masters of Oblivion call upon it to wreath themselves in night, enslave spectres, or throttle victims with their own shadow. Each time they use it, wielders run the risk of losing their soul and Humanity to something darker than death and twice as hungry.

Characteristics

The powers of Oblivion allow for the control of forces or spirits of an extra-dimensional element, originating from a place of death and nothingness. When manifested it appears as two-dimensional shadows on the surface of ordinary objects, either by themselves or as distortions of shadows already present, snaking along the ground, walls, objects, or people. This makes them impossible to attack with most physical means as any blow only hits the surface on which they appear, rather than the shadows themselves.

Oblivion projections and spirits sustain damage from fire and sunlight, counting as vampires with Blood Potency 1 in this regard. They also take one level of Aggravated damage per round from bright, direct lights, and may also suffer damage (Superficial or Aggravated) from blessed weapons and artifacts, depending on the strength of the blessing and any True Faith of the wielder.

Oblivion’s powers are ineffective in brightly lit areas. Daylight and rooms without shadows are particularly prohibitive, preventing the Discipline’s successful function, though ultraviolet light and infrared light place no restriction on the Discipline’s use. Moderately lit rooms apply a one-die penalty to the Discipline roll involved.

The use of these powers takes a heavy toll on the psyche of the user, and many powers cause Stains as the numbing emptiness of Oblivion seeps into the wielder.

Type: Mental

Masquerade threat: Medium-High. The abyssal shadows rarely show up well on cameras but are



obviously unnatural if witnessed in person.

Blood Resonance: Psychopaths and the emotionally detached. Blood empty of Resonance.

Note: When making a Rouse check for an Oblivion power, a result of “1” or “10” results in a Stain, in addition to any Hunger gained. If the user’s Blood Potency allows for a re-roll on the Rouse check, they can pick either of the two results.

Level 1

ASHES TO ASHES

Destroying evidence of feeding is a necessity among vampires who leave dead bodies in their wake. This power enables a vampire to destroy a corpse — fresh or long dead — by introducing their vitae to its body. This power does not work on vampires, but can work on animated cadavers, at the Storyteller’s discretion.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pools: Stamina + Oblivion vs. Stamina + Medicine or Fortitude

System: The vampire makes a Rouse Check to expend vitae, and introduces the vitae to the corpse. Unless the corpse is animated, the body disintegrates over three turns with no test necessary. If it is, the user rolls a contest of Stamina + Oblivion against Stamina. (Corpses with Fortitude may resist with Stamina + Fortitude.) If the user wins, the animated corpse dissolves in five turns, minus the margin (minimum one, and disintegrating corpses suffer physical Impairment). On a critical win, the corpse disintegrates immediately. On a total failure, the corpse is subsequently immune to this power from any user.

Duration: Variable

THE BINDING FETTER

The vampire can identify objects or locations important to ghosts. These “fetters” act as icons that bind the dead to their existence. A fetter might be an object, a building, or even a person. Knowing if an object is a fetter allows a necromancer to better manipulate the ghost. Fetters emanate variable auras, some bursting with vitality and glowing gold light,

others radiating decay, or odors important to the bound wraith, such as the smell of freshly baked bread, gasoline, or cigarette smoke.

Cost: Free

Dice Pools: Wits + Oblivion

System: On activation, the user’s senses become supernaturally attuned to the energies of fetters, and they may identify these auras by sight, smell, and their other senses. While this power is in use, the vampire is distracted from other activity around them, conveying a -2 penalty to Dexterity and Wits rolls.

Duration: One scene

OBLIVION’S SIGHT

The vampire’s eyes turn black, allowing them to see clearly within pitch darkness and to perceive ghosts who are not actively hiding their presence.

Cost: Free

System: On activation, the user’s eyes become supernaturally attuned to darkness, allowing them to ignore all low-light penalties, including those of supernatural origin. They still need their eyes to see and are affected by blindfolds and the like as usual.

If a ghost is present and not attempting stealth or using a power to conceal its presence, the spirit becomes visible to the vampire using Oblivion’s Sight. In such cases, ghosts appear as they wish to appear, whether as humans bearing the wounds that caused their death, as spectral monstrosities, or as perfectly immaculate corpses. Ghosts do not automatically realize when a vampire spots them, but if they do, many react with fear or anger rather than passivity.

This power does not grant the ability to make physical contact with ghosts, and the pitch-black eyes incur a two-dice penalty to social interactions with mortals while active.

Duration: One scene

SHADOW CLOAK

Subtly applying the influence of Oblivion on ambient shadows, the user masks their appearance or seems more sinister and threatening.





Cost: Free

System: The vampire gains a two-dice bonus to Stealth rolls, as well as on Intimidation versus mortals.

Duration: Passive

Level 2

ARMS OF AHRIMAN

Amalgam: Potence 2

The vampire summons shadowy extensions from unlit spots in the area, within line of sight. Local shadows distort as they flow across walls and floors and converge on one or more hapless victims.

Whether by gliding up the body of the victim or engaging in a mystic grapple with the victim's own shadow, the arms are able to hold them in place or smother them.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pools: Wits + Oblivion

System: The user takes one turn and pays the cost, summoning the extensions. Using these, the vampire can perform bludgeoning and grappling attacks against distant targets every subsequent turn. Additional arms can be created by splitting the dice pool, enabling the user to engage multiple opponents. (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 125). The shadows use the vampire's Wits + Oblivion to attack and deal Superficial damage or grapple, adding half the user's Potence rating (round up) as a damage bonus. The vampire can do nothing else except control the shadows while this power is active.

They can also use the shadows to perform simple actions (such as opening doors and pulling levers) but nothing as advanced as typing or controlling vehicles. The extrusions have a length (in yards/meters) equal to twice the Oblivion dots of the user. (Note that they, being shadows, move across surfaces, not air, and any distances must take this into account.)

The shadow arms can only be banished by bright light, such as from a powerful torch or daylight, but a successful Wits + Oblivion roll against Difficulty 3

allows the shadows to avoid the light for a turn.

Duration: One scene or until ended or destroyed

FATAL PREDICTION

Amalgam: Auspex 2

The vampire can knit invisible strands of entropy to a target mortal, increasing the odds of them suffering harm or even death within the span of a night and a day. The effect resembles that of a curse, but the vampire is unable to interfere with the doomed mortal lest the effect be broken.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pools: Resolve + Oblivion vs Wits + Occult

System: The vampire makes a Resolve + Oblivion test against the mortal target's Wits + Occult. For every success in the margin, the target suffers one point of Aggravated damage at some point during the next 24 hours. The source can be anything from sudden illness to freak accidents, but at no point must the vampire interact, directly or indirectly, with the victim as doing so risks negating the power. (The Storyteller decides exactly where the line is drawn on "indirect" interaction, but things like sending flunkies to "hasten" the outcome is definitely on the list.) Use of this power is invisible, though an onlooker can detect some sense of foul play on a Wits + Occult test at Difficulty 3. Only mortals (including ghouls) can be affected by this power, as vampires are dead already and far more resistant to these kinds of entropy manipulations.

Duration: A night and a day – 24 hours

SHADOW CAST

Oblivion is powerful but can often be foiled by the simple lack of appropriate shadows from which to summon its manifestations. This power draws upon the dark within the user to project a supernatural shadow from which to manifest other powers, no matter the ambient lightning. This shadow usually mimics the movement and shape of the user but can sometimes grow distorted and even monstrous, resonating with the current temperament of its owner.

Cost: One Rouse Check

System: Activating the power conjures a supernatural shadow from the vampire's body. As long as the power is active, the user casts this shadow, which cannot be removed except by direct sunlight.

Anyone witnessing the practitioner notices the shadow cast from no visible light source on a Wits + Awareness roll (Difficulty 3). The vampire can direct their shadow, elongating or distorting (but not detaching) it at will, though it can sometimes act on its own accord, at the Storyteller's discretion. For the purposes of other powers such as Shadow Perspective, the practitioner can lengthen the shadow to up to twice the practitioner's Oblivion rating in yards/meters.

For anyone standing within the shadow's reach, the Willpower damage from social conflict increases by 1 (after halving for Superficial damage). Standing in Oblivion's shadow is a terrifying prospect.

Duration: One scene



WHERE THE VEIL THINS

Vampires with an affinity for Oblivion can sense where the veil between the world of the living and the world of the dead is the weakest. This power doesn't tell a vampire *why* the veil between worlds is thin in a certain place, though. In locations where the veil is thinnest, mortal health suffers and use of the Oblivion Discipline becomes easier.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pools: Intelligence + Oblivion

System: Following a Rouse Check, the player rolls Intelligence + Oblivion (Difficulty 3) and on a win may determine the density of the veil in their nearby area, as large as an entire building or landmark. On a critical win, this roll reveals whether the veil density recently changed. On a total failure, the power backfires and gives a false reading.

Without use of this power, Oblivion users cannot benefit from a thinning of the veil, though penalties apply at the Storyteller's discretion.

Duration: One turn

DENSITY OF THE VEIL

Shroud Density	Possible Cause	Effect
Impenetrable	No deaths took place here, sacred ground	Wraiths cannot cross the veil here
Thick	Long ago a death took place here, a place of joy	No effect
Thin	A death recently took place here, melancholic mortals often pass through this place	-1 Difficulty on Oblivion Ceremony rolls
Frayed	A series of deaths took place here, Oblivion Ceremonies are often enacted here	-2 Difficulty on Oblivion Ceremony rolls
Absent	Split the Veil (p. 96) was used here, wraiths regularly pass through this part of the veil	-2 Difficulty on Oblivion Ceremony rolls, wraiths can freely pass to and from the lands of the dead, mortals suffer two Superficial Health damage in this area that cannot be healed until they depart

Level 3

AURA OF DECAY

Kindred with a strong connection to Oblivion can affect the world around them, making plants wilt, animals and humans grow sick, and food go bad. Some harness this aura as a power, polluting vitality with rot, and speeding up the erosion of life. This power does not speed up the decay of dead things, though.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pools: Stamina + Oblivion vs. Stamina + Medicine or Fortitude

System: The vampire makes a Rouse Check.

Following a win on a Stamina + Oblivion roll (Difficulty 3), unintelligent organic and inorganic material within five yards/ meters of them suffers — plants turn black and die, food rots in its packaging, and even bricks start crumbling. Material affected in this way can become toxic to ingest, if for instance this power is used in a kitchen or a water supply. Such toxic food and drink, if consumed, can be expected to inflict two Superficial Health damage in the following scene to the individual who eats it, and for each scene thereafter until treated with an Intelligence + Medicine roll (Difficulty 3).

If anything living is caught in the aura, it makes a Stamina + Medicine contest against the

vampire's activation roll. For every point of margin the vampire has, the victim suffers one point of unhalved Superficial Health damage. This damage is slowly applied throughout the scene. Repeated applications of the power in the same scene have no effect on the Health of mortals already affected.

The power is an aura that lasts for an entire scene before it fades away. Anyone with a sense of smell can detect a rotting odor emanating from the vampire during the time the power is active, inflicting a two-dice penalty to any Social rolls the vampire makes.

Duration: One scene

PASSION FEAST

Amalgam: Fortitude 2

When a vampire needs to spend an extended period in the lands of the dead, or wishes to torment a spirit, this Oblivion power allows them to subsist on the passions of wraiths rather than blood. An accomplished necromancer can feed on these passions, enabling them to go without blood for longer than their fellow Kindred.

Cost: Free

Dice Pools: Resolve + Oblivion vs. Resolve + Composure

System: A vampire with this power can drain a wraith of their passion. While in close proximity



(three yards/meters or closer) to the wraith, they may roll a contest of Resolve + Oblivion vs. the wraith's Resolve + Composure. A win for the vampire inflicts one Aggravated Willpower damage to the wraith and reduces the vampire's Hunger by one. Feeding from a wraith may merit a Stain at the Storyteller's discretion, as the consumed passion dulls the wraith's reason for being, likely sending them down a path to self-destructive acts. The Storyteller determines the number of passions a wraith possesses (though five or more is rare), and may deem that the wraith becomes an uncontrollable, murderous spectre once all passions have been consumed.

Duration: Passive

SHADOW PERSPECTIVE

The vampire can project their senses into any shadow within line of sight, seeing and hearing as if they were hiding within any part of it. This includes their own shadow, as manipulated by Shadow Cast (p. 87).

Cost: One Rouse Check

System: Following a Rouse Check, the presence of the vampire's senses in the shadow is undetectable by anything but supernatural means. (*Sense the Unseen*, for example). While this power is active the vampire perceives both their surroundings as well as what can be gleaned from the Shadow Perspective, as if looking through a screen or hole.

Duration: Up to one scene

SHADOW SERVANT

Amalgam: Auspex 1

The vampire gives independent life to a part of their shadow and can use it to spy on or unnerve their enemies.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pools: None

System: The servant has no mind of its own, but follows its creator's mental commands. The shadow travels at running speed and can effortlessly slip under doors, climb walls, or slip into or through the smallest cracks, although it cannot endure brightly

lit areas. It can also cling to moving vehicles, and its range is limited only by how far it can travel in one night. It hears and sees everything in its vicinity and can convey the information as soon as it is reabsorbed into its creator's shadow. The shadow servant can only be banished by bright light, such as from a powerful torch or daylight, but a successful Wits + Oblivion roll against Difficulty 3 allows the servant to avoid the light for a turn.

Duration: One scene

TOUCH OF OBLIVION

The vampire using Touch of Oblivion can harm and cripple with a single touch, aging the affected body part catastrophically. It can be used to wither a limb, crumple a throat, or to blind a pair of eyes.

Cost: One Rouse Check

System: Following a Rouse Check, the vampire grips their victim, requiring a Strength + Brawl roll if the victim is trying to avoid the vampire. Once gripped, the victim suffers two levels of Aggravated damage as well as a crippling injury.

If this injury is inflicted to an arm or leg, the targeted limb is rendered crippled and in the case of mortals requires lengthy rehabilitation, while vampires can mend the damage as regular Aggravated damage. Likewise, Touch of Oblivion may render a target mute, deaf, or blind. See crippling injuries (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 303) for mechanical details. Storytellers may decide that inflicting such mutilation warrants Stains.

Duration: One turn

Level 4

NECROTIC PLAGUE

Through touch alone, the vampire can poison a mortal victim's blood, imbuing them with a disease that wracks and ravages their body. This disease can also be made contagious and transmit the same harm to other mortals. Oblivion practitioners schooled in medicine often have enough talent to make this power appear in the form of specific illnesses, sometimes including some believed extinct.





Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pools: Intelligence + Oblivion vs. Stamina + Stamina or Fortitude

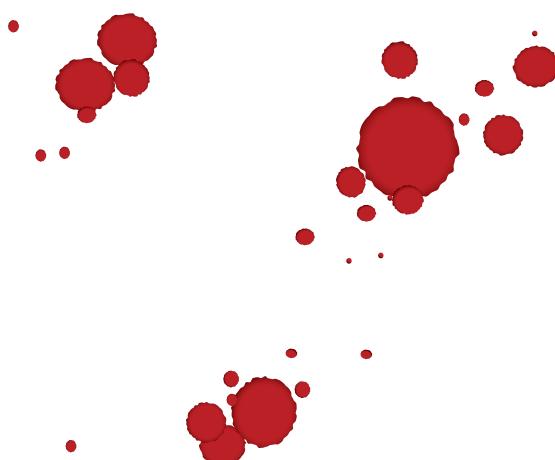
System: The user makes a Rouse Check and then rolls Intelligence + Oblivion while touching their mortal victim. If the victim is weak (a baby, elderly, unwell, recovering from an illness, dying, or with 3 unmarked Health boxes or less), they are automatically infected. If the victim is healthy, they make a Stamina test (those with Fortitude may resist with Stamina + Fortitude), resisting the disease if they roll more successes than the vampire.

Victims of the disease take one Aggravated Health damage at the start of every scene following their infection. The victim suffers from the disease for a number of scenes equal to the user's Oblivion rating. This damage cannot be medically treated, as it is supernatural in origin, but it can be healed through drinking vitae.

If the player rolls a critical win when activating this power, they can choose to make the disease communicable via touch, with subsequent recipients suffering the disease for one turn fewer than the victim by whom they were infected.

Use of this power warrants Stains, at the Storyteller's discretion.

Duration: One turn to activate, variable length of condition



STYGIAN SHROUD

Nearby shadows spread outwards as the vampire blankets the area in a layer of darkness, while sounds become muffled and indistinct. Anyone viewing the effect from without sees it as a shadow expanding over every surface, including the bodies of any victims, in the area. Those apart from the invoker caught in the effects find themselves struggling to see and hear their surroundings, and mortals are drained of their very life by the suffocating power.

Cost: One Rouse Check.

System: The user makes a Rouse Check and spends a turn concentrating, spreading the shadow over the desired surfaces. The effect covers a circular area with a radius equal to twice the user's Oblivion rating in yards/meters. The area is centered on the user or a spot in their line of sight.

Anyone caught in the Stygian Shroud receives a three-dice penalty to all rolls, unless they possess the ability to see through supernatural darkness. Any mortals caught in the Stygian Shroud suffer one level of Superficial damage for every turn they remain within it, due to the power's suffocating effects.

Duration: One scene

Level 5

SHADOW STEP

Stepping into a nearby shadow, the user disappears only to reappear from the same or another shadow further away. Whether they enter the Labyrinth or merely pass along its surface is a source of conjecture among many Lasombra and Hecata, but the spiritual damage with which they can emerge implies they are touching something foul as they use this power.

Cost: One Rouse Check

System: The vampire must enter a shadow large enough to cover them, and emerge from another one turn later. The target shadow must be within sight, though it can be perceived by mystical means, such as Shadow Perspective, if desired.

It is possible to bring another through the passage, but unless that person is willing, they must be held

by a successful grapple. If a Stain is incurred as a result of using this power, the passenger also receives one.

Duration: One turn

SKULD FULFILLED

This power enables a vampire to reintroduce illnesses to victims who recovered from them, break bones long-since healed, and revoke a ghoul's immunity to aging. While this power doesn't work on vampires, it is an effective way of cutting through their servants and ensuring debts to fate are repaid, without having to come into contact with the recipient.

Cost: Two Rouse Checks

Dice Pools: Stamina + Oblivion vs. Stamina + Stamina or Fortitude

System: The vampire makes two Rouse Checks as they expend sufficient vitae to coat both their palms and their face with blood, recalling the faces of their targets. If the user succeeds in a contest of Stamina + Oblivion vs. the victim's Stamina x 2 (those with Fortitude may resist with Stamina + Fortitude), the targeted individual is affected by a serious condition they've historically suffered and recovered from, such as treated cancer, a broken bone, or a disease — including one gained through Necrotic Plague (p. 90) — with any debilitating effects from this condition occurring immediately. The condition's effects are for the Storyteller to determine, but they should be severe (See the Crippling Injuries table for inspiration, *Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 303). If the victim is a ghoul, this power removes their immunity to aging and eliminates any vitae in their system, potentially resulting in older ghouls dying or even disintegrating where they stand. On a critical win, this power may kill the victim by stopping their heart completely if the user wishes. On a total failure, the vampire cannot use this power against that individual again.

Duration: Variable, dependent on whether the condition is treatable

TENEBOUS AVATAR

The vampire gains the ability to change their very

substance into that of a shadow, becoming a two-dimensional patch of darkness able to slither over any surface and through minuscule gaps and cracks. While in this form the vampire is only harmed by fire and sunlight.

Cost: Two Rouse Checks.

System: The transformation takes one turn, during which the vampire is unable to do anything else. Once the transformation is complete the vampire can move at walking pace across the ground or along walls, hampered only by hermetically sealed barriers.

Vampires using Tenebrous Avatar can envelop victims, causing the victim to reduce all their dice pools by three and suffocating mortals as with Stygian Shroud, above. If surrounding a mortal, the vampire can feed from them without penetrating the skin with fangs.

Practitioners of this power take no damage from physical sources but can be harmed by fire and sunlight as normal. Mental Disciplines can still be used at the Storyteller's discretion.

Duration: One scene or until ended

Oblivion Ceremonies

Ceremonies are Oblivion's equivalent to Blood Sorcery's Rituals and function in similar ways with the exceptions below.

Unless otherwise noted, performing a Ceremony requires a Rouse Check, five minutes per level to cast, and a winning Resolve + Oblivion test (Difficulty = Ceremony level +1). Ceremonies usually require additional ingredients or sacrifices to mingle the caster's vitae with. Unless otherwise stated the caster can only perform beneficial Ceremonies on themselves. Ghouls of Oblivion practitioners, or thin-bloods, can gain temporary access to Oblivion powers, but not to Ceremonies.

Ceremonies each have a prerequisite Oblivion power. At character creation a player can choose one Level 1 Ceremony if they have at least one Oblivion power noted as a prerequisite for that Ceremony. Characters can buy new Ceremonies at the cost



CEREMONY PREREQUISITES

Level	Oblivion Power	Ceremonies
1	Gift of False Life	Ashes to Ashes
1	Summon Spirit	The Binding Fetter
2	Awaken the Homuncular Servant	Where the Veil Thins
2	Compel Spirit	Where the Veil Thins
3	Host Spirit	Aura of Decay
3	Shambling Hordes	Aura of Decay
4	Bind the Spirit	Necrotic Plague
4	Split the Veil	Necrotic Plague
5	Lazarene Blessing	Skuld Fulfilled

of the Ceremony's level x 3 experience points, providing they meet the power prerequisite as well. Learning new Ceremonies during play requires both experience and time, as well as a teacher who knows the Ceremony already. Expect a Ceremony to take at least the square of its rating in weeks to learn.

Level 1

THE GIFT OF FALSE LIFE

Through use of this Ceremony, a vampire can raise a corpse or group of corpses to perform simple, single or repetitive tasks.

Prerequisite Power: Ashes to Ashes

Ingredients: A human body (or multiple bodies), a small concoction of blood, phlegm, and bile.

Process: After applying the concoction to the corpse or corpses and performing the Ceremony, the affected bodies animate into a form of false life. They follow a single simple command from the vampire, providing the corpse is physically capable of performing it, such as "sweep the floor," "hold this door shut," or "walk around the house perimeter." They have no ability to think or calculate, so conditional or complicated commands such as "attack the next person to walk through this archway," "drive this car," or "build a shack" do not work. They may be directed towards a

specific target for attack or other action if the user points at the target.

System: The vampire makes their Ceremony roll and upon a win they raise a number of corpses equal to their Oblivion rating, or the number of bodies they have prepared (whichever is lower). A critical win doubles their Oblivion rating for the purpose of determining corpses raised. The mindless corpse's animation ends when it is destroyed or it concludes its task. These corpses do not defend themselves from attacks, and decay as normal; the Ceremony does not grant them any form of immunity to the elements or time.

MINDLESS CORPSE

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 2, Social 0, Mental 0

Secondary Attributes: Health 4, Willpower 0

Exceptional Dice Pools: Intimidation 4

Special: Mindless corpses take Superficial and Aggravated damage in the same way as vampires, except they are immune to sunlight. They cannot heal or mend damage, and rot at least one Superficial Health damage each day. They cannot be mentally dominated or influenced as they are bound to their master. They do not react to motion, words, or interference from anyone but their reanimator. Mindless corpses may always contribute to Teamwork (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 122) for menial labor such as digging, lifting, or pushing even if they lack Skills.

General Difficulties: 2/1

SUMMON SPIRIT

This Ceremony enables a vampire to summon a spirit from the Underworld.

Prerequisite Power: The Binding Fetter

Ingredients: One of the targeted wraith's fetters (see *The Binding Fetter*, p. 85), a photo or other visual depiction of the wraith or their signed name, and the caster's vitae.

Process: The necromancer pours their vitae over a wraith's fetter, and studying the picture or signature, calls out the wraith's name. The wraith feels their



fetter's call, and begins a journey from their location in the Underworld to that of the caster. Though geography has differing scales in the Underworld, a journey may still take several nights if the spirit is on the other side of the world. If the veil is thin enough in the summoning location, the wraith is pulled through the veil between worlds by the fetter's strength. The summoned wraith is under no obligation to serve the vampire upon being called and may act with hostility if they feel the vampire is threatening their fetter. Alternatively, the wraith may be grateful for the summoning and the possibility of companionship.

System: The caster daubs the fetter with their vitae and makes an Oblivion Ceremony roll. The wraith cannot pass through the veil if it's impenetrable in the Ceremony location (see p. 88). Moving the fetter after the Ceremony doesn't help, as the wraith's ability to pass through the veil disappears if the fetter leaves the Ceremony site. The wraith disappears at the end of the scene unless a separate Ceremony is used to compel or bind them.

Wraiths summoned in this way do not manifest physically, but as shadows on the walls, quavering silhouettes of their living selves, from which voices might emerge. Wraiths speak the same languages they did in life, unless they've gone to the trouble of learning new ones in the Underworld.

Level 2

AWAKEN THE HOMUNCULAR SERVANT

Vampires use this Ceremony to create servants and spies out of body parts such as hands or skulls, or small dead animals like rats or foxes. Some necromancers work almost exclusively with homunculi, their workshops filled with scrambling and unsettling creatures.

Prerequisite Power: Where the Veil Thins

Ingredients: The required body part or animal carcass, the weapon used to sever/kill it, a small concoction of urine, fecal matter, and semen.

Process: The caster coats a blade (or other device

suitied to the task) in a gross cocktail of bodily fluids, and uses it to cut the targeted appendage off its root limb or body, or kills the small animal (which cannot be larger than a small dog and cannot fly, regardless of whether it has wings). After massaging vitae into the target, it comes to life as a homuncular servant, unfailingly loyal to its master.

System: The necromancer makes an Oblivion Ceremony roll and on a win gains a homuncular servant that spies, follows, or intimidates at the necromancer's command. If it strays farther than 100 yards/meters from the vampire, it falls inert, only awakening again once the vampire enters that range. Otherwise, it remains active for a number of nights equal to the number of successes rolled. A critical win on the roll keeps the servant active forever, while a total failure destroys all components involved in the Ceremony.

Most homunculi can scale walls, hop (even if it lacks the limbs to do so), and hide effectively, though individual variation is great and depends on the tasks it was created to perform. While it cannot speak or perform actions requiring deep thought, it can telepathically communicate single images, scents, or sounds to its creator.



HOMUNCULAR SERVANT

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 1, Social 0, Mental 1

Secondary Attributes: Health 3, Willpower 1

Exceptional Dice Pools: Athletics 4, Stealth 6;

Intimidation 4

Special: Homuncular servants take Superficial and Aggravated damage in the same way as vampires, except they are immune to sunlight. They cannot heal or mend damage. They cannot be mentally dominated or influenced as they are bound to their master. They do not need eyes or ears to perceive everything around them as someone with unimpeded vision and hearing might. They can telepathically broadcast a single image per scene to their master.

General Difficulties: 3/I



COMPEL SPIRIT

This Ceremony allows a vampire to bend a wraith to their will.

Prerequisite Power: Where the Veil Thins

Ingredients: A wraith's fetter, the caster's vitae, and an item (or threat) sufficient to damage the fetter.

Process: The vampire must be in close proximity to a wraith in order to use this Ceremony, typically through use of Summon Spirit (see p. 92). The necromancer casts a handful of their own vitae in the wraith's direction as they hold a destructive item to the fetter (a knife, a hammer, a gun, or potentially holding the fetter over a fire) or speak threatening words that the wraith believes. The vampire and wraith engage in a contest of wills. If the vampire wins, the wraith must serve as the vampire decrees, at least temporarily. On a loss, the vampire is left mentally debilitated and the fetter disappears from their grasp.

System: Make an Oblivion Ceremony roll vs. the wraith's Resolve + Composure. If the vampire has no way of physically threatening the fetter, also make a Manipulation + Intimidation roll (Difficulty equal to the wraith's Resolve + Composure).

If the necromancer wins both rolls, they can command the wraith to perform a number of moderately difficult tasks (spying, research, answering questions truthfully, etc.) equal to the number of successes rolled on the Ceremony roll. For every two successes, the vampire can instead command the wraith to perform a difficult task (such as attacking someone, doing something repugnant to the wraith's sensibilities, etc.). On a critical win, the vampire can demand any action from the wraith, and it tries its best to complete the task. The wraith remains in the vampire's service until the end of the chronicle or until it has fulfilled its master's commands, at which point it returns to the Underworld with an eternal enmity for the necromancer.

If the wraith wins either contest, the vampire suffers the margin in Superficial Health damage, and the wraith then re-enters the Underworld.

The compulsion placed on the wraith ends immediately if the vampire attacks it. If the vampire harms the threatened fetter, the wraith suffers

between one and three Aggravated Willpower damage (depending on the importance of the fetter) and the wraith is sent back to the Underworld to be tormented by, and possibly converted into, a murderous spectre (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 377).

Level 3

HOST SPIRIT

This Ceremony allows a vampire to open their body to possession by a wraith.

Prerequisite Power: Aura of Decay

Ingredients: A gift to be made as tribute to a wraith (whether the wraith values it depends on the individual), a parasitic bug, and two teeth extracted from the vampire's mouth.

Process: The vampire must be in close proximity to a wraith in order to use this power, typically through use of Summon Spirit (see p. 92). The necromancer presents a tribute to the wraith, sometimes in the form of alcohol poured on the wraith's gravesite, or a bag of coins to be buried in the earth, or even the freshly decapitated head of one of the wraith's until-recently living enemies. The vampire then pulls two teeth from their mouth, usually with pliers, and bites into a parasite with their remaining teeth. The vampire then opens their mouth and the wraith can choose to enter it, inhabiting the vampire's body.

The benefits of having a wraith ride one's body include an enhanced physique, access to whichever memories the wraith chooses to share, and the wraith's voice offering the vampire advice. The wraith *can* take complete possession of the vampire if they wish to, which some necromancers view as a blessing to be experienced, and others deem the main reason not to use this power.

Allowing a wraith to control one's actions for a night effectively subdues the Beast, as well as demonstrating physical prowess and knowledge the vampire may not usually possess.

System: Make a successful Oblivion Ceremony roll. If the wraith agrees to the proposition, it then enters the vampire's body and can remain for a number of

scenes equal to the successes rolled on the Oblivion Ceremony roll. With the wraith inside them, the vampire gains two dice to all Physical Attribute rolls and +2 Health until the wraith departs. The vampire can hear the wraith in their head, offering advice, and they can substitute the wraith's Skills for their own, at the Storyteller's discretion.

A wraith can choose to assert its possession instead of acting as a passenger. If the vampire resists, they make a Resolve + Composure roll vs. the wraith's Resolve + Composure. If successful, they reject the wraith's influence. If failed, the wraith steers the vampire until the end of the scene, though it can't make the vampire do anything self-destructive.

SHAMBLING HORDES

This Ceremony enables a vampire to raise a group of aggressive, walking dead minions.

Prerequisite Power: Aura of Decay

Ingredients: A mortal corpse (or multiple corpses), and a fresh mortal sacrifice.

Process: The vampire must have a separate corpse in addition to a mortal prepared for sacrifice.

The vampire slays the sacrificial victim, spilling their blood on the corpse or corpses intended for animation. If the Ceremony is successful, the corpses stand (the recent sacrifice does not) and serve the vampire's commands.

System: Due to the amount of blood spilled in this Ceremony, the caster must first test to resist hunger frenzy (Difficulty 2). Make a Ceremony roll, possibly incurring Stains in the process depending on the chronicle Tenets and the Storyteller's discretion. Upon a win a number of aggressive dead equal to the necromancer's Oblivion rating or the number of prepared bodies (whichever is lower) receive the gift of animation. Corpses animated this way do not decay and only enter repose if commanded to by the vampire, if the vampire meets final death, or if destroyed.

The animated corpses can parse moderately complex orders such as "kill everyone who



enters,” “groan if you see anyone pass this way,” or “terrorize that neighborhood.” Unlike the corpses raised using the Gift of False Life (see p. 92), these animated dead do not sit idle if left without commands, instead attacking anyone around them except for their master.

As per the rules for temporary Advantages like these (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 180), their continued usefulness beyond the current story must be ensured with Experience — such as through the Retainers Background (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 196; one dot per loyal corpse) — or the aggressive corpses may become unstable and unruly.

AGGRESSIVE CORPSE

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 0, Mental 0

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 0

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 6; Intimidation 5

Special: Aggressive corpses take Superficial and Aggravated damage in the same way as vampires, except they are immune to sunlight. They cannot heal or mend damage. They cannot be mentally dominated or influenced as they are bound to their master. They do not need eyes or ears to perceive everything around them as someone with unimpeded vision and hearing might. Bites from the aggressive dead inflict +2 Health damage which is Aggravated to mortals.

General Difficulties: 3/2

Level 4

BIND THE SPIRIT

Vampires with access to this Ceremony have the ability to shackle wraiths to specified locations and people.

Prerequisite Power: Necrotic Plague

Ingredients: A wraith’s fetter, the sacrifice of an innocent mortal, and sufficient salt to surround a property or individual. If the target for haunting is an individual, the necromancer must possess something of their body, such as fingernails, hair, blood, or skin.

Process: The vampire must already have a wraith under their control using Compel Spirit (see p. 93). The vampire kills an innocent mortal (though innocence is subjective, this tends to apply to the young, caregivers, and genuinely pious individuals) in or close to a location or person they want their wraith to haunt. Subsequently, they mix their vitae with sufficient salt to surround the target for haunting, and paint a circle with the mixture. They place the wraith’s fetter somewhere within the location, or in the target’s possession.

System: Following the steps of the Ceremony, the vampire may incur Stains from the murder depending on the Chronicle Tenets and the Storyteller’s discretion. They make an Oblivion Ceremony roll that cannot be resisted, as the wraith must already be compelled for this power to work.

The wraith is bound to the location or individual targeted, with no duration applied to this Ceremony’s effects. Any emotion the wraith feels intensely during its binding affects the inhabitants of the location or the individual to whom it’s bound, with each person affected suffering a two-dice penalty to all rolls made to resist acting or feeling the way the wraith feels. Therefore, an angry wraith may make vampires more inclined to Frenzy, while a depressed wraith might make a mortal more likely to stop self-care. Bound wraiths have the same powers as spectres (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 377).

The wraith is forever bound to the target, unless the vampire cancels the Ceremony, the fetter ever moves from the location or individual’s possession, or the wraith is destroyed. Binding also ends if the necromancer attacks the wraith. Most wraiths bound in this way are furious or melancholic about their plight, and their mood affects the area around them. Many necromancers use this method to defend their havens or haunt their enemies.

SPLIT THE VEIL

This Ceremony allows a vampire to create a tear in the veil through which wraiths can pass. Wraiths who enter our world via this method take to haunting locations and people, indulging in their

passions, and possess mortals if their powers allow for it. Some treat the vampire with gratitude for splitting the veil, while others enjoy tormenting the ones responsible.

Prerequisite Power: Necrotic Plague

Ingredients: A blade that's been used to cut into someone living, chalk or charcoal, a silk sheet, and a human sacrifice.

Process: The vampire hangs a silk sheet over a wall in a place where the veil density (see p. 88) is *standard*, *thin*, or *frayed*. They then perform a human sacrifice against the sheet, and as blood coats the sheet, cut it open with a blade. The Ceremony widens the portal between the world of the living and the world of the dead.

System: The caster performs the sacrifice, which may result in Stains depending on the chronicle Tenets and the Storyteller's discretion. When cutting the silk sheet, their player makes the Ceremony roll). Due to the amount of blood spilled in this Ceremony, the caster must roll to resist hunger frenzy (Difficulty 2). For every success on the Ceremony roll, the veil's density reduces by one level, down to being *absent* (see *Where the Veil Thins* on p. 87).

Importantly, if the veil rating is reduced to *absent*, wraiths can spill into the physical world for the remainder of the session (or night). Once that period concludes, a veil density of *absent* increases to *frayed* and the gateway for wraiths closes.

Level 5

LAZARENE BLESSING

This Ceremony enables a necromancer to bring a freshly-dead body back to life, though not how its relatives and friends might remember it.

Prerequisite Power: Skuld Fulfilled

Ingredients: One mortal sacrifice, incense, the heart of any mammal, and powdered silver.

Process: The necromancer burns incense to perfume the air before performing an act of sacrifice, cutting the heart of the victim out and replacing





it with the heart of another mammal, though it doesn't need to be stitched in and working for the Ceremony to function. After pouring a bag of powdered silver over the open eyes of the dying or dead mortal, the vampire invites a wraith to take the deceased mortal as a host. Wraiths cannot be forced to possess a body, but few refuse the opportunity to walk around in semi-living shoes again.

System: Killing a mortal for this Ceremony may incur Stains, depending on the chronicle Tenets. If the replacement heart was likewise taken from someone the vampire murdered, that murder might also incur Stains. Following a successful Ceremony roll, a wraith can enter the freshly-dead body and live in it as if it were their own. The wraith must be present during the act of sacrifice.

The possessed corpse wakes bearing the wounds that killed it, though the replacement heart is functional (no matter its origin or placement) and the body heals one point of Health damage upon possession. The remaining Health damage recovers with time (as vampiric healing). The body gains no special resistances to harm beyond Disciplines it might have possessed in life. The body possesses the same Physical Attributes, Disciplines (if a ghoul), and Advantages it had in life. Social and Mental Attributes, Skills, and any form of morality rating match those of the wraith.

This possession lasts indefinitely, or until the possessed body dies again or the wraith is exorcized from the host.

Blood Sorcery

Blood Sorcery calls upon the nature of the Blood to reveal truths, cause harm, and work other phenomenon. The Discipline itself has comparatively few powers, being more focused on the versatility of Rituals. For more information on Blood Sorcery (and for more powers and Rituals) see the **Blood Sigils** sourcebook.

Level 2

SCOUR SECRETS

The Blood Sorcerer unleashes rivulets of their Blood primed to search for information on a subject of their choosing. The Blood washes over the object of their search, allowing the Blood Sorcerer to investigate vast amounts of text and volumes in a matter of minutes. The object investigated bears a telltale bloodstain thereafter.

Cost: One Rouse Check

System: The user makes the Rouse Check and tests Intelligence + Blood Sorcery against a Difficulty set by the Storyteller: anything from 2 for a single letter in a regular office up to 5 for encrypted information hidden in a vast library. If the information has been supernaturally concealed the Difficulty increases further. The time spent depends on the size of the area to be searched: A single room might be scoured in minutes, while a library requires hours, if not the whole night. Additionally, the power does not impart the ability to parse the information if it comes in an unknown language or in a cipher.

If the knowledge sought is stored in non-written formats, such as painting, music, or on old floppy disks, the power works at the Storyteller's discretion, though the Difficulty is likely higher.

Duration: One night or until the information is found or the search comes up short, whichever comes first.

Level 4

BLOOD AEGIS

The vampire can will their vitae to form a physical protective barrier. The barrier manifests as a quivering sheet of Blood, the fluid moving of its own accord to intercept and catch incoming projectiles.

Cost: One or more Rouse Checks

System: The user expends Blood equal to one or more Rouse Checks. For each Check the floating barrier can reduce damage from incoming ranged attacks by five. The effect is automatic as the vitae intercepts each incoming projectile in a shower of



Blood, only to reform as long as the power remains active. Once the protection is spent the Blood turns inert as it lies splattered over the zone of conflict.

Duration: One scene or until damage levels are spent, whichever comes first.

Blood Sorcery Rituals

Level 1 Rituals

DOUSE THE FEAR

This Ritual allows the caster to briefly douse their natural vampiric fear of fire.

Ingredients: A holy object such as a crucifix, Bible, or Qur'an.

Process: The vampire must expose the holy symbol to a flame. The object does not need to be completely destroyed, just touched by the fire.

System: A successful Ritual roll following the

burning of the holy object grants the character two additional dice on all rolls relating to resisting Rötschreck. A critical win results in the character needing to make no terror Frenzy rolls at all. The effect lasts for one night.

SEAL THE BRAND

Normally tattoos, scars, and other changes to vampire flesh fade during the day's sleep. Yet some Kindred seek to make a mark on their own flesh, and give that mark permanence.

Ingredients: Molten silver poured over a tattoo, brand, or other body modification.

Process: The vampire casting the ritual pours the molten silver over the target's tattoo, brand, or body modification. The target suffers damage from the molten silver, but once mended, the affected modification remains permanent.

System: A successful Ritual yields a permanent body modification for the target. This modification



cannot be removed by any other means and is now considered part of the target's undying body. Pouring the molten silver onto the body modification inflicts one point of Superficial damage, which may be mended as normal.

Level 2 Rituals

AS FOG ON WATER

With this Ritual the vampire is able to traverse any body of water, silently walking upon it as if they were weightless, fog rising from their footsteps.

Ingredients: A piece of wood from a ship, and water

Process: The vampire submerges a piece of wood in the body of water they want to cross while spilling their Blood into it.

System: Upon a successful Ritual roll the vampire can walk across the surface of the water for the rest of the night. They can end this effect any time they wish but cannot walk on the surface again until they recast the Ritual.

CALIX SECRETUS

The sorcerer is able to turn a mundane object into a receptacle for their Blood, allowing them to store surprising quantities of it there to be retrieved for later use.

Ingredients: An object that fits in the caster's hand, and Blood of the user.

Process: The user drenches the object with their Blood and speaks the words of the Ritual. When complete, the object absorbs the Blood.

System: The process takes an hour. Make a Ritual roll, and if successful, the vampire imbues the object with an amount of Blood from the caster. If the caster wishes to release their Blood from the object, they need to say the command word. The amount of Blood stored can sate one Hunger for every two Rouse Checks made when storing the Blood. (Storing a single Rouse Check's worth of Blood allows for a ghoul to get their fix or for use in another Ritual requirement.)

SOPORIFIC TOUCH

The blood sorcerer can convert a dose of their own vitae into a touch-activated narcotic that renders a victim uninhibited and vulnerable to Disciplines such as Presence and Dominate, as well as attempts at mundane manipulation, coercion, or interrogation.

Ingredients: A small amount of hashish or other narcotic substance.

Process: The chosen substance is mixed with the user's Blood and rubbed between their fingers as the incantation is read (or whispered). The Ritual takes only a few minutes to prepare.

System: Make a Ritual roll vs. the Stamina + Resolve of the target when they make contact with the affected vitae. For the remainder of the scene, the victim suffers a dice penalty equal to the margin of win on the Ritual roll on all resistance pools involving Composure or Resolve. (Apply the penalty only once if the pool involves both Attributes.) The narcotic vitae retains its potency until it is touched, up until the end of the scene.

Level 3 Rituals

FIRE IN THE BLOOD

This Ritual allows a vampire to invoke the anguish of fire in a victim's blood. Blistering heat ravages the target's veins and causes intense pain. This Ritual differs from the Cauldron of Blood power (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 274); it is usable from a distance and a more efficient way to incapacitate rather than kill the victim.

Ingredients: A sample of the target's blood, a visual depiction of the target such as a photo, painting, or video recording, and a candle made from red wax or a lighter made of iron.

Process: The vampire concentrates on the visual depiction of their target (which can be the individual in person) and burns the target's blood sample, usually held in a Petri dish, glass bottle, or vial, over the flame. The effect occurs almost immediately, as the victim's blood heats up in their veins.

System: Make a Ritual roll following the incantation versus the target's Resolve + Occult (or Resolve + Fortitude, if the target is a creature with this Discipline). Each point of the caster's margin is applied as Superficial Health damage that also inflicts wracking pain upon the victim, forcing them to incur a two-dice penalty to Physical pools for the remainder of the scene. On a critical win, the penalty increases to three dice. A Kindred target must make a Rouse Check due to the damage to their vitae. A victim can only be affected by this Ritual once per night.

ONE WITH THE BLADE

Certain Kindred develop a close relationship with a favored weapon, in some rare cases carried with them for centuries of use. Such a weapon never rusts or dulls so long as it remains in the vampire's possession.

If someone else physically claims it as their own, it ages rapidly, like a ghoul denied vitae. If the weapon remains usable following this degeneration, it can inflict grievous harm on its original owner — the blood sorcerer — if used against them.

Ingredients: A melee weapon and enough of the caster's vitae to fully immerse it.

Process: The vampire submerges their chosen weapon in their own vitae and swears an oath dedicating their unlif to the weapon. The weapon must remain submerged without interruption until the following sunrise.

System: Once the Blood is collected and the weapon is submerged, make a Ritual roll. On a win, the weapon becomes mystically dedicated to the user. It remains of immaculate quality unless subjected to intentional harm when outside the caster's ownership. Additionally, if again anointed by the Blood of the user it gains a two-dice bonus when used in combat. The anointment takes a single turn, forces a Rouse check and lasts for a full scene. A vampire can never possess more than one weapon dedicated this way. In order to perform this ritual on a new weapon, the previous dedicated weapon must first be destroyed.

If used against its original owner it deals Aggravated damage but gains no additional dice.

Level 4 Rituals

FEAST OF ASHES

What better way to torment a rival than by turning the blood in their mouth to ashes? Kindred affected by this Ritual cannot drink blood for one night.

Ingredients: A piece of parchment with the name of the target written on it and burned, and ashes from the burned scroll.

Process: The caster writes the name of their target on a piece of parchment and burns it. They collect the ashes and use their own Blood mixed with the ashes to write the sigils required to perform the Ritual.

System: Make a Ritual roll versus the target's Resolve + Willpower. On a successful roll, the target cannot consume blood for one night, vomiting it up as if it were mortal food and drink. Only ashes satiate their Hunger and cannot bring it lower than 3, though few victims think of eating ashes unless told of the spell.



GUIDED MEMORY

By imbibing the Blood of a willing Kindred, a vampire can relive the memories of the donor, who guides them through the donor's past experiences. This can allow the vampire to "recall" memories from before they were born! In addition, these guided journeys can unlock Discipline powers, Merits, and potentially other gifts of the donor's Blood.

Ingredients: The vitae of another vampire, dried rosemary, and fresh poppies or forget-me-nots.

Process: The sorcerer burns the flowers and rosemary, blending the ashes with the donated vitae, then drinks the Blood.

System: The sorcerer selects a Memoriam goal

(*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 312), or one of the goals below:

- A Level 1 Discipline power; a one-dot Merit
- A Level 2 Discipline power; a two-dot Merit
- A Level 3 Discipline power; a three-dot Merit



The power may be encountered during the Memoriam, or the memory itself deals with the donor learning the power. The Merit may emerge from a similar circumstance, or result from the character unlocking some secret or potential in the past.

While the player may pursue a specific power or Merit, the Storyteller is the final judge of which gift they gain.

All gifts of guided Memoriam fade as new native memories overlay these resurfaced and imported ones. They last until the end of the session, or (if the guided Memoriam happened at the end of the session) until the end of the next one.

Powers

This power is independent of the sorcerer's other powers and does not count against the limit of powers they can possess in a single Discipline, although they still need to fulfill the Discipline rating requirement. This power cannot be used as a requirement to learn another power, but a character could gain an Amalgam power temporarily if they already knew the other prerequisite power.

Merits

Merit dots cannot be spread among different Merits or added to existing Merits the player character may already have.

Entering the Guided Memoriam

A guided Memoriam follows all of the same rules as a standard Memoriam except the Kindred donating the Blood and memories rolls the required Rouse check. The donor remains present throughout the scene as a spiritual or disembodied presence or guide that only the Kindred experiencing the Memoriam can interact with. Everyone experiencing the guided Memoriam must partake of the offered Blood.

Walking through another Kindred's memories is a particularly unnatural experience and inflicts penalties based on how far back in time the journey delves. The Blood offered by the Kindred donor is always considered a deep drink (*Vampire: The*

Masquerade, p. 312) and the bonuses supplied from that usually offset some of these penalties.

Additional Guided Memoriam Modifiers

- The scene takes place during or after your mortal life: lose one die
- The scene takes place less than a century before your mortal life: lose two dice
- The scene takes place one or two centuries before your mortal life: lose four dice
- The scene takes place three or more centuries before your mortal life: lose six dice

INVISIBLE CHAINS OF BINDING

The blood sorcerer binds a subject in invisible chains, confining them to a single spot for the duration of the Ritual.

Ingredients: A link of chain.

Process: The sorcerer inscribes the sigils on the chain using their own Blood. The process takes an hour, at which point the chain link can be concealed on their person to be used on a target at a later time, at which point the chain is thrown at their feet.

System: When throwing the prepared link at a target the user makes a Ritual roll against the target's Strength + Resolve. The target is unable to move from the spot for one hour per success in the margin as long as the chain link remains intact and within three yards / meters of them. A bound target suffers a four-dice penalty to any physical defense tests as well as to brawl and melee actions.

The chain link corrodes to dust at the end of the Ritual's effect.

Level 5 Rituals

ANTEBRACHIA IGNIVM

The caster of this Ritual manifests hungry flame from their flesh, using an enchanted coating of vitae like a buffer and can set items and people alight using the fire.

Ingredients: Sufficient vitae (from any vampire) to coat the caster's arms up to the elbows, and a source of flame (such as a lighter).

Process: The vampire immerses their arms in the blood and withstands the urge to feed or frenzy. After extracting their arms, exposure to flame ignites the vitae rather than the vampire it coats. The vampire can then go on to set targets alight using the fire on their skin.

System: If the user is at Hunger 4 or more, make a hunger frenzy test at Difficulty 3 to avoid draining the ingredients. At any point during the night they may expose the vitae to fire and make a Ritual roll. Any success ignites flames on the vampire's hands and arms, a spectacular display provoking a terror frenzy test (Difficulty 2) in all nearby vampires except the caster. They may touch others with Dexterity + Brawl in physical combat to inflict two Aggravated Health damage. Entering a grapple ignites the both combatants' clothes, continuing the damage each turn until they make a Composure + Survival roll (Difficulty 3) to smother the burn. The caster is only resistant to flame on their arms, and burns as usual elsewhere. The fiery arms extinguish when the caster wills it or when the scene ends.

DOMINION

The Blood Sorcerer makes themselves the sovereign of supernatural powers in their own domain, thwarting others' use of most vampiric abilities.

Ingredients: Seal made of iron embedded over every doorway in the building.

Process: The ritual takes three hours to cast. During this time, the caster must be embedding iron seals over every doorway, consecrating them with their own vitae, and carving sigils on the doors.

System: Upon a successful Ritual roll, the Blood sorcerer stops any uses of Animalism, Auspex, Dominate, or Presence except by themselves. Any uses of the Disciplines within the building still cause any Rouse checks to occur, though the amount of Blood spent to perform the ritual varies – from Rouse Check for an apartment up to five for a large manor. The Ritual lasts indefinitely but can be broken by the destruction of at least one seal.

Thin-Blood Alchemy

Thin-Blood Alchemy makes Blood Sorcery look staid and constrained. The newest of the Disciplines, its users continue to explore its potential with new formulae and new concepts seemingly emerging nightly. For more on Thin-Blood Alchemy, and more new formulae, see the **Blood Sigils** sourcebook.

Any thin-blood vampire can learn Thin-Blood Alchemy at the in-clan experience rate, even if they didn't take the Thin-Blood Alchemy merit at character creation.

Level 1 Formulae

MERCURIAN TONGUE

The alchemist can speak the native language of the mortal whose blood they used in the formula, and the native languages of those they feed from until they next sleep.

Ingredients: The alchemist's Blood, blood of a mortal who speaks a different native language than the alchemist, the tongue of a fish or bird, hot sauce from another country, and copper filings.

Activation Cost: One Rouse Check

System: The alchemist can speak the native language of the mortal whose blood they used in the formula. By spending a Willpower point and feeding from a mortal, they can switch their new language to that mortal's native language.

Duration: One night, or until the alchemist feeds from someone with the same native language as the alchemist.

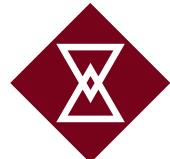
PLUG-IN

The alchemist is able to produce a low-level electrical current from their body, powering lights, chargers, or other devices.

Ingredients: The alchemist's blood, sanguine blood, liquid nitrogen, tungsten shavings, and a broken battery.

Activation Cost: One Rouse check

Dice Pool: Resolve + Alchemy





System: Make a Resolve + Alchemy test (Difficulty 2). On a success, the alchemist fills with electrical currents that can be used to power small devices, such as a smartphone, a personal computer, or a light bulb. These currents power the item by touch; it loses power when contact stops.

Duration: If lighting a room: one scene. If powering a device, until it reaches half battery charge.

Level 2 Formulae

FRIENDS LIST

This formula allows the alchemist to see the connections between mortals and Kindred. This shows as a thin, silver thread that connects between them, giving the alchemist an idea of whom a mortal may have a connection to.

Ingredients: The alchemist's Blood, phlegmatic blood, the eyes of a whippoorwill or owl or other nocturnal bird, and a silver thread.

Activation Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Alchemy

System: Upon activating this power, the alchemist makes an Intelligence + Alchemy test to see a thin,

silver thread connecting a mortal to a vampire they have some sort of connection with. (Obviously, no thread is shown if the mortal isn't connected to Kindred.) If the vampire is not physically close the alchemist can follow the thread.

Stronger connections require fewer successes to see – a ghoul might only require one success, but a distant contact or ally up to five. A mortal with multiple vampire relationships displays the strongest thread first, but the alchemist can see all of them with enough successes.

Duration: One scene

Level 3 Formulae

MANDAGLOIRE

Also called "The Funk" by alchemists who copy and adjust the formula.

The alchemist is able to make their blood emit a noxious gas that causes a rigid paralysis to mortals and supernatural creatures alike.

Ingredients: The alchemist's blood, phlegmatic blood, human fat, candle wax, ether, sesame oil, iron sulfate or verdigris, and borax.

Activation Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pool: Stamina + Alchemy vs. Stamina + Resolve

System: Tapping the athanor's vein emits a pungent stench when spilled that fills a room (or a house on a critical win). Mortals who fail to resist enter a full-body paralysis state, a waking coma, for the rest of the scene. Supernatural creatures who fail feel the effects of rigor mortis: a two-dice penalty on all Physical rolls from intense cramping.

Fixatio: The potion can be slipped into a drink or meal as a poison, or burned to act as a paralyzing fragrance, above.

Duration: Three turns

RUMOR

Alchemists frequently use this formula during negotiations to try and sway at least one person to their side; however, it can be easy to spot if anyone is paying close enough attention. Rumor allows the alchemist to make a statement and convince one person to agree with them on that statement.

Ingredients: The alchemist's blood, phlegmatic blood, pepper, oil, and graphite or mercury.

Activation Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Alchemy vs Wits + Awareness

System: Upon activation, the alchemist makes a statement and invites the target to agree, e.g. "I heard you plan to invest in the new mortuary downtown. Is that true?" On a win, the target agrees and continues to believe they agreed to the statement of their own free will. To get the target to actually act on their agreement (e.g., sign investment papers) usually requires a further Manipulation + Subterfuge (or similar) contest, but the alchemist can add their margin on the Alchemy contest to their pool in that contest.

Duration: One scene, and thereafter until something (or someone) persuasively contradicts the target's agreement ("I would never have agreed to that! I must have been drugged!").

TANK

The alchemist can use this formula to help strengthen their resistance against damage, albeit only temporarily.

Ingredients: The alchemist's Blood, choleric blood, oaked wine or bourbon, and Kevlar fibers or cement or ground tortoiseshell.

Activation Cost: One Rouse Check

System: The first time the alchemist sustains damage in a scene, reduce the damage by five. The formula then expires.

Duration: Until the alchemist takes damage or the scene ends.

Level 4 Formulae



SHORT CIRCUIT

An alchemist can use this formula to overload the batteries in any electronic or electrical equipment, including car batteries or the fuses of a building.

Ingredients: The alchemist's Blood, battery acid, melancholy blood, and salt water.

Activation Cost: One Rouse Check

System: By making a Rouse Check and touching the equipment (or metal connected to it) the alchemist automatically and silently shorts it out. This allows an alchemist to, for example, cause a blackout of an entire building by touching a power outlet, or a car by brushing against its body.

Duration: N/A

TOXIC PERSONALITY

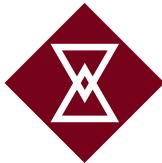
The alchemist secretes powerful, caustic bile from their pores and orifices, corroding metals, wood, and living tissue. The alchemist activating this ability may touch and manipulate the bile while not being affected by it.

Ingredients: The alchemist's Blood, choleric blood, potash or lye, animal spleen, cheesecloth, and iodine.

Activation Cost: One or two Rouse Checks

Dice Pools: Strength or Dexterity + Alchemy vs. Dexterity + Athletics

System: When active, the power allows the alchemist to corrode any material in seconds by simply making



contact with it and gains +2 damage on brawl attacks as their mere touch becomes acid. (As the alchemist controls how and where they excrete the acid their own clothes are usually unaffected.) The Storyteller is the final arbiter on the extent of damage caused but the acid is supernaturally strong and far more potent than that produced by Corrosive Vitae (see **Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 273).

The alchemist may make a second Rouse check to projectile vomit the bile as an attack (Strength + Alchemy during melee, Dexterity + Alchemy for a ranged spitting attack). On a win, the bile does the margin +3 in Superficial Health damage (Aggravated to mortals).

Athanor Corporis or Calcinatio: The alchemist or vessel can only hold this formula after distillation for a week before they begin to look sickly: blue veins popping against their pale skin, and the skin itself sagging low on their bodies. After a month, the bile corrodes the Calcinatio vessel if not tapped.

Fixatio: The container of the bile slowly corrodes, falling completely apart in Alchemy + 4 weeks.

Duration: One scene

Level 5

FLOWERING AMARANTH

This form of shared diablerie draws virtue from the vitae of a full-blooded Kindred into the alchemist and their assistants.

Ingredients: Blood from the alchemist and participating thin-bloods (up to three thin-bloods total), juice of red amaranth flowers from a plant fertilized with blood, pulverized leeches, hydrogen sulfide, and neon.

Activation Cost: Everyone participating must roll one Rouse Check

Dice Pool: Resolve + Alchemy vs. Willpower pool + Blood Potency

System: The alchemist and up to two other participants tie a silk cord around their wrists, connecting them in a triangle surrounding a full-blooded Kindred target, also so bound. The alchemist

rolls Resolve + Alchemy; each additional thin-blood participant can add one die to the pool by spending 2 Willpower. If the full-blood resists, they use their Willpower pool + Blood Potency. On a win, the participating thin-bloods gain one dot in one of the target's core clan Disciplines, determined randomly. (On a critical win, the alchemist can choose the Discipline.) They cannot learn or purchase this Discipline higher than the first dot, but in other respects can use it as though they were full-blooded Kindred. They do not gain generation, but still lose 1 Humanity and gain the black-veined aura of diablerie.

MOMENT OF CLARITY

The alchemist is able to temporarily submerge their vampiric instincts, harnessing the power of the Beast to support, rather than disturb, their mental acumen. For a short while they can reach superhuman levels of intellect and concentration while also avoiding bestial interference in their actions.

Ingredients: The alchemist's Blood, phlegmatic blood, cadmium, nootropics, and ash from burned pages of a meaningful text to the alchemist (scripture, favorite childhood novel).

Activation Cost: One Rouse Check

System: Upon activation, the alchemist gains mental clarity, their wits sharpen, and the Beast is temporarily sated. They add four dice to Mental or Discipline Skill pools, and can add four dice to Mental resistance checks against Disciplines requiring them: Dominate, Animalism, Presence, Auspex, and their amalgams. They are also immune to Messy Criticals and frenzy, if susceptible to the latter.

Duration: One scene

Predator Types

How a Kindred hunts their prey defines their unlife, more than perhaps any other aspect of their nature. Your chosen (or obsessive) hunting pattern arguably affects you even more than your clan does. After all, you may never see a fellow clan member, but you hunt every night, forever.



Vampires are, after all, fundamentally predators at heart, who must kill ... or at least hunt ... to survive. The Predator styles in the game exist to evoke that centrality and to focus the player on the constraints their nature imposes upon them. They don't necessarily mesh into every chronicle, or work with every possible player combination.

If that's a problem for your troupe, simply add one additional dot to the coterie pool for each member with an "under-powered" or "inconvenient" hunting style, defined however you'd like: by the total experience point value of the type package, by the number of net Advantage dots, or by whichever metric you feel "unbalances" the game. A less flashy or involved hunting style means more time and resources for the group, after all.

PREDATOR DISCIPLINE NOTES

Remember, your Predator type can grant an out-of-clan Discipline dot. Hunger can be stronger than bloodline.

Banu Haqim characters can take Blood Sorcery with the Bagger or Osiris Predator types.

Extortionist

The extortionist likes to force their victims to bleed for them. Ostensibly, the extortionist acquires blood in exchange for services such as security or surveillance, but as many times as the need for protection is real, it is just as often a fiction engineered to make the deal feel acceptable to the victim.

- Add a specialty: Intimidation (Coercion) or Larceny (Security)
- Gain one dot of Dominate or Potence
- Distribute three dots between the Contacts and Resources Backgrounds
- Gain the Enemy Flaw: (••) the police or a victim who escaped your extortion and now wants revenge

Predator Pool: Strength or Manipulation + Intimidation; you feed through coercion both subtle and painfully obvious.

Graverobber

Graverobbers often feed from fresh corpses, but despite their name, they also feed from mourners in cemeteries and visitors and patients in hospitals. Melancholic Resonance in a victim's blood appeals more than any other humor. This predator type often requires the vampire to hold a haven in or maintain connections to a church, hospital, or morgue.

- Add a specialty: Occult (Grave Rituals) or Medicine (Cadavers)
- Gain one dot of Fortitude or Oblivion
- Gain the Feeding Merit: Iron Gullet •••
- Gain one dot of the Haven Background
- Gain the Herd Flaw: (••) Obvious Predator (your cold nature makes you act in a deeply unsettling matter when hunting)

Predator Pool: Resolve + Medicine, sifting through the quiet dead for a body bearing rancid blood. Moving among miserable mortals for a vulnerable bite uses Manipulation + Insight. A cold corpse can slake up to 3 Hunger, but suffers the same slake penalties as bagged blood. A body fed on by another vampire, drained of blood afterwards, or missing parts slakes less.

Grim Reaper

Also known as a plague rat, you only feed on those about to die. You seek out hospice care facilities, assisted living homes and shelters. This means you are constantly on the move looking for new victims near the end of their lives and often have a difficult time settling down yourself.

- Add a specialty: Awareness (Death) or Larceny (Forgery)
- Gain one dot of Auspex or Oblivion
- Gain one dot of the Allies or Influence Background in the medical community
- Gain one dot of Humanity
- Gain the Feeding Flaw: (•) Prey Exclusion: Healthy Mortals

Predator Pool: Intelligence + Awareness or Medicine.

You may also gain a taste for specific diseases, and have an easy time identifying them by taste.

Montero

Since the Middle Ages, aristocratic Spaniards have mounted the *montería*: a deer hunt in which teams of beaters drive game onto the spears (and later the guns) of the *montero*, the huntsman. You carry on that tradition, using retainers to herd your victims to you for the kill. Your modern montería may take the form of a long con, a flash mob, a protest kettle, an endless bureaucratic shuffle, or a seemingly senseless gang pursuit.

- Add a specialty: Leadership (Hunting Pack) or Stealth (Stakeout)
- Gain one dot of Dominate or Obscure
- Gain two dots of Retainers
- Lose one dot of Humanity

Predator Pool: With an experienced team of retainers, the hunt comes down to planning: Intelligence + Stealth. With a well-practiced plan, the hunt comes down to patiently waiting for the game to arrive: Resolve + Stealth.

Pursuer

Some people will never be believed, while others will never be missed. You study your victim, learning their routine and whether they can disappear without raising a hue and cry. Then you stalk and pursue your victim throughout the night, only striking when your sensibility and your hunger reach their most delicious pitch.

- Add a specialty: Investigation (Profiling) or Stealth (Shadowing)
- Gain one dot of Animalism or Auspex
- Gain the Merit: Bloodhound •
- Gain one dot of Contacts from among the morally flexible habitués of your hunting ground: club bouncers, homeless watchers, night vendors, street dealers, etc. Someone who answers when you ask "which way did she go?"
- Lose one dot of Humanity

Predator Pool: Intelligence + Investigation to find a victim nobody misses, or Stamina + Stealth for long stalks of unknowing urban prey.

Trapdoor

Like the trapdoor spider, you build your nest and lure your prey into it. You may lurk in an amusement park dark ride or a steamy Turkish bath, haunt a house or manage a fight club, but your victims come to your place of power. There you might toy with them in terror, imprison and drain them slowly, or just drink deep and send them on their way.

- Add a specialty: Persuasion (Marketing) or Stealth (Ambushes or Traps)
- Gain one dot of Protean or Obfuscate
- Gain one dot of the Haven Background
- Gain one dot of either Retainers (your roper, major-domo, etc.) or Herd (steady visitors for whatever reason), or a second Haven dot
- Gain one Haven Flaw: Creepy (•) or Haunted (•)

Predator Pool: Charisma + Stealth if your victims enter your killing ground anticipating a fun night out, or Dexterity + Stealth if you feed on trespassers, urban explorers, or other passersby. Navigating the maze inside your den calls for Wits + Awareness (but you can add your Haven dots in dice to the pool since you know it so well).

Backgrounds

Taking Backgrounds lays out a solid framework for who a vampire was in their mortal life, and shows what parts of themselves they chose to keep or leave behind as they moved into eternal unlif. These are the weapons in the Kindred's arsenal when it comes to the mundane problems you'll face, as well as methods of surviving and preserving the Masquerade. Even if you didn't buy the Background with the coterie pool, you might share a Haven, a few Resources, or even a Herd member with your mates. Use discretion when deciding what pieces of yourself to share with your undead allies.

STANDALONE FLAWS

Remember, you do not require any Merit Points in that Background as a prerequisite to taking a Flaw. This may make some Backgrounds less effective, but can introduce interesting roleplay and fuel for plot advancement. Other players may have feedback on a Flaw you like, considering it dangerous (or un-fun) to your coterie; determine together how much your danger or folly should drive the group's story. Your Storyteller also helps determine how these Flaws manifest, as well as deciding their reliability and suitability for their chronicle.

For example, consider the Haven Flaw: Creepy, with no other dots in the Haven Background. Your vampire may know a house abandoned because it was a murder scene a few years back. Knowing that the never-removed bloodstains unnerve casual snoopers, your character has a somewhat reliable place to rest. But the downside can always come up in play, as decided by the Storyteller.

You might initially take these Flaws only to add flavor to your character, but eventually decide to fix them up in game, and eventually change them into Merits with experience points. Sure, your Creepy murder house is a stop gap from sleeping on the street or in the sun, but what if you fixed that back door so it locks again or even bought the property through a cut-out?

Allies

Allies can be as complex as a think tank a vampire may fund under the table, and as simple as childhood friends or family members. Allies show up to aid you, within their power of course. How many dots you put into your Allies will decide how reliable they can be in a pinch. When building any number of dots in this Background, take time to think about other pieces of your character that would justify having access to an Ally. For a Kindred whose Predator type is Siren, his Ally may be his agent, who can help him make introductions to the newest Toreador in the Primogen at an art exhibit. Or a Venttrue whose

Archetype is Godfather likely has both Allies and Enemies, coming from their crime family in life and a rival family moving in. Allies are never vampires, regardless of competency.

Enemies

On the other side of Allies are the background Flaw Enemies. If your Allies run a small private detective agency, their Enemies could be yours: a gang of smash-and-grab thieves who prey on their clients (and your Domain), or a police department using the bureaucracy to endlessly demand useless paperwork or seize evidence intended for you. You may also just not have Allies at all, only Enemies who try and throw as many impediments into your path as possible.

However, you can try using this Flaw to your advantage: manipulate the Enemies by using one of your Masks to denably send them after your own foes, or frame them for such an attack on a rival. Of course, Enemies already have plenty of motivation to trace such mischievousness back to you or your coterie – and you run the risk of letting them meet your Kindred foes. Discuss such tactics with the Storyteller, and with any other players in the group, as this Flaw can affect them as well. Just like Allies, Enemies are always mortals, or in some cases, ghouls.

Contacts

Where Allies help you make things happen, Contacts help you learn about things happening to others. How you have access to a particular Contact does not have to synergize with your background or Concept (a resourceful Kindred has eyes and ears everywhere after all) but a concrete reason for this specific Contact makes the story better and more plausible. Street-level coteries can leverage one and two-dot Contacts who provide street-level items and information as part of your shared milieu.

Go ahead and put a name and basic personality to a Contact, on the Relationship Map or in your notes. A character who worked as a radio personality may know the tech crew from their

studio, or a mortician may still have a connection to their funeral home. How your death changed your relationship with them – or if it didn't change it at all – provides juicy roleplaying potential in even a quick "drug buy" scene. As the vampire ages and meets new mortals to add to their arsenal, playing the game and being opportunistic about mortals you meet can create new Contacts and open up new possible story and resource opportunities.

Fame

Taking Fame as a background generally means that the Storyteller characters in a chronicle want to have access to you. There are two ways that a vampire may have Fame in a modern setting, and each carries their own dangers. Mortal fame, and having to be in the public eye, puts these Kindred at risk of being sniffed out by the Inquisition, or of being blackmailed by unscrupulous fellow Kindred. Choosing to have Fame among Kindred reduces that chance, but means that members of other sects or factions may see you as a potential ally, or threat, or source of information or access to even more famous Cainites. The Storyteller may wish to craft a Loresheet around a character's Fame, or offer the player the option of taking their Fame from an existing Loresheet group or legend.

Having Fame can make it difficult to get around places discreetly, what with humans tailing you wishing to post selfies with you, but it can protect you in some ways. Kindred risk breaching the Masquerade by overtly harming or attacking a Famous character, with human entourages and paparazzi always on the lookout in the area. You can also escape enemies by ducking into exclusive clubs or hotels with year-long waiting lists.

Infamy

The other side of the shiny Fame coin, Infamy comes with its own host of pros and cons. An infamous Kindred may have a hard time getting in good with the Prince, or humans may harass these individuals on their nightly goings-on. Other

unsavory individuals however may see a vampire with Infamy as an asset, and more likely to help a fellow scoundrel out. While this certainly doesn't help with your public image, other sketchy organizations or persons think you're one of them, and you can sometimes use that sympathy to get things done. Just be careful to not make them angry as well.

Haven

One of the most useful, and in some chronicles necessary, Backgrounds in the game. Having a reliable place to take shelter from the sunrise is vital to a Kindred's extended survival, and it doesn't hurt to make it nice either. Normally coteries build a communal Haven, but this is not mandatory, especially if it conflicts with other Backgrounds you have taken for yourself or the story you want to play.

Think creatively about your Haven, especially if you add Merits: a Laboratory has caustic chemicals and an anodized metal sink suitable for disintegrating a corpse or removing serial numbers from a gun. Your Storyteller may meet you halfway for custom havens like mortuaries: re-skin Machine Shop (p. 112) to build reanimated constructs in the back and to have a handy incinerator.

Remember, if you take no Haven dots and only a Haven Flaw (or Flaws), you still have access to a Haven. It's probably



not safe, and it's definitely not comfortable, but it keeps the sun out. The only way to not have anywhere to sleep is to choose the No Haven Flaw.

New Haven Merits

Like all Haven Merits, coteries often find it a better deal to buy these for an excellent group Haven rather than spend the same number of points (or more!) on many less-secure personal Havens.

BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENT •• OR •••

You rent out your haven to a separate business: a 9–5 call center, coffee shop, laundromat, or salon. You might even operate the business yourselves (or with Retainers) as a Corporate coterie (p. 160) although the Storyteller should avoid turning this game of personal horror into a game of business management horror.

The kine mill around living their daily lives while you sleep in the repurposed storage basement, or one of the server rooms where all of the out of service equipment is stored. The business pays a monthly rent (or profit, if you own it), providing you with a steady stream of funding.

The downside: A lot of strangers walking around, and exposure to local officials, and business taxes that potentially put you very much on the grid. Renting to criminals takes the taxes and paperwork out of the picture, but adds even more exposure to cops and other less pliable criminals. Reduce your base Haven dots by one for pools involving your Haven's privacy and for security against either financial or criminal intrusion (pick when you choose this Merit).

Dots in this Merit roughly equate to their Resources equivalent, and the Storyteller may let you use its dots instead of Resources if the substitution makes sense. It also adds two dice to pools to do things related to your business' activities or core competency, to interact with other local businesses, and to tests of preparedness to already have something you need in the moment (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 410). Businesses have

inventory and supply closets, after all.

However, if something happens to your Haven, you don't have those Resource-like dots any more: no money comes into your pool hall if it burns down or if the FBI closes it off as a crime scene. You may want to take "regular" Resources dots as a backup. They don't stack: a two-dot Business Establishment plus two dots in Resources means you have two Middle Class income streams; you're not four-dot Wealthy.

•• Your haven's business is a thriving local concern or national chain outlet.

••• Your haven's business is a dominant local concern or an office of an international company. Perhaps you have a few floors of a skyscraper, or an office building near the airport, or even a pier and warehouses on the docks where you collect fees from ships and shippers alike.

FURCUS • TO •••

Your haven lies over a knot or fork in the veins of the Earth, or a frayed spot in the Veil. While invisible to normal sight (though not perhaps to Auspex or various Rituals), it underlies a prominent area: the top of a staircase, a fountain in the garden, the center of a room. (Architecture + Occult might allow someone to deduce its location, if they know what they're looking for.) Kindred feel the pull of magical energies at the site, and kine often feel nervous or nauseated. Blood Sorcery Rituals or Oblivion Ceremonies (pick when you take this Advantage) tap into the furcus' power.

Each dot in this Merit adds one die to Ritual (or Ceremonial) dice pools used at the furcus. (At the Storyteller's discretion it may also subtract one die from Social pools used to calm or seduce mortals – or add a die when interacting with mortal hedge magicians or other occult groupies.) Bestial failures on such tests may also lead to especially horrific or eldritch results: energy from the furcus that harms or curses the sorcerer, accidental summoning of an entity, or a clear magical pulse from the haven's location. Depending on the Ceremony, a total or bestial failure might automatically impose the Haunted Flaw on the haven.

MACHINE SHOP •+

Your haven has state of the art tools, equipment, and machinery in a dedicated work space, plus supplies of oil, industrial chemicals, gasoline, and other household necessities. Each dot of this Merit adds one to the dice pool for Craft rolls, or to other tests related to building, repairing, or disassembling a piece of machinery or equipment: Intelligence + Firearms (Gunsmithing) to build a Sten submachine gun, Intelligence + Technology to fab a compound crossbow with a 3-D printer, Intelligence + Craft (Engineering) to soup up a car, etc. For particularly recondite machinery, you may have to explain how you sourced it if you don't have Resources *** or better.

Small havens with this Merit can only add to pools for one specialty of Craft: they don't have enough room for a general machine shop or for automotive work.

A three-dot machine shop can include an incinerator; a three-dot machine shop in a large haven can include a car crusher or compactor.

Haven Flaw**SHARED (• OR ••)**

Your haven is not entirely your own. Other Kindred, besides you and your coterie, have access to it and can make decisions about it without consulting you. Decide the specific conditions and determine the severity of this Flaw based on those circumstances.

The one-dot version of this Flaw covers joint havens: e.g., you have one or more Storyteller character housemates, or you and a whole clutch of fledglings squat in an abandoned building. Any problems they bring back to the haven become your problems, too. A coterie that takes a haven together does not automatically invoke this Flaw; sharing with your coterie has only as much downside as you mutually create in play.

The one-dot Shared Flaw also covers short-term havens: you're staying in an embassy or safe house or campground, with the expectation that you'll be moving on and another Kindred may arrive to

take your place at any time. Getting a new shared haven when that happens costs no more dots, but you may lose dots you put into improving the old one, in addition to moving all your belongings and re-training your Herd where to show up at night.

The two-dot version of this Flaw means you have a local landlord. Another Kindred has rights to the property (either an actual land title or a grant from the local Prince or Baron) and graciously (or not) allows you to roost there. After haven creation, you must discuss any changes you wish to make to your haven with your landlord. The landlord can enter your haven at will. Especially older Kindred landlords may also call on you for service or dirty jobs, treating you like a vassal or apparatchik.

Tremere chantries, Nosferatu warrens, and Ministry temples might be one or two-dot shared havens for characters of the appropriate clan, depending on the power balance between you and the other Kindred there.

Herd

Some Predator types rely on this Background more heavily than others, such as Consensualist, while the Predator type Blood Leech won't be able to make effective use of this Background at all. The chronicle may also help decide how Herds are used, if allowed at all, as contested territories, domains in war zones, or nomadic and fugitive coteries make it harder to access this Background. Herds may also blend into other Backgrounds, allowing you to get more story mileage out of mortals. Retainers and Allies may have tie-ins to a player's Herd, and the Storyteller may allow players to use similar combinations with other Backgrounds as well.

Influence

Based in political power, Influence adds intrigue and political warfare to a chronicle. Using Influence is more than just manipulating city politics or media in the abstract. Vampires of certain clans may have

easier times adding and using Influence in various sectors than others. Brujah have an affinity for connecting with political activists or local militias. Malkavians more likely have Influence in weird collectives or mystical circles.

When creating Influences and deciding how they connect to a character, think about Predator styles as well: Who should you manipulate to help you hunt? Influence also provides backup protection for your coterie's Domain. Within a coterie, having a wide spread of Influence (like a wide net of Contacts) gives your group flexibility in planning and reaction to enemy action. For example, having influence in a local political office would not be as effective at blocking off street traffic as a police district may, but the alderman's office can put your Haven guards on the list of city-approved "youth action groups."

Despised and Disliked

These two Flaws allow for interesting gameplay if you wish to crank up your vampires' self-reliance in their own Domain. Despised turns one group or region of the city actively against you, and even neutrals stay cold, while Disliked leaves everyone against you equally — either of which you can play up when rallying your own neighborhood. Of course, when you send your Allies and Retainers into other hoods, they may run into extra problems even if those Flaws don't affect them (or your Contacts) directly.

You might also run into those consequences on a night out: a Toreador disliked for uploading a video slamming the local soccer team gets into endless sports arguments when they just want to feed in peace. You can even combine Despised or Disliked with regular Influence: the alderman only meets with you in a parking garage and insists on being paid in cash, but she still zones your nightclub for all-night operations and a loading dock.

Loresheets

Loresheets exist to highlight a certain aspect of the world for the interested player and Storyteller,

without forcing every player to master the entire minutiae of the **Vampire** setting. A Loresheet foregrounds some group, historical event, or elder *as it relates specifically to the player*, encouraging them to take ownership of that aspect and reminding the Storyteller that vampiric arcana exists to serve the story at the table tonight, not as mandatory history lessons.

A Bloodline is a specific kind of Loresheet that acts as its own Background type.

Bloodline

You have been Embraced into a distinct bloodline with unique qualities. This gives you access to a second Loresheet that only members of your bloodline possess. All other rules and limitations of the Loresheet Background (**Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 190) apply — "Bloodline" is a distinct Background, and as such you can possess an Advantage from both it as well as the Loresheet Background. Most Hecata also have a distinct Bloodline.

Like Loresheet, you can only choose one Bloodline, although you can have one Bloodline and one Loresheet. Storytellers might decide that previously-published bloodline-related Loresheets (such as "Descendant of Hardestadt" and "Descendant of Helena" from **Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 390–391) count as Bloodlines, allowing characters with those Loresheets to take an additional, non-lineage-related Loresheet.

Mask

Political intrigue and political horror imply shifting or alternate identities, a key part of this Background. At its base, this Background lets you hold a job, drive a car, pay your phone bill, use a bank card, and otherwise remain somewhat tethered to mortal society. A chronicle that emphasizes shifted or alternate identities might also let a character with multiple Masks mitigate problems from Fame or hide out from Adversaries — for a while.

Zeroed and Cobbler

Zeroed synergizes well with a character acting as a spy or agent for their sect, a ghost in the machine for their own ends or those of their patrons. Cobbler gives a player the ability to make masks for others, for a fee and small risk. This Background makes an excellent side hustle and story hook: characters can sell their craft for cash or boons, while also creating potential dangers from their clients' hunters and enemies.

Known Blankbody and Known Corpse

Like other Background Flaws, these don't require the character to have any dots in the Mask Background. They act as storytelling vehicles, drawing the unwanted attention of enemies, or even loved ones. A character careful to avoid surveillance cameras or the attention of the security services can stay under the Coalition's radar even with Known Blankbody, but Known Corpse is harder to shake without active disguise powers.

Your famous death leaves you vulnerable any time mortals notice you: perhaps Netflix made a documentary about your cold case murder, or activists plastered your face all over the city during your candlelight vigil. Did you run for local office? Did your grin adorn billboards advertising your ambulance-chasing law firm?

Mawla

In many cases, older or more experienced Kindred serve as your Mawla. A sire who seeks the advancement of their childer makes a standard Mawla, or some member of the faction or sect that "recruited" you is assigned as your zampolit or confessor to make sure you don't squander the potential your makers saw in you. However, you might have a young Mawla: a loyal friend from your mortal days, also Embraced and remarkably still trustworthy.

More dots might indicate a Mawla in a more valuable position: a neonate worth one dot

normally could be worth two or even three dots as your informant in the personal entourage of the local Baron or Prince. It's up to the Storyteller to determine whether having a spy in the enemy camp is worth more or less than a spy in your own lord's court in this chronicle.

Adversary

Since an Adversary may drive the plot at any time, the Storyteller and player should discuss the specifics early and in some detail: the Adversary's sect or faction inevitably winds up playing a major role in the chronicle's narrative so it's best to take an Adversary who already fits into it. More powerful Adversaries target you as leverage against their real enemy: your sire or Mawla or other nominal superior.

That said, a personal Adversary can be interesting: perhaps you and your Adversary were Embraced at the same time and have competed for advancement within your sect ever since. Or reverse the perspective: you're actually your Adversary's great enemy. Perhaps they betrayed you, framed you before the Prince, and got you ejected from the court or exiled. Now you're back, and your greatest goal is to bring your Adversary down.

Boons and Debts

In most cases Status, Influence, Mawla, and other Backgrounds sufficiently represent a character's social resources, but there may be times when the story calls for more granular use of debts and boons (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, pp. 314–315) owed to specific individuals: "My Sire saved your Haven during the Revolt, remember," is more exciting and intriguing than a dot in Status. It's also less generally useful, but provides more specific leverage on a specific vampire.

Individual characters can acquire one-off Boons from other Kindred during character generation. Minor Boons cost half the points (rounded up) of the equivalent Mawla (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 193). Major Boons cost one dot more than Minor

BOON AND DEBT COSTS

Minor Boon	Major Boon	Creditor / Debtor	Minor Debt	Major Debt	Life Debt
•	••	Neonate	(•)	(•)	(••)
•	••	Ancilla	(•)	(•)	(••)
••	•••	Elder	(•)	(••)	(••)
••	•••	Primogen or Anarch Council member	(••)	(••)	(•••)
•••	••••	Prince or Baron	(••)	(•••)	(•••)

Boons. Characters may not purchase Life Boons at character creation without explicit Storyteller agreement. If the Storyteller agrees, a Life Boon costs three dots more than the equivalent Minor Boon.

Debts provide many fewer points when taken as Flaws than they cost as Merits. Debt sucks, what can we say? However, being in Major Debt (owing a Major Boon) to a higher-Status vampire is even worse than that. Once per story the character's creditor or their minions can ask them for a favor they cannot refuse without risking being shunned, blood hunted, or worse. This favor can take on any form and often means exposing the character to mortal danger or reputational collapse.

If a character finds themselves in Life Debt to a high-Status vampire, they might as well just get the Blood Bond and enthrall themselves. Even non-Caitiff vampires may experience such indebtedness as Debt Peonage (p. 127).

In all other ways, Minor, Major, and Life Boons function according to the descriptions in **Vampire: The Masquerade** (pp. 314–315). Track all debts and boons individually. Note that trivial boons, as simple, easily discharged promises, are not tracked using this system.

Boons and Debts cannot be purchased or bought off with experience points. After character creation, they can only be gained (or lost) through the character's actions in play.

Resources

In the WORLD OF DARKNESS and the world of the living, money always talks. Treat Resources as the last line of persuasion or interrogation when

charisma fails, or when your other Backgrounds can't reach the problem. Resources can always reach someone. Younger vampires like yourself have a better understanding of what mortals can do for you than older Kindred who see them only as food or pets. And you have both the knowledge and the means to motivate them. Maybe you can't stop an elder with money, but a thick stack of benjamins can convince plenty of mortal arsonists, reporters, or cops to try their best to do so.

Determine the source of your Resources, the more individual the better for the story. Do you sell Malkavian predictions (suitably redacted) to day traders, or live off the royalties of a decades-old hit song? Did you find a big bag of Mafia cash in the woods? Think of your Predator style as a possible Resources explanation: do you tithe your worshippers as an Osiris, or roll your victims for cash or drugs as an Alleycat?

Storytellers should also be mindful about allowing high (4+) Resource values. Gaining entrance to an exclusive club becomes far less interesting when a character can just buy the premises with a phone call.

Retainers

Retainers do things and go places that Allies and Contacts won't, often even commit murder or other felonies. Mortals might even feel enough love for or loyalty to you to do such things without being ghouls or thralls. Since Retainers should be named individuals, it doesn't hurt to look at their motives and their conditioning, and for the Storyteller to ask

what might theoretically break the relationship.

The relationship itself varies. Some Kindred simply keep Retainers as reliable errand people who can go outside in daylight. Others use their Retainer as a confidant, a sympathetic ear to help shoulder the burden of eternal life and the sadness that comes with it. Whatever responsibility you feel for your Retainer, their responsibilities to you dwarf it. In troupe-style chronicles (p. 198), players often portray other characters' Retainers. Especially in such chronicles, players need to recognize the power dynamics and roleplaying challenges involved (see *Power Differentials*, p.220).

Stalkers

The temptation with this Flaw, which the Storyteller should absolutely encourage, is to use the Stalker as a “free” (if somewhat unreliable) Retainer – which of course blows up on you once you actually depend on it. The Storyteller should insist that you answer two main questions when you take this Flaw: what does the stalker want from you, and why haven’t you just killed them already? The tension between these two answers drives the stalker subplot.

Even more than most Flaws, build this Flaw collaboratively with the whole group to avoid unpleasant mirrors of real-life stresses and problems for another player. Absolutely discuss *Veils and Lines* (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 423) regarding when the stalker is played, who plays them, and their role (if any) in the game. It’s a bit harder to come up with a coterie Flaw version of Stalkers, except of course the classic “the coterie is a band” setup.

Status

Status generally doesn’t transfer between sects, as each sect values different accomplishments and virtues. Status might also apply more narrowly than a full sect, denoting rank in a Ministry temple or Tremere chantry, for instance. Status and Fame somewhat overlap, but Status generally confers respect. A vampire might have Fame for killing



a rival in dramatic fashion, but a Banu Haqim warrior might also (or instead) have a dot of Status in their clan for their action. Status might also overlap with Loreshheets, which could justify a somewhat murky or nebulous Status: a double agent of Theo Bell might have actual Status in the Anarch soviet, and a cover Status established within the Camarilla by some kind of shadowplay. Discuss local, limited, or murky Status with the Storyteller to make sure their chronicle focuses on challenges such Status meets or flavors.

CITY SECRETS •

You have somehow acquired a damning secret about the city's Kindred power structure, perhaps specifically about someone in it. Decide the exact nature of the information with the Storyteller. If the secret refers only to mortal business ("the Mayor is secretly fucking a Russian Mafiya soldier"), it's just a way to explain your Influence.

A few power players in the city know you have this information, or strongly suspect it. Hopefully, you've made arrangements for the secret to get out upon your mysterious disappearance. You could sell this information for a high price, but its truest value is protection: those who want it to stay secret have some interest in keeping you happy. Of course, if you push your luck, they may decide keeping you quiet forever takes higher priority.

This Background resembles Influence more than Status in some circumstances; the Storyteller should determine when or if it adds to a Social pool, or possibly a Research or Insight test.

You can take this Background a maximum of three times, with a different secret each time.

New Merits and Flaws

Merits and Flaws can help make a character more distinct and individual. For more information on Merits and Flaws, see p. 179 of *Vampire: The Masquerade*.

Most of these new Advantages (those with the  symbol) apply to mortals, ghouls, and Kindred alike. In some cases, the Storyteller (or the player) should come up with a sufficiently persuasive explanation for non-Kindred to have, e.g., supernatural-seeming Luck of the Devil. For specific Caitiff, Thin-blood, and Ghoul Advantages, see those sections (pp. 126, 134, and 141).

Merits

Looks Merits

FAMOUS FACE •

You bear a passing or very close resemblance to someone very well known. Sometimes this works in your favor. Other times this results in "Charlize Theron bit that cop on the neck!" You gain two dice to social tests in circumstances where you can leverage your lookalike status, but suffer a two-dice penalty whenever you try to hide in a crowd or in other areas where you want to avoid recognition.

INGÉNUE •

You look completely innocent and blameless, making others believe in your good intentions much easier. Add two dice to any rolls related to avoiding suspicion or deflect blame, at the Storyteller's discretion.

REMARKABLE FEATURE •

You possess a rare, memorable feature such as a striking eye color, atypical pupils, or an unusual complexion, providing a two-dice bonus to social interactions with strangers. (The novelty quickly wears off.) Take a one-die penalty to disguise yourself.

Feeding Merit

VESSEL RECOGNITION •

One easy way to piss off a Kindred is to feed off their kine. Kindred guard their herds jealously, and you've learned how to avoid them, being able to smell out

which mortal belongs to a herd or is a particular Blood Doll.

A win on a Resolve + Awareness test at Difficulty 2 lets you smell whether a mortal has been fed on recently. A critical win lets you sense if the feeding is recurring, likely making them part of someone's herd.

Mythic Merits



LUCK OF THE DEVIL

Someone else will always take the fall for your missteps as long as someone's available to take the blame. Whether this is because of a face everyone loves, a guardian angel, or something far darker, you manage to slip, skate, and dodge out of trouble, though you're in constant need of new friends as you burn through them like a wildfire.

Once per session you can have a misfortune — an attack, an accusation, a blame, or anything in between — directed at you befall someone else close to you. This can be an ally, retainer, coterie mate, or even a Touchstone. The Storyteller is the final arbiter on what counts as a proper misfortune.

NUIT MODE ..

Your body doesn't automatically revert to the death-state each night, enabling you to keep things like new haircuts, tattoos, and other body modifications at your option. You are still able to return to your original death-state, though, and can mend any later modifications as if they were Aggravated damage. This Merit is available only to Kindred of Blood Potency 1 or lower. (If your Blood becomes more potent at any point, the Merit no longer grants any benefit, but if you drop back down to Blood Potency 1 it returns.)

Other Merits



CHECK THE TRUNK •

Mercenaries and gig workers have to keep their tools of the trade close at hand. They never know what their next job might require, but they do their best



to keep a supply of useful tools close at hand. Caitiff, Ravnos, Anarchs, and even some mortals especially benefit from this Merit.

You have easy access to an armory or cache of tools and hardware. None of these items can exceed a value available to a character with Resources 2. Common items found in a cache could include a sawed-off shotgun, rusty bolt cutters, half a roll of duct tape, homemade stakes, half empty squeeze bottles of lighter fluid, and whatever else the Storyteller allows. Take an additional two dots in Preparedness pools (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 410) for items within this Resource band. Losing your car, haven, or other storage space may interrupt this Merit until you build up a new stash.



SIDE HUSTLER ..

Folks on the fringes constantly have to grind to keep the little that they have. Juggling a million tasks, favors, and debts has become second nature to them.

Once per session you can get your hands on an item, a piece of information, or access to an event as if you had two dots in the appropriate Resources, Contacts or Influence Background. (Items obtained with Resources likely have to be returned intact.) Often this requires you to spend part of the night calling in markers and pressing your informal network.



TEMPERED WILL ...

Your stubborn spirit didn't die during your Embrace, and you find yourself knowing when people are trying to force you to do something against your will.

You are always aware of when someone is using Dominate and Presence against you. Once per session, when resisting Dominate or Presence, you may add two additional dice to your resistance pool. Only someone with no dots in either Dominate or Presence can take this Merit. (If you acquire the Disciplines afterward, or temporarily as with thin-bloods, the Merit no longer grants any benefit while you possess them.)

UNTOUCHABLE

The powers that be are very reluctant to punish you for even the most egregious crimes. Perhaps you're the secret power behind the throne, or you hold some damning blackmail over the local Baron, or you're the secret childe of a Justicar or other political potentate. Once per story you can escape all official punishment for a crime that would otherwise see you destroyed or cast out of your sect, though you may be privately reprimanded or face consequences through unofficial channels. The Court or Council often ignores your lesser crimes as well, but lower-level Kindred may take it upon themselves to step to you for your perceived transgressions and flaunted impunity.



Flaws

Looks Flaws

STENCH (•)

Your breath and body odor are supernaturally foul, redolent of open graves and rotting flesh. Even Nosferatu object to your stink. You can take minor steps to minimize the stench, such as splashing on plenty of cologne, but that causes other problems. Lose one die from seduction and similar Social dice pools, and lose two dice from Stealth pools against opponents who can smell, unless you are upwind.



TRANSPARENT (•)

For whatever reason, you aren't a good liar, and it shows. You either have a terrible poker face or your parents instilled in you a strong urge to be truthful even when it hurts.

Lose one die from any pools requiring Subterfuge. You cannot gain dots in Subterfuge.

Feeding Flaw

VEIN TAPPER (•)

You find the act of feeding extremely personal and cannot take blood from mortals while being observed. This means you often feed from the unaware and go out of your way to find (or create) drugged or unconscious victims.

Mythic Flaws

STARVING DECAY ..

Your undead body is constantly on the verge of reverting to a corpse and only staving off Hunger keeps you from decaying.

At any point in which your Hunger is 3 or higher your body shrivels and decays, incurring a two-dice penalty to physical tests as well as social interactions with mortals, not to mention risking the Masquerade.

TWICE-CURSED ••

You are cursed with additional Bane, making you labor under additional weight borne out of your clan founder's flawed nature.

Take your clan's variant Bane (see p. 56) *in addition* to your regular Bane. The Storyteller can prohibit this Flaw if the second Bane would cause problems for, or lack impact in, the chronicle.

Other Flaws** KNOWLEDGE HUNGRY (•)**

You always feared that you wouldn't have the time to learn everything you wanted about what's truly important. Well, that's one problem solved. The time to learn is not always now, though — you regrettably put a bookmark in your studies and attend to more life-threatening matters.

At character creation, pick a topic that your character hungers to study. When your character comes across books, tutorial videos, college seminars, or other methods of learning about their chosen subject, make a Willpower roll at Difficulty 3 to resist chasing their obsession.

PRESTATION DEBTS (•)

You owe another Kindred (or two others) two minor boons. The debt-holder wields more power and influence than you within vampire society, though not necessarily within your sect. They receive a one-die bonus in Social combat against you while they hold your marker. They may call in either of these debts at any time, but practically they do so when you really really don't want to (or absolutely can't) pay them off. However, if you do manage to successfully pay off both debts, you don't need to take another Flaw to "balance" your character. The creditor still likes to lord it over you, though, and retains the one-die bonus.

You can absolutely take this Flaw alongside one or more Minor Boons (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, pp. 193 and 315) at character creation. You cannot take this Flaw owing another player's character the boons in question.

For more a more detailed breakdown of Prestation Debts and Boons as Backgrounds, see *Boons and Debts*, p. 115.

 RISK-TAKER (•)

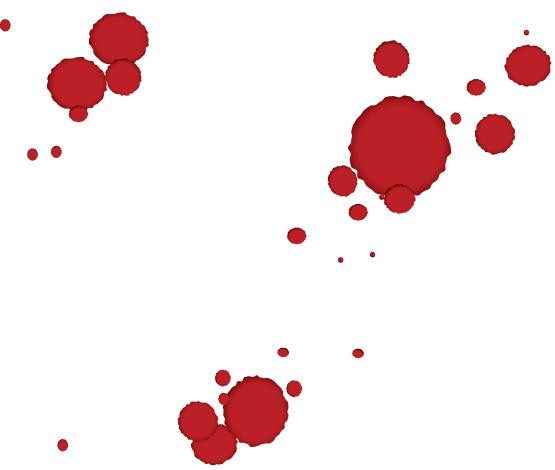
You're one of those people who feel compelled to take every chance to experience life at its fullest.

When confronted with a chance to indulge a risky temptation you haven't done before (such as snorting a new drug, imbibing vampire blood, or taking a Kindred lover), you suffer a two-dice penalty to all actions until you either partake of the new experience or the scene ends. This Flaw doesn't compel you to do something suicidal ... but you may not always accurately predict the full consequences of your actions.

 WEAK-WILLED (••)

You struggle to assert your own personality when confronted with the will of another. You may not necessarily be submissive; perhaps you feel more confident when following another person's lead. You might be part of a vampire's entourage or Herd, but you aren't necessarily loyal to that vampire.

Take a one-die penalty to Social pools against your leader or superior. Even when you're aware of an attempt to sway you mentally or emotionally (such as with Dominate or Presence), you may not use the active resistance systems to avoid those effects. ■





2022

Chapter Four:

CASTOFFS

Perhaps we are the discards — or we could be the part He keeps. This mystery is what keeps us all going, to see what happens in the next chapter.

— ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER

Vampires think they run the world, or they like to say they do. Those who see them from three steps behind know differently.

The Kindred have enough enemies to worry about, one would think, without creating more through disdain, cruelty, panic, neglect, and oppression. But they do just that, castigating the clanless, the thin-blooded, their own ghoul creations, and the kine they would truly die without as beneath their notice.

They call them outcasts or castoffs, parodies of their imagined greatness or creatures designed only to serve and to be served as food for their betters.

Some so-called outcasts take the scorn and climb the Kindred ladder as best they can. Others refine it into blades. Many do both. Still more try to survive on their own outside the supercilious gaze of the full-blooded ... until they have no choice but to look back in anger.

This chapter looks at those who the Kindred refuse to see: the clanless Caitiff, the ominously thin-blooded, the underestimated ghouls, and the unfortunate mortals suddenly awake in a world of darkness.

VAMPIRE THE MASQUERADE

Castoff Summary Sheet



CAITIFF

THE ORPHANS
stand up, suspect, trade favors, play all sides
SUSPECT

SLOW DISCIPLINE IMPROVEMENT

DISCIPLINE



THIN-BLOODS

THE MECURIANS
survive, seek, yearn, ally, distill alchemical formulae
CANNOT CREATE BLOOD BONDS NO BANES OR COMPULSIONS

DISCIPLINE



- Thin Blood
- Lifelike
- No Frenzy
- Sunlight

GHOULS

THE SERVANTS

serve, watch, placate, top from the bottom, rebel?
VITAE ADDICT

DISCIPLINE



- Quick Healer

MORTALS

THE KINE

love, live, fight, fascinate, organize
FRAGILE

DISCIPLINE

- Human Spirit
- Possible True Faith



Choose any Discipline



Discipline associated with the Resonance last drunk.



Thin-Blood Alchemy*



Level 1 power in domitor's Discipline

* Any thin-blood vampire can learn Thin-Blood Alchemy at the in-clan experience rate, even if they didn't take the Thin-Blood Alchemy merit at character creation.





CAITIFF

Caitiff often find their place in Kindred society as guns for hire, the ultimate expendables. However, their deep understanding of thin-bloods and of the streets increasingly makes them sought-after scourges in the Camarilla and Ashirra. These so-called Panders seek the respect and power they were denied as fledglings by hounding their thin-blood kin out of the territories of the Ivory Tower. While the Church of Caine may never welcome a Freestyler to sit through a sermon, the Primogen always have a need for someone who doesn't mind getting fresh blood under their fingernails. The Anarch movement finds it easier to use Caitiff in the frontlines than argue whether they deserve the same respect as a Brujah or Gangrel, especially with the influx of former Camarilla and Ministry vampires into their ranks. Those Caitiffs who excel may even find themselves the favored pet of a Venttrue Prince or a Tzimisce Baron. Not quite family, but a tool that the domain comes to rely upon to keep others in line. While a few Ashirra have adopted exceptional Caitiff in some emirates, this doesn't seem likely to catch on among their Camarilla allies. Even in the Ashirra, the clanless more often serve as enforcers than as officers.

Thin-bloods and their fellow clanless hurl the insult "sellout" at Orphans who find a place for themselves among other Kindred but the clanless have little time for regrets and recriminations. The place they have carved out may be at the bottom of the tower, but they remember worse places, when superstitious elders howled for their extermination. Even these nights, reactionary Princes in some domains still hunt Caitiff for sport, and everyone happily uses them as scapegoats. The Panders are survivors, not converts. All Caitiff know their unlivings hinge on staying useful and staying out of

the limelight. While they may find themselves better off than the thin-bloods these nights, it's not because they have won the love and respect of the clans. They've adapted to become part of the system that would turn on them if it didn't need them to keep running. So while the court may praise a clanless Cainite, the Caitiff know no honor awaits them there regardless of their usefulness and service. The clans do not look upon them and see the reflection of their Dark Father. Instead, the most devout Kindred see Caitiff as omens of their end.

More powerful than thin-bloods, the clanless nevertheless share many hallmarks with their barely vampiric siblings: adaptability, survival, and innovation. What thin-bloods scrounge up with hard-won Alchemical formulae, Caitiff seem to intuitively evolve: new capabilities that both exemplify and subvert their vampiric natures. Despite such similarities, jaded Caitiff seldom make common cause with thin-bloods they see as naïve and clueless. Those Caitiff that do adopt a crew of Duskborn may revel in the role of big brother but are hard-pressed to not to give them up when the powers that be require a blood sacrifice. But there's no ethical consumption under the Camarilla and all that, and there's always a new gang of thin-bloods to play fun uncle with around the next corner.

Those unbound who don't sell out to a cruel Prince, a petty Baron, or a pragmatic Emir often drop out of the game entirely. Those movement Caitiffs who thought the rise of the Anarchs meant their empowerment were quickly disabused of that notion as the Ministry and Brujah took charge even though most of them were very late to the party. These burnt-out Caitiffs have no interest in getting sucked into someone else's Jyhad. They do what they must to get by, but they refuse to believe in anything again. These drop-outs and slackers know all the lies and slogans meant to gaslight them back into the fold. Despite secretly cheering on the fall of Kindred society they know even that is a sucker's game. These Caitiff wear their hard-won cynicism as a badge of honor – their only mistake was ever believing in anything in the first place.



Caitiff Merits

These Merits are only available to Caitiff characters.

FAVORED BLOOD ••••

Vampiric power unfettered by the curse of the Ancients flows through you. Your intuitive and legendary command of Kindred prowess likely inspires both awe and fear in other vampires.

You can buy dots in any Discipline even if you've never tasted the blood of another vampire with that Discipline. Cannot be taken with the Muddled Blood Flaw (see p. 127).

MARK OF CAINE ••

You bear a mark, either physical or spiritual, that gives other vampires pause. Camarilla and Ashirra vampires look on your mark with fear, while Anarchs claim to respect you for playing with elder superstition — but they don't look at your mark

too closely either. Even Sabbat Cainites hesitate to tangle with you, though particularly religious Noddists might target you for special attention.

You gain two bonus dice on any attempt to intimidate, bully, or cow other vampires who subscribe to the myth of Caine. Anyone attempting to commit diablerie on you cannot add their Blood Potency to the roll and any failure to their roll results in a bestial failure.

MOCKINGBIRD •••

Orphans are often unfairly labeled thieves and diablerists, but some actually do have the power to mimic the powers of other vampires after tasting their blood.

For one night after drinking one Hunger die worth of blood from a vampire, you can choose and employ one Discipline power possessed by the Kindred from whom you fed. The power cannot be of a level higher than your highest Discipline, though you do not need to possess the same Discipline. Roll Rouse Checks as normal to activate this power. Any other rolls required to use the power use the donor's Discipline level and your Attributes. During this time, you mimic the donor's clan bane with the same severity level as the donor. Only one power can be "borrowed" in this way per night.

SUN-SCARRED •••••

While it's a common myth among Kindred that Caitiff and thin-bloods can walk in the sunlight, only a rare few have anything resembling that ability. These few are sometimes called Daywalkers, and those Caitiff who have this power usually keep it a secret for fear of being hunted and cannibalized by others. Unsurprisingly, Outcasts who can walk in the day may find themselves sought out for their particular acumen and the advantage it grants them over those who must slumber by day.

The first turn you are exposed to Sunlight in a scene, take no Health damage, take 1 Aggravated Willpower damage, and automatically succeed on any rolls to resist terror frenzy. For the remainder of the scene all Aggravated Health damage you take from sunlight is instantly converted into Superficial damage.

UNCLE FANGS •••

The local thin-bloods know you as a mentor and guide. Whatever your true motivations, you can often find aid among the Duskborn without having to ask twice.

You have easy access to a local coterie of three to five thin-bloods. They often know what's happening on the street before anyone else, and can sometimes provide you with Alchemical concoctions. Treat this group as an Ally group (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 192), though contrary to regular Allies, this group is undead, if only just. Cannot be taken with Liquidator (p. 127).

Caitiff Flaws

BEOFULING VITAE (••)

When you Embrace mortals or leave them for dead from feeding, the Blood twists them into maniacal corpses with an unquenchable hunger.

Any mortal you Embrace or kill by feeding returns as a desperate wight within a few nights. While these unfortunates are often too weak to be much of a threat (treat as a Ghoul; see *Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 372), sometimes a trick of the Blood sees a real monster arise (treat as a Wight; see *Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 375). Your unlif is a steady stream of clean-up jobs, for as soon as the local Prince or Baron gets wind of your condition you are likely to receive a personal (and terminal) visit from the powers that be.

CLAN CURSE (••)

A Caitiff by hair's breadth, you still suffer the curse of your sire's clan. While this can sometimes help you pass for a member of that clan, most often than not it just adds another pain to your tortured existence.

You suffer from a vampire clan bane of your choice, likely that of your sire (if you even know who they are). Its severity is halved (round down, minimum of 1).

DEBT PEON (••)

Orphans often have to sell their proverbial souls to Princes and Barons to find their place in

the night. These debts add up and few Caitiff ever climb out of the pocket of those in power, because the prestation system breaks down when Kindred society refuses to recognize the political existence, much less the rights, of the debtor.

You owe several minor boons, or even a few major boons, to a high-Status vampire, possibly originally incurred by your Sire. Tracking these debts proves pointless, as the creditor extracts new boons whenever they have leverage over you and only considers any boon settled when forced to by their peers. They have a two-dice bonus to Social combat against you in front of other Kindred. Refusal to honor your debt adds the Shunned (••) Flaw, and may even result in a Blood Hunt against you.

LIQUIDATOR (•)

Thin-bloods call you a Pander and avoid you whenever possible. They even refuse to speak openly with your coterie mates or other associates. Perhaps you served as a scourge, or just displayed particular cruelty as a member of the Sheriff's posse.

Take a two-dice penalty to all your Social skill dice pools against thin-bloods, other than Intimidation. Cannot be taken with Uncle Fangs (p. 127).

MUDDLED BLOOD (•)

Your Blood cannot recall its nature and must be reminded of its inherent power every time you want to strengthen it.

Even if you already possess a Discipline you must drink the Blood of someone who possesses it in order to buy dots in it. Cannot be taken with the Favored Blood Merit (see p. 126).

WALKING OMEN (••)

Many vampires rely on prescience or read omens on a nightly basis, and you happen to act as a magnet, skewing these supernatural compasses.

Any scrying, premonitions, or other forms of future- or fortune telling in your domain regularly points to you as a source of disaster and misfortune. While your close allies have learned to tune it out, other oracles single you out, screeching, when you are not being hunted by those who want to redirect a future that they believe will come to pass at your hands.

The effects of this Flaw are ultimately up to the Storyteller, but it should at the very least cause one serious altercation per story.

WORD-SCARRED (•)

Your body or a portion of it is covered in ancient texts of vampiric lore. Perhaps your sire inscribed them upon you, or they appeared on their own after the Embrace. Either way, shadowy forces conspire to use or destroy this lore.

The major occult foe or force in the chronicle often interferes in your life, seeking to imprison, flense, mind-wipe, Blood Bond, or otherwise neutralize you. (They would never lower themselves to recruit a Caitiff, don't be silly. You're just a lost, disobedient book to them.) Maybe two such forces fight over the right to edit you! Any other character who "reads" the full text on your skin learns a terrible secret regarding Gehenna, Noddist prophecy, Bahari mysteries, or the like. You and the Storyteller may decide this together, or it may be a mystery to you!



THIN-BLOODS

Many Kindred despise thin-bloods as weak, or actively hunt them as harbingers of end times. Many elders did both, and their heirs see little reason to depart from this tradition. The weaker ancillae project their fear of their own weakness onto the Duskborn, arguing that letting the thin-blooded circulate through the streets weakens the city. Thin-bloods use up valuable resources, and their growing numbers attract Hunter attention. Also they don't know their place, and disrespect their betters. Keeping them around poses an intolerable risk to full-blooded, real vampires.

Fuck that. You didn't ask to be Embraced into their shitty society, and you sure don't need their

permission to stay. But if you're going to take that attitude, you need friends, or at least backup.

Players new to *Vampire* can benefit from playing an all thin-blood chronicle. Thin-blood characters don't know any more about the world, or its history, or what vampires can do, than you do! This outsider perspective also allows players of older editions to painlessly reset their expectations of this new millennium of darkness.

The Thin-Blood Chronicle

An all thin-blood troupe engages with very different elements than a predominantly full-blooded Kindred chronicle. This chronicle style centers stories on the nightly activities of thin-bloods, how they exist in a world hostile to them, and where they belong within that world.

Thin-bloods spend their nights on the outskirts of Kindred society, with doors rarely opening toward sect membership unless the sect has something to gain. Even within a sect, thin-bloods find an older talon on the scales against them. The powers that be rarely allow thin-bloods to feed in prime locations without facing consequences, and when they can pioneer or nurture a desirable piece of territory more powerful vampires chase them out of it. Some thin-bloods seclude themselves in neighborhoods nobody wants, or even drift to smaller towns like the Caitiff did in the last centuries.

The dynamics between thin-bloods also shift away from more traditional organizations. Instead, they tend to develop organically in each location, with thin-bloods either keeping to themselves or taking on roles needed within a city. Many thin-bloods keep hidden away, their nights not much different from when they were alive, while other thin-bloods reach out, wanting to connect with similar vampires. Each fledgling has their reason for doing so, leading to many different interactions.

Why Play a Thin-Blood Chronicle?

Thin-blood characters have a very different perspective on the world and the darkness it encapsulates. Thin-

bloods occupy a narrative sweet spot among the supernatural horrors around them, just powerful enough to attract their attention and weak enough to always be in constant danger. They punctuate this scramble for survival with mysterious pursuits and the spark of Thin-Blood Alchemy offering a chance to get their own back or at least to hold their own.

A thin-blood chronicle has less of a high political focus, because thin-blooms can't easily navigate the politics of city or sect. Coteries focus on their nightly needs and short-term problems, rarely having the resources or power to address long-term or systemic issues that keep them down. The tone and action shifts to back-alley, gritty, street-style stories not tied down to rigid plots or the expectations of Harpies or ideologists. Themes of teamwork, uncertainty, and being outcast predominate, as characters build their connections within their coterie and out into their neighborhoods first before engaging the larger world. Hunting and learning to maximize one-dot powers against Kindred opposition provide plenty of bloody challenges, as does the occasional scourge or slayer.

Some players may want to experiment with different aspects of being a vampire. They may find other clans more restrictive than being a thin-blood. A thin-blood chronicle allows players to impact what it means to be a vampire, allowing them to explore things like Thin-Blood Alchemy, undeath, what it means to be in touch with their Beast, and even experimenting with sunlight. Running a thin-blood chronicle allows players to adapt to their world with fewer restrictions while still playing vampires.

Organizing a Thin-Blood Chronicle

A troupe can consider several approaches to a thin-blood chronicle when deciding what game style they want to play. During session zero, the Storyteller and players need to decide what type of story they want to explore as a thin-blood troupe. Some questions to think about are:

- What kind of supernatural horror would you like to encounter?
- Would your characters explore “curing” their vampirism?

- Do you feel like playing with high Kindred politics or low street action?
- How does your character approach Thin-Blood Alchemy?
- What is one goal your thin-blood character has?

This is not an exhaustive list, and you may find other questions to ask along the way. Each player should answer these as best as they can. Once the Storyteller has a good idea of the characters and how they view the world, they can determine the direction they want to take with their chronicle.

The session where you decide which city your chronicle takes place in, and make up characters, and establish your table's safety tools, and do all the other things you do before you actually start the story going is called **session zero**. (See *Vampire: The Masquerade*, pp. 135–138.) Sometimes session zero takes more than one session. That's not a problem, you need a good foundation before you put up a structure.

Thin-Blood Story Hooks

The Storyteller and players should consider different story hooks for the thin-blooms in their chronicle. Use these story hooks to help bring a thin-blood into a chronicle, add to a character background for future intrigue, or to drop in during a story to help cooperatively facilitate rich play.

- You spent most of your vampiric unlif alone, secluded from other Kindred. However, you recently learned about several thin-blooms in your area who have wanted you to join them and work together for resources and survival. In addition, they are willing to teach you more about vampires and the world you now live in.
- You just made the worst discovery possible. After moving to another city, you learn the Camarilla is moving in to sweep the city of any vampires not acknowledged within the sect, destroying them on sight. You need to figure out where you are going to hide or if you are going to try and join the sect. If the latter, who do you turn into the scourges to prove your loyalty?

- You have contracted, or was born with, an unknown disease that makes you acutely allergic to sunlight and forces you to drink blood. Together with others afflicted in a similar way you are trying to find a cure, all the while hiding from human-like monsters with supernatural abilities and political connections hunting you for being what you are.
- You angered the wrong person, who put a curse upon you, taking away any potency you had with your blood. As a result, you find yourself among the thin-bloods now, scared, abandoned, and weak. You have no place in your former sect once you were found out and now must figure out how to survive or strengthen your blood once more.

Organization

Thin-bloods don't have a centralized organization, like some clans do. They have neither the shared, ancestral resources to keep such groups safe, nor the political capital to integrate them within larger Kindred society. Instead, thin-blood assemble themselves within each city, with the degree of organization and the number of groups dependent on local conditions. Almost all cities have at least one thin-blood soviet or gang of self-radicalized Anarchs, possibly even one recognized by the real Anarch committee in town, but often isolated both politically and geographically. A big city with a lot of thin-bloods but a powerful Camarilla presence creates lots of different small gangs and groups; a smaller city with a power vacuum lets a larger network of Duskborn emerge, only to factionalize itself within a few years.

Within your city, some of these emerging nascent groups might include:

Alchemist Posse: The city's leading thin-blood alchemist attracts a community of clients, fans, and colleagues – and usually a rival or two with their own posses. This scene resembles a cross between cocktail culture and hip-hop club culture, following mixers and AJs and occasionally beefing with bloody results. Knowing someone in the posse generally gets

you put on the guest list and maybe even crash space.

The Basement: Named after either its subreddit r/BasementDrinkin or its dank headquarters, the Basement fancies itself the information clearinghouse of the local Duskborn and claims a national distributed network of such groups. The word “blockchain” gets tossed around a lot. Well-meaning thin-bloods tell the Basement what they've learned about vampirism or the supernatural or the local power structure, which supposedly gets archived. Indeed, some of this lore gets passed on to newcomers. Almost certainly penetrated by other factions, if only with disinformation, the Basement offers a standing invitation to both the NSA and the Camarilla to destroy it or turn it.

The Folk: A loose mutual-aid commune, beginning as an all-thin-blood Plumaire coterie within the furry community but spreading throughout other fantasy-life-themed meetup spaces. Most of the Folk organize locally, keeping to one city or area, though a few communicate across distances for safe travel. They host traveling “family members,” giving a haven for the day, providing them with vital information about the city, and even blood if needed. In addition, they share information when traveling, helping other Folk to know what is going on with other thin-bloods in other cities. To be a member of the Folk, all you need to do is to connect with them in each city, help out when needed, and be willing to identify yourself with a hippie name like “The Folk.”

Mundies: The Mundies take their name from *Athanor Mundi*, a radical alchemical manifesto posted on Usenet by the anonymous “Philatheles Doe” in the 1990s. Doe's original goal was to use Alchemy to fire all Cainites into a true Philosopher's Stone, gifting the world with eternal life and freedom from disease and age. Since Doe's disappearance around 2002 the Mundie movement splintered. Now Mundies generally believe that the thin-bloods, at least, are bound to achieve a higher state, possibly through alchemy, diablerie, or special cocktails of blood and supplements. Mundie cliques can be empty braggart gangs, amiable druggie co-



ops in “Athnor Monday” shirts, or crafty lurkers waiting to talk (or kidnap) another thin-blood into experiments. Fortunately, they seldom cooperate, each Mundie guru believing themselves to be the natural Nietzschean ubervamp superior.

Thin-Bloods and the Sects

Opinions might differ among the thin-bloods regarding the different sects, but there is a consensus among most of them. A singular thin-blood may find themselves in a good position with one or more of the sects, but not every Duskborn enjoys that comfort. A lucky thin-blood who finds a teacher will pass along this information, knowing they could have a very different experience.

Anarchs

“We have more of a chance with the Anarchs than any other sect, to be honest. Most of them don’t ask many questions as long as we don’t cause a fuss. Though I think they might tolerate us simply out of spite.”

When the Anarchs pushed back against the Camarilla and took most of the Brujah and Gangrel with them,

many thin-bloods saw an opportunity to form a relationship with the sect and gain the protection of stronger-blooded Kindred. The Anarchs, in turn, started working more with thin-bloods purely to spite the Camarilla.

If a thin-blood looks for the protection of an organization, this is the one they likely secure the most comfort in. A thin-blood gang could get Anarch standing, or a thin-blood may accept Anarch protection in exchange for a few favors. Thin-bloods have better access to Anarch leadership, on the whole, than in other sects. Anarchs often see themselves as underdogs, and sympathize with thin-bloods for that reason, but the practicalities of survival almost always trump their allegiance to egalitarian ideals. Cainite Anarchs still see the Duskborn as liabilities that drain limited resources while contributing very little in the way of raw power.

The Anarchs accept the Duskborn more than does the Camarilla, but they can count fangs better than the Ivory Tower can, too. If thin-blood numbers grow too great, the Anarchs become wary of their potential influence and might even declare a purge or a rumble to drop the ratio. Longer-term minded Barons

aggressively recruit thin-bloods into particularly dangerous coterie types such as a Day Watch.

Camarilla

"If I had to choose between any of the sects, the Camarilla would be the last one on my list. These elitist bastards make it their personal mission to make our existence so miserable we end our own unlives."

Any thin-blood who travels to (or awakens in) a Camarilla-controlled city needs to keep on their toes to avoid being caught or introduce themselves to the city's Prince and ask for permission to stay. This poses a considerable risk unless the thin-blood has a highly-specialized skill set, or the city an unusually open-minded Prince. Only vampires with little to lose dare to openly flout social convention and tastelessly consort with thin-blood scum. Some Malkavians and Nosferatu particularly delight in taking thin-bloods under their wings to flout social norms, but too many such protégés draws the Harpies' disdain and social death.

Most Mercurians opt to keep their heads down and stick to the outskirts of the city, or to whatever unpromising domain they have homesteaded. Thus the Scourge often becomes a thin-blood coterie's main point of contact with the powers that be in a Camarilla city. These enforcers of the Prince's will oscillate between threatening and guiding thin-blood coteries to stay within the lines of the city's traditions. At best the coterie has to deal with a reluctant bully who only makes an example out of them when demanded by the Prince or the Primogen. At worst, the Scourge is a violent butcher looking for any excuse to tear the coterie, and its members, apart.

The most insidious threat that faces a thin-blood coterie when operating out of a Camarilla domain is the allure of the Ivory Tower itself. The Camarilla understands how difficult unlife can be without a support system and they can offer a great deal to a promising vampire who can brew elixirs or walk in the sun or otherwise prove useful. The promise of an easy unlife and being adopted into a real clan can be hard to resist for those thin-bloods that have given up on curing their condition. Such opportunities are rare

and a thin-blood coterie may find itself torn apart as its members vie against each other for a chance to join the Camarilla as a full member.

Blood Destiny

Spending nights walking a thin line between mortal and immortal proves challenging for many thin-bloods. The choice between walking back to the sun and losing their immortality or trying to strengthen their blood and stain their soul hovers ever-present in their minds. However, much like immortality, achieving either of these options does not prove easy, and may take decades.

Developing a Project (p. 214) with the Storyteller is an excellent way to start. It allows players to think through and design how their character would turn back to mortal or strengthen their blood, but it is not the only way. You could build your entire chronicle around trying to achieve either, or both, of these goals.

Finding The Sun

Players who want to explore trying to change their blood back and finding their mortality again have a chronicle-long goal ahead of them, and one well worth investigating. Whether they pursue Golconda, team up with a mortal mystic or clergyman, or dive into ancient sorcerous lore or new alchemical transformations they meet plenty of weird and dangerous opposition while perhaps increasingly doubting the value of becoming fragile and vulnerable again.

Strengthening the Blood

When it comes to strengthening their blood, the Kindred know and fear the act of diablerie, drinking from one's elders. Getting opportunity for access to a full-blood vein, much less permission, can prove challenge enough for a chronicle. Many thin-blood coteries form just to get revenge on the vampire who made them by drinking him dry. But success carries its own stigma: neither the Camarilla nor the Anarchs approve of such actions even among other full-bloods.

Kindred know of no other method, but very few



Kindred know Thin-Blood Alchemy. Constant experimentation, research, and inspiration has already led to impossible elixirs and dangerous formulae: can the True Red Elixir be far away? Players and Storytellers should work together to develop any ideas and plots the characters may want to explore. Not every experiment works, but there is always a chance it could succeed. These temporary boosts could be enough to help a thin-blood pass for full-blood Kindred within a sect, or to let them surpass the sects entirely.

Not every character is going to want to walk these two lines. The appeal of sex, drugs, rock and roll, and eternal unlife can also drive a character to experiment upon themselves for different reasons. Either way, visible experimentation invites trouble of all kinds, and not just for the character but for every thin-blood within reach.

Thin-Blood Archetypes

Thin-blooded characters are more than just the product of their Embrace. They have interests in exploring their condition, understanding their place in the supernatural world, and pushing their abilities to the limits. Beyond the original Archetypes (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 110), here are some new Archetypes to explore in a thin-blood chronicle.

Blood Chemist

In their previous life, the Blood Chemist concocted designer drugs, seeking different types of chemical romance or psychedelic highs. With their newfound Embrace, they shifted interest from drugs to different Thin-Blood Alchemy formulae. They keep one foot in the fancy drug scene to make money — and to score potentially game-changing new ingredients for potentially world-changing formulae.

Caretaker

The Caretaker takes it upon themselves to help others in dire situations, both the newly Embraced and the generally outcast. They help provide shelter, blood, and knowledge around their very survival. Community and family are important to them, and they try to build up



their resources to help those in their care, protecting and nurturing whatever way they can. Some Caretakers commit an awful lot of what looks like mayhem in the name of charity and community.

Paranormalist

If vampires exist, then what else is out there? The Paranormalist eagerly investigates this world of darkness they have awakened into, gathering information and making contacts with any and all supernatural contactees or, better yet, with supernatural beings. They don't know (or care) about ancient rivalries; what matters is filling in their knowledge and stunting on their rival cryptid-hunters and conspiracy theorists on 4chan. The Paranormalist leaves a trail behind them, but normies (and older Kindred) find it too baffling (and ridiculous) to follow. Until the Paranormalist stumbles onto a *real* secret, of course ...

Street Rat

The Street Rat may not realize what they are, instead attributing it to some lousy drug trip, medical ailment left untreated, or even a bad dream. They scavenge around, looking for trinkets, valuable items, or discarded valuables that could earn them some cash. The Rat gets good at pick-pocketing, begging, and becoming invisible when needed, or the Rat gets eaten.

Sun Seeker

This thin-blood doesn't seek to change their vampiric state. Instead, they want to develop a way to experience the sun without losing their vampiric powers. The Sun Seeker may try to convince the Bahari cult (**Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 382) to accept them as fellow seekers, but the Lilin don't accept thin-bloods easily. The solution: find some artifact, tome, method, or ritual that the Bahari need for their own purposes and come to an arrangement that may benefit all Duskblood.

New Thin-Blood Merits and Flaws

These Merits and Flaws are available only to thin-blood characters. They have no dot value; each Flaw balances a Merit and vice versa. They do not count against the maximum dots in Advantages and Flaws allowed during character creation or purchased through experience. You can find further Thin-Blood Merits and Flaws in **Vampire: The Masquerade** (p. 183).

Thin-Blood Flaws

HELIOPHOBIA

An overly cautious Sire hammered the reminder to avoid sunlight into you a little too hard, or you saw someone catch fire in a sunrise early after your Embrace. Either way, you fear sunlight as though you were a full vampire. You are susceptible to terror frenzy from sunlight.

NIGHT TERRORS

You sleep as usual, with no memory of any of the dreams you may have had during the day. However, at night those dreams come flooding in at the most inopportune times. During times of stress, or when your Beast is strongest, nightmares pull through and feel excruciatingly real. They may be disjointed hallucinations, or they may be a way for the Storyteller to feed them or foreshadow events. Once per session, your night terrors onset and you take a one-die penalty to all actions for the rest of the scene.

PLAQUE BEARER

You are still susceptible to mortal sickness: colds, flu, and other more severe infections. Every time you feed you must roll a die for each Hunger slaked, and if any come up a “1,” you’ve caught something nasty. (Effect is up to the Storyteller, but could range from die penalties to slow Health degradation.) Mortal medicine doesn’t cure you; only drinking a functioning immune system by slaking your Hunger to 0 does so. And of course, you run the risk of infecting anyone you feed on, using the same die roll as above.

SLOPPY DRINKER

Your bite is careless, or your fangs are ill suited to puncture skin cleanly. When feeding, make a Dexterity + Medicine test against a Difficulty equal to Hunger slaked to cover your feed marks before too much blood is spilled. On a failure, the wound is too ragged to close: the mortal may bleed out with Masquerade-threatening neck wounds.

SUN-FADED

You cannot use Discipline powers – including Thin-Blood Alchemy – in sunlight, and active powers cease when you enter sunlight. You can use them indoors by day, with a two-dice penalty, as long as you avoid any hint of sunlight.

SUPERNATURAL TELL

Whether it’s your smell, your aura, or something even subtler, other supernatural entities can sense your presence. They may be curious, hungry, or irritated, but they definitely clock you. Lose two dice from Stealth pools and similar against supernatural opponents including other vampires.

TWILIGHT PRESENCE

You make others uncomfortable around you. Most mortals don’t want to be around you at all, and other Kindred dislike you even more than they do regular thin-blooms. Only thin-blooms can adjust to your weird demeanor. Lose a die from Social pools involving anyone except thin-blooms.

UNENDING HUNGER

Your Beast always hungers for more, never finding sustenance with smaller sips. When feeding in a scene you sate one less Hunger than other thin-blooms. This applies only once per scene.

Thin-Blood Merits

ABHORRENT BLOOD

Something in your Blood makes other vampires unable to stomach it. Whether it is the perverse mix of life and undeath or your history of questionable Thin-Blood Alchemy, other vampires gag and vomit when they try to drink from you. Other vampires abort any bite

attempts after the initial damage and anyone who tries to keep drinking from you must spend two points of Willpower each turn that they do so. Mortals and Thin-Blood Alchemy are not affected by this anomaly.

FAITH-PROOF

Whether you consider yourself an atheist or devoutly religious, you remain too close to mortality for True Faith to affect you.

LOW APPETITE

When at Hunger 0 or 1, and when rising at sunset, roll two dice on your Rouse Check and take the highest of the two.

LUCID DREAMER

Most vampires don't dream because they don't sleep. You dream; you can recall and even sometimes control your dreams. Once per session, if you're asleep by day you can ask the Storyteller to provide a clue from the previous night's memories or a hint about the story suitable for dream revelation.

MORTALITY'S MIEN

Your mortal nature still outshines your Beast. Your aura does not appear vampiric or supernatural; instead it looks mortal to anyone able to detect supernatural creatures. You can also add two dice to any attempt to make yourself appear mortal in other regards, such as makeup.

SWIFT FEEDER

Maybe you were a phlebotomist in life, or just didn't like mess. You sip delicately and quickly, neatly slaking one Hunger in one turn, including licking the wound closed. This Merit can only be used once per scene.

In the World of Darkness, the focus of the story often lingers on Kindred, with mortals holding a nominal and transactional focus to the intrigues of those bearing the Curse of Caine and haunted by the Beast. Ghouls, however, allow a distinct niche for storytelling and engagement that makes them compelling as player characters in their own right. Occupying the strange space between mortal and Kindred, ghouls offer all of the benefits of being a mortal — ability to function and act during the day,

interfacing with the full breadth of mortal society, and the like — with some supernatural benefits granted to them by the Blood of their Kindred domitor.

The word "domitor," a perversion of the Latin *dominus* meaning "lord" or "master," describes the vampire to whom a mortal is bound. Vampires who consider themselves cultured or more refined may prefer more affected terms for the relationship, but, semantics aside, it doesn't change the fundamental truth. One is subservient to the other, with vitae being the tie that binds them to one another.

Most mortals go through life without realizing that danger and power coexist in the shadows, blissfully unaware of what lurks beneath the veneer of normality they experience daily. But at night the lines between what is perceived to be reality and the world that lies beneath blur.

Maybe you stumbled upon a vampire feeding on a panhandler in an alleyway, or you were mesmerized by a creature of impossible beauty and magnetism in the club. Whatever was the inciting event that opened your eyes, one thing was certain: You caught just a hint, a glance of something darker, something primal, and you've not been able to get it out of your head since.

In the Half-Light

Just as vampires have an interest in mortals to meet their vital needs, there exist mortals aware of Kindred society who have just as keen an interest in their undead overlords. This can range from casual curiosity from someone with a passing familiarity with the occult to an all-out obsession that threatens their livelihood and personal relationships.

It's one thing to experience the stories of vampires fictionalized in the written word or on the silver screen, but it's a whole other thing when you realize that they actually exist, and that maybe, just maybe, they turn others among the still-living to their monstrous ends.

The degree to which these mortals pursue their interest in Kindred society varies, but it usually results in either becoming part of the vampire's sphere of influence or becoming one of their faithful attendants. In doing so, these mortals

open themselves up to a whole new world, where danger lurks around every corner if they are not cautious. Rival Kindred, coteries, and sects clash for supremacy in domains. All of these play a role in their new existence, leading to decisions once unthinkable. Choice becomes less about right or wrong, but what it takes to survive and navigate the world now thrust upon you, safety being but a distant memory.

GHOULS

Fatal Addiction

All relationships involving Kindred are undoubtedly parasitic, and the relationship between mortals and Kindred is no different. Mortals use other mortals, Kindred use mortals. It's cyclical and perhaps more symbiotic than parasitic, but those are just semantics that ghouls use to justify their reliance on their Kindred masters. They can lie to themselves about having things like "ethics" and "morals," but when it comes down to it, they're willing to cast those aside for a number of things, such as another hit of vitae, the continued support a vampiric patron offers, and the ability to forego aging without the baggage of the Curse.

Being a ghoul causes complications, certainly. Ghouls are more than an average mortal, arguably comparable in might to some thin-bloods, but far less than Kindred in the eyes of most vampires. Some vampires associated with the Anarchs may have a more progressive view of ghouls, but the more palatable rhetoric doesn't change the fact that ghouls and Kindred aren't equals.

Are there individuals who deliberately court danger by moving in the same circles as Kindred, if they've somehow learned about them? Of course, though they likely don't remain an "innocent" bystander to the world of the Damned for long. On the other side of the spectrum are those who through either happenstance or misfortune find themselves in the wrong place

at the wrong time. Or they find themselves at death's door, faced with the possibility of death or being inextricably linked to a vampire. Regardless of the circumstances that brought ghoul and domitor together, this relationship plays an important role in the ghoul's life.

Ghouls also must come to grips with their new reality. They're beholden to creatures who prey on mortals; perhaps on their friends, their peers, their community, even their loved ones. Ghouls commonly act as a sort of gateway to these groups, which their domitor can use as a herd to sustain their existence. Kindred need mortal blood to survive, and ghouls need Kindred blood — a continuous cycle of reliance.

The shroud has been pulled back, and reality is changed.

Ghouls, too, are forever changed.

The Role of Ghouls

The place of a ghoul in Kindred society is best described as liminal. They exist on the outermost fringes of the vampires' world of secrets, never truly recognized for what they bring to it, but playing a vital role in its upkeep nonetheless. Without ghouls to act as their eyes and ears during the daylight hours or as their connection to the modern world, the society of the Damned would begin to break down. While ghouls occupy lower rungs of vampire society than their domitors, and are often even considered disposable, they are also necessary.

Needless to say, the vast majority of ghouls labor under an all-consuming vitae addiction, if they're not outright Blood Bonded.

How a ghoul copes with their existence is entirely up to the player. Just how much has the character bought into this society they now find themselves a part of, whether willingly or forcibly? Some ghouls learn to accept their place as less-than, and even those not under the Bond may develop a twisted love for their Kindred masters, owing to their dependency on vitae and the imbalanced power dynamic. Some learn to repress the deeds they have done in the name

of gaining some diminished praise or approval in a sort of blissful ignorance. Others find a way to make the most of it, perhaps through careful cultivation of relationships within the society, and transform their place into that of a coveted ally.

The Storyteller should make efforts to ensure that this optional character type can thrive under the chronicle's Tenets if they choose to permit player ghouls. These characters are more than just mere servants. They are wholly realized individuals pulled into a world previously hidden from them, a world where ghouls are equally as complicit (and culpable) in perpetuating monstrous acts alongside their domitors.

Like young generations of vampires, ghouls have familial and other relationship ties that have narrative gravity. Ties that can be used to manipulate or blackmail ghouls can make for a darker turn. Playing a ghoul lends itself to emotionally intense roleplaying, especially when balancing the demands of a domitor and the ghoul's own needs, desires, and responsibilities. Ghoul characters always have difficult choices to make, decisions that have long-lasting ramifications: Do you obey your domitor or do you follow your conscience? How many times can you tell a domitor "no" before they deem you too tiresome to deal with?

These are the situations a ghoul inevitably finds themselves grappling with. The place of the ghoul is a perilous one, walking a fine line between maintaining their own Humanity and serving as thrall to creatures of the night.

Ghoul Archetypes

Unwitting Subject

They told you it was a medical trial, but the place sure wasn't a hospital and they sure didn't look like doctors. Usual suspects showed up, though, and the money was real. Had you sign stuff, but looking at the guy by the door, lawyers weren't the main thing that scared you. Still, the stuff was potent. Had you up all night, like some high-grade research chemical straight off the Dark Web. Probably was, too. The second time had fewer

volunteers, and you all got assigned tasks as well. "For metrics," they said. Weird, but the pay was too good to pass up, not to mention the buzz. The third time they handed the four of you who were left a list of names and instructions. You wonder how many will show up next time.

Cleaning Specialist

Kindred needs are a bloody business, and sometimes the pangs of their monstrous hunger makes a more thorough clean-up necessary. It's not always as easy as dumping a body wrapped in plastic into some dumpster in a back alley. It can be as involved as erasing a person wholesale from the system, and in the most extreme cases, snipping the loose threads so that evidence cannot be traced back to any one person. At any rate, it's a demanding profession. One that requires a strong stomach, but if push comes to shove at least you have the skills to cover up deaths — or fake them, if need be.

Mnemonic Courier

When something needs to be delivered discreetly and prying eyes kept looking elsewhere, your masters call on you. A life-long courier, graduating from drugs to weapons to near-extinct exotics, you now ply your trade transporting the most volatile merchandise of all: information. Their secrets are safe with you. After all, you never learn them. All you ever remember is the masters' eyes and a queasy sense of falling. At your destination, a word sets your cargo free, owing from your lips while you sink into the river of unmemory. Whether traveling across town or the world, your masters can rely on your capability, your discretion, and above all, your ability to remember and then forget.

Maverick

Where others are content to go with the flow and follow every order given to them, you buck every expectation and social trend. It's not that you're a contrarian, but rather that you possess a strong sense of self that's difficult to circumvent, and

mundane attempts to manipulate you tend to fail. There is a give and take in your relationship: While your domitor didn't quite know what they were getting with you, your ardent self-advocacy and frankness has been the talk of the domain ever since. While it is important to you to stay in your domitor's good graces, you also have a life outside of them — wholly separate, and you would prefer it to stay that way.

USING VITAE TO HEAL THE LIVING

While ghouls heal twice as fast as ordinary mortals, a vampire can provide additional Blood to speed up the process. For each Rouse Check's worth of Blood provided, a living creature (including ghouls) heals one level of Aggravated damage. This takes one turn for each Rouse Check and level healed. In order for the Blood to provide this effect it must be consumed fresh from the vein, and the first time a mortal receives Blood in this way they also become ghouls, of course.



Creating a Ghoul Character

Character Concept

Like their vampiric counterparts, character concepts for ghouls are limited only by your imagination. Ghouls can come from all walks of life, from medical professionals to social media influencers to runaways living on the fringes of society.

Ghouls also can be chosen for any reason that suits their domitor. Venttrue may create ghouls



from those closely aligned with their financial or political goals, but no one too far up the corporate ladder because when the time comes to dispose of them, the Blue Blood probably doesn't want them to be missed.

Some young Kindred detest the practice of creating ghouls but even they understand its utility. These are more likely to work with their ghoul in something approaching an equitable fashion. A few, in their naiveté, find themselves assisting so-called "independent ghouls" (p. 143), which rarely ends well for an altruistic neonate.

A core character concept for your ghoul should include a basic identity (example: an unassuming librarian or a workers' rights activist), general disposition toward the world (and their domitor), and an ambition that drives them to do what they do. Then spend some time considering the following questions to help further flesh your ghoul out:

- Are you even aware of what you are?
- Did you drink "from the tap," or did you become a ghoul more innocuously?
- What are your feelings toward your new "normal?"
- Did you become a ghoul willingly or was the choice made for you?

Keep in mind that though a ghoul depends upon their domitor (unless circumstances liberate them...), they still have their own drives, goals, thoughts, and motivations. Playing a ghoul whose domitor is a player's character or Storyteller character requires ongoing consideration regarding consent (see p. 216).

Ghouls do not have a Beast in the same sense that vampires do, but they still have Humanity scores, and actions they take, whether it be in service to their domitor or otherwise, can negatively affect their Humanity. The downward spiral for mortals and ghouls is not constrained by being lost to the Beast. And while the Beast is not a personified, inchoate monster for a ghoul, ghouls nonetheless have described the drive for vitae as everything from a dependency to an addiction to a relentless, consuming need that informs everything they do, even if it isn't

figuratively whispering in their ear. Choose your Ambition and Desire as normal.

Set Your Attributes

Before deciding which dots go where, consider your character concept and what the character is best at, what they are moderate at, and what is their weakest aspect. See the list of Attributes on p. 62.

- Take your best Attribute at 4
- Take your worst Attribute at 1
- Take three Attributes at 3
- Take the rest of your Attributes at 2
- Now derive two more Traits from your Attributes as follows:
- Add three to your Stamina to derive your Health.
- Add your Resolve to your Composure to derive your Willpower.

Choose Your Skills

Skills speak to a character's everyday life, what they know, how they perform certain actions, or even how they react to situations as they arise. A ghoul may have skills that their domitor lacks, such as Streetwise or Technology, or ones they have gained through education, a professional career, or through significant life events. It is wise to consider Skills as part of the reason your domitor chose you, Skills relevant to your current profession, or that display some manner of personal interest. You are (probably) not a mindless drone; you are someone's hand-picked attaché.

As well, consider for a moment what Skills represent in the character's life story. Did they learn about Politics during a summer when they were part of a grassroots canvassing campaign? Are they part of an emergency response team, increasing their knowledge of Medicine along the way? Being a top-notch brawler or expert marksman may help in combat situations, but without a rationale to accompany having those skills, it doesn't offer quite the same vitality to your character. Consider hobbies and after-hours activities they may participate in that manifest as low-level Skills.

You can choose your Skills on your own: Use

the Sample Professions Package (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 145), or use the Quick Skills Assignment method (p. 64). That is:

- **Jack of all Trades:** One Skill at 3; eight Skills at 2; ten Skills at 1
- **Balanced:** Three Skills at 3; five Skills at 2; seven Skills at 1
- **Specialist:** One Skill at 4; three Skills at 3; three Skills at 2; three Skills at 1

Add free specialties to Academics, Craft, Performance, and Science Skills. Take one more free specialty. Specialties can be applied only to skills with at least one level.

Disciplines and Predator Type

Upon becoming a ghoul, the character gains a level-1 Discipline power in a Discipline possessed by their domitor. Ghouls can purchase additional level-1 powers at the cost of 10 experience points each, but they must all belong to Disciplines possessed by their domitor. (The powers themselves do not need to be possessed by the domitor, however.)

Ghouls can never purchase actual dots in Disciplines, but always count as having a single dot for the purpose of using Discipline powers. (In rare cases this rating can increase temporarily, but only from using external augmentation such as Draughts.)

Ghouls are not vampires and do not have a Predator Type.

Advantages

Ghouls take 7 points of Advantages and 2 points of Flaws. They may not spend any points on Kindred-exclusive Advantages or Flaws, though they can generally use the same Merits and Flaws as mortals.

Like mortals, ghouls may not spend points in the following Advantages: Domain, Feeding, Herd, or Thin-Blooded. As with mortals, Haven isn't the same concept for a ghoul as for a vampire, but the Background remains available to them, with some amount of interpretation. Ghouls are not restricted from taking the Status Background, though this Status almost certainly derives at least partially

from the esteem of their domitor. In fact, certain ghouls may be notorious or even infamous among the Damned.

Players who wish to use Kindred-exclusive Loresheets for ghoul characters likely gained their knowledge thanks to their domitor's connections. If their domitor is a player character without that Loresheet Advantage, explain the ghoul's access somehow: previous domitor? A source in another domain? Work with your Storyteller to ensure that both your character and the story get served by taking this Background.

Unless otherwise specified, Merits and Flaws acquired as mortals continue to apply to ghouls.

New Ghoul Merits

These Merits only apply to ghoul characters.

BLOOD EMPATHY ••

You share a closer bond to your domitor than most ghouls, able to sense their emotional and psychological state, even when not physically in their presence. An astute ghoul can "feel" if their current domitor is in peril or requires their presence immediately, but it does not allow for direct telepathic communication. You feel Blood Empathy at a distance of one mile or less from your domitor, and the domitor to whom you feel Blood Empathy is the one whose blood you have most recently consumed. Note that this does not require a Blood Bond, though the effect feels stronger if one is present.

UNSEEMLY AURA ••

The Blood did something strange to you. Whereas your aura was once vibrant and full of the flush of mortal-adjacent life, it has become muted and indistinguishable from that of a Kindred. While it may lead others to overestimate you, it could also lead to some awkward situations later down the line.

New Ghoul Flaws

These Flaws apply only to ghoul characters.

BANEFUL BLOOD (• TO ••)

Due to some mysterious property of the Blood, you experience the bane of your first domitor's clan to a



degree. Your first domitor, the Kindred whose blood you tasted in order to become a ghoul, must be of Clan Lasombra, Malkavian, Ministry, Nosferatu, Ravnos, Salubri, or Toreador. Even if your domitor changes, the bane you experience does not.

You experience the domitor's bane at one level for each dot in this Flaw.

CRONE'S CURSE (••)

When you partook of your domitor's vitae, you aged rapidly. You appear at least a decade older than you are. In addition, your health has suffered, and you have one fewer box on your Health tracker than you otherwise would. The Embrace negates this Flaw, unless the Storyteller rules otherwise (because the problem was you all along, not your domitor's Blood).

DISTRESSING FANGS (•)

The Blood, in addition to giving you increased healing, physical prowess, and use of some minor Disciplines, also gave you sharpened teeth. But they're strange, stunted, and unsettling to those who can discern them, causing mortals to think you're part of some questionable subculture (ahem).

You lose one die on Social pools involving mortals because your fangs make them uneasy.

Convictions & Touchstones

Convictions and Touchstones are treated the same for ghouls as for mortals, and ghouls should choose one to three of each. See p. 149 for more information.

Ghouls start play with Humanity at 7.

Health

Ghouls are stronger and more resilient than their mortal counterparts, and depending on their domitor's clan and Disciplines, they can call upon feats of strength, hardiness, and speed that exceed mortal limitations.

In general, treat ghouls the same way as mortals in terms of healing and recovery (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 127), with a few notable exceptions.

Ghouls heal all damage done to them at double the rate of mortals with one exception: fire. Bodies, even those augmented by vitae, still require a certain amount of downtime to heal burns.

It bears repeating that ghouls can use powers above the first level due to other circumstances, such as Draught of Elegance, through Thin-Blood Alchemy, or other means, but in doing so they take 1 point of Aggravated damage as opposed to making a Rouse Check.

Special Situations

Life is unpredictable, and it's no different for a ghoul. Ghouls may find themselves in situations that change the trajectory of their development and how they interact with other characters.

Changing Domitors

The bond between ghoul and domitor runs deep, with ghouls experiencing a degree of emotional and psychological dependence in addition to their need for vitae. It is this type of relationship that makes the very notion of changing domitors an unwelcome event among ghouls.

Sometimes a ghoul needs to change their domitor, such as when the domitor goes into torpor. At that time, a domitor might "dismiss" their ghoul

from service — which doesn't change the ghoul's dependency on the Blood. Indeed, this may result in the domitor having an increasingly desperate thrall standing vigil over them in their unnatural sleep. Most ghouls would rather not face the rapid onset of age and so they may find themselves placed into the service of a domitor's confidante or even at the general disposal of their domitor's coterie or clan. It's still an emotional event, but it at least allows for an easier transition on part of the ghoul, and small comforts are still comforts, as most ghouls are not so fortunate when faced with the predicament of changing domitors.

History has seen ghouls who have been bartered, traded, and lost in gambling wagers. Others have been stolen, seduced, or even taken as spoils of war between the sects. Where once you were the loyal ghoul of a prestigious domitor, you may find yourself handed over to a social pariah. Worse still is the ghoul who has had to experience the death of a domitor and must choose between following their master into death or continuing in the service of someone else. Keep these thoughts in mind and explore also what this change means and represents to the character — the Blood Bond is powerful and evokes emotions that weigh on such decisions.

What Happens If a Ghoul is Embraced?

So, you decided to get Embraced. Well, actually, the choice may have been made for you by a desperate domitor. Whichever way that cookie crumbled, a few new details now apply to your erstwhile ghoul's situation.

Ghoul-specific Advantages (both Merits and Flaws) are lost, with the points refunded to buy new Advantages for the character agreed upon by the Storyteller. At the Storyteller's discretion, a former ghoul can maintain ghoul-specific Advantages.

The fledgling gains Generation dependent on the Generation of your sire. Blood Potency starts at the lowest value of that Generation's bracket. See the Generation and Blood Potency table on p. 214 of *Vampire: The Masquerade*.

Humanity score remains the same as the ghoul's at the time of the Embrace.

Independent Ghouls

Many ghouls, whether willing or coerced, manage to adapt to whatever relationship exists with their domitor. In most cases, in return for assistance with functions that the Kindred cannot attend to (or be bothered with), ghouls gain some amount of protection, attention, and the blood that sustains their existence. Such a lifestyle isn't for everyone, and some ghouls acknowledge no domitor, avoid blood bonds, and effectively do favors in return for vitae. Or they just straight-up steal it.

Kindred society considers these so-called Independent Ghouls loose cannons at best, and more than one unwitting neonate or foolish ancilla has learned a hard lesson by dealing with them. Many Camarilla Kindred consider Independent Ghouls to be unacceptable threats to carefully constructed social hierarchies. Many Anarchs, however, see these mercenary individuals as worthy of respect — they managed to hoodwink a lick and turn the power dynamic around. The Oswobodziciele movement in Anarch society actively liberates ghouls wherever possible. But even an appreciative Anarch doesn't necessarily trust an independent ghoul, though.

It's not an easy existence and the wise independent ghoul cultivates a network of Contacts, Allies, and Influences, not to mention a great deal of Wits and Resolve to stay one step ahead. Independent ghouls must seek out vitae to maintain their state, and the savvy ones know to imbibe inert blood rather than directly from a domitor, lest they risk a Blood Bond to a different "patron." If they become too desperate, they'll find themselves thrall to the very bond they attempted to circumvent.

Of course, this sort of attitude makes these already mistrusted ghouls an even bigger threat: Predators do not like being targeted by what they see as their prey, or those who should be servile instead of independent.

Consider what motivates a mortal to interact with vampires. The relationship between mortals and Kindred may be antagonistic, but not exclusively so, though rarely is it equitable. A mortal has inarguable advantages — anything from meeting a genuine friend, tasting a freshly brewed

MORTALS AND GHOUL CHARACTERS IN VARIANT CHRONICLES

While **Vampire: The Masquerade** is a game about vampires, much can be gained from stories in which the players aren't themselves vampires, at least to begin with. It's possible to experience the horrors of undeath from outside, as servants, agents, or potential victims. What follows are examples of the ways mortals or somewhat-mortals can be used to great effect in a chronicle.

THE ALL-MORTAL CHRONICLE

Have every player create a mortal character, with the aim to have them Embraced at some point (turning the chronicle into a one about vampires) or set them against the undead. Or both. For many new players, diving head-first into the World of Darkness and the Storyteller System is challenging enough without also having to learn the ins and outs of being a conspiratorial nocturnal leech. Likewise, experienced players often relish a change of perspective, allowing them to see the World of Darkness in a new proverbial light.

GHOULS, GHOULS, GHOULS

The misadventures of a retinue of ghouls lends itself extremely well to chronicle play. Unlike many vampires, ghouls are either expected to serve, or (if independent) have a clear objective with which to occupy their day-to-day activities. Whether as specialists set to unsavory purposes by an undead master dangling the carrot of eternity ahead of them, or as a motley group of servitude survivors struggling with a fatal addiction, their days and nights will never be dull.

MIXED MORTALITIES

Power dynamics is the name of the game when mortals (including ghouls) and vampires share a table. Make sure players understand the lopsided strength disparities and swinging spotlight distribution that can result from this. During the night, the vampires reign supreme, with mortals likely at their beck and call, while daylight sees the vampires' players idle for long periods of time while their unives hinge on the actions of the mortals. You can use troupe-style play (p. 198) to keep everyone active, even if all their characters aren't. Clear this setup with all the players, and abide by considerate play (p. 216).

cup of coffee, or watching the sun set and rise with their own eyes. For a player or Storyteller, placing a focus on mortal characters can emphasize the personal horror of Vampire.

MORTALS

Why Play a Mortal?

Mortals have access to the resources of a society built by themselves and for their own use. The modern world isn't designed for vampires, it's designed for mortals (particularly those of considerable wealth),

and vampires can at best avail themselves of only certain elements of it. Maintaining the Masquerade becomes more difficult as society's governments and corporations increase surveillance of the general populace. Any Kindred hoping to evade the lex talionis and escape to Melbourne by sleeping in a coffin aboard an airplane is in for a rather unfortunate awakening when airport security notices a mismatch between the cargo scan and the plane's manifest.

The growth of online social media platforms allows mortals to connect like never before, with no shortage of anonymous communities where mortals turn an eye to monitoring undead activity in local areas. In the last two years alone, numerous Kindred have been confirmed destroyed

by organized groups of mortals, many operating as vigilante “neighborhood watch” groups, but others as collateral damage from more noxious mortal activities. The cracks in the Masquerade have grown wider in the last decade, and humanity’s belligerent alienation from itself has hastened the process.

Imbalance

Unlike with vampires, who spend their nights in a perpetual state of conflict against one another, the struggle of the regular mortal is one of functioning within their own society. Prevailing economics force mortals to compete for enough money to live comfortably. The struggle to make it through a 40-hour week at the local call center in order to earn enough money to pay for rent and medical bills is forgotten by vampires, who can ultimately drag any poor soul off a street and drink from them if desperation strikes.

Kindred tend not to think about how being the victim of the Kiss or being subjected to Dominate may impact a mortal — more than a few former security guards, boardroom executives, medical professionals and accounting clerks have lost their jobs, not to mention their mental health, as a result of a vampire’s careless use of their supernatural gifts. The cumulative nature of society’s need for people to remain in work can quickly lead to serious repercussions for mortals. Many Americans have unreliable health care, therefore losing their job can lead to potentially fatal results for them or their loved ones. Few managers accept “I don’t remember who those guys who came into the office last night were” as an excuse from their employees.

Dangerous Attraction

Many Kindred, whether through callousness or naiveté, regard mortals as little more than food, innately less than themselves. This pervasive mindset is dangerous, but it is not one-sided. Humanity shares a curious fascination with vampires, particularly in popular culture. For many, vampires represent a certain allure — a deadly supernatural

threat equally predatory and seductive.

Some Kindred even forget that the Damned rely on mortals for progeny, and care little for extending grace or civility to the living much as mortals often view farm animals raised for slaughter. Farm animals, however, pose little threat to mortals, though the same cannot be said for the relationship between mortals and vampires. Kindred discovered during the first Inquisition the dangers that mortals could pose to vampires, a lesson learned so well that it resulted in the Tradition of the Masquerade. A lesson reinforced by the success of the Second Inquisition tonight.... Like a lion that finds itself impaled on a buffalo’s horn, the predator rarely expects the prey to fight back.

Meanwhile, a more insidious compulsion sometimes draws many mortals toward the Kindred. Pop culture is replete with seductive images of vampires, emphasizing the sensuality of their bloodlust, the sleekness of their bodies, and the temptation to relinquish one’s fears and anxieties to their one-sided intimacies. Former victims of a vampire’s hunger may understand that this is a mere honey trap, though they do so with knowledge of just how seductive a vampire’s illusion of immortality can be.

When a vampire draws a mortal into a relationship with them, it is often one-sided. A vampire desires things the mortal can provide, from blood to having agents who can operate in daylight hours, to greater complexities like access to political or societal structures that don’t function with vampire concerns in mind. Kindred often use this as a means to gain power over others, and even occasionally return this loyalty, whether honestly or duplicitously. Such benevolence could be a gift of wealth, providing luxurious lodgings, or even a risky glimpse into the reality of the Kindred’s truth.

For many mortals, flirtation with the Damned is a heady thrill, an excitement intrinsic in being close to danger. The exhilaration of being able to interact with the world where these deathless beings struggle is a high not many mortals will ever know is possible, much less experience, and for those who, it may take

on the characteristics of a rewarding relationship, if not genuine love, and a vampire may feel genuine affection for a mortal who moves in their wake.

But in the end, the vampire is almost certainly the one who decides the terms of the relationship.

Mortal Archetypes

Suspicious Investigator

You don't remember exactly what happened. One minute you were filing your report at the station, filling out forms on a bizarre assault case, then the next thing you knew you were home. You're pretty sure somebody came into the office and spoke to you. Can't quite remember what it was about, but you think they said to forget about something. The next day, the chief called you into her office and asked about missing files. Now you're on unpaid leave. Whoever did it didn't realize that they were tangling with a department veteran. You're on the trail now. You're certain it's connected to the new nightclub in town, and if you can just speak to the owner, you'll have all the info you need.

Troubled Partner

Your partner hasn't been the same since July. He definitely looks unhealthy, much paler than usual. You've been worried — there's a pandemic happening and he hasn't been eating properly. In fact, you don't know when the last time he ate a full meal was. So, last weekend you told him you want to know what's really going on, he either tells you the truth or you're walking out the door. And he laid it out for you, the whole truth. You still don't quite believe it, and you definitely don't buy that he's... shit, even just thinking the "v-word" sounds outlandish. Even so, ever since he told you, it's like he's vanished off the face of the Earth. But now, every few nights, you're sure you catch sight of someone watching you, and they vanish when you turn your full attention to them.

Lost Hopeful

When you first joined the family, you were amazed how easy it all sounded. Live in a big house, don't

worry about money or taxes or anything. All you had to think about was her: how to please her, how many ways to love her, how she wanted you to look. You're part of her family now, and that's just fine. On your lucky nights, you might be chosen to make the offering. The intimacy of her touch, her kiss on your neck, it leaves you eager for the next night. But still, there's more to strive for. You share the house with many of your brothers and sisters, but only one of you can be First. You are ashamed to admit it, but you're envious of the First, the mistress' chosen, for they enjoy the full glory of your mistress' attention. Maybe soon you'll be chosen to be First as well, if you are loyal enough. Or maybe there's another mistress who can see your true worth.

"Pizza" Delivery

You had another phone call last night. Same place as before, Pier 17. Same delivery as before, none of your fucking business. A few wooden crates marked with Cyrillic letters, you make the delivery, and, when the money changes hands, you kick a little up to the guy at the other end of the line. You only know him as Seb, but you know from his accent that he's not from around here. You don't know where he gets the goods. That's his business. All you know is that he sure calls you a lot. Pay's worth it, though. But there's always a way to sweeten the deal. Like tonight. Tonight you're bringing a few friends. When Seb shows up, you're going to have words, see about keeping a little more of the cut for yourself.

The Role of Mortals

The following rules allow players to create mortal characters for participation as part of the troupe (if not the coterie proper...). This set of options allows a player to explore the relationship that a vampire holds with mortal kin or colleagues and, perhaps, even their own Touchstones.

Portraying a Touchstone

Touchstones represent vampires' immediate connections to Humanity, both as a game trait

and as a society. As such, it can be very rewarding to explore what the mortal gets out of this arrangement, if they're even aware of what it represents to the vampire in the first place.

The first question a player who is interested in this role should ask is if their player's character is aware of their nature as a Touchstone. (Remember, though, that the character doesn't know about rules like Touchstones.) Do they know the vampire for what that vampire is? Some Kindred opt to hide their presence, heeding mortal Touchstones from afar. A scarred Nosferatu, for instance, might lurk outside a

window to check in on their former fiancé.

Alternatively, the vampire may choose to try to conceal their supernatural nature: A Ventrite may opt to retain her seat as a board member simply to be close to her aging father. This carries with it an additional challenge, in that the mortal doubtless comes to notice that time refuses to age the vampire.

How does the mortal feel? Has their loved one vanished and been replaced with some monstrous creature that wears their face? Or if simply watched from afar, does the Touchstone feel haunted, stripped



of their value, or dehumanized? Does the love that the vampire attempts to express come across instead as artificial or disturbing, or even fill their mortal beloved with fear that they are now perceived through the senses of the Beast?

Cultivating the Embrace

One other potent theme suited for playing a mortal character is with an eye toward becoming a vampire. A troupe may establish a few sessions of its chronicle to act as a Prelude to each of the characters' Embrace, or as part of session zero (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, pp. 135 and 138). Players' characters may be Embraced together, or separately over the duration of the chronicle or Prelude.

Alternatively, a player may wish their character to be the childe of an existing player's character. Doing so allows for the players to establish a relationship organically between their characters. This may be the natural culmination of a Kindred desperately trying to hold onto the vestiges of their days as a mortal, or in a doomed attempt to maintain a lover's affection.

Creating a Mortal Character

The process of creating a mortal character is very similar to that of creating a vampire, with a few significant differences.

Character Concept

Defining your character's core concept is important and takes the same form as it does for vampire characters as described in *Vampire: The Masquerade*. As with Kindred, the core concept is the summary of who the character is, and likely implies motivations and calls to action. Consider if the character is aware of the existence of vampires or not. Some concepts for a mortal character include:

- A son who believes his father was killed by a vampire and is driven by revenge
- A grieving spouse tracking down her missing partner
- A small-time gangster with no idea who they're pushing around

- Former security guard
 - Unsuspecting college student
 - Adrenaline junkie
 - Tech-savvy hacktivist
 - Blood doll who gets off on being fed from
- Choose your Ambition and Desire as normal.

Clan and Sire

Mortals do not begin play with a clan or Sire (though they can gain them if they are Embraced during gameplay or downtime).

Set Your Attributes

Before deciding which dots go where, consider your character concept and what the character is best at, what they are moderate at, and what is their weakest aspect. See the list of Attributes on p. 62.

- Take your best Attribute at 4
- Take your worst Attribute at 1
- Take three Attributes at 3
- Take the rest of your Attributes at 2
- Now derive two more Traits from your Attributes as follows:
- Add three to your Stamina to derive your Health.
- Add your Resolve to your Composure to derive your Willpower.

Choose Your Skills

Think about your character concept and history to formulate the set of skills that make sense with how your character lives their life. Are they a well-rounded executive? Dabbling student? Street-savvy dilettante?

Mortals use the quick skill assignment method. That is:

- **Jack of all Trades:** One Skill at 3; eight Skills at 2; ten Skills at 1
- **Balanced:** Three Skills at 3; five Skills at 2; seven Skills at 1
- **Specialist:** One Skill at 4; three Skills at 3; three Skills at 2; three Skills at 1

Add free specialties to Academics, Craft, Performance, and Science Skills. Take one more free specialty. Specialties can be applied only to skills with at least one level.

Disciplines and Predator Type

Mortals are not able to use Disciplines, nor does the Predator Type Trait apply to them.

Advantages

Mortals take 7 points of Advantages and 2 points of Flaws. They may not spend any points on Kindred-exclusive or ghoul-exclusive Advantages or Flaws.

Mortals may not spend points in the following Advantages; Archaic, Domain, Feeding, Herd, Mythic, Status, or Thin-Blooded. Mortals surely view their “Haven” in a manner that’s markedly different from how vampires do, but it does remain available to them.

Players who wish to use Kindred-exclusive Loresheets for their mortal characters may not necessarily gain any mechanical benefits from doing so, and are encouraged to work with their Storyteller to ensure that mortals with vampire-specific Loresheet knowledge suit the chronicle.

Note also that certain circumstances may further negate the validity of certain Merits and Flaws, such as becoming a ghoul or receiving the Embrace. In general, the Storyteller decides whether the player can reallocate the points of invalidated Merits and Flaws, or if they’re simply ablated. In general, a player should be able to purchase new Advantages for points spent on invalidated Merits (since they’re benefits the player pays for), while the Storyteller can keep points from Flaws, to be used as they see fit down the road.

Convictions & Touchstones

Select zero to three Convictions and the same number of Touchstones (see *Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 172–173). Consider the character’s core concept and personal values when selecting Touchstones.

Mortals do not regard Touchstones in the same manner as vampires do and, because they still live among mortal society, often have more immediate options in who they can designate as Touchstones. Good choices include family and friends, but also professional contacts, aspirational gurus, unresolved relationship partners, or even a celebrity — more than

one mortal could cite a parasocial relationship with a talented actress, for example.

Mortals start with Humanity at 7.

Health

Mortals suffer damage with greater severity than vampires, and cannot use their blood to mend injury. Mortals receive Superficial damage from blunt force trauma: punching, falling, and so on. Heavy force trauma, such as being struck with a baton or baseball bat, or run over by a car, deal Aggravated damage, as does penetrating, cutting, or piercing damage such as that from knives and bullets. Mortals do not sustain Aggravated damage from sunlight, but do receive it from other sources that indicate such (fire, Feral Weapons, etc.).

For recovering Superficial and Aggravated Health damage see p. 127 of *Vampire: The Masquerade*.

Health damage for mortals also has a few additional considerations.

During a session, one point of Superficial health damage takes four days of rest to recover. (This is in addition to the Health levels recovered at the start of the session.) The rest may occur during downtime, but it is cumulative. For example, healing 3 Superficial health damage takes 12 days. Unless the individual is hospitalized, one Aggravated health damage takes three weeks of rest to recover, using the same method. These are general downtime-elapsing guidelines that the Storyteller can adjust, but remember that mortals are inherently more fragile than vampires.

This method of healing does not account for long-term scarring or life-changing injuries. The Storyteller may declare that any notable injury may leave a scar or other permanent changes to the mortal’s body, such as by sustaining great damage from a single source, or withstanding one’s last tracker box of Health damage. Such injuries could range from a disfigurement to bone or joint damage. In extreme cases, recovering from damage might result in the loss of one point from a Physical Attribute trait of the Storyteller’s choice. This should never feel arbitrary or punitive; again,

mortals are inherently less resilient than vampires, and Trait loss should come as a result of great danger or sacrifice.

Willpower

For recovering from Superficial and Aggravated Willpower damage, see p. 127 of **Vampire: The Masquerade**.

Mortals may spend one point of Willpower to ignore being Impaired or other Health-related penalties for one turn. This represents the human will to persevere in the face of adversity, tragedy, or ruinous physical trauma. Perhaps best described as “the human spirit,” this motivation drives the living to accomplishment. Perhaps in the face of the knowledge of their finite existence, the light that burns half as long burns more brightly,

MORTALS, GHOULS, AND HUMANITY

In a **Vampire: The Masquerade** story, keeping the Beast at bay and the ethical accountability for one’s actions is one of the primary themes of the game. For this reason, mortals and ghouls also keep track of their Humanity scores in this context, even though what Humanity actually represents is the Kindred’s desire to pretend that they remain human, as a coping mechanism for what they’ve become.

In a larger sense, mortals don’t actually have a Humanity score. Since they are human, they don’t have to pretend to be human. In other World of Darkness games with different thematic focuses, “normal humans” will have different ethical contexts — you won’t necessarily need to carry over the Humanity Trait into a different game.

Humanity

Mortals begin play with a Humanity value of 7. Loss of Humanity is as perilous for mortals as it is for vampires, but unlike vampires, mortals have no Beast. Without an internal personification of their nature upon which to levy blame for their baser acts, mortals have to reconcile their eroding Humanity with their own choices.

Humanity loss can be expressed in many ways. Mortals who have chosen to undertake actions that lead to Humanity degeneration sometimes blame their actions on external forces. Indeed, blaming others for one’s own actions may be what caused Humanity loss in the first place. This may take the form of an outside group that the individual feels derision for; some might blame all people of a certain gender for their own dissatisfaction, hold all people of a certain income bracket as less deserving of anything but disdain, or turn their aggression toward a specific individual as a target for abuse. Or eroding Humanity may lead the individual to become more distant from others, unable (or unwilling...) to empathize with their fellows. Selfishness, cruelty, the inability to relate to others: All of these attitudes represent a dwindling connection to what it means to be human.

When portraying a mortal character who has fallen to Humanity 3 or less, the player and Storyteller should agree upon a Compulsion that represents the character’s slide into selfishness. This Compulsion can be a pre-existing one or an original expression, but the result is the same: Whenever the player attempts an action that yields a total failure, the Compulsion comes to the fore. (See **Vampire: The Masquerade** p. 208 for more on Compulsions.) Note, too, that Willpower cannot be used to allay a Compulsion — the aberrant behavior very quickly comes to dominate the personality of the mortal whose Humanity has so significantly degraded.

When a mortal has no Humanity, they do not succumb to the Beast and do not enter wassail in the way that vampires do. Instead, their Compulsion comes to the fore and thereafter dictates their every choice. For a mortal with zero Humanity, they do not even derive pleasure from pursuing these acts; any positive feeling other than satisfying the Compulsion has long since left them. Upon reaching zero Humanity, that character is no longer playable and control of that character falls to the Storyteller as it does with any other character of the same Humanity score.

A mortal who spends a lot of time around vampires may gain a Compulsion to stalk and kill as a serial killer. This definitely includes mortals who lose Humanity while hunting vampires.

Storyteller Options

These are entirely optional rules. They *require Storyteller approval* first. They enter play entirely at the Storyteller's discretion and need not apply to all mortals equally.

High Humanity

A mortal may begin play with a Humanity score higher than 7, if that's a reasonable conclusion from the character concept or history. Note that, since they have no Beast, high-Humanity mortals don't enjoy the same systemic benefits that high-Humanity vampires do. Rather, mortals with a high Humanity score often feel compelled to maintain that value for its own sake, or because they feel a higher calling.

Players portraying mortals with high Humanity scores obviously want to deal with stories about temptation, redemption, or other themes associated with maintaining a high degree of ethics and compassion.

Corrupting Embrace

When a mortal is Embraced, reduce their Humanity by 1. The mortal may feel some amount of their soul turning upon itself, growing foul and demanding attention. Most Kindred would concede that from the moment of the Embrace, the Beast grows. For the fledgling, the feeling of having lost a vital part of themselves and having it replaced with something inexorable and undeniable doubtless lingers, a sensate reminder of having a part of themselves tainted by vampiric blood. Within them now dwells the Beast, lurking in the recesses of a fledgling's consciousness, gnawing, lustful, and hungry to devour more. In many cases, such things would be played out during a scene in which the Embrace occurs, but if the player doesn't want to focus on those details, the systems can stand in. ■





Chapter Five:

COTERIES

*Criminals together. We're in hell, my little friend, and there's never any mistake there.
People are not damned for nothing.*

— JEAN-PAUL SARTRE, *No Exit*

The term coterie may have originally come into use to designate a small group of vampires who work together with a single goal in mind. By contrast, a sect is a larger faction of vampires who share a common philosophy, while a court, domain, territory, or other terms generally define all of the Kindred in a single geographic locality. With that in mind, despite the modern prevalence of the term, many vampires consider “coterie” to be archaic speech.

Some young vampires feel “coterie” is too weighed down by the aristocratic ideology of the Camarilla, and it has nearly fallen out of use in certain Anarch domains, in favor of “local,” “gang,” or the now similarly-antiquated “soviet.” Young Kindred, especially, often describe heterogeneous groups of vampires with a stylistic phrase related to their plurality or leadership: a *bande* of Brujah or Ravnos; a *burrow* of Gangrel or Nosferatu; a *goddammit* of Tremere (less often used by Tremere themselves, who prefer *school*), a *studio* of Toreador, a *suite* of Ventre; and so on. Thin-bloods may not even know there’s supposed to be a special word for “group” or “team.”

Coteries sometimes serve as a means of ensuring dependency between members of a greater conspiracy, replacing more holistic interpersonal connections. Modern Kindred may form coteries as an enterprise of common interest, a ritual of camaraderie among like-minded vampires, or even as an expression of affection, insofar as the Kindred can feel it. Coteries persist due to the strong, traditional role that they hold in Kindred society – and because walking alone gets ever more dangerous these nights. When groups form, whether as social cliques, familial broods, information networks, or simply as outcasts, mutual protection remains the primary expectation.

A Greater Purpose

Vampires are naturally predatory creatures, and fearful of one another’s monstrous natures — it is uncommon for them to truly share bonds of trust. As such, coteries usually emerge to facilitate a singular goal or press a specific agenda. Coteries form with a purpose.

Trust, of course, is a rare and elusive emotion among Kindred. Any vampire who has spent time in multiple coteries can attest to one strong similarity that they all share: Belonging to a coterie is less like chilling with friends and more akin to swimming with fellow sharks.

Any number of reasons may propel vampires into a coterie, but no matter those reasons, each member has their own objectives and agendas. All vampires want something, every single one, and at the same time, no coterie has ever existed in which all Kindred have been aware of one another’s true intentions. Whether the coterie consists of individual vampires who pursue blood, power, magic, wealth, knowledge or social leverage, those vampires are always in some form of competition with one another. Underneath mutual protection lies personal ambition.

Despite this, only a shortsighted vampire would ever throw their coterie-mate under the bus to pursue a personal goal. Vampires who do so quickly garner infamy and make enemies.

Outside of coteries formed for social reasons, august Kindred of certain domains sometimes mandate coteries with very specific goals in mind. A Camarilla domain might create a coterie formed by (or under) the Sheriff, Deputies, and Hounds, pursuing the objective of safeguarding their territory. A desperate Anarch domain might see a Lupine-hunting pack that reports to the Baron. An Ashirra coterie may find itself forced into particular vigilance against the Sabbat. The circumstances create the justification that keeps a coterie together or the top-down sanction for it.

The Players’ Characters

To many Kindred, coteries feel unnatural. Solitary predators don’t form harmonious social groups. That said, the players’ characters have an advantage in that the relationships among the *players* supersede this. The social unit around the game table helps build a sense of belonging.

That doesn’t have to be the case, though. Vampire society is treacherous, and certain troupes may enjoy some amount of suspenseful suspicion of their fellow players.

Take care when players welcome the concept of betrayal. It can be tempting to play a backstabbing vampire, but it’s usually more rewarding to play

a group who play the long game, realizing their agendas and making something of lasting value, using their unexpected solidarity to backstab their foes together. Unlike Storyteller characters, whose actions often serve a crafted narrative, players' characters have more free will, making the bonds that emerge between them more valuable.

Coterie as Cloud

The example coterie types in **Vampire: The Masquerade** (pp. 197–199) or in the next section of this book are just that, examples. Coterie types fade into each other, and even the type names serve more as rules shorthand than universal terms among Kindred. Yes, some Toreador fashion junkies call their coterie Plumaires, Questari is a recycled Tremere term, and Anarch shock troopers sometimes use the word Commando in their unit, but coterie types aren't clans.

Blur distinctions, blend types, build your coterie around your troupe first and the rules second. If you decide to play "unexploded methuselah

experts" who the Emir calls in to deal with a sleeping ancient under the stadium, you could build that as a Cerberus or a Questari just as easily as a Regency coterie, and you might want to swap one or another prerequisite among the listed types.

Similarly, your coterie can change after creation. Perhaps your characters' ambitions changed: the Prince angered you, you vow to destroy her, you become a Hunting Party to corner the market on her favorite blood types. Perhaps the story shifted: your patron was exposed as a Sabbat infiltrator, so now you've become a Fugitive coterie working to clear your names. Perhaps your own success changed you: your Saboteur coterie overthrew the power structure, and now you're a Regency or Maréchal coterie in all but name. Shift your coterie Backgrounds and other Advantages freely to accommodate your new purpose. Story counts first, not symmetry. As long as the overall number of dots and point cost remains the same, and as long as something in the narrative explains or justifies the shift, coterie mechanics shouldn't constrain play.



COTERIE TYPES

DOMAIN ADVANTAGES

Chasse: Size and richness of domain hunting grounds **Lien:** How well you're integrated into your domain

Portillon: Security of your domain against intruders

BLOOD CULT

THIRSTY GODS

Control a human cult and feed them, master blood magics, leverage cultists into power

HERD ... SUSPECT (•)

DOMAIN



CERBERUS

CHAINED HOUNDS

Guard or protect a significant location, learn its secrets, trade access for power

HAVEN ..

DOMAIN



CHAMPIONS

LOCAL HEROES

Protect your domain from worse predators, fight crime, try not to lose hope or Humanity

HERD ... SUSPECT (•)

DOMAIN



COMMANDO

SWAT TEAM

Fight for a master, explore and exploit enemy defenses, maintain unit cohesion, use special force

MAWLA ... STATUS • ENEMIES (••)

DOMAIN



CORPORATE

LLC

Take care of business, grow shareholder value, nestle into mortal power structures, skim off the top

INFLUENCE .. RESOURCES ...

DOMAIN



DAY WATCH

SUNSHINE SOLDIERS

Guard undead sleepers from mortals, patrol the city, strengthen your position while nobody's watching

INFLUENCE .. ENEMIES (•••)

DOMAIN



ENVOYS

PEACEKEEPERS

Mediate between factions, create alliances and common ground, identify a common enemy

CONTACTS ... RESOURCES .. SUSPECT (•)

DOMAIN



FAMILY

BLOOD RELATIONS

Maintain domesticity, expand blood ties advantageously, keep the line going, negotiate Blood Marriages with other Families

ALLY • CONTACTS .. RESOURCES .. ENEMIES (••)

DOMAIN



FANG GANG

CRIME CREW

Be undead and do crimes, case targets and hit them, defend turf against rivals

CONTACTS • ENEMIES (••)

DOMAIN



FUGITIVE

ON THE RUN

Keep hidden, keep moving, clear your name, lure your hunters into ambush

CONTACTS ... MASK .. RETAINER • PURSUER (+)

DOMAIN

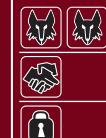
GATEKEEPERS

GRAVEYARD SHIFTS

Monitor the Veil, deal with wraiths, bust ghosts, prevent unauthorized grave robbery, rob graves

CONTACTS •• RETAINERS •• INFAMY (•)

DOMAIN



HUNTING PARTY

BLOOD RUNNERS

Find the best blood sources, protect them from poachers, sell their blood to the high bidder

ALLY • OR MAWLA •

DOMAIN



MARÉCHAL

CITY HALL

Serve and guard the lord of the city, do their dirty work, leverage your access to power

STATUS ...

DOMAIN



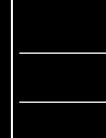
NOMADS

MOVEABLE FEAST

Explore warily, perform and move on, rook the locals, the show must go on, find a true home?

CONTACTS •• RETAINERS •• SUSPECT (•)

DOMAIN



PLUMAIRES

BIRDS OF A FEATHER

Socialize, pursue your communal art or interest, outshine rival plumaires, spot new talent, unlive well

CONTACTS ...

DOMAIN



QUESTARI

SEARCHERS AFTER HORROR

Research your quest, gather and preserve books and equipment, sift rumors, solve mysteries and puzzles, block rivals, launch expeditions

CONTACTS ..

DOMAIN



REGENCY

PLACEHOLDERS FOR POWER

Protect and strengthen your position, do the same for the city, follow your elder's policies, placate rival factions until you strike

MAWLA • STATUS ... OR

DOMAIN



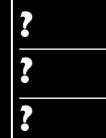
SABOTEUR

UNDERGROUND ENEMIES

Keep hidden, strike at your foes dramatically or cunningly, undermine your enemies politically or with mortals, coup d'état?

CONTACTS •• INFLUENCE • MAWLA • MASK • RESOURCES •• ADVERSARIES (••)

DOMAIN



SBIRRI

FALSE FLAGS

Unlive your cover, gather intelligence, build and run a network of traitors and spies

MAWLA • MASK •

DOMAIN



VEHME

SECRET POLICE

Maintain and protect the Masquerade, hunt down and subdue breachers, bring them for trial, carry out judgment

INFLUENCE •• STATUS ...

DOMAIN



WATCHMEN

CIVIC GUARDIANS

Patrol and protect, extend sect power and influence, fight sect opponents and werewolves, hunt the Sabbat

STATUS ..

DOMAIN



Blood Cult

“Join us and our blood shall forever be undivided, for there is no law beyond our will.”

Blood Cults lure in prey with the promise of supernatural spectacle or esoteric truth. They risk the Masquerade for easy access to a herd and pliant servants seeking escape from the trials of their mortal life. They may believe in their sanguinary theology, or simply use the garb of ritual to cover simple predation.

Blood Cults often have a mixed membership of Kindred and thin-bloods, itself suspect in older vampires' eyes.

Blood Cults usually organize in a spiritual hierarchy, led by a charismatic or domineering Kindred with a grand title such as High Priestess. Other Kindred in the coterie may use familial titles such as father, sister, or cousin. Though Blood Cults seldom gauge their power by territory, most have a dedicated ritual space, secured and maintained by an Abbess, Sacristan, or Khadim.

Prerequisites:

- Domain: Lien • and Portillon ••
- Herd •••
- Suspect (•)

Possible extras: Haven (cult church or compound), Haven: Furcus, Retainers (vergers, lay brothers); Enemies (••)

Preferred Resonances: Sanguine

Common Coterie Advantages: On Tap •; Cursed (varies), Targeted (•)



Cerberus

“No one saw you come in... no one has to see you leave.”

Most cities have at least one Cerberus coterie, charged by the Prince with guarding the grounds of an Elysium or other places of import within the city. Often the job comes with hoary and powerful oaths, or just with an implicit threat: “If something goes wrong ...” Cerberus members sometimes pass their honorable (and burdensome) duties along as legacies from sire to childe. The few Anarch Cerberus coteries usually take over the job after the fall of a Camarilla city, often as ambitious volunteer committees.

Cerberus coteries need both tough street fighters and adept political operators, and they keep their own business inside the coterie. They attract vampires who seek acceptance, redemption, or glory in exchange for service, such as Banu Haqim, Salubri, or Tzimisce.

- In addition to the basic goal of protection, Cerberus coteries may:
- Act as liaisons between the Kindred court and mortal power structures.
- Fortify their domain against intrusion and surveillance.
- Maintain the historical or supernatural character of their charge.

This last can conflict with the desire to protect: erecting gruesome barricades or unsightly moats around a museum, landmark, or historic site seldom goes over well. Nor does patrolling the site with rats or ghosts.

Prerequisites:

- Domain: Chasse • and Portillon •••
- Haven ••

Possible extras: Haven: Furcus or Haunted or both, Retainers (guards), Status (for legacies); Adversary

Preferred Resonances: Melancholy

Common Coterie Advantages: Privileged •••; Bullies (•), Custodians (••), Territorial (•)

Champions

"Criminals are a superstitious and cowardly lot."

Kindred in this coterie still cling to something in their humanity that wants to do good, while their Beast wants to kill and terrorize. In some neighborhoods those goals don't immediately conflict. Champions aren't always vigilantes: some coteries incorporate community organizers or even a neighborhood watch.

Muggers hiding in the alleys? Drug dealers poisoning the feed stock? Gone in the night, one way or another. For a while, the system works, or seems to. In addition to such simple sanitation, Champions might:

- Run night patrols and investigate potential threats.
- Identify problem cops on the beat: brutal, corrupt, or too eager to hunt vampires.
- Keep their streets dangerous enough to discourage Camarilla-backed developers.

Eventually, things likely get out of hand. Witnesses have to disappear, good cops or social workers need to be discouraged from investigating, and eventually the Champions harm or kill as many innocents as they save. Even if they keep their brutality mostly in check, they make enemies along the way – you can't create a brighter future without killing a few crime lords. They catch the eye of bigger sharks: was the bratva kicking payoffs up to the local Brujah bande? Does the Seneschal think that the Anarchs' biggest muscle can be pointed at the Champions – or vice versa?

Prerequisites:

- Domain: Chasse • and Lien ••
- Allies •
- Enemies (••) (local organized crime)
- **Possible extras:** Contacts, Haven: Hidden Armory, Influence (church or police); Adversary

Preferred Resonances:

Common Coterie Advantages: Bolt Holes (varies), Transportation ••; Custodians (••), Targeted (•)

Commando

"To make peace, prepare for war. To make money, find the unprepared."

Some Commando units serve a Prince or Baron, fighting for a sect. Some powerful Kindred commission their childe or grandchilde as a captain to keep a personal guard unit in being. More mercenary Commando teams take jobs from any patron who can pay. Missions might include:

- Hunting down thin-bloods within the city.
- Being hired to protect the business of a city officer.
- Escorting a high-value target through a contested or dangerous area.
- Build up their arsenal by arms dealing or by raiding someone else better armed: gangsters, cops, National Guard armory.
- Figuring out who set the coterie up to assassinate an elder.

Commando coteries, like mortal special operations teams, comprise specialized roles: captain, sergeant, tactical officer, negotiator, specialist, and door-kicker, among others. Most missions require some non-combat investigation as well: tracking down witnesses, gathering intel on a target, schmoozing potential clients or influential figures at court.

Prerequisites:

- Domain: Chasse • and Portillon ••
- Mawla •• (whoever tasks you for your missions)
- Status •
- Enemies (••)

Possible extras: Haven (base of operations), Haven: Hidden Armory, Mask, Retainers (NCOs, more troops); Adversary

Preferred Resonances:

Common Coterie Advantages: Transportation ••; Bullies (•), War Crimes (••)

Corporate

"That's the thing. There's never any new business. All of our business is old business."

Corporate coteries use modern business methods, along with Kindred strongarm tactics and supernatural manipulation. Camarilla ultra-traditionalists still consider them gauche, but none deny their utility in these capitalistic nights. Anarch coteries who try the Corporate route often collapse in ideological suspicion or paralysis, but charismatic Anarchs fresh from Silicon Valley still try reinventing the boardroom.

Corporate coteries organize as a board of directors, headed by a chair voted by the membership or appointed by an elder. As long as they turn over substantial dividends to their (often literal) stakeholders, the coterie can do pretty much as it pleases.

Rather than wrangle with profit-and-loss statements, the troupe can abstract the actual activities of the corporation with Projects or just with Resources dots. That leaves goals like:

- Discouraging business rivals with terror, or manipulating them into mergers.
- Developing cash-heavy markets such as criminals or terrorists.
- Investigating embezzlement or corporate espionage.
- Lobbying (or otherwise suborning) government investigators and regulators.

Stereotypically Ventrue lead Corporate coteries, but Lasombra string-pullers, Hecata bankers, and even Malkavian visionaries have what it takes to run such enterprises. Regardless, the coterie needs high-powered lawyers (ghouls, or just Retainers on retainer) to keep mortal authorities happy, either above or under the table.

Prerequisites:

- Domain: Chasse • and Lien ••
- Influence •• (business community)
- Resources ••• (the portfolio)

Possible extras: Contacts, Haven: Business Establishment, Herd, Influence (corporate or political), Retainers

Preferred Resonances: Phlegmatic

Common Coterie Advantages: Debt (••), Territorial (•)

Day Watch

"You need us on that rooftop. Mostly because being on that rooftop would set you on fire."

Day Watch coteries elevate thin-bloods from being poor and expendable to being well paid and expendable. Being a thin-blood with the Day Drinker Merit seems like a hard requirement to be a part of this pack, but Storyteller and player flexibility help make this concept happen.

With vampires moving around by day, the Masquerade becomes as flammable as an elder. Day Watch coteries preserving their incognito overlap with potential rival Vehme coteries, who may additionally see the Day Watch as an unjustified risk.

The coterie constantly interacts with mortals, and has to shift mental gears to deal with the infrequent Kindred they serve and protect. Those Kindred resent and suspect the “half-bloods” who hobnob with mortals while decent Cainites sleep.

Day Watch coteries function in many ways: bodyguards for the Primogen, or scouts aimed at organized vampire hunters. The coterie often faces suicidal assignments: thin-bloods are a dime a dozen, after all. A surviving Day Watch needs its members to be the absolute best. And if the worst happens, the coterie might turn its eyes – and its weapons – towards the full-bloods they supposedly exist to guard.

Prerequisites:

- Domain: Chasse • and Portillon ••
- Influence ••
- Enemies (•••)

Possible extras: Allies, Contacts, Haven, Mawla, Status: City Secrets, a shared relic or ritual allowing activity by day

Preferred Resonances: Whatever the Alchemist needs today

Common Coterie Advantages: Debt (•)

Envoy

"Working together, we have a chance at survival. Let us turn our differences into collective strengths."

This group serves on diplomatic missions, functioning as mediators between disparate parties. Most often, Envoy coteries form in the wake of factional conflicts. When the belligerents reach a compromise or armistice, they sometimes task their younger members with forming such a coterie to handle the remaining contentious issues, and to perhaps eventually transcend old grievances.

The goals of an Envoy coterie depend upon whom they are working with or negotiating between at that moment. Their goals may change if their diplomatic missions shift. Some goals might include:

- Uniting two coteries, cults, cities, or sects against a common goal.
 - Strengthening the position or influence of a particular individual.
 - Coordinating Projects to meet the same goals.
- Even without a formal assignment, Envoy communicate informally with the local power structure seeking information on potential partners, security for prior agreements, and leverage to use to help protect their compromises.

Prerequisites:

- Domain: Chasse •, Lien •••
- Contacts ••• (mortals from diverse backgrounds and professions)
- Resources •• (pooled cash and assets)
- Suspect (•)

Possible extras: Mask (cover identities for different domains); No Haven (always on the move) (•) or Shared Haven (embassy or legation) (•)

Preferred Resonances: Sanguine, Phlegmatic

Common Coterie Advantages: Privileged •••

Family

"No matter how much I hate you right now, you're my brother, and nobody does that to you."

Synonymous with the Hecata, common among Ventrite, Tzimisce, and the older branches of most other clans, the Family coterie connects blood relations to the Blood. Many ancillae remember when family overrode all concerns in life and unlife alike: indeed, outside the postmodern West, it generally still does.

Family coteries often recruit mortal members of their extended families as allies, Embracing the most promising to carry on the next generation. They may have dependent lineages of servants or Retainers, as well as the standard parents, grandparents, siblings, cousins, and distant relations. A Blood Marriage (**Camarilla**, pp. 91–92) in the past can explain multiple clans in one Family.

A Family coterie's goals focus on both mortal and vampire relationships:

- Protect the family interests, arrange mortal marriages, and ensure the success of future relatives.
- Plan advantageous Embraces and Blood Marriage alliances.
- Trace their genealogy to find lost members, or to locate old family graves or relics.

Other family members might be married out, estranged, or mysteriously missing. Family coteries offer many opportunities for disturbing Storyteller characters who can't simply be killed off – they're family! They set up meaty conflicts for troupes who enjoy butting emotional heads in the game: whether your coterie maps to *Sopranos* or *Succession*, family matters.

Prerequisites:

- Domain: Chasse •, Lien •, Portillon •••
- Ally • (a connected mortal family member)
- Contacts •• (family, extended family)
- Resources •• (family liquid assets)
- Enemies (••) (one or more mortals who oppose the family business)

Possible extras: Haven (ancestral manse), Herd (extended family members), Influence (family business), Mawla (vampire within the same family), Retainers (a family ghoul); Dark Secret (family diablerie or black sheep), Haven Flaw: Haunted

Preferred Resonances: Sanguine

Common Coterie Advantages: Bolt Holes (varies); Cursed (family curse), Territorial (ancestral manse)

Fang Gang

“Crime doesn’t pay ... you. It pays us.”

Gangbangers, Syndicate heisters, or a con artist crew, the Fang Gang provides other Kindred a dirty skill set and underworld entrée. Their stories fill with violence, betrayal, temptation, and repercussions from victims and targets of all the above. Familiar from hundreds of films and TV shows, it’s probably the easiest type of coterie for new groups to adopt: pick a driver and scout, a hitter, a gun-thug, a break-in artist, and maybe a face or a mastermind and you’re ready to do crimes.

The Camarilla doesn’t care if the coterie breaks mortal laws, and the Anarchs love a rebel – until the Fang Gang steps on someone else’s turf, whacks a valued ghoul or ally, or takes a job with a power player’s hated rival. Crime stories become political stories if the Fang Gang gets powerful, but there’s always another gang to throw down with if the coterie prefers keeping it street.

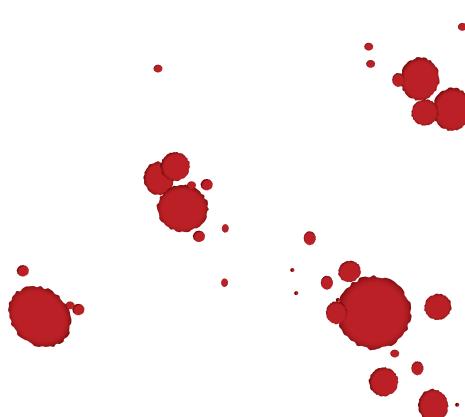
Prerequisites:

- Domain: Chasse •, Lien •, and Portillon •
- Contacts • (fence or other criminal middleman)
- Enemies (••)

Possible extras: Haven (clubhouse), Herd (human members/victims of your gang), Influence (organized crime), Resources (loot), Retainers, Status (likely with Anarchs)

Preferred Resonances: Choleric

Common Coterie Advantages: Targeted (•)



Fugitive

“We can’t stop. We can’t even slow down. What we’re trying to do is turn around.”

These vampires are on the run. FIRSTLIGHT targets them. The Court proclaimed a Blood Hunt. Anarchs seek them for a stake-and-boot party. The pursuer may even be a single, potent vampire. It’s rare for every member of the coterie to be hunted. Instead, one or two Kindred on the run convince others to go with them out of love or camaraderie or Blood Bond.

Or perhaps the coterie did a job that led to their excommunication, or learned too much about someone powerful. In danger everywhere, they trust only mortals, and not many of them. Perhaps their Touchstones make up part of their entourage, or they have to try to leverage their protection from hiding or from another city.

Fugitive coterie chronicles escalate paranoia: Who’s hunting us? Will one of us betray the others? They end with the coterie captured, or turning and fighting one last doomed battle. Or perhaps with victory:

- The coterie discovers who framed them, and proves it to their pursuer’s satisfaction.
- They successfully fake their Final Death, or redirect their pursuers after a different group of Kindred, easier with mortal hunters than with Kindred Hounds.
- They find protection somewhere else, buying it with their dangerous secret or with some other trump card they uncover in their flight.

The Fugitive coterie who attempts to clear their name in any circumstances must come up with a compelling argument, or with some even worse hold on their accuser. If not, keep a stash of resources handy for another quick escape.

Prerequisites:

- Domain: None
- Contacts ••• (help on the run)
- Mask ••
- Retainer • (daylight driver)
- Special: Fugitive coteries always have one or more Flaws related to their Pursuer: Adversary, Enemy, Infamy, Known Blankbody, Shunned

Possible Extras: Allies, Cobbler •, Loreshell (when being hunted because they know too much), Resources (cash and lightproof vehicles); Despised (••)

Preferred Resonances: Choleric

Common Coterie Advantages: Transportation

••; Targeted (•)

Gatekeeper

“Our friends straddle the boundary between life and death. Our enemies lie just across it.”

Still rare, but appearing among Hecata, Lasombra, and other Oblivion users, Gatekeeper coteries commune with (and command) the dead, often as a service to other Kindred. Necromantic powers and ghostly servants provide considerable, potentially deniable, throw weight to the Baron or Prince who sponsors a Gatekeeper coterie at a remove.

Some Gatekeeper coteries decide matters through consensus, while others follow the most powerful necromancer among them – sometimes called the “Master of Ceremonies” by younger licks, or just Gatemaster. Coteries with a permanent stable of spirits or walking corpses empower a sexton to control and contain them within their domain.

While they shun thin-bloods, they show no animus towards Caitiff who have managed to learn the powers of Oblivion or who have sought them out for such learning. Tutoring any willing Kindred in Oblivion ceremonies provides important boons or other considerations for the coterie. Other Kindred commission them to lay dangerous ghosts, commune with honored ancestors, or to seek out grave reliques or other secrets held by the truly dead.

Prerequisites:

- Domain: Chasse ••, Lien • and Portillon •
- Contacts •• (graverobbers, morticians)
- Retainers ••• (a wraith servant and spy)
- Infamy (•) (dealings with dark entities)

Possible extras: Enemies (vampire hunters who recognize the coterie dealing with the dead), Haven: Furcus (Ceremonies), Mawla (accomplished necromancer), Resources (stolen from the dead), Status: City Secrets (learned from the dead)

Preferred Resonances: None

Common Coterie Advantages: Bolt Holes; Cursed (varies), Territorial (•)

Hunting Party

“I can see you’re a customer of taste and refinement. Let me show you our cheerleader cellar.”

Hunting Party coteries know resonances like the backs of their hands, and often know exactly where to find them. Herding clot-bearers can change their emotional state, so managing free-range mortals is the key to inventory. Protecting these assets is important, and doing it carefully even more so. Mortals can be tapped again and again, but repeat harvests raise risks: law enforcement (or Second Inquisition agency) attention, freakouts by the persecuted mortal, vampire poachers, and systemic interference from rival tappers such as the Circulatory System or even a do-gooding Champion coterie.

Like Fang Gangs, Hunting Party coterie members specialize by skill set. Hunting Party coteries prize Kindred who can sniff out resonances, as well as well-connected glad-handers who can trade with other ranchers to fill an order. But researchers, private eyes, even blood drive coordinators provide the all-important knowledge of where valuable veins exist in your city. They may be Kindred members or mortal contacts or both. Protecting and inventorying mortals in demand often takes a higher priority than prospecting for new clots — but a rich new dyscrasia that can feed the most powerful Ventrite in the city can make a coterie’s fortune overnight.

Prerequisites:

- Domain: Chasse •••
- Ally • (bait, human trafficker) or Mawla • (blood broker)

Possible extras: Herd, Influence (organized crime)

Preferred Resonances: Whatever sells best

Common Coterie Advantages: On Tap ••



Maréchal

"The Emir insists on your company this evening. Let's not keep them waiting."

Bodyguards and praetorians for the city's ruler, the Maréchal coterie represents their personal power and interest, as opposed to the Sheriff, who theoretically represents the Court or the soviet or even the city as a whole. A prestigious posting with potential for access, its membership usually reflects the clan makeup of the city's Kindred power structure as influential elders attempt to insert their childer into the coterie.

Traditionally, the Prince or Baron appoints the coterie's captain, and the coterie votes on its own master at arms — often a war leader and executive officer, and often an older veteran vampire. Tied as they are directly to the ruler, the coterie must work to shore up their patron against enemies and rivals

or risk losing turf to the Sheriff. A bold Maréchal coterie can switch allegiance to the new rulers ahead of a coup, but if they pick wrong, they soon become Fugitives at best.

Likewise, the coterie needs to keep its own misdeeds deeply hidden or deniable, or perpetrate them against mortals or thin-bloods or other groups without power or influence. Their behavior splashes back on the ruler, so many Maréchals carry out their tasks in the shadows, only appearing at court when needed to overawe or overcome some challenger.

Prerequisites:

- Domain: Chasse •• and Portillon ••
- Status •••

Possible extras: Adversaries, Influence, Mawla (Prince/Baron), Retainers, Status

Preferred Resonances: Choleric, Sanguine

Common Coterie Advantages: Transportation ••; Bullies (••)

Nomad

"Welcome back, my friends, to the show that never ends ... but it does move on."

Nomad coteries move from place to place, bringing the party with them. Some Nomads (sometimes called Carnival coteries) perform for mortals, Kindred, or both: appealing to elders with deliberately anachronistic entertainments recalling Dust Bowl circuses or Victorian burlesques, or organizing Shakespeare rep or EDM raves.

Carnival coteries have dedicated roles: performer, barker or compére, stagehand, manager, roper or shill. Other Nomad coteries just shift together, all for one and one for all, long enough to get gas and blood and head out the next night.

Nomad goals vary depending upon the skill set of their members, such as:

- Grab what you can; you're not going to be here to get caught in the smash!
- Satirize the local power structure or conceal Cainite rites in the performances.
- Offer an outsider perspective (or outsider advantage) to deadlocked local powers.
- Create Resonance-soaked feeding opportunities without a herd.

Nomads may pass secrets on to trusted (or treasonous) ears on their route, or seek components for some vastly separate ritual that must be performed in seven cities in seven months to take effect.

Prerequisites:

- Domain: None
- Contacts ••• (audience, promoters, travel brokers, etc.)
- Retainers •• (daylight help)
- Suspect (•)

Possible Extras: Allies, Fame, Herd (fans or fellow travelers), Resources

Preferred Resonances: Sanguine, Animal

Common Coterie Advantages: Transportation ••; Debt (••)

Plumaire

"Where were we last night? Don't worry, you wouldn't have appreciated it, even if they had let you in."

If living well is the best revenge, unliving better than another Kindred is even sweeter. Plumaires, "birds of a feather," dedicate their coteries to the best things in unlife: music, fashion, art, or anything else that lights up their endless nights. In addition to Toreador fashionistas, one sees Ventrue architects, Malkavian designer chemists, Brujah mods and Gangrel rockers — preening, selfishness, and display come naturally to Kindred of all clans. Even a Nosferatu might collect perfumes, or delight in infrasound-heavy black metal.

As vampires, they turn joy into cruelty and competition: they must be and have and control the best of whatever they seek, and they must shame and crush those who dare to want the same thing. What keeps Plumaire coteries going boils down to those two elements. Once the troupe has picked their coterie's area of interest, their *focus*, their goals might include:

- Impressing the Harpies, which might have to start by convincing the Harpies their focus is cool or tasteful at all.
- Suborning or Blood Bonding the best (or most popular) mortal practitioner of their focus, at potential risk to the Masquerade.
- Heckle a rival coterie's performance, or otherwise sabotage their focus moment or their collection.
- Genuinely seek out the best of their focus to try and stir their Humanity again.

Whatever they do, though, they must do it fabulously.

Prerequisites:

- Domain: Chasse •• and Lien ••
- Contacts ••• (fellow members of your subculture)

Possible extras: Adversary or Enemy (rival fashionista), Fame (in subculture), Status (for high society Plumaires)

Preferred Resonances: Sanguine

Common Coterie Advantages: Transportation ••; Debt (••)

Questari

“Seek, and ye shall find.”

The Questari coterie forms to delve into secrets or mysteries, from ancient legends to “who staked the Baron?” Kindred authorities may assign them to trace a methuselah, or they may collect rare artifacts to sell on the blood magic scene, or they may consider the research its own reward. Some collect merely to expand their collection, becoming more institution than investigators, a phenomenon so common the Tremere have a name for it: a Rectorate.

Rectorate coteries mostly stay at home and jealously guard their library, archive, or museum; roving Questari mount constant expeditions away from their home city following leads or rumors to treasure or truth. Many Questari coteries try to do both! Both efforts can develop on-screen enemies, or play out in the background as abstract Projects, the troupe switching focus when the story demands it.

Crime-solving Questari need a Storyteller willing and able to provide a series of mysteries; the deep lore of the World of Darkness provides plenty of secrets for the esoteric types. Troupes diving into that deep lore likely find a Questari coterie ideal, allowing the Storyteller to knit characters with obscure or seemingly unconnected Loreshheets together in the same chronicle. Questari can often absent themselves from the more brutal political horror of **Vampire: The Masquerade**, for groups that shy away from such things. Other Questari collect secrets to weaponize in exactly that kind of political horror chronicle. Regardless, their greatest foes may turn out to be rival Questari, racing towards mutual goals in ongoing battles of wits ... and then of fangs.

Prerequisites:

- Domain: Chasse • and Lien •••
- Contacts ••

Possible extras: Haven with Library, Mawla, Resources (research budget), Status: City Secrets

Preferred Resonances: Sanguine, Phlegmatic

Common Coterie Advantages: Transportation •• (cargo plane or Land Rovers); Territorial (•) (for Rectorate types)

Regency

“The Beckoning has called our elder to war. Regrettable, but it does leave us in command.”

The Regency coterie, representing a powerful elder, is respected, feared, and sometimes hated by many, and often only begrudgingly recognized at all. Inheriting power means inheriting enemies, which can drive a wedge between the coterie and former patrons or turn old adversaries into needed confidants. Regency coteries centered around a present-but-torpid elder are mockingly called Somnophiles, and have their own challenges keeping their lord both relevant and safe, and interpreting their orders in strange dreams and omens.

Camarilla Regencies face eager “assistance” from courtiers seeking to replace them or turn them into puppets. Anarch Regencies (usually called Provisional Councils or Steering Committees) have less maneuvering to worry about, but may get purged at any time by more radical Anarch factions.

Every night the elder stays away, the question of making the Regency permanent arises, in their enemies’ minds if not in the coterie’s. Civic crises force the coterie to improvise, keeping their (and the sect’s) position from collapse, and inching them ever closer to independent action. A Regency coterie that inherits half a city from an elder locked in rivalry with another has its own set of problems, especially if their opposite elder shows signs of Beckoning derangement.

Prerequisites:

- Domain: Chasse •• and Portillon •••
- Mawla •• (major-domo or zampolit)
- Status •••• (or ••• for Anarch Regencies)
- Advantages: Select up to 10 dots shared among Haven, Herd, Influence, Resources, Retainers, Status: City Secrets, and/or Coterie Advantages
- Flaws: Select the same amount of dots worth of Flaws (Adversaries, Compromised Haven, Despised, Enemies, Stalkers, Coterie Flaws)

Preferred Resonances: Phlegmatic

Common Coterie Advantages: Bolt Holes; Bullies (•), Targeted (•), War Crimes (••) (sins of the elder)

Saboteur

"We will erode their domain brick by brick."

The Saboteur coterie has no immediate power base or roots in their new domain. Instead, they have the support of a powerful Kindred elsewhere who wants to destroy or conquer it. In mortal terms, they most resemble a terrorist cell, but seldom serve an explicit political agenda larger than vendetta or factional infighting. The sometime exception: the radical Anarch Saboteur coteries called Vanguards, who exist to destabilize a Barony (or sometimes a Court) and then shift themselves into power as the “only ones who can solve this problem.”

Opponents – from the target sect or the mortal security services – work to learn the Saboteurs’ true mission. While they guess, the coterie acts:

- Infiltrating their target
- Gathering knowledge of their target’s weaknesses
- Plotting a decisive stroke
- Suborning mortal investigators and redirecting them toward the target sect

Saboteurs may specialize by skill and Discipline set: political provocateurs, assassins, bomb builders, infiltrators. Thin-bloods prove extremely helpful: organizing the kine, launching day raids disguised as hunter strikes, and the like. Every Saboteur should scout the city for weak points, escape routes, and hidden dangers to unleash at Zero Hour.

Prerequisites:

- Contacts •• (disenfranchised, outsiders, etc.)
- Influence • (subversive organizations)
- Mawla •• (handler)
- Mask • (cover identities)
- Adversaries (••) (at least one Kindred opponent)

Possible extras: Resources (liquid cash), Retainers (recruits and muscle), Domain (if the coterie is embedded in their current locale, must buy Portillon first); Suspect (•) and more Adversaries

Preferred Resonances: Melancholic, Choleric

Common Coterie Advantages: Bolt Holes

Sbirri

"Perhaps we can come to an arrangement? We're all on the same side after all."

This coterie infiltrates a city or faction at the behest of their true masters: where Saboteurs map to terrorists, Sbirri are spies. The name comes from Renaissance Italy, where it referred to a noble’s henchman wearing a hooded coat (*birro*). The Sbirri likewise conceal their true features behind the traditions and objectives of another coterie type, their cover. The coterie’s primary liaison with their handler or patron shouldn’t seem to lead the cover coterie.

The coterie’s backstory becomes a crucial part of play, and Storyteller and troupe should establish it in session zero. How did they insert into the target city, and who inserted them? Do they replace a previous Sbirri network? Can they trust the leave-behinds from that network?

The troupe may choose to run their cover activities as Projects in the background, while concentrating spotlight time on their clandestine activities:

- Uncover political enmities and secrets at Court to gain leverage.
- Subtly deepen factional divides and rivalries by playing both sides.
- Recruit influential Kindred or mortals to their patron’s cause, or to a false flag.
- Covertly protect their patron’s other assets and influence in their city.
- Shut down or divert suspicious investigators, Kindred or mortal.

Sbirri coteries interest themselves in those on the outs with the power structure: thin-bloods, Caitiff, resentful Ministry temples or just anyone shunned by the Harpies. Dealing with such suspicious characters harvests plenty of secrets, but the Sbirri must make sure none of the dirt splashes on their own cloak.

Prerequisites:

- Domain: As Coterie being mimicked; can spend one less dot overall
- Mawla •• (handler or messenger)
- Mask •

Possible extras: Adversary of target city’s Primogen (bought as unwitting Mawla), Status: City Secrets, other Advantages from the coterie’s cover type; actual Adversaries, Dark Secret (••)

Preferred Resonances: Melancholy or cover coterie preferred

Common Coterie Advantages: Bolt Holes (varies), Chasse: Back Alleys

Vehme

“We’re not paying you to believe it. We’re paying you to Tweet it. #vamily”

As the Second Inquisition rages, the importance of covering Kindred tracks and enforcing the Masquerade rises even more starkly. Modern Vehme coteries seldom trouble themselves with teaching others the Traditions or chastising those who are a bit too sloppy with their nightly business. Their only concern is keeping vampires a secret from the mortal world, and the Court often gives them broad powers to achieve those goals.

Usually this means cleaning up messes and manipulating the media and law enforcement, but in truly egregious cases Vehme bring in Masquerade breachers for judgment. The Ventrue historically took clean-ups as their responsibility, and most Camarilla Vehme coteries still have a Ventrue member hooked into the city’s influence networks. Anarch Vehme “cleaning crews” if anything work more bluntly (and more often online) than Camarilla string-pullers, and it’s not uncommon for the two sides to collaborate in blatant or emergency cases. In some cities, the Baron and the Prince co-appoint a joint Vehme coterie to handle matters for both sects.

Prerequisites:

- Domain: Chasse •
- Influence: ••• (especially in police and media)
- Status •••

Possible extras: Adversaries, Mawla (on Primogen or Anarch Councils)

Preferred Resonances: Sanguine

Common Coterie Advantages: Privileged ••• ; Custodians (••)

Watchmen

“These tracks don’t look lupine, but break out the silver just in case.”

Watchmen protect the domain from a specific threat or guard the city’s borders from infiltration or invasion. Lupines, Sabbat, enemy sects, and even mortal hunters can find themselves on their list. The ruler usually grants Watchmen domains on the city’s border, or in dangerous territories recently fallen under their sect’s control.

Watchmen don’t always get enough support at Court: too-powerful warriors can become threats, and too-successful heroes can become political pawns. Careful Watchmen assemble enough firepower to do the job well away from Elysiums, avoiding the city center and the fashionable racks. Reckless or ambitious Watchmen suddenly lose support to the Maréchals, or even find their calls for aid unreturned at the most inopportune moments.

The coterie’s most capable warrior usually leads as the chief or warden; their seconds jockey for their position and keep the rest of the crew in check and trained up. Unlike most coteries that serve the city, Watchmen never accept a leader imposed from the outside and a few rely on semi-ritualized duels to determine who runs the show. Watchmen put their unives on the line regularly and have little time for the prejudices others have for Caitiff, thin-bloods or anyone else. If you’re willing to fight and face final death, your blood is good enough for them.

Prerequisites:

- Domain: Chasse • Lien •• and Portillon •
- Status: •• (own sect)

Possible extras: Contacts, Retainers

Preferred Resonances: Animal, Melancholy

Common Coterie Advantages: Transportation •• ; Territorial (•), Under Siege (••)



Coterie Systems

In many ways, creating a coterie is even more important than creating a character. If play happens among characters, the coterie provides and defines the “among.” This section provides some more flavor and ingredients for coterie creation and ongoing play within a coterie.

Vampires usually don’t just meet up in a bar and decide to start a coterie, although that has happened. Generally, coteries come into existence for a reason, often before the current troupe of characters moved in, or got Embraced, or otherwise kicked off the chronicle. When you define your coterie in session zero, take a little time to decide how long it has existed before your characters joined it. Did they find it? Did one of their sires? Unrelated senior members should discreetly fade out as soon as possible: coteries should focus tightly on the actual player characters and their Background characters such as Mawali, Retainers, and the like.

New Coterie Advantages fill in some figures in front of the Backgrounds, and characters’ clans can now inform and influence coterie play even more directly. The more in-depth Domain creation systems address the all-important question of

where the coterie does what it does. Finally, a streamlined Coterie Creation Summary puts all this in one place, that place eventually being the Coterie Sheet in the Appendix (p. 239).

In all these systems, here and in other chapters, the Storyteller can introduce whatever they feel enriches the game. Players and Storytellers alike can always take what they want and leave out whatever they feel diverts it or changes it into something other than what they want to play.

Changing Coteries

Vampires are social predators and notoriously fickle in their allegiances. While coteries may not be quite akin to mortal polycules, the social connections between vampires change and evolve constantly as their ambitions broaden and their humanity fades. Very few vampires stay in the same coterie for the entirety of their existence and many not only change coteries regularly but maintain membership in several at once. Thin-bloods in particular mix and match coteries as a matter of survival, trying to find the right mixture of alliances that will see them through to the next night.

Regardless of clan, this mercenary attitude to relationships is a feature of Kindred society and while anyone openly claiming membership in several coteries may be subject to increased scrutiny, rarely does it

devolve into banishment or violence. All vampires have competing loyalties to a sect, a clan or even a moral philosophy, and balancing the demands of these imperatives is usually the part of unlife that drives Kindred to seek help among their peers. A vampire with ties to multiple coteries may not be wholly trusted, but their connections are seen as a resource, not a threat, by vampires that know how to play games in the dark.

When a character leaves a coterie, any extra Advantage points they spent on the coterie may take a while to recoup (*Vampire: The Masquerade*,

p. 180). If a character makes no attempt to recoup any extra Advantages they spent on the coterie, then the dots remain under the coterie's control. If they do attempt to recoup their Advantages the coterie slowly loses access to these Backgrounds and Advantages as the character regains their points, with the exact timing determined in play by the Storyteller and by how the coterie responds to having their Advantages repossessed.

KINDRED IN MULTIPLE COTERIES

Can you join more than one coterie? Absolutely. This wouldn't be a game of personal and political horror if you couldn't set your character up in multiple conflicting alliances. Popular Kindred may be asked to join multiple coteries. This is time and resource consuming, but essentially a compliment, and generally permitted if each coterie is aware of the others. Joining another coterie in secret, however, often triggers distrust and suspicion.

Kindred in more than one coterie find themselves inevitably stretched thinner, more stressed and time-pressured than those with only one set of enemies and colleagues to monitor. Represent this by charging the character one dot (3 experience) for each additional coterie they join: they may take a Flaw to pay for this dot, even if they theoretically have their maximum number of Flaws already.

STRONG COTERIES: OPTIONAL RULE

Standard coteries begin with one free dot per player character. Any more dots need to come from player Advantage dots, or from coterie Flaws. This creates lean and hungry coteries, as befits lean and hungry player characters. But in chronicles featuring older legacy coteries, or just to play with a slightly richer dot economy, the Storyteller may allow Coterie Bonuses (below) or just increase the starting free coterie pool by two or three dots. As always, privilege story potential over mechanical rigor.

COTERIE BONUSES

At your Storyteller's discretion certain coterie types grant a one-dot bonus to one of your domain traits if your coterie meets all of the prerequisites of the coterie. This bonus cannot raise a domain trait above five. If a coterie changes type and receives a bonus that would bump a domain trait above five, refund a coterie dot or the spent experience to the player character that purchased the original fifth dot of the trait.

Coteries gain this bonus to the following domain traits:
Chasse: Blood Cult, Envoy, Fang Gang, Hunting Party,
Plumaire: Questari, Regency, Sbirri
Lien: Champions, Corporate, Family, Gatekeeper,
Vehme
Portillon: Cerberus, Commando, Day Watch,
Maréchal: Saboteur, Watchmen
Coteries without domains (Fugitive, Nomad) may add their extra dot to Contacts or Retainers instead.

Dissolution and Destruction

If all its remaining members agree to dissolve the coterie, every member recoups their Advantages and the process likely goes more rapidly with no institutional inertia (or intentional slow-walking) to oppose them.

When a coterie member who invested a lot into the coterie is destroyed their bequest of Advantages remains at the disposal of the coterie but as detailed above no longer have any plot protection. If these legacy Advantages are ever damaged, destroyed or exhausted they can only be replenished or regained through the fresh expenditure of experience by a new player character (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 180).

COTERIE VERSUS PERSONAL BACKGROUNDS

The coterie as a whole possesses coterie Backgrounds, not the individual vampires in it (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 196). This may raise questions on what happens when one of the Kindred uses personal and coterie Backgrounds together. Personal and coterie Backgrounds don't stack. However, when a character possesses both, they normally get an additional attempt at a task related to the Background, or access to another passive opportunity. For example, if a vampire has both coterie and personal Fame, they have two chances to lean on it to get preferential treatment at a nightclub — but other clubgoers have twice as many opportunities to recognize them. These extra chances don't happen when both Backgrounds cover different Domains. A vampire in Baby Chorus who's also a well-known physicist only stands an enhanced chance of recognition if the band plays at the University of Chicago.

Individual vampires who free-ride on their coterie Backgrounds too often set themselves up for payback or worse from their fellow coterie members.

Coterie Backgrounds stand and fall together. If you all slumber in a coterie Haven and it's burned out by thin-blood arsonists, nobody has a Haven to fall back on. If you depend on your coterie Mask, when an NSA database search cracks your fake ID, everybody gets flagged up together in the system.

Coterie Advantages

Coterie Advantages can only be bought with coterie dots or by taking coterie Flaws to offset the cost. Coterie Merits and Flaws affect the coterie as a whole, and all characters who openly associate as members of the coterie. Vampires that keep their allegiance a well-guarded secret may be able to avoid some of the consequences of their coterie's Flaws, but will also miss out on being able to access the coterie's Advantages.

Unlike character Advantages, those associated with a coterie can persist even if the character who purchased the Merit or Flaw is destroyed or no

longer a member though these Advantages will fade or degrade over time and the Storyteller no longer has to abide by the same consideration for destroying these Advantages as they are no longer attached to an active player character (*Vampire: The Masquerade* p. 180).

Coterie Merits

BOLT HOLES • TO ...

The coterie's domain covers an unusually large (or confusing) area. While controlling so much territory can be a logistical challenge at times, the advantages far outweigh the drawbacks. Every dot in the Bolt Holes Merit (to a maximum of three) gives the coterie a bonus die when trying to escape detection or evade pursuit when within their domain. This Merit may play into other dice pools at the Storyteller's discretion.

ON TAP • TO ...

Your coterie goes out of its way to create an atmosphere within your domain that instills a preferred Resonance in your prey. When taking this Merit choose a Resonance. Whenever hunting in your domain you can add dice equal to the rating of this Merit to find a victim with the specified Resonance.

PRIVILEGED ...

The coterie has been granted special rights beyond that usually afforded to Kindred in their sect. Determine the remarkable deed you or perhaps one of your sires did to earn this unusual favor. Ideally, connect it to your coterie type: your Gravekeepers exorcised a dangerous wraith, your Questari solved a vexing murder that prevented the Court from dissolving in vendetta.

Regardless of the reasons, the coterie cannot be punished for a specific crime that would see other Kindred ostracized or destroyed. The Storyteller is the final judge, but examples include being allowed to feed in areas off-limits to others, being allowed to openly carry weapons in Elysiums, or even a blanket

permission to Embrace childer within their domain. While this immunity can be revoked if abused, as long as the coterie backs the winner it usually remains in place even through changes in a city's leadership.

TRANSPORTATION ••

Getting around the city is never a problem for members of your coterie. A small fleet of luxury vehicles and drivers (Driving 6) are at your group's disposal on short notice. Also, once per story the coterie can call upon a rare or expensive vehicle such as a helicopter or bulletproof SUV for a night. The death of a driver or destruction of too many cars makes this Merit unavailable for short periods as determined by the Storyteller.

Coterie Flaws

BULLIES (•)

Your coterie is associated with a dark time when a tyrant Prince, corrupt Baron, or capricious Emir ruled the city. Whether willingly or because of

prestation, your coterie enforced their will and many have not forgotten. The coterie has a one-die penalty on all Social dice pools (except Intimidation) when dealing with other vampires in the city. This Flaw does not apply to dealings with their old master's cronies and henchmen.

CURSED (VARIES)

A mystical curse afflicts everyone in the coterie while outside their domain. The coterie decides on a Mythic Flaw (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 182, and pp. 120–121) and takes the same number of dots in Cursed. They can pick multiple Folkloric Blocks or Banes. (For these purposes, consider Stench (p. 120) also a Mythic Flaw.) Whenever they are outside their domain, they suffer the drawbacks of their chosen Mythic Flaw.

CUSTODIANS (••)

The Kindred of this coterie have a particularly odious or inconvenient responsibility within the city. While they gain no status or compensation for taking on these duties, if they ever fail or shirk



this responsibility they risk censure, dishonor, or even death. The exact nature of this responsibility is left up to the coterie and the Storyteller to devise but common custodial tasks include cleaning up after parties at Elysiums, checking the Prince's gates just before dawn, tending elders or other torpid vampires, babysitting fledglings of politically powerful sires, or leaving offerings at graveyards or temples.

If the coterie should ever fail at their task or refuse to do it they lose one dot from their Status within their sect until they make amends and return to their service. (Lose coterie Status first, then individual member Status dots.) If they lose all Status, the coterie also becomes Suspect, but retains this Flaw as well.

TARGETED (•)

A mortal vampire hunting agency or some other threat knows that Kindred operate in your coterie's domain and have penetrated at least some of your defenses in the past. Your coterie may even be in some Vatican filing cabinet or FIRSTLIGHT database. Your coterie's Portillion rating is halved (round up) against this threat.

TERRITORIAL (•)

The power base of this coterie is intrinsically linked to a few key pieces of territory that require their constant presence. If the coterie ever leaves the city for extended periods of time or fails to maintain a presence in their domain, it degrades or suffers damage.

For every week the coterie is absent from their domain it suffers a one-dot penalty to all domain traits (Chasse, Lien, Portillon), though a trait can never be reduced below zero in this way. If only part of the coterie remains in the city, they must divide their time and attention: remaining members can reduce their hunting pools by one die (two dice if only one member remains) every night to prevent this domain trait penalty.

If the coterie's domain traits are all reduced to zero or if their absence is especially lengthy, they may lose their territory altogether at the Storyteller's

discretion. When the coterie returns, it takes a month of their constant presence within their domain to repair all penalties that have accrued.

Coteries with no dots in domain traits cannot take this Flaw.

UNDER SIEGE (••)

Your domain is under attack and the powers that be seem content to let you handle it without their aid. The nature of your antagonists is up to the coterie and Storyteller to decide: lupines, the Order of St. Leopold, the Sabbat or another opposing sect, or a rival (and politically protected) vampire coterie. These invaders constantly test your defenses and capture key pieces of your territory without resorting to open violence or breaches of the Masquerade. Once per story the storyteller can reduce one of your coterie's domain traits to one dot or deny the usage of one of your coterie Merits or Backgrounds as your rivals attempt to chisel your territory out from under you.

Coterie Boons and Debts

Use the same costs and systems for individual character Boons and Debts (p. 115) for Coterie Boons and Debts.

When a coterie possesses a boon or debt, any member of the coterie may call upon the boon, or suffer under or discharge the debt.

Expanded Domain Creation

A coterie is defined by its domain as much as by its purpose. This section presents players and storytellers with new options to customize their hunting ground. A coterie's territory can cover a few connected alleyways or be scattered across the city. Vampires rarely limit their ambitions to the lines on a map. A city's geography can certainly present challenges, but more often the mortals and institutions in their domain shape the coterie's options and even their destiny.

Kindred Geography and Domain Types

The political map of a city often differs from its geography, but certain realities cannot be avoided even by the undead. For instance, ports and waterside cities depend on trade and those areas have a constantly shifting population of visitors and laborers even if heavy industry has given way to tourism or high-rise condos. Influencing the levers of power within a city often means having access to its mortal political, economic, and social leadership, but above all else it is the flow of blood in the streets that truly maps the city.

Where mortals concentrate within a city begins with climate and geography, though history and local government policies sometimes play an outsized role as well. A downtown area devastated by an economic collapse could be flush with prey as residents commandeer empty buildings as community housing, but the lack of traditional law enforcement to infiltrate could make it a more challenging hunting ground. While you can map out the vampire population onto a city's geography, it's often best to abstract a city by how an area serves the interests of the Kindred that feed on and exploit the mortals there. It's rarely possible to cleanly divide a city into different domain types, but they can serve as a guide for players and Storytellers alike when thinking about where coteries are based and how they shape the communities around them.

OUTSKIRTS AND TERRA NULLIUS

No man's land. The areas outside the city or unwanted by the ruling powers. Graveyards, bodies of water, trackless forests, trailer parks, and abandoned industrial zones usually dominate these domains. The few Kindred that claim these areas are usually independents that refuse to submit to any sect. The low density of the mortal population can make hunting precarious, though on the other hand mortal law enforcement is also slow to catch on when people start disappearing. Transient coterie

types such as Fugitives, Gatekeepers, Nomads, and Watchmen are most common on the outskirts of a city, and the Commandos may base here far from watchful eyes. A Family mansion might be out on its own sprawling acreage.

THE BORDERS

Usually marked by the terminus of public transportation, the border areas of a city are dotted with suburban communities, big-box stores, and the occasional airport. These domain types are places of transition, where a vampire sect's claims of control and authority tenuously begin. The ruling class is often more concerned with order in these areas than in the meticulous interpretations of law and tradition. A Prince rarely makes an appearance in a border area, but their more dangerous servants keep a constant presence.

The city's Scourge makes the border their playground, and makes an example of any coterie unwilling to keep their domain clear of thin-blooded undesirables and other potential Masquerade breachers. Hunting on the border often means competing with nomads and thin-blooms. The slim pickings in these domains also means that herds usually have to be regularly moved and guarded to avoid having the pantry raided by rivals. Border domains aren't always on the edges of the map: a city with a particularly busy train station could have a border domain in its very center. These domain types attract coteries that have something to hide or something to prove, such as Blood Cults, Champions, Fang Gangs, Nomads, Vehme, and Watchmen. Envoys might also set up in such liminal spaces, especially near airports and train stations.

THE RACK

The center of a city's nightlife, mortals gather to socialize and escape their dreary lives in the Rack. Bars, dance clubs, theaters, and restaurants compose the majority of a Rack's establishments but an informal ecosystem of sex, drugs, and violence caters to those living and dead whose taste have grown more jaded. The Rack is where many vampires

first encounter a city's Sheriff or Constable, the Masquerade's chief enforcer.

Hunting in a Rack is usually easy for most vampires, regardless of feeding habits. Not only are mortals plentiful at night, but they often wander the streets inebriated or otherwise distracted from their usual fears. As a hotspot of feeding vampires, these domain types spawn Masquerade violations and they're often the first place hunters congregate when looking for easy targets. The combination of richness and danger makes them ideal domains for the Prince or Baron to assign to powerful Kindred who the ruler considers valuable allies who nonetheless need distractions from their own ambition. Those Kindred sometimes "sublet" parts of the Rack to ambitious coteries eager to prove themselves at the cost of taking some hits at Court. Day Watch, Fang Gang, Hunting Party, scenester Plumaires, and Vehme are the most common coteries in these domain types; Blood Cults and Sbirri find the Rack good camouflage for their various subversions.

THE PRESTIGE

The social and cultural institutions of a city are often scattered throughout the metropolis, but some do have districts where museums, universities, and other landmarks are concentrated. For Kindred these places not only attract mortals to their domains, but signify their authority. Some rulers host Elysiums in them, while others keep them as "Royal Preserves" to avoid damaging the city's reputation amongst the mortal elite.

Hunting in these domain types is usually rather limited, both because of the lack of prey and because of the severe punishments meted out to Kindred that threaten the Masquerade near an Elysium. Cerberus and Plumaire coteries find their foci in the Prestige, and a performing Nomad coterie may play there. In some cities, the old mansions or palazzos of the rich cluster here: Family coteries, likewise. Questari may set up on (or beneath) a university campus, or convenient to its research facilities.

THE HEART

The economic and political core of the city, the "central business district" in urban planning parlance. The heart of the city is not necessarily the center of town, but where the most vital interests are physically located. Only coteries very close to the ruling class receive easy access or exclusive territory in the heart. In larger metropolises, towering mixed-use skyscrapers crowned by luxury penthouses and helipads dominate the heart. In some cities, the heart empties out after business hours leaving a vampiric food desert; in others, it's a thriving neighborhood of upscale stores and eateries catering to the rich. Cities with high-tech surveillance regimes usually monitor these areas heavily and sweep up vagrants and the homeless on sight. Co-opted police and paramilitary forces, or private bodyguards in some cities, heavily concentrate in these areas as well, but their presence remains understated except when a show of force is required.

Smaller or economically distressed cities may not have an identifiable heart, or they have a long-dead one — which may still rest atop its Kindred ruler, of course. The heart of the city is where you find the throne. Elders, Primogen, and the top of the ruling class maintain at least one haven in its confines. Corporate, Maréchal, and of course Regency are the most common coterie types found in the heart of the city, along with Commandos ready to deploy anywhere. In older cities, Somnophiles cluster around the previous Heart from centuries ago which might now be a tourist district or anonymous factories.

Quick corporate espionage system: Convert margin on Larceny rolls to break in, or Technology rolls to hack, a corporate office here into extra dice on Finance tests to undermine that corporation.

Domain Merits

Under this alternate system of Domain traits, a coterie can buy a Domain Merit that boosts a

specific Domain Trait (Chasse, Lien, or Portillon) while offering other advantages and opportunities for the coterie. These boosts count against coterie prerequisites. Unless noted in the description, the Merit boosts the relevant Domain Trait by its dot value: Apartment Towers boosts the domain's Chasse by two dots, for example. Merits in this system come with both good and bad effects, which roughly balance overall with the basic Domain Trait system.

While a given coterie's territory may contain discos, police stations, and cemeteries regardless of what Merits they take, Domain Merits reflect how much access they have to these elements and how central they are to the coterie's unlife. Domain Merits are usually associated with a building or location and each notes what Resonances commonly grow in those places.

Domain Merits help a coterie define and personalize their territory in a way that best suits their style and hunting practices. A coterie that tends their territory carefully can custom-craft a domain that exudes the mixture of Resonances and hunting bonuses that they prefer best. This, of course, invests the players far more when hungry rivals (or hunters) move in and threaten the coterie's artisanal blood farm.

The city's ruler may exclude coteries with Shunned (••), Suspect (•), or similar Flaws from high-value or high-prestige Merits like Nightlife, City Hall, or Cultural Landmark.

CHASSE MERITS

A domain's Chasse trait determines its size and the ease of feeding there. Certain landmarks, institutions, or features within a domain can boost this Trait and feeding patterns that synergize well with it.

•• APARTMENT TOWERS (ALL): A few very densely packed residential buildings filled with prey with a standard mix of Resonances. Vampires with the Extortionist Predator Type get one extra die on their hunting pools here. These buildings appear in almost any part of a city and often become the focus of conflicts between coteries with neighboring domains. High turnover means enemy observers can more

easily infiltrate: subtract one die from your domain's Portillon pools against observation or surveillance.

•• BACK ALLEYS (PHLEGMATIC): A good place to do business out of the sight of the authorities and the overly curious, providing quick access to sewers, coal tunnels, cellar networks, and other city infrastructure. Vampires with the Alley Cat or Montero Predator Types get one extra die on their hunting pools here. The rat population adds one die to the Animalism pool of any Kindred spying on your domain.

• FUNERARY (NONE/MELANCHOLY): This is often a cemetery, funeral home, or dedicated morgue. Most dying prey here have no Resonance, although mourners may present Melancholia. Kindred with the Bagger or Graverobber Predator Types get one extra die on their hunting pools here. Some vampires see Kindred that congregate and feed in such places as scavengers less worthy of status or respect, costing the coterie a die from Social pools in contests against high-clan snobs.

•• GATED COMMUNITY (MELANCHOLY): A residential area with manicured gardens and dedicated security. The basic Difficulty for Larceny tests and similar here equals the Resources dots for the average resident: a Middle-Class development has Difficulty 2, an Ultra-Rich one has Difficulty 5. Once entered, Sandman Predator Types add one extra die to their hunting pools. The mortals living in these communities are often highly educated professionals or retired military and a good source for Allies, Contacts, or Retainers with specialized knowledge and skills. They also may have law-enforcement contacts themselves, and get a respectful hearing when they describe strange red-eyed burglars. Storytellers may deny this Merit to a coterie located in the heart of a city.

•• HOSPITAL (MELANCHOLY/PHLEGMATIC): This is usually a larger institutional medical facility with an attached morgue and psychiatric care facility. Depending on where the coterie is located, the facility could instead be a dedicated mental

health asylum, a medical research establishment, or a sprawling assisted living facility for the elderly. Vampires with the Bagger, Consensualist, Grim Reaper, or Trapdoor Predator Types get an extra die on their hunting pools here, as do pools to obtain bagged blood or medical supplies. Hunter groups with a religious or medical background get an extra die to their pools to infiltrate your domain.

••• NIGHTLIFE (CHOLERIC/SANGUINE): An area of businesses dedicated to serving food and entertainment open late into the night. Vampires with the Montero, Pursuer, Scene Queen, Siren, or Trapdoor Predator Type get an extra die on their hunting pools here. Kindred from other territories may also be willing to pay in boons for feeding access to this area. Any 1 rolled in a hunting pool here means the target has enough drugs or alcohol in them to taint their blood (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 310). City government and organized crime elements have extra leverage here: add one dot to those Influence types here, for your coterie and your foes alike. Storytellers may deny this Merit to a coterie located in the outskirts.

•• SHELTER (CHOLERIC/MELANCHOLY): Either a homeless shelter or an encampment of houseless mortals. Vampires with the Alley Cat or Sandman Predator Types get an extra die on their hunting pools in the Domain. Any 1 rolled in a hunting pool here means the target has drugs or alcohol tainting their blood (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 310). The mortals that live in these communities often know a lot about street life and make good Allies, Contacts, or Retainers with specialized knowledge and skills. Storytellers may deny this Merit to a coterie located in a prestigious area in the city.

LIEN MERITS

The Lien trait governs the coterie's ability to manipulate, control, and interact with the mortals in their domain. Many of these locations grant bonuses depending on the type of actions the coterie requires from their mortal subjects.

••• CAMPUS (CHOLERIC/MELANCHOLY):

A university, major library, or research facility that focuses on academic pursuits. Using its facilities after hours, it provides the equivalent of two dots in the Haven Merit Library (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 189), although access is limited at night and requires break-ins or a Mask that provides justification and clearance. Hunter groups with a religious or academic background get an extra die to their pools to infiltrate your domain.

•• CITY HALL (PHLEGMATIC): The seat of the city government or possibly an office building where a lot of the city's bureaucracy does its work. The coterie can wager these dots in political or urban-development Projects (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 417). Records access grants the coterie the equivalent of one dot in Mask for city records (land titles, driver's licenses, tax papers, etc.). Foes (mortal or Kindred) with Influence in city government add one dot to pools to infiltrate your domain. Storytellers may deny this Merit to a coterie not located in the Heart of a city.

•• CULTURAL LANDMARK (CHOLERIC/

SANGUINE): These locations are usually cultural centers, art museums, sports stadiums, or famous landmarks, but they can also include tourist traps, zoos, or aquariums. During event hours, your Portillon lowers by one dot, as crowds of outsiders flood into your domain. If animals are kept on the premises, vampires with the Farmer Predator type gain an extra die on their hunting pools here. Coterie members can leverage their access to this location for an extra die in appropriate Social dice pools: to get in just before closing, to arrange a party, to trade tickets to a prestigious opening (or a deluxe fast pass) for a minor boon, etc. If an Elysium regularly occurs here, it costs an extra dot but grants a two-dice bonus on Etiquette pools with vampires of your sect and on all tests to pick up Kindred gossip. Storytellers may deny this Merit to a coterie located in the outskirts of a city.

•• MARKETPLACE (MELANCHOLY/

SANGUINE: A place of commerce and trade such as a shopping mall, port harbor, or trade district. The coterie can wager these dots in Economic Projects (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 417). Add two dice to appropriate Social or Finance pools: e.g., to source an item or ingredient, pick up stock tips or other insider info, or hide a body (in a harbor district). These areas are also heavily patrolled by mortal law enforcement and rife with electronic surveillance; lose two dice from any Stealth or similar pool here against hunters or Kindred foes with law-enforcement connections. Kindred rarely fight over strip malls, but organized criminal gangs and federal authorities are very sensitive to any disruptions in a port or stock exchange.

•• MEMBERS ONLY (SANGUINE): An exclusive venue or club that serves a dedicated clientele paying for privacy and luxury. This could be anything from a university's alumni clubhouse to a sex dungeon. Any haven the coterie establishes on the premises gains one dot in one of these Haven Merits: Luxury or Watchmen. But of course, any foe who can obtain membership or an invitation can enter your haven with impunity.

•• TRANSITIONS (MELANCHOLY): This is a halfway house or addiction treatment center that helps people reintegrate into society. The coterie gains one dot in the Herd Background that defaults to the Melancholy Resonance. Hunter groups with a religious or medical background get an extra die to their pools to infiltrate your domain. Storytellers may deny this Merit to a coterie located in a prestigious part of a city.

PORTELLON MERITS

The Domain's security and early warning system against intruders. These Merits expand a coterie's options when under threat or securing their haven.

• ABANDONED BUILDING (MELANCHOLY):

This location is a rundown warehouse or foreclosed

business. Any haven the coterie establishes within this facility gains one dot in the Cell and Postern Merits, but always has the Creepy Flaw. Unless the coterie uses their Influence, there is always a risk that the location gets demolished or renovated.

•• FIREHOUSE (CHOLERIC/MELANCHOLY):

This firehouse has a full fire engine crew vigilant to threats against your coterie's haven and holdings. Any attempts to burn the coterie out of their haven or destroy their holdings fail or have very limited success unless this facility is neutralized.

•• POLICE STATION (PHLEGMATIC/

SANGUINE: A police precinct full of heavily armed police. This Merit comes with a low-level clerical or IT contact in the precinct, who can add two dice to pools attempting to trace infiltrators into your domain. However, if the police (or an agency operating through the police, such as the FBI in America) moves against the coterie, subtract two dots from both the domain's Portillon and their Haven Merit to resist. Many Anarch Barons especially advise against making the police your domain's primary line of defense.

•• PRISON (CHOLERIC/MELANCHOLY):

A maximum security facility, usually crowded, for holding prisoners. While controlled by the state, criminal organizations are tacitly allowed to do business inside its walls. Add two dice to Streetwise pools to negotiate favors with criminals inside or outside the joint, or otherwise leverage their access. This Merit includes one (Difficulty 3) means of entry and exit, decided by the troupe: suborned guard, forgotten maintenance tunnel, contract with the laundry trucks, etc. A total failure on this roll launches an investigation, which lowers the domain's Portillon by two dots until the end of the story. The prison's nearness lowers the domain's Lien by one dot to timid mortals and those who consider property values the most important kind. The Storyteller may deny this Merit to a coterie whose domain lies in the city's heart or prestige areas.

•• TRANSIT (PHLEGMATIC): A series of tunnels, warrens, or forgotten buildings connected to an active public transit station. Any haven the coterie establishes within this facility gains two dots in the Postern Merit. Add two dice to pools to evade pursuit on transit, summon rats with Animalism, or any other test relevant to subway tunnels. On the other hand, Nosferatu and other subterranean dangers can bypass these two dots in Portillon when infiltrating your domain.

Clans and Coteries

Every Kindred is an individual, but clans represent both prevailing archetypes as well as social functions by which vampires seek progeny of like mind. The following sections describe a generalized outlook for how members of each clan might interact with coteries they join.

Merits of Membership

To this end, each also includes a specific Clan Coterie Merit that a Kindred of that clan can purchase at character creation, or the coterie as a whole can purchase during coterie creation. The benefits of these Merits can be generally activated or enjoyed by anyone in the coterie, a sort of group resource that can either be called upon collectively or that benefits the entire coterie. After all, coteries exist to offer safety in numbers, despite what insular elders or suspicious ancillae may think — and that safety in numbers sometimes comes in the form of advantages that can put those vampires a step ahead of a rival. Note that in some cases, only one member of the coterie can use a given Merit in a session, on a who-needs-it-most basis.

Banu Haqim



Outsiders often stereotype the Banu Haqim as driven, somber, and severe. In general, the children of Haqim have little interest in countering this perception. Clan culture rewards those who are

goal-oriented, which emphasizes actions and deeds. Esteem among the Banu Haqim follows what they do, rather than exalting lineage or honoring tradition for its own sake. Clan members, therefore, take a pragmatic approach, making allies where they must in order to pursue their goals and accomplish their agendas.

Among the Banu Haqim, coteries are heavily focused. Every group has a goal, whether that is as judges, enforcers, or exerting influence over a sector of mortal infrastructure.

In more cosmopolitan coteries, Banu Haqim may find themselves the recognized motivational force in a coterie. They gravitate toward roles in which they determine the direction of the group, or interpreting commonly agreed objectives. Banu Haqim Kindred regard this as leadership — other vampires, however, can chafe at what they perceive as being ordered around, especially young Kindred who aren't necessarily seeking a regimented or task-oriented dynamic in their coteries. Interactions with the coterie also vary greatly by the faction to which a given Child of Haqim belongs. Quite simply, the methods and fellows of the clan's conflicting orthodoxies are different, and whether one shares the perspective of a number of influential Banu Haqim high in the clan's ranks also bears weight.

As always, individual motivations vary, but this same focus on specific objectives often means that Banu Haqim membership in a coterie may be a temporary thing. Almost akin to serial entrepreneurship, a Child of Haqim may find common cause with a different coterie that better suits her. Kindred with whom they have shared a coterie in the past often remain valuable associates. Many see value in renewing lapsed relations with reliable Kindred to rejoin a coterie or form a new one after departing it.

For the Clan of the Hunt, new prey is ever on the horizon.

CLAN COTERIE MERIT: CALL TO PURPOSE ••

Once per session, the Banu Haqim motivates a coterie-mate they can see with a rousing statement

reminding her of her Convictions or even an intense stare that calls her to action. The coterie-mate gains the effects of a Willpower point that must be used immediately, such as to reroll three dice or to briefly master a frenzy. This “Willpower point” isn’t taken from the Banu Haqim, and must be given to a coterie-mate. The Banu Haqim cannot use it on themselves.

See **Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 158, for more information on using Willpower.

Brujah



Brujah sires often Embrace on a whim, in the throes of emotion, or seemingly without the discretion of other clans. Apocryphally, some domains are so rife with Rabble, it’s almost impossible to find a coterie without at least one Brujah!

Perhaps that’s to be expected given their history. The Brujah are descendants of ancient warrior-philosophers, rebels against oppressive causes, or crusaders against perceived injustices. In such times, Brujah relied on coterie-mates to watch their backs and conspire to bring down those who would wield power against them. Tonight, this premise hasn’t changed, whether it now manifests as revolutionary cells dedicated to overthrowing a corrupt social system, or as outlaw biker gangs that kneel to no law.

This might make them come across as hard cases and solitary iconoclasts, but that’s rarely true. The emotional call that brought them into the night sustains them. Brujah look to Kindred coteries as comrades in arms or even siblings. A coterie is as close to family as vampires can afford.

Brujah don’t necessarily care if you’re a Nosferatu or a Malkavian. So long as you’re trustworthy and reliable, they’re ride-or-die for you. What often matters to a Brujah is that the coterie is pulling in the same direction (though this might be a lofty goal, given the contrarian tendencies of the Brujah...). That’s not to say that some preferential attitudes or power struggles don’t exist, whatever form the safe house takes. But the Anarch movement has grown and the Brujah fortunes have risen in the modern nights, and so long as their

coterie-mates’ attitudes don’t cause static with a Brujah colleague, they’re willing to kick against the pricks with anyone by their side.

Those who join coteries with Brujah often find the closeness of those bonds to be one of the most memorable and integral factors. The unique familial surrogacy that Brujah may instill (or project...) upon a group is unlike that of any other clan. Yet a coterie for a Brujah is not a transactional “team” but rather something more. Earning the trust of a Brujah, especially one who particularly values loyalty, is often enough to inspire these vampires to powerful displays of unity.

CLAN COTERIE MERIT: BOOT AND RALLY •

Sometimes the best way out of a bad situation is to try again, harder, while a frenzy-prone coterie-mate impresses upon you the error of your ways. Once per session, the Brujah inspires a flagging coterie-mate, who may then reroll all regular dice on a failed Physical Skill test.

Gangrel



Kindred have become so disconnected from their roots, from their primal nature, that they can no longer survive without edifices of brick and glass. Kindred have grown so spoiled and dependent upon the luxuries these modern nights have brought them that they have forgotten how to survive without. The Gangrel have not forgotten these things. The Beasts acknowledge their true nature, claiming territory for themselves where they can in the global landscape, whether in perilous urban spaces or the differently dangerous unknown domains between them.

For the Gangrel, a coterie is just a pack by another name, and a pack is a group of individuals working toward a common cause, ensuring that everyone is kept safe. As the adage goes, the lone wolf dies, but the pack survives. While not all Gangrel consider coteries and packs interchangeable, even they can’t deny the similarities in practice. Any coterie with a Gangrel among its number has little to fear should

a physical threat arise, for few clans are as strong or tenacious as the Gangrel in combat.

In addition to bearing puissant tooth and claw, Gangrel sometimes pull double-duty as pathfinders to those seeking safe passage through known hazardous territories. In the rare instances a coterie deigns to travel outside the gilded cages of cities, its members become acutely aware of the benefits that a Gangrel member gives them.

CLAN COTERIE MERIT: PACK TACTICS ...

A lone wolf against an enemy risks much, but a pack of wolves working together can take down even the largest and most dangerous prey. When in combat, so long as you have another member of your coterie alongside you, you more effectively harry your common foe: Anyone attacking the same enemy as you adds a single die to their dice pools for Brawl or Melee attacks. This Merit is non-cumulative; no matter how many Gangrel with it gang up on some poor fool, it offers only a single additional die to each of them.

Hecata

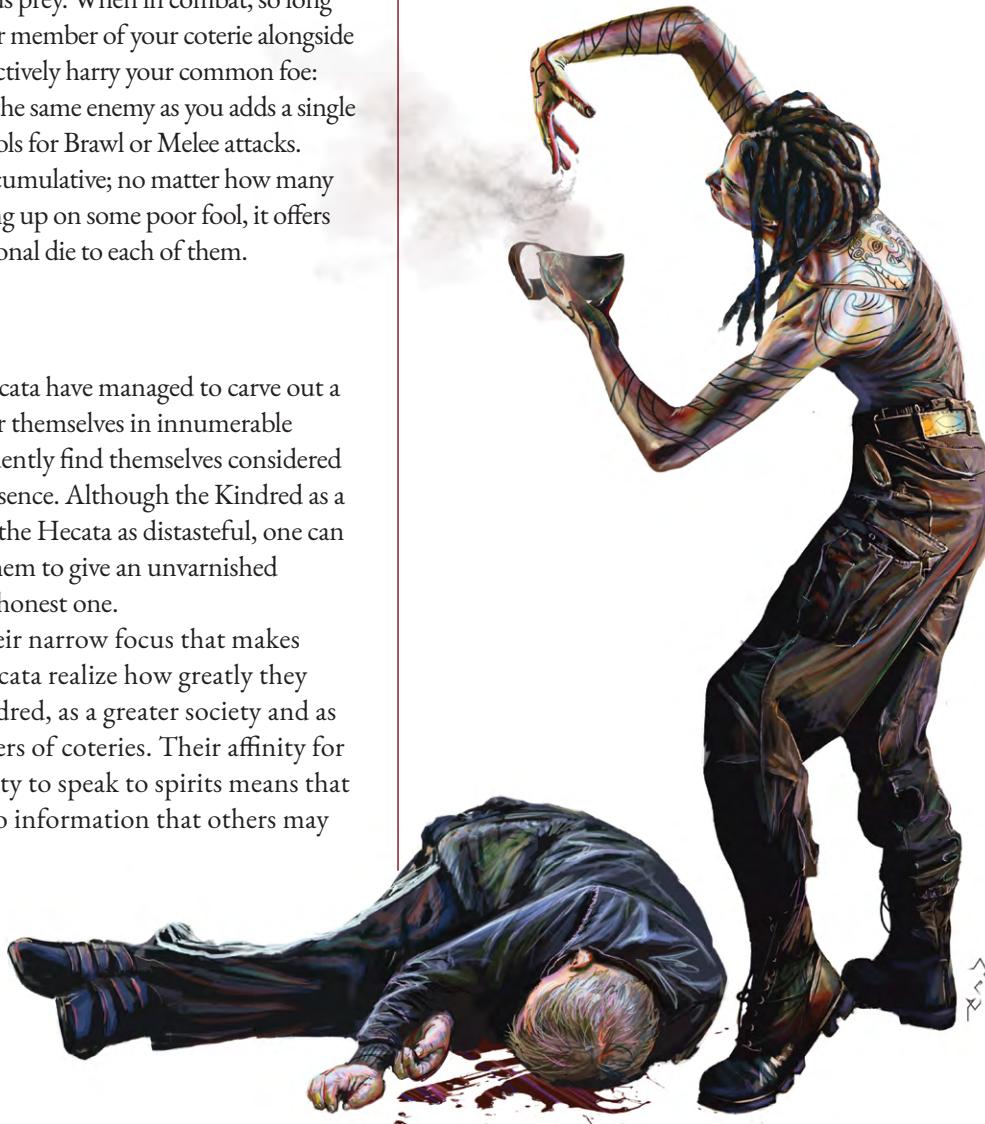


The Hecata have managed to carve out a place for themselves in innumerable domains, yet frequently find themselves considered an unwelcome presence. Although the Kindred as a whole might view the Hecata as distasteful, one can always count on them to give an unvarnished opinion, if not an honest one.

It is perhaps their narrow focus that makes the pragmatic Hecata realize how greatly they rely on other Kindred, as a greater society and as individual members of coteries. Their affinity for the dead and ability to speak to spirits means that they have access to information that others may

have thought long gone, and that information makes the Hecata valuable to others in return. And since information is such a valuable currency in the world of the Damned, many coteries are willing to endure the social cost of such unwholesome fellows. The Hecata gain greater facility with the temporal world and the coterie gains access to a shuddersome vein of secrets.

This may seem transactional, and to an extent it is, for which the Hecata bear the responsibility of those assumptions. In both their necromantic acumen and the dealings of the Giovanni family, the



Hecata have come to perceive many of their nightly interactions as exchanges — this placation of a spirit, that favor for the Toreador harpy. Such a calculating outlook colors others' perception of them, but that makes coteries in which they are truly accepted and understood as individuals rather than tools all the more meaningful. And those who surround themselves in the remains of the dead take comfort in willing contact with others where they may.

CLAN COTERIE MERIT: ARS MORIENDI ..

Almost all members of the Hecata clan are at least cursorily familiar with death and the dead. Once per session, the Necromancer is able to mask the corpse of someone killed by a member of the coterie. They can disguise foul play in the case of a mortal corpse, or protect the Masquerade by making the remains of a destroyed vampire (usually a brittle skeleton unless the vampire was very young) draw less attention, usually by efficiently disposing of it. These are quick-and-dirty fixes, though, and will not divert someone already on their tail, but they can provide some proverbial breathing space to the coterie.

Lasombra



Few clans are as ruthlessly efficient as the Lasombra when it comes to achieving goals. Whether crushing rivals or consolidating influence, the Lasombra take no half-measures. This drive for success leads them to being the allies everyone wants, but no one wants to admit they need. From a classical economics perspective, the Lasombra see coteries as a tool, a means to an end to drive their success. Success brings reward, of course, and even failure brings growth through tribulation. Steel is forged in the fires of adversity.

That doesn't mean the Lasombra see the individuals in their coteries as tools, however. With their clan history of exalted rank and ecclesiastical power, elder Lasombra are familiar with intricate webs of obligation, favor, and elective cooperation upon which legacies are built, and these lessons pervade the self-mythology of the Magisters, even

unto the ranks of neonates. Although few Kindred tonight receive their peers and lessers in baroque churches floored in black-veined marble, the same proprieties among fellow Damned may be made in a hotel ballroom or even on a nightclub floor. The quality of the relationship is celebrated in the ceremony that acknowledges it.

While other Kindred may maintain certain wariness in welcoming a Lasombra into their coterie, it is undeniable that Night Clan vampires bring with them a multitude of benefits. Their affinity for shadows and the use of Oblivion make them valuable to coteries whose preferred methods involve secrecy, espionage, and hidden movement. Stories of Lasombra willing to sacrifice coterie-mates for their own immediate benefits are probably overblown... but dealing with "the sins of the fathers" is ironically a burden many Lasombra bear when it comes to reputation.

CLAN COTERIE MERIT: AT ANY COST ..

The Magister sets a ruthlessly effective example for their coterie-mates. Once per session, a member of the Lasombra's coterie can choose to add two successes to a test made. The test is then considered a messy critical, including appropriate negative consequences.

Malkavian



Each Malkavian's view of the world is so individually misaligned with those around them, even within their own clan, that it can pose a significant challenge for such a vampire to find someone willing to see the world from the Malkavian's own unique perspective. Oracles often have an optimistic outlook toward coteries, seeing them as a chance for social interaction they may otherwise struggle to indulge. As a result, the potential to form social bonds with others in a coterie can be both exciting and terrifying. Malkavians want to relate to their Kindred, but their bane makes it difficult to do so.

Occasionally, a Malkavian's senses may propel them into the limelight, yielding the chance to enjoy the adulation of other vampires, while at other times

they feel an overwhelming urge to withdraw and shut themselves off from those around them. Social interaction can be particularly demanding for the Malkavians, and trying for the other members of their coterie.

Not all vampires, of course, are interested in taking the time to form an emotional support structure for Malkavian Kindred. For some vampires, their view of the Malkavians' curse is colored by the prejudices that they carried in mortal life — Kindred society is replete with fear of the Malkavians' difficulties relating.

Some Kindred, especially those raised in a less enlightened age, may view a Malkavian's bane as judgment for their sins, a trade-off for their "gifts" of insight, or simply a tool to be exploited. One apocryphal elder sequesters a Malkavian in an iron-lined coffin, staked and sealed in perpetual night. This wretched Malkavian emerges only at the whim of this cruel coterie-mate, thereafter to be sealed away again for God only knows how long. Few Malkavians would choose to be part of such an arrangement, making for quite the cautionary tale.

CLAN COTERIE MERIT: EVERYTHING IS CONNECTED ...

The Malkavian is able to extract secrets from the most unlikely sources, such as discerning the location of an elder's vault from someone's casual exchange about the weather or unearthing an adversary's deepest fears from the way they take a right at an intersection. Once per session, the Malkavian has the ability to let another member of their coterie substitute one Skill pool for another of their choice (that they possess) in a test involving the gathering of information. The Oracle is then able to interpret the results, gaining the same information as the original pool would have yielded, depending on the margin of success as usual.

The Ministry



To hear a member of the Ministry tell it, they can bring everything to a coterie.

Everything. The Setites want to be everybody's confidante, and want to stay close to those in their coteries, making sure that the group's needs are met, no matter what those needs might be. Viewing the world as a marketplace, Ministry Kindred strive to ensure that they can offer everything their fellows can, but better. If you need guns, they'll give you a silver



Lexus with a trunk full of AR15s. If you need vitae, they'll bring you blood from vessels high on top-shelf heroin. If you need to get out of the country, they know a guy with a private jet. If you need a herd, they'll give you a key to their downtown apartment where a number of unidentified refugees are "couch surfing until they find a permanent place to stay."

Often, this means that the presence of a Setite within a coterie introduces an element of *quid pro quo*. The Ministry can provide for their fellows, but may expect favors and social benefits in return. Such recompense could be a widening of the Tempter's network of connections or even recruitments for their spiritual flock. For the Ministry, this in no way precludes social bonds or represents an exception to forming alliances. The Ministry would rather deal with their local community, starting with their coteries. What better customers than people who know the people one knows, after all?

Those who share a coterie with a member of the Ministry are generally quite aware of this. Canny vampires are quick to take advantage of the benefits of maintaining ties with the Setites, even if they're cautious of the Ministry's ulterior motives. Some vampires may balk at the idea of working with the Ministry, fearful of what scheme the Tempter might be working right under the coterie's nose. In truth, the Ministry Kindred is often entirely upfront and even honest about their intentions. Nobody wants to deal with an oily used-car salesman, after all. If the Tempter were to double-cross, betray, and scheme their way through their unlif, they would find their reputation catching up with them! It can hardly be their fault if their customer wants something to be true other than what the Setite is offering. Let the buyer beware.

CLAN COTERIE MERIT: DISCERNING •

Once per session, the Ministry Kindred may discover something superficial a Storyteller character wants, so long as any member of the coterie has spoken to that character during the session, even if the Setite wasn't present. This may relate to the individual's Desire or Ambition or it could relate to a specific course of action they were undertaking (but should

not expose any deep schemes or mysteries, especially if the coterie is unaware of them). The character who interacted with the Storyteller character in question describes the encounter.

Nosferatu



So far as many Nosferatu are concerned, a coterie is a makeshift family unit, and the clan is already a member of one of the largest family units that exist. A Nosferatu's bond with other Sewer Rats is potentially already strong, in no small part due to their nature as outcasts among Kindred society. Whether dwelling in underground warrens or remote hideouts, many Nosferatu come to view the world as a binary: the host of "presentable" Kindred, and themselves.

This pragmatic outlook creates an interesting consequence, in that Nosferatu tend to be fairly open-minded in terms of which coteries they join. A single Nosferatu may even be a member of several coteries at any given time, each without the knowledge of each other. There's probably no attempted duplicity in this; rather, a Nosferatu may simply compartmentalize their social circles, regarding one coterie as valuable for one purpose and another coterie for other goals. One of these might even be an all-Nosferatu coterie that transcends sect allegiance.

Enterprising Nosferatu across the history of the Kindred have acted as information brokers, and many of the clan continue to play this part even tonight. How they use information, though, can be intensely personal. Nosferatu may freely share information with coterie-mates, simply for the chance to interact with the "beautiful" part of the world. This in itself is a huge benefit for a Nosferatu who belongs to a cosmopolitan coterie: The chance to simply hang out at a nightclub or walk the city streets under starlight may do wonders to abate the Orlok's sense of alienation.

Of course, not all coteries are quite so accepting of the Nosferatu, and some Sewer Rats simply can't bring themselves to trust other vampires. Their unique clan

curse presents a social barrier that many Kindred must strive to overcome. Whilst every one of the Damned harbors a Beast within, the Nosferatu's cursed blood exposes theirs for the world to see.

CLAN COTERIE MERIT: CONTEXTUAL CONTACT ..

Nosferatu Kindred often know more about their contacts than the contacts themselves, being able to leverage niche skills and hidden talents of their associates and others'. Once per session, a member of a coterie that has a Nosferatu with this Merit can add the highest single Contacts rating of another member of the coterie to any one test to recover or acquire information (e.g., recovering deleted data, using social engineering to acquire a login password, or rifling a physical file cabinet). The contact needs to be involved in some way, but the test is allowed to fall outside their usual area of expertise for this test only. A Contact can only be used once per story for this purpose.

Ravnos



The Gangrel's nomadic nature gets the benefit of the doubt, their Blood being wilder than most. The Ravnos rarely enjoy such benefits, and though the Ravnos can be found almost everywhere, thriving in any environment, the more conservative Kindred social structures often regard them as weeds that need to be plucked from their carefully curated gardens.

A lone Ravnos finds themselves a ready target for clans that look down on their peripatetic tendencies. Although the clan cares little for the opinions of so-called "high clans" who simply don't understand the realities of Ravnos unlife, many Ravens concede that they may have a point: Some roots are better than no roots. If a Ravnos wants to survive, there need to be some concessions made. What better way to develop those roots than among members of a coterie? Coteries represent safety in numbers, after all.



When it comes to coteries, the Ravnos' itinerant nature has the potential to make them boon members. They know the best places to lie low in a domain, having discovered them while evading their doom, and are skilled at discerning secrets, whether through subservient animals or inveigled mortals. These secrets can then be used to the advantage of the coterie. Rogues keep their ears to the ground, often hearing of threats long before they garner the notice of more prominent and therefore powerful. Whatever other clans may think of the Ravnos, they often have the ability to come through in the clutch just as it's needed.

Almost like they planned it that way.

CLAN COTERIE MERIT: CRYPTOLECT ...

Being forever on the move means having to find new ways to communicate with allies. Using coded language, onomatopoeia, and gestures, this Merit provides the Ravnos and their coterie with their own pidgin for the express purposes of communicating with each other — practically no one outside the

coterie understands it, short of expert long-term surveillance. The coterie's cryptolect is not eloquent or robust, but can be used to convey high-level concepts quickly and securely, and isn't identifiable as any other language. It also requires face-to-face presence to function, as its gestures and signs diminish when observed over phone or video calls. Leaving the coterie or losing its Ravnos member means the Kindred are no longer up-to-date on the cryptolect and can't use it to communicate subsequently.

Salubri



What more perilous fellow than a member of a clan hunted by the pillars of Kindred society? In almost every case in the modern era, especially in the nights immediately following their Embrace, Salubri join coteries for protection. The odds are usually stacked against them otherwise: Their clan bears an unjust reputation, and Salubri sires often arrange their own final death following a passing on the Embrace. If a Salubri doesn't make some valuable contacts, and fast, their nights are surely numbered.

Salubri ask a lot of the coterie to which they belong, explicitly or otherwise. Despite the injustice of their clan's reputation, Salubri who have spent any time at all among the Damned know well that they may tarnish their coterie-mates by association. After all, any Kindred willing to act on the prejudices of centuries past probably doesn't care what excuses a Soul-Thief's compatriots might have to offer. Needless to say, this revelation can strain relations among a coterie when the Cyclops reveals the truth of their Embrace — assuming it's done electively and not while a blood-soaked Scourge stands before them.

Assuming the Salubri attempts self-preservation through secrecy, it's probably a matter of when, not if, some other Kindred discovers the truth of their persecuted clan. Wise coterie-mates will have considered this eventuality beforehand, whether their response is to close ranks and protect the

Cyclops, or to abandon them to the mercies of a merciless social order.

With all this in mind, it seems a longshot that any coterie at all might accept a Salubri compatriot. For the most part, that's true, but the players' characters are, as ever, the probable exception to the calcified customs of undead society. Some seek answers to the Kindred condition, or nurture their connection to an inevitably dwindling Humanity, to which the Salubri temperament can be well-suited. On occasion, coteries with a Salubri member "flip the script," themselves becoming the hunters of antagonistic vampires. This can be a dangerous approach to unlfe, as the Salubri effectively becomes the bait by which the coterie draws out its enemies. Whether they're doing this to spit in the eye of domain politics, or to seek some sort of redemption through a purge of debased Kindred is a matter of coterie choice (not to mention how honest they're being with themselves).

Of course, not every Salubri seeks to subvert the clan's status, and some gladly lean into their negative reputations. If the Kindred want a folk devil, some Soul-Thieves are perfectly willing to give them one, and to drag their coterie into hell with them. For example, a Salubri-led cult of diablerists tormented the courts of northern Italy in the nights before the Beckoning became widely known, and persistent rumors ascribe the leadership of a relentless Sabbat pack to a Cainite bearing an undeniable third eye. Given the Salubri reputation, it wouldn't be surprising if these tales were blown out of proportion, but then again....

As a testament to the strangeness of the modern nights, Salubri occasionally make odd bedfellows with those who would have traditionally been their enemies. Among elders and even ancillae, tradition and propaganda may hold sway, but for young Salubri and Tremere or Salubri and Banu Haqim coterie-mates, centuries-old vendettas might not mean shit, and are just one more way domineering elders use the clans to manipulate the Eternal Struggle.

CLAN COTERIE MERIT: RESTRAINT •••

Whether from dire need to keep a low profile, or true moral conviction, Salubri are often paragons of self-control, a trait that can rub off on others. Once per session the Cyclops can restrain the Beast of another coterie member in their presence, enabling them to reroll all (and only all) of their Hunger dice in a test for free.

Toreador

 If it's exclusive access to the inner circles of power or the dangerous proximity to fame you seek, look no further than the Toreador. The Divas have the knack for homing in on the desires of others and turning them to their own gain. While the Venttrue like to brag about their successes and pedigree, the Toreador watch from afar with an air of smug satisfaction. Sometimes, it is better to show and not tell.

Few understand the social needs of Kindred more than the self-styled doyennes of Kindred culture. The clan boasts of invite-only salons whose guest list may as well read as a who's who. Connected at every level of society, from the perennially popular to the brightest rising stars among the neonates, they can put you into contact with whomever you desire. Their reach also extends outside of Kindred society, and into the mortal world. Ever want to meet your idol or get a taste of their blood? A Diva can arrange that. All you have to do is model for a sculpture or indulge in a night of passion. Such a small price to pay for doors to be opened.

For the Toreador, *les petit salons*, as some are fond of calling coteries, are a regular part of their existence. They are tiny but extremely valuable communities in which the Clan of the Rose may gain new artistic insight or reignite a waning inspiration, but also to continue to further their own personal network. Everyone wishes they were a Toreador, but in lieu of having the Blood Beautiful, having a Toreador in your coterie often does the trick. The more important the Diva is to a domain, the better. It's easier to get things done



when one can bend the ear of those with high status and offer the coterie's luster to them in return. If one can handle the slings and arrows of Kindred social fortune and indulge the Divas' fits of pique, one finds a strong ally with all the connections they could ever need.

CLAN COTERIE MERIT: ALL ACCESS •

Whether it's the premiere of a film by a budding auteur, a fundraising gala for an aspiring politico, or the dive bar that suddenly has a dress code because it doesn't like the looks of you, you know how to get yourself in — even without an actual invitation. Once per game session, when a coterie is faced with a barrier to enter a mortal event or facility, they can get past the bouncers or security guards by being on the guest list or having a connection to whatever passes for owner or patron. This applies only to situations with some kind of door staff or guest list; it doesn't

circumvent security systems, mystical wards, or the like, and the Storyteller is of course free to block entry if this would somehow short-circuit a story (but should then provide the players with a juicy clue instead).

Tremere



It is difficult to say whether a coterie is fortunate or cursed to have a Tremere in its ranks. Many Kindred look upon the Usurpers as being more arrogant than they have any right to be, and the Tremere in return see their cunning and ruthlessness in their pursuit of knowledge as an advantage that the other clans tend to dismiss. The Tremere know what they bring to Kindred society: knowledge and true mastery of certain mystic secrets.

Blood Sorcery is perhaps the most potent of advantages to which the Tremere have access that lend well to their inclusion in coteries. Second is their ability to quickly adapt to changing situations, using their keen minds to implement solutions to the obstacles they may encounter. There is one thing that is certain: When you have a Tremere in your coterie, you probably have meticulous accounting, planning, and resource management on your side.

The Tremere see the value in having connections to these loose associations of “like-minded” Kindred. One doesn’t think of the Usurpers as especially adept in social matters, but their occult networks offer another way to attain knowledge, whether through mutual exchange or carefully conducted experiments that their peers are unaware of — but that may nonetheless yield a timely edge.

CLAN COTERIE MERIT: MULTI-LEVEL LOREKEEPING ••

Despite the Tremere reputation for jealously hoarding occult knowledge, many vestiges of the notorious Pyramid actually facilitate the sharing of such among scholars of the forbidden. Once per game session, a single Kindred in a coterie with a Tremere who has this Merit can use a Loresheet

Advantage (or a lower-dot Advantage from that same Loresheet) that someone else in the coterie possesses, including clan-specific Loresheets, at the Storyteller’s discretion. This additional Loresheet Advantage is usable only for the game session, and any knowledge supposed by the Loresheet Advantage is not retained thereafter by the borrower. All other limitations on the Advantage remain: for example, a “one use per story” Advantage is expended for the remainder of the story no matter who uses it.

Tzimisce



The Tzimisce are an intimidating force for any social group, in no small part due to their demeanor. Most Dragons would regard the coterie as *theirs* much as they would consider an estate or household as their own. Whether when claiming six blocks as inviolate domain or executing takeover of a mortal *zatbatu*, relating to a world outpacing them can pose a significant hindrance. A Tzimisce may, for instance, see little wrong with controlling the minds of a score of mortals and may even believe that this is an act of “subtlety” on account of having left no bodies in their wake. Of course, the social dynamics of most coteries operate on a far less vertical model, but even so, many Kindred may see a value in feeding the Tzimisce’s ego.

Individual vampires of Tzimisce frequently consider themselves the most important of all Kindred, and though they may observe delicate and fraught hospitalities as a courtesy to their fellows, this is often a somewhat obvious facade. Dragons can nurse grudges against other Tzimisce with enough vitriol to put a Toreador vendetta to shame.

More often, Tzimisce join coteries with members of other clans. Even though the Voivodes may presume a certain superiority over their colleagues, this does not preclude affection, as peculiar a form as it may take. The Tzimisce perspective is broad, and they may view coterie-mates as fellows, rivals, compatriots,

attendants, or even vassals under their care. For some Dragons, coteries are a source of status: something to be hoarded, cultivated, and ultimately used as a badge of honor. This anachronistic perspective affords value to the recognition and prestige of having an entourage and ultimately being responsible for them, as an Old World lord might.

The coteries themselves have every reason to count a Tzimisce among them. After all, being part of a Tzimisce's cadre means that you are under their protection, as the custom of hospitality (or the notion of ownership...) demands. For coteries of an especially strong stomach, the powers that a Tzimisce can wield are often enough to support claims of territory. With their affinity for manipulating corporeal forms, a Tzimisce is often equally capable in the Horrid Form as an aesthetic virtuoso, reshaping coterie-mates into paragons of physical beauty.

CLAN COTERIE MERIT: OLD-WORLD HOSPITALITY ••

Enter freely and of your own will. At the beginning of a session, any members of the coterie who stayed at the Tzimisce's haven when the previous session concluded restore an additional level of Superficial Willpower damage. This includes shared coterie havens.

Ventrue



Those who hold the keys to the kingdom seek ever to extend their control, and if the Kindred of the Clan of Kings desire one thing in common, it is the ability to derive more power from their *existing* power capital. Financial, political, governmental — they cultivate a facility in every source of worldly power imaginable, making them the ally everyone wants, but the price of doing business with them is too costly for the Blood of many. It may be difficult for Kindred of other clans to find common ground with the Ventrue without feeling that they're competitors or, worse, obstacles.

Coteries that have at least one Blue Blood among them quickly learn what the phrase "proximity

to power" means. The connections an ambitious Venture cultivates are often their own reward for a Ventrue's coterie-mates, whether in the form of talented and ambitious retainers, well-connected allies, or the luxuries of extensive resources.

Need to lock down an intersection to occlude a Masquerade breach? Foreclose on a rival's haven? Launder money from a dockside deal? A savvy Ventrue can do that, and so much more — all you need to do is ask.

Which isn't to say that the Ventrue is a magic wand for the coterie's temporal problem-solving. One does not cultivate a Clan of Kings, carefully building networks spanning centuries with ghouls, willing mortals, and neonates acting as their eyes and ears at every level of world government and aristocracy, by running errands for those less capable than oneself. God created ghouls and mortals to do the scutwork, after all. The premise of a Ventrue's participation in a coterie is to occupy a position of value, and if that Blue Blood ends up developing the coterie into a willing subsidiary of Ventrue, Inc., well, the coterie should have piped up earlier if it had a problem with the value proposition.

CLAN COTERIE MERIT: KINDRED LEGACIES ••

The Ventrue understand that a vampire's legacy carries with it an accounting of the deeds of their progenitors. For some Blue Bloods, this emerges via written histories while others may have certain sires or scholars among their acquaintances. However it manifests, once per session, a member of the coterie with a Ventrue who has this Merit may ask the Storyteller to reveal a piece of relevant information about the history of a single vampire with whom they've come in contact. This could be something specific, such as "the Ministry club owner smuggled fugitive Anarchs out of town after an uprising in LA," or more mysterious such as "the allegations levied against that Kindred's great-grandsire having committed diablerie were untrue, but his childe still carries the shame to this night."

Caitiff



To be Caitiff is to dwell in a vampiric conundrum, missing a particularity of the Blood that afflicts them with specific drawbacks, but that likewise leaves them without its distinctions. On the one hand, the Caitiff is free from many of the burdensome elements of Kindred lineage. On the other, much of Kindred society places a premium on such lineage, and being without one means that one is on the wrong side of custom in that venerable society. Post-Embrace, Caitiff may find themselves in the company of drug-den broods, satanic covens, transient enclaves — or coteries of fledglings who watch each other's backs in a world of deathless, Byzantine treacheries.

The word “caitiff” itself is an old-form one, meaning both captive and outcast, in case the clanless individual needs reminded of their station in the society of the Damned. Practically speaking, this societal pressure often drives clanless vampires in one of two directions. Those Caitiff who are able to go it on their own likely choose to do so, rejecting the very society that rejects them and keeping their own company. Kindred history is punctuated with clanless Kindred so independent (or so monstrous...) that they can tell sects to go fuck themselves anyway. While this is more the attitude of the autarkis than the Caitiff proper, the latter often creates the former.

In the modern nights, however, many Caitiff are so young that they've spent the entirety of their pre-Embrace lives socialized in some capacity or another. To these modern Caitiff, coteries are natural, especially among the outsider cultures from which the clanless often emerge. Many hail from groups already on the margins of society, and thus already have some experience with being pariahs, so being an outcast among a different society, well, same shit, different night. Which leads these vampires to adopt coteries out of the same desire for self-preservation that many young Kindred already do. Unfortunately, the same sorts of straits in which outsiders find themselves in mortal life often ring

true for Caitiff as well, making for strained or even vicious coteries.

Trust is often in short order so far as the Caitiff experience it, which can make them wary or even reluctant members of coteries. One hand washes, the other, though: If they see that trust not only exists but is also given, Caitiff may potentially become a coterie's most earnest supporters.

CLAN COTERIE MERIT: VERSATILE VITAE ••

A walking example of unshackled Blood, the Caitiff's versatility is almost contagious. Once per session the Caitiff can influence a coterie member with their malleability, enabling them to use a Discipline power they do not possess (as long as they have the Discipline levels and other prerequisites for it) for the duration of the scene.

Thin-Bloods



The great and terrible Curse of Caine has persisted into this, the Time of Thin Blood, a harbinger of the End Times!

Certainly, such florid ideas may have little bearing on the modern nights, but if one thing is true, it's that the Embrace passes fewer and fewer of the characteristics of “full-blooded” Kindred onto the recipients the longer a lineage extends. And those who suffer this thin Blood have their own troubles, an overwrought society of the Damned notwithstanding. No reliable numbers exist on how many thin-bloods even exist, of course, so it's impossible to guess how many keep each other's company and how many mingle with more potent-blooded Kindred of greater generation. In addition to the problems of the Caitiff, thin-bloods face their own travails.

Duskborn who stay among their own often don't have the parlance of that full-blooded Kindred society, and rarely use the word coterie to describe their social unit. Depending on the group's demeanor, they may not even *have* a word for their social unit, or they may lean into

terms that thumb their nose at social mores — particularly mortal social mores, as many remain oblivious to the extent of Kindred presence. Thus it's not uncommon to find self-described covens, packs, prides, gangs, cults, crews, and even murders of Duskborn. These almost invariably have little insight as to how greater Kindred society functions, and exist on the peripheries of established domains, in ignorance until that terrible moment when the depth of the Kindred condition reveals itself in the form of the territory's actual claimant.

For thin-bloods who find themselves in the company of vampires with more puissant Blood, well, it's similarly too broad to give any accurate trends. Some duskborn hide the "shame" of their comparatively poor Blood as long as they can — and given how many other secrets a coterie might have among its members, the secret might be safe until tragic circumstances or even final death do them part. Yet other thin-bloods make no secret of their state, and depend upon the "real vampires" to shield them from the crudest impulses of Kindred society. No few undead mentors and Mawlas take to this role, perhaps finding in it an echo of parental urge, however perverted by the Blood. And of course still others can't be bothered with it, trusting to the thin-blood to get their shit together or end up as ashes trying. Again, the entire occurrence of thin-bloods at all is too recent a Kindred development to define their ethnography categorically.

In some cases, thin-bloods find themselves inheriting coteries almost in the manner of original sin, Embraced into broods or families that all share the same sire... whatever that sire's current fate may be. These are frequently born of misfortune: A thin-blood coterie that emerges when a young vampire without adequate instruction in the Traditions or ways of unlfe accidentally makes more of their own kind; an Anarch pack Embraced to undermine the local power structure only to have those sires destroyed, go missing, or otherwise become casualties of the War of Ages; or a tragically uninformed lover pulls their paramour into the

ranks of the Duskborn on a rainy night under the unfeeling, electric city lights. Whatever the case, they tread an alienating road unless they find safety in numbers, which often means playing at the wicked intrigues of the Damned.

CLAN COTERIE MERIT: MORTAL HEART ..

By simply existing, thin-bloods prove that a bridge is possible between mortal and undead, between Humanity and the Beast. Once per session the thin-blood can remind their coterie of what it means to be alive, allowing them to count their Humanity as one dot higher for a scene. ■



VAMPIRE THE MASQUERADE

VAMPIRE THE MASQUERADE	
Coterie Sheet	
1	Coterie Type
Chronicle	Members
City	Name
Domain	
Description	3
Chasse	ooooo
Lien	ooooo
Porillon	ooooo
Domain Merits	
Domain Resonance	
Coterie Advantages & Flaws	
4	
Coterie Boons & Debts	Haven or Hangout
	5
Haven Merits & Flaws	
Chronicle Tenets	Coterie Goals

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1 STARTING POINTS

What city does the chronicle take place in? If you've named your chronicle or your coterie, fill those names in on the Coterie Sheet on p. 239.

Build your starting Coterie Pool: add one point per player character. At any time in this process, players can spend Advantage points from their own character pools and add them to the Coterie Pool.

There's a lot of things to buy with Coterie Pool points, so build carefully! Generally, the most important things to buy are Domain and Haven, so you have an allowed place to hunt and a secure place to sleep.

OPTIONAL: STRONG COTERIES

See Strong Coteries (p. 170) if your Storyteller allows bonus dots to the Coterie Pool.

2 COTERIE TYPE

This describes what you and the other characters do, their purpose for teaming up.

See the list of coterie types on p. 156.

Based on your Coterie Type (p. 158), distribute your Coterie Pool points among the listed Prerequisites. Each point spent for a Flaw here gives you one more free point to spend on Backgrounds or Merits.

If you don't have enough pool points, you don't have to fill the Prerequisites completely. But if you haven't filled your Prerequisites, you can't spend any more points on coterie Advantages, Backgrounds, Domain Traits, or anything else.

If one of the player characters is a thin-blood with the Day Drinker Merit, they can replace one Prerequisite Retainer with themselves, and save the dot cost.

Add any Allies, Retainers, or other coterie Backgrounds from the Prerequisites to the Relationship Map (refer to core book.

Vampire: The Masquerade, p. 142)).

TYPICAL SECTS AND COTERIE TYPES

Typical doesn't mean always. Your good story idea trumps vampire stereotypes.

CAMARILLA

Cerberus, Commando, Day Watch, Envoy, Hunting Party, Maréchal, Plumaires, Questari, Regency, Sbirri, Vehme, Watchmen

ANARCH

Blood Cult, Champions, Commando, Fang Gang, Nomads, Plumaires, Questari, Saboteur, Sbirri, Watchmen

3 DOMAIN

What part of the city do you hunt in? Where is your base of operations? This is your domain, usually granted to you by more powerful vampires in your city.

If you have extra points in your Coterie Pool, you may spend them to increase your Domain traits. **Chasse** is how big and rich your hunting ground is; **Lien** describes how well you integrate into your domain; **Portillon** defines your domain's defense against intruders. (See *Vampire: The Masquerade*, pp. 195–196.)

OPTIONAL: DOMAIN MERITS

These are structures, facilities, and features of your domain.

If your Storyteller allows Domain Merits (p. 175), you can buy them with Coterie Pool points. Their dots count both as Merits and as Traits: you don't have to buy two dots in Chasse if you buy a two-dot Chasse Domain Merit!

Note important locations in your domain on the Relationship Map.

DOMAIN RESONANCE

Resonance is the predominant emotional flavor of the mortal blood in your domain.

Count up the Resonances from your Domain Merits. Each Merit counts once, but multiple Resonances count once for each Resonance. (A Choleric/Sanguine Merit adds one Choleric and one Sanguine, for example.) If one Resonance has three or more Merits, and has more Merits than any other Resonance, that's the Resonance of your domain.

4 ADVANTAGES

Just like character Advantages, but everyone in the coterie has access to them.

You can buy Backgrounds as a coterie (see *V:tM*, pp. 196–197) rather than individually. If some characters have bought individual Backgrounds they would rather share with the coterie, their players can

trade them in and contribute the points they spent on them to the Coterie Pool instead.

Once you've bought all the Prerequisites for your Coterie Type, spend any points you have left in your Coterie Pool on Backgrounds (see *Vampire: The Masquerade*, pp. 184–195) or Coterie Merits.

Look at the Possible Extras section of your Coterie Type description for Advantages that work well with your coterie type.

Remember, you can always buy Flaws to balance points spent on Backgrounds and Merits. Make sure everyone (including the Storyteller) agrees on all the Flaws you buy!

Clan Coterie Merits: If your character belongs to a clan, you can buy your clan's Merit for your coterie. Caitiff have a 'clanless' Coterie Merit. (See p. 190.)

See also the list of Coterie Merits (p. 171) and Coterie Flaws (p. 240).

Add any coterie Adversaries, Allies, Contacts, Enemies, Mawla, Retainers, and other important characters to the Relationship Map.

5 HAVEN

Where does your coterie spend the daylight hours? Does every member of your coterie have their own Haven or do you want to buy a common coterie Haven?

This Background is so important, it's worth double-checking in its own step, now. Remember you can trade in individual Haven points on a common coterie Haven, and you probably save points on a better Haven than any one character could afford.

Did you get a Haven from your Coterie Type, or buy it in the previous step? You can customize it with Haven Merits and Flaws (see *Vampire: The Masquerade*, pp. 188–189; pp. 111–113).



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Chapter Six:

CHRONICLES

*Every body is a book of blood;
Wherever we're opened, we're red.*

— CLIVE BARKER

Characters, whether singly or in groups, drive play. Play cannot happen without them. We call what happens a story, whether a Storyteller (or a clever player or six) planned it out ahead of time or whether it emerged in play and surprised everyone, or whether we only saw what it all meant when we looked back at it.

This chapter discusses how individual and collective character and player choices drive that story, the chronicle. Choices made by players – of play style, and for considerate play, and of what beliefs they plan to center – inevitably change the game. No matter how carefully anyone planned it out on the Relationship Map.

Or maybe it's the Relationship Wiki on your laptop screen. You, all you players, you decide for yourselves. It's your chronicle, after all.

ONCE PER SESSION

Write each rule or event that affects your character (good or bad) once per session on a note card or post an icon in a chat window for it. When it happens, flip the note card or delete the icon. This can help both you and the Storyteller keep track of these elements.

More Forms of Play

Vampire: The Masquerade originally began as a tabletop roleplaying game TTRPG. Traditionally, that means players and a Storyteller sitting around a table, narrating both the story and their character dialogue, rolling dice to resolve character actions. For decades this was the default way to play all roleplaying games and many people still prefer this style over any other.

But even in the earliest **Vampire** nights, some people played chronicles with more than one character per player; seemingly *un*-traditional “troupe-style” games actually come out of **Vampire**’s oldest traditions. Some players played **Vampire** in bars and theater spaces and outdoors, with hand gestures and good will replacing dice and thick sourcebooks. New types and forms of play emerged, which is why **Vampire: The Masquerade** covers alternate Scenes and Modes of play on pp. 290–293 in the first place. This section takes that coverage, and extends it over many more forms of play.

One-Shot Play

Not every vampire game has to be a multistory epic or big-C chronicle. Even today, many players get their first taste of roleplaying in single-session or single-story games. Convention games and “haunted house” or other mysteries often run more smoothly with pre-generated characters tuned for one specific story and its dramatic (and other) challenges. This also helps new players get over the hurdles of accidentally building a character too weak or otherwise unsuited for the night’s adventure. With

more experienced players, the Storyteller can present bare-bones versions of characters with the rules necessities for the night and perhaps an immediately impelling Desire, and let the players develop or customize other powers, Advantages, and the like.

Unlike many other game genres, horror roleplaying games have a long history of finishing a story in a single session. Most obviously this is because horror games tend to have a higher rate of character death than other roleplaying games and the one-shot form takes the stress off of the player that an “early” character death might penalize them in experience or play time. While players shouldn’t be sacrificing their characters without reason in a one-shot, by putting meta-game concerns to the side they’re free to express their character without those considerations even if it leads them to self-destructive or self-sacrificing acts.

This also means that one-shots tend to feature scenes heavy on drama, and characters are more willing to expose their internal conflicts up front and without much prompting. By strictly limiting the number of sessions available to the players to explore their characters and the story, it frees them from their natural inclinations to bide their time or wait for the most opportune scenario to reveal their character’s true nature. The clock is ticking and there is only now.

While the one-shot play style doesn’t require a lot of modifications, it can be useful to make heavy use of rules systems such as taking half (**Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 123) and one-roll conflicts (**Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 296) if the goal is a true single-session one shot. These systems emphasize roleplaying and the dramatic ramifications of the characters’ actions. While rolls and stats are still important, these



systems clarify and speed up their implementation so that more table time can focus on the character's story instead of the minutiae of adjudicating their actions in detail.

Possibly the most important thing to consider when running or playing in a one-shot though is planning for character death. While this style of play isn't an excuse to be ruthless, cruel or careless, as a player you should be aware that death may be more likely when the drama of the game is turned up to maximum volume. It can be useful to discuss with the Storyteller beforehand what happens when a character dies: can the player switch to a predetermined (or chance-met) Storyteller character?

One-on-One Play

A particularly intense play style that's very well suited to World of Darkness games only requires one Storyteller and one player, either keeping the same roles throughout or switching off story by story in a linked chronicle. One-on-one play can require either a great deal of trust or very well-set boundaries between the two participants. Because both player

and Storyteller have no "time off" from each other, their choices in play seem immediately personal in a way that larger game groups can avoid. It puts a constant spotlight on one player, who never gets to take a breather while others act. The Storyteller, meanwhile, can't use inter-player discussion or roleplaying as an opportunity to step back or improvise the next act.

However, the exploration of the character's motivations and internal life can get down to the floorboards. Touchstones and Memoriams that might be too personal or complex to delve into in other play styles can be centered and used as the core of the story. As the two players build trust, through check-ins or mutual excitement at the results, they can even begin to alternate roles as the story progresses, perhaps giving the tale a *Rashomon*-like quality of overlapping perspectives that never quite unite into a single narrative.

One-on-One Breakouts

Vampire games often explore internal dilemmas and how a character's connection to their past and their

humanity is transformed, damaged or even erased by their unnatural desires and circumstances. While it's important to maintain a balance of attention and consideration within a gaming group, sometimes the player and Storyteller can play out a character's personal journey away from the group in a one-on-one breakout.

This can be as simple as a quick 15-minute session where a player sidebars with the Storyteller, acquiring information or a new perspective that presents them with a dilemma if they share it with the rest of the group. Or the player and Storyteller can plan a completely separate game session outside the group's regular schedule, possibly over video chat. Those sessions can explore deep personal stories or advance solo agendas: strengthen the character's connection with a new Touchstone, or dive into their past with a Memoriam.

While side sessions can be fun and valuable, the Storyteller should use them sparingly to compartmentalize the group in ways that heighten drama without setting them against each other without cause. A good rule of thumb is to let the players decide when a one-on-one session or sidebar is required outside the normal flow of play. Not every secret meeting with a player's shadowy benefactor requires a chat in the corner.

Part of building trust at the table means becoming comfortable with playing out in the open with everyone at the table and trusting them to respect the boundaries of in-character and out-of-character knowledge. Reserve one-on-one play for story elements that dredge up a character's personal drama and allow them a chance to grow, shrink, or transform in face of confronting those inner struggles. How the character then brings those new insights back to the table with the larger group is the true payoff in this method.

Troupe-Style Play

In troupe-style play, each player has their main Kindred character, who takes center stage during

one session. Working from the Relationship Map, or simply riffing during session zero, the troupe develops a number of secondary characters: ghouls, fledglings, retainers, allies, and so on. Or in a higher-powered game, each player might have a main ancilla character; the associates could include neonates and fledglings. Or have a main group of full-blood Kindred with some thin-blood associates and hangers-on.

The troupe should decide as a whole their comfort level with playing each others' Touchstones. If the troupe decides on playable Touchstones, try to broaden the Touchstones' dramatic possibilities so that they can plausibly show up in and contribute to more than one type of story.

In a given session, the Storyteller (or the troupe as a whole) decides who the main character will be. That character's player takes on that role, and the other players assume control of secondary characters, changing it up on a session-by-session basis. Some sessions may involve two or more main characters, sometimes in a supporting role or walk-on part, sometimes in a more "team-up" story. And for formal Elysiums or other climactic moments, every player may portray their main character just as in a standard **Vampire** session. But generally in troupe-style chronicles, the expectation and the pattern is a parallel set of storylines and agendas, each wrapped around and focused on one main vampire, but illuminating the drama between them from multiple perspectives.

At the start, try to connect at least as many secondary characters to each main character as there are players in the troupe, so these "solo" stories still involve every player. For example, a group with one Storyteller and four players has four main Kindred. Each of those Kindred main characters should have three associates connected to them in some way so all four players can interact during any session. Some secondaries may have multiple connections: the coterie's trusted retainer could accompany any main character, for example.

In the *folio* model, each player has “their” folio of those supporting characters, and plays “their” associate of the session’s main, or picks which secondary character they feel best fits the current story. In the *pool* model, the troupe keeps all the supporting characters in common, and as long as every player has someone to portray it doesn’t matter who assists the central Kindred in the session. Many groups split the difference, everyone making up new characters for the pool as they appear in play and individual players taking increasing ownership of the supporting characters they most enjoy playing.

Benefits and Challenges

Every session one player’s vampire drives the action and gets the spotlight, allowing deep immersion and dramatic response. By removing the need to compete for spotlight, the other players now have permission to feed that drama; indeed, it may be their character’s explicit role in the scene! The results often give everyone involved a deeper understanding of a character than would simply watching them bounce emotion off the Storyteller alone. Similarly, players have more license to “play to lose” as they can afford to dramatically sacrifice a secondary character — or even their main vampire! — without completely losing their tether to the ongoing chronicle.

If characters are more “expendable” in troupe-style play, they also often become more robust and better in play. Especially secondary characters who might only be walk-ons for the Storyteller in a standard chronicle become living (or unliving) presences at the table, with their own agendas and personalities adding richness and entertainment to the ongoing story.

Troupe-style play works well for groups in which the vampire characters are less hands-on and work toward private agendas — sometimes even against each other — trusting the mortal characters to dirty their hands on the vampires’ behalf. Main characters can face off and maneuver in secret, using mortal pawns to do their dirty work. If the player

portraying that pawn has to sabotage their own main vampire, so much sweeter the revenge when they turn it around on their foe next session!

The biggest challenge of troupe-style play is compartmentalization: players constantly get exposed to plenty of information their main character doesn’t have. In addition, many players can’t compartmentalize player-vs.-player activity, which flourishes in troupe-style play though it’s not inevitable. If compartmentalization is a problem area for your troupe it may be wisest to avoid this form of play.

Guest Storytelling

Troupe-style play lends itself well to guest storytelling. A player not accompanying another main character has the option to step into the Storyteller role at the table if everyone else agrees. This allows the Storyteller to play a secondary character of their own — a character from the pool, an antagonist, or some other “guest star” — and become involved in the plot. Discuss this ahead of time at the table, and make sure all players consent to having a guest Storyteller.

Knowing how to step into a guest storytelling role is also very important. Recognize you are playing with someone else’s sandbox when it comes to a city setting, plots, and Storyteller characters, and respect prior developments and character expressions. Add new Storyteller characters or setting elements rather than repurposing old ones in an unfamiliar way. In some troupes, guest Storytellers might run in a different setting or aspect: the guest session happens on the South Side, leaving the “main” chronicle in Uptown where it normally occurs.

The logical end point of guest Storytelling is rotating Storytelling: every player has a main character, and takes turns Storytelling when their main is offstage. Plot elements, Storyteller characters, antagonists, and so on might be shared in a city-wide pool, or kept in each Storyteller’s folio, or a mix of the two. In these games, the troupe truly outweighs any given player, and needs to make their decisions communally so that

everyone agrees on the ground rules. It cannot be stressed enough that **Vampire** is a collaborative game, so everyone needs to communicate, talk things through, and work together to tell the story that everyone wants at the table.

Solo Roleplay

The further one goes from the traditional roleplaying table, the more common it is to meet people roleplaying without the support of Storyteller or even other players. From people exploring personal storylines in text roleplay to social media accounts of fictional characters, all methods of in-character self-expression can count as roleplay, even if they don't include other active participants. What was once considered an enhancer or an added layer of getting into character has become a way of roleplaying in itself. Composing playlists of what your Minister listens to, solving online quizzes from the perspective of your Hecata, or running an Instagram account as your Toreador are all viable methods of solo roleplay, and may be combined with more traditional means of telling a **Vampire: The Masquerade** story. Some players use video games and interactive novels as exercises to develop their stories further, putting their characters in the role of protagonists. Others look for similar *solos* to collaborate, and make great stories together.

VAMPIRE AMA

- Have you kept to any of your human rituals, like brushing your teeth?
- What did you think about (fictional) vampires before you were Embraced?
- Which part of human life do you miss the most?
- What was the weirdest place you've ever fallen into daysleep?
- Do you think your clan fits you?
- What's the hardest thing to get used to about being undead?

Online Styles of Play

Contemporary technologies have created opportunities to move the gameplay away from the table and into many other spaces, both for convenience and the additional tools it provides. This section examines some of these alternative playing styles, and offers some advice for getting the most enjoyment out of them.

Moving away from the concept of a group of people playing together at one table with one Storyteller to lead them through a lengthy chronicle isn't a new concept by any means. From MUD and MUSH servers, roleplaying accounts on *VampireFreaks*, and using every newly emerging chat, messaging app, social media platform or massively multiplayer game to portray their characters, **Vampire** roleplayers find their way to adapt popular tools to fit their stories.

Times change: character design in simple dress-up apps give way to *Picrew* or even AI-based solutions like *ArtBreeder*, static 2D avatars evolve into Vtube personas, and text-based online roleplaying tools gain interactive maps and lighting systems. No matter the tool or the style of roleplay, the goal of it remains the same: to tell a good **Vampire** story. If you're not feeling courageous enough to begin your journey as a Storyteller or a player (yet...), you can participate in the collective experience as a member of the audience, as most of these styles allow, and even actively seek "spectators" to enjoy the roleplaying efforts.

Actual Play

Actual Play (AP) is a term used for a tabletop roleplaying game experience that's either broadcast on a streaming platform or delivered as an audio podcast. Whether the actual play is broadcast live or recorded, the audience witnesses the game session as spectators, seeing and/or hearing all the character dialogue and action as it transpires. When broadcast live, many people enjoy participating in a live chat session to discuss the events of the actual play as they happen.

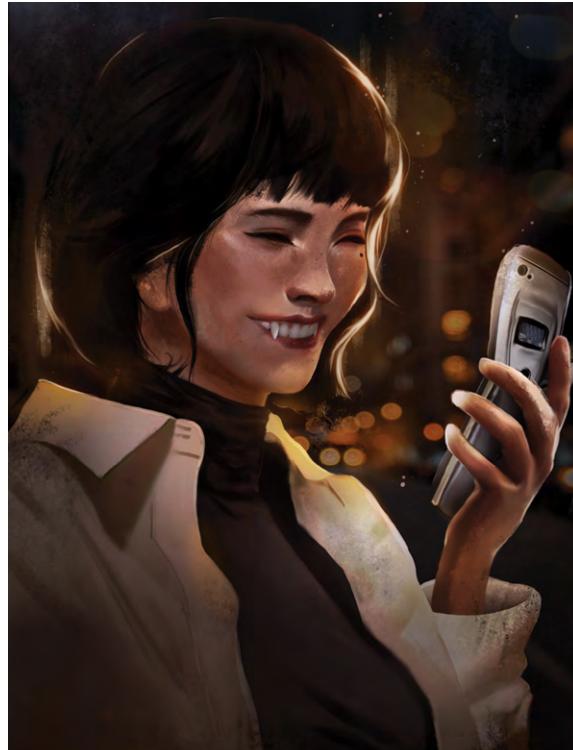
For many **Vampire: The Masquerade** players, *LA by Night* was the first time they've ever heard the words "Camarilla" or "Malkavian." A group of players sitting at the table in a stylishly lit studio, all dressed up for the occasion, collaborating with the Storyteller describing yet another sticky situation in which the coterie has put themselves. It's an intimate story, with characters sharing moments of vulnerability, touching hands only to bare fangs moments later — all of this watched by hundreds of thousands of people tuning in, typing in comments live and messaging each other to share the experience.

Popular actual play shows on Twitch and YouTube often set a high level of expectation for Storytellers and players at the home tables, but you don't have to be a professional actor or a flawless Storyteller to have fun and entertain an audience yourself. Having a studio is a luxury that allows roleplayers to interact physically, exchanging glances, gestures, and nods, while allowing the Storyteller to read the room better, similarly to traditional roleplaying tables. It's by no means the only way to stream **Vampire**, though, and many more affordable options are available.

Talking Heads

Most actual plays are "talking heads" style, meaning that the players and Storyteller are playing remotely — connecting online from any part of the world using video conferencing tools (like *Google Hangouts*, *Zoom* or *Discord*). On the audience's screen, this gives the appearance of "talking heads in boxes" Some such APs also feature great lighting, VFX and SFX, costuming for characters, and other enhancements, but none of these are necessary to have fun playing **Vampire** with your friends in this format!

Although "talking heads" shows are generally less visually appealing than studio recordings by default, their Storytellers have a wide variety of tools to make the such a show captivating: overlays with characters names and clan symbols, royalty-free music libraries



to enhance the atmosphere, automatic background swappers for webcams to hide the rooms behind players, or Twitch extensions allowing live voting for the audience to have an impact on the story. Many of these tools require nothing more but the time invested in searching for assets fitting your chronicle — see *Pexels* for photos and videos, *StreamElements* for stream alerts and overlays, and *Free Music Archive* or *Soundtrack by Twitch* for music.

Whichever tools you use, keep in mind that it's more difficult to read the cues, body language and mood at the table if you don't see your fellow players in person. Latency, audio delays and shyness may cause some characters to participate less, and they may be overshadowed by their more talkative peers. Always make sure to give others the room to speak and shine, both in private and the livestreamed or recorded sessions. (Spotlight Distribution, in **Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 356, is of particular importance here.) During a livestream, it's important to have the group text chat open at all times, to read potentially important out-of-character

information shared by other participants. It's also crucial to perform the after-stream debrief, where your group winds down in voice chat privately, without an audience, freely discussing everything that happened and ensuring everyone feels OK about the session.

Streamed games are not ideal places to experiment with characters outside your culture. Be extra considerate and as respectful as possible when portraying such a character in a streamed game. Storytellers, make sure your antagonists aren't all from one group, or that one group doesn't only show up as villains.

Aim to make any regional or national accents as authentic as possible. Don't play them for laughs or to demean.

Be mindful of speaking prayers aloud or acting out religious expressions: someone from that faith might be watching, and it's the kind of thing that can give offense even if done respectfully. If need be, just say your character's doing the thing without doing it in-character.

Reading and research definitely helps with this process, as does talking to people from the groups you want to represent, but try to read reputable modern scholarship.

Virtual Tools in Streaming

One way to surpass the visual limitations of Talking Heads style play is to use a variety of virtual tools available to **Vampire** players to enhance the illusion for the audience (and more often than not, players at the virtual table). Vtubers — virtual avatars that mimic the user behavior live through a webcam — is a trend that emerged from Japan and quickly became popular worldwide. Free tools allow anyone to create their own virtual character, customizing everything from hairstyle to clothing options, some even including fangs for a more exaggerated vampire aesthetic.

If using an avatar isn't enough, the Storyteller

may also use virtual environments to simulate the in-game world. Crafting the chronicle's locations has never been easier – whether by the use of photomanipulation (*Photoshop, GIMP*), 3D modeling (*Blender*), or even by creating interactive spaces using game development software (*Unreal Engine, Unity*), there are a plenty of ready-made solutions, guides, tutorials, and free assets available to make the process easier. A simpler approach requires nothing but static images of visited locations, which can work magic paired with relevant audio cues and music. In most cases, *World of Darkness* games aren't as tactical as other roleplaying games, but sometimes it helps to see a visual indicator of who's seeking a vessel on the nightclub dance floor and who's just discovered a hastily evacuated alchemical lab in the storeroom.

When planning your streaming setup, it's important to keep in mind it should be easily readable and understandable to your audience. Remember that many watchers may join your show in its middle, and being able to quickly grasp what's going on will greatly improve their experience. One way to help this is using Virtual Tabletop tools, with visual cues in the form of character sheets, maps, and dice rolls.

Virtual Tabletop (VTT)

To simply explain, VTT tools (such as *Roll20* or *FantasyGrounds*) bring tabletop roleplaying books to the digital space. Imagine all of the game's rules in one place, allowing you to check "what was that loresheet about?" or "which clan does that storyteller character belong to?" with one click of a mouse – this together with dice rollers, character sheets, notes, maps and other handy resources, all in one place, accessible to every chronicle's participant at any time. Of course, Storytellers can hide some of the information from their players, keeping a secret stash of information available only to themselves – the tools allow them not to reveal all cards at once. VTTs often offer maps on which to place tokens

representing players' positions, and some add another layer of fun with dynamic lighting systems — allowing the players to equip themselves with flashlights (or Heightened Senses) and explore the mostly obscured areas.

Online Text-Based Roleplay

One of the most popular and easily accessible styles of roleplaying has been around for a couple of decades: the online text-based game, played on a personal computer or mobile device. They come in a wide variety of formats, ranging from play-by-post to live chat, and they continue to evolve with every new tool and messaging app that emerges.

Every app allowing users to interact with each other can be used as a roleplaying tool in some capacity — even social media platforms like Twitch or Facebook, including groups and private messaging features within these channels. All it takes is finding the right group with whom to share the story — some text chronicles are more time-consuming than others, and some have a preference towards the players within the same time zone (or at least sharing the same waking hours).

Some **Vampire** chronicles that use this format include hundreds of players and dozens of Storytellers, all interacting in real time, creating the impression of a “living” city of independent characters who create innumerable personal stories. It can feel a little overwhelming to players encountering them for the first time; fortunately, many have extensive guides to help onboard new players and help them feel welcome. It’s a good idea to read the policies, rules and the chronicle tenets to be sure that it’s right for you.

Many text-based roleplaying settings require little to no Storyteller interaction or guidance, as the stories emerge organically and naturally from the interpersonal drama and relationships between players’ characters, conflicts, and common goals of the interactions. Storytellers often operate similarly to moderators, ensuring that everyone is having a

good time, but also creating consequences to any actions affecting the chronicle’s ongoing narrative, like frequent Masquerade breaches.

Play-by-Post

Play-by-Post style is an online text-based roleplaying style that got its start on message boards and forums but today has its own dedicated platforms. Because each player makes one post at a time, in turn (usually), this style offers a slower pace than chat-based chronicles. That can be a consideration if you have limited time to play or if you want to write longer, more detailed descriptions of your character’s actions and inner monologues than is usually possible in a chronicle in which players participate synchronously.

Instead of that, you can play your chronicle while on a bus, lying in bed, or in between various daily responsibilities, practicing your writing at the same time. Play-by-Post groups can allow for a pretty relaxed pace, often with one “check-in” per day required while in an active roleplay, and frequent breaks allowed. Many play-by-post chronicles assume one in-game night takes place throughout one real-time week, letting players distribute their time to contribute to the story. You can find many servers operating this way on Discord, either through its own Discovery tool or external search engines, like Disboard. And, again, be sure to check the chronicle’s posted policies and guidelines to make sure it’s a good match for your expectations and needs.

Just like with other styles, consent and considerate play is crucial while roleplaying via text. Traditional sessions have the advantage of taking place within a set amount of time, letting players slowly get in and out of character, with after-session care included. With the story available at any time to participate using one’s phone, the distance between the real world and the story becomes less, enabling more opportunities for bleed (see sidebar).

Additionally, a common issue with text roleplay is how one describes another player’s actions. It’s sometimes crucial to mention another player’s

movements or reactions, but it's also an easy pitfall to impose some behaviors onto another character, putting the player in an uncomfortable situation ("My character would never let her Touchstone out of her sight!"). In any case, make sure to always talk OOC (out-of-character) with your roleplaying partners, and ensure the course of action is mutually agreeable.

MIND THE BLEED!

Bleed occurs when a character's emotions affect the player and vice versa. Although some levels of bleed are unavoidable or even welcome (like a cathartic sadness felt after another character's final death, or the joy of celebrating a goal accomplished), bleed may become destructive if the player-and-character separation isn't clear. Real anger felt toward a player portraying one's rivals, or confusing in-game relationships with reality can be a source of discomfort in chronicles. Open, honest communication with other players and established rituals of getting into and out of character help with preventing it. Remember to always check in with your troupe, especially after intensely emotional scenes!

For more information on consent and considerate play, see the appendix on p. 421 of **Vampire: The Masquerade**.

Virtual LARPing

In video games such as *Vampire: The Masquerade – Bloodhunt*, you may sometimes encounter roleplayers in Elysium, the waiting area for match participants. Using all the tools at their disposal — in-game chat, environment, character customization, and fancy emotes — they tell their own **Vampire** stories, often prolonging their match's wait time just to continue socializing and unraveling their individual narratives. This style of roleplaying requires neither dice nor Storyteller, just like many other styles we mention in this chapter. It's no less a true **Vampire: The Masquerade** roleplay, though, often filled with actions and consequences, emotions and drama.

The concept of having your own virtual persona was long-explored in pop culture, and is now more accessible than ever. It's easy to jump into a virtual avatar, carefully crafted in *Vtuber Maker* or using an in-game character customization system. With a few clicks of the mouse or the controls that come with a VR headset, we can transform into any character we imagine, and modern tech allows us to control their whole bodies up to the tips of their fingers, if we so wish (and have the necessary equipment).

VR has become more accessible in recent years, and with *VRChat*'s growing community, socializing inside crafted avatars has become popular among roleplayers and influencers.

Virtual LARPing is much older, with roleplaying guilds present in every MMORPG in existence, and players employ the least expected video games in which to weave their **Vampire** stories. You may find people pretending to be vampires not only in *Second Life*, *IMVU*, and *The Sims*, but also *Grand Theft Auto* or even *Red Dead Redemption*.

Virtual LARPs follow variety of rulesets, some taking queues from real-life LARP experiences (like *Mind Eye's Theatre*), others using a mix of regular tabletop rules and built-in software tools (like rolling virtual dice in *VRChat*), while others drop all mechanics imposed by their more traditional predecessors and opt for pure in-character improv instead. Players can stumble upon curated events, like Camarilla court meetings or Anarch gatherings, but more often it's a free-for-all experience, with a variety of Kindred avatars in one space and enjoying the emergent narrative that comes from these interactions.

Inspired by the introductory text to this chapter, you may try roleplaying your own character in *Vampire: The Masquerade – Bloodhunt* next time you enter Elysium — and who knows, maybe someone will join you to tell a story together!

TikTok Style

It might seem unexpected but this social media platform, best known for its short, snappy videos

browsed on a smartphone, is also a venue for **Vampire** roleplaying! . TikTok isn't the only, nor the first app of its kind to see roleplaying communities using videos as their form of quick in-character expression. It's a fast-growing one, though, hosting many **Vampire: The Masquerade** roleplayers, and even a few "massively multiplayer virtual LARPs" that anyone recording just a single video can join. It's different in many ways from actual plays: Players never face each other, but instead talk to the camera; the interactions between characters are staged, and happen from one video frame to another, in the form of *Stitches* and *Duets*. *Stitch* incorporates up to 5 seconds of someone else's video at the beginning of yours. It can be used as a response to another user's question, reaction to their statement, or an answer to the challenge they proposed. *Duets* allow you to record your video side-by-side with another, and are more often used for roleplaying scenes. With good timing, *Duets* can simulate conversations between two characters, or even more dramatic action scenes. Sound plays a great role in *TikTok* style, from moody music tracks enhancing the scene with their lyrics, to voice snippets lip synced by the person on camera.

For players with a more traditional experience, seeing Kindred synchronizing their mouth movements to a cut dialogue from a popular reality show, or dancing to trap remixes of video game music may seem incongruous at first, but understanding it can be helpful for any roleplayers out there, to expand their way of thinking. TikTokers don't so much roleplay who their character *is* as portray what they find relatable in their character. This might be a scene from a movie they've recently seen, which perfectly embodies the power and dominance of their Ventrite character, a chorus of a pop-rock song representing the attitude of a rebellious Brujah, or a funny "Things Librarians Say" video that fits a Tremere. It's never assumed that the characters *truly* say these things in their chronicles, rather being treated as a part of the remix culture — the celebration of what our characters represent and what **Vampire: The**

Masquerade means to them — in all forms from serious, emotional roleplaying to outright parody. And, honestly, it's exactly the sort of Masquerade-threatening modern irreverence in which young Kindred would indulge, if only to thumb their noses at more rigid forms of vampire society.

Convictions

Although they seem similar to Chronicle Tenets, the character's Convictions have a different purpose narratively, mechanically, and philosophically. The Tenets deny ("Thou shalt not kill") while Convictions permit ("Protect the marginalized"), creating drama from the conflict. This shows up explicitly the mechanics: If you violate a Tenet in service of your Conviction, it reduces the resulting Stains by one or more (**Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 239). They define where your own beliefs may stray or more strongly converge from those of society or even your comrades.

Convictions are often statements that start with the word "always" or "never", they deal in absolutes because they illustrate core pillars of a character's identity and what anchors them to their remaining Humanity. Storytellers should deny Convictions that are overly vague or open-ended. At base, Convictions should be short, powerful reasons to justify Tenet transgressions.

Ideally, Convictions also tell a story about your character, albeit in somewhat telegraphic style. It can be helpful when coming up with Convictions to ask yourself questions about your character's mortal past and their early nights as a Kindred.

- What are they clinging to from their mortal life that keeps the Hunger at bay?
- What caused their most recent Stain and how did their conscience justify their actions?
- Why did these beliefs survive their embrace?
- What will it take for them to abandon these last traces of their mortal life?



While Convictions must be concise and close-ended, the only true limitation on them is that they must adhere to the terms of considerate play agreed upon at the table in both their letter and spirit.

Sample Convictions

Detailed below are several examples of longer form Convictions that are part of a larger theme or path. If a player decides to use some of these, they can pick and choose from different themes as they wish, the grouping is to give context to each Conviction and to clarify how they are intended to play within a Chronicle:

DEN MOTHER

- Give everything for those you love.
- Never back down when protecting the weak.
- Always put your family first.

FOR THE COMMUNITY

- People matter more than rules.
- Abusing authority is the worst crime.
- Serve the weak, challenge the powerful.

THE GAMBLER

- Never leave anything on the table. Don't be afraid to go for the big reward.
- Property belongs to those who can keep it.
- Never deny yourself what is given freely.

JUSTICE FOR ALL

- An eye for an eye.
- Never obey an unjust law.
- Always punish the guilty or corrupt.

LOOKING OUT FOR NUMBER ONE

- Property is inviolate, theft is always wrong.
- Self-defense justifies anything.
- Never forget a debt, everyone has to pay what they owe.

MODERN ROYALTY

- Always take charge.
- Always pay your fair share.
- Pay back betrayal with betrayal.

PACT OF HONOR

- Always repay your debts.
- Loyalty is everything.
- Always keep your word.

THE RECLUSE

- Privacy is sacred.
- Always finish what you started.
- Guard what you love.

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

- A deal's a deal, never break a contract.
- Never leave a comrade behind.
- Don't get involved in a fight you're not paid to fight in.

SURVIVOR'S HEART

- Never back down from a challenge.
- Survival comes first.
- Always follow through on threats.

Touchstones

Touchstones anchor vampires. They forge a living, mortal tie to their Convictions, someone who embodies what the vampire values, upholds, or strives to be. A vampire has as many Touchstones as they have Convictions. A Touchstone is *not* a ghoul, pet, mascot, abstract idea, or statue. It must be a living, breathing mortal a vampire has a connection to with no vampiric Blood. It is through their Touchstone that a vampire can connect with their Humanity and keep their Beast chained (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 173). Touchstones help bring a counterpoint to your vampire, a mortal foil representing the human option the vampire has lost or abandoned, someone to fight for or to lose if they slip too far down the slope.

Does a Touchstone need to know their connections to a vampire? The player and Storyteller decide. Did the vampire know them in mortal life? Do they admire their Touchstone from a concealed location, or engage in physical

contact that horribly reminds them of their curse? A vampire might obsess over a celebrity who represents their Conviction, only to be disappointed by the actual human being — and resolve to “help them recover their true self” rather than give up their human illusions.

The knowledge that vampires exist has the ability to change a person and wake them up to an entirely new world that's been hidden from them all their lives. So if a Touchstone learns about a vampire's true nature, the Storyteller and player then decide (or determine through roleplay) whether that knowledge distorts their connection to the vampire's Conviction.

What Is the Relationship?

The relationship between a vampire and Touchstone represents the connection between the vampire's Beast and their Humanity. A frenemy or rival Touchstone says something different about the Kindred than a lover or sibling. Whether they admire from afar or build a personal connection, a vampire's presence in a mortal's life eventually wears them down. A vampire always walks a fine line between benefiting from a Touchstone to using or abusing a relationship. A vampire can have several types of relationships with their Touchstones, depending upon the player's preferences.

Players always have control over how far they wish to take their relationship with their Touchstone. Vampire can touch upon hard or uncomfortable subjects in which a player may choose not to participate. Players set the limits with their Touchstone relationships. Likewise, a Touchstone relationship that makes the Storyteller uncomfortable has no place at the table. Please see p. 216 and *Vampire: The Masquerade* (pp. 1 and 419) for more information on considerate play mechanics, player choices, and why these are important.

From Afar

A vampire who watches their Touchstone from afar has the advantage of not having to risk revealing their true nature by accident. The drawback is that the vampire loses their connection to the small things that make a Touchstone human, such as social connection, conversation without the worry of being in danger, or casual touch. Kindred easily forget these small daily acts when living longer than mortal lifespans, and slip into seclusion or distancing. Unfortunately, the Beast thrives on this isolation, separating the vampire from their former self and making them feel alone.

This relationship can become a fixation if the vampire is not careful. Stalking, voyeurism, and obsession loom as real possibilities for a character who uses their Touchstone in this fashion. However, casual admiration or playing with a rival's career need not lead to fixation. It leads to other things.

Casual

Touchstones can be casual acquaintances with a vampire, only connecting occasionally, like the grocery store clerk who makes sure to stock a specific brand of coffee for a customer. The vampire doesn't see them every night but will have small moments once in a while to connect. With casual connections, the Kindred can still experience a nuanced social relationship with less risk of being discovered. However, keeping it casual or infrequent can lead to missing cues, misinterpreting interactions, being surprised by major developments (“Sorry I forgot your coffee, my kid ran away last night”), or slipping into pure manipulation and using.

This relationship can dissolve with time. Mortals often change jobs, move, or pass on, and a vampire with a casual Touchstone may not learn about this shift in dynamic until much later. Thus, it is a real danger to a vampire's Humanity.



Close Connection

A vampire who keeps their Touchstone close has the advantage of keeping a close watch on their activities, connections, and daily life. It's beneficial for many vampires because these continuous mortal bonds strengthen their hold on their Beast. The drawback, of course, is that their vampire drama — rival Kindred, hunters, collateral monstrosity — splashes back on the Touchstone, or continuously threatens to. The closer the connection, the greater the danger, and the greater the temptation to risk the Masquerade by revealing the truth.

Close connections create problems for the vampire as well as the Touchstone, over and above the Masquerade threat. For example, a vampire may become paranoid about their Touchstone and become overprotective. Their rivals and enemies can use their Touchstone against them, if only by knowing where to ambush them on a Tuesday night.

Touchstone Ideas

Touchstones can come from various places, but they must have some tie to the vampire. For example, a Touchstone acts as a mentor for the vampire's Conviction, a trusted mortal they like to spend time with, or someone connected to their mortal life. They are a tether to hold a vampire accountable for their actions and a force to try and change their pathway.

Vampire: The Masquerade (p. 173) has a good list of basic Touchstones to think about, but players are encouraged to create a deeper connection. There are many more ideas a player could explore, such as:

- A "father-figure" paramedic who enjoys dad jokes and is a goth from the 80s. He makes sure you have enough food in your apartment, tells dad jokes to get you to laugh, and has helped you out when your car broke down.
- A friend you had in high school but lost touch with until they reached out on social media. You

were able to rekindle your friendship, and they've invited you to spend time with their family since you live alone.

- An old rival on the newspaper, who you still break stories for. But you can't resist making them look stupid when they try to explain to their editors how they got onto the trail, or sabotaging the novel-writing career you thought they held over you in life.
- The waitress who sits with you at an all-night diner and talks when there are no other customers in the restaurant. She listens to anything you have to say and offers advice when needed. She worries about you but doesn't want to show it.
- A social media creator you randomly met on the street and befriended. They live right down the street from you and invite you to hang out often.
- A teenage girl who just needs a few lucky breaks to get into the local college on a baseball scholarship. You knew a girl like her when you were in college playing ball, but she never made it. This is your chance to fix things.
- You befriended the woman after accidentally killing her husband while feeding. She calls you weekly to talk. Your guilt drove you to help make sure she could heal from your actions, though she has no idea you were the cause of her pain.
- The best friend of your sister, your previous Touchstone, reached out to you when your sister died and offered to share stories of their adventures with you. Through this, you formed a friendship, and you now seek to protect your last connection to your mortal life.

Touchstones on the Relationship Map

When players place a Touchstone on their Relationship Map (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, pp. 142–144), they get a potential social fulcrum. A Touchstone might have their own connections, lines leading into the mortal world and perhaps even back

toward rival Kindred. Eyeing the map might even help conceptualize those rival Kindred's potential approaches to their Touchstone, for player and Storyteller alike. As with everything in a vampire's unlife, they can use their Touchstone's connections and relationships to their own advantage, at the risk of burdening or endangering the Touchstone in turn.

Using a Touchstone in your Chronicle

Players and Storytellers alike should use Touchstones within a chronicle. Don't just relegate a Touchstone to just downtime actions or worse yet, a mechanical device for your character. Use them for deeper connections to personal horror, because if you don't, your Storyteller will. Use your Touchstones frequently throughout gameplay and work with the Storyteller to decide how best to introduce these moments.

Some ideas for using your Touchstone include:

- **Random Meetups:** Your unlife and your Touchstone's life may still overlap: friends or nightclubs or political causes in common. At any point, you might run into your Touchstone randomly in a scene. When they ask who your friends are, you have to introduce them to your coterie while making it clear this mortal isn't lunch.
- **Projects:** Incorporating your Touchstone in your Project (or other activity) can help you accomplish your goal and strengthen your connection. You might get your Touchstone to do something in daylight: check out a book from the library, or visit a politician's campaign office. If your Touchstone has real skills as a researcher or glad-hander, making them a full-time part of your Project could advance it and help you keep track of them!
- **Backup:** Bringing your Touchstone to a fight is never a good idea, but it sometimes just can't be helped. You may want to shield them as much as possible from harm, but a Touchstone may want

to help. Involvement without endangerment: if your Touchstone just bought a high-speed sports car, maybe they can be the getaway driver from your heist of that Ventrite office park.

- **Rescue:** If you've defined a Touchstone in a dangerous business (cop, firefighter, reporter on the organized crime beat) the temptation to save them may seem constant. Indeed, it can be a rare upbeat moment — until the Touchstone yells at you for interfering, and gets curious about just how you shrugged off that bullet. Just when you've come to the sensible decision to let them live their own life, that's when the Storyteller can throw something really bad at them. Double points if that really bad thing actually gets kicked off by your fellow Kindred.
- **Political Rival:** Nothing is more personal than a Touchstone becoming a ghoul or becoming Embraced by another vampire. It's a risky move but can throw a vampire off their momentum. This might be a plausible accident, or a deliberate chess move against you, and finding out which it was requires you to keep interacting with your Touchstone knowing their loyalty has shifted.
- **Involuntary Investigator:** Creating a smart, observant Touchstone feeds player vanity a bit, and such mortals represent the best of Humanity in many cases. However, they also prove endlessly persistent investigators of the mystery of ... you! Having to avoid your Touchstone to derail their impending Masquerade breach creates its own problems. But what if they reach out to that older guy they've seen you with, the really pale one with the pet rat?
- **Tragic Accident:** You likely take great pains to keep your Touchstone safe. But accidents (and worse) happen, and you may need to decide in the moment to either save a life or lose it. Car wreck, critical injury, gunshot, Touchstone bleeding out: do you heal them or allow them to die? Either way, you lose your Touchstone; this drama comes entirely from the relationship you've already built even as it threatens to destroy it forever.

Losing Your Touchstone

Vampires lose their connections to their Touchstones as they outlive the mortals around them. It is the nature of agelessness. But what happens when that connection is lost? What happens to that Conviction? What happens to the vampire? How does a vampire find a new Touchstone?

A vampire can lose a Touchstone in a variety of ways. First, they could die from just being a mortal. Mortals get sick, have accidents, and die from old age. Succumbing to their mortality is very common for a Touchstone. Second, a vampire could change their Conviction and no longer feel a connection with that mortal. Learning someone's true self or private feelings can be devastating for someone, and a vampire learning their Touchstone does not embody that Conviction is enough to cause a vampire to lose that connection. Last, a Touchstone could be corrupted by being Embraced or becoming a ghoul. The introduction of vampire Blood is enough to change their nature and force a vampire to lose its Touchstone.

A vampire can feel very differently about the loss of a Touchstone, depending on the circumstances surrounding the event. This connection isn't as strong as the Blood Bond, but it can hit some vampires pretty hard, a rope snapping high up the cliff. On the other hand, a vampire who changes their Conviction may not feel much at the loss of their Touchstone. A player and Storyteller should collaborate on how a character would react to this change.

Finding a new Touchstone can be challenging. Their Touchstone needs to embody something relatable to their Conviction for the vampire to build a connection. A vampire may lash out and take a life, then seek out anyone connected to that mortal and use that tragedy for their Touchstone. They may seek out distant relatives to communicate with their mortal family. Building a connection with a Touchstone takes time but is very important for the vampire. The alternative is the vampire slowly losing

their connection to Humanity and slipping away towards their Beast. It won't happen right away, but without the link to their Touchstone, they don't get the mechanical benefit with their Humanity.

No Touchstone?

A vampire may choose to walk through unlifewith no Conviction, and therefore no Touchstone. This might reflect a vampire dangerously close to falling to the Beast, or one who clings to Kindred society at the cost of their individuality, following only Tenets. They still have Ambitions and Desires to guide their actions, but might find it difficult to decide or predict how far they might go for them. Also, without a Conviction to explain and mitigate their Tenet violations, they tend to lose Humanity faster than other Kindred. Work with the Storyteller to determine why your character lacks Conviction, and what sorts of effects they see in play as a result.

Memoriam

Vampires can walk the earth over many lifetimes, but even young Kindred can find it difficult to recall their past as the regular trauma of vampire unlifeforces them to forget. Relentless loss of Humanity erodes their identity. Remembering specific events sometimes requires special effort, a process called Memoriam (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, pp. 311–314).

Shaping Memoriam

The vampire's current Hunger or their level of Humanity often shapes their Memoriam experience. As with mortals, a vampires' memories are not perfect reproductions of past events. Memories are an amalgam of memories, experiences and desires that are stitched together to create a narrative that often enforces someone's identity. Given their agelessness, vampires constantly adapt, edit and suppress memories to

better serve their shifting sense of self. Especially as their Humanity collapses, the memories of being a mortal no longer serve their new desires and ambitions. A vampire builds their Memoriam of these memories, but sometimes the very act of exploring and reliving these constructed realities can unearth the hidden meanings or the actual events that they were created from originally. Some Memoriams are almost dream-like or ephemeral as they shift through different scenarios, but many are more concrete and based on actual events even if they're shaped by the vampire's current identity and perspective.

Humanity

It should come as no surprise that as a Kindred's Humanity changes so does the internal landscape of their psyche. While a vampire with a high Humanity might have an easier time accessing details from their mortal days, undead with low Humanity may not be able to access their mortal memories at all.

Instead when they enter a Memoriams that center on their breathing days they are confronted with a shadowy pastiche of their life. Faceless mortals with half remembered names confront them with stark no win scenarios. More generally, vampires with low Humanity can expect their Memoriams to be muted in their color palette, often with only the red and greens of blood, gore, and viscera standing out amid the pale tones of their fading memories.

Hunger

A vampire's current Hunger often infects a Memoriam, and can define the way other Storyteller characters react to the player characters within the scene. Kindred with high Hunger might terrify or cow everyone around them, while more sated vampires might inspire Storyteller characters to be more at ease. Sometimes this can mean flipping the script on the vampire during the Memoriam, as they have to fend off overly interested mortals to stay on task or convince them of their good intentions to get the information that they need. Memoriams that

center mortals or information possessed by a mortal often push Kindred outside of their comfort zones and challenge the rote way they tend to approach the mortal world.

Playing Memoriam

While there are many ways to play Memoriam, one element that should always be true is that they're intended as cooperative play experiences as they usually incorporate elements of a player character's backstory or even mortal life. This means that players can expect to have a stronger say in how a Memoriam plays out even if they're playing with a group that usually runs a more traditional Storyteller-driven table. Some modes of play mesh well with the more collaborative (and often dreamlike) nature of Memoriams.

Freeform (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 291) play works well with Memoriam scenes with low stakes or very limited goals. Since a Memoriam fails when a single challenge is unmet, freeform Memoriams work best when failure won't deter the players or the Storyteller from playing the scene out for the best narrative results. Directed freeform (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 291) play suits Memoriam particularly well, especially those with high stakes or dwelling on important aspects of the character's backstory.

One-Roll Memoriam

One-Roll Conflicts (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 296, 298–99) can be adapted for use in Memoriam much in the same way as the freeform options above. Usually, the roll comes at the climax of the Memoriam scene or story, once the Storyteller and players have a good notion of the final crisis. (You can, of course, use One-Roll Memoriam to resolve each challenge within a Memoriam, just as with any contest or conflict.) The Storyteller sets a Difficulty for the Memoriam based on the level of the goal selected by the players, possibly adjusting that Difficulty



upward by one die for particularly dangerous foes or difficult obstacles in the past. Each player participating in the Memoriam then makes one roll of a conflict dice pool, based on their approach to the Memoriam conflict. Willpower re-rolls and Blood Surges are not allowed in One-Roll Memoriams.

Sample One-Roll Memoriam difficulties:

- **One-dot Goal:** Difficulty 2
- **Two-dot Goal:** Difficulty 4
- **Three-dot Goal:** Difficulty 6

Memoriam modifiers adjust the conflict dice pools as usual and each player character takes Willpower damage equal to the difference between their successes and *twice* the Difficulty of the One-Roll Memoriam. This damage cannot be mitigated by armor or supernatural means. The degree of the damage depends on the opposition and the seriousness or desperation of the climactic challenge. Optionally, players can mitigate this damage by taking Stains as they risk their Humanity to achieve their goals with less cost to themselves.

Optional Rule: Badly Failed Memoriams

Normally, failing a Memoriam merely results in disappointment or an influx of distressing memories. If the Storyteller (or the players!) feel they've really messed up, or rolled a total failure at some crucial moment, feel free to pile on another consequence.

The coterie gains a one- or two-point Flaw affecting the entire coterie until the end of the story. Common consequences from badly failed Memoriams include a new Adversary or a Haven Flaw such as Haunted or Compromised. In narrative story terms, these drawbacks were already present, but the Memoriam either aggravated or brought them to light for the characters.

Projects

Projects are an excellent way for players to accomplish a specific task or goal that may take several game sessions to complete. As described in *Vampire: The Masquerade* (p. 415), the Storyteller and player decide on multiple steps in a Project, rolling dice at specific milestones.

ONE-ROLL PROJECTS

Storytellers may want to use only one dice roll for a Project. Attempts to complete a Project with one dice roll should have a milestone determination of 1–5. Storytellers using this adjustment should have players use their Hunger dice to help determine the outcome.

Streamlined Project System

Some troupes may find the rules for Projects to be more extensive than what they're looking for in a game. Because of this, a simpler system based upon the Project mechanics can help streamline this process. However, it still benefits players from

using this system without developing a complicated pathway to accomplish their goals with the Storyteller. The Streamlined Project System focuses on the story and simplifies the mechanics to a few dice rolls.

If a troupe decides to streamline their Project rules, here is an alternate system to use instead of the one found in *Vampire: The Masquerade*. This system helps reduce the number of dice rolls needed with a project and focuses on the narrative aspects within the plot or goal. Use it as a way to streamline events around that task or goal without making it the focus of multiple game sessions and taking away from the plot where other characters are actively focusing.

To use the streamlined Project system, players need to figure out what goal they are working toward that requires dice rolls. This goal affects their character sheet, city structure, or domain status, as well as a roleplaying impact at the table. Additionally, if multiple players are working toward a goal, they need to determine what their characters do to help the Project progress.

The Storyteller then determines how many milestones the players need to meet to reach their goal and how many attempts they can make toward this milestone. The number of milestones can vary but typically falls anywhere from 3–6, but can go higher for complicated Projects. The number of attempts can be anywhere from 1–5.

After determining the milestones, the player decides what rolls best fit the goal they want to achieve. If multiple players are involved, they choose how they wish to contribute to a project. Disciplines are allowed if agreed upon by the player and Storyteller for their dice pools, though a failure can cause other problems. Use Hunger dice in this roll for narrative purposes: two dice for relatively safe projects, three for risky ones. With pools of three dice or fewer, use one Hunger die.

If a player rolls enough successes to match or exceed the milestones for the Project within their allotted attempts, their Project succeeds. On a messy critical on the Hunger dice, the character gains a success but has a complication they need to deal

with as a result. On a bestial failure on the Hunger dice, the character fails the attempt and has to overcome a significant setback with the Project. The setback is determined collaboratively by the player and Storyteller. It can include complications such as Masquerade breaches, losing a second attempt at the Project, or removing dots on the character sheet.

Developing an opposing Project uses the same rules above, with one exception. The Storyteller determines the number of attempts both player characters have to reach their milestone. Whoever gets the milestone goal first achieves their Project goal. Should both players reach the milestone goal simultaneously, any further successes determine the winner. If that is not the case, both players work with the Storyteller and collaboratively decide the Project's outcome.

Once the outcome is determined, the Player and Storyteller collaborate on narrating the Project and its outcome. Complications may be dealt with at this time or be used for future plots and linger over characters like the sword of Damocles.

Quick Guide

1. Determine the goal
2. Set milestones: 2–6 average, but can go higher
3. Determine attempts: anywhere from 1–5 attempts
4. Decide on contributing dice pools: add Hunger dice for narrative purposes
5. Make dice rolls
6. Determine successes: messy critical is a success but complication; bestial failure is a failed attempt and significant setback with the project.
7. Resolve the Project narratively.

Example

Alex decides they want to overcome their Illiterate Flaw (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 179). To do this, the Storyteller determines Alex needs to hit three milestones for this journey and do so in two attempts. First, Alex will use their Intelligence 2 and Academics 1. Second, they take one Hunger die

because of the small pool. Alex's first roll had two successes, but one was a messy critical. Alex decides they got frustrated one night while studying and destroyed their computer to take lessons. It costs Alex 1 dot of Resources to overcome this setback and continue forward. Alex's second attempt had one success, allowing Alex to meet the criteria of the Project and overcome their Illiterate Flaw.

Using a Project to have players earn dots for their sheet rather than buy them is an option. A Storyteller determines if a character met the Project's milestones. If they achieve more successes than the milestone required, they can let the player earn their goal without using experience points. This rule may not work for all games, and it is up to the Storyteller and players to determine if they wish to use this rule.

Ideas For Projects

Projects have a variety of uses at the table and can help shape gameplay for all players at the table. The scope of Projects can vary greatly, depending upon the goal of the character, what personal goals they set for themselves, and what previous actions a character took.

Some examples of Projects a character may want to undertake include:

- A character wants to make an intricately crafted item from rare materials. It will take time and resources to gather these materials, then more time and skill to prepare them for what they want to make.
- A coterie seeks to expand its influence into an area of the city protected by another coterie. Making this move helps put the coterie into a better political position for the future. They will need to work together to make connections, build trust, and establish their presence in the area without the other coterie noticing.
- The coterie wants to organize a special event: a formal masquerade ball, an alchemical kettle battle, a big rock concert or stage performance,

an art or fashion show, or the like. Use the Project system to set up a special event with multiple smaller events. Success means the event starts on time and as planned; failure creates problems the host needs to overcome. Bestial failure invites disaster if the coterie doesn't cancel the event.

- A vampire's favorite vessel has a Resonance working against a vampire's studies in a discipline. To align their Resonance, the vampire decides to make it a Project to help shift it into one which works better for their studies. This use helps avoid having to roleplay scenarios that may go against the Chronicle Tenets.
- A character wants to become the harpy's whip, giving them access to multiple connections to the city's ruling council. Unfortunately, it will take a lot of work to gather enough information, status, and clout to get the harpy's attention, and even more, work to earn their support for the position.
- A coterie wants to take back a section of the city taken over by a lupine pack. This extended Project needs to include Influences, patrols taking place, information gathering, and possibly combat. The coterie takes on an extensive Project. If they succeed, they can take back the section of the city with relative ease. However, if there are complications or failures, they may need to fight against the werewolves, taking on many risks.

Collaborative Projects

Projects are an excellent way for coteries to collaborate and solve a problem, work on a collective goal, or create something new for the game. For example, the coterie has undertaken collaborative efforts to develop Loresheets, shake up the city's ruling structure, or protect a particular part of the city. These all use Projects to complete, streamlining the work of the coterie and allowing everyone to work together and contribute in meaningful ways. However, failure means setbacks or complications when working toward the goal and can even lead to significant player conflict over the result.

Considerate Play Guidelines

Remember that the Storyteller isn't the final arbiter of whether something is offensive or not. If you're a player and another player does something that makes you feel uncomfortable, "they're the Storyteller/a more experienced player so it must be okay" doesn't excuse their action. Similarly, if you're the Storyteller, resist the urge to tell yourself "I should just smooth it over or they'll think I'm running a bad game."

The fact that vampires are fictional characters, the justification that these stereotypical depictions are "just how it is" or "actually true" in the context of this world, or the idea that **Vampire** is a game about bad people doing bad things: none of these are an excuse for you, the player, using **Vampire** as a medium to recreate harmful stereotypes. We're trying hard not to do it in our text, and you can help us by not doing it at your table either.

Vampire games center dark story elements by design, but an important part of playing **Vampire** is understanding your responsibilities as a player to create a considerate environment for everyone else at the table. Trust is priceless and it's much harder to build than destroy. This is especially if your group includes a mix of new and old players. The easiest way to build trust is to be honest with your intentions and limits, and in turn to respect the same as stated by your fellow players.

See the considerate play advice and methods on pp. 421–425 of **Vampire: The Masquerade**.

Culture and Religion

It's okay to make a character who belongs to a real-world demographic, such as a Syrian Toreador or an Italian Hecata. But we don't recommend making that character an ethnic or national stereotype. Also remember that clans such as the Banu Haqim and Ravnos transcend their original version, and we

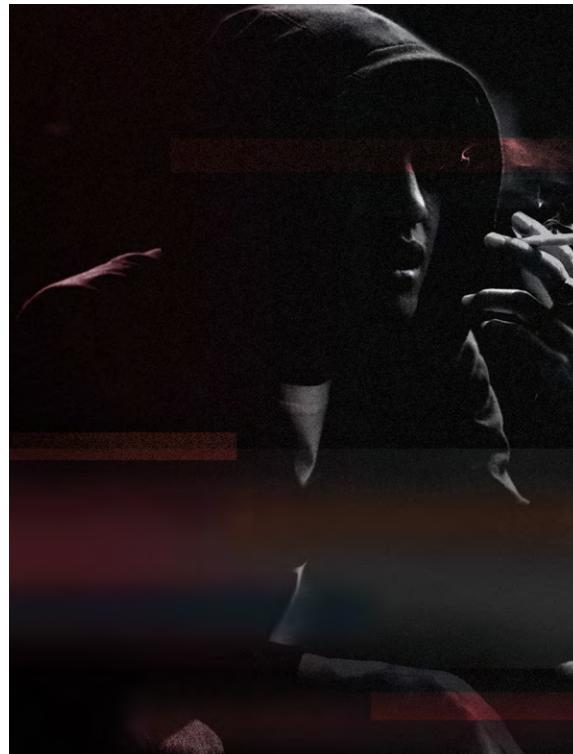
encourage you to play those characters as coming from any ancestry from around the world.

Like every game with participatory imaginative content, **Vampire** cannot prevent bad actors from using the medium or excuse of a fictional game about evil beings to push hurtful misconceptions, though we've done our best to make it hard for them to do so. If you don't have bad intentions and you do mean well, then we encourage you to play characters outside your own demographic experience in this game—and if you're the Storyteller, you'll definitely have to. If you do, there's stuff you can do today to avoid mistakes.

Playing outside your demographic is a skill like any other; you get better at it with mindful practice. You might start out easy by making a character who's "just kind of like everyone else," and then slowly build in cultural signifiers. Add them one by one and monitor your group's reactions; if a choice you made didn't work for them, roll it back and go in a different direction. Aim for authenticity, not for laughs or easy stereotypes.

Strive to provide your character with a concept that isn't just their demographic categories. Give them professions, hobbies, fashions, and tastes in art or music. This is true even if you're improvising a character as the Storyteller: imagine just one or two things beyond their race and gender as you come up with them.

Antagonists and other oppositional characters are the highest difficulty setting, as it were, for the above. Depicting cruel ambition as the product or result of their systemic oppression is only one choice among many possible: no matter how much you like Magneto, keep your antagonists varied and their motivations creative and individual. In addition, while it can be fun to play against antagonists who perpetuate systemic oppression if your players have all explicitly consented to do so, you have to give your players space to say no, use a safety tool, or redirect you if your portrayal is, shall we say, too realistic.



Romance, Seduction, and Sex

Romance, seduction, and sex recur as themes throughout **Vampire**, and using them responsibly is incredibly important for the consent and comfort of everyone involved. Players and Storytellers should follow several guidelines when utilizing these themes in a chronicle.

Remember that Storytellers are players, too. Their consent and comfort are just as important as the other players' concerns. If a subject makes a Storyteller uncomfortable, they can say no and not lead the scene with the topic in question, or end or alter a scene if an uncomfortable topic arises in the middle of it. Every person at the table should be giving enthusiastic, informed consent.

Consent

Consent is paramount, even mandatory, when players portray characters with intimate connections

to another player's character. Portraying a vampire (or a mortal) with an intimate connection to another player's character requires a significant amount of collaboration between both players, and the acknowledgment of the Storyteller. Everyone involved should consent (ideally verbally and enthusiastically) to utilizing these themes in play. It is perfectly acceptable to focus games elsewhere if the players wish, or to set strong limitations on the depth to which these themes can be explored in play or "on screen."

Recognize that consent isn't always permanent: a player can suddenly discover that a topic does in fact squick them out and revoke their consent at any point. Remember, sitting down at the table isn't enthusiastic consent for every scenario, but it is an invitation to ask for consent in scenes that may become intense. Ensure the horror and action involved stay at the table in-game and don't lead to players feeling uncomfortable or unsafe while playing.

Not every session, scene, or event needs consent if the players and Storyteller at the table are comfortable with and trust each other. Such groups can explore the fun, dark, horrifying, or sexually charged topics at the heart of the game with confidence that nobody at the table intends harm or toxicity. Instead, the game table becomes fun, welcoming, exciting, and even positive despite all the blood-drinking. Deep dives into strong emotion are, after all, the beating heart of **Vampire**. But just as you post warning signs on diving boards, even high-comfort, high-trust groups should set ground rules in their session zero, and remain open to safety tools.

Mutual Respect

Everyone at the table should respect each other's limits. While one person may be comfortable with sexual encounters or seduction during gameplay, another player may have no interest in exploring or watching it. Therefore, everyone at the table needs to agree on how scenes with love, sex, and

seduction will be handled. (Lines and Veils work especially well here.) Storytellers should check in with everyone involved with intense scenes, and players should understand they can indicate when they start to feel uncomfortable.

Even if these topics are discussed during session zero, it is best to revisit them throughout prolonged storylines, intense scenes, and new issues not previously addressed. Reviewing everyone's comfort level shows respect for each other, allows everyone to reevaluate their consent, and helps Storytellers narrow down future plots.

Multiplayer Consent

Often, scenes include more than two players, making enthusiastic consent for romance, seduction, and sex complicated. What happens if some players consent to specific scenarios but one or more other players do not? What should a group do if one player in a scene suddenly decides they cannot handle going further? How can a Storyteller navigate a scene where different players have different levels of comfort but all consent to the content? Navigating these scenes can be tricky, but there are ways to do so and allow all players to be involved while still respecting everyone's limits.

The first rule to remember is to default to the player or players who do not consent to specific topics. If a Storyteller or player is unsure if a subject would be okay at a table or if players are okay stepping out of scenes so that others can play, the best practice for the group would be to default to the level of comfort that includes everyone. Don't include the topic if it is a hard no from a player.

If players and the Storyteller all agree, the table could also run certain scenes without players who are uncomfortable with specific topics. The players could leave the gaming area or sit and not be involved during the scene. While this isn't the best or most inclusive practice, it allows some flexibility for everyone. Ideally, players not involved

in the scene should be given a scene independently, allowing them to progress their character stories in other ways.

The Storyteller should always make sure the players are okay with leaving the table while a scene finishes up. If the player is not okay with this, the Storyteller should pull back the intensity to match what the player is comfortable with while allowing the others to continue their scene. This might include toning down descriptive language, keeping actions generic, or even taking the scene in a different direction.

If a player or Storyteller cannot continue the scene and they remove their consent, there are a couple of options the table can decide between. Players can provide a generic ending for the scene, allowing events to happen while not roleplaying details, or the scene can ‘fade to black.’ This technique allows the details of the scene to be up to the individual and never get hashed out. These theater of the mind techniques enable the scene to happen and the story to continue forward.

Should a player or Storyteller become very distraught during the scene, it is best to stop entirely and decide as a group whether the events actually happened or if the scene should just be left and not ended. It is essential to respect each person’s choice whether they want a conclusion to the scene or not with either decision. Working together with all the players and Storytellers helps this process.

Playing With Malkavians

Throughout the history of **Vampire: The Masquerade**, Malkavians fulfilled many roles: loose cannons, mystery solvers, and servants of chaos. Players can represent the effects of the blood of Malkav on their characters’ minds in many ways: the belligerent joy of a Deadpool, the single-minded ruthlessness of a River Tam, the dangerous hyper-empathy of the Scarlet Witch, or the multiple manipulations of Jeanette and Therese Voerman (**Vampire: the Masquerade**, p. 394).

Other players spend time researching pre-existing conditions, real life phenomena of prophetic instances, and drawing inspiration for how the Malkavian Bane manifests in their own characters.

Is she apologetic to everyone she meets because she has witnessed their Final Death, but for fear of interrupting the flow of time cannot explain why she must say sorry after they’ve met? Or is he prone to ripping pages from books, highlighting passages, and leaving them in hidden places for his coterie mates to uncover, hoping they can put the words “Primogen Baslow has sold us out” together before it’s too late? How do blood resonances affect the way they compartmentalize and interact with their kaleidoscope minds?

Learn the comfort levels of the player who wants to portray a Malkavian at your table, and of the other players who will have to interact with them. Malkavians played by the Storyteller offer more opportunities to showcase the clan’s multivalent nature, and similarly more opportunities to clarify player comfort with darker or more damaged Oracles. Pre-drawn Lines and Veils around such subjects allow Storytellers and players to craft Malkavians that open up new options for the chronicle rather than stop play dead.

Establish this consent with all players at the table, even if there are no would-be Visionary players present. Direct players uncomfortable with highlighting mental illness and having it included in their game away from the traditional methods of creating a Malkavian Compulsion. Use extreme caution and sensitivity if you decide to model Malkavians after someone suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, schizophrenia, or bipolar disorder: those are real illnesses with real (and mostly just debilitating) effects, and other approaches can prove more fertile and less aggravating. Consider focusing on a Malkavian plagued by prophetic dreams, or who believes the dead give them riddles, or a staunch believer in radical, vampirical conspiracies.

Power Differentials

Over time, Kindred lose their capacity for love, tenderness, and even sympathy for the plight of mortals. Depending on how old the Kindred is, they may even forget about the finite fragility of a mortal, especially one who bares their heart to the vampire. The nature of the Beast, and the ambitions of the Kindred herself, remain a mystery to mortals until they have felt the stinging grip of the Embrace for themselves. Until that point, mortals remain hopelessly devoted or infatuated, and ghouls squat just a step above drug addicts, performing grotesque acts in the name of just one more sip of vitae. This unbalanced power does not always even out after the Embrace either, as the fledgling vampire finds himself Blood Bound to his sire, who keeps him under accounting, teaching him the rules of survival and etiquette that she could not before.

At what point the fledgling and his sire become equal is not clear-cut. As a fledgling is pulled into the vortex of politics, his loyalty to his Sire will be tested as other Kindred give false promises of better care, more opportunities. The equality may begin after he has allowed her Vitae to exit his system, and breaks the Blood Bond. Or when he finally earns her respect and becomes a fully recognized member of the Camarilla. It could also be before the Embrace ever even happened, where he decided enough was enough and disappeared from his domitor's unlif, struggling as he thirsted for her vitae for the first few weeks. Whatever the circumstances cause the power differential to balance itself out, until that time, mortals always remain finite and fragile playthings for Kindred to use as pawns in their own games.

Mortals

Especially when the Kindred are involved, the nature of relationships between vampires and mortals isn't one that fairly represents both sides' interests. The relationship between such players requires both consent and understanding of one another's emotional boundaries. This implies an intimacy that

is best suited for consenting players willing to respect each other's boundaries and know when to back off if the interactions become too intense.

Some of the themes that arise from playing a Touchstone may include betrayal, stalking, obsession, and other potentially traumatic experiences. Characters being groomed for the Embrace raise similar questions of trauma and intensity. At no point should a *player* be surprised by an in-game relationship with the potential for an emotional intensity to which they didn't agree beforehand. And even if the player did agree beforehand, they have the right to revoke consent at any time if the experience isn't something they enjoy.

A vampire may inflict her curse upon a mortal for any number of reasons. The psychological impact of suffering the Embrace by a loved one can be staggering. Feelings of resentment, betrayal, or violation are common among fledglings, and even more so when a substantial prior relationship exists. Because of this, it's important that all players involved be aware of the developments that might arise between their characters. The Embrace itself — the act of draining mortal blood and reinvigorating their body with vampiric Vitae — is exceptionally intimate. Be very careful when depicting violent Embraces, and while a *character* might experience violation and betrayal, the *player* should never have to suffer these feelings themselves. After all, few fledgling Kindred who thought they were being granted glorious immortality were made aware of the full weight of Caine's curse.

Ghouls

A ghoul's existence is rife with difficult choices, necessitating complete dependency on a monstrous being to sustain their survival, and requiring some personal sacrifice in the name of duty. Debasement of the self is common, with many a ghoul watching in silent horror as their lives crumble around them all for the sake of pleasing their domitor. They may be called upon to perform acts that would stain the soul of a Kindred but do little to slow down the ghoul in

their pursuit of their domitor's approval — and more vitae. The relationship is unequal, and in many cases, there is little in the need of consent between the involved parties. The same cannot be said about the relationship between the players of these types of characters.

Just like when playing a vampire, playing a ghoul can lead to difficult situations where the *character* may be forced to engage in behaviors the *player* may personally find abhorrent, but that fit within the *ghoul's* motivations and development. This is especially true in cases where the domitor is another player's character. When dealing with a ghoul-domitor relationship at the game table, it is vital that the lines of communication between both players — in and outside of the gaming session — remain open and welcoming. It can be easy to get caught up in the dynamic of the ghoul being deferential to their domitor to the point of abuse.

Keep chronicle Tenets in mind when involving mortal and ghoul characters. Much can be gained by having a ghoul (or two!) at the table during a chronicle. Ghouls are subservient, yes, and often

defer to their domitor to make decisions. But that's not the case one hundred percent of the time, so some negotiation between players is needed. Make no mistake: Domitors and other Kindred often abuse their ghouls and even treat them as little more than property, but abuse at the table between players is never permissible. Given player consent, abusing a *character* is fine — abusing a *player* is not.

Discuss beforehand the line dividing what is acceptable between the players of the ghoul and the domitor as well as the Storyteller, focusing on each player's comfort levels regarding certain themes. Ghoul characters, either of their own volition or at the command of their domitor, may engage in acts redolent of real-world violence, oppression, and physical and psychological traumas that may be triggering or difficult for themselves or other players to handle. Be sure to check in with your players using a preferred calibration technique (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 423) to ensure they are comfortable proceeding or if a session recess is warranted for some decompression. ■



LORESHETS



BANKERS OF DUNSIRN

(BLOODLINE; HECATA CHARACTERS ONLY)

Sometime around the 18th century, the Giovanni wanted a foothold in the markets of the New World. But all of their attempts were constantly blocked by a Scottish family of bankers who owned several shipping ventures. Impressed by their financial acumen, the Giovanni investigated bringing the family into the fold. What closed the deal was the discovery that the Dunsirn were cannibals as well as financiers. It was the perfect balance of money, depravity, and ability to keep a secret.



For centuries, the relationship between the two families was clear: The Dunsirn made the money, and the Giovanni family spent it like water. Surprisingly, even though mortal members of the Dunsirn family still indulge in the occasional bit of “long pork,” the Kindred don’t show much aptitude or interest in necromantic pursuits. Prior to the Family Reunion, there was an effort to force them into learning the ways of Oblivion, but now the Dunsirns are happy to go back to what they do best: bleeding people dry.

And this time, they don’t need to answer to the fucking Giovanni to do it, either.

→ ← → **LORE** ← →

• Money Obscures: It’s hard to make money and not be noticed, but the Dunsirn have worked in the shadows for centuries. You’ve spread some of your family’s money around to make an alternate identity for yourself. You get two dots of the Mask Background for free, though you must maintain this Mask at least once per story.

• Money Talks: The Dunsirn find information in the most interesting places. All you have to do is spread a little money around, and people jump out of the woodwork to tell you things. Once per story, you can find information as if you had the Contacts Background with a number of dots equal to your Resources. This ability lasts for a single scene.

•• Money Enhances: You always have access to the best that money can buy. Having access to quality products not only acts as a status symbol, it also makes everything a little easier. When making a roll in which you can use your own equipment, you get a bonus die to the roll.

••• Money Multiplies: All the Hecata know the Dunsirn are bankers. But most of them think of it in the abstract, as if “banker” is just a different way of saying “someone with a lot of money.” But you are (or are directly related to) a legitimate investment banker. Gain three dots (up to five) in Resources. In addition, anyone in your coterie loses the Destitute Flaw (**Vampire: the Masquerade**, p. 193), and can purchase dots in Resources at 2 experience points per dot, instead of the usual 3.

•••• Money Dictates: You are the head of the Dunsirn family accounts. You have your undead finger on the pulse of the Hecata’s financial accounts. And you make sure that everyone else knows it. You gain three free dots of Status in the Hecata. In addition, once per chronicle, you can either give every Hecata in the chronicle two additional dots of Resources or remove all Resource dots from every Hecata in the chronicle. These Resources additions or removals last for a single story, and if removed, generate a chronicle-length Adversary Flaw in the form of one of the robbed vampires.

CHILDREN OF TENOCHTITLAN

(BLOODLINE; HECATA CHARACTERS ONLY)

In the early sixteenth century, Spanish Giovanni met representatives of the Aztec civilization as part of the Cortez expeditions. In the city of Tenochtitlan (now part of Mexico City), these Giovanni were introduced to a massive, formalized necromantic tradition. So naturally they killed, enslaved, and converted the “heathens,” bringing them into the fold. The Giovanni called these converts *pisanob*, a Mayan term that roughly translates to “ghosts of the dead that walk the Earth” (the fact that the Aztecs weren’t Maya didn’t concern the Europeans). That



these vampires already had a name, a legacy, and their own beliefs mattered little to the Giovanni.

Their leader, Pochtli, was still in charge of the Pisanob up through the Family Reunion. However, the family had been whittled down to a bare few remaining Kindred after the ongoing attacks by the Harbingers of Skulls (see p. 226), although the reasons for the attacks were unknown. Pochtli offered his unlife to the Harbingers in exchange for an end to hostilities, which the Harbingers accepted.

Now, the remaining children of Tenochtitlan are deciding on a new leader, while planning their revenge.

→ **LORE** ←

• Hiding from the Wolf: The remaining Pisanob survived because they are really, really good at hiding. You've learned all manner of techniques to remain out of sight of those that would hunt you... and those you would hunt. You get one extra die on any roll to hide, including via the use of Disciplines or Ceremonies.

• Ghostly Instincts: The original Kindred embraced in Tenochtitlan were extremely talented necromancers, and they have carried on a wide variety of tips, tricks, and secrets among their brethren. You've learned some of those secrets, which give you two additional dice on any Oblivion Ceremony roll involving the summoning, control, or destruction of ghosts.

• Forward Thinking: After years of being hunted down by the Harbingers of Skulls, you've learned to always plan ahead, turning potential tragedy into a triumph. Once per story, you can reroll any Skill roll. In addition, you always get one free Skill reroll in any scene in which you work against another Hecata. If the Hecata in question is a member of the Harbingers of Skulls, you get an additional success on that reroll.

.... Necromantic Prodigy: The secrets of Oblivion are yours to command, whether through study, your ancient bloodline, or secrets you have acquired from your cousins over the years. Your mastery of necromantic ceremonies is unparalleled. You get two automatic successes on any roll necessary for activating a necromantic Oblivion Ceremony.

..... Next in Line: Now that Pochtli has sacrificed himself to the Hecata's grand plan of unity, it is time for another to step up and lead the Pisanob to future glory. You are one such individual, wielding a balance of necromantic skill and political savvy. You have an additional two dots of Status within the Hecata. Further, you have an ally among the Hecata leadership, who acts as a five-dot Mawla once every other story. (You can purchase the Mawla Background as normal to make the character a more regular mentor or patron.)

FLESH-EATERS

(BLOODLINE; HECATA CHARACTERS ONLY)

The Nagaraja are the most wayward of vampires in a clan now full of wayward vampires. They believe themselves to be the first ever necromancers. They revel in the fact that their lineage is not easy to trace back to one of the known Antediluvians. They believe they once mastered the lands of the dead, having converted their Blood to live in such a place. And, perhaps as a result of said Ceremony, they ate human flesh in lieu of drinking blood. They believe one night they can become masters of the Underworld again.

The Nagaraja are rightly seen as bogeymen, as they number but few and advocate for the horrible practice of capturing mortals and stripping them of flesh and blood night after night, while keeping them alive through first aid and gifts of vitae. As a disparate group, they have little that binds them as a society beyond their affinity for ghosts (most master Oblivion ahead of any other Discipline) and their belief that torment of the body and spirit brings any witnesses (or victims) closer to the mysteries of life, death, and undeath.

A handful of Nagaraja showed up to the Family Reunion, claiming some kind of catastrophe drove them out of their home. Initially they were believed to be some kind of radical form of Dunsirn, but while the bankers are hobbyists in the realm of cannibalism, the Nagaraja are experts. Years of avoiding attention from both mortals and Kindred society have honed them into efficient serial killers — quite useful to their new clan-mates. They may no longer need flesh the way they did, but their skills are still useful in this new age. And some never lost the taste.



LORE



•Viscus: You can still eat flesh in lieu of drinking blood — biting a mortal and causing an Aggravated wound acts in all other ways like drinking blood for you. You can also eat fresh corpses, although the taste is not as good.

•• Unseen Spirit: Some of the Nagaraja can make themselves unseen to ghosts and spirits. If you do not already have access to the Obfuscate Discipline, take Cloak of Shadows (**Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 261) at no cost — you do not necessarily have the Obfuscate Discipline, but rather a special power of your own. This power works like Cloak of Shadows, except that it only works against spirits and ghosts. If you do have (or

later acquire) Obfuscate, instead all your Obfuscate powers work against ghosts and spirits in addition to their usual effects.

••• The Perfect Murder: You have a lot of experience in planning murders. As long as you have at least a night to plan a cold-blooded, intentional murder, you get one extra success on all rolls for that murder scene. These successes are negated by someone who possesses the Send a Murderer Bloodline ability (below).

•••• Send a Murderer: You're a serial killer, or maybe you've spent a lot of time studying them. You get two extra dice on rolls to study murder scenes

or track down killers. In addition, you've worked with law officials (mortal, Kindred, or both) on some cases, whether it's through sending them anonymous emails or as a direct consultant. You have three dots to spend between Contacts with the police force, Contacts with investigators in Kindred society, and Status.

••••• Monstrous Bite: When ready to attack or feed, your teeth extend to lengthy, splayed, and vicious daggers that protrude from your mouth. When attacking with your bite, you suffer no called shot penalty, gain one extra success on all Intimidation rolls, and increase your bite damage to 3.

HARBINGERS OF ASHUR

(BLOODLINE; HECATA CHARACTERS ONLY)

Holding the Jyhad's longest grudge, the Cappadocians were the Clan of Death before they were usurped by the upstart Giovanni. Believed for centuries to be destroyed, the Cappadocians either took to wearing masks and calling themselves the "Harbingers of Skulls" or a subfaction of the clan named themselves "Harbingers" generations before. Whatever the truth, the majority joined the Sabbat and worked aggressively against Giovanni interests. For many years it was thought that both sides would never stop until one obliterated



the other, but that appears to have changed with the Family Reunion.

Despite the reconciliation and the acknowledgment of the remnants of the Cappadocian Kindred, the Harbingers of Skulls as they were could no longer exist. But neither could the Cappadocians return to their former state after so many centuries of anger. As such, these vampires respond to either name, but they have become some synthesis of the two. Like all things, the past form has died, and enriched the earth so that something new can grow.

↔ **LORE** ↔

• **The Ashen Mask:** You don a plain mask made of ash wood, for while you respect the traditions of the Harbingers, you care more about studying death than status, glory, or revenge. If a Touchstone of yours is dead or dies after you purchase this lore, study of their corpse allows you to transfer the Conviction they represent to another mortal (**Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 240) as if they died peacefully. If they actually did, gain a one-die bonus to the Humanity test. If anybody else interferes with the corpse, you must test against fury frenzy at Difficulty 3.

• **The Gold Mask:** You don a rose gold mask, because you strive to balance your existence between the living and the dead. Gold has connections to both wealth and alchemy, with golden grave goods sitting in the perfect intersection between the two. As such, you have the

capacity to hide your actions, and the actions of your coterie, as you explore death. You have the equivalent of four dots of Influence when attempting to cover up a death.

•• **The White Mask:** You don a bone-white mask, with not a speck of dirt on it, because it is the mask of a respected Harbinger lost in one of the historic purges. You speak for the elders of your bloodline, and most Harbingers (and even other Hecata) listen to you. You add three dice to any social roll against another Harbinger, and two dice to any social roll against another Hecata.

••• **The Obsidian Mask:** You don a polished black mask, because you are more than just a vampire — you are truly half-dead. You are a wraith that has inhabited a vampire's body. You may learn Oblivion Ceremonies without a

teacher (and with half the training time if you have one anyway) due to your experience in the Underworld, but are vulnerable to effects which target ghosts (such as some Oblivion Ceremonies). You suffer a two-dice penalty to resist these effects, but gain a two-dice bonus when resisting effects that control your physical shell (such as Dominate).

•••• **The Lazarene Mask:** You don the mask engraved in the image of one of the clan founders, for you know the true secret of the Harbingers. Their crusade was never solely about destroying the Giovanni, but annihilating all those who serve the Clan of Death. The final stage of necromancy is for all who practice it to die, and become the masters of death. You incur no stains for any action taken in the pursuit of killing another Hecata Kindred, or any character who serves the Hecata.

LA FAMIGLIA GIOVANNI

(BLOODLINE; HECATA CHARACTERS ONLY)

Until recently, whenever an outsider Kindred thought about the Clan of Death, they pictured the Giovanni family. Their origins stretch back before the Roman Empire (when they were known as the Ioveanus or Jovians), and the entire time they've had their hands in Kindred affairs. The original Giovanni family knew how to play the game better than anyone, crafting an identity as “Devil Kindred” to strike the right balance of fear and respect in their rivals — and their relatives.

Identifying the Giovanni family with the Clan of Death was a useful fiction for centuries, until the Vatican and



the FBI joined forces against the clan — starting with the family. Reputation comes with records, and the Second Inquisition rolled up every family retainer and bank account it could find. When the Family Reunion restructured the Clan of Death, the surviving Giovanni found safety in new anonymity. But they resented having to hide themselves, and further resented upstart bloodlines tossing out years of family history for security or worse, for political convenience. The “true Giovanni” have grown used to being top dogs, and they’ll murder to retain that position.

After all, no one fights like a family.

→ ← → **LORE** ← →

• **A Cousin’s Ear:** Even if family members hate each other, the whole family lives by a certain code to share information — that’s how they’ve survived everything from the fall of the Roman Empire to the Second Inquisition. Once per session, you can ask a direct question of another member of the Giovanni family, and get a straight answer. However, you have to answer a question in return. You can also ask a favor of mortal members of the family once per story, as if you had the Allies Background at three dots.

• **Faded Glamor:** Being a Giovanni still means something, even if it’s not your name on the clan anymore. Old habits die hard, and the instinct to obey is still ingrained in much of the Clan of Death. Once per session, you can add

one automatic success to any social roll against another Hecata Kindred, ghoul, or retainer.

•• **Petty Cash:** The Giovanni started as merchants, and they still know the power of cold, hard cash. As one of the favored childer of the family, you have access to a substantial bank account. You get four dots to spread among the Resources and Retainers Backgrounds for free, but these dots can be pulled back by elder members of the family at any time, especially if you cross them.

••• **Spectre Servant:** There’s a lot the family is good at, but in particular they’re excellent at enslaving the spirits of the dead to their will. You have inherited or personally captured a spectre to act as your servant. This Ally

uses the spectre stats (**Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 377). The spectre wants nothing more than to break the leash and devour your spirit. Until then, they can be summoned once per session and arrive within 10 hours.

•••• **Aspiring Anziano:** You have managed to work your way through the hidden politics of the Family Reunion and come out on top. You’ve done so partially from political skill and ruthless zeal, but mostly because you know where the bodies are buried (in every sense). You get five dots of Status among the Hecata, and you can get a private audience with the Capuchin every few stories. Just don’t push your luck, or you’ll join the corpses.

THE GORGONS

(BLOODLINE; HECATA CHARACTERS ONLY)

The Lamiae were a bloodline of Kindred believed to be descended from Lilith as well as Caine — their founder and high priestess (named Lamia) claimed to be the daughter of the Dark Mother herself. In ancient times, a Cappadocian elder found Lamia performing sacred Bahari rites, and was so taken by her skin and resistance to pain that he Embraced her. From then on, the Lamiae were dedicated warriors protecting the Cappadocian clan, until the clan's alleged destruction by the Giovanni. The last Lamia was believed destroyed in 1718.



However, the Gorgons lived on, much like their Cappadocian charges. While the latter claimed the title "Harbingers of Skulls," the Lamiae took the title of "Lilins," spreading the word of Lilith and the Bahari faith while secretly uncovering the fate of the Cappadocians and undermining the Giovanni. Now, in the wake of the Family Reunion, these women stand proudly once again at the side of the Kindred that Embraced them — although they are less inclined to tolerate so-called "Cainites" who chastise their faith.

→ **LORE** ←

• The Serpent’s Kiss: Legend claims the bite of the Lamiae once spread plague to their victims. These nights the bite of the Lamiae is no longer fatal, although a few like yourself have some remnants of the disease left in their system. Once per story, you can choose to infect your mortal prey with disease, causing them one Aggravated Health damage every night for three nights. This ability has no effect on vampires.

• Protection: You embody the original purpose of the Lamiae — the protection of your charges, by any means necessary. You gain a two-dice bonus when using the Block maneuver (**Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 297) to protect someone else.

•• Four Humours: Many ancient Lamiae practice manipulation of the four humors, allowing control over their victim’s body or mind. Once per story you may bite a mortal and inflict a two-dice penalty on all actions which don’t immediately further their current resonance, until the end of the night or their resonance changes humours. If their blood contains a Dyscrasia, increase this penalty to three-dice.

••• Controlling the Beast: Chaos and pain are key aspects of the Bahari faith (and, thus, the faith of many Lamiae). However, mindless chaos and pain do not lead to education, so controlling accidental infliction of both is important. Once per session, you can convert a messy critical in combat into a critical.

•••• Medusa’s Gaze: The Lamiae most steeped in the bloodline’s mysteries hold a private power that betrays a more literal meaning behind their epithet than many realize. Once per session after you win an Intimidation or conflict roll, those who lost become unable to act on the following conflict turn. Outside of combat, they become unable to move for a scene unless they succeed at a Willpower roll (Difficulty 5).

NASYON SAN AN

(BLOODLINE; HECATA CHARACTERS ONLY)

A young lineage with Black Atlantic roots and rumored Cappadocian connections, the vampires once known as the Samedi carried on business as mercenary spies and necromancers, maintaining herds and confidants in religious circles and keeping a low profile. Rumors and misconceptions shrouded them in secrecy; but at the Family Reunion, they emerged from the lies to enter into the Clan of Death.

Unanswered questions still abound, many focused on their infamous paterfamilias, known in modern nights as Doc San. But times change, vodou isn't hiding anymore, and neither are they. *Nasyon san an* are stepping out in billowing dresses, immaculately coordinated streetwear, and even the occasional silk hat. From Bahia to Ilé-Ifé to New Orleans and beyond, ready the rum and cigars. *Laissez les bon temps rouler.*



→ → → **LORE** ← ← ←

• **CSI Shit:** As an aspiring gede, you've learned a few tricks about death. One of them is knowing a lot about rot, decay, and how bodies die. By carefully examining a mortal corpse you can immediately know the cause of death. If the cause of death is supernaturally concealed, you gain the ability to roll despite that.

•• **Pound of Flesh:** Something of your bloodline's original weakness remains with you, even as a full-fledged Hecata. In fact, you can even share it around. If you accept a gift freely given, you and whoever gave it to you receive a three-dice penalty from any pools used for any actions against one another for the remainder of that night.

••• **Treat Yourself:** You've taken the gedés' legendary appetite to heart. Once a night, you can indulge in a meal, a cigar, an alcoholic drink, or a sexual tryst just as a human would, regardless of any penalties which Humanity might inflict and incurring no negative effects in terms of Hunger. Your consumption thereof appears convincingly human to anyone paying attention to that kind of thing.

•••• **My Setite Friend:** Your bloodline has a strange relationship with the Ministry. There's a lot of overlap in interest, and more than a few have decided to join the Ministry rather than stay with the Hecata. You have a connection with the Ministry, whether it's one of those wayward "Samedi" or another Follower of Set. You can ask your friend for a favor once per story, which translates to the equivalent of three dots in appropriate Backgrounds such as Allies, Influence, and Resources.

..... **The Silk Hat:** No one is entirely sure who the Bloody Doctor is, but they do know you have his favor, and are the next in line to his practice. Whatever that is. You're not entirely sure what will happen if you step up and claim the silk hat of the Doctor. It may be a purely political position within the Hecata, or it may invest you with fantastic spiritual powers. It'll certainly invest you with the Doctor's enemies. Before you accept the role, however, you have the effect of Mawla at five dots, although the help comes in cryptic ways and via mysterious actions.

VAMPIRE THE MASQUERADE

Vampire Traits and Types Summary Sheet

Predator Types

Alleycat: You take blood by force or threat.
(Celerity or Potence)

Bagger: You acquire preserved or dead blood, rather than hunt.
(Blood Sorcery or Obfuscate)

Blood Leech: You feed from other vampires.
(Celerity or Protean)

Cleaver: You take blood covertly from your mortal family.
(Dominate or Animalism)

Consensualist: You take blood with consent.
(Auspex or Fortitude)

Extortionist: You force mortals to pay you in blood for your services or protection.
(Dominate or Potence)

Farmer: You feed from animals.
(Animalism or Protean)

Graverobber: You hang around hospitals and morgues looking for victims.
(Fortitude or Oblivion)

Grim Reaper: You feed on those about to die.
(Auspex or Oblivion)

Montero: Your retainers drive the prey to you.
(Dominate or Obfuscate)

Osiris: You feed from your cult or followers.
(Blood Sorcery or Presence)

Pursuer: You study and stalk your victim before striking.
(Animalism or Auspex)

Sandman: You feed from sleeping victims.
(Auspex or Obfuscate)

Scene Queen: You feed from your subculture or exclusive group.
(Dominate or Potence)

Siren: You feed by seducing your victims.
(Fortitude or Presence)

Trapdoor: You lurk in your nest and lure prey into it.
(Protean or Obfuscate)

Attributes

Mental Attributes

Intelligence: Memory, reasoning, intellect

Wits: Quick reaction, intuition, spur-of-the-moment decision-making

Resolve: Focus, concentration, attention

Physical Attributes

Strength: Muscular power, close-combat damage

Dexterity: Agility, grace, reflexes

Stamina: Toughness, resilience, endurance

Social Attributes

Charisma: Charm, magnetism, strength of personality

Manipulation: Verbal finesse, social guile, smoothness

Composure: Self-control, cool, calm head

Skills

Physical Skills

Athletics: Running, jumping, climbing

Brawl: Unarmed combat of all types

Craft: Crafting, building, shaping

Drive: Operating vehicles

Firearms: Using ranged weapons, such as guns and bows

Larceny: Breaking and entering, guarding against the same

Melee: Armed hand-to-hand combat

Stealth: Not being seen, heard, or recognized

Survival: Remaining alive in adverse surroundings

VAMPIRE

THE MASQUERADE

Social Skills

Animal Ken: Animal handling and communication
Etiquette: Politeness in social settings
Insight: Determining states of mind and motives
Intimidation: Getting another person to back down
Leadership: Directing and inspiring others
Performance: Expressing art in person to an audience
Persuasion: Convincing others verbally or emotionally
Streetwise: Understanding the ins and outs of criminal and urban spaces
Subterfuge: Tricking others into doing your will

Mental Skills

Academics: Humanities and liberal arts, book-learning
Awareness: Senses, being aware of your surroundings, spotting threats
Finance: Handling, moving, and making money
Investigation: Following clues, solving mysteries
Medicine: Healing injuries, diagnosing disease
Occult: Secret lore, both real and unreal
Politics: Diplomatic and bureaucratic acumen
Science: Knowledge and theory of the physical world
Technology: Understanding and using modern technology, computers, and online activity

Disciplines

Animalism: Supernatural affinity with and control of animals (Gangrel, Nosferatu, Ravnos)
Auspex: Extrasensory perception, awareness, and premonitions (Hecta, Malkavian, Toreador, Tremere, Salubri)
Blood Sorcery: Use of the Blood to perform magic (Banu Haqim, Tremere)
Celerity: Supernatural quickness and reflexes (Banu

Haqim, Brujah, Toreador)

Dominate: Mind control (Malkavian, Salubri, Tremere, Tzimisce, Ventre)

Fortitude: Monstrous toughness (Gangrel, Hecta, Salubri, Ventre)

Obfuscate: Remain obscure and unseen (Malkavian, Nosferatu, Ravnos)

Oblivion: Necromancy and shadow shaping (Hecata, Lasombra)

Potence: Supernatural physical strength (Brujah, Lasombra, Nosferatu)

Presence: Attract, sway, and control emotions (Brujah, Ministry, Ravnos, Toreador, Venture)

Protean: Mastery over form (Gangrel, Ministry, Tzimisce)

Thin-Blood Alchemy: Mixing blood, emotion, and other ingredients to create powerful effects (Thin-Blooded)

Backgrounds

Allies: Mortal associates, usually family or friends

Contacts: The information sources you possess

Fame: How well known you are among mortals

Haven: A place to sleep safely by day

Herd: The vessels to which you have free and safe access

Influence: Your political power within mortal society

Loresheet: Your connection with the secret history of the World of Darkness

Mask: A false identity, complete with documentation

Mawla: Kindred who advises and supports you: a mentor, patron, or confederate

Resources: Wealth, belongings, and income

Retainers: Followers, guards, and servants

Status: Your standing in vampire society

VAMPIRE THE MASQUERADE

Advantages Master List

This master list of Advantages includes Backgrounds, Merits, and Flaws for **Vampire: The Masquerade**. It does not list every Loresheet. Unless noted, these Advantages can apply to any vampire. Advantages with the  icon are also available to mortals and ghouls.

Backgrounds

ALLIES • TO

Mortal supporters and helpers; *V:tM*, pp. 184–185.

BLOODLINE • TO

Your bloodline gives you unique qualities; p. 112.

CONTACTS • TO ...

Mortals who provide information or items; *V:tM*, p. 186.

FAME • TO

Fame among mortals (or Kindred); *V:tM*, p. 187.

HAVEN • TO ...+

A place to sleep by day; *V:tM*, pp. 188–189.

See *Haven Merits* and *Haven Flaws*.

HERD • TO

Mortals on whom you feed; *V:tM*, pp. 189–190.

INFLUENCE • TO

Influence and clout in the mortal community; *V:tM*, pp. 187–188.

LORESHEETS • TO

Information on or access to elements of deeper World of Darkness lore; *V:tM*, p. 190.

See *V:tM* (pp. 382–406), *Anarch* (pp. 190–198), *Camarilla* (pp. 184–190), and other *Vampire* books for specific loresheets.

MASK • OR ..

False identity; you can buy multiple Masks; *V:tM*, p. 190.

MAWLA • TO

Kindred patron, mentor, or other sometime ally; the plural of mawla is mawali; *V:tM*, pp. 192–193.

MINOR BOON • TO ...

Favors owed by other Kindred; *V:tM*, pp. 193, 315.

RESOURCES • TO

Wealth or source of income; *V:tM*, p. 193.

RETAINERS • TO ...

Loyal servant such as a ghoul or thrall; you can buy multiple Retainers; *V:tM*, p. 194.

STATUS • TO

Status and rank in a sect of Kindred; *V:tM*, p. 194.

Merits

BEAUTIFUL ..

Add one die to looks-dependent Social pools; *V:tM*, p. 179.

BLOODHOUND •

You can smell Resonance; *V:tM*, p. 182.

BOND RESISTANCE • TO ...

You resist Blood Bonds more easily; *V:tM*, p. 181.

CHECK THE TRUNK •

Two-dice bonus to Preparedness dice pools (*V:tM*, p. 410); p. 119.

CITY SECRETS •

You know a damning secret about the city's Kindred power structure; p. 118.

COBBLER •+

You can make Masks, requires Mask ••; *V:tM*, p. 192.

EAT FOOD ..

You can consume normal food; *V:tM*, p. 182.

VAMPIRE

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★ FAMOUS FACE •

You resemble someone very well known; p. 118.

★ HIGH-FUNCTIONING ADDICT •

You add a die to one pool type while on your drug; *V:tM*, p. 180.

★ INGÉNUE •

Add two dice to rolls to avoid suspicion; p. 118.

IRON GULLET ...

You can feed on cold blood. Not available to Ventrue; *V:tM*, p. 182.

★ LINGUISTICS •+

One additional language per dot; *V:tM*, p. 179.

★ LUCK OF THE DEVIL

Others take the fall for your fuckups; p. 119.

NUIT MODE ..

Your body can keep tattoos, haircuts, etc. Not available over Blood Potency 1; p. 119.

★ REMARKABLE FEATURE •

Add two dice to Social rolls with strangers, lose one die from disguise pools; p. 118.

SHORT BOND ..

Blood Bond on you decays more rapidly; *V:tM*, p. 181.

★ SIDE HUSTLER ..

Once per session, get something as if you had two dots in Resources, Contacts, or Influence through your network.

★ STUNNING

Add two dice to looks-dependent Social pools; *V:tM*, p. 179.

★ TEMPERED WILL ...

Add a die to resist Dominate or Presence. May not have dots in either Discipline; p. 120.

UNBONDABLE

Cannot be Blood Bound; *V:tM*, p. 181.

UNTOUCHABLE

Escape official punishment once per story; p. 120.

VESSEL RECOGNITION •

You can smell whether a mortal has been fed upon; p. 119.

ZEROED •

You officially don't exist. Requires Mask ••; *V:tM*, p. 192.

Haven Merits

Unless noted, Haven Merits appear in *V:tM* (p. 189).

BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENT •• OR ...

Renting to (or running) a business out of your haven at the cost of some privacy; p. 111.

CELL • TO

Minimum Haven ••

FURCUS • TO ...

Adds dice to Rituals or Ceremonies (pick one); p. 212.

HIDDEN ARMORY •+

LABORATORY •+

Minimum Haven ••

LIBRARY •+

Only one dot allowed in Haven •

LOCATION •

LUXURY •

MACHINE SHOP •+

Adds dice to Craft, repair, etc. pools; p. 112.

POSTERN •+

Hidden exit.

VAMPIRE THE MASQUERADE

SECURITY SYSTEM •+

Alarms.

SURGERY •

Minimum Haven ••

WARDING •+

WATCHMEN •+

Guards.

Caitiff Merits

These Merits only apply to Caitiff characters. They appear on p. 126.

DEATH-PROOF •

Cannot learn Oblivion, but immune to it.

FAVORED BLOOD

Can buy powers from any Discipline as in-clan, needing only one prerequisite power for amalgams.

MARK OF CAINE ••

Two phantom dots of Status for bullying and intimidating other Kindred, harder to diablerize.

MOCKINGBIRD ...

Can drink Discipline powers from other vampires.

SUN-SCARRED

Less harmed by sunlight.

UNCLE FANGS ...

Thin-blood ally group.

Ghoul Merits

These Merits only apply to ghoul characters. They appear on p. 141.

BLOOD EMPATHY ••

Can sense your domitor's emotional state at a distance.

UNSEEMLY AURA ••

Your Aura resembles a Kindred aura.

Thin-Blood Merits

These Merits only apply to thin-blood characters. They have no dot value; each Flaw balances a Merit, and vice versa.

Thin-Blood Merits appear in *V:tM* (pp. 183-184) and on p. 135.

ABHORRENT BLOOD

Other Kindred cannot drink your blood; p. 135.

ANARCH COMRADES

CAMARILLA CONTACT

CATENATING BLOOD

You can create Blood Bonds and Embrace.

DAY DRINKER

Can walk around in daylight.

DISCIPLINE AFFINITY

Gain a dot in a Discipline, as a normal vampire.

FAITH-PROOF

Immune to True Faith; p. 136.

LIFELIKE

Medically mortal; you can eat, drink, fuck, etc.

LOW APPETITE

Roll two dice on some Rouse Checks; p. 136.

LUCID DREAMER

You dream and can remember relevant details; p. 136.

MORTALITY'S MIEN

Aura reads as mortal; p. 136.

SWIFT FEEDER

Slake one Hunger in one turn including closing wounds; p. 136.

VAMPIRE

THE MASQUERADE

THIN-BLOOD ALCHEMIST

You can take Thin-Blood Alchemy as a Discipline.

VAMPIRIC RESILIENCE

You take damage as a regular vampire.

Flaws

ADDICTION (•)

Lose one die without a fix; *V:tM*, p. 180.

ADVERSARY (• TO ••)

Kindred who opposes you; *V:tM*, p. 193.

ARCHAIC (••)

Cannot use technology. Ancillae or older only; *V:tM*, p. 180.

BOND JUNKIE (•)

Harder to resist the Blood Bond; *V:tM*, p. 181.

BONDSLAVE (••)

Easily Blood Bound; *V:tM*, p. 180.

DARK SECRET (• TO •••)

If found out, you would be infamous and hunted; *V:tM*, p. 187.

DESPISED (••)

One group or region of the city despises you; *V:tM*, p. 187.

DESTITUTE (•)

No money or home; *V:tM*, p. 193.

DISLIKED (•)

The city generally dislikes you; *V:tM*, pp. 187–188.

ENEMIES (• TO •••)

Mortal hunters and foes; *V:tM*, pp. 184–185.

FOLKLORIC BANE (•)

A folkloric bane (e.g., silver, holy water) causes you Aggravated damage; *V:tM*, p. 182.

FOLKLORIC BLOCK (•)

Must spend Willpower to push through a folkloric block (e.g., spilled seeds, running water, holy symbols); *V:tM*, p. 182.

HOPELESS ADDICTION (••)

Lose two dice without a fix; *V:tM*, p. 179.

ILLITERATE (••)

V:tM, p. 179.

INFAMY (• TO)

Infamy among mortals (or Kindred); *V:tM*, p. 187.

KNOWLEDGE HUNGRY (•)

Must make a Willpower roll to resist studying your obsession; p. 121.

KNOWN BLANKBODY (••)

Biometrics in Second Inquisition files; *V:tM*, p. 190.

KNOWN CORPSE (•)

Your death is well-known; *V:tM*, p. 190.

LIVING IN THE PAST (•)

Outmoded Convictions cause Social penalties. Ancillae or older only; *V:tM*, p. 180.

LONG BOND (•)

Blood Bond on you decays more slowly; *V:tM*, p. 181.

METHUSELAH'S THIRST (•)

You can only fully slake Hunger with supernatural blood; *V:tM*, p. 181.

NO HAVEN (•)

No secure sleeping place; *V:tM*, p. 188.

OBVIOUS PREDATOR (••)

You frighten mortals and cannot maintain a Herd; *V:tM*, p. 189.

ORGANOVORE (••)

You can only feed on human organs; *V:tM*, p. 181.

VAMPIRE THE MASQUERADE

PRESTATION DEBTS (•)

You owe two Minor Boons; pp. 115–116.

PREY EXCLUSION (•)

You refuse to hunt specific prey; *V:tM*, p. 181.

REPULSIVE (••)

Lose two dice from looks-dependent Social pools; *V:tM*, p. 179.

RISK-TAKER (•)

Compulsive risk-taker, two dice penalty when resisting risky behavior; p. 121.

SHUNNED (••)

Loathed by the vampire sect; *V:tM*, p. 194.

STAKE BAIT (••)

Stakes to the heart cause the Final Death; *V:tM*, p. 182.

STALKERS (•)

Annoying hangers-on; *V:tM*, p. 194.

STARVING DECAY (••)

At Hunger 3+ your body decays for a two-dice penalty to physical tests and to social tests with mortals; p. 120.

STENCH (•)

Lose one die from relevant Social pools, two dice from relevant Stealth pools; p. 120.

STIGMATA (•)

You bleed from hands and feet at Hunger 4; *V:tM*, p. 182.

SUSPECT (•)

Two-dice Social penalties with the vampire sect; *V:tM*, p. 194.

TRANSPARENT (•)

One-die penalty to Subterfuge. Cannot gain dots in Subterfuge; p. 120.

TWICE-CURSED (••)

Take your clan's variant Bane (p. 56) in addition to your regular Bane; p. 121.

UGLY (•)

Lose one die from looks-dependent Social pools; *V:tM*, p. 179.

VEGAN (••)

You only feed on animal blood; *V:tM*, p. 181.

VEIN TAPPER (•)

You cannot take blood from mortals while being observed; p. 120.

WEAK-WILLED (••)

One-die penalty to social combat against a superior, you may not use active resistance against Dominate or Presence; p. 121.

Haven Flaws

COMPROMISED (••)

V:tM, p. 188.

CREEPY (•)

V:tM, p. 188.

HAUNTED (•+)

V:tM, p. 188.

SHARED (• OR ••)

Another Kindred (or more) can use and change your haven without asking; p. 113.

Caitiff Flaws

These Flaws only apply to Caitiff characters. They appear on p. 127.

BEOFULING VITAE (••)

Your Embrace creates monsters.

CLAN CURSE (••)

You still suffer the Bane of your sire's clan at half-severity.

VAMPIRE

THE MASQUERADE

DEBT PEON (••)

Crippling debt to a high-Status vampire.

LIQUIDATOR (•)

Considered an enemy to thin-bloods, two-dice penalty to social pools with them.

MUDDLED BLOOD (•)

Must drink Blood of someone with a Discipline to buy dots in it.

WALKING OMEN (••)

Scrying, premonitions, divination point to you as the cause of misfortune.

WORD-SCARRED (•)

Skin covered with vampire lore texts, making you an occult target.

Ghoul Flaws

These Flaws only apply to ghoul characters. They appear on p. 141.

BANEFUL BLOOD (• TO ••)

You suffer from your domitor's clan Bane.

CRONE'S CURSE (••)

The Blood aged and weakened you, lose one Health box.

DISTRESSING FANGS (•)

Lose one die on Social pools with mortals.

Thin-Blood Flaws

These Flaws only apply to thin-blood characters. They have no dot value; each Flaw balances a Merit, and vice versa.

Thin-Blood Flaws appear in *V:tM* (pp. 182–183) and on p. 135.

BABY TEETH

No fangs.

BRANDED BY THE CAMARILLA

CLAN CURSE

Pick a Clan Bane.

DEAD FLESH

You're slowly rotting.

HELIOPHOBIA

Terror frenzy from sunlight; p. 135.

MORTAL FRAILTY

You heal as a mortal.

NIGHT TERRORS

Dreams invade your waking night; p. 135.

PLAGUE BEARER

Mortal illness still affects you; p. 135.

SHUNNED BY THE ANARCHS

SLOPPY DRINKER

Dexterity + Medicine to avoid leaving wounds; p. 135.

SUN-FADED

No Discipline powers in sunlight; p. 135.

SUPERNATURAL TELL

Supernaturals can detect you; p. 135.

TWILIGHT PRESENCE

You make mortals and full-bloods uneasy; p. 135.

UNENDING HUNGER

Resist hunger frenzy when you feed; p. 135.

VITAE DEPENDENCY

Must drink vitae to use powers.

VAMPIRE THE MASQUERADE

Coterie Advantages

Can also include Backgrounds, above.

Coterie Merits

Coterie Merits can only be bought as a coterie, with coterie pool points. They appear on p. 171.

BOLT HOLES • TO ...

Add one die per dot to escape and evasion attempts in your sprawling domain.

ON TAP • TO ...

Automatically hunt for a given Resonance in your domain.

PRIVILEGED ...

Special rights for the coterie.

TRANSPORTATION ..

Sick ride.

Clan Coterie Merits

Members of a given clan can purchase their respective Clan Coterie Merit either at character creation or during coterie creation. These Merits can only be used by coterie-mates, and only once per session (except Pack Tactics and Cryptolect).

BANU HAQIM: CALL TO PURPOSE ..

Free Willpower point; p. 179.

BRUJAH: BOOT AND RALLY •

Reroll regular dice on a failed Physical Skill test; p. 180.

GANGREL: PACK TACTICS ...

Add one die to Brawl or Melee in combat against the same opponent as the Gangrel; p. 181.

HECATA: ARS MORIENDI ..

Mask a corpse you killed; p. 182.

LASOMBRA: AT ANY COST ..

Add two successes to any test for a messy critical; p. 182.

MALKAVIAN: EVERYTHING IS CONNECTED ...

Swap any Skill pool in for another to gather information, the Oracle interprets the result; p. 183.

THE MINISTRY: DISCERNING •

Speak with any other Kindred, the Setite determines what they want; p. 184.

NOSFERATU: CONTEXTUAL CONTACT ..

Add your highest Contacts rating to any test to obtain information; p. 185.

RAVNOS: CRYPTOLECT ...

Secret coterie language; p. 185.

SALUBRI: RESTRAINT ...

Reroll all Hunger dice in a test; p. 186.

TOREADOR: ALL ACCESS •

Get into an event or facility because you're on the list or know a guy; p. 187.

TREMERE: MULTI-LEVEL LOREKEEPING ..

Share a Loresheet Advantage with a coterie-mate; p. 188.

TZIMISCE: OLD-WORLD HOSPITALITY ..

Restore an additional level of Superficial Willpower damage in their haven; p. 189.

VENTRUE: KINDRED LEGACIES ..

Know a piece of information or gossip about another Kindred; p. 189.

CAITIFF: VERSATILE VITAE ..

Use a Discipline power you do not possess; p. 190.

THIN-BLOOD: MORTAL HEART ..

Count Humanity one dot higher; p. 191.

VAMPIRE

THE MASQUERADE

Coterie Sheet

Coterie Name	Coterie Type	
Chronicle	Members	
City	Name	Clan
Domain		
Description		
Chasse	○○○○○	
Lien	○○○○○	
Portillon	○○○○○	
Domain Merits		
Domain Resonance		
Coterie Advantages & Flaws		
Coterie Boons & Debts	Haven or Hangout	
	Haven Merits & Flaws	
Chronicle Tenets	Coterie Goals	

VAMPIRE THE MASQUERADE

Coterie Domain Traits and Merits

The optional Domain Merits under each trait appear here under their ruling trait, and on p. 175 in more detail.

CHASSE • TO

Richness and size of hunting grounds; *V:tM*, pp. 195-196.

APARTMENT TOWERS ..

BACK ALLEYS ..

FUNERARY •

GATED COMMUNITY ..

HOSPITAL ..

NIGHTLIFE ...

SHELTER ..

Lien • to

How well the coterie integrates into their Domain; *V:tM*, p. 196.

CAMPUS ...

CITY HALL ...

CULTURAL LANDMARK ..

MARKETPLACE ..

MEMBERS ONLY ..

TRANSITIONS ..

Portillon • to

Security of the Domain; *V:tM*, p. 196.

ABANDONED BUILDING •

FIREHOUSE ...

POLICE STATION ..

PRISON ..

TRANSIT ..

Coterie Flaws

Coterie Flaws can only be bought as a coterie, with coterie pool points. They appear on p. 172.

BULLIES (•)

Bad feelings from previous regime, one-die penalty on Social pools (except Intimidation) with vampires.

CURSED (•+)

Mythic Flaw (*V:tM*, p. 182) affects coterie members outside their Domain.

CUSTODIANS (••)

No-glory shit job; lose Status if neglected.

TARGETED (•)

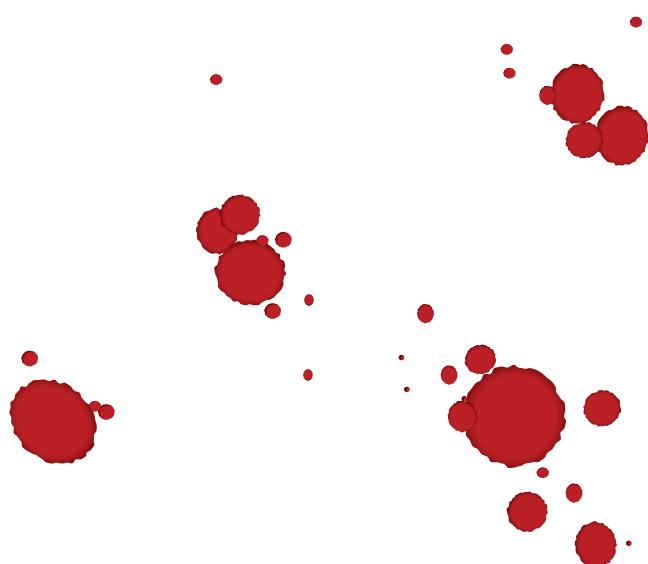
Coterie appears in some hunter agency file or other.

TERRITORIAL (•)

Territory degrades (Domain trait penalties) when you leave the city.

UNDER SIEGE (••)

Enemy threat targets your domain with seeming impunity.



Consolidated Antagonists

Tzimisce Servitor Ghouls

More than just fleshcrafted victims, infamous Tzimisce ghouls known as *szlachta* and *vozhd* are created through long-forgotten rituals, endowing them with Blood-imbued weaponry and a loyalty far beyond even Blood Bound thralls. While extremely rare in the modern nights, still-active elder Fiends have been known to make use of these

inhuman creatures, if only as a last resort, and some now-masterless thralls may still protect the havens of long-departed Kindred.

Beyond even these shuddersome creatures, rumors persist of entire families of ghouls in service to hoary elders, the Tzimisce foremost among them. Whether that means such elders feed great torrents of their blood to entire families or have somehow contrived a way to have the quality of being a ghoul pass on congenitally is too foul to think.

Szlachta

The loyal minions of Tzimisce masters, *szlachta* are often chosen for their existing loyalty rather than having it ingrained in them. Still, it never hurts to be sure.



Szlachta take many forms, from the subtly altered majordomo of a Fiend's estate to the twisted-to-purpose bearers of the master's sedan chair. Especially among the retinues of young Tzimisce, more specialized and modern *szlachta* may be found in service. Which is to say, there's no such thing as an "average" *szlachta* — presented below is a baseline servant that Storytellers can modify to suit story needs.

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 2, Mental 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 10, Willpower 4



Exceptional Dice Pools: One specialized skill at 8

Disciplines: Two level 1 powers

Special: When crafted for war, the rituals imbue the bone spurs of the *szlachta* with properties equivalent to Feral Weapons. Some *szlachta* with especially ruthless conditioning are effectively immune to mind-bending powers and Disciplines such as Dominate or Presence.

Vozhd

These nightmarish leviathans are hybrids created from dozens of *szlachta* who have been grafted together through Vicissitude and Blood

Sorcery. Primeval juggernauts, they are said to be employed in remote areas almost like the siege engines of eras past, with terror and mayhem as its primary goals.

The *vozhd* has no personality. It cannot choose to defy its master, nor can it creatively interpret its purpose. That also means it cannot be tricked, though it may be evaded, outrun or even, however unlikely the thought, defeated by even more potent combatants. It needs nothing to eat to sustain it, other than the master's blood once per month, yet its appetite seems infinitely ravenous.

Storytellers should feel free to adjust individual Traits to reflect the unique nature of each *vozhd*, but players are unlikely to deal with these war-ghouls frequently enough for such nuances to be truly recognizable.

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 10, Social 0, Mental 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 14, Willpower 6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 12, Melee 12

Disciplines: Potence 3 Fortitude 3

Special: A *vozhd* has Vicissitude-augmented physical modifications that behave as weapons, dealing non-halved Superficial damage (+4 damage modifier) to vampires and other supernatural creatures. They are also covered with the equivalent of 4 (or more) points of armor, and Storytellers are encouraged to be creative with further modifications.

They are immune to simple reasoning, let alone mind-altering powers. Good luck!

Revenants

Necromancers use ceremonies of Oblivion to animate these corpses and pieces of corpses, but don't always clean up after themselves. These things might scuttle or shamble around in the darkness of any city's crypts, sewers, and burned-out necromancer laboratories.

Mindless Corpse

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 2, Social 0, Mental 0

Secondary Attributes: Health 4, Willpower 0

Exceptional Dice Pools: Intimidation 4

Special: Mindless corpses take Superficial and Aggravated damage in the same way as vampires, except they are immune to sunlight. They cannot heal or mend damage, and rot at least one Superficial Health damage each day. They cannot be mentally dominated or influenced as they are bound to their master. They do not react to motion, words, or interference from anyone but their reanimator. Mindless corpses may always contribute to Teamwork (*Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 122) for menial labor such as digging, lifting, or pushing even if they lack Skills.

General Difficulties: 2/1

Aggressive Corpse

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 0, Mental 0

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 0

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 6; Intimidation 5

Special: Aggressive corpses take Superficial and Aggravated damage in the same way as vampires, except they are immune to sunlight. They cannot heal or mend damage. They cannot be mentally dominated or influenced as they are bound to their master. They do not need eyes or ears to perceive everything around them as someone with unimpeded vision and hearing might. Bites from the

aggressive dead inflict +2 Health damage which is Aggravated to mortals.

General Difficulties: 3/2

Homuncular Servant

Necromancers create these servants and spies out of body parts such as hands or skulls, or small dead animals like rats or foxes.

Most homunculi can scale walls, hop (even if it lacks the limbs to do so), and hide effectively, though individual variation is great and depends on the tasks it was created to perform. While it cannot speak or perform actions requiring deep thought, it can telepathically communicate single images, scents, or sounds to its creator.

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 1, Social 0, Mental 1

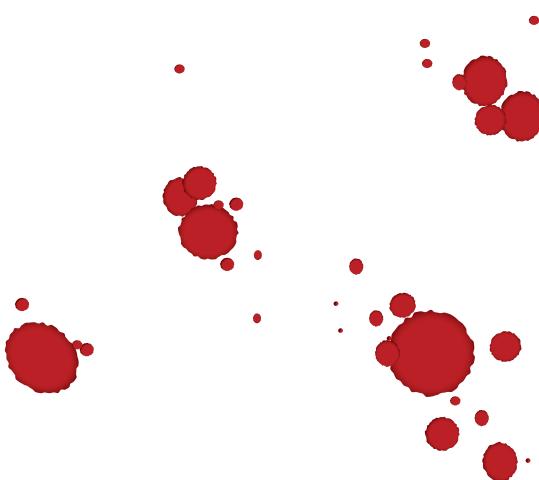
Secondary Attributes: Health 3, Willpower 1

Exceptional Dice Pools: Athletics 4, Stealth 6;

Intimidation 4

Special: Homuncular servants take Superficial and Aggravated damage in the same way as vampires, except they are immune to sunlight. They cannot heal or mend damage. They cannot be mentally dominated or influenced as they are bound to their master. They do not need eyes or ears to perceive everything around them as someone with unimpeded vision and hearing might. They can telepathically broadcast a single image per scene to their master.

General Difficulties: 3/1 ■



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