

A SOURCEBOOK FOR VAMPIRE: THE MASQUERADE

# IN MEMORIAM

VAMPIRE  
THE MASQUERADE



# There's No Escape from Your Past...

You've been dead longer than you were alive. You've witnessed the passing of every mortal from your first life — through violence, disease, or the relentless march of time — while you, undying, remain bound to this world. Your nights are haunted by the echoes of history, from the distant whispers of two centuries past to the cataclysmic World Wars and the rise of the modern era.

Embrace the mantle of the *nouveaux elders*, the ancillae who have seized power in the absence of the true elders, many of whom have now fallen or been beckoned away. Become a Kindred of 100, 150, or even 200 years. Detail your backstory and relive the formative trials and tribulations that forged you into the monster you are today. Command the night with the power of centuries behind you with *In Memoriam* for **Vampire: The Masquerade**.

- **Craft Ancilla Characters** with enriched rules designed for advanced play.
- **Consolidated and Streamlined Memoriam Rules** featuring new variations and advanced rules for deeper character development.
- **New Lore, Resources & Plotlines** surrounding 11 mortal eras and 8 pivotal Kindred events.
- **Six New Loresheets** that link characters to significant historical moments.
- **Unleash a 200-Year-Old Kindred** and delve into their ongoing struggle with the Beast as their Humanity erodes.

*In Memoriam* is a sourcebook for **Vampire: The Masquerade**, a Storytelling Game of Personal and Political Horror.



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*Vampire: The Masquerade*



# VAMPIRE

THE MASQUERADE

## IN MEMORIAM

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## On Time

Dear friend,

*I haven't changed my mind. I won't Embrace you.*

*I'd like to tell you that it isn't worth it, and it's not. We are accursed creatures; the horizon of eternity loses its brightness when you're forced to drink it down. But to the mortal, well... You'll want it anyway. How I wanted it, too.*

*So instead I'll offer some few words of warning and advice. Just in case you haven't realized, that in losing death as an enemy, you gain another: Time.*

*To the fledgling, she is generous. Everything you ever wanted, you can have. Even if mostly all you'll want is blood. You drink and drink it down, sweet sticky life, and you become enraptured by your senses. The night sky does look more beautiful, the feeling of skin against skin is all the sweeter for the promise of the feed. You still have things to fear aplenty, regardless of how strong you feel. But Lady Time, she doesn't take from you, she only gives.*

*Eventually, you have to fill yourself with more than mere pleasures and impressions. If you are cruel and lack imagination, perhaps you grow sadistic trying to surprise yourself. This I do not recommend; pointless cruelty eats away at what you are. But if you have a little more rarity of heart than that, you start to pursue the things you never could. Spend every night painting in oils, translating colors into truth. Travel the world if that is what you most desire. Find the thing you love and submerge yourself, until you're almost fully fed on fascination. A vampire of passions of the soul. And Lady Time, she is still quiet.*

*This was the best era. I would stay there if I could, and I return as often as I may.*

*But I lost twenty years in the pursuit of this rare glory when I had not twenty years to give. When I returned, I found my mortal brother's face full of worried lines, and when he saw me, I could tell he was afraid. So I did what I thought best and tried to help him. He's an old man, still, and how he hates me.*

*He is one reason I refuse you. There were others, too — I didn't learn my lesson straight away, that we are meant to leave the ones we love behind.*

*I am an ancilla now, and Lady Time is my cruel lover. Not as cruel as others I have had, but vicious still. She's dragging me away from all I ever was, promising we'll always be together and that things between us will never change. She says I will be powerful; I will be perfect. But I see my elders walking on the path before me, and it's leading places where I have no wish to go.*

*I don't know if you'll find someone to change you. Selfishly, I wish you won't. The wheel turns, and as I age, I harden, yet everything but time itself slips out of my grip. What does it matter if my body cannot decompose when there's nothing in it but the Beast?*

*More and more, the things I try to love turn into ash.*

*I was once a man. I don't want to forget it.*

*Yet Time takes that from me as well.*

— Leander of Sopron



# Introduction

# ACCURSED CREATURES

**I**n *Memoriam* is a phrase used in obituaries, a melancholy reminder of what and who was lost. When it comes to vampires, the dead keep walking. But gloomy shadows still hang on to them — making them beings out of time and out of place. The vampire is essentially *wrong*: an ambulatory corpse, a monster who appears beautiful, talented, or clever. There's an inherent tragedy in such a fate as well as seductive poetry. Not to mention great potential for intrigue; after all, the vampire must keep to the shadows, reflecting humanity's own darkness, secret fantasies, and fears.

In the **World of Darkness**, the classic vampire of fiction is best reflected in the generations known as the ancillæ. Lestat de Lioncourt, Joshua York, Bill Compton, and Spike would all be ancillæ in **Vampire: The Masquerade**. Sir Francis Varney, too, at the time *Varney the Vampire* came out. This book is about what it is like to be ancilla: to remember, to hunt, and also to be cursed. It's for those of you interested in developing backstories for older Kindred characters or running chronicles focused on them.



**Vampire 5th** edition is designed for the fledgling and neonate first. The spotlight starts out on the high-generation vampire who must navigate a night regulated by rules they still don't fully understand, or at least agree with. A night of chaotic awakening, where the elders, who once were the system and the law, have for the most part been called away for grander purposes.

But where they ruled as powerful Princes and Barons for centuries, someone else can rise. The ancillæ. The Kindred who are far enough removed from the first vampire to resist the call of the blood gods, known as the Beckoning. Yet old enough to understand how to navigate the dangerous web of Kindred society — web of which they are now the masters.

The definition of ancilla in this book is a vampire who has existed long enough that they've lost all connection to their mortal life. The origin of the term is Latin, meaning "servant" or "slave." When the Kindred started using it, the then-ancillæ were the youngest generation, and it served to remind them of their place in the hierarchy. That time is long past, and any Kindred who remember it used that way are too old to answer to it.

If you are ancilla, you are as good as dead to the world you knew, and though you still have mortal relationships, you have no one who can help you remember who you were back then. If you're jaded or unfortunate enough, you can gain your place among the ancillae within a century of unlife, but most were Embraced between the late 1700s and the 1940s. The oldest ancillae will soon be considered elders; the youngest still clearly remember what it was to live. Where the story of the newly-Embraced fledgling and the more established neonate is that of seeing yourself become a monster, the story of the ancilla is to have become a monster long ago and struggle to *also* be a person.

#### **MATURE CONTENT WARNING:**

**Vampire: The Masquerade** is a game of personal and political horror where you portray a blood-sucking monster in a world resembling our own. Characters routinely deal with activities typical of vampire fiction: violence, seduction, murder, and taking advantage of people.

This book is about the long unlives of immortal vampires, their backstory, and their memories. It dives into different historical settings, and by extension, also touches on themes like the trauma of war, persecution, inequality, poverty, and oppression. See Appendix II for advice on how to calibrate play in historical settings.

## How to Use This Book

This book is meant to inspire. It contains character and story concepts, setting examples, and plot twists from mortal and Kindred history since the 1770s that'll hopefully spark many ideas. Think of it like a scrapbook of ancilla memories — it doesn't cover everything but paints a picture of different moments with their own mood and feel. Secondly, this is also intended as a practical tool you can use in planning out your chronicle, giving depth to your character, and directly at the table when you need a quick antagonist.

**CHAPTER ONE: THE SPINDLE OF CLOTHO** is named for the youngest of the three fates of Greek

Mythology, who spins the thread of human life. It offers an ancilla-focused character creation system that lets you build ancilla characters with strong ties to the past. New mechanics, like the Archaic specialties and the Oceans of Time, reflect how older Kindred are both more powerful than their younger counterparts and also products of the times they've experienced. You can use it for inspiration to create Storyteller characters as well.

**CHAPTER TWO: THE THREAD** dives into different events and periods from mortal history, reflecting how these times may have affected the Kindred who remember them. It can serve as an aid when you plan sessions that involve the Memoriam mechanic and flesh out players' and Storyteller character backstories. You'll find characters, events, and locations in all of them that you can use more or less directly in Memoriam scenes. Find the rules for Memoriam in Chapter Five of this book, with more optional rules in the *Players Guide*.

Kindred History is in focus in **CHAPTER THREE: THE ROD OF LACHESIS**. This chapter can be especially useful for Memoriam play that connects to Kindred politics in modern nights. Use it to figure out which events your characters were part of and which enemies they made there who still have it out for them tonight.

**CHAPTER FOUR: THE KNIFE OF ATROPOS** is all about the tragedy of the vampire: that, in defeating death, they eventually lose what made them living. It dives into some of the problems ancillae face as they go through the ages, like creating childer you regret and eating your Touchstones, and how to get the most roleplay potential out of them. It introduces the idea of *the Desolation* — the time when an immortal realizes that they must fill their nights with something real if they're to continue to have any value to them.

**CHAPTER FIVE: CONDUCTING THE CHORUS** is about storytelling chronicles that underline the feeling of being cursed with immortality. Memory is a big theme, as is the way it can twist up and ruin you from the inside if given enough time. The chapter offers basic and advanced Memoriam mechanics that you can use to give depth to stories for vampire characters of any age and generation. ■

Chapter One

# THE SPINDLE OF CLOTHO: Ancilla Characters

MK  
2024

For ancilla characters, the first nights of trial and error, horror, and discovery are behind them, replaced by the terrors of monsters used to their nightly depredations.

## Ancilla Character Creation

The character creation process presented here is an alternative to the one in *Vampire: The Masquerade*. It uses the same elements and rules while offering additional options, so keep both books at hand. What you have here is a way to give your ancilla characters the weight of time and experience behind them. You define their place in the society of the Kindred as well as their general history, affecting their powers and weaknesses. With this process, ancilla characters have more Flaws and also more Advantages.

### ANCILLA STORYTELLER CHARACTERS

This is how you quickly craft ancilla Storyteller characters:

**Clan:** Pick one

**General Difficulty:** 4–5 / 3–4

**Standard Dice Pools:** Put 6–8 dots in each Mental, Social, Physical, Disciplines

**Secondary Attributes:** Level Health and Willpower from 5–8

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Pick three Skill Pools and put 8 to 10 or even 11 dots in each

**Disciplines:** Spend 10–12 dots on Disciplines.

One can go to 5, and one or two can be non-clan Disciplines. Don't forget to give them powers.

**THE RELATIONSHIP MAP:** As you create your character, you should also create a Relationship Map—a visual tool showing whom your characters know. You share one between the troupe, but you can also make a smaller private one. Perhaps you want to keep some connections secret from the other players.

**Yordan:** I remember I once saw you at the court of the Prince, soon after I'd been Embraced into the Tremere. Sometime in 1898, 1899. You're not much older than me.

**Bianca Archetti:** I have no memory of that, but I've met so many Kindred over the years. Can't remember them all.

**Yordan:** No, I remember. You were pretending to be... There was someone rumored to be in torpor, and you were pretending to be their lost childe.

**Bianca Archetti:** It was hard to be a Lasombra in the Camarilla then, so I created a fake lineage for myself. An embarrassing time.

**Yordan:** But... You're as old as I am. Have you had this experience where there's somebody familiar to you, but when they age, it's like you don't know them anymore? They become alien somehow, different. With someone younger, you see the mortal they once were. With an ancilla, you never know where you are with them.

**Bianca Archetti:** Maybe that's what it's like for you. You've spent too much time in your libraries.

**Yordan:** I'm an ancilla too! Why is it that all my compatriots feel so strange to me?

**Bianca Archetti:** I guess once you have a hundred years or more of personal history, it shows. You've exceeded the limits of mortal time.

— The Tremere Yordan unloading on the Lasombra Bianca Archetti at Elysium

# Ancilla Characters: *Summary*

## COTERIE TYPE

Choose a coterie type together as a troupe. You gain a coterie pool of two dots per ancilla character and one dot per neonate. You may buy coterie Flaws, gaining you one extra dot in your coterie Advantage pool per dot in coterie Flaws.

Spend the coterie pool on the suggested shared Advantages and Flaws, or choose different ones—the Flaws associated with ancilla-specific coteries are mandatory to take.

Mark them with a “C” on the character sheet or use a coterie sheet (p. 13).

## AGE, CLAN, AND CORE CONCEPT

What year between the 1770s–1940s were you Embraced, and into what clan? Come up with a basic concept for your character. Put their name on the Relationship Map.

## ATTRIBUTES

- 4,3,3,3,2,2,2,1
  - Take one Attribute at 4; three Attributes at 3, four at 2, and one at 1.
  - Health = Stamina + 3; Willpower = Composure + Resolve

## SKILLS

Pick a Skill distribution:

- **JACK OF ALL TRADES:** 3,2,2,2,2,2,2,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1

One Skill at 3; eight Skills at 2; ten Skills at 1

- **BALANCED:** 3,3,3,2,2,2,2,1,1,1,1,1,1,1

Three Skills at 3; five Skills at 2; seven Skills at 1

- **SPECIALIST:** 4,3,3,3,2,2,2,1,1,1

- One Skill at 4; three Skills at 3; three Skills at 2; three Skills at 1
- Add free Archaic specialties (Table 2: Decades, pp. 25–30) to Academics, Craft, Performance, and Science skills. Take one additional free specialty.

## DISCIPLINES

Pick a Discipline spread:

- **FOCUSED:** 3,1,1

- Put three dots into one of your clan Disciplines and one into another. Put one dot into a third Discipline of your choice.

- **STRATEGIC:** 2,2,1,1

- Put two dots into two of your clan Disciplines. Put one dot into a third Discipline of your choice.
- For Caitiff characters, choose any Disciplines to distribute your dots in.

### PREDATOR TYPE

Pick a Predator Type and consider how you've made it into a pattern over the course of your unlife.

Add the dots and specialties. These need not be Archaic.

### GENERATION

Decide how many steps removed from the first vampire your Blood is:

#### ■ 12th Generation

- While your Blood is weaker than many of your contemporaries, you make up for it with mortal connections and acumen.

### BLOOD POTENCY 1.

You gain eight dots to spend on Starting Advantages and 12 experience points to spend on Skills.

#### ■ 11th or 10th Generation

- Like most ancilla, you are a cut above the average neonate in terms of power, but years of unlife have left their mark in the form of regrets, disadvantages, and enemies.

### BLOOD POTENCY 2.

- You gain eight dots of Starting Advantages and three dots of Starting Flaws.

### ■ 9TH OR 8TH GENERATION

- The strength of your Blood is almost on par with an elder, but the challenge of wielding it has led you down many dark roads, and your history is haunted by tragedy.

### BLOOD POTENCY 3.

- You take five dots of Starting Flaws. You may take two dots of Advantages by losing one level of Humanity.

### BUILDING YOUR CHARACTER HISTORY

Use your Starting Advantages to represent your:

**BLOODLINE:** Your lineage of vitae.

- SIRE AND CHILDER:** Your relationship to your closest kin.

**POSITION:** Your role and status in the world.

### CONVICTIONS AND TOUCHSTONES

Select one to three Convictions reflecting the time you were born. Create an equal number of Touchstones, each connected to a Conviction. Add them to the Relationship Map.

You start at Humanity 7.

### OCEANS OF TIME

Think about what your Kindred was up to in their unlife and go to Table 1: Oceans of Time (p. 23).

For an ancilla Embraced up to 100 years ago, choose three eras.

For an ancilla Embraced up to 150 years ago, choose four eras. Lose 1 Humanity.

And for an ancilla older than that, choose five eras. Lose 2 Humanity.

Follow the instructions and replace any Touchstones and Convictions you may have lost with new ones at the end.

### AMBITION AND DESIRE

As the final step of character creation, choose your long-term Ambition and an immediate desire.

## Coterie Type

Once the troupe has a clear idea of the setting for your chronicle, it's time to sit down at the table and begin to craft the characters. The first step is to choose what kind of group they are. You can choose from the coterie types found in *Vampire*, other supplements, the ones listed further below, or you can come up with your own. Ask each other questions about the coterie: how did the characters get together, and what connects them in the present?



### INTERGENERATIONAL COTERIES

In some cases, it might suit your story to play with a coterie that combines ancillae and neonate characters. Perhaps they are sires and their childer, or they've been brought together by other circumstances. In such situations, there are obvious power differences, but childer and neonates still have some telling advantages over ancillae, such as attitudes and skills more applicable to the present day, fewer Disadvantages, living original Touchstones, and more of their Humanity intact.

At the Storyteller's discretion, any players' younger characters in such a group can be allowed extra Backgrounds, signifying the added advantages they enjoy from their ancilla connections.

You gain a coterie pool of two dots per ancilla character in the coterie and one dot for each neonate or younger character. Once you've agreed on what type of coterie you are, you can invest in the suggested Advantages that you buy and hold collectively. Everyone in a coterie can use these Traits, but if they're lost — say, your shared haven burns down — they're lost for the whole coterie. You write the coterie type and their name, if they have one, in the "Notes" section on the character sheet.

If all players agree, you may buy coterie Flaws. This gives you one extra dot to use on coterie Advantages per dot put into Flaws. If you choose an ancilla coterie type from this book, it's mandatory to invest in the associated Flaws.

Spend the coterie pool on coterie Domain, Advantages, and Flaws. Write them down in the "Advantages & Flaws" field of the character sheet, and mark them with a "C" to show them as coterie Traits or use a coterie sheet.

#### EXAMPLE:

*The Nightbringers, a Blood Cult coterie of two ancillae and two neonates, has four dots to spend. They collectively choose to gain two coterie Flaws to bring this total to six dots of Coterie Advantages and two dots of coterie Flaws.*

*Regency coteries and other high-status coteries from *Vampire* are suitable for ancilla characters, but you'll find some new concepts made especially for the older undead below.*



## Coterie Sheet

Coterie Name	Coterie Type	
Chronicle	<b>Members</b>	
City	Name	Clan
<b>Domain</b>		
Description		
Chasse      ○○○○○		
Lien      ○○○○○		
Portillon      ○○○○○		
Domain Merits		
Domain Resonance		
Coterie Advantages & Flaws		
Coterie Boons & Debts	Haven or Hangout	
	Haven Merits & Flaws	
Chronicle Tenets	Coterie Goals	

Weighty problems often outweigh the status and resources of well-established coteries. When using an ancilla-specific coterie type, it is therefore mandatory to take the Flaw associated (and gain the extra dots to spend on Advantages).

### ARCHONIUM

Each Justicar recruits their own coteries of expendable enforcers to investigate and persecute perceived threats. Half the Archonium typically belongs to the clan of their Justicar, though covert operatives often hide or lie about their clan origins. Though a Camarilla institution, Archons operate as diplomats and spies in Anarch and Ashirra domains.

An Archonium often adopts the mien and method of supernatural undercover espionage. Their distant masters act as mission handlers, sending ever-changing orders coded into the migration patterns of corvids over Austin, poems in a Sámi-language newspaper in Tornedal, or other occulted means.

Archons are also often recruited locally for a specific purpose and may not necessarily get a choice whether they want to serve a Justicar or not. The judges of the Camarilla are known for their high-handed tactics, where the spectacle of an undead court trumps concepts like “evidence” or “justice.”

**■ Domain:** An Archonium’s Chasse starts at max one dot when arriving in a new city—only so much can be done remotely to prepare.

**■ Status:** .... Camarilla, only useful when breaking cover

**■ Mawla:** ... Ancilla contact in debt to the Justicar

**■ Adversary (....)** Anarch radical, Kindred criminal, or Sabbat infiltrator)

### PRIMOGEN COUNCIL

They are the kings of the city, the true power behind the throne. Some cities are ruled openly by Primogen Councils, others by a Prince who may or may not be the puppet of the Council. In this type of coterie (and chronicle), the coterie members are constantly at covert war with each other but often must unite to deal with the whims of Princes and other internal or external threats to their city.

**■ Domain:** Typically, the members of a Primogen Council don’t share a domain. Rather, they each hold a domain and jealously guard it from their peers. However, all members of the Primogen have benefitted from their status over time and may add one free dot to Chasse or Portillon, signifying the cooperation of their Prince or informal Anarch leader.

**■ Haven:** ... Some Primogen share a meeting place and emergency haven, often in a historical building with high security. This Advantage starts at three dots, but members are expected to donate personal Advantage dots to the shared pool. Creating a Haven for a Council is akin to building a shared supervillain lair; enjoy the process and make sure each member contributes with a feature or a strong thematic element.

### PRINCE’S COURT

After a decade or two of inquisitions, Beckoning, and Gehenna War, ash-covered thrones are common. This coterie has just risen to rule a smaller city or major domain within a megacity like Cairo or New York. It consists of the “Prince” (however they want to style themselves), their advisors, lovers, Blood-Bonded pets, or whatever takes their fancy. They are the clique around an undead despot, and theirs might be a short and bloody ride or a shrewd reign that survives even the Gehenna War.

**■ Domain:** A royal domain typically has Chasse ... and Portillon ..., and only members of the Court are allowed to hunt there.

**■ Haven:** The top ten floors of a high-rise building. A farm complex housing thousands of cattle. Typically, a castle starts at a Haven rating of ... or ....

**■ Status:** A new but established Court has at least three dots in Status, one if it’s the night after a bloody coup. The Prince should have great use of their individual Status, and Shared Status should be at least 4 in a Camarilla domain since the act of seizing praxis is an ingrained part of Kindred culture.

A Court coterie should pool a large part of their Advantage dots into shared Advantages to build a common seat of power worth protecting and wrestling over through the decades.

**■ Adversary:** (...) Enemies come with the job, and this coterie share a nemesis. If they consist exclusively of ancillae, this monstrous elder, vengeful

methuselah, or embittered Justicar counts as a five-dot Flaw and their Traits should break all usual statistical values. Difficulty starts at 6/5.

### THE DECADE CLUB

This coterie is an informal club consisting of all the Kindred in a city who share a bond of history. Perhaps they are simply the Embraces of the 1770s banding together for sanity in a world of climate change, machine learning, and K-pop. Or perhaps the coterie consists of all the Kindred that fought during World War One, were Embraced during the Russian Revolution, supported the French monarchy in 1789, or were Embraced during the Gilded Age. Far beyond an undead history reenactment society, they often maintain intact holdings and values and fight dead ideological wars that still brush up against modern politics.

- **Domain:** Museum, Library, Cathedral, or Heritage Foundation with a Chasse at maximum two dots and Portillon at max three.
- **Library:** \*\*\*\* From a specific period or cause.
- **Mythic Flaw:** Pick a suitable anachronistic or Supernatural Flaw worth one to two dots, such as Folkloric Block or Bane.

## Age, Clan, and Core Concept

The next step is to choose the year your character was Embraced and into what clan. Think a little

bit about what your mortal life was like and how it contrasts with your unlife in the present. What archaic concepts and ideals do you carry with you into modern nights? This, and the rest of character creation, is about your individual character, but it's still good to coordinate with the rest of the table. Playing characters who have a lot in common creates a very different vibe from those with opposing goals and values.

Describe the vampire character you want to interpret at the table as a short elevator pitch to the Storyteller and the rest of the group. A good pitch is no more than age, clan, and an inspiring sentence.

### EXAMPLES:

- (1805) Brujah Napoleonic Logistics officer turned communist politico
- (1764) Ventre Jesuit Inquisitor recruited from a now-dead Mesoamerican people
- (1946) Post-war Gangrel cop turned Anarch activist
- (1872) Monarchist Lasombra still serving an inbred or extinct central European royal line, mostly as a self-appointed hitman

## Attributes

This is your starting Attribute spread:

■ 4,3,3,3,2,2,2,2,1

Take one Attribute at 4; three Attributes at 3, four

### RIVALS COTERIE

By Blood or by the gilded cage that is Kindred existence in a mortal city, members of a Rivals Coterie are commonly enemies and allies almost simultaneously. A council, the childer of the same elder, the Primogen Council. Such chronicles typically involve backstabbing and helping each other face common threats in turn. A Rivals game is commonly set over decades.

#### Examples:

- A group of childer made and mistreated by their shared sire.
- A long-established Primogen Council.
- The last vampires of a court that no longer exists, who used to be bitter rivals, now have only one another.
- The almost-elders who keep scheming with each other, whether or not they occasionally try to dust each other or steal each other's shit.

Remember that a Rivals Coterie chronicle may have a “winner” and a body count. Player vs. Player (PvP) certainly isn’t for everyone, so if you go this route, ensure all players are okay with it. It’s always good to discuss such assumptions during session zero. The best way for friends to play enemies in a game is to really relish your own downfall. Remember that in a drama, the character of the “loser” or victim in a plotline gets as much spotlight as the winner, if not more. Besides, after loss comes revenge!

## The Ancilla Experience

You are old.

The times you lived through as a mortal and childe are long gone, but they still shape your convictions and taste.

You have lost Humanity and your original Touchstones. You've been forced to replace them, or you're about to.

Remembering your over-long unlife is a double-edged sword. Memoriam scenes give you access to the past, but they also act as uncontrollable psychotic nostalgia, tearing you away from the present.

Your chronological age is represented by your Skills and their Archaic specialties, as well as your Convictions and Advantages, particularly Backgrounds.

You believe.

You were born into a world of faith. Today, over 80% of the world's population identifies with a religion. When you drew breath, it was almost everyone. Take it as a given that older characters believe in God, or at least once did. Many still go through the motions of belief.

You are powerful.

You are likely to be "thick of Blood," meaning you are just eight or fewer generations away from the first vampire. This, plus years of purposeful Resonance feeding, gives you powers far outweighing those of younger Kindred.

You can often best dozens of armed mortals or a whole coterie of childer. You've applied your powers to survive and crush your enemies over decades and centuries and have probably specialized in certain uses for the gifts of Caine.

You have responsibilities, issues, and enemies.

You perform an important function in mortal or Kindred society, be it as a peacekeeper, assassin, bureaucrat, harpy, or eternal rebel. By claiming and holding on to your domain and position, or just by virtue of age, you have many scars and numerous enemies, living and dead. These are represented by the Advantages and Flaws you get as an ancilla.

You have a routine.

You have developed nightly habits and a Predator Style that serves you well. You minimize risk through your Mask and Haven.

But sometimes it fails.

No matter how cautious ancillae are, shit happens.

You've been through incidents when you screwed up and lost big. Maybe you went into torpor for decades, changed sects or cities, or otherwise had to start again, rebuild your power base, perhaps even your Humanity.

You are approaching a shift in your existence.

For decades, unlife has been predictable and stable. Now, something is happening, and you are at the cusp of a crisis. This could be a crisis of Humanity, like a shift of Convictions and Touchstones. Often it's a question of power and Ambition.

You want something different than what you have, or what you have is under attack, and you are forced to change your ways.

Perhaps you think you've fallen in love (never a good thing for a vampire), take up a cause, drop to a new low in Humanity, understand another sect's perspective, or make a bid for praxis.

What you want and strive for is never what you really need. Play will uncover the true core of your character in time.

at 2, and one at 1.

Set your Health to Stamina + 3; Willpower is your Composure + Resolve.

## Skills

Pick a Skill distribution:

■ **JACK OF ALL TRADES:** 3,2,2,2,2,2,2,2,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1,1

Take one Skill at 3; eight Skills at 2; ten skills at 1

■ **BALANCED:** 3,3,3,2,2,2,2,2,1,1,1,1,1,1,1

Take three Skills at 2; five Skills at 2; seven Skills at 1

■ **SPECIALIST:** 4,3,3,3,2,2,2,1,1,1

Take one Skill at 4; three Skills at 3; three Skills at 1

Find the decade of your Embrace in Table 2:

Decades and use it as inspiration. In what historical context did you develop the knowledge and practical experience your Skill dots represent? Add free Archaic specialties (see p. 24) to Academics, Craft, Performance, and Science skills. All of these specialties should be appropriate to your lifetime.

Take one additional free specialty.

## Disciplines

Pick a Discipline spread:

■ **FOCUSED:** Put three dots into one of your clan Disciplines and one into another. Put one dot into a third Discipline of your choice.

■ **STRATEGIC:** Put two dots into two of your clan Disciplines. Put one dot each into a third and fourth Discipline of your choice.

For Caitiff characters, choose any Disciplines to distribute your dots in.

As an older Kindred, it's likely you have unconventional (even non-clan) Disciplines or learned to combine Disciplines in novel ways.

## Predator Type

Over time, a vampire's Predator Type becomes a routine, almost second nature: it becomes a predation pattern. Supported by assets, allies, mortal pawns, blood trafficking networks, and decades of experience, the feeding routine becomes almost fool-proof.

Pick a Predator Type and consider how you've made it into a pattern over the course of your unlif. Give it some thought, as it largely defines your

character. Add the dots and specialties from the Predator Type to your character sheet. These need not be Archaic.

When you decide on the Predator Type for your ancilla, extrapolate it to ensure it feels believable over time. For instance, Farmers, Consensualists, and Cleavers are rare among ancillae since these feeding patterns are either inherently risky or otherwise unsustainable over time.

### EXAMPLES:

*Caitiff Sir Liam Hershey has used his Presence and aristocratic upbringing to establish a stranglehold over a casino empire in Monte Carlo since 1836, with a haven on top of each of his eight luxury hotels. His Predator Type could be Sandman or Siren.*

*Brujah Primogen Pelle Kanelli was instrumental in establishing the Christiania free city in the 1960s, holding it for the Camarilla for a decade before being driven out by Anarch biker gangs. He uses his deep counter-culture pull to keep existing as a never-seen prince in pauper's clothing among the homeless people and sex workers of Vesterbro. His Predator Type is Scene Queen.*

Both are dependent on their routines and holdings to make it somewhat peacefully through the centuries. Like in these examples, ancillae often establish these patterns during their first decades as a Kindred, and they often carry the scent of a bygone era with them into the 21st century.

## Ancilla Predator Options

Pick a Predator Type from *Vampire* or another setting book. You can also use one of the following ancilla Predator Type options:

### TITHE COLLECTOR

With age and status often come the comforts of convenience. The Tithe Collector holds enough power that the vampires around them pay tribute in the form of carefully selected vessels, delivered at regular intervals or upon request. As long as they maintain their position and return the vessels in reasonable condition, it's someone else's job to worry about the Masquerade.

■ Add a specialty: Intimidation (Kindred) or Leadership (Kindred)

- Gain one dot of Dominate or Presence
- Gain three dots of Domain or Status, representing a domain large enough to share or a specific position near the top of your community
- Gain an Adversary (••) Not everyone appreciates your influence

## Generation

Choose how many steps removed your Blood is from the first vampire.

If you want to play a weak-blooded ancilla of the 12th Generation, you begin with Blood Potency 1. You gain eight dots to spend on Starting Advantages and 12 experience points to spend on Skills.

Ancillae of 10th or 11th Generations, begin with Blood Potency 2. You gain eight dots to spend on Starting Advantages and must take three dots of Starting Flaws.

The most potent ancillae of the 9th or 8th Generation enjoy the benefits (and drawbacks) of Blood Potency 3. Power such as this doesn't come cheap. You gain no Starting Advantages and you must take five dots of Starting Flaws. You may take two dots of Starting Advantages if you sacrifice a level of Humanity.

You will have the opportunity to gain more Advantages during the Oceans of Time step.

Age and generation are not equal, but ancillae tend toward thicker Blood than neonates and childer. Ancillae are commonly of the 9th to 11th Generation, though examples exist of 13th Generation—or even thin-blooded—Embraces before the 18th century (although few, if any, survived through to the modern age). Conversely, some are the modern childer of truly monstrous elder-blooded fiends. Especially in Europe, ancillae of the 7th to 8th Generation aren't unheard of.

Your character doesn't have to know their generation since potency shifts slightly over the ages. If your Storyteller wishes to keep your generation secret, you should still play your character as a specific Blood Potency. If the truth is revealed, the consequences could be far-reaching—why would your sire pretend to be a higher generation than they are? Could your childer and grandchilder actually be thin-blooded? What could this discovery do to your reputation in Court?

## THE PRETEND ELDER

The Beckoning offers many opportunities for career advancement. Identity theft is a dangerous but powerful way to leapfrog the power structure of a city or establish a nationwide cult no one dares mess with.

**Did you fake the last will of the Beckoned Dark Age Prince you believe destroyed, or simply pretend to be much older than you are? Both work fine to bamboozle fledglings, but the pretend elder will sooner or later have their bluff called.**

**The players that choose this type of character or coterie should be aware that if you play elder games, you pay elder prices.**

## Building Your Character History

Most ancillae have a haven, reliable access to blood, and a settled position in Kindred society, ensuring their continued existence. Their survival resources are represented in character generation through the possibility of racking up a generous number of useful Advantages, both from their Starting Advantages and in the Oceans of Time step. On the flip side, the pathological ingrained behavioral patterns, the enemies, curses, debts, and obligations of a century-old vampire are represented through a larger-than-normal number of detrimental Flaws.

Use your Starting Advantages and Flaws to represent your bloodline, sire, place in the world, and any potential childer you've Embraced and add them to the "Advantages & Flaws" section of the character sheet. You may also choose to spend these dots after the Oceans of Time step.

## Bloodline

Stories of powerful but dysfunctional families have provided human culture with some of the best drama. The stakes are high, and tragedy is the rule rather than the exception. Fledglings and neonates can fail and be destroyed, or even try to kill their sires. Love becomes hate and vice versa. Ancillae, now properly removed from their mortal lives, are often more obsessed with the fate of their bloodline and its internal and external feuds and dramas.



What bloodline do you belong to? Are you the scion of a renowned or celebrated line—with all the expectations that come with it—or has your vitae flown along a more subtle path through history? Any famous people or places in the family legends? Do you care about your bloodline? What is the renown of the line? Are you the last? Or do you have a famous childe, perhaps better regarded than you are?

Certain bloodlines have explicit Loresheets attached to them, such as La Famiglia Giovanni of Clan Hecata (see *Cults of the Blood Gods*, p. 225) and Descendant of Lodin for Clan Ventrule (*Chicago by Night*, p. 273). You don't need to invest in a Loresheet to belong to a bloodline; that's simply a way to access those specific Advantages. Players' characters are usually limited to one Loresheet, but Storytellers may allow players a second Loresheet if it represents their bloodline.

## Sire and Childe

*“Our fathers sinned, and are no more; It is we who have borne their iniquities.”*

— Lamentations 5:7

**SIRE:** Who created you, when, where, and most importantly, why? Have they been an ally, absent, or an enemy through the ages? Any notable events or conflicts? How has your relationship to your sire changed over time? What is it now?

**CHILDER:** As an ancilla, you've likely been tempted to Embrace. Perhaps you already have several childe who are rebelling or planning to drain you dry already, but your bloodline continues—and that's the most important part of all, Prince's permission be damned! At least, that's how many ancillae feel. As their humanity slips away, killing and infecting a mortal with their fatal

condition can seem like love or even a grotesque analog to procreation. It feels meaningful, and it feels like what you're meant to do.

*Have you sired your own childe and when? In what way do your offspring hate you? Did you share moments of trust and intimacy before things turned sour, or have they yet to turn? Perhaps you even work together or—God forbid—share a coterie.*

A childe provides a plethora of dramatic possibilities and can be a part of a character's backstory, a recurring Storyteller character, or even another player's character in a longer chronicle.

Make sure to remember your childe during the Oceans of Time step when you create a more detailed journey through history. If your childe is not portrayed by another player, you may select Advantages and Flaws to represent them and your relationship to them—a one- or two-dot Mawla can serve to represent your offspring.

## Position

What is your current or past position in Kindred society? No matter if you exist in a Camarilla, Anarch, or Autarch domain, you have some status and power in your city. What is it?

Spend dots from your Starting Advantages (or Flaws) on Backgrounds, Status, Loresheets, and other Advantages representing your position in Kindred society. Write them in the Advantages section of the character sheet. These are, of course, determined to a large degree by your choice of coterie above. Note that you may gain more Advantages during the Oceans of Time step of character creation.

Remember, these positions seldom function exactly as described, neither in name nor in function. In collaboration with your coterie and the Storyteller, describe what role you play in the scene of your particular city.

*In Memoriam* is geared towards playing Kindred brimming with power and influence. Don't be shy with those titles.

**Note:** You buy your personal status on top of your coterie status, so if you are a Prince's Court, you start with three dots in Status as a courtier and then buy one more to represent being the Scourge of the Court. Naturally, if you lose your position, you lose the Status that comes with it.

## CHANGING SECTS

Ancillae are old enough to have experienced the rise of the Anarchs as a viable sect on its own, a separate phenomenon from the inhuman Sabbat of the Middle Ages, and to remember when many Camarilla domains were run like the Cult of Mithras and the Anarchs were nothing but barely tolerated malcontents. Ancillae saw the Camarilla rise to the height of its power in Queen Anne's London in the 1890s and the beginning of its downfall when the Anarch Free States were founded in the 1950s. This means that while most ancillae have stayed loyal to one sect for their whole unlife, many have not.

As you develop your character, ask yourself whether they've switched allegiances. Do they have enemies in the sect they left? Allies who still remember them despite turning to the other side? Make sure you reflect your character's sect history in their Backgrounds and Flaws.

## New Ancilla Advantages and Flaws

### Adversary

**FLAW (-) SHAMEFUL CHILDE:** You did the thing other Kindred have trauma from—you created a childe and left them to fend for themselves. Perhaps you didn't know until it was too late, perhaps you lost control and were too ashamed to face the music. Either way, now they're out there somewhere, and sooner or later, they'll come back to confront you.

**FLAW (-•) TOUCHSTONE EMBRACED BY YOUR ENEMIES:** This former Touchstone of yours didn't simply die or change as a person—they were Embraced. Now they run with your enemies.

This Adversary is a single neonate, but they have allies, and the mere confrontation with what they've become carries a risk of Stains.

### Archaic

- CUSTODIAN OF HISTORY:** An elder has confided his version of a lost age to you before being called to the Gehenna War, destroyed in a FIRSTLIGHT paramilitary strike, or consumed by a Sabbat pack on

the home front of the Eternal Struggle. You get tacit permission to refer to, use, read up on, and form your character's opinion on one of the most important periods or characters in **Vampire** lore, granting +1 die to all relevant Skill tests pertaining to your subject. Possible subjects include:

- The Book of Nod and the First Cities (Noddist lore is still seen as heretical by many ancillae)
- The First Inquisition, including the Anarch Revolt and the Convention of Thorns
- Constantinople and the Trinity
- The Revelations of the Dark Mother (heretical to most)
- Antiquity and the War of Carthage

**FLAW (•): GRIEF PHOBIA:** The traumatic loss of a Touchstone saddled you with a permanent phobia for something that reminds you of them, the way you lost them, or the Conviction they used to embody to you. You lose one die in all tests made while in the presence of your phobic stimulus (determine what this is when you take the Flaw). Examples could include a genre of music, a certain smell, or the Touchstone's family members. You can take this Flaw once for each lost Touchstone in your past.

**FLAW (•): OLD TRICKS:** You've never mastered the modern age: all your specialties must be Archaic specialties.

## Fame

**FLAW (• TO ...) BANNED FROM...:** At some point in your illustrious past, you got yourself barred from a city ruled by Kindred who still won't welcome you.

- **A small city** like Salzburg, Tromsø, Napier, or Portland.
- **A mid-sized city** like Ljubljana, Malaga, Sacramento, or Venice.
- **A large city** like Paris, Rio de Janeiro, Tokyo, Atlanta, or Cairo.

Getting in anyway is possible, of course, but there'll be all kinds of trouble. Storytellers should note that this city should be relevant to the chronicle at some point.

## Feeding

**FLAW (••) OUTDATED PREFERENCE:** This Flaw resembles the Venttrue Clan Bane, except your preferred mortal has become almost impossible to come by. Examples include castrato singers, quaalude addicts, footmen, phrenologists, milkmen, Redcoats, and wet nurses.

You either have to capture and force mortals to fit with your preference, or you always spend 1 Willpower to feed.

## Mythic

- **TO ... OBJECT OF POWER:** Over the course of your travels, you've gotten your hands on a rare but powerful item.
- **A set of uncommonly lucky dice.** You may reroll a single die once per story, excluding Hunger dice.
- **Grimoire.** It's empty until you fill it, but it grants you a +1 die bonus to all Level 1 Ritual tests.
- **Golden eye amulet that protects you against threats.** You get a free Premonition warning once per session when someone is about to cause you harm, even if you don't have that power.

**FLAW (•) CURSED OBJECT:** Something you own wants you dead. Once per session, at a time determined by the Storyteller, you must reroll a successful test, risking failure instead.

**OPTIONAL RULE: BURNING ADVANTAGES**

Sometimes, players may propose leveraging their Advantages in ways that aren't covered by the rules. When that happens, you're free to reject them, but you can also choose to let them when it makes sense in the story. An ancilla has learned that caution and sparse use of resources is the safest way to survive the night, but in a pinch they're ready to sacrifice parts of their networks and rebuild them.

A good way to balance unconventional use of Advantages is consequences. A player could lose a dot from their Advantage permanently, trigger a Flaw, take a Stain on their Humanity, or something similarly dire when an Advantage is pushed to its limit.

Tell the player that, "Sure, you can use your Contact to take the fall for the drugs found in your car," but be sure to declare some possible repercussions like, "...but that's the last thing she does for you" or "...you must threaten her family to do it and gain a Stain." Often players have good ideas for what the price of burning an Advantage could be.

## Convictions and Touchstones

Ancillae have made it through their first mortal lifetime and have been forced to accept their inhuman condition. They've said farewell to mortal families and vital Touchstones without succumbing to the Beast. They have lost control to their Hunger many times and been forced to make moral sacrifices that would break most mortals (or younger Kindred). They have lost the naivete and thrill of being a young monster, and their dreams of freedom from the machinations of the other creatures of the night have usually evaporated.

Ancillae have been down the road of existential desperation and have finally given up on ever becoming fully human again. Most have also eroded their Humanity to a point where it is no longer an obstacle to their prolonged existence. They are ready to do what they must and have made extensive preparations to secure what is important to them. They are the protectors of their Touchstones and Convictions, dearly guarded from the teeth of time—and in turn, these anchor the ancillae to the remnants of their Humanity.

You should select one to three Convictions reflecting the time you lived. Consider who their lost

Touchstones were and how what they represented carries forward into the ones you currently have.

**EXAMPLE:**

*"Perfection is virtuous": Lenni Yaeger, singer-songwriter and descendant of a Jesuit master chorist you knew and respected in life.*

*You start at Humanity 7. This represents where you started as a fledgling and may change during the Oceans of Time step.*

**ETERNITY IS THE DEATH OF ALL LOVE**

When you lose a level of Humanity during character creation (no matter if you are using the Oceans of Time method or not), you have the option of sacrificing a Conviction and a Touchstone instead, losing them in a catastrophic way that is for you to define.

It may be appropriate to buy a dot or three of Flaws to represent the fallout of the crisis following the loss. A mortal enemy that saw you kill them, a Supernatural Flaw, or a bad new habit.

What happened? How does it still hurt you? How do you cope? Have you tried and failed to replace your loved one? Are you in the throes of bereavement without accepting it? Trying to reinvent yourself to feel something, anything?

Read more on the shifting but everlasting sorrow of trying to replace Touchstones and Convictions, as well as the transformations or even inversions such heartfelt things may be subjected to, in Chapter Five: The Knife of Atropos.

## Oceans of Time

When you've defined the basic Skills of the mortal who died and grew into your ancilla character, it's time to start their nightmare journey across the vast expanse of time between their Embrace and the present.

Consider the key events that shaped your Kindred, where they operated, what was important to them, and start making choices, as you take them through Table 1: Oceans of Time.

For each era of unlifed up to the present ask yourself:  
*What did I do? Where was I located? What tragedies befell me? What bitter lessons did I learn? Did I win or lose status in my sect? Did I gain new allies and enemies, or acquire assets or status I still*

## TABLE 1: OCEANS OF TIME

This table provides a system for aging ancilla characters as part of the character creation process. For ancilla Embraced...

...up to 100 years ago: choose three eras.

...up to 150 years ago: choose four eras. Lose 1 Humanity.

...151 years or more ago: choose five eras. Lose 2 Humanity.

**A TIME OF ADVERSITY:** *You spent more nights than you would've preferred huddled up in damp cellars, licking your wounds and eying the rats.*

Gain two dots of Background Flaws, Skills worth 12 experience points, and one suitable Archaic Skill specialty.

You can choose to gain 10 experience points to spend on Disciplines and roll a die; on 1–5, you also lose 1 Humanity.

**A TIME OF CALM:** *It went by much too quickly, but for a while, your nights were mostly free of dangers. You immersed yourself in your passions and grew your abilities.*

Gain Skills worth 6 experience points and one suitable Archaic Skill specialty.

You can choose to gain another 3 experience points and roll a die; on 1–5, you gain one dot in Antiquated Flaws.

**A TIME OF INTRIGUE:** *As others jealously reached for your assets, you had to be clever to protect yourself.*

Gain two dots of Background Advantages and one suitable Archaic Skill specialty.

You can choose to gain another two dots of Background Advantages and roll a die; on 1–5, you also lose 1 Humanity.

**A TIME OF EXCESS:** *The consummate leech, you indulged in every vice and even managed to overcome some of them.*

Gain three dots of Advantages to spend on Bonding and Feeding Merits.

You can choose to gain 10 experience points to spend on Disciplines and roll a die; on 1–5, you also gain three dots of Supernatural or Substance Use Flaws, or lose 1 Humanity.

**A TIME OF VIOLENCE:** *You indulged your Beast, letting it loose upon your enemies and any others who were in the way.*

Lose 1 Humanity and gain 15 experience points to spend on any Disciplines.

Every time this era is chosen, roll a die; on 1–5, you gain the Dark Secret Flaw (++) and cannot choose this era again.

**A TIME OF SORCERY:** *You turned your mind to the sorcerous side of undead existence, finding secrets in the Blood.*

Lose 1 Humanity and gain 15 experience points to spend on either Mental Attributes, Occult, or Blood Sorcery or Oblivion (Rituals or Ceremonies only).

You can choose to gain another 3 experience points to spend on the above and roll a die; on 1–5, you also gain a Cursed Object (+).

**TORPOR:** *You spent an era in torpor, hoping time would erase some of your mistakes.*

Remove one dot of Flaws.

You may remove two additional dots of Flaws and roll a die; on 1–5, lose a dot from your lowest rated Discipline.

## LOSING YOUR HUMANITY

Humanity cannot drop below 4 before the first session of play. If you roll more losses of Humanity, you instead lose a Conviction and its corresponding Touchstone. In the end, you should replace any Touchstones who did not make it through the Oceans of Time.

Any character that gains six dots of Flaws cannot gain any more. Instead, subtract two Advantage dots for each Flaw dot gained above that number. (Remember that torpor is always an option if the Flaws start stacking up.)

*bold? What impressed me and made me disappointed about the decade?*

See Table 2: Decades for inspiration.

If you really want to immerse yourself, you can write a short note about your unlife during each decade in a character journal or on a separate sheet. This step-by-step journey through time can help you create a solid foundation for a deep biography to be elaborated on in play.

**Note:** You can save Skill points, but saving points to spend them all in the last few decades to avoid Archaic specialties isn't allowed.

### STANDARD ANCILLA

The system presented here is an optional method for players when creating ancilla. You may still use the default system in *Vampire: The Masquerade* (+35 experience points, -1 Humanity, +2 Advantages, +2 Flaws, Blood Potency 2), although because of the slight differences, it's recommended all players follow the same system.

## Archaic Specialties

Archaic specialties represent how your area of expertise has been superseded as times have changed. However, as you'll discover, some specialties continue to have relevance as times change, especially when you battle antagonists as old as you.

Using Skills with Archaic specialties limits how often you can apply the standard +1 specialty bonus. Additionally, the Storyteller may deem certain situations warrant a -1 die to the pool instead, representing these outdated Skills.

### EXAMPLES:

*Performance (Early Tango) may make you look ok dancing at a house party. You stick out like a sore thumb at a backwater square dancing hot hash (-1), but in a vintage club or in any Argentinian Elysia, your posture and skill at making your dance partner appear to fly is highly impressive (+1).*

*Your reflexive stance, elbow-powered cuts to the neck and face, and unwillingness to back down make Melee (Academic fencing) a liability in a knife or fire fight against US Marines (-1), but Lord*

*have mercy upon the poor upstart neonate you face in a one-on-one duel with a light fencing sword in your practiced grip (+1).*

Be sure to connect your specialties to era you gained them and note them down on your character sheet.

### EXAMPLE:

*Darla has the Skill Medicine and takes the Archaic specialty Midwifery. She writes it down on her Character Sheet like this: "(Midwifery 1760s)" to remember that her specialty is dated if she ever needs to deliver a baby. It'll probably still be a help but it depends on the situation. Darla is free to spend several specialties on midwifery, adding "1950s" for instance, but specialties won't stack. Darla simply will be more likely to be able to use her one-die specialty bonus in the present the less outdated it is.*

*Archaic specialties may or may not become completely outdated in modern nights, depending what they are. Georgian contract law will rarely be useful except perhaps in legal matters involving other Kindred from that era, while the basics of blacksmithing remain pretty constant and only some of the tools have changed.*

*The specialties and Storyteller character concepts in the Decades table are meant as inspiration—you're welcome to come up with your own. Just remember your character should've been able to pick them up in the era they represent.*



**TABLE 2: DECADES**

DECade	Events	Archaic Specialties	Storyteller Characters
1760s	Catherine the Great at war with the Ottoman Empire The Seven Years' War Spanish missionaries come to California. Gorkhas conquer Nepal. Pontiac's Rebellion The French surrender New France, and the city of Quebec, to Britain. The Industrial Revolution is in its early stages. Alchemy is falling out of favor among chemists. A local farmer of Gévaudan slays a man-eating animal known as the Beast of Gévaudan, probably a lupine.	Bloodletting Kukri Mechanical chemistry Alchemy Midwifery Early modern experimental philosophy Star-fort defense French confectionery	Classical composer Court doctor and pioneer alienist American settler Jesuit refugee Gorkha soldier Franciscan monk Learned upper-class Lady Ornamental hermit Portrait artist Serf
1770s	The American Revolutionary War begins. Kindred rebels in New England fight for independence from European Camarilla control (pp. 35–39). Cook reaches Australia. Xhosa Wars in South Africa The Illuminati founded in Bavaria War of Bavarian Succession Publication of Adam Smith's <i>The Wealth of Nations</i>	Classical rhetoric Smoothbore flintlock musket Grapeshot cannon Oceanic navigation Courtly etiquette Wig maker	American Independence fighter Hessian mercenary Huguenot immigrant Anti-Catholic rationalist Aboriginal warrior Xosa shepherd Tavern keeper
1780s	The French Revolution begins; in Paris, a new Bohemian faction of Camarilla Kindred challenge the traditionalist old-guard rule (pp. 39–42). First Anglo-Maratha War The Northwest Indian War begins. Liberal reforms in the Holy Roman Empire; abolition of serfdom Spanish settlers found Los Angeles on the village of Yaanga. Australia colonized by the British	Needlework Field amputations Blacksmithing Brickmaking Timber framing construction Sheep keeping Linnaean taxonomy Cagliostrian Hermeticism Montgolfier balloon piloting	British criminal settled in Australia British army Redcoat First Nations warrior Revolutionary spy Freed peasant Tax collector Spanish missionary Anti-Spanish indigenous rebel Cagliostro cultist Balloon pioneer Domestic servant
1790s	The Reign of Terror in France Slavery abolished in all French territories Assassination of Gustav III of Sweden Haitian Revolution Expansion of European Colonialism British anti-colonist soldiers from Sierra Leone found "Freetown." The Irish Rebellion of 1798 The Second Great Awakening	Shipboard combat Sonnet writing Sufi riddles Cannon siege tactics Woodworking Neoclassical sculpting Domestic service	Romantic poet Irish revolutionary Escaped French noble Naturalist explorer Travel writer Amateur botanist Landed Gentry Lady's maid Wet nurse
1800s	Second Anglo-Maratha War Napoleonic Wars Slave trade banned in the U.K., the U.S., and Denmark-Norway Napoleon reintroduces slavery in French colonies. Serfdom abolished in Prussia and Warsaw Haiti gains independence. The Holy Roman Empire is dissolved. Zheng Yi Sao commands a fleet of 40,000–60,000 pirates in the South China Sea.	Napoleonic cadre organization Prussian fencing Cartography Lithography Crop cultivation Food preservation Haggling Georgian contract law	Grand Guignol actor Haitian liberation fighter Russian Cossack Prussian Officer Apothecary Industrious tradesperson Abolitionist Destitute widow South China pirate
1810s	The Napoleonic Empire collapses after attempt to invade Russia. Sweden claims Norway from Denmark. Spanish American Wars of Independence The War of 1812 Automation of textile industry triggers Luddite uprisings, destroying machines in northern England and the Midlands. The Regency era begins: Prince George becomes regent of Great Britain. Gaslight becomes common in cities, complicating street hunting. Mount Tambora erupts, leading to "The Year Without a Summer;" the sulfide gas reflects sunlight over the northern hemisphere, making it possible for many Kindred to operate briefly during daylight. Polidori's "The Vampyre" published (1819)	Industrial engineering Steamboat piloting Black powder demolitions Perfume making Civil engineering Tailoring Fine penmanship	Maritime artillery crew Napoleonic soldier Struggling textile worker Coal miner Local parish priest High Society lady Most eligible bachelor

1820s	Disastrous Blood Wedding in London between Anne Bowesley and Louise Maria de Rambaud (pp. 90–93) The first photograph is taken. The first railroad is built. The town of Ashcroft is founded around a coal mining operation. The Greek War of Independence The Missouri Compromise The Russo-Turkish War of 1828–29 The Java War	Apothecary Loom tuning Charcoal manufacturing Sailmaking Janbiya dagger Yatagan saber Charleville flintlock musket	Opium smuggler Russian Decembrist Resurrectionist body snatcher Methodist preacher Devious professional courtesan Ottoman court scholar Principled rural schoolmaster	
1830s	The Black Hawk War and the Battle of Fort Dearborn Ada Byron becomes the first known coder in the world. The Spanish Inquisition officially ends, 1834. The Montmartre Massacre, in which Prince Villon of Paris destroys illegal children in his domain (pp. 93–96) Victoria becomes Queen of England, 1837. The First Opium War Abolition of Slavery in the British Empire The Trail of Tears First regular steamship service across the Atlantic	Percussion cap flintlock pistol Canal lock operation Auctioneering Herbal remedies Cavalry tactics Professional quill cutting	The last Spanish Inquisitor Runaway circus performer Transcendentalist intellectual Romantic landscape painter Member of the temperance movement	
1840s	The Irish Famine The European revolutions of 1848 The Treaty of Waitangi becomes New Zealand's founding document. China cedes Hong Kong to the British to end the First Opium War. The First Anglo-Sikh War The Mexican-American War Marx and Engels' <i>Communist Manifesto</i> (1848) The California Gold Rush begins. The Women's suffrage movement holds its first convention, 1848.	Railroad engineering Muzzle-loading rifle Cuirassier saber Foundry work Daguerreotype photography Urban planning Victorian cookery Parliamentary procedure	Social reformer Confident governess Southern belle Secret Carbonari movement member Rich philanthropist Bath-house operator Bored court-house stenographer Pre-Raphaelite artist Underground Railroad worker	
1850s	The Crimean War The Second Opium War Mass migration to the American frontier Mormon missionaries settle what will become Las Vegas. The Second War of Italian Independence The First Indian War of Independence Construction of Central Park in New York begins. The Colorado Gold Rush begins. Charles Darwin's <i>On the Origin of Species</i> (1859)	Taxidermy Whaling Rope making Ice fishing Percussion revolver Animal trapping Fur processing Livestock handling	French Foreign Legionnaire Brothel madam Pawnbroker Gold Rush prospector Traveling piano tuner Russian serf seeking emancipation	
1860s	Abraham Lincoln is elected, 1860. The American Civil War The Great Unification, in which domains around Berlin are forcibly consolidated under one Prince (pp. 101–104) Little Crow's War World's first subway system, the London Underground, opens. The New York Draft Riots The Japanese Imperial Army fight the last shogunate samurai in a battle of guns against swords, 1864. Haussmann's renovation of Paris Gregor Mendel and Francis Galton discover genetics. Canada becomes a British dominion.	Breechloader cannon Battlefield medicine Telegraph operation Springfield rifle musket Underground Mining Horse-drawn machinery	Union Army nurse Chinese railroad laborer Anarchist laundress Tobacco manufacturer Hard-working farm hand saving up for something important Lovestruck barber's apprentice	
1870s	The Second Industrial Revolution The Unification of Germany Franco-Prussian War Battle of Little Bighorn Post-Civil War Reconstruction in the U.S. The Satsuma Rebellion The Hermetic order of the Golden Dawn is founded. Bulgaria and Romania declare independence from the Ottoman Empire. Le Fanu's <i>Carmilla</i> (1871–72)	Masonry Coal mining Stenography Chemical tanning Cigar rolling Hat making Butchery Chassepot infantry rifle	Gentleman explorer Lady of leisure Shameless street urchin Eccentric dandy Ottoman janissary Apache warrior Australian outlaw Russian Nihilist Paris Commune revolutionary	

1880s	First Boer War Jack the Ripper terrorizes London. British occupation of Cairo Serbo-Bulgarian War France colonizes Indochina. Increased European colonization in Africa The Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria's 50-year reign, 1887 Assassination of Czar Alexander II of Russia The automobile is invented. Vlad Dracula takes domain in England and breaks the Masquerade by telling his story to Bram Stoker (pp. 96–100).	Bicycle repair and maintenance Tinware manufacturing Steam powered printing press operation Mediumship Pamphlet writing Classical studies	Wild West outlaw, cowboy, and cattle rustler Wild West lawman and gambler Russian revolutionary Irish immigrant laborer Motherless chimney sweep
1890s	Spanish-American War Second Boer War The opening of the Trans-Siberian Railway in Russia The Hawaiian Kingdom overthrown by U.S. insurgents The First Sino-Japanese War Economic depression in the U.S. The Boxer Rebellion Bram Stoker's <i>Dracula</i> (1897)	Soft drink syrup mixing X-ray photography Serialized letter novel writing Bolt-action service rifle Early automobile mechanic Hat pin (melee) Baby farming	French Colonial settler in Algiers Cigarette-smoking New Woman lady auteur Bohemian painter Socialist newspaper editor Arts & Crafts Movement designer Asylum employee Miracle cure salesman Consulting detective
1900s	King Edward VII reigns over the British Empire. First radio broadcast The 1906 San Francisco earthquake Paris bounces back as the cultural capital of Europe. Japan established as a world power following the Russo-Japanese War Ottoman invasion of Persia The Trial of Mirrors: the blood god Kemintiri humiliates the Camarilla (pp. 104–107). Norway declares independence from Sweden.	Zeppelin navigation Edison phonograph cylinder recording Typewriting Conversational French Horology Instrument tuning	Suffragette in the Women's Rights Movement British soldier in the Boer War Daring Zeppelin pilot Rich heiress Chauffeur at a great estate Dashing foxtrot instructor Ballets Russes dancer Gibson Girl with a secret
1910s	R.M.S. Titanic sinks, 1912 First Balkan Wars World War I Latvian War of Independence Execution of Czar Nicholas II, his family, and servants The Great Influenza epidemic of 1918–20 The Russian Revolution The Mexican Revolution Dissolution of the German colonial empire, the Ottoman Empire, Austro-Hungary, and the Russian Empire	Tank-mounted field gun Trench warfare Seitengewehr 98 "Butcher Blade" bayonet Officer's saber Trench club Enfield machine gun Gasoline engine repair Field dressing Trench art Morse Code Biplane piloting Telephone switchboard operation	Wounded soldier in the field hospital Trench poet Red Cross volunteer October Revolution Bolshevik Deserter from the front Officer's batman Butler to a declining noble house
1920s	Prohibition The discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamen Turkish War of Independence Polish-Soviet War Irish War of Independence Russian Civil War Rise of radical political movements The Soviet Brujah Council formally abandons the ideal of open coexistence with mortals, 1926 ( <i>Anarch</i> , p. 27). Egypt gains independence. The Wall Street Crash, 1929	Thompson machine gun Charleston Jazz improvisation Silent film acting Egyptology Moonshine making Smuggling	Daring French aviator Russian émigré Lost Generation writer Surrealist painter Italian-American racketeer Sea captain Tea room waitress Jazz club performer

1930s	The Great Depression The Second Sino-Japanese War begins. The Hunt for the Hidden begins in Prague (pp. 107–110). Spanish Civil War Rise of Nazism in Germany Soviet famine The Hindenburg Disaster World War II begins, 1939. <i>Dracula</i> screens (1931)	Smith & Wesson K-Frame .357 Magnum Surrealism Dust Bowl survival Prop and stage design Radio broadcasting, Synchronized swimming	German refugee Hollywood cameraman Boy Scout trying to earn another badge Disturbingly attractive street vendor Bureaucrat working against the system from within Civil Rights activist Vaudeville performer Soup kitchen volunteer	
1940s	The Holocaust Atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki Japanese-American Incarceration The Second Anarch Revolt begins in Los Angeles; the Anarch Free States are founded. The Moonlit Crusade begins as Camarilla Princes seek to divert attention away from Anarch causes (pp. 114–117). Founding of the U.N. and NATO The Cold War begins. The Havana Conference mob summit on Cuba Founding of the Hells Angels, 1946 Indonesian War of Independence First Indochina War Radiocarbon dating developed The People's Republic of China proclaimed	M6 tank cannon STEN submachine gun Codebreaking Navajo code talking War Bond salesmanship Victory garden cultivation High altitude bombing Propaganda Document forgery Human smuggling Rationing	Rationing coupon clerk American Rosie the Riveter in the wartime workforce British Spitfire pilot Resistance fighter Professional boxer Orphaned relative War correspondent Scrap metal collector Traveling salesman Fruit orchard farmer	
1950s	Racial segregation is ended in the U.S. The Space Race begins. The Korean War The Vietnam War begins The Civil Rights Movement The first passenger jet flight route opens. Egyptian Revolution Color television The CIA fake vampire attacks in the Philippines to destabilize the Hukbalahap Rebellion.	Chemical warfare Guitar Dance the Twist Highway lore Diesel engine repair Switchblade Beretta M1951 AK-47 Analog photo editing	Murderous housewife Beatnick biker-poet Civil rights firebrand Moody Korean War veteran Paranoid Rockabilly drummer Black sci-fi writer struggling to get published Rocket Propulsion engineer Communist hunter (FBI, CIA) Rebellious teenager	
1960s	The Cuban Missile Crisis Stonewall riots The Moon landing Construction of the first laser The Second Vatican Council Coup d'état in Brazil Assassinations of Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., and Robert F. Kennedy The Hunt of Spring, 1968: Anarchs hunt Old Clan Tzimisce and Nosferatu in Prague (p. 108). The Six-Day War The Summer of Love	Hotwire car M16 Stunt driving Maoist political theory Infiltrate protest movement Microfiche technologies	Ambitious secretary in government job Draft dodger electrician Improv actor and activist Union strike organizer British pop vocalist	
1970s	Black September The Baader-Meinhof Group is active. 1973 oil crisis 1973–1975 Recession The Fall of Saigon Chilean coup d'état Watergate scandal The Killing Fields murders in Cambodia Kent State massacre Massive urban decay in Cleveland, Detroit, and New York City The Soviet-Afghan War begins. Iranian Revolution Emergence of American serial killers The GRU Fifth Directorate discover Anarch influence over the KGB and start their fight against the Kindred ( <i>Camarilla</i> , p. 74).	Homemade explosives Investigative journalism Flamethrower Riot suppression Synthesize psychedelics Self-reliance farming Ambush tactics Computer programming Psychological profiling Fundamentalist theology	Disillusioned terrorist in prison Punk band-provocateur Vacuous erotic movie film star Serial killer masquerading as a Hippie Conceptual artist Self-absorbed bouncer at Studio 54 Junkie cop and single parent Psychologist consulting for the FBI	



1980s	Chernobyl disaster Beirut barracks bombing The internet is created. Satanic Panic The HIV epidemic The crack epidemic in the U.S. Large-scale thin-blood purges (p. 117) The War of Chicago breaks out, as lupines and Sabbat attack the city ( <i>Chicago by Night</i> , p.103, 119). Space shuttle Challenger explodes on lift-off. U.S. invasion of Grenada Revolutions of 1989; Fall of the Berlin Wall	Metal guitar Charismatic preaching SWAT team tactics MAC-10 Hedge fund investment Haute Couture fashion trends Plastic surgery	Wall Street yuppie in lust Liberation theology Catholic priest Talented but shy graffiti artist Ex-KGB agent with terminal cancer HIV-infected Broadway dancer British metal bass-guitar playboy Crime scene cleaner
	Collapse of the Soviet Union The Congo Wars Heaven's Gate collective suicide The Gulf War Rodney King trial Nelson Mandela elected President of South Africa The Week of Nightmares; the ancient predecessor of the Ravnos is said to wake; many members of the clan are lost (p. 117). Waco Siege The first sheep, Dolly, is cloned. The Los Angeles riots Oklahoma City Bombing Tokyo subway sarin attack Viagra is created. The EU is established. The Y2K scare	Network programming Glock 9mm Cult deprogramming Chaos Magick DJ (CD or turntable) Cause false memories Record label lore Rapping Piercing Street magic Sabotage 'zine production	Britpop songwriter with heroin issues Occultist comic book artist School-shooting survivor Left-wing journalist Comet-worshiping cultist Straight-edge hardcore punk musician Heroin chic model Techno DJ Irreverent conspiracy theory radio host Regression therapy scam artist
	September 11th attacks Homeland Security gains access to all U.S. citizens' private data. The US initiates the War on Terror. Hurricane Katrina devastates New Orleans. The Great Recession Reality TV surges in popularity. The Human Genome Project is declared complete. Facebook launches. The first iPhone Government agencies commence coordinated attacks on "blankbody threats," marking the beginning of what becomes known as the Second Inquisition Obama is elected. Vienna Chantry destroyed; the Tremere Pyramid decapitated.	Digital photo editing Designer drug manufacturing Game programming Cybersecurity Software piracy Urban exploration Guerilla marketing Skateboarding Yoga, hot and otherwise	Pickup artist Black hat hacker (illegal) White hat hacker (legal) "Internet wants to be free" pro-piracy activist Nature photographer Horse girl with serious connections
	Occupy Wall Street The First and Second Arab Spring The Beckoning begins, marking the start of the so-called Gehenna War. Berlin falls to a bloody Anarch revolution ( <i>Anarch</i> , p. 37; <i>Camarilla</i> pp. 111–112). The U.S. conducts more than 500 unmanned drone strikes throughout the Middle East. Convention of Prague. The majority of Brujah leave the Camarilla. The Vermillion Wedding. The Ashirra formally allies with the Camarilla. The fall of London as Second Inquisition agencies annihilate the local Camarilla hierarchy. Marihuana legalized in several U.S. states Black Lives Matter European migrant crisis Global awareness of man-made climate change Advancement of LGBTQ rights in the West MeToo movement begins Brexit Greek economy collapses Russo-Ukrainian War begins	Online marketing Hack digital car DIY plastic surgery Quantum physics Online community management Online provocation (Trolling) Cryptocurrency trading Memecraft Speedrunning E-sports Conspiracy theory expertise (Illuminati, Flat Earth, or chemtrails)	Climate change lobbyist Travel influencer with money problems Potential whistleblower Ex-military trans rights campaigner Nihilist pop diva Radical social sciences student Gun-running conspiracy theorist Pregnant teen nail tech with a heart of gold

## Ambition and Desire

As the final step of character creation, you should choose your long-term Ambition and an immediate Desire.

The Ambitions of ancillae can be grand but should still be specific, like “Eradicating the Sabbat presence on the U.S. East Coast” or “Making up for all the murders I committed in the last 90 years of low Humanity.” The Desire reflects what they want now and here and can be as frivolous as any fledgling’s, if not more—choose something that involves someone on the Relationship map or counteracts the goals or morals of another coterie character to optimize the potential for interesting dramatic roleplay.

## Final Words: Ancilla Chronicles and Power Level

Old and powerful vampires can influence or destroy whole mortal subcultures and upstart coteries and take on enemies even older and more inhuman than they are. The characters created with this system are significantly more powerful than neonates. This is intentional.

The power difference will be most visible in mixed coteries, but remember that even if neonates are weaker in terms of dots on the character sheet, they blush easily, remember their humanity, and have access to contemporary society in ways ancillae envy.

Let ancillae be powerful in play, and let the players take on the challenges that come of it.

Ancilla-level danger, if it’s sought out or emerges from events in your chronicle, could regularly involve task Difficulties and enemies more challenging than the standard. Goons outnumber them by at least three to one. The stakes could involve whole cities and institutions or accidentally spill over to threaten whole families or cliques of kine. They could just as easily remain as personal as any game of *Vampire*; despite their age, they were people once.

We do not recommend adjusting Difficulties or enemies down to match the Blood Potency and general power level of the players’ characters. Simply let play and the long past of ancilla characters present high-risk, high-reward opportunities rather than springing them upon the players.

Ancilla-level danger should be telegraphed so

players see it coming and choose to avoid it, even if the cost of doing so could be high. Ancillae should feel the consequences of their own actions rather than be subjected to the whims of a cruel power structure. After all, they’re often part of that power structure.

### TORPOR AND THE INEXPERIENCED ANCILLA

Being an ancilla doesn’t necessarily mean that you’ve become more powerful. Sometimes a young vampire falls into torpor and emerges into a completely different world a century later. This is one of the worst ways to become an ancilla: You lose all of your connections to your humanity in one go, you’re weaker than your compatriots, and you have no idea how the world works. What’s more, it might not even take a hundred years. Losing just a year to torpor might destroy an ill-prepared neonate’s Mask, Resources, and Fame.

This also means that neonate or childer characters (in terms of experience or experience points) may still be old enough to be ancillae.

### Edge of the Abyss

Ancillae may discover they are brushing up against an even more dangerous game than Kindred city politics. Playing intricate power games with elders or engaging with the Gehenna War should be an overwhelming challenge, even to a full ancilla coterie.

The world of the wholly dead is ancient and full of secrets unknowable to those who view it by the light of their humanity. Elders may have access to powers ancillae have yet to dream about and may have the might of oligarchs and private armies at their beck and call.

### THE WHIMPER OF THE BEAST

**H**eavy is the head that wears the crown, the emperor is dressed in rags, and the behemoth fears the squeaking of the mouse. With all the talk of how empowered the ancillae are, don’t forget that the mighty can also be pitiful. Raw strength does not translate to inner peace, and some people never learn to navigate the social politics of their society, not even given decades. Ancilla chronicles can be home to the Prince and their Court, but also to the centuries-old recluse ruled by paranoid delusions and to the Romantic poet whose unlife skills never seem to catch up to his own ambitions. ■

Chapter Two

# THE THREAD:

## Mortal History



MIK  
2024

**T**ough some may wish it wasn't so, mortal society is inescapable for the Kindred.

When it changes, caused by crisis or just the inevitable progress of history, it forces them to adapt and to pretend to change as well, lest they make themselves suspicious. But most Kindred are, in essence, beings of the time when they were first Embraced. As fields grow into forests and democracies are born and slain around them, they are keepers of their past as it remains inside.

This chapter dives into a selection of different eras and impactful events from human history, exploring how Kindred may have interacted with them. It should be said that the chapter cannot and doesn't try to represent more than a sliver of the historical past, interesting moments experienced from the perspective of the Kindred. You can use it for inspiration when building ancilla characters and to run Memoriām—whether you want to run the occasional quick flashback Memoriām or spend whole sessions diving into the past of players' characters. You'll find Storyteller characters, settings, and events that you can use to help bring to life your stories at the table.

**Tip:** Many of the Storyteller characters from this book can easily make cameos in each other's eras. Need more material for a scene set in the Twenties? Go to the Great Depression.

## Fiction not Fact

Writers of historical novels must come to terms with one thing: When you blend reality and invention, you're bound to get some details wrong. So instead of perfect accuracy, the goal is usually to convey the overall spirit, attitudes, and conditions of a certain time and place in a way that makes them come alive to the reader. As Storytellers, that's a good goal to set as well.

You'll get far towards that goal by outlining some big lines of an era—is it a time of war or peace? Does your story, or flashback, take place in the shadow of the Great Depression or perhaps in the aftermath of the French Revolution? These big events can help set the mood of the setting even if your story doesn't directly involve them.

Then you flavor the setting with details that support the mood you're going for, such as what people in the scene are wearing, how they get around, or how they speak. Focus on what you know, and don't get bogged down by what you don't.

### ALIBIS FOR CHARACTER INTERACTION

Some settings are harder to move around in than others. In eras where class, race, and gender play a large part in the organization of society, it's harder for characters to move between locations. A standard mortal character in Victorian London is unlikely to be able to attend both the gatherings in the Royal Society and those in the slum without causing a scandal, for instance. But the players' characters need not be like everybody else. Here you'll find some alibis for character interaction—excuses and reasons for characters to be in spaces that otherwise can be exclusive.

- Artists, actresses, entertainers, explorers, acrobats, composers, courtesans, authors, journalists, young men, and widows with fortunes of their own are often permitted to transgress cultural norms.
- You can lie about who you are. Some mortals have Masks as well.
- Bribery, flattery, and special talent can be exchanged for favors and acceptance.
- Servants are often all but invisible.
- Traveling merchants, tinkers, doctors, midwives, tailors, milliners, French chefs, pastry makers, architects, and other crafts and trades people can go wherever their job takes them.
- Clergy and philanthropists are always invited or can say they've come to save somebody.
- Kindred with Disciplines like Dominate and Presence are never really excluded from anything. With Obfuscate you can at least watch from the shadows.
- The errand boy's big packages are the yellow vest of back-then. Look busy and determined, and no one will ask questions.

## When to Take Creative Liberties

Feel free to invent people and places that never existed. Historical characters can make cameos but don't worry if someone appears ten years too early in the wrong location. As characters, they serve your story, not the other way around. That goes for the culture of the setting, too. If you need to break a bit with the gender norms of a given period to be able to run an interesting Memoriam for a player's female character, feel free. We don't suggest rewriting history in a way that erases real atrocities, but where you place

your story and what you focus on is up to you. See Appendix II for more advice on playing with history.

## Thinking in Genre

It can be helpful for the Storyteller to decide in advance of engaging with Memoriam what their ambition level is. Are you aiming to make your Memoriam scenes as historically realistic as possible? Or is your goal something more of a pastiche? Returning to the 1940s for a scene, are you going for realism, a film noir vibe, a war-time action movie feel, or something else? Thinking in terms like these can help direct your focus and provide inspiration.

There's something I learned as a mortal that worked less and less as years went by in my undeath. Among the living, you can start again. The world is vast. Move to a new place and nobody knows who you are. Among our kind, the same is true at first. Who among us knows every inhabitant of even our closest neighboring domains?

As you age, this anonymity fades. Your Kindred know who you are and what you did.

I did well during the Great War. Of course, war is always a good time for those such as us, parasites feeding off the corpse of humanity. So many Kindred tried to hide, escape, and survive. They were scared of the destruction, the industrial scale of the death machine. They left their assets unguarded, and I was there to take

over. That's how I acquired the wealth that has sustained my various masks to these modern nights. It came from my Kindred, who couldn't handle the sweep of mortal events.

Unfortunately, they remember. Those who were destroyed had children. Ghouls. Even mortal relatives. All the detritus of social existence. I thought that time would sweep such problems aside, but that's not true. Not when we persist, year after year, with our grudges.

Sometimes I wonder if I would have acted differently if I had known my actions during the war would brand me a traitor forever. It's hard to say. I'll ponder the question as I lie to sleep for the day in the palace I recently acquired in the Loire Valley.

– From the diaries of the Lasombra Bianca Archetti

# The American Revolution

**Time:** 1775–1783

**Place:** North America

The War of Independence is a conflict between the Crown and the Colonies, between European aristocracy and American desire for freedom, between old blood and new. Between 1775–1783, thirteen of the North American colonies fight to throw off British rule and establish the United States of America.

The British army is a large and looming stable force of about 42,000 men. It enlists farm boys, enslaved people, prisoners, and mercenaries. Three-fifths of the army are the so-called Hessian mercenaries, German soldiers who are feared and despised by the Americans. Motivated by their wages, they're well-trained but take little initiative.

The American rebels are defended primarily by two forces: The Continental Army, which never grows larger than 20,000 men at any one time. And the state militias, smaller groups of poorly disciplined militias where soldiers as well as officers fight for only a few weeks or months at a time so they can handle the harvest in between battles. Spain and France support the rebels later in the war as well. Conditions for American soldiers are miserable—they get too little food, they freeze, and payment is uncertain. But the nature of the task means that for a time every man has a chance to be heard; a common shoemaker can influence matters of state, a dockworker gets to speak in town hall meetings with the voice of a newborn country.

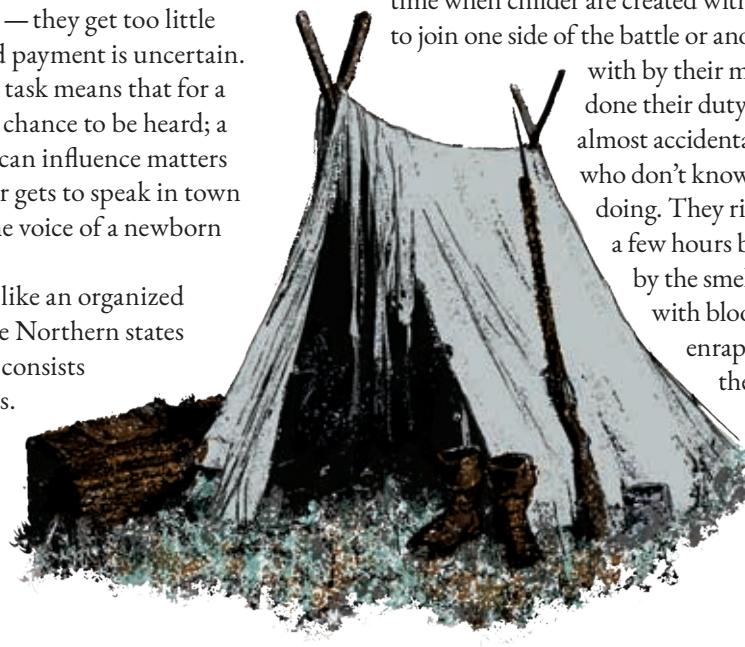
If there's anything like an organized vampire society in the Northern states during these years, it consists of Camarilla domains. Ventru and Tremere, who arrived as early as the 1630s, came to lay claim to

towns even as they were being built. They were young Kindred who decided to find new domains of their own instead of rebelling against seemingly invincible elders. Many Brujah came too, eager to forge new paths for themselves, but were driven out of their havens and forced into hiding by Ventru, who would tolerate no resistance to their rules. Conflict simmers now between all three lineages, with the head of the first New England Tremere chantry, Madeline Coventry, pulling at the reins just as much as the Brujah settlers. But there are others, too. Bit by bit, the European Kindred realize that the Sabbat arrived before they did, on Spanish ships a hundred years before. The deep South and South America are prowled by Cainites, who laugh at the idea of bowing to those who would make chains for themselves out of ideals. In the wilds, Gangrel and lupines run with indigenous peoples. Sightings are rare for those who prefer the bustling colonial port cities but never impossible.

The conflict between the factions mirrors the one between the British Crown and the Americans. It becomes a war between Loyalists, who still serve European Camarilla Princes, and those Kindred who seek self-determination in the newly-born U.S.; a war in which the revolutionaries find themselves allying with Sabbat monsters—something Kindred of modern nights will not appreciate being reminded of.

Another thing that often forgotten is that war is a time when childe are created with abandon, forged to join one side of the battle or another, and dealt

with by their masters once they've done their duty. Others are created, almost accidentally, by neonates who don't know what they are doing. They rise on the battlefield a few hours before dawn, roused by the smell of mud mixed with blood, and become so enraptured with the taste they perish right then and there with the sunrise. They are the nameless, and they are best forgotten.



## Flashback Characters

### **Francis Marion, “The Swamp Fox”**

This military officer commands a task force of about 80 men known as Marion’s Men—a band of guerilla fighters who strike fast and hard against the British forces without mercy when they’re unwise enough to enter the swamps of South Carolina. Marion is short and lean with sharp features and intelligent eyes. His men consider him a friend.

Marion has already crossed paths with Sabbat neonates. So far, they only seem to attack the British, so he simply instructs his men to move in groups, hoping the monsters will keep their focus on the enemy. It’s up in the air whether he’ll ally with the night monsters or seek to destroy them if he has to make the choice.

**General Difficulty:** 4 / 3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 6, Mental 4

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 5

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Firearms 7, Stealth 7, Leadership 7

### **Madeline Coventry**

#### *One of the Leaders of the New England Rebels*

One of the first European Kindred to settle in New England in the 1630s, Coventry made Salem her seat of power. Here, she established her chantry by Embracing among those who’d have otherwise died in the trials. By the 1700s, the Boston Ventre started to see her as a real threat to their control of the New World. Allying herself with local Brujah and, by extension, Sabbat agents, Coventry becomes one of the de facto leaders of the anti-Loyalist rebels. In 1783, she takes Boston from the Ventre who still bow to Camarilla rulers based in Europe.

Coventry is a shrewd creature who will do what it takes to protect her interests and those of her chantry. She promised them an end to their suffering when she offered them eternity instead of Heaven, and she’ll keep her promise even if she has to wade through blood.

**Destiny:** Following her involvement in the American Revolution, Coventry will get embroiled in further

conflicts as others challenge her right to rule Boston. She’ll withdraw to Salem for a while, eventually falling into torpor. In modern nights, no one will be able to say if she still sleeps or is simply hiding.

**Clan:** Tremere

**Generation:** 8

**Embrace:** 1590

**Blood Potency:** 5

**Humanity:** 6

**General Difficulty:** 6 / 4

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 7, Social 7, Mental 8, Disciplines 7

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Occult 9 (ritual magic), Persuasion 9

**Disciplines:** Animalism 1 (Bond Famulus), Auspex 3 (Sense the Unseen, Premonition, Share the Senses), Blood Sorcery 3 (A Taste for Blood, Extinguish Vitae, Blood of Potency), Dominate 2 (Compel, Mesmerize)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 7 / 5, add 2 to all pools, add four dots of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 1.

### **MEETING CHARACTERS IN MODERN NIGHTS**

All Storyteller characters in this book are provided with the stats of the era they appear in. For the purpose of allowing players’ character to run into them again in modern nights, see *Modern Nights* at the end of each Kindred character. Wights, ghouls, and mortals aren’t expected to survive, but you’ll find tips on how to make quick stats for ancilla Storyteller characters on p. 9, if you want to Embrace anyone.

### **Hessian Wight**

With disgust, the Patriots describe the Hessian soldiers as murderers and monsters. Little do they know.

The Hessian wight rides out every night in search of relief from his torment. He was a decorated officer, as you can tell from his uniform when he gets close. Perhaps someone intended to make a weapon for the British out of him—a nighttime hero of the Crown. But now he rides alone, seeking blood, perhaps revenge, blind to anything but a thirst that won’t be sated and an anger he no longer understands.

Locals prone to superstition tell stories of a ghostly rider on a dark horse who leaves a trail of corpses in his wake. Others say there's nothing to the rumors—just a German deserter fleeing from his task or hallucinations of soldiers who see too much in the shadows.

**Destiny:** A wight is terrifying to encounter but rarely lasts long.

**Clan:** Gangrel, Nosferatu, or Ravnos

**Generation:** 7

**Embrace:** Between 1776–1783

**Blood Potency:** 5

**Humanity:** 0

**General Difficulty:** 5 / 3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 2, Mental 3, Disciplines 5

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 3

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 7 (riding), Melee

7 (cavalry sable), Survival 7 (tracking)

**Disciplines:** Animalism 1 (Bond Famulus), Fortitude 3 (Resilience, Unswayable Mind, Toughness), Obfuscate 4 (Cloak of Shadows, Unseen Passage, Silence of Death, Vanish)

### Hessian War Horse

The black mare, which once had a name, is the ghoul animal companion of the Hessian wight. Its coat is matted, its mane tangled, and it looks almost ready to drop. But neither exhaustion nor the explosion of gunpowder can halt the horse when its rider is sitting on its back.

Before the Hessian lost his humanity, this horse was his closest friend. Now their bond is warped, kept strong only by the vitae he feeds it from his veins.

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 7, Social 1, Mental 1, Disciplines 1

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 3

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 4

**Discipline:** Obfuscate 1 (Cloak of Shadows)

**Special:** The Hessian war horse does +3 damage when trampling prone opponents.

## Flashback Locations

**BOSTON:** King George dislikes Boston in particular. He's been trying to quell the rebellious spirit growing here since before the Americans started their war for "independence." Ever since the massacre of 1770, when British soldiers fired into a crowd and killed civilians, when the Loyalists crack down on one act of insurrection, another breaks out. In response, the British use the gravestones on Copp's Hill as target practice, limit the rights of the locals to meet and organize, and impose sanctions on the Boston trade.

Boston has become a powder keg, ready to blow at any moment. A Ventre Prince controls the city but, having styled himself a Loyalist, fears nightly for the safety of his haven.



**NEW YORK:** Surrounded by a maze of waterways, New York is almost impossible to defend from the crushing force of the British Navy who hold it for most of the war. At least a dozen Kindred prowl the streets nightly, and more arrive regularly on trade ships from Europe. Most are reluctant to get involved with the war effort, wanting to focus on better things like culture and getting on with business.

New Yorkers pride themselves on being much more benevolent to their slaves than their neighbors in the South—but many still take issue in 1779 when General Clinton promises freedom to all enslaved men who enlist on the side of the British. The city fills with thousands of freed black soldiers.

**CHARLESTOWNE:** The most important port city in the South and one of the wealthiest cities in the United States, Charlestowne exports rice and fabric to the West Indies and imports luxury goods to sell in Georgia and the Carolinas. To protect economic interests, the city is Patriot already from 1776—but the greater region is split. The battles fought down here in the South are nightmarish. Neighbor turns on neighbor. Loyalist forces will murder pregnant women, mount rebel heads on stakes, and torch down homes with the people still in them. Sabbat neonates feed on the still-breathing bodies of “traitors” hung from the trees of South Carolina, calling the woods their larder.

In 1780, the British take Charlestowne in what becomes the biggest defeat of the war. Continental soldiers are imprisoned on prison ships in Charlestowne harbor, where nearly 800 of them die from disease and malnutrition. If you were here, you likely feel sick near running water for reasons that have nothing to do with what harms vampires in European folklore.

## Flashback Scenes

**THE MARCH TO CONCORD:** It’s the evening of April 18, 1775. 700 British Redcoats march out of Boston to seize the guns and ammunition stored by the local militia in Concord, Massachusetts. The weather is shit, and they have to march through brackish marsh water, some places waist-deep. Empty-eyed newborn Sabbat fledglings pull them down under the water to drink their fill, and fear spreads among the ranks like frozen tendrils as comrades who

were there moments ago are suddenly gone. By the time the Redcoats have been transported across the Charles River to Cambridge, it’s already 2:00 a.m. and they’ve quietly lost several men.

5:00 a.m.: The army arrives at Lexington. Fewer than one hundred armed Patriots meet them on the village green, but no one was supposed to know that they were coming. The British kill eight of the Americans and march on, but now the nervousness is so dense it could be cut.

Arriving in Concord, the troops are met with hundreds of determined, comparatively rested, militiamen. They don’t attack; they watch. But over the next four hours, as the Redcoats search the city and light fires in the already-emptied arms storages, another two thousand militiamen arrive, building a ring around the city.

Around midday, the British start their return to Boston. But now, from every direction, American snipers pick them off. The soldiers start leaving clothing, equipment, and cannons behind in the mud to get away a little faster. They don’t know the area. The Patriots do. Perhaps you almost died in this mud. Perhaps you did, waking up that night with a headache like an axe wound to lap up the bloodied mud and start your search for answers.

**THE BATTLE OF NEW YORK:** On June 10, 1776, General Howe and his brother, Admiral Lord Howe, arrive in New York with a fleet of 34,000 British and German troops and encamp on Staten Island. You are part of a small coterie of immigrant vampires who have so far managed to stay out of the conflict between Ventrue loyalists and Coventry’s rebels, spending your time on the things that truly matter, such as mesmerism and pornography. But the Howes bring an old and, frankly, evil agent of the Tower with them from the North, a Nosferatu by the name of Nostoket, who has allied with the British in the desire to return New York to what it should be—his private kingdom. Now he demands your loyalty. Will you choose a side or find a way to get out of this particular snare?

Nostoket is a 6th Generation elder with Puritan values who’s been in torpor in Canada since he was driven out of New Amsterdam and it became New York. He should be almost impossible to defeat except by accident or in social conflict. (See *Gehenna*

*War*, pp. 94–101 for guidelines on how to craft extraordinarily powerful Storyteller characters.)

**SMALLPOX IN THE BLOOD:** Disease runs rampant in the military camps. You become a carrier of smallpox. If you are yet mortal, the fever rages in your blood, a bumpy rash covers your body, and anything you eat spews out of you from both ends. Perhaps this is how you die: shitting your guts out in a damp tent on an empty field, your tent mate threatening to take your life early if the stink doesn't stop. If you carry the greater infection of vampirism, you feel no symptoms. Regardless, it's a test of Dexterity + Medicine at Difficulty 3 for your mortal contacts not to get infected. Until the end of the Memoriāl, you need to test for each one when you encounter them unless you keep your distance.

**WEAPONISED:** A clever general decides to turn you into a weapon. This is how you become one of the undead: given to a vampire on either side of the conflict so that they can make you a deadly tool for their cause.

**CHRISTMAS NIGHT, 1776:** George Washington, the commander of the Continental Army, has lost New York. But tonight he strikes back. Crossing ice-strewn Delaware River in darkness with some 2,400 troops, he falls upon the Hessian garrison at Trenton at dawn, taking almost a thousand prisoners. You fight on his side as a mortal man, let him into the garrison before the sun has risen, or fight on the side of the Hessian mercenaries, trying to hold back the colonial rebels.

## Topics for Further Research

- The Boston Tea Party
- The Intolerable Acts
- The Sons of Liberty
- Minutemen
- 1st Rhode Island Regiment
- The involvement of Indigenous people—and Gangrel—in the war
- Camp followers and women's roles in the war

# The French Revolution

**Time:** Circa 1787–1799

**Place:** France

The French Revolution heralds a time of change and upheaval of old hierarchies. Changing times impact ancient Cainite structures that seemed as immovable as the Old Regime. From the ashes of the ancient order rise new Camarilla figureheads leading a reformed, more adaptive, and more encroached institution. On the fringes, Anarch groups thrive on the chaos and violence of the Terror and find in collective tyranny the ideological foundation of the movement for decades to come.

## A Crumbling Old Guard

At the end of the 18th century, Kindred society mirrors ancient European institutions. Clans with historical ties to power (Toreador, Ventre, Tremere, and Brujah with their ties to military institutions) tend to recruit within privileged groups that ensure proper breeding and assets. However, even the more conservative start to hunt for talented individuals outside of traditional aristocratic stock, especially from the educated middle classes or ascending officers with no noble titles.



This results in a new faction of younger Camarilla Kindred, self-proclaimed as *the Bohemians*, and led by the Toreador Félicien Beaumont. This faction advocates for reform in Camarilla domains and opportunities for the newly Embraced to advance their station, pointing out the failure of mortal royals and nobles to adapt to changing times, new discoveries, and emerging technologies. Their center of activities is set up in Montmartre, a progressive central hub, until it gets cut down in the Montmartre Massacre a



half-century later (pp. 93–96). The onset of the Revolution sparks the progressive Bohemians into action against their Camarilla elders.

## Downfall and Deception

Most elders of the Camarilla underestimate the impact of mortal uprisings on their own existence. Yet, after the crumbling of the Absolute Monarchy and as popular violence rises, their assets, retainers, and sometimes even havens get caught in the crossfire. Younger licks and the Bohemian faction, better equipped to adapt, hide, and bounce back, start secretly seizing properties and assets. For the first few years, the insights and initiatives of the Bohemians are appreciated, and it looks like evolution could be organic. But old habits die hard, and the elders are quick to put them back in their proper place when they forget it. Tensions rise again, and the balance between the factions unravels, leading the ruling Prince François Villon and select members of his court into exile. Félicien Beaumont and the Bohemians rule, briefly, over a scattered Camarilla amid growing instability.

## Reign of Terror and Anarch Chaos

During the onset of the Revolution, lone Anarchs reach the city to prey under the cover of street riots and popular uprisings, enjoying the sudden and frequent outbursts of violence. However, when the mortal government establishes the Reign of Terror to combat the enemies of Revolution, Anarch groups start flocking to Paris in massive numbers, led by charismatic leaders such as Dalia Nakache, aka the “Guillotine Virago,” famed for running pack feedings during executions. This period is touted as a Golden Age by Anarchs, an exciting period of running free almost openly and relishing in streets drowned in blood.

On the other hand, for Camarilla loyalists, survival becomes a constant battle, and the trickle of exiles turns into a river. In Paris, Félicien Beaumont and his followers manage to protect selected assets and ensure Camarilla survival by laying low and cultivating strategic alliances. Cainites who survive that troubled period will later recount their tribulations with a mix of terror and exhilaration,

as opportunities were abundant but survival was strenuous. For many, the brutality of the period will spark an early loss in Humanity or a turn to mysticism in the hope of making sense of these events and their own malfeasant existence.

## Restoration and Mutations

As Paris is almost engulfed in riots and threatens to become an Anarch hub, reaction finally strikes. Mortal politics stabilize the Revolution with the one-two-three hits of the Bourgeois Republic Directory, Napoleonic Empire, and Monarchic Restoration. All three regimes act similarly in integrating the vivid forces of the bourgeois ascendant educated class and some progressive conquests to reactionary structures that capture the power for the elite, to the detriment of the popular, dangerous, and uneducated masses.

The Bohemian Cainites and exiled old guard, who have been on tenterhooks judging one another in expectation of the other's next move, use the appeased political atmosphere to strike a truce in the face of the Anarch expansion. The final purges in Paris provide cover to force most of the Anarchs into exile. Some Anarchs stay in Paris with a less visible public presence, though, and continue to thrive in the numerous Parisian revolutionary cycles of the 19th century.

The authority of the Camarilla is restored, but it's been shaken to its roots and becomes a fertile ground for political infighting between the weakened old guard and the younger licks. Fatigued by the constant bickering, Prince François Villon appears rarely and leaves Elysium grounds to Félicien Beaumont, who becomes his steward of the Paris Court.

## Fresh Blood and Mourning

During the French expansion and the Napoleonic wars, ideas of liberty and change influence Europe, creating many new young idealists and revolutionaries in Paris. Correspondingly, Paris sees an influx of younger Kindred both on the Anarch and Camarilla side, the latter drawn by the promise of affluence and influence offered by the Bohemian faction.

In a similar vein, the uprising and emancipation

in the French colony of Saint-Domingue and the (temporary) French abolition of slavery in 1794 bring hope of seeing people of color recognized and treated as equals in the new regime, and Paris becomes more multicultural as a result. These aspirations are short-lived, though, as the Revolution fails to deliver on its promises of liberty, equality, and fraternity.

The aftermath of the Revolution is a time of continued changes despite the conservative reaction and the restoration of the monarchy. Scientific salons, political cafés, and intellectual effervescence continue to sparkle and infuse the 19th century and the beginnings of the modern age. On the other hand, for many, the return to calm is a time of mourning, having to come to terms with the vast changes to society and their many, many losses.

## Flashback Characters

### Félicien Beaumont

#### *Leader of the Bohemian Faction*



Beaumont appears as a modern aristocrat, well dressed but in practical blacks and dark blues, with none of the frills of traditional nobility. A sharp politician trying to build political influence in Camarilla cities, he remains cautiously reformist and is careful to push the goalposts without antagonizing the old guard. He is always accessible to the new Kindred and a good guide and ally to help navigate the political intricacies and instability of Paris.

**Destiny:** Félicien will likely withdraw from the public eye at the beginning of the 19th century, perhaps to reappear during the German occupation in the 1940s. If he survives into the modern nights, he'll be feeling the call of the Beckoning.

**Clan:** Toreador

**Generation:** 10th

**Embrace:** 1762

**Blood Potency:** 2

**Humanity:** 5

**General Difficulty:** 5 / 4

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 7, Social 8, Mental 6, Disciplines 7

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 7

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 8, Performance

9, Persuasion 9, Politics 7

**Disciplines:** Auspex 1 (Sense the Unseen), Celerity 2 (Cat's Grace, Fleetness), Fortitude 1 (Resilience), Presence 3 (Awe, Lingering Kiss, Entrancement)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 6 / 5, add 2 to all Pools, add four dots of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 1.

## Dalia Nakache

Anarch Gang Leader, Street Agitator

A spitfire of a leader, Dalia is one of the most noticeable Anarch leaders amongst the many factions that roam Paris during the Revolutionary nights. She takes great pleasure in hunting fallen aristocrats and counterrevolutionaries. She doesn't trust easily but will welcome newcomers to the blood-crazed celebrations under the guillotine and can become a powerful ally and mentor if the opportunity arises.

Dalia's vampiric abilities are well geared towards maintaining a loyal cadre of ghoul followers, and they're rarely far from her, making it difficult to catch her by surprise.

**Destiny:** The fortunes of the Anarch Movement wax and wane, and Dalia's will change with them. She'll spend many decades hiding from Camarilla assassins and Blood Hunts, but in modern nights she'll still be around, still a revolutionary planner, thinker, and ideologue.

**Clan:** Salubri (pretending to be Brujah or Gangrel if prudent)

**Generation:** 10th

**Embrace:** 1742

**Blood Potency:** 2

**Humanity:** 4

**General Difficulty:** 5 / 3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 6, Mental 7, Disciplines 7

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 5

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 7, Brawl 10, Leadership 9, Intimidation 7

**Disciplines:** Auspex 1 (Heightened Senses), Fortitude 2 (Resilience, Invigorating Vitae), Dominate 2 (Slavish Devotion, Domitor's Favor)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 6 / 4, add 1 to all Pools, and add four dots of Disciplines.

## Flashback Locations

**MONTMARTRE:** This popular district of Paris has small winding streets and bustling cafés where artists and bon vivants love to gather. In the underground, you may find the secret *Halls of Montmartre*: arching caves of stone, richly adorned, where Félicien Beaumont and the Bohemians hold their meetings.

**LES INNOCENTS CEMETERY:** The center of Paris, near the food markets and butcher shops, hosts the biggest cemetery in the city. Beggars, peddlers, and sex workers use it as a trading and meeting place, and more unsavory unnatural predators can also hide in its shadowy corners.

## Flashback Scenes

**FIRST IMPRESSIONS:** You arrive in town as a newcomer, maybe an idealist revolutionary, maybe as a fledgling hoping to find your way around the famed Parisian society. The first impressions of the city are exhilarating: so many people, smells, and frantic activity. The Seine seems sparkling at night, lit by thousands of lights. Whether you start your exploration amongst your peers or in the popular setting of a riverside cafe, all is made to strike the imagination and ignite a revolutionary fever.

**UNDER THE GUILLOTINE:** Nestled between the sprawling Rue Royale and the palace and garden of Le Louvre, the Place de Grève is the main site used for executions. At the height of the Reign of Terror, hundreds get executed in a day; the blade of the executioner never stops, day or night. Onlookers come to watch the executions by the thousands, fighting for the front row to get splattered or dab their handkerchiefs in blood. Criminal gangs and Anarch groups both hunt in the area. You may be enjoying the blood craze or be on your own personal quest, but the guillotine is a sight that remains with you.

**LES BALS DES VICTIMES:** These emblematic balls given in the aftermath of the Revolution are open only to relatives of guillotined victims. They wear red ribbons around their necks. Maybe you haunt the balls to process your memories of the Revolution, or to prey on mourners.

## Topics for Further Research

- The Society of Revolutionary Republican Women, a female-led revolutionary group
- The development of scientific societies, literary salons, and political cafes as hubs of knowledge (and new hunting grounds)
- The Vendée Rebellion
- The Conspiracy of Equals
- The hunger of the winter 1794–95

## Blood and Prejudice

**Time:** *The Regency Era. Technically 1811–1820, actually 1800–1830*

**Place:** *England*

The most civilized place in the world. That's how Regency Londoners refer to their home. And while it is true that the city's elite participate in extravagant social gatherings, frequent exclusive clubs, ride in Hyde Park, attend the theater, and promenade along fashionable Bond Street, not everything is all that civilized in the capital of the British Empire.

For one, there's plenty of prejudice and bad blood between the upper and lower classes. At this point, the English consider slavery uncouth, abolishing the slave trade in the British Empire in 1807, but slavery itself lives on in the rest of the Empire, and only a small percentage of Black Englishmen and -women can be found among the upper classes. For a young vampire, their class background is something they can hardly escape. They're born into a certain class and Embraced into a clan and a specific generation. Initially, these are equally significant and equally challenging to break free from. However, as a vampire learns new habits and manners and becomes more resourceful, they can choose the class they want to be associated with.

The upper classes, or the *ton*, are governed by a vast collection of unwritten rules. Here, everyone has specific roles: Women shall marry, bear children, and appear as respectable society ladies. Men shall take care of their family and name and behave in a manner that prevents scandal or gossip from tarnishing their reputation. Representatives of clans Ventrule and Lasombra are often found in these circles.



The working class resides in crowded and dilapidated housing, where sanitation is poor and diseases spread rapidly. Men, women, and children work long hours in factories, engage in domestic service, and perform manual labor for low wages. It's not uncommon to find a young Brujah, Anarch, Caitiff, Nosferatu, or an occasional Gangrel or Ravnos in these dirty blocks.

Meanwhile, the middle class in London experiences significant social and economic growth. Many live in comfortable townhouses, with men pursuing careers in law, medicine, trade, or skilled crafts. Families partake in leisure activities such as attending public lectures and church events, visiting museums and galleries, and participating in organized sports like cricket or lawn tennis. Hiding among the bourgeoisie, one sometimes finds Kindred of clans Ministry, Malkavian, Hecata, Banu Haqim, and even Tremere and Toreador.

While mainland Europe is embroiled in the Napoleonic wars, in England, the Prince Regent rules in place of his father, George III, who suffers from mental instability. Despite the expectations of society, kine and Kindred alike indulge in scandal and gossip, with affairs, duels, and financial mismanagement making everything more interesting.

## Feeding Oneself: Culturally as Well as Practically

Some Kindred hunt in gin houses, which are stripped-down pubs serving cheap, low-quality alcohol, especially on Saturdays when urban workers receive their wages. Others lie in wait for body snatchers who, under cover of night, attempt to steal fresh corpses to sell to scholars and doctors as teaching material. Those who enjoy feasting on intellectuals frequent the coffee houses, where authors and thinkers gather to converse about politics and culture.

Well-dressed dandies can be found in neighborhoods like St. James, where they pass the time playing Faro and exuding elegance. And for those with a taste for fine ladies, the Royal Italian Opera House at Haymarket offers a fine selection of bluebloods.

Hunting and maintaining the Masquerade isn't always easy in a bustling city like London,

and it becomes even more challenging with the establishment of The Metropolitan Police Service — until certain Nosferatu find a way to infiltrate it.

Masquerades are a pastime beloved by Kindred and kine alike. They provide an opportunity to boldly socialize with individuals with whom it would normally be inappropriate. What occurs at the masquerade remains confidential; approaches, insults, or romantic encounters are not to be discussed afterward.

Country estates offer an escape from the hustle and bustle of the city. There, the elite enjoy rural pursuits such as hunting, fishing, and hosting extravagant house parties. Many wealthy Kindred also appreciate the countryside. Hunting mortals may be more challenging in rural areas, so many bring their snacks from London. Yet, the tranquility and peace offered by some time spent on an estate surrounded by beautiful nature makes it a cherished respite. In their country mansions filled with ghouls and fellow Kindred, vampires can largely forget about the Masquerade and enjoy their unlife to the fullest.

## Flashback Characters

### *Jonathan Smithson*

#### *Ghoul Librarian*

The most significant transformation in the life of Jonathan Smithson didn't occur when he was transformed into a ghoul but when he transitioned from employment at the Bodleian Library to the library of the Night Lounge.

Jonathan, although a ghoul of local Tremere, in fact belongs to the whole club. He is under the protection of the club members, so if someone wishes to exploit him, his knowledge, or his services, it's best to be either sneaky or fast.

Jonathan seldom leaves the library; he only steps outside to eat. He sleeps in a modest chamber inside the library, mostly during daylight hours. He treats all members of the club equally rudely. Books and reading make him very happy, although it never shows on his face. He despises readers who use books for any other purpose than gaining theoretical

knowledge. This, paradoxically, is why he can be entrusted with his employers' rare collection.

**General Difficulty:** 4 / 2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 3, Mental 8, Disciplines 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 4, Willpower 7

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Insight 6, Intimidation 6, Awareness 9

**Disciplines:** Auspex 1 (Heightened Senses)

## Summer Upton

*Maid-of-all-work*

In London, people live separate lives in separate worlds that almost never overlap. There's the world of the genteel and the world of the middle class, as well as the workers and the poor. The noble lady never talks to the miner. But one person operates in all realms: the maid.

Summer, born into the working class and serving in the kitchen of a lawyer's household, has always wanted to have it all: the world of women and that of men, the world of the poor and of the nobles, the world of the living and that of the dead. Now, thanks to the gifts of the Blood, she can finally operate wherever she wants — at least until her working-class manners give her away.

London is full of interesting places to visit, new people to meet, and intriguing information to gather. Summer is a happy, joyful, and endlessly curious person. She's easy to be around, and it's easy to open up to her. This makes her an excellent spy — only she's a bit too keen to share all her information with anyone willing to listen.

**Destiny:** If Summer makes it through the 19th century, destined as she is to reveal too many secrets, she'll be working as a hotel night manager, a harpy masquerading as a celebrity chef, or a jewelry thief in modern nights.

**Clan:** Malkavian

**Generation:** 11th

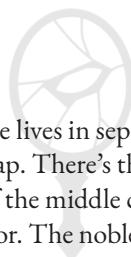
**Embrace:** 1815

**Blood Potency:** 2

**Humanity:** 7

**General Difficulty:** 4 / 3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 6, Disciplines 5



**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 6

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 7, Insight 7, Stealth 7, Streetwise 7

**Disciplines:** Auspex 1 (Heightened Senses), Obfuscate 3 (Silence of Death, Unseen Passage, Mask of a Thousand Faces)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5 / 4, add 2 to all Pools, add two dots of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 1.

## Lady Heralda Bloomerocke

*Solitary Socialite*

Lady Heralda's fondest wish was to become a widow at a young age. That almost failed when she died before her husband. Luckily, no one found out about it. After her husband's tragic demise, undead Heralda received the generous inheritance that now secures her income.

In society's eyes, she's a somewhat peculiar widow, respectable but reclusive within her estate in Essex. In reality, Lady Heralda enjoys a lively social calendar. She's even begun to forget what the Masquerade means. Her mansion is so sheltered that no one but invited guests stray there. She feeds on her staff, takes care of her garden, goes boating on her pond, and hunts. She often has guests.

A few times a year, Lady Heralda organizes incredibly extravagant and bloody balls that involve dancing, displaying cutting-edge art, practicing all manner of intriguing vices, and sampling a variety of different blood Dyscracias. Everyone who's anyone wants to be invited — Lady Heralda's example shows that one doesn't need to be very ancient at all to make a name for oneself. After a week of festivities, the ghouls bury the evidence beneath the pond.

**Destiny:** Lady Heralda's unbothered decadence is bound to get her in trouble. She might get taken down by her own guests in a frenzied blood orgy or assassinated to preserve the Masquerade. Should she survive the 19th century, she'll adapt poorly to the decline of the British country houses coming for her in the early 20th century, and modern nights will find her destitute and half-mad with Hunger.

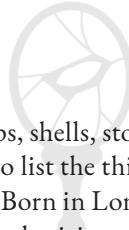
**Clan:** Tremere

**Generation:** 11th

**Embrace:** 1762

**Blood Potency:** 2**Humanity:** 3**General Difficulty:** 4/3**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 7, Mental 5, Disciplines 5**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 7**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Academics 7, Finance 7**Disciplines:** Celerity 1 (Cat's Grace), Presence 4 (Awe, Lingering Kiss, Entrancement, Summon)**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4, add 2 to all Pools, add two dots of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 1.

## Michael Sealander

*Collector*

Fossils, medals, weapons, stamps, shells, stones, snuff boxes. It would be easier to list the things Mr. Sealander does not collect. Born in London to a wealthy family, the English physician and esteemed member of the Royal Society and the Royal College of Physicians started collecting plants, butterflies, bones, and taxidermied animals while studying medicine. Later, his cabinet of curiosities became one of the most famous in the country. He established a small zoo for his exotic animals, including monkeys, a depressed hyena, an ill-tempered ostrich, and two alligators who don't get along.

After the Embrace, Michael has amassed an impressive collection of occult items in a fairly short time. When hunting for collectibles, he is entirely ruthless. Furthermore, his fascinations have taken on increasingly fanatical and brutal features. Whereas he used to collect plants and crossbreed them to obtain new, exciting specimens, he now does the same with mortals. Agelessness means that a dedicated researcher and collector has centuries to produce people of exactly their own taste and interest. Michael keeps his exotic animals and secret human zoo at his country estate in Yorkshire, where they are cared for by ghouls. He sometimes organizes tastings and scientific viewings where academically inclined Kindred can admire his breeding work.

Otherwise, he spends his time in his city apartment and still participates in the activities of

scientific societies. His immutability has begun to raise questions, but he refuses to stage his own death — there's a risk that the hard-earned collection would be lost when his distant relatives claim their share of the inheritance. Michael should urgently stage a marriage and produce an heir.

**Destiny:** Michael's extreme cruelty is likely to turn him into a wight before the end of the 19th century. But he won't go down without having secured his legacy, mortal and vampiric, and his 11th Generation childe will take his place and perhaps also inherit some version of his bizarre fascinations. Dorthea Sealander might be a collector of rare Dyscracias, taxidermied endangered species, and cursed objects.

**Clan:** Malkavian**Generation:** 10th**Embrace:** 1802**Blood Potency:** 3**Humanity:** 3**General Difficulty:** 5/3**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 5, Mental 7, Disciplines 5**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 5**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Academics 8, Etiquette 6

**Disciplines:** Auspex 4 (See the Unseen, Premonition, Scry the Soul, Spirit's Touch), Dominate 1 (Compel), Obscure 3 (Cloak of Shadows, Silence of Death, Mask of a Thousand Faces)

**Modern Nights:** Dorthea Sealander will have a General Difficulty of 4/3, four dots of Disciplines, and Humanity 5.

## Flashback Locations

**THE NIGHT LOUNGE:** Every respectable London vampire aspires to gain entry to the Night Lounge, an exclusive Elysium not unlike the gentlemen's clubs of mortal society. Within its walls, members have the privilege of feeding on fresh mortals readily available, engaging in stimulating discussions, or perusing the extensive library stocked with classics and more occult rarities. However, the favored pastime of most patrons is gambling, with stakes reaching extraordinary heights; wagers are made on trivial matters, such as predicting which of two drops of blood will fall first from the edge of a table. These bets are recorded in a large, brown book safeguarded by the Librarian.

A recent entry reads: "*Ambassador Latimer of*

*Clan Ventrue hath bestowed upon courtier Parr of Clan Malkavian a vial of her blood. Should Her Excellency manage to fuck a lady in a balloon one thousand yards above the earth, Parr shall return the aforementioned vial and tender unto Her Excellency threefold the measure of her own blood. No gifts of blood are to be used during the process. Should Her Excellency find herself unable to accomplish this singular feat within the course of one annum, courtier Parr shall lay rightful claim to the original offering of her blood."*

Prospective members must be presented and endorsed by at least two current members. All members anonymously cast their votes by depositing either a black or white ball into a voting box. A single black ball is enough to reject membership, though voting against someone can be dangerous, as Kindred often have means to find out the identities of dissenters even if the vote was anonymous.

**THE HOUSE OF COMMONS:** It is indeed practical that the sessions at the House of Commons typically begin late in the afternoon and extend into the early hours of the night, a schedule that could almost be deemed the result of suitable advice from a Kindred to the esteemed members.

The House of Commons meets in St. Stephen's Chapel, situated within the Palace of Westminster. The ruling party, the conservative Tories, believe in the divine right of king and church, while the Liberal Whigs, who form the opposition, advocate for societal and governmental reform.

Many Kindred are interested in mortal politics. Although direct influence over decisions, let alone aiding or sabotaging the career of a mortal politician, is frowned upon, it is not entirely unheard of.

Gentlemen, and those who present themselves as such, may attend the debates in the public gallery. Ladies have to be more cunning. In the Palace of Westminster there's a ventilation shaft that opens into the chamber of the House of Commons below. It is a hot, dark, uncomfortable loft space, but through the gaps in the shaft, ladies can hear everything that's happening below, perhaps even catch a glimpse of what is going on.

**THE ELEGANCE:** Libertines, noblemen, courtesans, adventuresees, dandies, and wealthy couples with peculiar tastes seek entertainment and pleasures of various kinds within the numerous London sex clubs. The women-only establishment on Jermyn Street caters to ladies who favor their own gender, while Molly houses throughout the city extend a welcome to homosexuals and crossdressers of all genders. The Flagellants' Club specializes in serving nobles who delight in the art of birching.

At the Elegance, Kindred of the capital gather to have fun with mortals or retreat to the private enclave reserved exclusively for the Embraced. A typical evening could include enjoying different kinds of blood, studying the latest dirty books and pornographic imagery, and observing the exquisite individuals hired to pose in the nude — it is strictly forbidden to touch or engage in conversation with the models; only detailed observation is permitted. However, handsome rent boys and skilled courtesans are available to cater to every taste if you retreat to the specially appointed rooms.

After a fun night out, those desiring a souvenir may purchase an erotic drinking vessel or request a lock of their partner's intimate curls to wear in a locket or affix to their hat as a talisman of virility and luck.

## Flashback Scenes

**I SEE DEAD PEOPLE:** You may have to wait in line for more than an hour, but the view is worth it. Skeletons, demons, and ghosts dance on the walls of the London Lyceum Theatre. The magic lanterns make them go faster and faster, and you watch, as if in a hypnotic trance, as they chase each other around the room. Sometimes you are horrified by the creepy decorations; at other times, total darkness descends. A pungent smell fills the air.

Wax dolls are displayed around the hall. You recognize some characters from paintings you have seen: Voltaire, Madame du Barry, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Benjamin Franklin. The wax dolls seem so lifelike that you defiantly feel one of them to make sure it isn't real.

Marie Tussaud escaped from France. During the Reign of Terror, she was imprisoned for three months, her head was shaved in preparation for

her execution, and she was forced to make death masks of the famous victims of the Revolution, including Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. She is now in England and cannot return because of the war with Napoleonic France. She has accepted an invitation from phantasmagoria artist Paul Philidor and now exhibits her work at his show at the Lyceum Theatre.

At first, you think the eerie sounds, the loud music, the intoxicating smells, and the laudanum you took just before you got here are messing with your head. Then you realize that there's one more motionless figure you recognize. It's a vampire you know. Their eyes stare directly at you, but their heart has been pierced with a stake.

**COLLECTOR'S ORDERS:** Egyptomania has swept over Europe. As Napoleon's 1798 campaign in Egypt reaches the port city of Rosetta, the scientists accompanying the French army find something spectacular — a stele of granodiorite inscribed with three versions of the same text. One is in ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, one in ancient Egyptian Demotic script, and one is in ancient Greek.

The scientists quickly understand that the stele, which they name the Rosetta Stone, might be the key to deciphering the Egyptian scripts! After defeating the French in battle, the British acquire the Stone and start transporting it to London.

In London, the infamous Malkavian collector Michael Sealander learns about the stele and cannot concentrate on anything else. He needs to get it, no matter the cost. The Rosetta Stone is more than a meter tall and weighs over 750 kilograms, and it's very well guarded, so he will need help. Michael bribes, kidnaps, flatters, and makes offers that are hard to refuse. Perhaps you're in his service; perhaps you race him to the stone.

The stone will arrive in Portsmouth aboard the captured French frigate HMS Égyptienne. From there, it will be taken to King George III. After that, it will be presented to scholars at the Society of Antiquaries of London, and its final resting place will be in the British Museum. Unless you get it first.

## Topics for Further Research

- The East India Company
- The Napoleonic Wars
- The Blue Stockings Society
- The publication of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*
- Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin's vacation to Lake Geneva in the Alps with Percy Shelley, Lord Byron, John Polidori, and Claire Clairmont
- The Acts of Union and The Slave Trade Act
- The invention of gas lighting and the first steam-powered railway locomotive
- De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*
- The Grand Tour
- The Luddite movement
- Fordyce's *Sermons to Young Women*

## The Victorian Era

**Time:** Ca. 1837–1901

**Place:** The British Empire, North America, the Habsburg Empire, and wherever else a Victorian may travel to

### The British Empire

Queen Victoria reigns for 63 years, from 1837 until her death in 1901. Under her rule, the British Empire is the largest the world has ever seen; it has its talons buried in every continent. By 1920, it will cover almost a quarter of the world. And at the center sits Victoria, her small hand clasped lovingly in Albert's. They say the sun never sets on her empire. To the British Camarilla Kindred, it never needs to rise.

London is the capital of the empire, growing obscenely wealthy as constant traffic of people and goods between Britain and the colonies ensures the trade need never stop. The Industrial Revolution is modernizing life for millions, and Britain is a leading producer of steam engines, textiles, iron, and steel. Raw cotton from Egypt is spun and woven right in the Lancashire mills and sent out into the world to undercut the native handloom weavers. Abject poverty



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trails after progress. Immigrants from the colonies and the poorer parts of Europe flock to London to live in slums, taking work as dockworkers, rat catchers, matchstick makers, and chimney sweeps. A few streets are all that separate the great mansions of high society from the dehumanizing conditions of the urban poor.

The European Camarilla has also expanded its power throughout the Western world, feeding on the Victorians with as much entitlement as the empire feeds on its subjects. They see all other Kindred as beholden to them and strike harshly against those who would resist. Bored, and often privileged beyond excess, they prey upon each other too. The center of the Camarilla's empire is London: ruled, so they say, by the methuselah Mithras himself—golden god. The courtiers of the Mithraic court are as cutthroat as they're glorious.

Victorian culture is full of contradictions. While leading voices of society speak of progress and a new age of rationalism, others turn to spiritism and mythology for answers. Mr. Darwin's new book *On the Origin of Species* plays no small part in it, suggesting that humankind came not from paradise but from a murky biological morass untouched by the creator. Some find this a comforting idea—with God, Man cannot be a sinner, surely? Others feel haunted by the idea of a primitive past: The monkey screams with abandonment inside the man, and culture feels like a thin veneer that can too easily be ripped asunder.

As the century draws to its close, the feeling of standing at the edge of a dying era grows. The *fin de siècle* are years of decadent decay. Gothic horror now wears its most scarlet gown, and the worst fears of society loom flirtatiously on the horizon, hinting that they may come true. This is also when the vampire enters popular imagination: ancient, undying, and evil. Like the buried nature of man.

For a vampire, no matter how civilized they are, the monster remains inside them. In this, the British Empire is much the same, sucking in wealth and resources from its colonies, suppressing the dreams and aspirations of their peoples while professing a self-image of enlightenment. Under the veneer, the hungers of the vampire and the Empire cannot be denied, and in the end, they destroy.

## Outside the British Empire

**AUSTRO-HUNGARY:** Vienna sparkles as the brilliant jewel of the Habsburg Empire and one of the centers of European art and intellectualism. The broad avenues are lined with splendid palaces, and the opera never ceases to amaze with the quality of its productions. Inside the city, the wealthiest and most adored among the European socialites sit down for tea at charming sidewalk cafés.

The city is not without edge. An influx of immigrants from the corners of the Empire means that it is a melting pot of different cultures. Political tensions simmer just beneath the surface, and just like in London, wealth and poverty coexist uneasily. Yet, in Vienna there's a special willingness to experiment within arts, culture, and the sciences. Occult ideas mix freely with scientific in the studies done here into parapsychology, hypnosis, psychoanalysis, and psychical research.

For Kindred in the know, Vienna is home to members of the upper-class Ventre elite who still care very much for mortal fashions. But the real rulers are a council of seven Tremere elders. It's always a dilemma which faction one should call on first.

**NORTH AMERICA:** To the Victorians, North America stands at the pinnacle of modernity, for good as well as evil. Rapid industrialization, in particular the expansion of the railroad network, has seen cities shooting up from nothing and made millionaires of common men. So much wealth is accumulated in the U.S. that they call the latter part of the period the Gilded Age. Materialistic excess goes hand in hand with political corruption, and a man may make anything of himself if he can secure the capital to fund his dreams.

As the Northern and Western United States prosper, the South struggles following the losses of the American Civil War and the abolition of slavery. The Sabbat is spreading throughout the United States, Canada, and Mexico like a plague, creating too many childe in much too short a time.

In many ways, to the Kindred of the Camarilla, the Sabbat plays the role of the Gothic monster in their narratives. They are the dark side of all they are and could be: the threat of giving into their basest instincts.

**ON FOREIGN SOIL:** There can be no culture without barbarism. Victorian writers return, constantly, to fantasies of ancient, pagan forces that threaten to pull them down from their pedestals at a moment's notice. It's a complicated fantasy, for the historical past is also home to some of their highest ideals: the philosophy and mythology of the ancient Greeks, the military prowess and nobility of the Romans are mirrors that modern man loves recognizing himself in.

Thus, the Mediterranean and Italy are especially favored destinations for travel both in the mind and in reality. For young upper-class men and women of Europe, a trip around the continent is all but a requirement to finish their formal education. A Swedish heiress, with her chaperone in tow, has her portrait painted on the steps of the Sacré Cœur in Paris. A German gentleman loses his heart and health to a Toreador from the 1500s in an orchard in Florence. When they return, they do so haunted, bringing stories of impossible encounters with them.

## Flashback Characters

### Baroness Helene von Vetsera

A great sadness shines out from the enigmatic Baroness von Vetsera despite her charm and social graces. People love to gossip about her because her backstory is so dramatic.

The Baroness was born Helene Baltazzi, the daughter of a lawyer working in the Sultan's court in Constantinople. But both her parents died mysteriously, one after the other, and at 16, she was an orphan, and the wealthiest unmarried woman in the city. Her father's friend, the diplomat Albin Vetsera, became her guardian and, after a year, her husband. Vampires of European high society know that Albin, an influential member of the Ravnos, a lineage unusual in Europe at that time, had chosen Helene's destiny for her long before he kissed her in church and took her to their marriage bed. He did not, however, Embrace her until she had provided mortal heirs to settle the legitimacy of "his" line. Rumor has it the Baroness was relieved to find comfort in a mortal lover's arms and heartbroken

when that lover was the first vessel her husband had her feed on after her Embrace.

Baroness Baltazzi is every bit the gentlewoman, polite and put together. She enjoys her evenings in the theatre and dotes on her mortal daughter, Mary von Vetsera. However, she's only biding her time. When the moment is right, she'll try to have her husband destroyed.

**Destiny:** Baroness Baltazzi is destined to suffer social disgrace in 1889 when her daughter runs away with the Austrian Crown Prince Rudolf. The pair are found dead together, presumed to have taken their own lives. Helene will once again seek revenge but will eventually withdraw from society and dedicate herself to an unlifed of quiet contemplation.

**Clan:** Ravnos

**Generation:** 10th

**Embrace:** 1867

**Blood Potency:** 2

**Humanity:** 6

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 5, Mental 6, Disciplines 6

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 7

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Stealth 5, Etiquette 6 (high society), Occult 8 (spiritism)

**Disciplines:** Obscure 1 (Silence of Death), Presence 3 (Awe, Lingering Kiss, Entrancement)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4, add 2 to all Pools, and add four dots of Disciplines.

### Sir Arthur Halesworth

#### Sheriff of South London

Sir Arthur is the image of a high-ranking military man: tall, strong, and proud. He earned his knighthood suppressing uprisings in India. Before that, he served in South Africa, rising to the rank of General. As a mortal man, he'd dreamt of a life of adventure. As a vampire, he revels in the power he now holds over others. It is nothing he is proud of. Sir Arthur always valued discipline and self-control. But there was also always a part of him that took pleasure in demonstrating his superiority. Now, he knows it as the Beast.

Sir Arthur, used to navigating the echelons of mortal high society, easily rose in the ranks of the London Camarilla. He now serves the Mithraic court as Sheriff

of South London. Sir Arthur's greatest weakness is his pride. He is a hypocrite who values rules above all else but often can't live up to them himself.

**Destiny:** In later years, Sir Arthur falls victim to the political machinations of the city and loses his title of Sheriff. If he's not destroyed before the modern nights, he'll be one of the first to heed the call of the Beckoning.

**Clan:** Gangrel

**Generation:** 8th

**Embrace:** 1843

**Blood Potency:** 3

**Humanity:** 6

**General Difficulty:** 4/4

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 7, Social 7, Mental 7, Disciplines 6

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 8

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 8, Brawl 8

**Disciplines:** Animalism 1 (Bond Famulus), Fortitude 3 (Resilience, Toughness, Defy Bane), Obfuscate 1 (Cloak of Shadows), Protean 3 (Eyes of the Beast, Feral Weapons, Earth Meld)

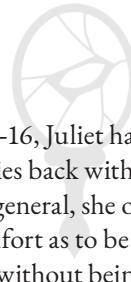
**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4, add 2 to Exceptional pools and 1 to Standard, add one dot of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 2.

## Juliet Parr

*Sheriff of North London*

A slight girlish figure of about 15–16, Juliet has long chestnut hair, which she usually ties back with a whisk, as a young man might. In general, she often wears menswear, as much for comfort as to be able to make her way around London without being questioned. In life she was a lady, expected to marry, embroider, and breed little boys. The Embrace was her escape from that, and calling her Lady Parr now would probably be a mistake.

Juliet is a favorite of the high-ranking Mithraic courtier Lady Anne Bowesley. The two are allies, maybe more. From 1879, she serves as the Sheriff of North London. She has obsessive-compulsive tendencies, a trait that can be a help but is most often a distraction when it comes to solving problems for the court. It also means she doesn't give up easily when she is on the trail of someone she means to take down.



**Destiny:** Parr goes on to have an illustrious career, finally becoming one of the feared Justicars of the Camarilla in 2011, a post she still holds.

**Clan:** Malkavian

**Generation:** 9th

**Embrace:** 1782

**Blood Potency:** 3

**Humanity:** 6

**General Difficulty:** 5/4

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6 (Dexterity), Social 6, Mental 7, Disciplines 6

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Hunting 8 (horseback), Streetwise 8, Investigation 9

**Disciplines:** Auspex 2 (Heightened Senses, Premonition), Celerity 1 (Cat's Grace), Dominate 3 (Compel, Dementation, Mesmerize), Obfuscate 2 (Silence of Death, Unseen Passage), Potence 1 (Lethal Body)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 7/5, add 4 to all pools, add six dots of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 1.

## FALL OF LONDON

See the chronicle *Fall of London* to read more about key Kindred characters hailing from London, such as Queen Anne Bowesley, Mithras, and Juliet Parr, and discover what happens in the city in modern nights.

## Sister Daphne

*Nun*



The pale, sickly-looking nun keeps her hair covered, but her lashes and eyebrows are almost invisibly red. Her eyes are gray and clear. In life, she worked as a shopgirl. She became an art model. She was also an artist in her own right—someone ardently admired for her beauty and, if too rarely, for her skills. Too frail to keep up with her passions, she was half-way into a much too early grave when she was offered an alternative to dying. She's been a vampire since 1862. When seven years later, her husband dug up her grave, looking for a book of poems he regretted throwing in there, he found it empty.

Now sister Daphne keeps to herself. Having sworn off men as well as art, she spends her nights in prayer and travels only ever in the company of her secretive sisters—mortal nuns who know she isn’t like them but believe those who have fallen furthest from the light need God’s forgiveness most.

**Destiny:** Sister Daphne stands at a crossroads. Will she seek away from Kindred kind or give in to her hungers? She might come to join the Arcanum, the mysterious order of scholars dedicated to the research and documentation of supernatural forces, quietly letting herself be studied. Or she could swear herself to a strong Kindred mentor who’ll teach her to feed remorselessly. Either way, modern nights will most likely find her deep in torpor.

**Clan:** Toreador

**Generation:** 11th

**Embrace:** 1862

**Blood Potency:** 2

**Humanity:** 8

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 5, Mental 5 (Intelligence), Disciplines 5

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 6

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Craft 8 (painting), Stealth 7, Insight 6, Awareness 6,

**Disciplines:** Auspex 1 (Heightened Senses), Presence 2 (Awe, Daunt)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4, add 2 to all pools, add two dots of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 1–3.

## Constable Albert Owen

*Policeman*

The Constable makes a robust, determined figure as he walks his evening patrol, checking in on the street urchins, the shopkeepers, and his friends among the cabmen and their horses. Being a bobby in overcrowded London is a tough job, and most don’t last that long, choosing to go back to laboring or to enter private service. But Albert’s been a cop for close to a decade; it’s what he knows and something he does well. Unfortunately, the job isn’t just breaking up bar fights and sending home rent boys when they’ve gotten into trouble. There are murders, too. Recently, a host of tiny bodies

have been washing up on the banks of the Thames. This mystery has Albert taking much longer walks at night than usual. Should he run into a feeding vampire, Albert won’t be asking questions before blowing his whistle and getting out of his club.

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 4, Mental 4

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 8

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Animal Ken 7, Brawl 6, Investigation 8, Streetwise 7

## Doctor Azad Singh

*Surgeon*

Dr. Singh came to Europe as part of a delegation from India, at Queen Victoria’s request, to demonstrate his scientific knowhow and, in extension, the reach and glory of the British Empire. Why he stayed, he couldn’t tell you. British surgeons have, for the most part, been less than forthright in accepting Dr. Singh’s ideas—but his survival rates mean he still regularly gets called in for emergencies at private hospitals. Respected but disliked in upper-class circles and loved but not well-paid among the poor, Dr. Singh moves freely in both strata of society and can be counted on to be discreet.

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 4, Mental 5

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 8

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Medicine 7, Streetwise 5, Science 7 (Biology)

## Mistress Elsa Tanner

*Landlady*

The widowed Mrs. Tanner runs a lodging house. She’s a friendly mid-30s lady of stocky build who loves to chat with her lodgers. She’s only got a few extra rooms, but times are hard, and it’s nice not to be alone in the house. Out of the goodness of her heart, first and foremost, Mrs. Tanner is also raising a few “dear babes” at a time—poor little kids whose mothers have paid her to take care of them and find them nice adoptive homes. Fortunately, homes seem easy to come by, for the perceptive lodger will notice that new babies arrive often, but there are never more than two to three around the house.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 4  
(Charisma), Mental 3**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 4**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Subterfuge 6

*The most unbounded wealth is the neighbor of the most hideous poverty... The crumbs which fall from the tables of the rich would appear delicious viands to starving millions, and yet these millions obtain them not!*

*In that city there are in all five prominent buildings: the church, in which the pious pray; the gin-palace, to which the wretched poor resort to drown their sorrows; the pawn-broker's, where miserable creatures pledge their raiment, and their children's raiment, even unto the last rag, to obtain the means of purchasing food, and alas! too often intoxicating drink; the prison, where the victims of a vitiated condition of society expiate the crimes to which they have been driven by starvation and despair; and the workhouse, to which the destitute, the aged, and the friendless hasten to lay down their aching heads and die!*

— G. W. M. Reynolds, *The Mysteries of London*, 1844

## Flashback Locations

**WHITECHAPEL:** The civilized world is full of slums, but Whitechapel is among the most notorious. The overcrowded district is known for its poverty—its people living on top of one another in tiny, squalid rooms without proper sanitation. Petty crime is just another way to make a living here: there's a brothel on every other street, and the ladies are as likely to rob you as to service you. Under such conditions, the police have all but given up on maintaining any kind of law and order, leaving local gangs to offer their “protection” in return for money. Jewish refugees, Irish dock workers, and born-and-bred East End locals form wary alliances to support and protect one another as best they can.

**THE MUSIC HALL:** As you enter, the smell of tobacco, spilled beer, and faint perfume fills your nostrils. The audience is loudly chattering. At the dining tables, the more well-off patrons are enjoying dinner. In the galleries, workers, sailors, and shop girls are eagerly expecting the show. The first performer is a comedic singer, the second a

magician. The laughter is loud, and the resonance is overwhelmingly Sanguine.

**HYDE PARK:** By day, the lush green park is a place of leisure where people from all walks of life are free to snatch moments of joy in the sun as they gather for picnics, hoping to run into someone interesting, and go for boat rides on the lake Serpentine. On fine summer evenings, all the youth, beauty, celebrity, and wealth can be seen riding along the tree-lined Rotten Row route, playing an elaborate game of who to greet and who to “accidentally” ignore.

But by night, the park transforms into something more mysterious and even perilous. It is that way with shadows. By habit more than anything, some Ventru still take their stroll through the park, dressed to the nines. They delight in the wonder in their victims' eyes when they drain them.

**THE PRIVATE CLUB:** Only members are allowed in the elegantly furnished environs of the private club. It's a gentleman's club for explorers, aristocrats, or members of parliament, a ladies' society for women who've attended university, or a thinly-veiled secret society dedicated to occult pursuits. The club has a library with the newest newspapers, a bar, a dining room, and a few guest rooms. You'll always run into someone you know here.

**MRS. TANNER'S LODGING HOUSE:** This is a two-story house on the edge of a London slum. The top floor houses Mrs. Tanner's lodgers. You can get a bed in the shared room for four pence a night, or a room to yourself for thirty. Mrs. Tanner serves breakfast and dinner in the common room on the ground floor, next to the kitchen. The babies she keeps in the basement. You can hear them crying faintly at all hours of the night.

**THE STATELY HOME:** Built in the 17th century to house some monastic order, this large limestone building has been in the owner's family for generations. There can be no doubt it's haunted, both by ghosts and by the general degeneration that befalls old families who marry their nieces to their nephews and value privacy and gold above all else. It's surrounded by many hectares of farmland and forest on all sides. The East-facing part of the mansion is covered in ivy and slowly crumbling. The chapel is never used.

Perhaps you attended a party and never left, hiding away in the attic among the medieval portraits, feeding on the waitstaff in secret; you worked here, or you were a friend of a member of the family and spent a summer visiting.

**THE VENETIAN HOTEL:** Hidden within the maze of canals, this restored Renaissance palazzo is a popular stop along the route for young men on their grand tour. Inside, the sumptuous velvet furnishings and rich tapestries alight the imagination and give the guests something to write home about. The place is entirely enchanting apart from the proprietor, an off-putting old man who smells like death and smiles like he has a secret. He's a ghoul, tasked with handpicking the most intriguing of the guests for a special audience with his discerning master. Most are left with a hazy memory they can't explain. Some never leave Venice at all.

**THE COUNTRY HAMLET:** This small Slavic village hasn't changed for the last 300 years. The cobblestone streets, lined with rickety wooden houses, are worn and impossibly slippery when it rains. The church, with its weathered spire, stands as a testament to the villagers' enduring faith—and to their fears and superstition. Outsiders are met with suspicion, and everyone believes in monsters, knowing well that they often take the shape of so-called aristocrats. The local priest, raised somewhere more urbane, is desperate for a bit of intelligent conversation.

**BLACKWELL'S ISLAND:** Since 1830, Blackwell's Island has been where New York City sends the citizens society cannot make space for. There is a prison here, a workhouse, a hospital for orphans, and a lunatic asylum. The prison houses hundreds of inmates, both men and women—in separate buildings. It's understaffed, and prisoners often try to swim away. The lunatic asylum is built to contain maybe 800 inmates but regularly houses upwards of 1,700, and from 1887, only women. Made famous by investigative journalist Nellie Bly's report, the asylum is best described as "a human rat-trap"—here, inmates are forcibly dunked in ice baths, beaten with broom handles, given spoiled food, and not allowed to talk or move for many hours. Some suffer from paranoid hallucinations;

many are perfectly sane but have nowhere else to go: immigrants, elderly, or simply poor.

Perhaps you were one of the 50 inmates building a Gothic-style lighthouse on the island in 1872. Perhaps you were an immigrant who spent the last twenty years of your mortal life at the insane asylum, staring at a wall.

## Flashback Scenes

### **THE VANDERBILT COSTUME BALL, 1883:**

The newly-built Fifth Avenue Vanderbilt mansion in New York City is ablaze with light. The grand ballroom has been transformed into a scene from another world, and the elite of American high society are gathered here, all in costumes. The hostess, Alva Vanderbilt, is dressed as a Venetian Princess. Trusting the costumes, the guests include the Duchess of Burgundy, King Louis XVI, and a pretty hornet with a diamond headdress. There are several devils and demons too. The ball opens with a hobby-horse quadrille. It would be ridiculous if it wasn't quite so opulent.

You could've been one of the uniformed waiters or a friend of the family. A silk-and-gilt blood-sucking butterfly or a lover of one of the family.

**THE FOG:** London has been swallowed by thick, acrid pea soup fog, reducing visibility to mere feet. Rising out of the many factory chimneys, sulfur dioxide and soot mixed with the vapor of the Thames form a greasy, acrid mist that shrouds the city as high as 50 meters. The street lamps barely pierce the murky gloom even at daytime, and even sounds are muffled, replacing the city's bustle with unsettling silence. When it's as thick as this, you have to be truly desperate to go out—if you don't fall into the Thames or get trampled by a frightened horse, you make yourself as good as a willing victim for the city's Kindred, who hunt both mortals and each other without restraint for as long as the fog takes to lift.

**A SÉANCE:** The room is dimly lit by candles that cast dancing shadows on the emerald green wallpaper. As the heavy curtains are drawn, shutting out the world outside, someone's husband mutters something about parting the veil, and is angrily shushed. The medium already looks drained, like

your mere presence takes it out of her. As she begins to chant, the room strangely does appear to grow colder, and you feel yourself get drowsy. Suddenly, a ghostly voice seems to speak directly in your thoughts. It's angry, old, and very hungry.

#### **AN ENCOUNTER AT THE ARTISTS' SOCIETY:**

They come here every week, the bohemians, the self-taught artists, and the students at the Royal Academy, to learn from each other and paint without the supervision of authority. You come here too sometimes. Tonight, the model is a slim, brown-skinned woman draped in white. As you pause to contemplate the composition, the man next to you leans in to whisper. He gives you a cryptic warning. At the time, you think nothing of it and barely pay attention. But decades later, you'll find yourself desperately needing to remember what it was he said.

#### **AN UNFORTUNATE RUN-IN IN THE SLUM:**

There are parts of London where not even vampires should travel on their own. You feel a shiver running down your spine, as you look behind you and see nothing but the long shadows of dilapidated buildings, leaning precariously over the narrow alleyway. You could swear you knew this part of town like your own pocket, but tonight, everything looks different. Suddenly, you bump into a body, hard as rock and broad like a barrel. When you look up, the man's mouth opens in a smile that is all teeth. Behind you, his gang of cut-throat Gangrel companions howl with excitement.

## Topics for Further Research

- The Fabian Society
- The Society for Psychical Research (SPR)
- New Women and suffragettes
- Mesmerism
- Egyptomania
- The California Gold Rush
- The Great Exhibition
- The Crimean War
- The Irish Potato Famine

# The Belle Époque

**Time:** Circa 1871–1914

**Place:** Paris

The Belle Époque is an age of prosperity before World War I forces Europe into the following era of brutalization and economic crisis. Underneath the brilliance of prosperous industrial societies lies the rot of class inequality, colonial exploitation, and jingoistic nationalism. Elites consolidate their power through the union of old aristocratic titles and new money. The working industrial proletariat explodes in numbers, and the peripheries of great cities are peppered with slum districts born of the hoarding of riches by the ruling classes. People navigating this era might enjoy the privileged and carefree lifestyle of the elite or adversely struggle to survive on scraps, involved in gang wars or betting their future on emigration.

## A Tale of Three Cities

While the Belle Époque moniker refers to the Parisian supremacy in the fields of art and culture, the whole era has three remarkable metropolitan hubs in Paris, London, and New York. Similar trends abound in all three cities.

### **PARIS**

Paris remains the capital of arts and culture, but the political influence of France is on the decline, coupled with a struggling people. Politically, the Republican regime is consolidated with protected constitutional rights (including liberty of press and association), as well as the separation of Church and State. Camarilla members in Paris has inherited from the French Revolution a careful balance between Old Regime elders and the “Bohemian” younger generation that can get a lot of unofficial power and influence and scattered but proactive Anarch groups on the city’s fringes.

### **LONDON**

London remains the world’s foremost financial power and the capital of the richest country in the world. While the light of the Edwardian Era pales in comparison to the juggernaut of its predecessor, there’s no denying the attraction and

power of London. The British upper class remains rooted in its land-owning aristocracy, with liberal industrialists soon aligning with titled conservatives. While many actors of Kindred society can vie for power, London remains steadfastly a Ventrue hold, secured by the long-reaching shadow of its Prince.

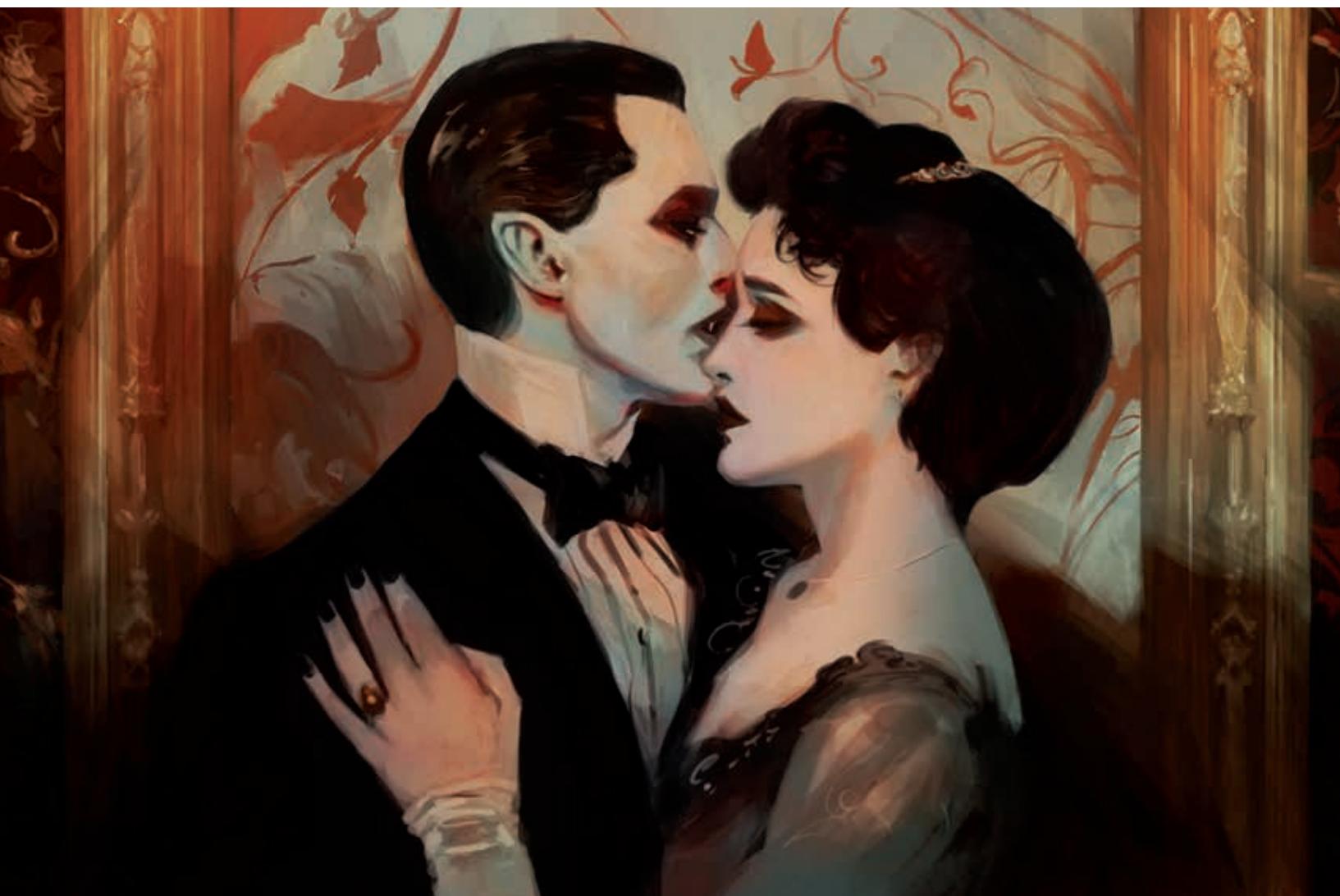
#### **NEW YORK**

The bustling center of the New World, New York City is full of potential for quick success. Control of the territory remains disputed between sects, with Camarilla scions, careful to preserve their investments and widest sphere of influence, vying for influence against Sabbat enclaves and Anarch groups in the margins. In the early 20th century, New York

is in name controlled by Ventrue—but in reality, no one can really control the massive city or its growing population, and it is a constant battle for the Ventrue to stay at the top of the food chain.

#### **Old and New Elites**

No era embodies class war as transparently as the Belle Époque, with the concentration of wealth and influence in the elite reaching an all-time high. The Kindred are not exempt from such struggles. In Camarilla circles, those with consolidated power and fortune rule over small armies of fledglings or hopeful retainers, who must fight for advancement with little space to maneuver.



For these elites, though, undead life can be ecstatic, with all the pleasures of cultured life and riches at their disposal, notorious artists and courtesans conducting the party. Operas, balls, concert halls, and museums provide a never-ending flow of entertainment. While the advancement of electricity can make street hunting more challenging in affluent districts, cults and circles of influence provide easy or even willing victims to feed on.

In Paris, however, the need for reconstruction after the disastrous Franco-Prussian war enables a new rising elite to reach for political influence. Their most prominent figure is Adolphe Thiers, former French President, who was Embraced by the Ventre for eradicating the revolutionaries of the Commune de Paris. Adolphe succeeds in stirring discontent in younger Kindred towards the rigid Toreador rule and helps them gain influence through control of economic institutions and trade flux. The Parisian nouveau riches thus enable a policy of investing in newly reformed areas after the expulsion of the poor and the Anarchs. This successful tactic increases their wealth and power tenfold but fans the flames of open conflict over control of the city.

## Class War and Gang Warfare

At the bottom end of class hierarchies, the working proletariat and street gangs survive in the peripheral slums. Anarch groups and Caitiff take advantage of these lawless fringes to hide and hunt at will. The infamous gang “Apaches de Paris” stoke terror in the city for decades, being adept at street robberies and causing many gang fights for territorial control.

Savvy Anarchs start to use these gangs for information and money, also using them as a tool to destabilize the Parisian establishment. The catastrophic Charity Bazaar fire in 1897 starts a series of targeted terror attacks to weaken the so-called “good society.” Other such events include the sabotage of the Paris Opera chandelier, street fights, and early anarchist bombings. Some are deemed accidents to avoid panic, but the class conflict hits a boiling point at the onset of the new century.

The mortal government strikes back by reclaiming popular districts, destroying slums, expelling the gangs and the poor from their hiding places, and transforming the areas for commerce or transit.

The Camarilla establishment uses its influence to piggyback on this policy, exploiting it to root out their enemies, while the younger generations see the opportunity to invest in and take control of future affluent areas like the 15th and 16th districts of Paris.

The great Parisian flood of 1910, hitting the poorest districts the hardest, becomes the final blow to the survival of popular Paris. Many of the resources belonging to the gangs are lost or destroyed, and their Cainite associates have to lie low while struggling to survive in the flooded and destabilized city. The Apache gang never recovers from the setback, and the turmoil of World War I precipitates their disappearance.

## Flashback Characters

### *Adolphe Thiers*

#### *The Butcher of the Commune*



Though superficially rejuvenated by the Embrace, he still appears as an older gentleman with bushy white hair and a piercing, ice-blue stare under heavily wrinkled eyelids. A prominent politician through all of the 19th century, he enjoys a newfound undead existence as a rising political leader, pushing towards consolidation of propertied fortunes to exercise influence. Benevolent and easygoing on the surface, ruthless and cunning on the inside, he's an easy ally for ambitious youths during the Parisian Belle Époque.

**Destiny:** Adolphe Thiers is likely to become the target of assassinations. Too used to political power as a mortal, and rising to it quickly in undeath as well, he'll make many enemies. However, there's a chance he might remain in Paris in modern nights playing his part in the court of Prince Villon.

**Clan:** Ventre

**Generation:** 11th

**Embrace:** 1877

**Blood Potency:** 2

**Humanity:** 5

**General Difficulty:** 5 / 3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 7, Disciplines 7

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 6

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Persuasion 8, Insight 7,

Finance 9, Politics 8,  
**Disciplines:** Dominate 2 (Compel, Slavish Devotion), Presence 1 (Awe), Fortitude 1 (Unswayable mind)  
**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4, add 1 to all pools, and add two dots of Disciplines.

## **Georges Leca**

### *Apache Leader*

The mortal leader of the Apache Gang is a rough fellow in his mid-thirties, with tanned skin, dark hair and complexion, visible scarring, and a slight southern Mediterranean accent. His demeanor is cocky, even playful, but turns to anger quickly when provoked. While the Apache gang has several smaller groups and factions, Leca controls the biggest one and is also the more accessible leader due to his habit of being a contact for new immigrants to Paris.

**General Difficulty:** 3/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 4, Mental 4

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 5

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 6, Brawl 6, Melee 6, Intimidation 6, Leadership 6

## **Amélie Jourdan**

### *Apache Gang Member*

Beautiful Amélie is a fair-haired petty thief and kept woman, currently in a relationship with Georges Leca but eager to get away from his brusque temper and violent outbursts. She can exercise an indirect influence on the gang via her lover and is usually well-informed about the gang's dealings and resources.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 2, Social 4, Mental 3

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 4, Willpower 5

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Subterfuge 6, Insight 5, Awareness 5

## **Flashback Locations**

**THE OPÉRA GARNIER:** The beautiful construction of Charles Garnier has been the center of artistic life for several decades and is unmistakable in beauty and grandeur. On the higher levels, high

society partakes in all sorts of performances. Behind the scenes, artists, decorators, and hourly workers scurry through narrow corridors and staircases to make magic for the audience. A select few, including the secretive Parisian Nosferatu, know that underneath the Opera, a grand artificial lake was built. It lies in utter darkness, unvisited by mortals.

**PARIS-UNDERGROUND:** Underground, beneath the streets of Paris, hundreds of kilometers of tunnels stretch out, forming a massive network that connects old quarries, cemeteries, the morbid Catacombs, the Opera lake, and in some places, metro tunnels currently under construction. Marginal groups, kine and Cainites alike, haunt these parts. Some areas even still hold old weapons and resource caches from old wars. The air is heavy and oppressive, thick with the scent of damp decay.

**THE CABARET DU NEANT:** The "Cabaret of Nothingness" is one of the most popular cafes in the lively Paris district of Montmartre. Located close to the Père Lachaise Cemetery, it is styled in themes of the macabre, celebrating death in all its most medieval guises. In the Hall of Intoxication, a chandelier of human bones lights up the coffin-shaped tables. On stage, an actor performs a more hopeless version of Hamlet's soliloquy. In a connecting alcove, a young female performer in a white veil decomposes into a corpse before the fascinated audience using lights and mirrors.

## **Flashback Scenes**

**OPERA LIGHTS:** Your first night at the Opéra Garnier is always a thrilling experience. The grandeur of the decor, its lavish gold panels, and chandeliers capture the eye as you climb the grand staircase. It's the perfect place to mingle with the high and mighty for connection, perhaps to hunt. The visitors have the careless beauty of the rich. The scents and quaint rustle of rich fabrics are exhilarating.

**UNDERGROUND INTRIGUE:** You attend a gathering of Kindred deep within the labyrinthine tunnels beneath Paris. Illuminated only by flickering torchlight, two different coteries of Nosferatu negotiate for control over a section of the catacombs where young mortals have started gathering for secret parties. Glancing into a side tunnel, a

frightened young girl of about 15 stares back at you. No one else has seen her yet.

## Topics for Further Research

- The Sanctuary of the Golden Valley
- The Exposition Universelle
- Haute couture and French luxury department stores
- New Imperialism and colonialist exploitation
- The Art Nouveau movement
- The Second International
- The Second Industrial Revolution
- The Dreyfus affair

## The Last Days of the Russian Empire

*Time: Circa 1861–1917*

*Place: Saint Petersburg*

As 1913 dawns, it's been three centuries of glorious Romanov reign. The streets of St. Petersburg are bedecked with the double-headed eagles of the Romanovs and the Imperial colors of red, white, and blue. The affluent and influential prepare for a week of extravagant balls at the Winter Palace.

Simultaneously, strikes, land seizures, armed uprisings, political assassinations, terrorist attacks, and mutinies unfold throughout the Empire, only to be violently quelled by czarist forces. Within factories, laborers toil in deplorable conditions, and those advocating for reforms face execution, exile, or forced labor. The Romanovs hope to remind the malcontents, harshly, of their place among the people, that they should be as children: obedient and thankful.

Traditionalist Kindred elders feed off the czarist monarchy, relishing the status quo. They have more in common with the ranks of royalty than they do with lowborn fledgling Kindred: both believe they have a right to rule. Meanwhile, younger Kindred emerge from within the ranks of factory workers, artists, and academics, ready to embark on a new existence in a transformed world without landlords, or lords of any kind.

## The End of Serfdom

For centuries, the Russian aristocracy wielded absolute authority over the people. Tens of millions of Russians were their private property. But with Czar Alexander II's abolition of serfdom in 1861, Russia enters a new era. This makes the Czar unpopular with many of the nobles, as well as with the Russian Kindred. Brujah, who despise the monarchy, want it gone entirely. Nosferatu, who have infiltrated the Czar's secret police force, are dismayed by the decentralization of power. And the Tzimisce, who have been here longer than the Romanovs, are annoyed it will be harder for them to keep slaves.

Numerous revolutionaries, both Kindred and kine, attempt to assassinate Czar Alexander II. In 1881, they finally succeed, but no one can anticipate how little time the Empire has left.

## The Last Czars

After Czar Alexander II, Czar Alexander III takes the throne. He's a conservative figure, known for his direct and robust demeanor. His physical strength is legendary—he can tear packs of cards in half with his bare hands. Some speculate high-ranking Ventrue have expressed their gratitude for his conservative policies by offering him Blood. He dies young, and his son Nicholas II takes the throne.

Several Malkavians observe ominous signs on the day of Nicholas II's coronation, chief among them being the Khodynka Tragedy. Following the Czar's crowning, crowds assembled on Khodynka Field in Moscow to celebrate their new emperor. However, there are way too many people, and a catastrophic crush ensues, resulting in the trampling and suffocation of over a thousand individuals. Some wise ones leave then, seeking refuge from the following two decades of political blunders, mutinies, strikes, civil war, and revolution. Concurrently, numerous Anarchs and Brujah flock to Russia, enticed by the prospect of participating in a pivotal moment in the nation's history. In the aftermath of an empire's collapse, someone has to rise to the occasion and create a new order.

# Flashback Characters

## Anastasia Vorontsova

### Explosives Expert

Born into Russian nobility, Valentina received her education at the Rodionovsky Institute for Noble Girls. Wanting to study chemistry as a woman, she had to go to Switzerland, however, and at the University of Zurich, she becomes radicalized and begins to see the gentry as parasites upon society. Eventually, she decides to join the *Narodnaya Volya*, or People's Will, a revolutionary socialist organization dedicated to toppling the Czarist regime. She's the organization's explosives expert.

During her time with the People's Will, Anastasia makes friends with some of the group's more secretive members: Anarch vampires. Together, they devise a daring plan: to compel an elder to Embrace Anastasia. The scheme succeeds, and Anastasia can finally contribute much more forcefully to the group's terrorist activities, supported as she is by an illustrious lineage.

Anastasia is strong and short-tempered. She's eager to enlist the players' characters in assassination attempts against Czarist oppressors. She harbors a deep-seated shame regarding her aristocratic background and reluctantly acknowledges she can only drink from the members of the working class.

**Destiny:** Anastasia is destined for an unlif of violent conflicts. She might rise in the ranks of Russian Anarchs following the October Revolution and spend the next several decades masquerading as a member of the Communist Party, eating her fill of workers every night. She might leave for the West before the Iron Curtain falls, seeking to spread her ideas. Or she could fall to a fiery premature detonation on one of her very first missions.

**Clan:** Ventrite

**Generation:** 9th

**Embrace:** 1880

**Blood Potency:** 3

**Humanity:** 7

**General Difficulty:** 5/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 4, Mental 6, Disciplines 4



**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 6

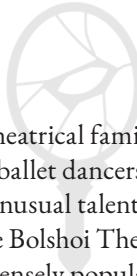
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Brawl 7, Intimidation 6, Etiquette 6, Science 7

**Disciplines:** Dominate 2 (Compel, Mesmerize), Fortitude 2 (Resilience, Toughness)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4, add 1 to all pools, add two dots of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 2.

## Aisha Sultanbayeva

### Choreographer



Hailing from a famous Kazakh theatrical family, Aisha's parents were performers, ballet dancers and choreographers. A dancer of an unusual talent, she became the prima ballerina of the Bolshoi Theater in Saint Petersburg. She was immensely popular among the audience and the choreographers, and she could choose any Grand Duke as her lover. Clan Toreador were practically fighting over her, but it was a Malkavian who finally Embraced her.

Aisha had to leave ballet behind, something she'll never forgive her sire for. She became a choreographer instead, creating scandalous, modern and avant-garde ballets that cause a sensation. The audience doesn't always understand what they're seeing, but it affects them deeply, and sometimes the premieres end in a riot.

Aisha remains popular among the Imperial family and the nobility, and she can grant the players' characters access to high circles both in the Camarilla and in the mortal world.

**Destiny:** If Aisha escapes Russia before the revolution comes for her, she'll likely find her way to the Ballets Suédois in Paris, the New York City Ballet, or the Royal Danish Ballet. In modern nights, she'll be doing everything she can to ignore the call of the Beckoning, wanting only to focus on her art, which will be growing increasingly experimental.

**Clan:** Malkavian

**Generation:** 10th

**Embrace:** 1777

**Blood Potency:** 2

**Humanity:** 7

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 5, Mental 6, Disciplines 4

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 5  
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 6, Awareness 7, Performance 7  
**Disciplines:** Auspex 3 (Sense the Unseen, Premonition, Share the Senses), Dominate 1 (Cloud Memory)  
**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4, add 2 to all pools, add three dots of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 2.



## Dmitry Ivanov

### Revolutionary Leader



A worker at Putilov Iron Works, Dmitry takes part in the 1904 strikes and gets fired. An intelligent and charismatic man, he quickly persuades his colleagues to join the strike and demand better conditions for all the workers. This is how he catches the eye of both the Okhrana, the secret police, and Brujah feeding on the workers.

In 1905, Dmitry is seriously wounded by a Cossack saber in the massacre called Bloody Sunday. A Brujah named Varvara finds him trying to drag himself home and, rather than let him die, Embraces him.

Dmitry wants the players' characters to join his fight against both the Czar and the Ventre and Toreador Kindred, who support the Imperial regime. He's constantly in danger, both because his sire has Embraced him without permission and because the secret police are searching for him. He only feeds from those he sees as society's parasites: nobles, soldiers, and industrialists. Joining him will be dangerous, but he might be on the winning side.

**Destiny:** If he makes it through the 1910s, Dmitry will go far, making a place for himself in the Revolutionary Council (colloquially known as the Brujah Council) following the fall of the Czarist regime. In modern nights, he might well be deeply involved in the Anarch Movement.

**Clan:** Brujah

**Generation:** 11th

**Embrace:** 1905

**Blood Potency:** 1

**Humanity:** 8

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 5, Disciplines 4

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 5

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Persuasion 7, Politics 6, Streetwise 6

**Disciplines:** Potence 1 (Lethal Body), Presence 2 (Awe, Daunt)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4, add 2 to all pools, add two dots of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 1–3.

## Flashback Locations

**THE STRAY DOG CAFÉ:** This preeminent art salon in St. Petersburg serves as a meeting place for writers, poets, dancers, and other artists who gather to discuss literary theory, host poetry readings, and stage theatrical performances. They identify themselves as “stray dogs,” marginalized by traditional aristocratic society. Despite facing repeated closures by the authorities, the café persists, serving as a primary stage and hunting ground for some of the city’s Toreador. Adjacent to it, they’ve established an Elysium within one of the palaces on Mikhailovskaya Square.

**A WEAVING MILL:** Rows of large weaving machines made of metal and wood dominate the space. The factory is dimly lit. Textile dust fills the air, catching the light streaming in from small windows and settling on surfaces, giving everything a dull appearance. The extremely loud rhythmic thumping of the looms and the whirring of spinning wheels fill the factory, creating a constant background din.

Workers, almost all women and girls, work up to 15 hours per day. They look pale and malnourished, and some have visible injuries. They cough because of the textile dust in their lungs, and many suffer from hearing loss. They move quickly and methodically among the machines, their movements repetitive and synchronized. Some operate the looms, while others monitor the quality of the fabric or repair broken machinery.

**PETERHOF PALACE:** The grand summer residence of the Russian Czars is located some 50 kilometers from Saint Petersburg, on the shore of the Baltic Sea. The massive yellow and white building is a mix of Baroque, classical, and many other styles—every emperor has added something fashionable for his time. Celebrations, balls, and masquerades take place here. Over 3,000 guests can marvel at the gilded carvings and the hallway mirrors that create the impression of infinity.

The Coat-of-Arms Pavilion, the dome of which is crowned with a weathervane in the form of a double-headed eagle, accommodates noble guests and members of the Imperial family.

The rather unusual Court Church is an octagon decorated in a cheerful manner, with bright paintings, gilded carvings, and kindly-looking

images of the saints to create a festive atmosphere.

Sprawling gardens with dozens of marble statues, fountains, and manicured hedges surround the palace. Even with visitors strolling along pathways lined with vibrant flowerbeds, it’s easy to hide in the endless greenery.

**SENNAYA SQUARE:** This square is home to a huge market where every day commonfolk come to sell their wares, buy bread, exchange gossip, and find work. Hay, firewood, and cattle are all sold here. In addition to the vendors and customers, you’ll find beggars, pickpockets, and drunks. It’s easy to hire someone for a dirty job or to get the latest news from the underworld. In the past, this marketplace was the center of the 1831 cholera outbreak. More than 1,500 deaths were occurring daily. People still whisper that evil spirits and “foreign doctors” may come back to poison the good people of Saint Petersburg.

## Flashback Scenes

**AN UNSUCCESSFUL ASSASSINATION:** This is not the first attempt on Czar Alexander II’s life, but it will be the most daring. A bomb is going to go off inside the Winter Palace.

The rebels and their Anarch compatriots have failed again and again. They tried to shoot the Czar in Saint Petersburg, then in Paris. They tried to blow up his train three times on its journey from Crimea to Saint Petersburg. This time they won’t fail. While it’s almost impossible for a young revolutionary to get close to the Czar, it’s significantly easier to enter the palace disguised as carpenters, guards, or servants.

Over time, anarchists have smuggled dynamite into the palace, amassing over 300 pounds of explosives by February 5th, 1880. They’ve placed it in the sleeping quarters of the palace guards, directly beneath the royal dining room. A clockwork timing device is set.

In February, the sun sets at 5:30 in Saint Petersburg. That night, a blizzard rages over the city. For the Anarchs, it’s a race to reach the palace before the scheduled dinner at 6 o’clock. With preparations complete, they anticipate eliminating the entire Imperial family.

It’s a beautiful explosion. It shakes the whole palace and resonates across the Palace Square, the Admiralty building, and all the way to the Kazan Cathedral.

Eleven mortals die, dozens and dozens are wounded.

But the Imperial family is unharmed. The official explanation is that the snowstorm has delayed one of the guests, the Prince of Bulgaria, and the Czar decided to wait before he would enter the dining hall. But rumors abound that it was a Kindred who tipped off the palace guards and saved the royal family, and possibly, the monarchy.

**BLOODY SUNDAY:** Even the most indifferent Kindred can sense something is happening in the early pre-dawn morning hours of Sunday, January 1905. Mortals all over the suburbs of Saint Petersburg are on the move. Women, men, children and the elderly are holding up religious icons and the portraits of their beloved Czar, singing hymns and patriotic songs as they advance toward the city center.

When the Kindred rise that evening, they note the absence of electricity and the closure of the public spaces. Those who usually start their nights with a newspaper find that none have been printed. When they open their shutters, they find the city engulfed in chaos. Around a thousand mortals have been killed and many more are fighting for their lives. From the frightened hectic mortals, you learn that when the crowds reached the Winter Palace, they were met with violence as the Imperial Guard opened fire on them without warning. What was supposed to be a peaceful protest had become a bloodbath.

Some vampires, seeking easy prey, venture out to hunt, while others, particularly younger ones, survey the destruction with a mix of pity and surprise at mortal cruelty. They Embrace among the fallen, sure that they'll find no loyalist there.

## Topics for Further Research

- The Smolny Institute
- The Russo-Turkish War
- The Russification of Ukraine, Finland, Poland, Belarus, the Baltics and other minorities
- The Russian Revolution of 1905
- The mutiny aboard the battleship Potemkin
- The Lena goldfields massacre
- World War I
- The Russian Revolution of 1917

### VAMPIRE ANARCHISTS

Kindred tend to lag behind when it comes to the convulsions of mortal history. They're parasites feeding off humankind rather than secret masters directing the course of history. Many elders, in particular, are perpetually confused at the increasingly strange turns taken by mortal events.

This doesn't mean Kindred don't take part in historical events. Such is the case with the last nights of Czarist rule in Russia. While the Camarilla's storied Ventrue and Toreador dynasties liked to Embrace from the aristocracy and spend their nights in glittering palaces, there were other Kindred who Embraced among the poor and the disenfranchised. Vampirism spread like an unseen epidemic, with sires making childe far from the sight of any Prince or Primogen.

No vampire suddenly loses all of their mortal allegiances and principles upon the Embrace. Such affiliations tend to fade with time, but a loyal Czarist Embraced into the Ventrue is usually an ardent supporter of the monarchy in death as well. Similarly, a radicalized anarchist Embraced by a Brujah bomb-maker carries their convictions into undeath.

In the revolution to come, many individual Kindred get caught in the fervor, supporting various sides the same as the mortals do. As the future state takes shape, it's already infested with vampires who have found niches for themselves during the revolution.

But the undead poison everything they touch. The vampire revolutionary may have had noble goals, but they're still a predator and a parasite. No amount of self-delusion removes the fact that their presence tends to have a negative effect on the mortals around them.

## The Great War

**Time:** 1914–1918

**Place:** The European frontlines and Istanbul

At the onset of the 20th century, imperialist European power nations fight for expansion and control of resources and territories. These rivalries escalate and end in the Great War. World War I is the

first fully industrial war, costing 10 million lives in a mostly pointless strife. Power dynamics and social class are turned around where old fortunes have disappeared. Inversely, war profiteers stand to make a fortune providing for the armies. Brutalization infuses society: After witnessing the horrors of the war, human life is considered less valuable. For most Kindred, surviving and maintaining the Masquerade in a disorganized society proves strenuous. However, the need to adapt to brutally changing times proves advantageous to the industrious fledgling, who can use the opportunity to carve a space for themselves.

## Shifting Power Dynamics

While expected, the Great War destabilizes European countries' economies and social structures with shocking speed. Entire societies seem to shift overnight: production systems turn into war suppliers, men of fighting age are made into soldiers, and women take over factory and field work.

Kindred must adapt quickly to a new reality where some protections and resources are lost or suddenly useless. Sharper minds prevail by retreating to the countryside, moving their assets, and joining the ranks of the war profiteers. For others, the Great War is a second blow after the changes brought on by the revolutionary years, and it acts as a powerful social leveler. In France, the continued influence of the Toreador Bohemians and Ventre landlords contribute to the steady reinforcement of a new generation of survivalist Camarilla loyalists, who come together to stand against the perceived brutality of members of the lesser clans.

Indeed, Anarch groups, as well as some minority factions among the Gangrel and Brujah, see in the war an opportunity to unleash a most-needed bestiality in mortals and in themselves, using the battlefield as a proving ground.

## On the Front Lines

The Front is a nightmare of trenches, mud, piles of bodies, and the almost unending pounding of artillery fire. Even Cainite immortality is threatened by the destructive power of modern machine guns. Some licks do haunt the battlefield, though, developing strategies to evade damage from the crossfire, hiding



in abandoned bunkers, hunting under cover of the wilderness, and stealing from military convoys.

For the Anarch, the battlefield is also a recruiting ground, especially among mutineers condemned to the firing squad. For many Brujah, surviving on the front line becomes an initiation ritual. For the Gangrel, ghost towns and villages are new domains to take over where nature and wilderness can take hold again, but this generates brutal conflicts with local lupine gangs. The Masson pack, held by the siblings Lambert and Floriane, does manage to carve a wide haven around the infamous Chemin des Dames and retain control of the area even after the war.

The aftermath of the Great War brings about a generation who've seen the horror and massacre of the most extensive battleground in history and will always retain a unique shade of brutality moving forward.

## The Eastern Front and Aftermath

The Great War is fought on many battlefields. The Eastern Front undergoes less of the trench war, seeing more conventional warfare with troop movements and ranged battles. However, central Europe appears more shaken and altered by the impact of the war. The end of the Great Empires (Germany, Austro-Hungary, Russia, and the Ottoman) creates a myriad of new nation states with aspirations to self-determination. Camarilla structures, resources, and seats of power are also greatly weakened, making Eastern Europe a vigorous hub for Anarchs and less established vampiric lineages.

The city of Istanbul, a central communication hub during the Great War, is weakened by the transfer of the capital to Ankara. This, however, benefits a vivid Cainite presence who has dwelt there since the time it was Constantinople.

## Flashback Characters

### Lambert Masson and Floriane Masson Pack Leaders

Siblings Lambert and Floriane are in their early 20s, with chestnut eyes and hair and the conventional unassuming air of people raised in the countryside.

They used to live and work together on the family farm and were exiled when the whole area was bombed and entrenched. They were found and Embraced by Joshua Dutertre, who hoped to use them as a diversion in his own plan to take over new domains at the German border. During the war, they pulled together survive beyond expectation, creating their own pack of anarchists and deserters.

**Destiny:** With time, Lambert and Floriane succeed in taking over part of Eastern France, making the area a haven for fugitives and the dispossessed. World War II threatens their continued existence, but if they make it through, they'll build a new unlif for themselves in the U.S.

**Clan:** Gangrel

**Generation:** 11th

**Embrace:** 1916

**Blood Potency:** 2

**Humanity:** 5

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 4, Mental 4, Disciplines 7

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 5

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** *Lionel:* Brawl 7, Leadership 6, Survival 7, Stealth 7

*Floriane:* Brawl 7, Intimidation 7, Survival 7, Stealth 7

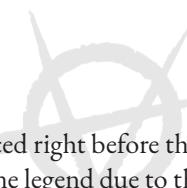
**Disciplines:** *Lionel:* Animalism 2 (Bond Famulus, Feral Whispers), Protean 1 (Eyes of the Beast), Dominate 1 (Compel)

*Floriane:* Protean 3 (Eyes of the Beast, Feral Weapons, Shapechange), Fortitude 1 (Resilience)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4, add 2 to all pools, add two dots of Disciplines to each, and provide them with a shared Touchstone.

### Yannick

*Frontline Rescuer*



A former gang member Embraced right before the war, Yannick becomes a frontline legend due to their continued interventions in saving deserters and mutineers. Their criminal past has trained them to stealth and manipulation, and they infiltrate army camps under any disguise that will fit them.

**Destiny:** After the war, Yannick will become a prominent Anarch member, especially noted for their continued capacity to recruit. They continue

recruitment into the modern nights, working hard for the Anarch cause.

**Clan:** Brujah

**Generation:** 11th

**Embrace:** 1912

**Blood Potency:** 2

**Humanity:** 6

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 6, Disciplines 7

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 5

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Stealth 8, Intimidation 7, Politics 7

**Disciplines:** Celerity 2 (Rapid Reflexes, Fleetness), Presence 1 (Daunt), Oblivion 1 (Shadow Cloak)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4, add 1 to all pools, and add two dots of Disciplines.

## Flashback Locations

**CHEMIN DES DAMES:** The “ladies’ road” is emblematic of the trench battlefield, the location of one of the most brutal and pointless battles of the Great War. The mutinies against the war started there, and hundreds of French soldiers were executed there as well. Now a Gangrel hideout, the place is bleak and eerie, a gray horizon over muddy grounds, where the wind echoes like whispers of ghosts.

### THE GRAND QUARTIER GENERAL (GQG):

The French military headquarters are stationed in the lavish Prince de Conde Hotel, a manor house of beautiful architectural proportions. The contrast between the elegance of the marble staircases, tall mirrors and gilded chandeliers, and the muddy misery inflicted on the common soldier is staggering.

**ISTANBUL:** The Ottoman Empire allies with Germany during the Great War, but Istanbul is mostly spared from the fighting which occurs south in the Straits or in the desert between Egypt and Mesopotamia. As a travel and commercial hub, Istanbul is also a nerve center for weapon trafficking and espionage. Under the shine of old palaces, the brilliant seaside and winding streets are a seat of clandestine meetings and exchanged state secrets.

## Flashback Scenes

**ACROSS THE NO MAN'S LAND:** Being called to run the No Man's Land at night, you try to summon your courage against the fear that knots your entrails. No one is safe there, not mortals, not licks. Under cover of night, the pounding of artillery has subsided, so now is your time to climb over the barbed wire and run. You lose sight of your companions in the darkness as you stumble on the muddy shell craters, the stench of rot and death catching up with you. You run, evade the crossfire, and survive, it seems. The echo of the bombing and the shades of the dead stay with you.

**DESERTERS:** *“Congratulations, you’re free! Cursed be the military pigs, the warmongers, the exploiters of the people!”* The cry of the Anarch leader rings through the night. The men that you just rescued blink wearily in the torchlights, unsure of their good fortune. You saw many of these groups, some just roaming the countryside, some taken from the prison, straight from the grasp of the executioner. You believe in this cause. After all these years, you have come to hate the war and those who profit from it. Most of the men you rescued will just run away, hoping to get back to family and loved ones. A few stay with you to become some of the fiercest, most brutal Anarchs of their generation.

**THE CITY IN TIMES OF WAR:** City life in wartime is dour. If you evaded conscription to the front lines, you need to keep a low profile. There’s little in the way of entertainment, food is scarce, and propaganda saturates the poster walls and radio waves. You may be using the war for opportunity, though, supporting the war industry, maybe through the black market. Perhaps you won’t end up shell-shocked like a soldier, but you remain jaded by the bleakness of the experience.

## Topics for Further Research

- Combat in colonial territories
- Women’s roles during the Great War
- Scientific progress through military research and surgical experimentations

# The Roaring Twenties

**Time:** The 1920s

**Place:** North America, other big cities of the West, and Cairo

“Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow you may die.” Or, you get the idea. *Les années folles* is a feverish time, delirious with joy to be out of the war and over the Spanish flu. But for many, it’s the sort of joy where you expect the next bad thing to be right around the corner (which, of course, it is). So, the kine have a bittersweet aftertaste of cynicism. Yet, they’re so eager to live fully. It’s no effort at all to drink your fill.

Perhaps this is why the ’20s is a time of relative peace between North American Kindred. In Los Angeles, Prince Dominguez lets everyone do as they please as long as they show him respect. Prince Lodin has enough to do managing his court in Chicago to start outright conflicts with anyone outside of it. And though Anarch groups have overthrown the Princes of many West Coast cities, they seem content with what they have for now. Everyone wants peace.

But the Anarchs plot, the Sabbat are gathering their forces, and an ugliness is spreading among the kine who think that one great war is not enough to cleanse the world.

## The Prohibition Era

Thanks to the diligent work of the temperance movement, alcohol is banned nationwide in the U.S. from January 17, 1920. You’d think that’d make the blood clean. But the production of illegal spirits is soaring, and half the time you drain someone now, they’re full of moonshine and industrial-grade cleaning solvents. An entire industry is being built around getting the kine drunk, and it’s making star-quality gangsters out of small-time gang runners. They make it in the Bahamas, Cuba, Saint-Pierre, and Miquelon, move it over the borders from Canada and Mexico — or with the rum-running ships outside Atlantic City. They make it in their bathtubs, too. And then they turn it into gold.

A young coterie can make a real place for themselves running spirits for the network. And of course, they can carry all sorts of other things as well.

## The Rise of Organized Crime

If you ask a neonate New Yorker with a taste for the dramatic, the big cities of the West run on gangsterism. The boroughs of New York, Detroit, and Chicago, London, Birmingham, Berlin. A great deal of Italy, especially the South is getting used to trusting the mafia over the police. The gangsters growing fat on Prohibition in America expand to narcotics and gambling, loan-sharking and racketeering, integrating themselves in local businesses and taking over entire neighborhoods. They even interfere with newspaper distribution. The made man is replacing the self-made man as the icon of the American dream, and Al Capone is becoming as beloved as a movie star.

Of course, the FBI wants them dealt with badly. But they can’t figure out how, and the crime families are thwarting them at every turn. It’s almost too easy to get away with murder at this time for the Kindred who knows how to mask their crimes. No one looks for vampires where they’re expecting mobsters.

## The Chicago Outfit

Also known as the South Side Gang, the Italian-American syndicate deals in racketeering, bootlegging, bribery, coercion, Black Hand extortion, money laundering, murder, loansharking, trafficking, tax evasion...

Members include:

- *Giacomo “Big Jim” Colosimo*. Owner of hundreds of brothels. Boss 1910–1920. Shot in a restaurant.
- *Giovanni “Papa Johnny” Torio*. Boss 1920–1925. Stepped down.
- *Alphonse “Scarface” Capone*. Boss 1925–1931, when he went to prison.
- *Antonio “Tony the Scourge” Lombardo*. Consigliere.
- *“Machine Gun Jack” McGurn*. Hitman.
- *Frank “The Enforcer” Nitti*. Bodyguard. Boss from 1931.
- *Jack Zuta*. Pimp, accountant, and political fixer.

## The North Side Gang

Irish-American crime syndicate, the principal rival of the Chicago Outfit. They started out as pickpockets and labor slingers but move into racketeering, bootlegging, gambling, extortion, robbery, and murder.

Members include:

- *Charles Dean O'Banion*. Boss 1919–1924.  
Murdered in his flower shop.
- *Samuel "Nails" Morton*. War veteran and right-hand man of O'Banion. Dies in a riding accident. The gang members fill the horse with lead.
- *Hymie Weiss*. Boss 1924–1926.
- *Vincent "The Schemer" Drucci*. Boss 1926–1927.
- *George "Bugs" Moran*. Boss from 1927.
- *Ted Newbury*. Rumrunner. Lieutenant under Moran.
- *Jack "Two Gun" Alterie*. Gunman and Western enthusiast.
- *John Duffy*. Hired muscle. His body is left by O'Banion in a snowbank in 1924 after Duffy beats a young woman to death.
- *Jack Zuta*. Pimp, accountant, and political fixer. Shot by Al Capone's man in 1930 for being a traitor.

## The Forty Elephants

A notorious female-led crime syndicate was active in South London. These well-dressed women specialize in shoplifting—walking in as though they belong, taking jewelry, silk, clothing, and furs from London shops, and making their getaway in taxi cars and fast stolen vehicles. They'll also masquerade as maids to gain employment in big houses and ransack them, seduce and blackmail male officials, and peddle fake cocaine.



Members include:

- “Diamond Queen Annie” Alice Diamon. The brains of the business.
- “Baby-faced” Maggie Hughes. Wife of gangster Billy Hill, who’s stuck behind bars.
- Dorothy “Dolly” Mays. Maggie’s sister.
- George Hughes. Maggie’s brother-in-law.
- Bertha Tappenden
- Gertrude Scully. Tailoress.
- Mary Gibbs, mother of nine, is constantly going in or out of prison.
- “The Bobbed-Haired Bandit” Lilian Goldstein

## The Sweet Jazzy Tunes of the Sax

Another thing Prohibition is good for is the nightclub life. Women aren’t kept out of the speakeasies as they were the legal pubs, and that significantly lifts the mood. At the same time, some hundred thousand Black Americans are migrating into Harlem from the South, creating what becomes the Harlem Renaissance—a cultural boom that builds the foundation for the Civil Rights movement and sprouts new Black literature, music, theater, and art. Rising literary stars like Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, and Countee Cullen portray and challenge the era with words, while musicians like Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Bessie Smith, and Edith Wilson provide the pulse of the 1920s nightclubs. Jazz grows out of blues and ragtime and takes Charleston, swing, Black Bottom, and the Shimmy with it, making all the pearls and tassels of the flappers shake when they move. It’s not always pretty. Popular nightclubs, like the Cotton Club, exclude Black Americans from the audience, but then one doesn’t have to feel so bad about draining the guests.

## Flashback Characters

### Corinne Griffith and Vincent Sterling

*The Orchid Lady of the Screen and her handsome lover*



Considered by many to be the most beautiful actress of the silent film era, the Orchid Lady is the muse and mistress of the jealous and demanding Toreador Vincent Sterling.

Corinne is charming, funny, and knows what she wants—The perfect starlet in every way. In *Black Oxen* from 1923, she plays a woman who rejects romance for a political career. But in real life, she’s unhappily married to the scriptwriter and director Walter Morosco. Her way out would appear to be her lover, the mysterious Mr. Vincent Sterling, producer of the popular *Moonlight Masquerade*. Handsome enough to turn the heads of both women and men at Hollywood parties, he offers both career advancement and a chance of real romance for Corinne. He’s also deeply jealous and plagued by fears that others will try to take his woman. He’s especially distrustful of other Kindred. If you so much as look at her, you’re bound to get in trouble.

**Destinies:** Corinne will never be Embraced and will die in old age, possibly mourning the eternal beauty she could’ve had. Vincent Sterling will spend his unlife looking for another starlet to replace her and will still be active in Hollywood in modern nights.

#### CORINNE GRIFFITH

**General Difficulty:** 3/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 4 (Charisma), Mental 4

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 4

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Performace 5 (Drama, Comedy), Subterfuge 5 (Seduction)

#### VINCENT STERLING

**Clan:** Toreador

**Generation:** 10th

**Embrace:** 1799

**Blood Potency:** 3

**Humanity:** 7

**General Difficulty:** 5/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 4, Mental 6

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 5

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Stealth 7, Etiquette 5, Persuasion 5

**Disciplines:** Celerity 1 (Rapid Reflexes), Presence 2 (Awe, Lingering Kiss)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4, add 2 to all pools, add three dots of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 2.

## “Machine Gun Jack” McGurn

*Boxer/Hitman*

The Sicilian-American Jack started out as a boxer at 14, changing his name from Vincenzo Gibaldi because Irish boxers get better bookings. If you run into him before 1923, he’s a friendly guy with an easy smile. But in 1923, Jack’s stepdad Angelo is murdered by gangsters from the Genna family when he refuses to pay protection money. Now, Jack’s smile withers. In February 1926, he spends eight days hunting down and killing the three men responsible. This gets him invited to join the Capone gang, and Jack becomes Al Capone’s most trusted and prolific hitman. In 1941, Al Capone is Embraced, and he Embraces Jack that same year. Mortal or not, “Machine Gun Jack” remains one of the most dangerous individuals you might have the pleasure of running into in Chicago.

Jack co-owns a speakeasy jazz club, the Green Mill Gardens.

**Destiny:** When Jack is Embraced in 1941 by Al Capone, he will become a 9th-Generation Ventrue. His indiscreet use of his powers will eventually get him kicked out of the Outfit, and he’ll withdraw to a quieter life hunting golfers on the Evergreen Golf Course. Rumors in modern nights will have it that’s also where he suffered final death, flayed by his enemies right there on the green, but who can say?

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 6, Mental 4 (Resolve)

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 5

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Brawl 8, Firearms 8 (machine guns)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4, add 2 to all pools, add five dots of Disciplines, set Humanity at 3–4, and set Blood Potency at 4.

## Flashback Scenes

**THE SPEAKEASY:** It’s the Prohibition era, and alcohol is illegal in the United States. This doesn’t mean no one drinks. There are over 100,000 Speakeasies, blind pigs, gin joints in New York alone. In the French Quarter of New Orleans, there are three per block. This one’s in the back of a restaurant, and you can get here by knocking on the back door and asking for the special dessert menu. The bar has a system of levers that can pour alcohol down the sewers at a moment’s notice. Come to think of it, you could throw almost anything down that chute.

There are live jazz performances every Friday and Saturday.

**THE MOVIE PALACE:** The movie palace, or picture palace if you’re in the UK, is the new big thing. Before, you had only smaller storefront theaters and movie houses visited by the working class. This is where the upper middle class goes to be enthralled by the wonders of the moving pictures. This one is an “atmospheric” theatre designed by John Eberson to give the impression of sitting in an outdoor Moorish courtyard under a dark blue sky. Clouds are projected onto the ceiling—and a certain sentimental Kindred comes here almost nightly to stare at them and ponder. The theatre fits 3000 people when it’s full, which it often is.

**CAIRO:** “Egypt is a country where the Egyptians reign, English rule, and everybody does as he pleases,” so write two African American jazz musicians in *The Chicago Defender* in 1923. Everybody’s busy going to Cairo: Hungarian chorus girls and Polish cabaret dancers, archaeology enthusiasts wanting to see the newly discovered tomb of Tutankhamen, saxophone players, and movie stars. Egypt has just gained independence. The city is sweltering, packed with cabarets, dance halls, and hash bars. The biggest clubs are run by women—women who are also active in the fight to get the vote. Among these, you find Badia Masabni’s Opera Casino, which hosts an after-hours Elysium on the top floor.

**WALL STREET:** A bustling financial hub that oozes rapid economic growth and investment opportunities, it’s hard to take more than a few steps down Wall Street without running into some sort of ghoul. The Financial district of lower Manhattan

is dominated by skyscrapers in neoclassical and Art Deco styles—all concrete and chrome-plated steel. Arrange a meeting with a contact in the lobby of the National City Bank building or haunt the stock exchange to manage your affairs or your exclusive stockbroker diet.

**HOLLYWOOD:** The film capital of the world, Hollywood is swimming in money, talent, and new ideas. It's a place of experimentation—with art, booze, sex, and drugs. The stars of the silver screen go to great lengths to secure their continued success. More than one would make a deal with the devil for a few more years of youth. While actress Gloria Swanson takes baths in a solid gold bathtub, desperate up-and-coming starlets compete for the chance to taste the water of life from the veins of slick-haired vampire investors, meeting in the booths at the Musso and Frank.

## Flashback Scenes

**THE RUN:** You're new in town and have gotten the chance to make a name for yourself with the local mobsters. The gang wants you to make a delivery. Nothing complicated. You just have to get 40 bottles of high-quality Cuban Rum past the cops.

**THE RESCUE:** An insane ghoul hyped up on Tzimisce vitae and some sort of morphine-cocaine mix has kidnapped an up-and-coming actress from the film studio where he works as a cameraman. Without her, the filming can't progress. Your boss wants the damn movie to be a success, and the male lead leaves town tomorrow.

**THE RELIEF:** It's evening in New Orleans. The air is full of sweet music and everyone smiles at you as you walk through the garden district. Whom do you feed on that you shouldn't have?

## Topics for Further Research

- Taking the waters at Saratoga Springs
- The First Red Scare
- Women's Suffrage and first-wave feminism
- The St. Valentine's Day Massacre

- The Irish War of Independence
- The Lost Generation
- NAACP
- Segregation, the resurgence of the KKK, and the rise of fascism

## The Great Depression

**Time:** 1929–1939

**Place:** New York City

Should the esteemed Kindred, who has successfully invested in the stock market since the 17th century and maintains a steadfast attachment to her wealth, find her assets disappear overnight, it would undoubtedly evoke her displeasure. This is exactly what happens to some of the elders in North America on October 24, 1929. Many ghouls are killed the night the Kindred hear that the Wall Street Crash has happened. It's the start of the Great Depression.

Although some Kindred are as affected as the kine, others find ways to profit on the chaos. As the market plummets, new players enter the New York scene, short-selling stock and buying distressed assets at bargain prices—or making their own way outside the system.

## Feeding Grounds

### THE UPPER EAST SIDE

The Upper East Side of Manhattan is home to many of the most affluent New Yorkers who run their trade in the financial district. Those who understand the principle of buying when everybody else is selling and holding until everybody else is buying. Great fortunes can be made like this and by investing in food production, aviation, construction, and entertainment. And, with an unemployment rate of 33%, it's effortless for a vampire to exploit the mortal workforce for their ventures.

### HARLEM

In Harlem, you may find a Brujah running their own numbers racket with capital gained in the Crash, blending banking, investing, gambling, and lottery play. Since most banks don't accept Black customers,

they have to invest illegally. A vampire can achieve remarkable success being in this business, and even make a name for themselves in the community, financing small businesses, creating jobs, and donating money to programs promoting racial progress—all the while discreetly feeding on their neighbors.

The press and police report on the war between Harlem's organized crime and the five Italian American Mafia crime families, the Jewish-American Undzer Shtik, and the Irish Mob. They remain oblivious to Kindred who prefer to stalk about in the background, letting the likes of Lucky Luciano, Dutch Schultz, Arnold Rothstein, and Jack "Legs" Diamond bask in the limelight. Nonetheless, the battles between the factions of the Kindred who compete for control over New York is no less bloody.

### GREENWICH VILLAGE

Greenwich Village is known to some as “the Free and Independent Republic of Washington Square,” since the painters John Sloan and Marcel Duchamp declared it so in 1917. This neighborhood is like a tucked away small world unto itself, where all things avant-garde are allowed to grow. Spared, for the most part, from inclusion in the Manhattan grid plan, it still retains its twisting 18th century street layout, and there are coffee shops and art studios on every corner. Here you'll find the “University in Exile”, home to German Jewish academics who have fled from persecution in their homeland. You'll find Café Society, America's first racially integrated nightclub, opened by a Jewish Latvian immigrant. And perhaps you'll find a Toreador in a small and ridiculously

## The East-Coast Bohemian's Guide to Pop Culture

- \* Orson Welles' radio adaption of The War of the Worlds
- \* Aldous Huxley's Brave New World
- \* Dashiell Hammett's The Maltese Falcon
- \* Fritz Lang's Metropolis
- \* Dracula with Bella Lugosi
- \* Prana Film's Nosferatu
- \* Weird Tales, pulp magazine. Also Amazing Stories
- \* The Invisible Man, Universal Pictures—but also the books, obviously

impractical old apartment, reading futuristic science fiction books, scrapbooking with pulp magazines, and obsessing over horror movies.

Rumor has it the portrayal of vampires in movies from the period is so similar to the Nosferatu because a Toreador decided to persuade mortal filmmakers of the macabre nature of the vampire—directing attention away from their own clan and playing a joke on the Sewer Rats all in one go. The attentive will also realize that vampires in film tonight resemble nothing as much as a parody of the Toreador, so perhaps the favor was returned.

## Flashback Characters

### **Benjamin Terry**

*Stockbroker Ghoul*

The fairly recent Wharton graduate impressed both his clients and his colleagues during his initial months at the New York Stock Exchange. However, his apparent money-making talents attracted the attention of someone else as well—which is how he came to be a ghoul.

Benjamin knows nothing about vampires and assumes his mistress is the sole creature of darkness in New York City. He's confused about the effects of the Nosferatu Blood upon his abilities and his appearance but takes it for granted that he doesn't have much choice. Unfortunately, Benjamin lost most of his mistress's money in the New York stock market crash of '29. If he doesn't get it back, and fast, she'll find out and do something terrible to him.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 3, Mental 4, Disciplines 1

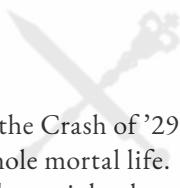
**Secondary Attributes:** Health 4, Willpower 5

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Academics 5 (Business), Finance 7, Technology 5

**Disciplines:** Obfuscate 1 (Cloak of Shadows)

### **Olga Alexandrova**

*Real Estate Financier*



Olga has made more money on the Crash of '29 than she did throughout her whole mortal life. She has a nose for money and likes to joke that she can tell when an investment is going bad, like meat that's started putrefying. Embraced in her mid-40s, just a decade ago, Olga still has a strong attachment to mortal society—not so much the people, but the glamor and the social rules. She loves the expression on the faces of old rivals when she continues to do well, and they have to sell their second home.

Olga poses as the wife of an investment banker—one with very sensitive skin—but it is she who does all the major business. Her mortal husband's own investments are what she considers play, but at least they keep him occupied and placid.

**Destiny:** Olga will likely be doing just fine for most of the 20th century, but she'll catch the attention of Second Inquisition investigators in the 21st, and from then on, she'll be doing her late-night spa treatments on borrowed time.

**Clan:** Ventrue

**Generation:** 10th

**Embrace:** 1922

**Blood Potency:** 2

**Humanity:** 6

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 6, Disciplines 5

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 6

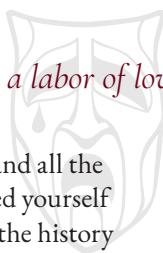
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Subterfuge 7, Awareness 7, Finance 8

**Disciplines:** Dominate 2 (Cloud Memory, Mesmerize), Potence 1 (Lethal Body), Presence 1 (Daunt)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4, adding 2 to all pools, add one dot of Disciplines, lower Humanity by 2, and provide her with a retinue of loyal Retainers.

## Isabella "Bella" Moretti

*Controlling the Five Families is a labor of love and duty*



Bella enjoys the power, the money, and all the beautiful things that having attached yourself to the most feared criminal mob in the history of the United States can bring. In addition, she uses her position to manipulate mortal affairs to the advantage of the Camarilla, ensuring that the interests of her allies among the New York City Kindred are protected at all costs.

Bella is ruthless when it comes to competitors and absolutely loyal when it comes to friends. Music is her weakness. She has a particular fondness for jazz, with its sultry melodies capturing the essence of the night. She's willing to risk her safety, entering enemy territory, to sit at the dimly lit tables in the swirling cigarette smoke of the Harlem clubs and hear the swinging tunes of Duke Ellington or the heartbreakin ballads of Ethel Waters.

**Destiny:** Bella is a likely victim of diablerie, her unruly childe taking over her domain in modern nights.

**Clan:** Nosferatu

**Generation:** 10th

**Embrace:** 1910

**Blood Potency:** 3

**Humanity:** 5

**General Difficulty:** 5/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 6, Mental 5, Disciplines 6

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 6

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 8, Intimidation 9, Streetwise 8

**Disciplines:** Animalism 1 (Bond Famulus), Potence 3 (Lethal Body, Soaring Leap, Prowess), Obfuscate 2 (Silence of Death, Unseen Passage)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4, add 1 to all pools, add two dots of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 1.

Or create her 11th Generation childe with Blood Potency 2, Humanity 6, a General Difficulty of 4/3, Standard dice pools of 5–6, Health 5 and Willpower 6, Exceptional dice pools of 7–8, four dots of Disciplines, and an impressive record collection.

## Titus Jones

*Fanboy*



He has seen Anna May Wong and Marlene Dietrich in *Shanghai Express* 89 times.

He can name Babe Didrikson's every athletic achievement from the past ten years.

He spent a week looking for Richard Bruce Nugent to ask for an autograph for his copy of *Smoke, Lilies and Jade*.



He followed Oscar Stanton De Priest on his speaking tour across Illinois.

He traveled all the way to California to witness Amelia Earhart land in Oakland and become the first person to fly solo from Hawaii to California.

He waited at the stage door on Broadway every night to meet the stars of the *Run, Little Chillun*. From there, he went to see Gladys Bentley perform at Clam House, one of New York's most notorious gay speakeasies, night after night.

Titus's fascination with talent knows no bounds. Be it an artist, an athlete, an adventurer, or a politician, he's ready to devote himself to them at least until he finds the next target. His Embrace hasn't hindered his admiration for mortals; rather, he's expanded it to include several intriguing, influential Kindred. He has an amazing ability to get himself close to even the most powerful and famous. He doesn't let anyone speak ill of those he admires, let alone lay their hands on them. Sometimes he ends up hurting his idols, which terrifies and saddens him.

**Destiny:** If Titus makes it into modern nights, he'll still be found deep underground most of the time, running movies from the golden age of Hollywood on his old-school film projector.

**Clan:** Toreador

**Generation:** 11th

**Embrace:** 1899

**Blood Potency:** 2

**Humanity:** 7

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 5, Disciplines 4

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 6

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Insight 7, Persuasion 7, Subterfuge 7

**Disciplines:** Auspex 1 (Heightened Senses), Celerity 1 (Cat's Grace), Presence 2 (Awe, Lingering Kiss)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4, add 2 to all pools, and add two dots of Disciplines.

## Flashback Locations

**CENTRAL PARK:** During the Great Depression, this urban park has turned into the city's largest squat, known as the "Forgotten Men's Gulch." Temporary

houses are made of wooden planks, cardboard boxes, tarps, and other scrap materials. The water reservoir is shut down and drained, leaving only a 6-acre expanse of dusty land. Encampments are regularly cleared by the police, but the people with nowhere to go always come back. They leave to stand in breadlines, to beg or look for work, before returning to the main thoroughfare known as "Depression Street." Thousands of tourists come through just to look. In 1933, the residents are forced to leave to make room for the new Great Lawn.

**ATLANTIC AVENUE TUNNEL:** New York City's Nosferatu had ruled everything below street level since the first sewer was built. In 1845, mortals decided to build a Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) tunnel beneath Atlantic Avenue in Brooklyn, the first subway tunnel in the world. But already in 1861, the tunnel was sealed again. Almost 800 meters long and over five meters high, the tunnel now serves as the major Nosferatu den. During World War I, it was rumored to be used for bomb-making by German terrorists. In the '20s, people said that it was full of whiskey distilleries. Nowadays, people say all kinds of things. Mostly they'll tell you not to investigate. No one ever seems to come back when they go to investigate.

## Flashback Scenes

**DRACULA:** It's the Golden Age of Hollywood, but *Dracula* premieres at the Roxy Theatre in New York City. Bela Lugosi, Helen Chandler, and other stars of the movie are present, looking sharp and beautiful. The cream of New York's entertainment business has arrived to see the exciting film. Among the audience, there is a significant number of the city's Kindred.

At the end of the movie, after the applause, director Tod Browning takes the stage.

"You might not know it, but not everyone in the audience is a human," he says and smiles.

Is this a joke? Or has the Masquerade been broken?

"I would now ask all the actual vampires to stand up so that we can give you a big round of applause!"

This is as much as any mortal can remember, and most do not remember even that.

Two things are known. First, the newspapers report that several members of the audience blacked out from fear during the premiere. Second, the very

last line of the movie gets censored. This is what it said before it was removed:

*"Just a moment, ladies and gentlemen! A word before you go. We hope the memories of Dracula and Renfield won't give you bad dreams, so just a word of reassurance. When you get home tonight, and the lights have been turned out, and you are afraid to look behind the curtains—and you dread to see a face appear at the window—why, just pull yourself together and remember that after all, there are such things as vampires!"*

**WORLD OF TOMORROW:** The New York World's Fair opens its doors on April 30, 1939, under the banner "Dawn of a New Day." Sixty countries and numerous companies welcome the public to glimpse the world of tomorrow, showcasing futuristic innovations such as a television, a diner, and something called air conditioning.

The grounds and colossal pavilions also feature art exhibitions, a life-size replica of a Soviet metro station, 150 pedigreed cows, a 200-foot-high waterfall, "Monkey Mountain" housing 600 monkeys, camel rides, and a full-size replica of a Buddhist Temple. The majority of New York's Kindred attend the fair at one time or another, seeking entertainment or feeding opportunities. One exhibit especially catches the interest of those in the know: The Westinghouse Time Capsule — a specially designed, non-corrosive metal tube to be buried 15 meters underground and sealed for 5,000 years. According to the press, it includes seeds, writings by Albert Einstein, a dollar in change, millions of pages of text on microfilm, and things like that. But among the New York Kindred, persistent rumors suggest it contains the skull of the Brujah methuselah Altamira. Allegedly, Altamira's childe, Maxwell of Chicago, has been using the skull to commune with her, receiving advice, guidance, and knowledge of his enemies' weaknesses in return. The methods of its preservation, how it's ended up in mortal hands, and just what kind of Blood Sorcery Maxwell has employed to protect it is unclear — apparently, the skull is haunted and intensifies the Hunger to such a degree it is too dangerous for any Kindred to possess. Nevertheless, some may be tempted to test their luck.

### THE TALLEST BUILDING IN THE WORLD:

Everything seemed to be going smoothly for the Ventrué real estate financier Olga Alexandrova until she decided to start investing in a skyscraper. And not just any skyscraper, but one in the new art deco style, both stunning and majestic. Unsatisfied with plans for a mere 50-story building, Olga pushes for 60 stories, then 80. It has to surpass the height of the Chrysler Building, where one of her fellow Ventrué has their Haven; it has to be the tallest building in the world! Her clanmate isn't the only one annoyed. The construction of the Empire State Building necessitates the demolition of the beautiful Waldorf-Astoria hotel. The Elysium Keeper, who's just finished renovating the hotel, is far from pleased. What ensues is a protracted battle of sabotage and pursuit.

Ultimately, the skyscraper must emerge victorious. The Waldorf-Astoria will be razed, along with all its secrets from the Gilded Age.

## Topics for Further Research

- The Hindenburg Disaster
- Los Angeles Summer Olympics and Lake Placid Winter Olympics
- The total solar eclipse of 1932, where day was turned into night
- The Dust Bowl of 1934
- Construction of the Hoover Dam
- The U.S. mafia in Cuba
- The Untouchables

## World War II and the Post-War Period

**Time:** 1939–1950

**Place:** The European Theater

In September 1939, Nazi Germany invades Poland, beginning the expansion-focused part of Hitler's plan to create a thousand-year empire in the image of old Rome — and initiating the most destructive conflict human history has ever seen. Kindred communities are divided and destroyed in the period

that follows. While some low-Humanity licks are able to take advantage of the situation and few lack for vessels, the Kindred are as helpless against carpet bombings as anyone else.

## **The Axis and the Allies**

Broadly speaking, the conflict has two sides: the Allies and the Axis. In 1939, the Allied coalition consists of the United Kingdom, France, and Poland, while the Axis is headed by Germany, Italy, and Japan. The Soviet Union claims neutrality but is cooperating with Germany in return for half of Poland and the chance to annex the Baltic states and parts of Finland and Romania.

From 1939–1941, Germany expands into Europe, occupying Denmark, Norway, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, France, Yugoslavia, and Greece. They also invade the Soviet Union, prompting Stalin to declare for the Allies. With Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, the U.S. joins the war on the Allied side as well.

From a few months into the war, both sides employ Kindred spies without knowing it. With some exceptions, the European Princes aren't very invested in national politics, but you can't protect your territory without knowing what is going on. When there's Kindred interference, it tends to be in support of the defending forces. In London during the Blitz, for instance, Queen Anne would love nothing as much as for the Germans to stop throwing bombs at her city.

## **The Nazi Ideology**

Nazi Germany's expansion policy is only one part of the thousand-year plan. Hitler has been fine-tuning his totalitarian ideology for decades, and for the most part, the rest of the world has let him do it. Even outside of Germany, many are charmed by the propaganda machine, which promises a return to past glories under a strong leader. However, Nazism is insidious and it lifts up some by destroying others. Jews become the designated number one enemy of Nazi Germany. Together with Romani, gay people, people with physical and mental disabilities, and other "enemies of the state," they're systematically persecuted over the course of the war. As the war progresses, millions are forcefully removed and

taken to concentration camps to be worked to death or executed. As the Nazis search cellars, attics, and the bellies of boats for hidden Jews, they sometimes come across vampires as well.

For those not directly affected, far from Auschwitz and Dachau, Nazism can seem promising and glamorous. The SS wear uniforms designed by Hugo Boss, the high command vacations in the Alps, and it doesn't start with genocide but with casual racism.

## **The End of it All**

The war in Europe ends with the fall of Berlin and Germany's surrender on May 8, 1945. In Japan, it ends with the U.S. dropping the first atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August that same year. The shock of the bombs is felt across the world, at least in spirit. At first, some elders theorize that the Antediluvians have woken. They're more horrified than relieved to realize it's mortal doing.

## **After the War**

In the aftermath of the war, the world has two superpowers: the Soviet Union and the United States. Former allies, they become competitors in the Cold War. Much of Central and Eastern Europe fall under Soviet control and end up behind the Iron Curtain. Silence falls between the Kindred of the West and those within the USSR.

Meanwhile, the U.S. is the richest country in the world and pumps billions into rebuilding Western Europe. Some Kindred travel west to drink in the optimism of the new American consumers. Others stay behind to fill in the power vacuums created by the final death of many of the elders in the war.

## **Flashback Characters**

### ***Elise Berger***

#### ***Resistance Fighter***

Elise works at a bakery which gives her an excuse to be out and about before the sun rises in the mornings. Some of the local German soldiers also like her and the fresh-baked buns she sometimes hands them when no one is looking, so they look

the other way when she takes bread to the hospital. They want to think she's a friend. In truth, Elise is carrying messages and sometimes more for the resistance. She's full of fury behind her small smile. Hatred drives her as she shapes the finger waves the soldiers think are so flirty. She thinks she doesn't have anything better to fight with. Given the chance to be turned, she'll take it a thousand times over.

**Destiny:** If Elise isn't captured and executed by the Nazi political police, she might get a chance to be Embraced. She may become part of a player's character's bloodline. In the 1940s, she'll try to use her newfound powers to make real progress for the resistance movement and get revenge on the Nazi officials who have been targeting her neighborhood. However, she's bound to lose control. Sooner or later, Elise will realize that she's doing more evil than good as beholden to the Beast. When that happens, she may simply grow morose and restless, but perhaps she'll turn on the one that Embraced her.

**General Difficulty:** 3/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 5, Mental 4

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 5

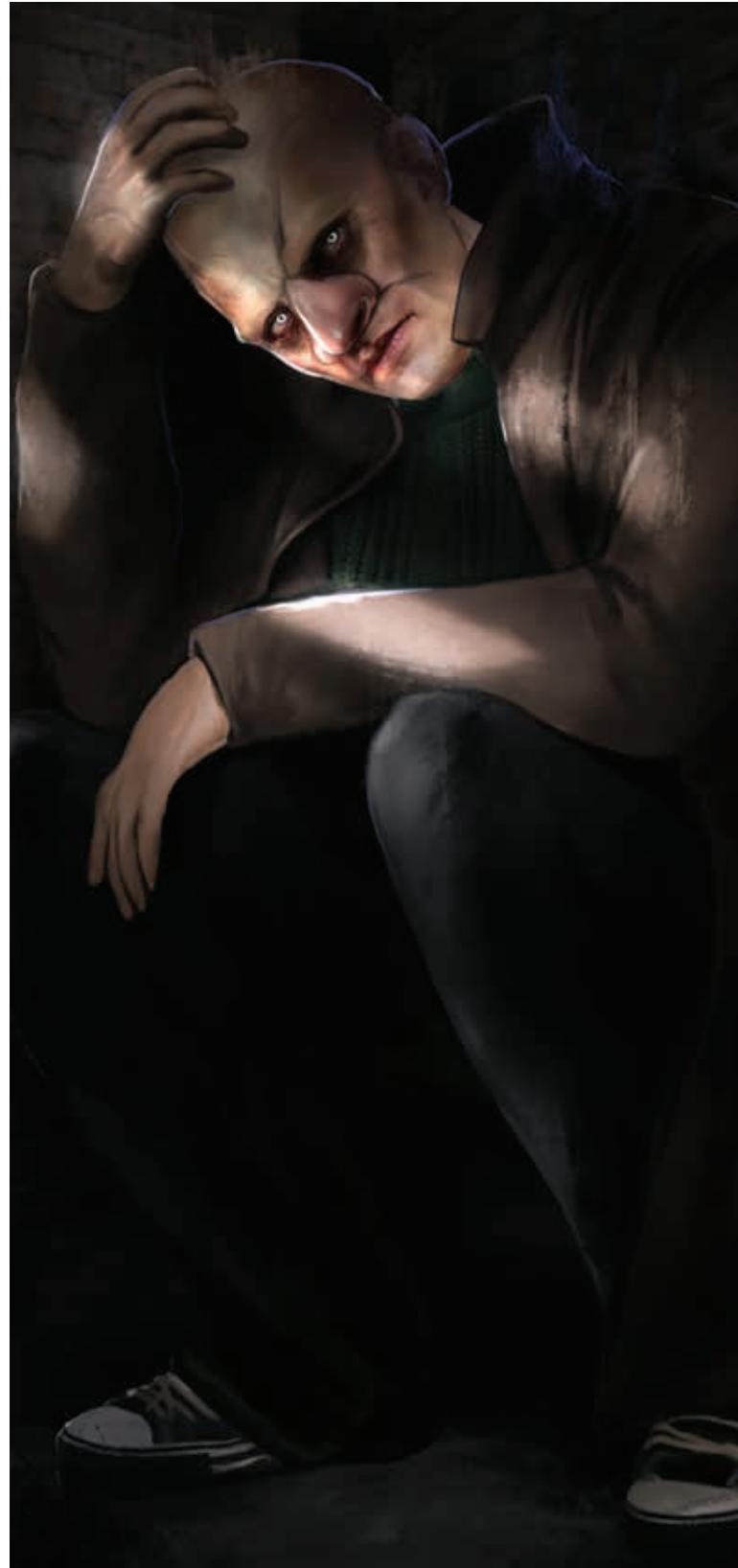
**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Survival 4, Streetwise 6  
(Resistance movement), Subterfuge 6

**Modern Nights:** To make Elise a vampire, either determine her Traits based on who Embraced her, or give her a General Difficulty of 4/3, add 2 to all pools, add four dots of Disciplines, set Humanity at 4–7, and set Blood Potency at 1.

### Nicholas, “The Mapmaker”

Kindred in London tell rumors of a strange and withdrawn Nosferatu who knows all the secret pathways under the city. They say he can predict where the bombs will be dropped and that he'll teach you his secret for the right type of blood. Supposedly he never speaks, as his tongue was cut out before he was Embraced. Supposedly he's so misshapen, even his own clan is disgusted by him.

The actual Mapmaker, Nicholas, is a shy man who appears to be around the age of 25. He has a tendency to stutter, which gets worse when he is overstimulated. His face and neck is covered in smallpox scars, and he's blind in one eye. When the bombs start falling over London in the Blitz,



he keeps a detailed record of where they've been dropped. Recognizing patterns that no one else can see, he does appear to have a sixth sense when it comes to safety during air raids. He starts building underground shelters for Kindred a few weeks into the Blitz, as much to protect the mortals in his neighborhood from being locked up with a vampire in Fear Frenzy as to keep his own kind safe. Nicholas holds a somewhat bizarre affection for mortals—despite the fact that most of them avoid him like the plague, even when he only wants to save them from the bombs.

**Destiny:** His efforts to keep especially the Nosferatu population of London safe during the Blitz will earn Nicholas a position as Primogen for his clan under Queen Anne once she claims praxis. When London falls to Second Inquisition attacks in 2012, he's presumed to have suffered final death. But few can compete with Nicholas' knowledge of the pathways below the city. The real question won't be whether he was able to scurry away in some deep hole to lick his wounds in peace, but why he leaves the rest of the Court to their fate.

**Clan:** Nosferatu

**Generation:** 10th

**Embrace:** 1902

**Blood Potency:** 2

**Humanity:** 7

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 7, Social 4, Mental 6, Disciplines 5

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 6

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Craft 8 (Cartography), Larceny 8, Awareness 7

**Disciplines:** Animalism 2 (Bond Famulus, Feral Whispers), Obfuscate 1 (Cloak of Shadows), Potence 1 (Lethal Body)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/3, add 2 to Exceptional pools, lower Humanity to 5, and add two dots of Disciplines.

## Flashback Locations

**A MILITARY HOSPITAL:** This former hotel has been converted into a convalescent hospital for sick and injured Allied soldiers. Bandaged young men are stuffed together in every room—lying delirious in

rows of steel-framed hospital beds or limping back and forth down the long hallways trying to rebuild muscle. Many who aren't currently dying are in high spirits. Relieved to have done their duty and made it out alive, if not in one piece, they joke with the German and Russian prisoners of war running the mess hall. The American nurses are strict but kind. One of them is getting frustrated that she can't seem to do anything to help the new patient in the basement of the hospital. He's suffered third-degree burns on much of his body and she's not sure he'll pull through the night. She doesn't know that he always looks like this or that he's only here to feed on the wounded.

**LONDON, 1941:** In the winter of 1940–1941, the Blitz—the German Luftwaffe's ongoing bombing campaign of the United Kingdom—is in full swing. The city's children have been evacuated, and the streets are eerily quiet. Great parts of the city have been replaced by rubble, especially in the densely-populated East End, where the factories are. For months, the bombings have always been at night, so people hang black curtains in their windows and no streetlights are on. Only thin slivers of light shine out from moving cars. One moon-lit night in May, German planes drop more than 700 tons of bombs across the capital. For the first time in history, Kindred caught outside are in as much danger as their mortal neighbors.

**COPENHAGEN, 1943:** Denmark declared neutral at the onset of the war, but that didn't stop Nazi Germany from occupying the country. So far, the government has been allowed to function relatively normally. Communism has been outlawed and German soldiers patrol the streets, but life goes on. Children still play, and no one is starving to death. Unrest is brewing, however. German officials are growing impatient as the Danes refuse to pass anti-Jewish legislation, and the resistance movement is becoming bolder, committing acts of sabotage.

Come August, the Nazis have had enough. They institute martial law and the SS is given free rein to bring the country under control. In the coming weeks, 7,056 Jews must find a way to escape to Sweden. Those who cannot make it, hide. Kindred must be careful too. For weeks at a time, there's a nightly curfew

and being seen on the streets risks arrest. The city is uneasy. How to tell what side your neighbor is on? Appearing at all suspicious is riskier than ever.

**STALINGRAD, 1942:** Stalingrad is a city built of wood, and in the fall of 1942, it is in flames. The smoke is so thick, it blots out the sun. The city is full of civilians, for Stalin has denied evacuation until the very last moment, stating that the army will fight harder with more to defend. Now, it's too late. The Battle of Stalingrad has begun, and it's a battle for every street and building. Red Army soldiers fight next to grandmothers and little children scavenging for grain, grass, anything. Statistically, 10,000 people die every day, yet there's still not enough supplies. The Volga is full of dead bodies. One of them sways gently in the freezing water, thinking that this must be it, the Hell he was promised in return for his soul. Come the early hours before dawn, he'll have to accept that the devil hasn't come for him and find somewhere to hide. The winter will be long.

**UNDERGROUND:** When the sirens go off, everybody hurries towards the nearest air-raid shelter. Some are made of corrugated steel sheets, dug into backyards and covered with packed dirt or bags of sand. It's cold and damp inside, and when you fit more than a few people, everything eventually gets covered in a thin sheen of moisture. Basements are also good to hide in, but in some places, they're surprisingly uncommon. In cities like London and Paris, many seek refuge in the underground transit systems. The British government forbids it at first, fearing that people will start living down there permanently. Some already do and must work hard to keep their lairs hidden, as humanity encroaches on their territories.

## Flashback Scenes

**WOKEN BY BOMBS:** You've been sleeping, deep in torpor or simply for the day, when you're violently shaken awake by the crashing of thunder. Every instinct screams that you shouldn't be awake right now. You blink, your ears are ringing. You're angry. You're starving. You can't make sense of it. There's a ray of daylight coming in through broken

brick rubble where your walls used to be. A woman covered in fine white dust coughs and tells you not to move in case you've broken anything. "They'll dig us out soon."

**CONSCRIPTION:** Following Germany's invasion of Poland, and Britain's declaration of war, conscription becomes mandatory. All men between 18 and 41 are required to register for military service. The ages are a bit different in the Soviet Union and the U.S., but the principle is the same. If you've been masquerading as a mortal male, this most likely includes you. Do you take this as a sign to kill off your Mask and flee the city? Or do you try to argue that a submarine is the best place for you, forgetting that you'll have to feed down there? Perhaps you learned to Rouse the Blood just enough to appear alive but sickly early on?

**OUT AFTER DARK:** It's past curfew but a vamp has got to eat. The last weeks, the Germans have tripled their patrols. Do you avoid them or convince them to make an exception for you? And how do you deal with the gang of Anarch licks who lie in wait to attack you when you make your way home?

## Further Research and Recommended Sources

For every historical period mentioned in this book, the truth is that we can only provide a glimpse, some ideas and inspiration for what can play out in your chronicle. The resources below can provide more depth and context if you're looking to deepen your understanding of what happened up to and during World War II.

- Marcel Ophuls, *The Sorrow and the Pity* (1969)  
French documentary film presenting interviews with former collaborators and Resistance fighters in occupied France.
- Primo Levi, *If This is a Man* (1947)  
A first-hand account of Jewish Italian chemist Primo Levi's arrest as a member of the Italian anti-fascist resistance and his time in the concentration camp Auschwitz.
- Claude Lanzmann, *Shoah* (1985)  
French documentary film which presents over nine hours of interviews with survivors, witnesses, and perpetrators of the Holocaust.

- Anna Reid, *Leningrad* (2011)  
Narrative history detailing the Siege of Leningrad, when the Axis powers tried to starve the city into surrender.
- Marta Hillers, *A Woman in Berlin* (first released anonymously in 1954)  
The Soviet capture and occupation of Berlin in the spring and summer of 1945 as remembered in one woman's memoirs.
- Hermann Langbein, *Against All Hope* (1994)  
Historical documentation of those who fought back against the Nazi concentration camps from within.
- Alan Moorehead, *The Desert War* (first written between 1940–1943)  
A civilian war correspondent's perspective on the conflicts in North Africa.
- Vasily Grossman, *Life and Fate* (1980)  
A novel set in the shadow of the Battle of Stalingrad. The Ukrainian-Jewish Grossman was a Soviet war correspondent.
- Paul Ham, *Hiroshima Nagasaki* (2014)  
Narrative history of the nuclear attack on Japan told through the eyes of survivors.

## The Turbulent Sixties

**Time:** The 1960s

**Place:** California, New York, major cities across Europe, and Vietnam

Why would a single decade matter in the long unlives of the undead? This is the question that elder vampires sometimes ask upon being roused from torpor to guide their anxious childer. Used to be, you could pass a hundred years in sleep, and hardly anything would've changed, except the people. But in the 20th century, you sleep for 10, 15, and when you rise, they've invented and set off the atomic bomb, sent a dog to space, and done away with hats. Progression is picking up speed, and even immortals can feel it.

For many, the 1960s are a tumultuous decade. It's a time where youth clashes with tradition, where it seems the future is coming not tomorrow but

tonight. The great nations reach for the stars and race each other to the moon—the Moon!—as the whole world watches. And it begins to dawn on the undead that they may not be as safely hidden among humankind as they once were. The only thing protecting them is that the mortals no longer believe. It isn't feasible to pretend to be indestructible when mortals make rockets that can raze continents and launch themselves into space.

## Rebellion

Countercultural movements sweep across the West, with cities like London, Amsterdam, Paris, and Prague becoming hubs of rebellion. Young people reject authority, discrimination, and oppression, embarking on journeys of self-discovery and attempting to live their lives in protest against those who would have them make war, not love. Battle still finds them—on the frontlines in Vietnam or at home, fighting cops wielding batons and tear gas.

The '60s start out as a golden age for Anarchs. Los Angeles and most of California have become the Anarch Free States and are attracting Kindred from all over who mix with, make love to, and build bloodlines among the free-thinking students of Berkeley University. To many of the Camarilla, this is an incestuous and dangerous trend. On the East Coast, Prince Lodin is growing ever more paranoid that the rebels will make an Anarch paradise out of his city, Chicago. The paranoia boils over in 1968 and becomes an open war. Kindred of either side are no longer safe in their havens or even at Elysium. Lodin is just barely holding Chicago. A little to the East of him, the former Camarilla stronghold Detroit falls to Sabbat gangs.

## Something in the Water...

The kine have started to look forward to a New Age of love and light. A revival of Eastern mysticism spreads among the hippies who promise one another salvation in the spiritual. It's never been so easy for a Kindred to style themselves a guru, selling bottled Blavatsky, and get together a willing herd. The mortal gurus, claiming to connect to the Ascended Masters of the Great White Brotherhood, smile prettily when you tell them telepathically to open up



their veins. Perhaps there really is a new awakening. One thing many Kindred will swear on: the quality of vessels is changing. Sometimes, when you hunt down a victim—it could be a long-haired hippie or a mother of three with curlers in her hair and a frilly apron tied around her waist—and sink your teeth into their flesh, it feels like you could lose yourself. Perhaps it's just the LSD, making the kine so much sweeter to taste

## Flashback Characters

### Greg

#### Cool Ghoul

*"What's up?" Greg opens the door, leans against the frame, and runs a hand through his beach-blond hair. Behind him, a young woman with sun-kissed skin pulls on a kimono with a sigh and goes to make some coffee, no matter the time. Greg grins. "Do you need anything?"*

Greg's the campus cool dude. He can get you whatever you need—as long as it's weed, rare records, or the newest copy of *The Berkely Barb*. Well actually, if you're a special friend of Greg's mistress, there aren't really any limits on what he'll try to get you. Greg loves that woman and the taste of her.

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 5, Mental 3, Disciplines 2

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 5

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Drive 8, Streetwise 7, Politics 7 (counter-culture)

**Disciplines:** Dominate 1 (Cloud Memory)

### Aurelia Vervaine

#### Neopagan Priestess

It was a split-second decision when Jane ran off with a group of hippies and became Aurelia. What was supposed to be a three-day camping trip became the trip of a lifetime when she woke up on the second night covered in blood, with bone splinters in her teeth and her head full of visions. Now, she leads her own coven of blood witches and feasts monthly

on the blood of truckers naïve, kindhearted, or malicious enough to stop for her and her girlfriends when they hail them.

**Destiny:** In modern nights, Aurelia will be one of the first adherents of the new Tremere House Carna.

**Clan:** Tremere

**Generation:** 12

**Embrace:** 1964

**Blood Potency:** 1

**Humanity:** 8 (she can still see the sunset, carefully)

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 6, Disciplines 6

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 5

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Insight 7, Occult 8

**Disciplines:** Auspex 1 (Sense the Unseen), Blood Sorcery 2 (A Taste for Blood, Extinguish Vitae; Rituals: Blood Walk, Eyes of Babel)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4, add 2 to all pools, add four dots of Disciplines and two Rituals, and lower Humanity by 1.

### Anthony Ward

#### Special Agent

Anthony's worked for the bureau since McCarthy had him hunting commies, and he's still got an eye out for Russian spies even though they're no longer the main focus of his day-to-day job. Instead, Anthony's gathering intel on the new counter-cultural movements that have been popping up everywhere you turn. He doesn't know it yet, but one of his leads is gonna take him straight into the middle of the Anarch Movement. And if there's one thing Anthony will hate more than communists, it's going to be goddamn vampires.

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 5, Mental 5

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 5

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Intimidation 7, Subterfuge 8, Investigation 8

## Flashback Locations

### THE PIRATE RADIO SHIP LADY ELIZA

In Britain, the BBC monopolizes the radio and has a ban on rock 'n' roll, allowing only six hours of

popular music weekly. In response, opportunistic radio disk jockeys take to the international waters off the coast of England to broadcast pirate radio to millions of listeners.

The *Lady Eliza* is a beaten-up old fishing vessel made of steel. She's loaded with fuel, food, water, whiskey, and enough Beatles and Rolling Stones records to last a month on stormy seas, and no one thinks it's that weird if you sleep all day as long as you're up in time to operate the nighttime radio.

**WOODSTOCK:** It's the summer of 1969, and you're at the legendary Woodstock Festival, known lovingly to locals as the Miserable Mud Pit. The festival area is so crowded you're constantly brushing against bodies, and more are coming every day. The first 23 hours are warm and mild, but soon, rainstorms are coming in waves, making everyone look and feel like drowning rats. There are 300,000 more people than expected on the cow pasture now, and the food situation gets so bad someone airdrops 10,000 sandwiches onto the festival grounds from a U.S. army helicopter. A vampire in a blackout van is having the time of their unlife.

**VIETNAM:** The war zone is a nightmare world for those on the ground. Depending on your rank, you may have access to reasonable barracks and hot showers, or you may be sleeping in a wet hammock in the jungle, heat your C-rations over lit pieces of C-4 explosive, and shit in a hole every morning while you get harassed by monkeys or shot at. Sometimes both. You spend your days trying not to get blown up, watching your friends die in a multitude of ways, and learning to laugh when you kill. Maybe you leave pieces of yourself in that hellhole. Maybe you're "saved" by a buddy with secrets and turned into a thin-blood freak who cannot die, and you get to spend eternity with post-traumatic stress.

**THE COMMUNE:** A group of young people disillusioned with the expectations of society have come together to build another kind of life. The inhabitants of this farmhouse share everything—their sorrows and their joys, their drugs and their food. One of them is a neonate fleshcrafter who is trying to create the new

messiah out of meat. You better not take issue with that—the hippies won't let anything happen to their Tzimisce friend. They've been through enough already.

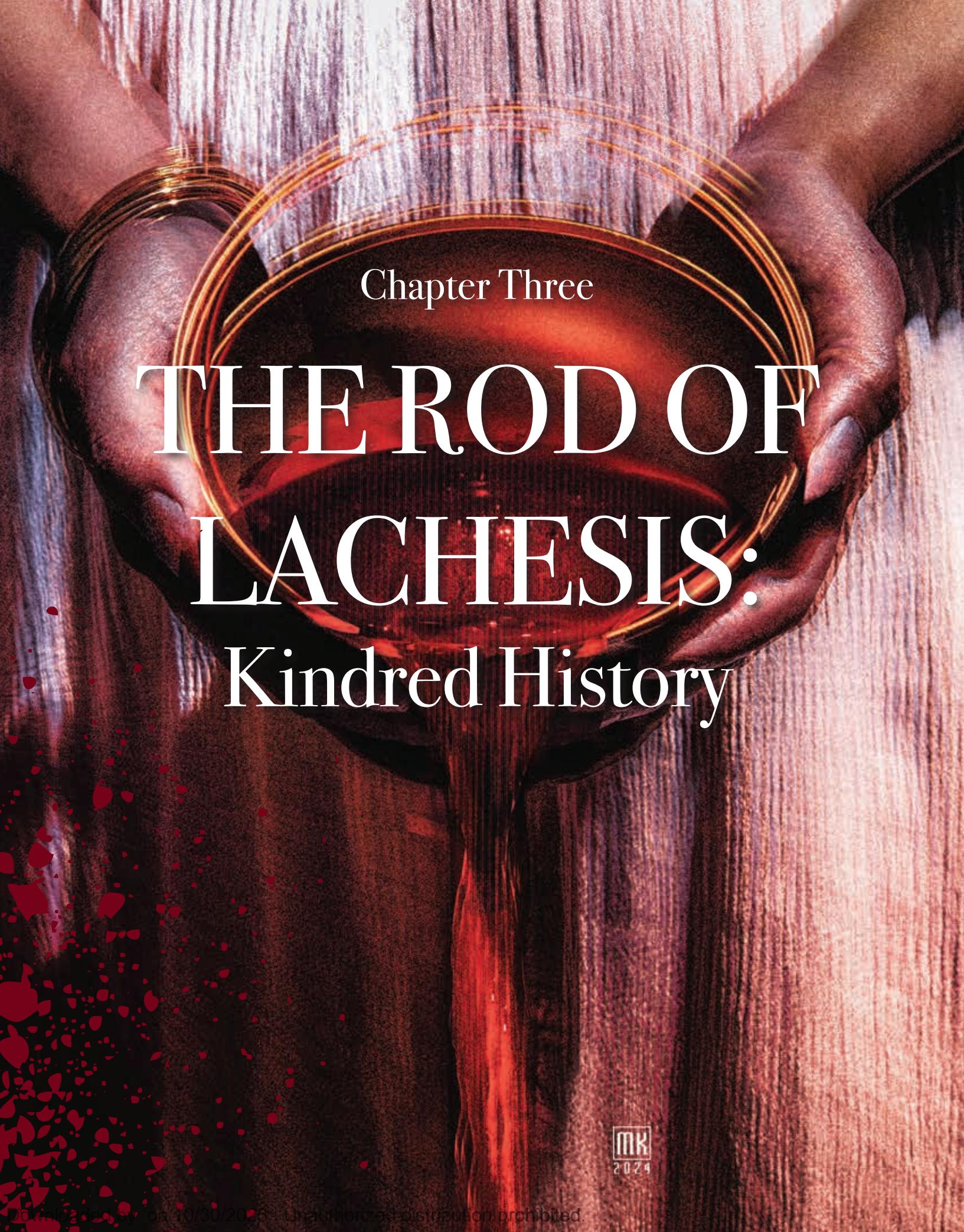
## Flashback Scenes

**A PROTEST MARCH:** You're part of a great crowd moving forward through narrow, bewildering streets. You have to follow the flow of the people not to get left behind. Around you, the protestors are shouting. Someone elbows you in the stomach, and you feel a surge of anger—at them, at the world. You pull yourself together. You're here to find someone specific—someone who can help you or throw you to the wolves.

**AN ORGY:** You're listening to "Purple Haze" again. One of the others keeps moving the needle back on the record player without changing the record. You'd do it yourself, but you're unsure you can stand. Besides, the brunette between your legs wouldn't like it. You stare up at the ceiling. Were there always vines growing out of it? A young man purrs into your ear. When you turn your head, his eyes are completely black.

## Topics for Further Research

- The Civil Rights Movement
- The Silent Majority
- The Space Race
- Psychedelic therapy and research
- The Stonewall Riots
- The Summer of Love
- Decolonization and independence movements in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean
- Cold War counterintelligence and espionage ■



Chapter Three

# THE ROD OF LACHESIS: Kindred History

MK  
2024

**W**hen you're a mortal and want to learn about your history, you can study, read history books, and look things up online. But when you're one of the Kindred, there are significant limitations you have to face: The Masquerade means there's little to no information available in writing. No books, no websites.

How do you learn what has come before?

This chapter deals with significant events in vampiric history from roughly the last two hundred years—the time an older ancilla may have been around. Your character may have memories of meaningful mortal events, and similarly, they may have been impacted by or directly participated in something that changed the world of vampires.

Many of these events are local, yet carry symbolic significance far beyond the limits of those they directly affected. The Second Anarch Revolt started with the birth of the Anarch Free States, but it certainly didn't end with it. Even in modern nights, Kindred sometimes use these events as reference points when they talk about what's happening now. One might say of an upcoming Blood wedding, "This is going to be another Night of Bloody Tears, isn't it?"

The lack of a written history means that much of the vampiric past becomes stories and legends. Some of those who were part of a historical event are still around, decades and centuries later, but can you trust their version of events? Are they telling the truth as they experienced it, or embellishing their own legend?

Conversely, if a player's character was present for one of the events described in this chapter, this has given them inherent cachet among the Kindred. They can tell the story of what it was really like, and of course twist it to serve their own agenda. It's not like there's an objective record to compare their words against.

Anarchs and members of the Camarilla often see the same event in a very different light. The Great Unification of smaller domains into one under the Prince of Berlin, Gustav Breidenstein, is often seen in the Camarilla as a great show of strength and unity, while an Anarch critic could argue that it showed the Camarilla doesn't respect even its own principles. It doesn't matter if you're a Prince—you still have to submit to greater power. And if a stronger Prince wants what's yours, they'll take it.

## *Every Cainite is a Pawn on someone's chessboard*

—The Erciyes Fragments

**Yordan:** We met at the...

**Bianca Archetti:** Yes, of course. Make yourself comfortable. I can have nourishment for you later, but your arrival is unexpected.

**Yordan:** I know. This is embarrassing, but I have nowhere else to go. I thought, maybe... You have all these palaces, or so I heard...

**Bianca Archetti:** Palaces and a bad reputation, that's me. You've come to me because they don't like Tremere in these parts, and your own hierarchy is in shambles. You thought maybe I'd give you a break.

**Yordan:** Please, you have no idea how difficult everything is! My whole existence as Kindred was with our clan. They provided me with everything! A haven, a library, meaning, security. They even helped me with sustenance. I had a ghoul servant who assisted me with hunting.

**Bianca Archetti:** You're an ancilla, and you don't know how to hunt on your own?

**Yordan:** No, it's not like that...

**Bianca Archetti:** ...

**Yordan:** Okay, it is like that. But we had a big chantry, and I was a researcher. They took care of me! But now, with everything falling apart, I had to get a haven of my own. I forgot to give Blood to my ghoul, and he died. I don't know a single mortal, not personally, and I'm losing my grip, I'm losing myself....

**Bianca Archetti:** That's why you joined the Church of Set. Because you hoped they'd give you structure.

**Yordan:** Yes! But they... I couldn't do the things they asked of me.

**Bianca Archetti:** You escaped the Church and came to me. But don't worry. I know how to deal with them. I've had so many mortal masks in my time. That's one of the blessings of age. You get to see more than a mortal ever could. You get to see history and secret history, too. The history of our kind, where there are so many lies that the only way to truly know anything is to participate in it yourself.

**Yordan:** So you'll help me?

**Bianca Archetti:** No. I won't make a pet out of you, even though that's what you're asking for.

**Yordan:** But...

**Bianca Archetti:** I'll tell you what I will do for you. I'll teach you to hunt. A vampire of your age and lineage who doesn't know how to feed himself? That's too embarrassing for me to countenance.

— The Tremere Yordan visits the Lasombra Bianca Archetti at one of her havens

## Unliving Witnesses

The history of the Kindred, as commonly told by such authorities as the Church of Caine, starts with the Biblical story of the first murderer. After Caine, we have the Second Generation of vampires, of whom little is known. Then comes the Third Generation, the Antediluvians and progenitors of the lineages commonly called the great clans of the Kindred.

For much of history, the Kindred organize themselves in small domains ruled by individual tyrants. The first major sect to be created is the Ashirra, said to have consolidated itself by 632 CE. For a long time, they alone show that the Kindred are capable of forming ties that unite domains, at least to some degree.

In 1493, all this changes as the fires of the Inquisition burn and Kindred are destroyed to an unprecedented degree. In the end, this threat leads to the formation of three new sects: the Camarilla, the Anarchs and the Sabbat. These three, together with the Ashirra, still shape the major contours of Kindred politics.

As we move forward in time, we're first in the age of the Antediluvians, still rumored to sleep somewhere under the earth. Then we come to the time of the methuselahs, ancient blood gods, some of whom are said to have risen in the modern nights. You could conceivably find one of them and ask them about the first nights of the Kindred, although it's unlikely anyone would actually manage this.

Then comes the time of the elders, Kindred who were there when three of the great sects were formed, who saw the Renaissance and the end of the Dark Ages in Europe. They, too, are difficult to interview. Many have been Beckoned, and the rest may be solitary or lost to their memories.

Moving forward further still, we reach the French and American Revolutions, the Victorian era and the Great War. This is the time of the ancillae, and they're still very much present in Kindred society. In the Elysium of great domains, you find those who remember what it was like to walk the streets of Belle Époque Paris. While they, too, have their pride and peculiarities, they're still a tad easier to talk to than a blood god.

Because of this, it's the history of the last two centuries that's most present in Kindred society. It's the history of those who are still among their Kindred, telling rival stories and calling each other liars.

Vendettas from the 19th century still fester because their principals are still around to carry grudges.

## The Facade of Propriety

Many vampires are deeply invested in maintaining appearances. This goes particularly for the Camarilla, where the Princes and Primogen often do their utmost to make the inherent brutality and exploitation of vampiric existence disappear under the veneer of sophistication. Still, the Anarchs too have their own image to maintain, just different from the one the Camarilla tends to cherish. Many Anarchs prefer to see their Revolts as driven by principle, leading to a better world. The sordid deals, machinations, and betrayals seething under the idealistic front are hidden away.

This leads to perhaps the first, most obvious story you can tell using Kindred history: the characters know a sanitized story and then discover the horrifying rot underneath. This can work even with ancilla characters who were there. Perhaps history played to their advantage and they never saw a reason to question the events they participated in. Maybe your character was part of the original Second Anarch Revolt in Los Angeles and learned how Salvador Garcia heroically destroyed the old Prince.

But it's only now that you find out what really happened on that fateful night!

The Disciplines of the Kindred present special opportunities for discovering past betrayals. Perhaps the character actually was there all along, with Salvador Garcia in the haven of the Prince, but lost those memories because someone used Dominate on them. How would that feel, to discover that one of the people at the very heart of the evil you try to uncover is you yourself?

Of course, for the Storyteller this sort of a twist requires good judgment, as not every player enjoys having their character's history changed in this way. As a player, you can signal your interest in such developments by giving your character a personality trait such as, "I've always feared there's something horrifying in my past I've forgotten!"

This kind of a story works best when the characters are invested in the status quo represented by the historical event. They want to go on believing

that the story is true but then discover that it's not and have to reassess their worldview and opinions.

After all, sometimes that happens to us in real life, too...

## Our Vile Enemies

Sometimes, historical events concern those your character hates. Maybe you're an Anarch with deep, lasting scars from two centuries of Camarilla perfidy and you want nothing more than to see the Ivory Tower fall. But when you discover something new about what really happened, perhaps the truths that have always governed your existence come into question.

All the evil things our side does are aberrations or excusable by the circumstances. Conversely, the evil our enemies do defines their very being. No good deed can ever justify their fundamental awfulness, as seen in their darkest moments.

This is what the great sects tell their members, and often the Princes and Anarch bosses running various domains, too. You're on the side of the angels, against an encroaching darkness! Of course, given the Beast gnawing at the core of every vampire, these stories may be hard to believe, but sometimes it's the sinner who wants the lies to be true most of all!

All this applies to historical events where the characters do not sympathize with the victors. Perhaps your character was a Camarilla vampire who lost everything when the Anarchs of Los Angeles revolted. You've carried a grudge for decades, vowing to get back at them somehow. But now, something has happened to make you see their side of the story. Perhaps the Camarilla of your own domain has become so repressive, you've started to flirt with going over to the Anarchs yourself. What does it mean when hating the Anarchs for what they did to you has been a part of you for so long?

The long memories of the Kindred mean that old events can be dug up and relitigated far beyond the lifespans of ordinary mortals. While historical trauma may start to fade for mortals after a generation or two, for the Kindred such things go on and on.

Thus you may discover that the small domain where you had your territory, and that got destroyed in the Great Unification, was built on even greater crimes than those of Prince Breidenstein. That the domain was wiped out by a monster doesn't necessarily make it wrong that it was wiped out.

Eventually, you may even suffer the worst fate of all: You may come to sympathize with those you once hated.

Table 3 summarizes the events in this chapter.

**TABLE 3: KINDRED EVENTS**

EVENT	PAGE
The Night of Bloody Tears, 1822	90
The Montmartre Massacre, 1830s	93
The Stoker Affair, 1860–1920	96
The Great Unification, 1861–1868	101
The Trial of Mirrors, 1902	104
The Bloodhunts of Prague, 1939–1944 and 1968	107
The Birth of the Anarch Free States, 1944	111
The Moonlit Crusade, 1948–1955	114

## The Night of Bloody Tears

*I'd been one of the Kindred too long by the time of my wedding to have any dreams of love. But when I tasted my bride on the altar, I felt something... A vampire may not know the color of love, but we do recognize beauty in Blood.*

— Queen Anne Bowesley

**Time:** The 23rd of November, 1822

**Place:** The manor Harlech Hall near London, so named in honor of obscure nostalgia by the Regent Valerius, who used it for important occasions

Was London a domain securely in the Camarilla fold, or was it an autarky only nominally affiliated with the sect? In the early years of the 19th century, there was still some uncertainty around this question. The methuselah Mithras ruled the domain, whether personally or through puppets, and while it seemed he'd accepted Camarilla membership, his domain still felt like a realm of its own.

In 1798, Mithras left London, leaving the Ventrum Valerius as Regent to rule in his place. Valerius sought to take the domain entrusted to his care closer to the Camarilla to cement the idea that it was truly part of the sect. The most spectacular of the methods he used to do this was the Blood Wedding between his childe and the future Queen of London Anne Bowesley and

Louise Marie de Rambaud, childe of the Toreador Justicar Violetta (in office between 1666 and 1897), grandchilde of the Prince of Paris, François Villon, and descendant of the Toreador methuselah Helena.

While de Rambaud's lineage was pristine, superior to that of Anne Bowesley, she'd been Embraced for Villon's court in Paris for the express purpose of being wedded off to secure an alliance. Bowesley, in contrast, already had accomplishments of her own.

The Blood Wedding was held in one of Regent Valerius' havens near London — an oppressive, old-fashioned mansion giving the impression that any and all horrors could be found within its walls. An attempt at diplomacy and conciliation, it became known as a catastrophe of spectacular scale and proportion. Although the Blood Wedding was politically motivated and the wedded couple was not consulted on whether they wanted to go through with it, the legend says that some affection existed between the two, if only as between predators.

In the end, what came to be known as the Night of Bloody Tears was a bitter failure. Local Kindred loyal to Mithras sought to sabotage the wedding by arranging for the destruction of many of the Parisian guests. In an act of hubris, the Justicar chose to condemn and execute four London vampires for their crimes against the Camarilla, saying that it was the last thing needed for the alliance to truly succeed. It had the opposite effect, making Valerius appear weak in the eyes of his domain unless he retaliated.

In the end, approximately one-third of all Kindred present at the wedding had been destroyed, most of the survivors had fled, and Anne Bowesley and Louise Maria de Rambaud wouldn't see each other again for nearly a decade. The stories are unclear on what happened when they finally did.

Since then, the specter of the Night of Bloody Tears has haunted all subsequent Blood Weddings of importance held to cement a political alliance.

## Flashback Characters

The Night of Bloody Tears featured some of the best-known luminaries of the Kindred courts of both Paris and London. Among all the movers and shakers were fledglings and ghouls, servants and bodyguards.

### Anne Bowesley

At the time of her Blood Wedding, the future Queen Anne, successor to the rule of Mithras in London, was still in the service of her sire, the Regent Valerius. She was already chafing under his control, having had aspirations of taking over the domain in the event that Mithras would leave. Already ambitious and talented in life, Anne became a mainstay of the Kindred ruling elite pretty much straight from her Embrace, first in a discreet role and then taking more and more responsibilities for herself. It helped that she had been Embraced in her early 50s, granting her much more practical experience with politics than many of her vampiric peers.

Although Anne resented her sire, she agreed with the plan to bring London closer to the Camarilla. She saw her Blood Wedding as a way for her to become known through the sect, so that if she couldn't get ahead under her sire and Mithras, she might be able to succeed in another domain instead.

Anne's motives for the wedding were purely pragmatic, but it ended up being a personal tragedy anyway. She became enchanted with Louise Maria just in time to lose her at the altar.

In modern nights, Queen Anne survived the destruction of her domain by the Second Inquisition agencies targeting London Kindred. Currently, she's a Prince without a city, plotting to return one night and take back everything that was once hers.

**Clan:** Ventre

**Generation:** 8th

**Embrace:** 1688

**Blood Potency:** 5

**Humanity:** 5

**General Difficulty:** 5 / 4

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 8, Mental 7, Disciplines 7

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 10

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Etiquette 10, Subterfuge 10, Awareness 9

**Disciplines:** Auspex 2 (Heightened Senses, Premonition), Celerity 1 (Cat's Grace), Dominate 3 (Compel, Mesmerize, Submerged Directive), Fortitude 1 (Resilience), Obscure 2 (Silence of Death, Unseen Passage), Presence 5 (Awe, Lingering Kiss, Dread Gaze, Irresistible Voice, Majesty)

**Modern Nights:** Adjust Blood Potency to 7, update General Difficulty to 7 / 5, add 2 to all pools, add five dots of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 1.

## Louise Maria de Rambaud

Born to the French ruling elite, Louise Maria spent her mortal days in court, living a frivolous life of amusements and diversions. She was Embraced because she was charismatic and clever, seen as a fitting pawn for the plans of her grandsire, François Villon. She was Embraced just in time for the French Revolution, surviving thanks to the powers of her Blood when many she knew from her former life faced the guillotine.

Her experiences in the Revolution taught Louise Maria that she could take care of herself and even succeed. She could take risks and triumph. When she heard she was to be wed to Anne Bowesley, she was surprised but saw it as an opportunity to escape the softly suffocating Kindred court of Paris and go somewhere where she could thrive.

Louise Maria had only a vague idea of what kind of a person Anne Bowesley was, but during the horrors of their Blood Wedding, she was struck by her ruthlessness and ability to survive. Something in Anne's hard competence sparked a flame inside Louise Maria just in time for her to be dragged back to Paris in ignominy.

In later years, the hold of her lineage was not to last. As the unrest of the Second Anarch Revolt



spread to European domains, Louise Maria defected to the Anarchs and left her old existence behind, exchanging an unlife of privilege and ease for the hardscrabble struggle of the revolutionary. Now as an ancilla, she's both prone to romanticizing the freedom and idealism of the Anarchs and ruthlessly sacrificing anyone, kine or Kindred, to force her cause of the moment to succeed.

**Clan:** Toreador

**Generation:** 7th

**Embrace:** 1772

**Blood Potency:** 3

**Humanity:** 7

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 8, Mental 7, Disciplines 6

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Etiquette 9, Insight 9, Subterfuge 9

**Disciplines:** Auspex 3 (Heightened Senses, Premonition, Scry the Soul), Dominate 1 (Cloud Memory), Presence 2 (Awe, Lingering Kiss)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4, add 2 to all pools, add three dots of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 1.

## Flashback Scenes

The worst of the Night of Bloody Tears lasted for only a few hours, but the impact was felt across decades, even centuries.

**THE JUDGMENT:** As the guests settle in, the Justicar makes a surprise announcement: she will hold an impromptu trial for some of them, assuring that most are innocent of crimes against the Camarilla, so they have nothing to fear. A difficult situation to navigate, especially if one's allies are among the accused.

**THE CEREMONY:** Blood Weddings tend to have bespoke ceremonies, too rare to follow a commonly accepted and universal template. In this one, the brides are to drink each others' Blood at the altar, blessed by a mortal priest serving one of the London luminaries. As they drink, violence starts among the audience as the pro-Mithras faction begins their slaughter. Which side are you on, and how do you make it out?

**THE DUNGEONS:** Escaping from the carnage is difficult business in a mansion purposefully designed to be confusing and labyrinthine. The Mithraic cult has secrets going back thousands of years, and some of its members may be here in the tunnels beneath the building, waiting to be discovered by a terrified wedding guest. What is found, and how does it cast the reign of Regent Valerius into disrepute?

## Developments

**THE REUNION:** Two hundred years after the wedding, the local Camarilla and Anarchs are trying to forge an understanding, made difficult by the hatred and resentment on both sides. London's Queen Anne has sought refuge in the domain of the players' characters after having to flee her own, and on the side of the Anarchs, some of the most stringent demands are made by Louise Maria de Rambaud. The question is, does the memory of the Wedding make it easier to find common solutions, or will the demons of the past spoil things once again?

**HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF:** You are involved in the planning of a Blood Wedding supposed to bring peace to the domain. Unfortunately, one of the oldest Kindred to attend was there for the Night of Bloody Tears and attempts to sabotage the proceedings at every opportunity, ferreting out plots and conspiracies, real and imagined: "I was there! I know these things always end in tragedy!"

# The Montmartre Massacre

*It took a long time for their effects to be felt, but I don't think the Anarch Revolts of the 20th and 21st centuries would have been as strong without the Montmartre Massacre. The actions of the Prince of Paris showed us the true face of the Camarilla.*

— Salvador Garcia, an Anarch ideologue

**Time:** *In fits and starts during the 1830s*

**Place:** *Paris. Although the event came to be known as the Montmartre Massacre, it spread to many different arrondissements.*

By the start of the 19th century, Paris was becoming dangerously overpopulated. The Prince, François Villon, had granted too many of his allies the right to sire childer, and illegal Embracing among the city's Kindred underclass had gotten out of control.

As a result, the Prince instituted a program of culling that came to be known as the Montmartre Massacre. It progressed in stages: At first, individual Kindred were destroyed in secret, then a couple of high-profile Blood Hunts were called against particularly egregious violators of the limits on Embracing, and finally came the culmination, the destruction of multiple coteries of fledglings in their havens in Montmartre at sundown.

This final massacre of young fledglings in particular has become part of Kindred history, the

### BLOOD WEDDINGS AND GENDER

The wedding between Anne Bowesley and Louise Maria de Rambaud was between two women and probably caused confusion among some of the younger Kindred who attended. In Kindred society, age may express itself in the casting off of mortal norms, gender-based limitations among them. For the Kindred who put together the Blood Wedding, the gender composition of the couple was irrelevant. What mattered was politics, power, lineage, and symbolism.

As the centuries have passed, there have been different attitudes towards gender in various Kindred domains. What's more, everyone who's an ancilla or older has seen norms change in mortal society over and over again. Many vampires experiment with gender as they grow older and the old attachments of their mortal identities fade away. This can even become a sign of status: Holding onto your mortal limitations is a sign of immaturity.

At the same time, many older Kindred do hold onto the affectations of their time, and for some this includes ideas about gender. It's often surprising how fast such affectations are discarded when it becomes a question of survival, power, or blood.



image of buildings tightly packed together on fire, vampires roasting in their havens recalled over and over again in various circumstances.

The numbers of destroyed Kindred are inflated as the story is told and retold. Some who were there say it was less than ten vampires in total, while there are Anarchs who speak of hundreds of hapless fledglings staked and burned in the most vicious manner.

In modern nights, there are wildly different versions of the event. Many Camarilla loyalists say it's a shame it got saddled with such a judgmental name — The Montmartre Massacre — when it was just an example of a Prince tending to the health of his domain in difficult circumstances. If such a non-event has to be remembered at all, surely history is better served if we remember it as Villon's sad but necessary duty to prevent Masquerade breaches?

In the stories told by more historically minded Anarchs, the Montmartre Massacre is a reminder of the time when a Camarilla Prince could just destroy anybody under a hundred years old with no repercussions; when to be a vampire was to be a bootlicking toady in service to one of a few older, powerful Kindred. Typically, such stories end with a reminder that in a number of Camarilla domains, these conditions persist, showing the imminent need for more revolution.

For a Duskborn, the Massacre is something they might hear about in an alarming conversation shortly before the local Scourge comes knocking on their door.

## Flashback Characters

The specifics of the Montmartre Massacre are hard to establish because many Kindred who were there have since claimed they weren't. Conversely, there are those who have tried to bolster their credentials either as victimized Anarchs or as Camarilla hardliners by pretending they were part of the events.

### No-Name Pauline

For some, becoming a vampire wasn't such a bad deal. Sure, Pauline lost her ability to walk in the sun and had to hunt mortals to survive, but this was a Hunger she could work with. When she'd been mortal, she had to work as a washerwoman and beg on the streets when that didn't yield enough to eat.

As a mortal, Pauline had no idea who her parents were, and the same continued in death. Her sire Embraced her for reasons of her own but never bothered to tell her childe why she was brought into the night.

For a year or two, it wasn't so bad. Sleeping in an old, rotting shack with other confused fledglings, hunting, sometimes trying to help a mortal she

knew. It made her feel better about all the people she hurt while she fed.

Then one night Pauline had been late coming back from a hunt and had to sleep in the basement of a laundry, hiding in a pile of coal. As she returned to her coterie, she found her and her companions' haven on fire, the glow illuminating the dark sky. The Gangrel she thought she might grow to love screaming, in flames, before he was reduced to ashes. The kind, sad woman of unknown lineage who'd found the building for their haven decapitated by a cruel Scourge, her skull rolling on the cobblestones.

The Prince's minions destroyed everything that ever mattered to Pauline. Only, she fell through the cracks. She's still there somewhere out there with her memories of fire.

**Clan:** Nosferatu

**Generation:** 12th

**Embrace:** 1829

**Blood Potency:** 2

**Humanity:** 8

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 4, Mental 4, Disciplines 5

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 4

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Streetwise 6, Brawl 7, Animal Ken 6

**Disciplines:** Animalism 1 (Bound Famulus), Obfuscate 2 (Cloak of Shadows, Unseen Passage), Potence 1 (Soaring Leap)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4 (adding 1 to all pools), add two dots of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 1.

## François Villon

The former poet François Villon has ruled as Prince of Paris for as long as anyone can remember, ensuring the continued glory of the last of the three most important Camarilla strongholds in Europe. In modern nights, Berlin has fallen to Anarchs and London to the Second Inquisition but Paris still stands—a sparkling Toreador fortification of fashion and endless parties. Behind the apparent frivolity, there must be a ruthless Prince with a will of iron. How else to explain the fact that Villon endures while others fall?

The truth is that Villon has not been seen in his own court since 2022. Because his reign has lasted through revolutions and wars, uprisings and plagues, there's a perception that he has maintained an iron grip through thick and thin. This isn't really true. Rather, the classic Villon move has been to disappear in times of danger and return when his enemies have weakened. He's been deposed in absentia a number of times, and he's always come back. Some of his courtiers whisper that this time is different, but most expect that he's simply removed himself from danger until further notice. In modern nights, the coterie may run into him somewhere entirely unexpected, rather than in the heart of Paris.

**Clan:** Toreador

**Generation:** 5th

**Embrace:** 1230

**Blood Potency:** 7

**Humanity:** 5

**General Difficulty:** 6/5

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 8, Social 9, Mental 9, Disciplines 9

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 9, Willpower 9

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Etiquette 10, Persuasion 12, Politics 10

**Disciplines:** Auspex 5 (Heightened Senses, Premonition, Scry the Soul, Spirit's Touch, Clairvoyance), Celerity 3 (Cat's Grace, Fleetness, Blink), Fortitude 2 (Resilience, Toughness), Obfuscate 3 (Cloak of Shadows, Unseen Passage, Fata Morgana\*), Presence 5 (Awe, Lingering Kiss, Entrancement, Summon, Majesty)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 7/5, add 2 to all pools, and add three dots of Disciplines.

For added complications, the Villon met tonight might be an imposter. If you don't have a specific vampire in mind, you can set the General Difficulty at 5/4 and remove 10 dots of Disciplines.

\*Found in *Players Guide*

## Flashback Scenes

The nature of flashback scenes depends on where an ancilla character was in all this. Someone in the Prince's court had a very different vantage point from someone running for their unlife.

**RUNNING FOR YOUR UNLIFE:** Not long after you became a vampire, you received word that you needed to leave town immediately. Otherwise, the Prince's cronies would find you and destroy you. Unfortunately, they were not content to let you escape and instead tried to trap you in a burning building. How did you escape?

**DEFENDING THE DOWNTRODDEN:** You tried to hold onto your mortal ideals and argued in the Prince's court in favor of those condemned to be destroyed. Was the court sympathetic or did the Prince add you to the list of those about to be exterminated?

**THE MASSACRE:** You spent your days in a communal haven used by a large coterie of your fellow fledglings in Montmartre. As you wake up at sundown, you realize that there's a crowd outside, your ghoul servants have already been murdered, and some of your closest associates are denouncing you to save their own skins. Do you fight, escape, or hide? How many Kindred were destroyed that night?

**THE ASHES:** You managed to escape the horror, but your allies were not so lucky. You find their havens destroyed, their retainers sifting through the ashes. There are ghouls there, suddenly without any source of Blood. Do you take them as your own or leave them to their fates?

## Developments

**THE RELENTLESS WHISPERS:** The Massacre has been a lasting stain on Prince Villon's reputation, as he has gone to some lengths to try to present himself as a humane ruler with some degree of a conscience. During the years since, his opponents have pointed out that these protestations would be more credible if the destruction of young Kindred had truly stopped in the early 19th century. Instead, they allege, the Massacre never really ended, and neonates and fledglings without adequate protection still disappear regularly.

**ROLE MODEL:** Among the Camarilla's Princes, the Massacre is regularly referenced as justification for similar programs of extermination. If the Prince of Paris did it, surely it's okay for everyone else as well? The Masquerade is threatened by too many Kindred! This is the only way to get the problem under control, just as they did it Paris in the nights of old. If you

complain about it, perhaps that means you have an illegal childe of your own hiding somewhere?

**MEMORIES SURFACE:** The characters have never really seen the Camarilla at its worst, the lies of their sires standing unchallenged. That is, until they meet a Nosferatu ancilla, No-Name Pauline. She has come to the town in pursuit of an old vendetta, and the story she has to tell of the old Camarilla is very different from the rosy propaganda fed to neonates like the players' characters.

**CLEAN HANDS:** The current ruling power of Paris (a representative of Villon or someone pretending to be him) has kindly requested the Camarilla of the local domain to call a Blood Hunt on a newly arrived Nosferatu. This seems quite extreme, and getting requests like this from another domain, perhaps even a faraway domain, is rare. The local Prince is worried. Do they need to honor such a request? What if there's more to the story? Better to ask someone to discreetly arrange an accident for the Nosferatu and then pretend they were destroyed before the Prince resolved the issue. That way, everybody gets what they want, and the Prince doesn't have to get mixed up in it.

## The Stoker Affair

*Even if she be not harmed, her heart may fail her in so much and so many horrors and hereafter she may suffer, both in waking, from her nerves, and in sleep, from her dreams.*

— Bram Stoker, *Dracula*

**Time:** 1860–1920

**Place:** The British Empire, Transylvania, Iceland, Sweden, Europe, and Eastern US

To the Kindred active at the time, the publication of *Dracula* in 1897 was a monumental event. An audacious attempt to shatter the Masquerade by one of their own kind, an unforgivable act of treason. The hunt for the Kindred calling himself "Dracula" or "Draculitz" engulfed the undead courts of Europe during the two decades leading up to the Great War. In the end, the publication would indirectly strengthen the Masquerade, but that is yet unknown in the Victorian Era.

Stoker's novel seemed to be a well-informed mortal's attempt to tell a Kindred story.

Unlike the early novels of the first mortal vampire craze, *Dracula* didn't just contain a grain of truth; it seemed to reveal everything about the Kindred, their weaknesses, and especially those of the Tzimisce. Earlier works included Dr. Polidori's *The Vampyre* (attributed to Byron then) and the lewd and melodramatic serialized *Varney the Vampire*. The first led to unproven accusations of Masquerade violation based on the name given to its vampire, Ruthven. Lambach Ruthven is the name of a Tzimisce elder, a remorseless but cowardly scion of the Sabbat. Incidentally, he was Vlad Tepes' sire, so it's not impossible the claims were true, and *Dracula* was at least Vlad Tepes' second attempt.

Kindred read *Dracula* as the story of a Tzimisce Voivode and his failed attempt to establish domain in Prince Mithras's London. He does this through the manipulation and seduction of a virtuous British woman and her extended social circle. At first, the story itself was believed to be almost entirely fictional, but Archons and hunting parties soon discovered the truth: Murrey, Harker, Jones, and the other characters in the epistolary novel were real, their lives torn to shreds by their encounter with "the count."

What if the Kindred antagonist of the tale was also real? This realization sent chills down dead spines and kicked off a Blood Hunt for this *Dracula* across many European domains. Things became even more strange when a Swedish language version of the text—more than twice as long as the original novel—was published under the name *Mörkrets Makter* in 1899, and a shortened Icelandic translation known as *Makt Myrkhana* saw print. These variant or radically expanded texts include many damning details: letters from the count to other Kindred, details about his network of agents, a mysterious wraithlike figure haunting his castle, along with many details about vampiric powers and weaknesses.

What if there were even more manuscripts? What if they reveal even more damning secrets of the Blood? What if the players' characters were involved in hunting for them and the mysterious Prince of Darkness himself? What if that half-remembered search becomes a thread stretching all the way forward into the present day? Will the ancillae who hunted for Lord Draculitz finally meet the most famous Kindred of them all? Will brushing up against the legend damn

them to eventual destruction at his hands? Or will they end up as unlikely allies, or even Brides, of the misunderstood monster behind *Dracula*?

**OTHER VERSIONS OF DRACULA:** Researchers state Stoker's early manuscript was vastly longer than the published version—about 800–1,000 pages compared to a measly 400.

The now lost versions often contain considerably more detail than previously found dossiers or even the recently discovered Swedish serialized version *Mörkrets Makter*.



They could include entirely new chapters, like “Unto the Pillars,” a Mina-penned diary entry about a visit to a haunted Stonehenge where the word “Mithraic” appears no less than six times. To a mortal scholar, it would perhaps appear as yet another curious theme lost in the final text, but to a Kindred it’s additional evidence that Tepes’ true aim in trying to relocate to London was an attack on Mithras’ power structure.

## Flashback Characters

### **Lucinda Wester (Lucy Westenra)**

#### *Daughter of Dracula*

Though she is destroyed by her remorseful hunter friends in the novel, Lucy is undead and kicking out of it. She is Vlad’s first British childe, a source of pride and shame simultaneously, as she gleefully flaunts the mores of Victorian society. The players’ characters are likely to encounter her when she is trying to silence a witness through seduction, violence, or bribery, or perhaps when she is trying to do the same to them. She is a fresh childe, but her Blood is thick, and her sire has taught her some few useful tricks.

If Lucinda isn’t destroyed before, she’ll be operating as an undercover spy in the Gehenna War, deeply embroiled in secret plots against the Sabbat.

**Clan:** Tzimisce

**Generation:** 6th

**Embrace:** 1890s

**Blood Potency:** 3

**Humanity:** 6

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 5, Mental 5, Disciplines 4

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 5

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Brawl 7, Etiquette 8

(Victorian high society), Manipulation 8 (Seduction)

**Disciplines:** Dominate 1 (Compel), Protean 2 (Eyes of the Beast, Feral Weapons)

**Touchstone:** Her former fiancée Doctor Seward (real name Albert Shore) and his future children.

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4 (adding 1 to all Pools), add three dots of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 1–2.

### **Johanna Clarke**

#### *Person of letters*

In the hunt for Dracula and the texts he spawned, the players’ characters are likely to run into mortal opposition. It could be from publishing houses like Routledge, who want to protect their authors and optimize their profit, a liberal politician, or even a group of determined followers of the author. Johanna Clarke is one such, part of a fanatical reading circle of cultured ladies who are constantly sending one another letters and writing in to the newspapers whenever they find something to be outraged or excited by.

**General Difficulty:** 4/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 5, Mental 6

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 4

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Academics 7 (contemporary literature), Subterfuge 8 (written scandal-mongering)

### **Vladimir III Tepes “Son of the Devil”**

#### *Voivode of Walachia*

Dracula himself is at the heart of the Stoker Debacle. He is perhaps best used as a bridge across time, appearing both in the modern nights and in Memoriam flashbacks set during the time when all of Europe was hunting for him. No matter if you use him as a never-seen figure of myth, a misunderstood hero figure, or a very concrete and deadly antagonist, understanding who Dracula is in the **World of Darkness**, and who he is not, is helpful.

In short, Vladimir III is real, while “Count Dracula” is a fictional character created by Bram Stoker at Vlad’s behest. Figuring out who the “real Dracula” is, plays a significant part of any Memoriam set during the Stoker Debacle.

In the 1800s, Vlad III Tepes was a forgotten historical figure, except in his homeland and in western Turkey. The Stoker Debacle ensured the whole world would know his name.

Vlad III of Walachia was born in 1431, but soon he was captured by the Turkish Sultan, Memet II. Held captive there, he learned to hate the Ottomans, eventually escaping to reclaim his father’s throne and lands in what is later known as Transylvania. To beat an empire, to

get revenge, and to ensure the freedom of his people, he turned himself into a metaphorical and literal monster, beholden to no one and feared by everyone.

Whether Vlad's infamous cruelty was a result of him regularly drinking the Blood of captured Transylvanian Kindred, or his brutally tragic upbringing, is up for debate. We know for a fact that his tactics were portrayed as brutal already during his own lifetime. This says a lot. Consider that public torture, execution of children, and starving whole populations to death were considered perfectly normal political tools in the 1400s, yet the intensity and scale of Vlad's terror tactics were perceived as "of the devil."

In his most famous act of psychological warfare, Vlad captured thousands of soldiers and farmers that had sworn fealty to the Turks. When the Sultan's forces approached Vlad III's castle, they were greeted by the sight of a vast moaning forest. The captives were mounted on blunt poles, inserted into their anuses, killing them slowly as the stakes travelled up their bodies and out their shoulders or mouths. It is from this incident Vlad received his historical nickname: Tepes, the Impaler.

The Sultan's army, sleepless and harried by surprise attacks from Vlad and his knights, panicked and fled at the sight. Walachia was saved.

This was Vlad Tepes: incredibly intelligent, fiercely protective, and prepared to do absolutely anything to win, even long before he stole the gift of immortality from the Kindred.

It took him decades of war, terror, and the heartbreak loss of his wife and family, but in the end, just before faking his own death in 1476, he had defeated all his mortal enemies and ensured Walachia's place in the Christian world forever.

For his tenacity, brilliance, and unquenchable loyalty to the land, he is still remembered as a national hero in Romania.

To become Damned on his own terms, he had to solve the riddle of the Blood Bond, hunt down, manipulate, and capture a worthy sire, and force them to Embrace him.

When he finally, probably with the aid of at least one ancient, forced the elder Sabbat vampire Lambach Ruthven to grant him the gift of Caine's curse, he took his place in Kindred history as the first "self-made" vampire since his countryman, the

wizard and usurper Tremere. But in doing so, he ensured no Kindred would ever trust him again.

So why did Vlad seek immortality? Wasn't freeing his lands from the Ottomans enough? No one truly knows the answers, and Tepes' answers are as rare as they are self-contradictory. Looking at his actions as an independent Kindred, we can see a tendency to remain free and unbound at any cost. In turn, a member of the Sabbat, the Mithras cult, the Camarilla, and, allegedly, the mythical "Inconnu", Vlad has always had more Kindred enemies than allies. It seems that's the way he likes it.

Vlad is unique in earning a simultaneous place on the Red Lists of many Camarilla domains and the enmity of the Sabbat. It's nothing short of a miracle that Tepes, time and time again, has managed to escape destruction at the fangs of other Kindred and dedicated mortal hunters.

**Clan:** Tzimisce

**Generation:** 5th

**Embrace:** 1495

**Blood Potency:** 8

**Humanity:** 3

**General Difficulty:** 7/6

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 10, Social 8, Mental 8, Disciplines 10

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 14, Willpower 8

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Melee 12 (Walachian Greatsword), Etiquette 10 (Archaic Voivode), Subterfuge 12 (appearing genuine), Occult 13 (Kindred legends)

**Disciplines:** Animalism 5 (Bond Famulus, Feral Whispers, Unliving Hive, Subsume the Spirit, Animal Dominion), Auspex 2 (Heightened Senses, Premonition), Celerity 2 (Rapid Reflexes, Fleetness), Dominate 3 (Cloud Memory, Mesmerize, Submerged Directive), Fortitude 2 (Resilience, Toughness), Obfuscate 2 (Silence of Death, Unseen Passage), Potence 2 (Soaring Leap, Prowess), Protean 5 (Weight of the Feather, Feral Weapons, Earth Meld, Shapechange, Mist Form), Blood Sorcery 4 (Koldunic Sorcery: Earth,\* Extinguish Vitae, Blood of Potency, Theft of Vitae; Rituals: Clinging of the Insect, Ward Against Spirits, Deflection of Wooden Doom, Defense of the Sacred Haven, Escape to True Sanctuary) (Note: *Gehenna War* offers Elder Powers which can be added to elder antagonists. This may

be suitable to make Dracula into an unique foe.)

**Touchstones:** Willa Murray Harker and her family, forever tainted by his Blood.

**Modern Nights:** Add four dots of Disciplines.

\* See *Blood Sigils*, p. 61. Can be replaced with Corrosive Vitae

## Flashback Scenes

**THE LOST COUNTS:** Why use the relatively unknown Bram Stoker to destroy the Masquerade? Why not a reputable member of the House of Lords, a royal, or even a Scotland Yard detective? What if earlier attempts to get Tepe's story out were made by Oscar Wilde, Conan Doyle, or even Aleister Crowley? What if the Dracula debacle started already in the mid 1800s and Stoker's text was simply the only one to see the light of day? What if the other, earlier attempts were crushed by Kindred — specifically one or more of the players' characters?

In this flashback, the players' characters are hot on the trail of one of these alternate versions and have the chance to influence the future of Victorian literature quite concretely. For example they could scare or seduce Oscar Wilde to "tone down" his vampire story so it eventually becomes *The Picture of Dorian Grey*

**THE BRIDE OF DRACULA:** During the hunt for Dracula, the players' characters encounter one of his many lovers, perhaps to question them, perhaps the "bride" is pretending to be the Count himself. It's important to remember that Vlad is a master shapeshifter, so the many reports that a Kindred has destroyed him are likely to be misreported cases where they fight one of his (often incredibly powerful in their own right) brides or childer.

**AGENTS OF WILLA, 1918–20:** The characters manage to track down "Mina Harker" some time after the Great War. She is called Willa Murrey, and she seems to have aged very little. She's desperately afraid that Vlad's Blood is somehow still affecting her as well as her young son Quincey, who has just returned home unscathed from war. Willa tasks them to bring her the rare Blood of one of the last known Salubri vampires — suspected to be a Bride of Dracula and a member of an unknown sect of Kindred. But is she really just a desperate mortal

hunter looking for redemption? Or has she already succumbed to an addiction to Kindred Blood?

Thomas Harker (Jonathan's real name) is long dead, and soon the players' characters are dragged into Willa's quest for a vengeance she can never have.

## Developments

As the players' characters manage to destroy more and more of the lost versions of Dracula, they meet emissaries of the Voivode and begin to understand his perspective as they witness the spread of the vampire craze in literature. These antagonists appear to be fully convinced of Vlad's innocence, and as they are destroyed by the players' characters, they whisper that they will understand their mistake in due time.

And perhaps they will. The real result of Tepes' Masquerade breach starts becoming fully clear in the 1940s, '50s and '60s when Bela Lugosi, Count Chocula, Christopher Lee, and others turn the vampire into an icon of pop culture. This makes the whole idea of the Kindred being real seem utterly ridiculous to most humans. In the end, Vlad strengthens the Masquerade, perhaps even saving the Camarilla from an earlier assault by the Inquisition.

Vlad continues to exist in the modern day, and it is fitting that players' characters who encountered him or the manuscripts he inspired in the late 1800s get to meet him again for a final confrontation, where the Voivode invites them to ponder the true consequences of their actions, repent and perhaps even become his Brides.

*The creature we know as Dracula keeps changing and evolving as the kine keep telling their romantic stories about him. When I met him, I felt shadows of Gary Oldman's gravitas, Lugosi's elegant whimsy, the menacing sexuality of Christopher Lee's Hammer horror version all at the same time. Yet he is none of them.*

*Has Vlad shaped these portraits, or is it Vlad that has been changed by them? Does he even remember the brutal feudal warlord he once was? Is Vlad Tepes lost and only the fictional Dracula still around? Or is the other way around, with Dracula a veil of gothic romance that hides a much less palpable creature?*

— Beckett

# The Great Unification

*The very basis of the Camarilla is the idea that we are stronger together. This is true for all Kindred, and it's true for the domain of Berlin. Incorporated under my rule, with loyalty and obedience as our virtues, we shall prosper*

— Prince Gustav Breidenstein of Berlin (destroyed)

**Time:** 1861–1868

**Place:** Berlin and adjacent, smaller domains

There's a mortal phenomenon where when a city grows, it absorbs nearby towns and suburbs into itself. In the world of the Kindred, it's not so simple. The Prince of a small town is probably going to fight tooth and nail to avoid being placed under the rule of a more powerful vampire. After all, who would want to give up the perk of hunting wherever you please in your own domain?

The Venttrue Gustav Breidenstein was the Prince of Berlin for a very long time. In 1575, there was a scandal typical of his reign. He was a brutal Prince given to draconian punishments, and one of his rules was that newcomers to his domain should present themselves the night of their arrival. If someone was being tardy, they

were staked and left so that the sun would burn a part of their body. Then the next night, they could try to see if they remembered their courtesies.

That year, a visiting Tremere was exposed to the sun too extensively and destroyed, causing a long-lasting vendetta between Prince Breidenstein and the clan.

Breidenstein's goal was to make his domain the mightiest in the world. As the city of Berlin grew, its borders touched upon neighboring towns and Breidenstein determined that these too should be part of his domain. Thus started his campaign, called the Great Unification, of expanding his territory at the expense of his unfortunate neighbors.

Never known for his tact or finesse, Breidenstein gobbled up domains through threats, blackmail, coercion, and violence. A few local Princes were allowed to hold their old domains as vassals of the Prince of Berlin but most were not so lucky. Memorably, one Prince was made into Breidenstein's court jester, tormented for years until his disappearance.

The Great Unification was a local event that had far-reaching repercussions in Camarilla domains. It was seen as a symbol of the sect solidifying its rule, with many powerful Princes following Breidenstein's



example and expanding their own domains at the expense of their neighbors. It also caused resentment and disunity which took a long time to fester, but it eventually resulted in many minor Princes seeing themselves more as autarkis than as members of a sect where more powerful members would take away their domains at their whim.

For many younger Kindred, the Great Unification blends in with all the other repressive measures and cruelty Breidenstein was famous for. Many Anarch propagandists liked and still like to present him as the face of the sect, dedicated to nothing but his own power.

Prince Gustav Breidenstein was destroyed at the turn of the Millenium, followed by a small number of weak Princes. Their rule ended in 2017 when the city fell to an Anarch uprising and was further decimated by attacks by Second Inquisition agencies. Because of this, Breidenstein's dream of a united, powerful domain that would be one of the leading lights of the Camarilla was finally extinguished. Now Berlin is once more a collection of small domains held by individual autarkis or Anarch gangs.

## Flashback Characters

Over the years, Breidenstein's Great Unification affected a large number of Kindred and mortals. It led to the creation of one of the greatest domains in the Camarilla before its fall to the Anarchs in 2017.

### *Ida von Rochau*

Ida von Rochau was never one to accept the lot given to her by so-called fate. Born as Gunther, Ida took on her sister's name and identity when the sister ran off with an officer and set up life for herself how she really wanted it. Becoming a career criminal and master document forger in life, she became the Prince of Wedding in death. Her domain became something of a pleasure district for Kindred and kine alike, with gambling and prostitution attracting visitors from near and far. As Prince, von Rochau's rule didn't much differ from mortal organized crime, and she was deeply embedded in the various legal and illegal businesses in her territory. She was enterprising, unpredictable, and both liked and feared among the Kindred of her domain and its neighbors.

At first, von Rochau tried to negotiate her way out of Breidenstein's Great Unification but soon found herself outclassed. Although she also spent her nights in a world of blood, desire, and violence, Breidenstein's medieval brutality was too much for her. After she received the burnt remains of her childe still smelling of gunpowder, she escaped.

Von Rochau eventually made her way to the U.S. and remains with the Camarilla, although she has great sympathy for the Anarchs. To her, the Beckoning felt like a blessing, a gift from the blood gods that would finally free the world from the kind of monstrosities who used to rule the Camarilla.

Perhaps it's time for her to grab a domain of her own once again and make sure that everyone who thinks they can tell her what to do is humiliated and destroyed.

**Clan:** Hecata

**Generation:** 9th

**Embrace:** 1821

**Blood Potency:** 3

**Humanity:** 6

**General Difficulty:** 5 / 4

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 7, Social 8, Mental 7, Disciplines 7

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 6

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Brawl 8, Persuasion 9, Streetwise 10

**Disciplines:** Auspex 2 (See the Unseen, Premonition), Fortitude 1 (Resilience), Oblivion 3 (Ashes to Ashes, Fatal Prediction, Shadow Servant; Ceremonies: Gift of False Life),\* Presence 2 (Awe, Lingering Kiss)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5 / 4 (adding 1 to all Pools), add five dots of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 1.

\*Found in *Players Guide*

### *Herman Ernst Kunth*

Being a lawyer can be dangerous. In the case of Herman Ernst Kunth, what he thought was an induction into a secret society actually led him to enter the world of the Kindred, helping to run the many mortal business interests of Prince Gustav Breidenstein. The original promise was health and the Blood that would keep him eternally young in exchange for loyalty and service.

But Breidenstein was a cruel master. He found infractions in Kunth's work, so that he withheld his Blood and eventually caused his ghoul to age into his current state, that of a man in his seventies. For other infractions, real or imagined, he forced Kunth to first kill his father and then his son. He was to be loyal to the Prince, after all, not to his family.

Made into a ghoul in 1812, Kunth was already a broken man by the time he assisted with the organization of the Great Unification. Like many ghouls who have served ancient vampires, he has a vast store of knowledge, of secrets and embarrassments that would cause great damage in the Camarilla. Only he knows where some of the torpid bodies of Princes deposed in the Unification still lie.

Breidenstein's destruction came as a shock to Kunth. He had imagined the Prince to be eternal, impossible to destroy, yet destroyed he was. After Kunth recovered, he experienced a resurgence of sorts, realizing that he had been left in control of significant hidden wealth. The only thing he needed was Blood and perhaps a chance to further decimate Breidenstein's legacy.

#### **General Difficulty:** 4/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 5, Mental 8, Disciplines 6

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 4, Willpower 7

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Subterfuge 6, Finance 10, Occult 9

**Disciplines:** Dominate 1 (Compel), Fortitude 1 (Unswayable Mind), Presence 1 (Daunt)

## Flashback Scenes

The Great Unification was a violent spectacle. Often, the sadistic methods of execution devised by Breidenstein for the amusement of his court are what Kindred most remember.

**DRAWN AND QUARTERED:** Some of the players' characters were present at Breidenstein's court for the execution of the last Prince who had resisted the Unification. Rather spectacularly, he was drawn and quartered at court. Were the characters spectators, subjects of the executed Prince, or were they neonates tasked with the execution?

**TERRITORY FOR ALL:** After the Unification, Breidenstein had a wealth of free feeding territories in his hands. He gifted them generously to his most loyal supporters. Were the characters among those who acquired new feeding territories, or those who had lost theirs as Kindred from one of the subjugated domains?

**DAWN COMES:** As part of the Great Unification, Breidenstein left a number of Kindred to meet the sun if they resisted his plans. At the most dramatic of these executions, six Kindred were staked on the lawn of a country mansion simultaneously. Who were they, those Kindred who were staked and then miraculously escaped? Did they keep their heads down, hoping that the storm would pass? Or were their sires destroyed, thus freeing them from their service?

## Developments

The Great Unification and Breidenstein's rule left an immense amount of resentment in its wake, and it has been proven among Kindred that bitterness can reach across the decades and the centuries to manifest in full.

**DOMAIN RECLAIMED:** One of the surviving Princes Breidenstein originally deposed has returned to Berlin with an aim to taking over their old domain once again. Of course, now the territory is radically different. The danger doesn't come from a Ventrue tyrant, but from Anarch gangs and the Second Inquisition. Then again, perhaps the Anarchs would value someone with experience in how to hide among mortals successfully and infest their businesses and interests.

**THE TYRANT REBORN:** A self-professed Ventrue shows up in one of the Courts of the Camarilla, claiming to be Prince Breidenstein himself, having returned from hiding to take what's his. He has the money and the supernatural power to show that he's not a complete charlatan, but many remember the Prince's destruction. How can you determine the truth in a world of liars and backstabbers? What's more, is it worth it to face a supposed Prince so famous for inventive brutality?

**UNIFICATION:** The Camarilla Prince starts to speak of uniting the nearby territories under their rule. They speak of peace and cooperation, but the

memory of the Great Unification shows that the result of such plans is often destruction and violence. Kindred don't like to relinquish what's theirs. What do you want? Do you see the situation as an opportunity or a problem?

## The Trial of Mirrors

*"This farce tarnishes the name of our great sect. It cannot be allowed to continue!"*

— The Ventre Justicar Michaelis

**Time:** August of 1902

**Place:** Washington D.C.

The legend of the methuselah Kemintiri has her playing the role of the Devil against the great and the good of the Camarilla, tricking Princes and humiliating the Primogen everywhere she goes. The true goals of the legendary Ministry figure are unknown, but she has the distinction of being the only blood god ever to have been held at trial by a Justicar, Michaelis of the Ventre. Unfortunately for the Camarilla, the judgment devolved into a bloody farce and came to be known as the Trial of Mirrors.

Michaelis had sought to create a spectacle of Camarilla power in the U.S., holding the trial in Washington under the auspices of the Tremere Marissa, who was the Prince of the city at that time. The Camarilla was supposed to be a union of Kindred domains uniting all under the same Traditions, honoring the same crucial principle of the Masquerade. To show that modern Kindred rule triumphed over ancient barbarism, the methuselah Kemintiri would be tried for her crimes!

That didn't happen. What did happen is hard to know even now. Among the many events reputed to have taken place during the Trial are:

- Kemintiri was executed, destroyed at dawn... Until she failed to burn and was discovered to be a witless mortal.
- Kemintiri impersonated the Prince, Marissa, and ordered Michaelis expelled from the city.
- Kemintiri impersonated Michaelis and demanded the Prince, Marissa, to be cast down and for the domain to join the Anarchs.

- At least seven D.C. Kindred were revealed to be Kemintiri's pawns and executed, only to be revealed to have been framed.
- One of the Archons of Michaelis was revealed to have been Kemintiri all along, suggesting that she somehow captured herself for the trial.

Many of the details attributed to the trial are ridiculous, but there's still a crimson tint to the farce. In their paranoia, Michaelis and Marissa ordered numerous Kindred and their ghouls destroyed, wreaking havoc through the domain and beyond. They started vendettas that persist until this night, seeing the influence of the enemy behind every shadow.

It's unclear how the trial ended. Its final event was an execution, but whose?

Although this was not the wish of many of the luminaries involved in the trial, for many in the Camarilla, it has come to symbolize the futility of going against the blood gods. Among Kindred ancestor worshipers, Kemintiri is not particularly popular. She's more of a trickster figure, used as a warning of the folly of going against the power of the Blood. When the ancients speak, their descendants should bow and listen, otherwise their hubris may be punished.

As a coda of sorts, the Justicar presiding over the Trial of Mirrors, Michaelis, fell to diablerie at the hands of Kemintiri in 1932. To add insult to injury, she impersonated him for ten full years, causing great embarrassment to those involved. For this insult, many in the sect, the current Ventre Justicar Lucinde included, are still hoping to destroy the methuselah once and for all despite her great power.

During the time Michaelis was being impersonated, many in the Camarilla noted that his judgments and trials didn't grow markedly more cruel or unusual, even though they were held in reality by a Ministry methuselah. Michaelis was already known for the severity and inventiveness of his punishments, and it seemed that the fake Michaelis continued that same tradition of high-handed sadism.

Washington's Prince Marissa was assassinated in 1968 although no connection to the Trial of Mirrors was ever established.

## Flashback Characters

The vampire at the center of the Trial of Mirrors is the Ministry methuselah Kemintiri, a mythical figure sometimes invoked in her own right by those prone to ancestor worship. She's a betrayer who can take the face of anyone, or so the stories go.

For more on Kemintiri, see *Gehenna War*.

Like most trials conducted by the Justicars, the Trial of Mirrors was a horrifying grand guignol, holding the weak and the strong alike in petrified terror. It left its mark on everyone, the Kindred in the spotlight and those in the margins.

### Dijana “The Lost Archon” Sindelic

A grandchilde of the old Prince of Washington D.C., Dijana Sindelic was Embraced to be a Camarilla insider. A Serbian immigrant wunderkind in academia, Sindelic transcended her hardscrabble origins, dedicating herself to the study of history. Embraced, she felt ages long past suddenly open up to her in the form of the ageless dead who were now her Kindred.

She believed in great mortal institutions in life and saw the Camarilla in that same light. Her sire suggested that she accept the offer of service to Justicar Michaelis as an Archon and she agreed, deciding to use her powers of investigation and research for something more immediate than the study of past eras.

Sindelic saw the world of vampires in stark terms of good and evil. Institutions, establishments, and traditions were good. The rebels, autarkis, and Sabbat lurking on the periphery of her world were monstrous and evil. She did her best to suppress and ignore the Hunger inside of her.

The Trial of Mirrors destroyed everything Sindelic believed in. She had worked diligently to bring Kemintiri in, only to discover that the information she uncovered had been lies, the Archons she worked with infiltrators, the Justicar she served incompetent, and the Camarilla she loved a hollowed-out, easily humiliated edifice.

Almost falling to the Beast, Sindelic lost herself and never really recovered. Unable to function in the Camarilla, she wanders the domains of the Anarchs, sometimes acting like the Archon she used to be. Other times, she could be mistaken for a wight.

**Clan:** Tremere

**Generation:** 7th

**Embrace:** 1844

**Blood Potency:** 3

**Humanity:** 4

**General Difficulty:** 5/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 5, Mental 8,

Disciplines 7

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 8

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Melee 7, Investigation 9,

Occult 9

**Disciplines:** Auspex 5 (Heightened Senses,

Premotion, Scry the Soul, Spirit's Touch,



Clairvoyance), Blood Sorcery 2 (A Taste for Blood, Extinguish Vitae; Rituals: Blood Walk, Illuminate the Trail of Prey), Dominate 3 (Cloud Memory, Mesmerize, Submerged Directive)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 6/4 (adding 2 to Exceptional pools and 1 to Standard), add Obfuscate 3 (Cloak of Shadows, Unseen Passage, Mask of a Thousand Faces), and lower Humanity by 1.

## Luke the Loser

Many Kindred have recreated themselves after the Embrace, replacing a lost mortal identity with something new, perhaps more suited to their new circumstances. Losing everything means you can make yourself into who you always needed to be. That was the case with Luke the Loser, a trans man and a Gangrel who swapped an ordinary and unexceptional mortal life for undeath with some of the greatest monsters ever to have existed.

His unlikely fate was to accompany Kemintiri during her trial, having been assigned to look after her by Prince Marissa and to keep an eye on the Justicar too. Why Luke specifically? He was someone who could be spared in a trial where other, more established Kindred were more interested in presenting themselves as powerful and important.

For Luke, the trial passed as if in a dream where he quickly saw that a self-made tough guy like him had no chance to stop the blood god from doing anything she wanted. The difference between him and her more powerful captors was that she never bothered to afflict his mind, leaving him with a clear memory of what happened.

After the trial, Luke was seen as a simple fool who had been duped by one of the most dangerous Kindred in existence. He wasn't happy with the moniker that stuck with him, Luke the Loser, but it saved him from being destroyed. After all, a fool can't be blamed for falling for a lie.

Unfortunately, Luke's powers of self-invention seemed to evaporate after the trial. Since then, he has never been able to shake this reputation of being the dunce who never realized what Kemintiri was up to. In reality, he was the only one who really saw the truth, but nobody would believe him if he claimed that now.

**Clan:** Gangrel

**Generation:** 11th

**Embrace:** 1886

**Blood Potency:** 2

**Humanity:** 8

**General Difficulty:** 4/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 7, Social 4, Mental 5, Disciplines 5

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 11, Willpower 5

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Brawl 9, Survival 7, Occult 6

**Disciplines:** Animalism 1 (Sense the Beast), Fortitude 2 (Resilience, Toughness), Protean 3 (Eyes of the Beast, Feral Weapons, Shapechange)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 4/3 (adding 1 to all pools), add four dots of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 1–2.

## Flashback Scenes

Memories of the Trial of Mirrors are confusing and subjective and most Kindred had a hard time understanding what happened even at the time. This reflects in how different ancillae remember their own participation.

**THE CHARGES ARE READ:** In the early stages of the trial, Justicar Michaelis had the charges read aloud in a ceremony designed to instill fear in everyone present. Kemintiri appeared subdued, even scared, and many Kindred present were already imagining how the trial would burnish their reputations. What kind of fantasies did the players' characters entertain before it all went wrong?

**THE MIRRORS:** In a confusing turn of events, the players' characters witness themselves at a Camarilla reception. Apparently, someone has taken over their identities, chatting with their allies and flirting with their enemies. But who and why? They can't all be Kemintiri! And even if they were, why would she do that to them?

**GROWING PARANOIA:** Mighty figures such as the Justicar and the Prince confer, increasingly paranoid about traitors and infiltrators. As their eyes turn to the players' coterie, they have a choice: Become the target of a paranoid Blood Hunt or suggest someone else to take the fall.

## Developments

The Trial has a long shadow, its consequences depending on who you are. To Camarilla elders, it was a great embarrassment, while to an Anarch, it's a carnivalesque trickster tale, no matter how many died or were destroyed in its course.

**KEMINTIRI UNDERCOVER:** A local Camarilla functionary who was present for the Trial of Mirrors declares that a neonate is Kemintiri in disguise and must be destroyed. Is this true, or is it just a paranoid delusion born from old trauma? The neonate in question appears terrified and confused, but of course that's just how the actual Kemintiri would play it.

**VENGEFUL JUSTICE:** The current Ventrue Justicar, Lucinde, comes to town intent on making sure nobody imagines the Justicars to be weak. Although few remember the Trial of Mirrors, Lucinde does, and in her imagination, the shame still has to be expunged with blood.

**WHAT HAPPENED:** The task of destroying Kemintiri is no small feat but everything is possible with the right preparations. The story is that somewhere in the confusion of the Trial of Mirrors there's a clue to her true motives, and once those are known, she can be trapped. Who would have been there, who would still remember?

## The Bloodhunts of Prague

**Time:** 1939–1944 and 1968

**Place:** Prague, Czech Republic

Prague. Mortals know it for its beautiful spires and rich cultural history; Kindred know it as a lethal hotspot in the long War of Ages. It flares up again and again, with periods of peace broken by the final death screams of whole coteries of neonates, sometimes all in a single devastating night.

From 1939–44, in 1968, and also tonight, Prague is one of the most dangerous and volatile vampire cities in Europe. The Bloodhunts of Prague were a series of dramatic events of unrest and open warfare



in the 20th century. They are thematically similar, share a cast of characters but are set a few decades apart. This makes them well suited to link through a series of Memoriam jumping between them.

The earliest verifiable mortal records telling us about undead bloodsuckers come from a village on the outskirts of Prague. Here, in the lands of old Bohemia, independent Tzimisce ruled for millenia, and their elders are remembered as sleeping gods. Among the most famous legends of Prague, we find those of a magical clock, often interpreted as the supernatural shadow of the Astronomical Clock, the legend of how the Devil helped build Charles Bridge and, of course, the legend of the Golem, a holy monster built from clay, defending the Jewish quarter in times of need.

## The Hunt for the Hidden, March 1939–1944

Nazi Germany occupied Prague in 1939, following the invasion and occupation of the provinces of Bohemia and Moravia. Reinhard Heydrich was placed as regional governor, and when Prague officially capitulated on May 14th, the region was formally integrated into the Third Reich. All administration and policing was taken over by Germans but was often staffed by local collaborators. For centuries, the city had been a major center of European Jewish culture and learning. The concentration camp Terezin was constructed nearby in 1941, and by the end of the war, two out of three Czech Jews had been murdered. In 1944, after turning parts of the city to dust with artillery, the Red Army entered Prague, and soon thereafter it became part of the Soviet sphere of interest.

During the first night of German arrests in the Ghetto, the Nosferatu Prince Zvi was burned in the chemical fires of a German flamethrower. For hundreds of years, Zvi and his Nosferatu allies had been embroiled in a cold war against the city's

Venture elders, who never forgave him for killing the former Prince, Rudolf Brandl, back in 1199. With Zvi destroyed, his Ventre enemies took the opportunity to take over leadership of the city and declare a Blood Hunt against all of Prague's Nosferatu.

The Toreador Vasily was made a puppet Prince, and served as the figurehead of the coup plotters. Many name Markus (a later Prince of Prague until his presumed final death in 2021) as one of the most ambitious of the Kindred behind the coup.

Vasily himself took only little part in the purge, and his conflict-adverse leadership saw him manage to coexist with both the Nazi occupation and the communist state that would take its place after '46.

## The Hunt of Spring, 1968

In the spring of 1968, the progressive socialist Czechoslovakian government under Alex Dubček declared its goal to adopt a softer style of governance. They called it "De-Stalinization" or "Socialism with a human face," and it was the culmination of several years of liberal reforms. The Soviet Union, threatened by the widespread administrative and economic reforms, called in half a million troops from the Warsaw Pact to occupy the country. They thought it would take four weeks to take Prague. It took eight months, and yet the resistance was never violent. Instead, citizens mislead, sabotaged, blockaded, and mocked the Soviet loyalist soldiers to prevent them from projecting power effectively. But in the end, the reforms were still crushed.

As the Prague Spring turned into protests and strife, a wave of strange murders was almost entirely dismissed by the kine population. But the mortal victims were collateral in the secret wars of Kindred. So, what happened?

A large group of Anarchs, led by the rebellious Sasha Esser, turned against the Ivory Tower in a six-month long purge of anyone suspected to still be connected to Zvi's old rule or the Old Clan Tzimisce. What the Ventre could get away with in the 1940s was not quite as easy in 1968, and the Purge was seen as a betrayal of the Camarilla and all it stood for. Zvi's old right-hand-man Kirill now fought hard to take down the Anarchs, earning the hate of many of his fellow Brujah.

# Flashback Characters

## Kirill

### Scourge of the Prince of Prague

In current nights, Kirill is a Primogen and the Sheriff of Prague. But during the Bloodhunts, he was the Prince's Scourge. For hundreds of years, he hunted the enemies of the Camarilla: Anarchs, autarkis, and thin-blooded vampires. Following the coup against Zvi, Kirill was forced to hunt down his old allies, as the new leadership wanted all Nosferatu destroyed, especially those who supported Zvi. Kirill followed orders, but as World War II ended and the Bloodhunts died down, he refocused his attention on taking down the ones who really deserved it, in his opinion, Anarchs. When Anarchs were behind starting the Hunt of Spring, 1968, Kirill relished in the opportunity to defend the Nosferatu and battle Anarchs in one go, even though his own childe Sasha Esser was on the Anarch side.

Born in Prague in the late 14th century, Kirill knows the city better than anyone else. His short fuse and love for a good hunt have made him feared among anyone who can be considered an enemy of the Camarilla.

**Clan:** Brujah

**Generation:** 9th

**Embrace:** 1430s

**Blood Potency:** 4

**Humanity:** 4

**General Difficulty:** 6/5

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 9, Social 7, Mental 8, Disciplines 7

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 7

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Brawl 10, Melee 11, Intimidation 11

**Disciplines:** Celerity 4 (Rapid Reflexes, Fleetness, Traversal, Traversal), Potence 5 (Lethal Body, Prowess, Brutal Feed, Spark of Rage, Uncanny Grip), Presence 3 (Daunt, Lingering Kiss, Dread Gaze)

**Modern Nights:** Add three dots of Disciplines.

*Legend has it that a group of fallen monks, or a Kabbalist Rabbi and his followers, had a library of secret texts here. It was the custom of local nobles to leave bastards and other unwanted children in the central crypt, and for the cult to collect. Both as a thank you for their service and to guarantee these children would not later lay claim to their inheritance. The latter was ensured by a simple and brutal method. They were all mutilated. Faces carved up until they looked like lepers, they were robbed of their likeness to this lord or that. "In their ugliness no one would have them but God," writes Paracelsus in one of his diaries from his years in Prague. I can't help imagine them still down there, jealously looking up at us. Mumbling incoherent prayers.*

— Prof. Gioberto Ucci,  
"The Embalmer of Old Town"

## Prince Markus

### Cold-Hearted Strategist

Markus has operated in Prague since he was Embraced to be used as a weapon against Zvi during the Nazi occupation. Following the coup and his part in it, he worked tirelessly to establish a greater presence in Prague for those of Clan Ventre and rose effortlessly within the ranks of Vasily's court. With time, he built a small empire of his own, becoming known for his exclusive collection of weapons and occult artifacts.

When Prague's elders were shamed by the disaster of the Convention of Prague (and many of them were conveniently drawn away by the Beckoning), Markus took a seat first in the Primogen Council, and then as the new Prince of Prague in 2012. As Prince, he managed the impossible task of balancing local Camarilla and Anarch interests and keeping the regional peace. The Second Convention of Prague in 2021 was seen as a power move by Markus to show off this achievement to the

Camarilla, but it seems things didn't go as planned as the summit was attacked by Second Inquisition forces. By all accounts, Markus was destroyed in the attack fires, but perhaps that's simply the story covering his real escape.

**Clan:** Ventrue

**Generation:** 10th

**Embrace:** 1939

**Blood Potency:** 2

**Humanity:** 5

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 6, Disciplines 5

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 5

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Firearms 6, Leadership 7, Academics 7

**Disciplines:** Dominate 2 (Compel, Mesmerize), Fortitude 3 (Resilience, Toughness, Defy Bane), Presence 1 (Daunt)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4 (adding 2 to Exceptional pools and 1 to Standard) and add three dots of Disciplines.

## Flashback Scenes:

**1939:** Markus and a squad of ghoul soldiers are on a raid against the followers of Zvi. The Nosferatu and packs of Tzimisce are holding out in the Jewish Cemetery. They're impossible to defeat, and Markus decides he must force Kirill, Zvi's old Scourge, to help. One of the Zvi loyalists call upon Shaagra as they fall, naming an old Tzimisce methuselah rumored to sleep beneath the city.

**1944:** Russian bombings force you to take shelter in the catacombs, a slaughter ground for the enemies of the lost Prince Zvi. There you witness Kirill, Zvi's old scourge, fight a hopeless battle against his old master's allies. It's a suicide attack to ease his conscience over switching sides to the new prince Vasily. An unholy alliance of Nosferatu and Tzimisce are defending a series of medieval plaques engraved with Noddist prophecies. All seems lost as another Soviet bomb brings the ceiling down.

**1968:** Escaping a band of Soviet Brujah who stalk the rooftops in search for Camarilla Blood, you hear talk of a "Brujah Council"—a group of Kindred

### A Sanctuary Within the City

Since the 1960s, vampires have been able to find sanctuary in one of the city's rare Elysia, the private parties of the Toreador Maia, also known as the Red Lady. Anything can happen there, and as safe as you feel while you're inside, the night feels dangerous again the moment you leave.

who infest the darkest corners of post-revolutionary Russian bureaucracy. This council seems to fear Prague, that's why they're so violent. Is it possible the methuselah Shaagra was not destroyed in the Second World War bombings as they say but is still somewhere beneath the city, and the Council knows this? Or do they simply fear Zvi's old ally, Kirill, who hunts Anarchs these nights with a passion?

## Developments

### THE ENTITY AND THE BLOODHUNT, 2021:

The current Bloodhunt in Prague was declared in 2021 against all Anarchs and still flares up occasionally as a shooting war. Some believe the methuselah Shaagra, rumored to sleep beneath the city, is finally awake or is about to awaken, and that this has fed the apocalyptic nature of the war.

A Bloodhunt against all Anarchs was declared after a second disastrous Convention of Prague in 2021 ended in a coordinated strike by covert Vatican strike teams (ESOG) and local law enforcement. Anarchs were blamed for the leak, and they were a fine scapegoat just a decade after a Brujah had assassinated Camarilla leaders in the city. The truth behind the strike may soon be lost for good, swept away in the Blood of frenzied childer, spilled from the contested rooftops.



# The Birth of the Anarch Free States

*"We declare ourselves to be free and independent, owing allegiance to no creature and no organization."*

— The first principle outlined in the Status Perfectus, the founding document of the Anarch Free States

**Time:** The Second Anarch Revolt starts on the 21st of December, 1944

**Place:** Los Angeles

The First Anarch Revolt occurred in the 15th century as a result of young Kindred being radicalized as their sires and elders sacrificed them to the fires of the Inquisition to save themselves. From the resulting tumult, three of the four great modern sects were born: The Anarchs, the Camarilla, and the Sabbat.

(The Ashirra's history goes back much further.)

Many in the Camarilla didn't take the Anarchs particularly seriously for the first centuries of their existence. The Camarilla was hegemonic, particularly in Europe. The seeds of discontent had been sown but Ivory Tower Princes were successful in keeping the ambitions of younger Kindred in check. As a sect with

real power and extensive domains, the Anarchs are a relatively recent phenomenon.

All that changed in December of 1944 in Los Angeles. The Second Anarch Revolt spread far beyond the borders of the city, inspiring rebellious sentiment across the world as Kindred in far-flung places heard stories showing that the Camarilla could be beaten after all.

In modern nights, the Second Anarch Revolt and the birth of the Anarch Free States in Los Angeles is a legend. Many have heard the story and only a few know how things actually happened. This is why the story has become romanticized, sometimes beyond recognition. Brave Anarch revolutionaries motivated by selfless zeal to improve the lot of their fellow Kindred!

The reality was much messier. The Anarchs fought among themselves for domain, over a hundred mortals were killed or wounded, fledglings and ghouls were sacrificed, and individual revolutionaries made secret deals with the enemy for their own benefit. There's a reason the story often starts and ends during the heady nights of the Revolt: what happened afterward is much harder to make into an inspirational legend to fire up young, idealistic Kindred seeking to pretend they're still good people despite the Hunger gnawing at their souls.

Many of the most important figures of the modern Anarch Movement made their reputations in the Revolt. It sometimes comes as a surprise that these celebrated heroes used to feed at the same Los Angeles dive bars and belong to the same coteries and gangs before being elevated to their current legendary status. It may be even more of a surprise that some of them still have havens in Los Angeles, hunting the same as any other vampire.

A revolutionary legend doesn't sustain a vampire. Only blood can do that.

## Flashback Characters

As with many historical events among both the Kindred and the kine, the Second Anarch Revolt looks different depending on your vantage point. Were you one of the triumphant Anarchs or a Camarilla neonate fleeing for your unlife?

### Salvador Garcia

The most famous ideologue of the modern Anarch Movement, Salvador Garcia is one of the original instigators of the Second Anarch Revolt and the author of the *Status Perfectus*, the founding document of the Anarch Free States, as well as the widely read *An Anarch Manifesto*. Born to a farming family in Spain, Garcia has been a rebel throughout his life and unlife, having taken part in countless struggles against authority.

He has avoided taking power, preferring instead to focus on supporting the various strands of the Anarch Movement in different domains and developing the ideology of vampiric liberation driving the fight against the Camarilla and other tyrants. His fortunes have waxed and waned depending on the current political fashion among the Anarchs, but at the moment he's once again on the rise. The recent successes of the Movement, the threat of the Second Inquisition, and the cracks in the facade of the Camarilla have all increased the demand for someone who can put together a good old-fashioned revolution.

According to the legend of the Second Anarch Revolt, Garcia destroyed the Prince of Los Angeles, Don Sebastian Juan Dominguez, in a daring raid. There are rumors that this is not really true and that something darker and more terrifying occurred that night, granting Garcia his victory.

**Clan:** Brujah

**Generation:** 9th **Embrace:** 1892

**Blood Potency:** 3

**Humanity:** 6

**General Difficulty:** 5/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 7, Mental 6, Disciplines 6

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 7

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Leadership 8, Streetwise 8, Politics 8

**Disciplines:** Celerity 1 (Cat's Grace), Dominate 1 (Cloud Memory), Fortitude 1 (Resilience), Potence 2 (Lethal Body, Prowess), Presence 3 (Awe, Lingering Kiss, Entrancement)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4 (adding 1 to all Pools), add two dots of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 1.

### Magnolia Lake

Embraced into the genteel Camarilla of Los Angeles in the early 1940s, Magnolia had been an aspiring actress unlucky enough to go to the wrong Hollywood party. She was swept into the world of the undead, her sire selling it to her as a realm of beauty, power, and wealth, well worth the price of the Hunger that came with it.

Only, she didn't have much time to enjoy her new existence. She'd barely become a vampire when the Second Anarch Revolt started. Her Camarilla compatriots left her behind, a sacrifice to the revolution to help their own escape. The next few years among the Anarchs have been blanked out of her memory, perhaps mercifully.

A Camarilla waif lost among the Anarch gangs doesn't sound like a story that'll last long, but something improbable occurred. Magnolia had always had a gift for self-invention. She'd been born under another name and acquired her current one because she wanted to sound glamorous and fit for the silver screen.

Similarly, after she left Los Angeles, she came up with an entirely new story: She'd been a passionate revolutionary, fighting to free her city among all the heroes of the revolution! Now that the Anarch Free States had been born, she was going to spread the revolution far and wide!

That's still the path she's on. It's an open question

whether she believes her own story or uses it to her advantage in Anarch domains. What's more, some who have followed her have remarked that the revolutionary plans she advocates are idealistic, foolhardy, and doomed to failure. Perhaps this is her revenge—goading Anarchs to their destruction.

**Clan:** Malkavian

**Generation:** 11th

**Embrace:** 1941

**Blood Potency:** 2

**Humanity:** 6

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 7, Mental 6, Disciplines 6

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Subterfuge 8, Insight 8, Politics 7

**Disciplines:** Auspex 1 (Sense the Unseen), Dominate 2 (Cloud Memory, Dementation), Obfuscate 2 (Cloak of Shadows, Unseen Passage)

**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4, add 1 to all pools, add two dots of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 2.

## Flashback Scenes

Revolution is chaos. Memories of what happened exactly vary, and it seems that everyone who was present has their own agenda. The Second Anarch Revolt started in Los Angeles but spread far and wide, its effects being felt in domains across the world.

**THE RAID:** What really happened when Salvador Garcia and a few others went on a daring raid to the haven of the Prince of Los Angeles, Don Sebastian Juan Dominguez? According to the legend, Garcia heroically destroyed the Prince. The buried truth is that the raiding party found the Prince already in ashes. How was he destroyed? What did Garcia and the others find at the haven? Are there suppressed horrors corrupting the noble legacy of the Second Anarch Revolt's instigating incident?

**RUN VENTRUE, RUN:** For many in the Los Angeles Camarilla, the Second Anarch Revolt came as a complete surprise. If some among them knew or suspected, they didn't tell the others because they felt leaving some of their Kindred behind would slow

down the revolutionaries. What does it feel like when everything you have built collapses in a single night? You lose your haven, your influence, and your allies. You have no Elysium to go to, and your ghouls have been killed. The only thing you have left is your coterie, and they're as miserable and scared as you are. Can you make it out of the city or are you going to burn?

**INSPIRATION:** A small domain is chafing under a tyrannical Prince. The local Kindred believe that the rule of the Prince is eternal and that the elders and ancillae running the domain cannot be challenged. That is, until the night a strange visitor comes to town. Sometimes introducing themselves as a Brujah, a Gangrel, or perhaps a Venttrue to look good in the eyes of the Prince. They present a facade of propriety and submission, but once among the downtrodden Kindred of the domain, they whisper of something that happened in faraway California. The Blood of a Prince may be old, but it's not invincible. Tyrants fall and even the strongest regime can be torn down. How did the Kindred of this domain take part in the Second Anarch Revolt?

## Developments

**THE THIRD ANARCH REVOLT:** In 2012, the majority of the Brujah left the Camarilla at the Conclave of Prague and the Third Anarch Revolt started. Behind this development were grievances that have been repeated across the centuries all the way to the birth of the Anarch Movement. Once again, the powerful and the established in the Camarilla decided to sacrifice neonates and fledglings, particularly Anarchs, to the Second Inquisition in the hopes that the intelligence agencies coming after vampires would be satisfied. Like its predecessors, the Third Anarch Revolt inspired young Kindred in various domains and caused many subsidiary revolutions against Camarilla power. It also made the legend of the Second Anarch Revolt relevant once again, raising the profiles of its core figures.

**THE IMPOSTOR:** Salvador Garcia shows up in the domain, talking big about revolution and change. In the process, he enchants young local Anarchs and Anarch sympathizers, graciously accepting their offers of blood, money, and influence. Yet something feels off. Is this really Garcia, or just an impostor cashing in on the reputation of the great ideologue?

What's worse, perhaps this is the real Garcia! The revolution needs resources, and taking them from local Kindred is all in the service of the greater good.

**THE GRUDGE:** Kindred have long memories. For a fledgling, the Second Anarch Revolt is ancient history and the Free States an immutable part of the landscape. For an aggrieved Camarilla ancilla, the Revolt could have happened yesterday. The wounds still fester, and the bitterness hasn't faded away. Perhaps the players' coterie took part in the Revolt, or their sires did. Whatever the case, there's someone out there who has nurtured a plan for revenge for long decades before finally putting it into action.

## The Moonlit Crusade

*All these so-called Anarch Revolts do is weaken us in the face of a true threat, that of the lupines! Instead of childish tantrums and mindless vandalism, we should unite all of the Camarilla across the United States and join the Moonlit Crusade to end the werewolf threat once and for all!*

— Prince Lodin of Chicago

**Time:** Started in 1948 and lasted in various forms until 1955

**Place:** Various Camarilla domains across the U.S. There were individual and often disastrous sorties beyond Camarilla-controlled territory.

When the unwashed rabble is coming for you, what's a poor Camarilla Prince to do? In the wake of the Anarch Revolt of 1944 in Los Angeles, the answer was to focus all attention on an external threat and hope that fear would stop most ill-treated neonates and fledglings from rebelling. After all, even those who chafed under Camarilla control worried about being torn to shreds by raging werewolves.

The Moonlit Crusade was invented by a group of Camarilla Princes, including some of the most respected ones in the U.S., such as Chicago's Lodin. To hear their flunkies and courtiers tell it, Kindred were under unprecedented assault by the lupines who sought to destroy every last walking corpse they could find. Such claims were bolstered by the very real fact that werewolves indeed did attack the havens of a number of prominent young vampires.

How did they know how to find them? Some newly minted Anarchs speculated that the Princes of the Camarilla had secretly leaked information about their enemies to select werewolves they knew about, prefiguring the later betrayal of the Camarilla leaking the havens of Anarchs to Second Inquisition agents.

At its height, the Moonlit Crusade attracted large numbers of fledglings and neonates, providing a sense of purpose to many struggling with their own humanity. Many Kindred, particularly younger ones, believed the rhetoric of the Moonlit Crusade. They sought out lupines and tried to fight them, thinking that their coteries and even mortal dependents were in danger. After all, didn't the Princes say that the werewolves can sniff out everyone you have ever known, every family member you want to protect, and kill them?

These naive unfortunates were often the biggest losers of the Crusade, getting destroyed because they thought their Camarilla leaders would protect them from lupine reprisals. Instead, when the werewolves came for them, help was nowhere to be found. Because of this, among more cynical Kindred, the expression "to join the Moonlit Crusade" has come to mean falling for the schemes of the old and the powerful.

The Crusade fizzled out by 1955, ending in embarrassment and recriminations as Princes tried to steal domains from each other and directed the Crusade against their enemies. Some of the enemies destroyed by the Crusade were not even werewolves, but just Kindred who'd made an enemy of a particular Prince. Once these lies, betrayals, and contradictions became impossible to ignore, many of the Crusade's most important backers washed their hands of it and pretended they never had anything to do with it.

## Flashback Characters

The range of the Crusade means that there are many Kindred still in existence who were there: Camarilla courtiers who lied and prevaricated to make it happen, Anarchs disappointed their efforts were eclipsed by this absurd concoction, and young Kindred who wanted to be brave and fight unaware of the Crusade's true cynical nature. Some of the most bitter are those young Kindred who fought the lupines, only to witness Camarilla support evaporate at the first sign of danger or retaliation.

## Mortimer “The General” Kraus

At the height of the Moonlit Crusade, Mortimer “The General” Kraus rose to the position of Warlord, an improvised title granted to him by the Princes backing the war. He had been a mendicant Nosferatu traveling from domain to domain, blessed with improbable luck in actually managing to kill a lupine in the early nights of the Crusade. For his efforts, he was lifted up and presented as a symbol of the Camarilla’s project to protect all Kindred everywhere.

Kraus remained the Warlord of the Moonlit Crusade only for four years before the Princes backing him surreptitiously decided to discard him. Blowback from actual lupine acts of vengeance had become too much, and the Princes decided that it was time for the Crusade to discreetly fade away. The decision left Kraus suddenly vulnerable with a massive target painted on his back.

Improbably, Kraus survived and still exists, an embarrassing reminder of a project that’s since been consigned to historical oblivion. He leads a lonely existence, defined by his brief moment of glory. He’s unable to stay in Anarch domains because of his strong association with the Camarilla, but the Camarilla doesn’t really want him either.

**Clan:** Nosferatu

**Generation:** 10th

**Embrace:** 1917

**Blood Potency:** 4

**Humanity:** 6

**General Difficulty:** 5/3

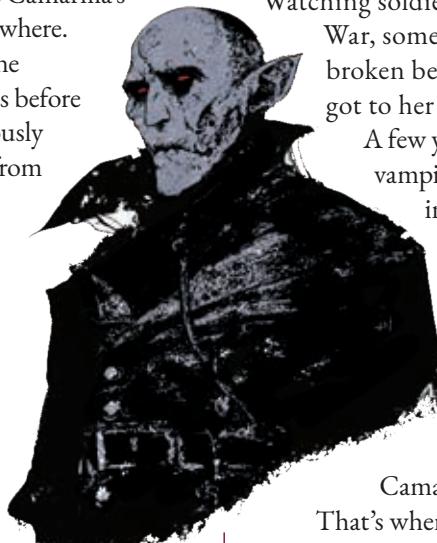
**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 8, Social 4, Mental 6, Disciplines 6

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 6

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Melee 9, Brawl 9,

Streetwise 7

**Disciplines:** Animalism 1 (Sense the Beast), Fortitude 3 (Resilience, Toughness, Defy Bane), Obfuscate 2 (Cloak of Shadows, Unseen Passage), Potence 4 (Lethal Body, Prowess, Brutal Feed, Draught of Might)



**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4 (adding 1 to Standard pools), add two dots of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 1.

## Belle Reed

Growing up on a farm in Texas, Belle admired and idolized soldiers and the idea of being part of a larger whole dedicated to serving her country.

Watching soldiers return from the Second World War, some relieved to be home and others broken beyond repair, was as close as she got to her dreams in life.

A few years later, Belle was a Brujah, a vampire, trying to figure out her position in the Camarilla cities of the American South. She’d known her sire briefly and had been Embraced with the blessings of a Prince. That didn’t help all that much when the sire went missing and it didn’t feel like there was a place for Belle in any Camarilla domain.

That’s when she heard the stories about the Moonlit Crusade and came to believe her vanished sire had been destroyed by the perfidious werewolves. Her old dreams of camaraderie and righteous war surfaced and made her into a loyal soldier blind to the lies of the Camarilla.

Most of the Kindred Belle had come to know and cherish during the Crusade were destroyed in lupine reprisal attacks while the Camarilla’s Princes and power-brokers hid. Something inside her broke when she realized she and so many like her had been betrayed.

**Clan:** Brujah

**Generation:** 12th

**Embrace:** 1946

**Blood Potency:** 2

**Humanity:** 7

**General Difficulty:** 4/3

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 7, Social 5, Mental 6, Disciplines 6

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 6

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Brawl 8, Survival 8,

Awareness 7

**Disciplines:** Celerity 1 (Rapid Reflexes), Potence 3 (Lethal Body, Prowess, Brutal Feed), Presence 1

(Daunt), Protean 2 (Eyes of the Beast, Feral Weapons)  
**Modern Nights:** Update General Difficulty to 5/4 (adding 1 to all Pools), add two dots of Disciplines, and lower Humanity by 2.

## Flashback Scenes

The Moonlit Crusade affected a number of domains across the U.S. As such, different versions of its basic events have happened in wildly varying domains.

**FALSE FLAG:** A Camarilla neonate, the childe of a prominent member of the Primogen, is found brutally destroyed, the rotten remains exhibiting signs of being crushed and torn in a manner that would seem to point towards the lupines. Only, the enforcers tasked by the Prince to conduct this false flag operation were sloppy, and now rumors that the Camarilla Court is destroying its own and trying to pin the blame on werewolves to ignite a war are starting to circulate. Do Camarilla characters believe the rumors or try to ignore them? Can an Anarch use a failed false flag operation to foment an actual Anarch Revolt in the domain?

**ASHES:** A coterie fighting in the Crusade makes short work of a pack of lupines hiding on an old farm, the advantage granted by surprise meaning that the enemy never has a chance to fight back. Only, after the fight is over, somebody notices that the corpses have turned into ash and bones. Were they vampires? Who told the characters these were lupines anyway?

**NO HELP:** A coterie that has returned home to their havens from the Crusade realize that someone is coming for them. Their Touchstones disappear, their ghouls end up staked, betraying ignorance on the

part of their enemies. Still, it's time to ask for help. Perhaps the Crusade could protect its own? The problem is, suddenly the luminaries of the Camarilla are impossible to find.

## Developments

**IT WORKED!** The Anarchs are agitating once again, with the Camarilla in dire straits as important domains fall and others are forced to accept a divided city only partially controlled by the Ivory Tower. Such a state of affairs makes Princes and other Camarilla dignitaries harken back to the nights of the Moonlit Crusade. It worked once, so why wouldn't it work again?

**REWRITING HISTORY:** The Masquerade means that there are almost no written sources for Kindred to learn their own history from, with the exception of rare manuscripts like the Book of Nod, the Book of the Grave-War or the Revelations of the Dark Mother. The city's Anarchs have become aware that the local Camarilla is secretly trying to destroy some of their members, older rebels who remember the perfidy of the Moonlit Crusade. The Camarilla's goal is to extinguish the memory of the Crusade so they can then tell a more flattering story about themselves.

**THE LUPINES:** Werewolves are attacking havens all over the city in an apparent attempt to wipe out the Kindred. How to stop them? That's when someone remembers the Crusade—perhaps some of the old crusaders are still in existence and could instruct younger Kindred on how to fight the werewolves? The only trouble is, their experiences with the Moonlit Crusade made them cynical and distrustful, unwilling to get caught up in other people's battles.

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### THE LUPINE PERSPECTIVE

Few Kindred ever bother to wonder about the Lupine perspective on events like the Moonlit Crusade. The werewolf is a violent beast and that's all there is.

Still, when such large numbers of vampires are mobilized against them, werewolves surely must have realized that they were at war. In this sense, the Moonlit Crusade became a self-fulfilling prophecy. Although it started as a cynical ploy to distract attention from the demands of the Anarchs and create conditions that supported a Camarilla call for a unified front, the end result was a lot of actual conflict with real Lupines.

Kindred have long memories because their undead bodies allow them to exist beyond human lifespans. In contrast, Lupines often lead short, violent lives, with events just a few decades old having already passed into myth.

A werewolf may remember stories of a time when the vampires came for their blood and respond accordingly even if it happened long before they were born.

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# The Forgotten Massacre

The Emergence of the Duskborn is mentioned below, but what few talk about is that there have almost always been examples of them among vampirekind. Seen as abominations since they first appeared, most would've been destroyed before they could learn to feed, and only a rare few would've managed to hide well enough to be left alone. They appeared non-existent because they were such a well-kept secret.

This changed around the early 1980s, when enough thin-blooded vampires started to emerge to become noticeable. At the time, Kindred spoke of an epidemic, a curse, and yes, a portent of Gehenna. It was still seen as necessary to put them down before they could find their footing, and in a majority of domains, it was law, enforced as strictly as the Masquerade. From the early '80s until the mid-90s, thin-blooded licks were routinely slaughtered and burned—with fire, when sunlight wouldn't take. Sometimes, even their sires were destroyed to put an end to "polluted" bloodlines, and more than a few Caitiffs got culled in the chaos by mistake or association.

In recent decades, as the Duskborn have become more accepted, the massacre of their fallen predecessors has become an awkward subject matter. Most prefer to leave it in the past, unspoken of, and Duskborn of tonight may never hear of it unless from those who'd prefer for them to suffer the same fate.

## Recent Events

Many neonates remember more recent events of Kindred history even as they too recede into the past with the heavy march of time. These include:

**THE EMERGENCE OF THE DUSKBORN:** As foretold in numerous prophecies of weakening Blood, when the 13th Generation of Kindred started making childer of their own, a new type of vampire emerged: the Duskborn, also known as the thin-blooded—not fully Kindred but not alive either. They are often seen as a sign of the end times.

**THE WEEK OF NIGHTMARES:** A period lasting roughly for a week in 1999 when an ancient

vampire, possibly an Antediluvian, arose and purged its own clan, the Ravnos. Although very few Kindred experienced these events directly, it caused panic in vampiric domains across the world and is often seen as the instigating incident of the Gehenna War.

**THE GEHENNA WAR:** The story of the Gehenna War is that ancient vampires are rising from torpor and the Sabbat has geared up to fight them in one final, apocalyptic battle. In practice, the Gehenna War manifests in places with ancient ruins and mortal conflict, and often involves incredibly lethal confrontations over obscure, confusing, ancient grudges.

**THE BECKONING:** During the last two decades, an increasing number of elders have been Beckoned away to mysterious purposes, often leaving abruptly and causing their domains to fall into disarray. This has completely changed the power dynamics, particularly in the Camarilla, to the immense benefit of ambitious ancillae and neonates.

**THE RISE OF THE SECOND INQUISITION:** In the early 21st century, intelligence agencies in different countries seem to have become aware of the existence of vampires, or "blankbodies" as they often call the undead because they don't show up on thermal scans. These agencies have worked together to destroy Kindred at scale, leading to the mass abandonment of digital communications technologies among vampires.

### THE FALL OF VIENNA, LONDON, AND BERLIN:

**VIENNA:** Vienna, London, and Berlin all used to be major Camarilla domains, important centers of the sect's power. That they have all fallen is a truth too awful for many Camarilla loyalists to contemplate. The Tremere chantry in Vienna was the most important stronghold of the clan, and when FIRSTLIGHT raided it in 2008, it broke the clan asunder and sent shockwaves through the Camarilla. Soon afterward, a similar fate befell the domain of London, its Kindred decimated in another Second Inquisition campaign enacted by local intelligence agency SO13. Berlin fell to the Anarchs in 2017 in a violent revolt followed by Second Inquisition suppression laying waste to the gains of the revolutionaries. ■



Chapter Four

# THE KNIFE OF ATROPOS:

## Playing the Downfall

MK  
2024

The Kindred are not immune to the passage of time. A year, even a decade, may not feel important to one who has centuries ahead of them, but those decades sneak up on you. One night you rise, and you've left everything behind you: the cultures you knew, the people you relied on, the very stuff that kept you anchored.

Aging makes the Blood grow stronger. But as the Kindred leave behind the last remnants of their mortal life, they become ever easier prey to their inner Beast. With each loss of a Touchstone, their Convictions are in danger of shattering and their Humanity of dropping. This is the inherent

tragedy of the ancillae: They're in the process of forgetting who they were as mortals, but they haven't yet forgotten that this is a loss. Their beliefs and convictions—and the human relationships that uphold them—become so much more important when they are the only thing tethering the Kindred to themselves. Sometimes they are the only thing that stands between them and the snarling beast inside them.

This chapter is about losing and reforging Touchstones and Convictions, struggling with bouts of low Humanity, and about the crisis of getting really, really old.

*You cannot imagine the terrors I've been through. As the Tremere Pyramid fractured, I lost everything. If this is what it means to experience historical events, I hate it. I tried to find refuge in another organization, a faith. The Church of Set. But that too turned to ashes as they humiliated and exploited me.*

*I know you'll judge me for going to Bianca Archetti. She has an awful reputation as a thief and an opportunistic backstabber. Everyone warned me about her. But consider this: All those who gave warnings would have let me fall until I was a wight, a rabid dog to be put down on the streets.*

*She helped me like a sire should have long ago. I learned from her all those things I was never taught by mine. I realized the Pyramid had protected me from so many things. I'd existed in a cocoon, unaware of what every other vampire had to go through, all because I had a talent for thaumaturgical research.*

*I didn't know how to find a haven or shelter for the day. I didn't know how to protect myself from my enemies or keep a ghoul. I knew so much about the powers of the Blood and so little about how to use them out there, outside the library.*

*I know I betrayed my clan when I made the deal, but I had no other choice. Archetti didn't teach me out of the goodness of her dead heart. Even I am not so stupid as to think that. No, she wanted our secrets.*

*And I gave them to her.*

*From an unsent letter of confession by the Tremere Yordan*

I am tested every night. Sometimes by eternity and other times by fools.

There are so many things you have to learn if you want to survive as one of the Kindred, and so few who can teach you. How to craft a mortal mask? How to hold property when you're dead? How to nurture your last connections to humanity so that you won't lose yourself and become a mere ravenous animal?

Some of the Kindred I know barely survive. They've been sheltered by those making use of them, and now they're unable to function alone. (Yes, I refer to the same Tremere as before.)

Others have successfully navigated all the travails of aging only to lose the inner struggle. If they don't fall to the Beast, they just lie in a bathtub full of self-pity.

You have to have real purpose to do more than survive. There's a world of mortals out there for you to play with, using whatever means you have. The powers of the Blood or simply money, it's all the same. Power is power and once you learn to use it, you'll find there is something meaningful out there to occupy your existence.

That's what I've done and I'm proud of it. You'll get tarnished on the way, but so what? only the quiet dead remain pure.

- From the diaries of the Lasombra Bianca Archetti

You asked me why I keep to myself. I remember it clearly: you in your ill-fitting dress which I adored nonetheless, sprawled out on the settee, my books all around you. It had been a perfect moment. I seldom get to forget what I am, you know. It's something to be treasured.

I didn't have words for you then. Wasn't sure how to tell you that I am afraid to let people in because of what I know I'll do to them. What I feared I'd do to you.

I've always been superstitious, and at that time I still held hope I wouldn't hurt you.

Ah. I see you now, brushing a stray lock of hair away from your face. Hi, Bea. Hi beautiful. ... It's funny. In my memories, the sun is lighting up the scene. Certainly, it couldn't have.

You laugh at me in my mind's eye. Enough stalling.  
Right.

I keep to myself because my Kiss is agony, my Hunger is insatiable, and inside this soft and gloomy fellow is a malignance I have never learned to control. Not in two hundred years. I hurt you badly, Bea. And I will do it all again.

- Leander of Sopron

# The Desolation

When never-ending nights start feeling meaningless, and the reasons to carry on no longer burn as strongly, a vampire either finds something to keep them going—a new focus, passion, or goal—or lose the battle against the gnawing demands of the Beast. Because it's always there, waiting for self-discipline to waver, growing stronger over the years.

The quest for a sense of meaning is something that marks the shift from the neonate to the ancilla. Sometimes it's subtle, as the vampire has managed to involve themselves so deeply in a greater goal, they hardly notice the last remnants of what they were and knew slipping away. Perhaps they have connections in mortal society which transcend individual people, and they get to slowly ease into the realities of immortality. But often, the shift can be dramatic, even dangerous, as the vampire still has to tackle the unyielding harshness of Kindred society and politics. It easily becomes a battle on the inside, while the outside needs to seem unphased.

*The Desolation* is the time in a vampire's unlife when they've been dead much longer than they were alive, and the feeling of jaded emptiness is starting to envelop them. They may have spent lifetimes gathering power and influence, honing their strengths, and building alliances. They may think themselves invincible. But as they lose their Touchstones and their Convictions, their Humanity starts to erode. If they don't reconnect to mortal reality and redefine or sharpen their beliefs, they'll descend into monstrosity or melancholy. Much too quickly then, they'll meet the fate that awaits all of them eventually: losing themselves fully to the Beast.

Where Dave, 52, mortal, may fight the passage of time by investing in a red Ferrari, the aging Kindred might need something a little more gruesome to feel spirited (although, yes, you do see vampires in sports cars, too).

After decades of cultivating their real estate empire, the meticulous Ventru sells it all in one fell swoop, invigorated by the rush of doing something reckless. And the tears of a thousand stockbrokers, as the market crashes, are olives in their mental martini.

The Kindred have different terms for the

Desolation, if they talk about it at all. To admit turmoil and inner chaos is to display weakness, and therefore it's something many Kindred have to experience alone. For some the process is quick, but it can also take years to get through.

Kindred in the midst of the Desolation can be more dangerous and unpredictable, as their inner turmoil makes them volatile and inconsistent.

## Dealing with the Future

Playing a newly-made vampire is all about how to deal with your own death not taking and suddenly having become a predator. How do you avoid eating your friends? How do you handle the vicious and unforgiving Kindred society with all its rules and pitfalls?

As an ancilla, you've hopefully found the answers to most of those questions. Instead, it's time to deal with the questions of what happens to you over time. A major theme here is which parts of your identity survive with you and how you anchor yourself to what's important to you.

The Kindred are products of their times, and the inability to change (for the better) is often cited as one of their great curses, even if it's a truth with moderation. But being stuck in your ways isn't the same as being unable to care. And caring about things is a great motivator. In the beginning of their unlife, the Kindred remembers what it felt like to be truly human. They may have living relatives or loved ones as Touchstones. But when those mortals start to die, and the connection is severed to the Kindred's sense of their former mortality, they must find something else to emulate that spark of life and must replace their Touchstones. That's what the Desolation is all about, redefining what will drive the Kindred for the centuries to come.

## Things to Focus on

These are a few the things ancillae might become obsessed by as they face the Desolation:

**ALL OF YOUR REGRETS:** A long unlife will give you plenty of chances to do things you regret, and some Kindred become plagued by unbidded flashbacks from their past. The really regretful ones may gather in societies like the flagellant Order



of Repentants to punish themselves properly for everything they did and didn't do.

**ART AND KNOWLEDGE:** Excellence for the sake of excellence can hold the Beast at bay. Yet, the outbursts tend to be extraordinary when the ancilla realizes they cannot achieve the perfection that they crave.

**BECOMING A SIRE:** What better ways to solidify one's legacy, and find new meaning, than to create a childe in one's own image? Having childer, legitimately so, is an honor and proof of one's high standing in Kindred society. But reasons to create a childe can be as many as there are Kindred.

**FEEDING:** Drowning your sorrows in blood is a time-honored tradition for a reason, even if it is the path most trod by soon-to-be wights.

**SCHEMING FOR A GREATER CAUSE:** Many Kindred find meaning and direction in stabbing one another in the back, especially if they can justify it as being for a greater cause.

### Turmoil, not Apathy

With all this talk about the ancillae forgetting what it's like to be human, it may be tempting to start playing them as cold and jaded. And of course, ancilla characters *can* be indifferent inhuman entities worried primarily about their political agendas. But that image doesn't do justice to the amount of *Angst* the Kindred generations who were Embraced in the era of the Great Romantic poets are also allowed to feel. The fury of those who grew up on revolutions and general strikes. In other words, there's a lot more to explore in

# Six Embraces to Regret

Below you'll find some of the different types of childe a Kindred may Embrace, and why Embracing is a cursed pursuit.

## I Couldn't Part with You

Sometimes you can't imagine being without a beloved mortal relative, maybe your Touchstone. It creeps up on you as the mortal gets older, that they'll inevitably die. Creating such childe is usually a bad idea, since the qualities you loved about them will likely disappear or get corrupted when they change. Embracing a Touchstone can lead to Humanity drop or Stains on the Humanity track.

## The Self-fulfillment Project

You want someone who'll worship the ground under their sire's feet. Perhaps you've got your eye on a ghoul who's served you for a long time already. But when the spell of the Blood gets broken, the adoration and devotion might also fade, and not even a Blood Bond can force someone to respect you. This might sour the relationship or make the sire even harder on their childe, demanding perfection in everything.

## The Chance I Never Had

Driven by the need to right wrongs made towards you many years ago, you create a childe to do everything right this time. Too bad the childe is an ungrateful disappointment.

## The Better Version of Me

The childe is the perfect progeny and can do nothing wrong. That's why you picked them: for their talents. You have to work overovertime to cover for their misdoings and fuck ups, but still can't see any fault in them.

## The Disappointment

They turned out wrong and had to be put down. We do not talk about them. They are a never healing wound in our black soul.

## A Task to be Fulfilled, Nothing More

You were ordered to create a childe, and didn't get to choose. This is nothing personal, just a duty to be fulfilled. Naturally, you'll still be held responsible for any mistakes they make. And if they didn't want the change, you are who they'll blame.

the inner workings of the ancillae than their power.

Use the notion of the Desolation as a driver in the storytelling, and get your players to explore that space—what makes their characters tick? All ancillae are individuals who survived the shocking realization that they were truly not going to die while everyone they ever loved and cared for perished. They are the ones who *made* it. Why did your character?

## Fragile Things: Touchstones and Convictions

Touchstones are the mortal embodiments of a vampire's Convictions, the values they try to uphold even after death. Losing or hurting a Touchstone easily leads to a drop in Humanity, and with that loss, the Conviction is lost too. Thus, such loss is a time of crisis for any Kindred. Many older vampires recall going through dark periods following such a loss, times where they didn't care about who they hurt or how they would survive. Getting through such low-Humanity periods may have made the Kindred sharper around the edges and better equipped to handle difficulties. Or they may just have come out of it scarred and traumatized.

### EXAMPLE:

*Alfea's twin sister had twins of her own, just a few years after Alfea's Embrace, but she passed while they were small, leaving Alfea with a feeling of being cut in half. Alfea took comfort in visiting her nieces, being the aunt they loved but rarely saw, sending cards and gifts on birthdays.*

*She watched them grow old and forgetful from the shadows. Standing at their shared grave, staring at the dirt over the last of her great lineage, a dark rage filled her. It masked the emptiness they left behind, the envy she felt that they could die together while she was still alone. Forgotten.*

*For a while, Alfea only fed on twins, as difficult as that was. Eventually, she made ghouls of two twins who reminded her of her nieces, who would never age or die as long as she was there for them. But she grew to hate them and their bond, which she could never share.*

*Her new Touchstone is a twin who has lost their other half. Their strength in going on inspires her and has helped her decide she won't try to replace what she lost again. Her new Conviction is that strength is better built alone.*

## Replacing What's Been Lost

Losing a Touchstone is hard and dangerous. It may not be enough to tear down the Conviction they embodied, but the loss still means the Kindred needs to find a new mortal to anchor it to and fast.

There's always the possibility of transferring the character's fixation to another mortal, maybe a sibling or a child to the old Touchstone (see

*Humanity in Vampire*). This can be done subtly, but it can also backfire terribly, as replacing a loved one with someone uncannily similar can horrify even the undead.

Another way is to follow where the story takes you. If the Storyteller is aware that a player's character is in need of a new Touchstone, they can help by introducing Storyteller characters to the narrative and giving them some air time. Solving a difficult problem together can give

the player's character a chance to connect with a mortal character, and maybe the renewed or a new Conviction rises out of what they experience together.

Finally, new Touchstones and Convictions can be defined by building on old ones and considering how they might've been renewed or twisted. This is a good option if you're defining the loss in a character's backstory or simply want to spend playtime on other things.



**EXAMPLE:**

Alfed's original Conviction was "Family first", but the loss of the twin Touchstones and the dark place she went to after means she eventually connects with a new Touchstone whose primary quality is that they act as someone she can mirror herself in. She admires how they handle grief, and her new Conviction becomes "Strength is better built alone" or "Don't depend on anyone."

There aren't mechanics for replacing lost Touchstones, as such, as the personal nature of each connection shouldn't be dictated by the vagaries of dice rolls. For some games, new Touchstones fit the tone perfectly, while others would lose their sense of tragedy. Follow where the game takes you and enjoy the new dimensions this adds to the character—regardless of which route you take.

## Touchstones in Play

Introducing Touchstones in play can sometimes feel difficult, since they're private to each character, and the Kindred are secretive and protective around them. Consider keeping them in play by using handouts (maybe something like letters to a distant "uncle" or a notice in the paper of someone getting married), or tossing them into the game without telling the rest of the troupe who they are. Only the player who knows the Touchstone will notice their importance.

To interact with a Touchstone is to keep the Conviction they embody in focus for that player's character. Things the Touchstone says have a deeper meaning, their actions or desires have a greater impact, giving those particular scenes a different filter for the player whose Touchstone they are.

To some extent, two or more players could share a Touchstone if that happens organically in-game. There's a lot of Shakespearean tragedy and drama to be found in this direction, and with a little Storyteller subterfuge, the players don't even need to know from the start that their characters are sharing.

## Remembering Past Touchstones

Losing a Touchstone can cause Stains on the Humanity track for a character, and is something all ancilla characters at some point must've gone through. You're free to define such losses in character creation, but if you didn't, it's never too late to remember a dear lost Touchstone, adding them to the Relationship Map in gray as a reminder of the tragic loss. Touchstone loss can be blamed for a great many things, from low Humanity to why your character is so obsessed with killing Ventrule or can't keep it together when they pass someone wearing rose-scented perfume. In this way, it can provide more reasons to roleplay and can help motivate new types of play, creating conflicts or stronger alliances between players' characters.

Some examples of past Touchstone narratives and how they could be affecting your character:

**DAMNING YOUR LAST RELATIVE:** You couldn't stand the thought of your mortal family line ending and decided to make a ghoul of your last relative and Touchstone. It caused a Stain on your Humanity track, but the guilt of having robbed your Touchstone of their mortal life was enough to keep the level of Humanity you were on. This ghoul is still with you, and you dote on them as if they were a beloved dog, feeling you can never repent the crime of what you've done to them.

**HUGGING PUPPY TOO HARD:** The grief over a lost Touchstone was so intense you immediately went out in search for a new one, as similar as possible—just like you used to go from relationship to relationship in life. The connected Conviction is almost the same, but it gets a little more extreme every time you replace the Touchstone.

**DOING DARK DEEDS:** Your Touchstone was the one thing that kept you from giving in to your dark urges, and when you lost it, the Beast won the battle. Somewhere down the line, you managed to stop yourself, probably running into your next Touchstone and forging a Conviction never to give into those drives again. Consider what the dark urge is and how much Humanity

it cost your character. Construct a Conviction from this experience and a new Touchstone who counters the dark urge.

**IT WAS ALL A LIE:** The loss of your Touchstone makes you pivot in your beliefs. A firm believer in the power of justice could form a Conviction about how there is no justice to be had—you will have to make your own.

**YOU FUCKED UP:** You harmed or even killed your own Touchstone, or your directions indirectly caused their demise, resulting in Stains. Maybe you're afraid to fixate on another mortal for a while following this, and your next Touchstone needs to be such a strong connection, or embody something so fundamentally important to you that you can't resist getting involved. This is of course great roleplaying material and great drama for a chronicle.

## Low Humanity

As the years go by, the aging Kindred has been around the block a few times, and it's only natural that their Humanity has dropped. With less remorse, as some baseless deeds that once would've felt horrific now feel common, the Kindred may start to slip down the Humanity track without even noticing. And some do. Being Beckoned isn't always what has really happened when an elder disappears. But a Kindred with low Humanity is often also one who knows that unnecessary evil deeds weaken them in the long run. They resist the Beast to be able to keep doing it; their Convictions need to be strong and their Touchstones protected at all costs. Losing their grip once may be the thing that tips them over the edge. And wouldn't that be such a sad ending—to be put down as a mad dog by one's own?

The trick of being an ancilla is to be careful *what* to care about, and then hone that care, protect it, and preserve it, like the most treasured thing you own.

### EXAMPLE:

*Michael couldn't care less about those soldiers. They all chose to go to war, fully knowing what that entailed. Why should he bother with them, feed them, clothe them, or even set them free? Better to put them away, to use as a blood reserve if the war keeps coming closer, the voice whispered inside him.*

*He couldn't care less about those soldiers, but keeping them here posed another threat, a threat the childe beside him couldn't fully fathom yet. He stifled a sigh, and pushed the appealing bloodstained images out of his mind.*

*"Let them go. Give them provisions to make it back behind their own lines."*

*It wasn't an act of mercy, even though he saw his childe's apparent surprise. But it wasn't. It was an act of necessity.*

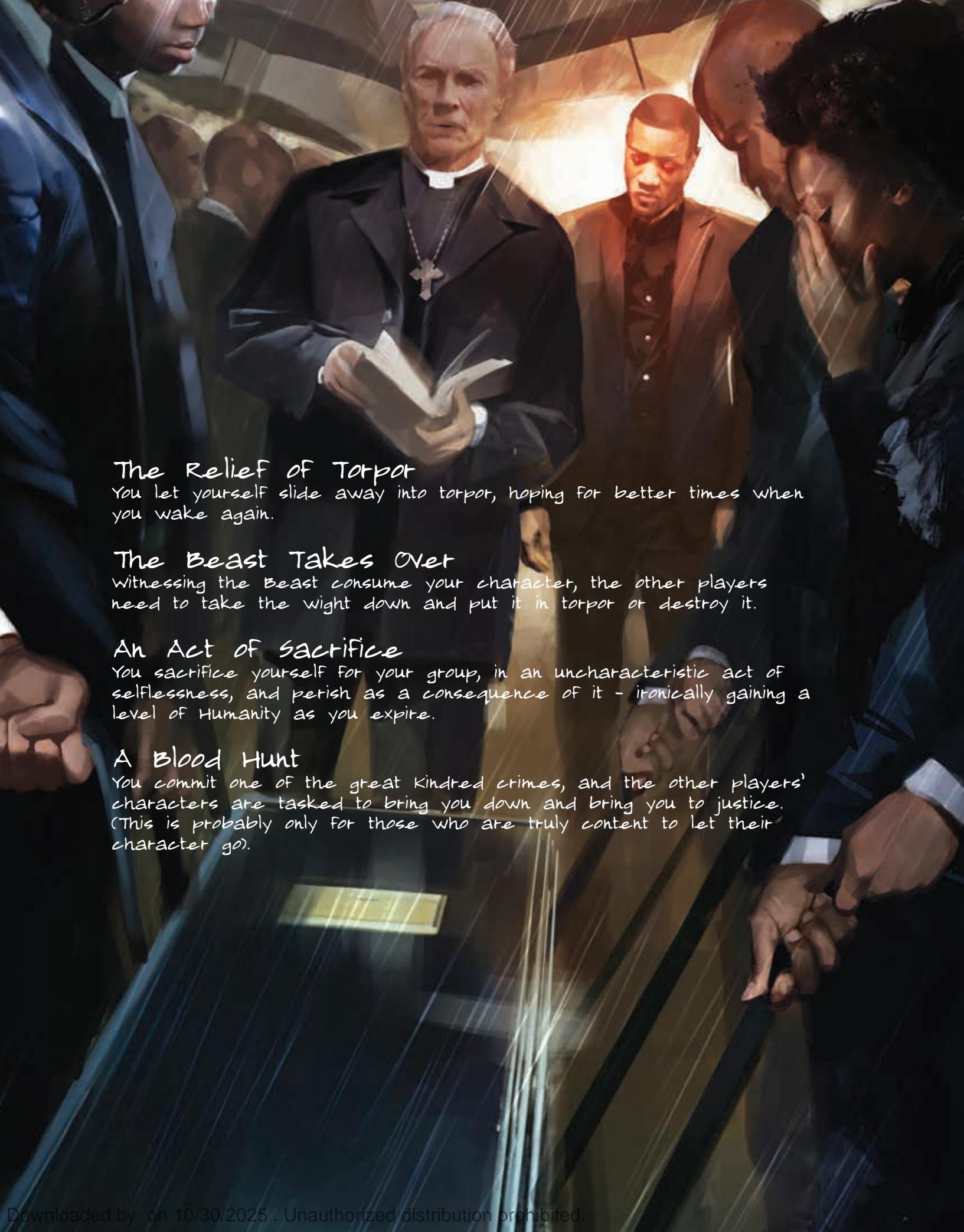
**Tip:** Remember to warn players if their character's actions are about to cause Stains. A Stain is not an in-game concept that the Kindred use but it's common knowledge among vampires that giving into the Beast eventually dooms you.

## Climbing up from Low Humanity

Regaining Humanity is hard for Kindred who have begun to give into the Beast. To connect with long forgotten feelings of compassion and vulnerability isn't something one does easily. But it's not impossible or unheard of. To regain Humanity, the Kindred needs to do something selfless, making an utmost sacrifice for the good of someone else. And they need to connect with what it is to be human in a way they've probably all but forgotten. That is dangerous, but maybe it's worth it to feel like a person again, if just for a while?

Even if they aren't successful, a vampire can dedicate themselves to the attempt to regain their lost Humanity. You'll find great horror material here as well. Committing increasingly desperate and cruel deeds in the attempt to do something good gets dark easily.

Successfully increasing Humanity during a chronicle should be a major personal story arc, and may not be within the scope of the narrative at all (see Increasing Humanity in *Vampire*), but it won't be uncommon for ancilla characters to have been lower Humanity for some of their existence than they are in the present. Having those periods in your character's past can be part of what motivates them in the present.



### **The Relief of Torpor**

You let yourself slide away into torpor, hoping for better times when you wake again.

### **The Beast Takes Over**

Witnessing the Beast consume your character, the other players need to take the wight down and put it in torpor or destroy it.

### **An Act of Sacrifice**

You sacrifice yourself for your group, in an uncharacteristic act of selflessness, and perish as a consequence of it - ironically gaining a level of humanity as you expire.

### **A Blood Hunt**

You commit one of the great Kindred crimes, and the other players' characters are tasked to bring you down and bring you to justice. (This is probably only for those who are truly content to let their character go).

## Spiraling Down into Destruction

The Beast is strong. Sometimes stronger than the Kindred. When they slip, it grows a bit stronger, a bit cleverer. It waits for moments of weakness or temptation to push through. This fight is one that's easy to lose. It can take decades, but the Beast is cunning and patient, and it *will* eventually win. Playing a character on this path can be very fun and rewarding, but will soon end in making the character unplayable unless you find a way to turn around.

When a character is getting pulled into this spiral, it may be time to let them plateau or get onto the path of regaining some Humanity. Or maybe it is time for a spectacular sendoff!

### The Way of the Wight

When a vampire loses their last level of Humanity, all their physical Attributes increase to 5 for the duration of the scene (see "Losing the Last Drop" in *Vampire*). After that, they will have become a wight.

For characters with Blood Potency above 4, the Storyteller could instead allow them to use all physical Disciplines at no cost for the duration of the scene.

#### *Ancilla Wight*

The final stage of a vampire's descent into the dark spiral of destruction which is the loss of their Humanity is that of the wight: the mindless monster given over fully to the Beast.

**Clan:** Toreador, but it's hard to tell

**Generation:** 8

**Blood Potency:** 5

**Humanity:** 0

**General Difficulty:** 5/2

**Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 9, Social 4, Mental 9, Disciplines 9

**Secondary Attributes:** Health 10, Willpower 6

**Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 10, Brawl 10, Craft 10 (creepy flesh sculptures), Subterfuge 7 (Impeccable Lies)

**Disciplines:** Auspex 3 (Sense the Unseen, Premonition, Share the Senses), Celerity 2 (Cat's Grace, Fleetness), Potence 5 (Lethal Body, Prowess, Brutal Feed, Uncanny Grip, Draught of Might)

## Character Death

When a player has decided they're ready to end their character's storyline, Storyteller and player should conspire beforehand and create a plan for how it plays out and what happens next. Is there a childe of the character who could be played as a continuation or another suitable replacement? The destruction of a player's character should not be taken lightly, but it's not the end of the world either. If the feeling is that the character has had a good run and it's time to change things up — make something narratively striking from it!

Below you'll find some ideas for how to end it. Storytelling the final death of a character can be done in several ways, but however you choose to do it, let it be epic. Allow a frozen moment of reminiscence of the character's past existence, a Memoriam unlife passing before their eyes before they go. Let the player hold a monologue on their last thoughts before taking the plunge into a roaring fire, or let them paint a picture of the small innocent child their character once was. Let the character remember the embrace of a loving parent, or the ecstasy of their first kiss. Maybe they're thinking about the first time they died, and became a Kindred, and the difference between that and dying yet again. The possibilities are endless. Make it count. ■





Chapter Five

# CONDUCTING THE CHORUS: Storytelling Ancillae

DK  
2024

**C**hronicles focused on ancilla characters will be different from those focused on fledglings and Duskborn. The players' characters are more powerful, and the challenges they face should be as well. The stories you can weave with them are also of another type; to do with what we leave behind in time, the grief of giving up all that we could've been, the fantasy of never, ever ceasing to exist; and the old dark folktale warning that getting everything you could desire always comes at the cost of your soul.

This chapter is written mostly for the Storyteller. It goes into some essential themes you can consider underlining when planning out a chronicle for ancilla characters, how to draw on character backstories for plot, and how to further develop and personalize

such stories during play. You also get mechanics for running Memoriam, guided visits to a character's past, and tips on how to use them to support the tone of your stories—to help you paint more nostalgic, melancholic, or threatening moods.

Players seeking options to explore and define their characters' pasts, or that of their characters' sires, can also find inspiration here. For instance, the section on memory, "Testing the Waters of Lethe," provides some suggestions that can make your character both more terrified and terrifying.

For everything that makes them strong, the ancilla has a weakness too, even if sometimes it's only they themselves who can exploit it.

*I woke up bathed in blood sweat again. Bit by bit, the ringing in my ears was overtaken by the wailing of sirens from without, the buzz of chatter from the streets; by bitter disappointment. How I detest the city now.*

*I'd half decided not to rise at all. I'd lain the whole past morning thinking of it, feeling myself slipping down into that warm, forgiving nothingness below. What use have I of the present era? It allows no real joy and only very little art.*

*Petersen's pretty girl would cry out to find me dead. She'd drop the envelope with the other tenants' cheques so they'd sail slowly to the floor. Perhaps tears would fall from her grey eyes. I wonder if she'd reach out to feel the cold of my corpse flesh, no longer forced to hide how desperately she has been aching for that touch. She could pretend it had been wanted all along. Why do they always want the broken ones? I have nothing to offer her but death and pain.*

*I should return to the old country. I can find myself a hill to make my grave, dig my way into the root of Angerwald, or rest below a mountain lake. Forget these last few decades ever happened.*

*But I am a coward, Bea.*

*I don't know that I can face what's waiting there. By which, I don't even mainly mean my sire nor his spectral retinue. Who knows, perhaps neither remain. Perhaps the horror of his mastery knows greater masters still.*

*Sinking into the long sleep, perhaps to never wake, is a thought as sweet as any. They say it is a dreamless state — that torpor is like dying. And, by God, it's been too many years.*

*But Bea, what if what they say about it isn't true? What if the dreams of my days should follow me into that sleep I can't escape?*

*I once knew real bliss, I know it.*

*I can't bear to recall those moments I have lost. Yet, they wait for me below.*

— Leander of Sopron

# The Curses of the *Ancillae*

Instead of the neonate's struggle for nightly survival or to find a place within vampiric society, the longer unives of *ancillae* lend themselves to different narrative focuses. Here we get to the great themes of vampire legends as we know them, the pangs of immortality: that evil has poisoned the Fountain of Youth, that the powers bestowed upon the Kindred are also cursed.

## Agelessness

Neonates, being relatively new to unlife, often see existence through a perspective filtered by mortal concerns; they exult in being protected from illness and luxuriate in the physical might of their undead flesh. For *ancillae*, the charm of such superficial things is long forgotten. After all, the Beast taints even one's successes, and time's relentless passage may spare you, but it won't spare your loved ones, or much of anything else you cherish. You pour yourself into projects and ambitions, but too often such striving obsession costs you more than it wins. The mortals who were meaningful to you age, grow sick, and die. You might seek to ghoul or Embrace them, but in that, you curse them to be like yourself, Beast-ridden, and to suffer loss on a scale living beings were never meant to bear.

*Ancilla* characters are haunted by all that they have lost, and all that still remains which will be lost to them as well. Their stories are ghost stories, whether they know it or not.

## Power

Empowered by their concentrated Blood, the *ancillae* are some of the most dangerous predators in the night, along with the last elders. Certainly, even their strength is tested on the frontlines of the Gehenna War, but who thinks of a god when they meet a tiger in the wild? They are also, most of them, powerful in other ways than through the Blood. They have had time to build business empires, make political alliances, and lose all of their illusions. They are

sharpened blades in social combat as well as physical and mental. But the power to do as you please is also the power to do what you regret — strength to destroy what you yourself have built.

*Ancilla* characters are their own worst enemies; they too often shatter what they wanted to preserve. The strength that gives them power makes them monstrous as well.

## Lineage

Every vampire is part of a bloodline, though some are more pronounced than others. To some Kindred, their sires are now only a bad memory or a distant connection, almost forgotten. To others, they remain, the bond to them impossible to sever, having grown thick and rubbery with time, Blood, and favors. How to adequately put in words how one feels towards the progenitor who is both one's savior and one's tormentor, the person who took everything from you, but may be the one and only constant you have known in an unlife of centuries? The relationship is rarely simple.

Many *ancillae* have childer too, or are at least tormented by a longing to Embrace, even if they think it wrong. They seek out the ideal childer for the sake of strengthening their bloodline and their clan. They Embrace to stave off loneliness, to thwart one another, to give eternity to those they deem worthy, to preserve what time will take, and for a thousand other reasons. It is almost always doomed. The childer turns out wrong, the worthy become monstrous, the cultures and traits they wanted to protect are twisted.

*Ancilla* characters are often part of a family network with a sire, vampiric siblings, and childer. Their closest blood relations are their duty and their sins, appearing to remind them of the parts of themselves they'd rather not remember and pull them down if they get too close to feeling human.

## Other Vampires

"Hell is other Kindred" isn't quite how the quote goes, but it's true nonetheless. *Ancilla* characters are often deeply involved with Kindred politics — they've spent decades expected to kneel for those above them and are now meant to break the backs of those below. Surrounded by others who

Gentle conversations with someone you considered an ally amidst undeath's loneliest nights are juxtaposed with moments of burning shame and rage as you bitterly scowled and schemed at this self-same individual over a slight. A hateful declaration of enmity against the rival who robbed you of a lover you had intended to Embrace competes with a recollection of camaraderie as you and that very rival prowled the streets together, culling your enemies with undeniable efficiency.

want what they have, the ancilla with status must always watch their back. Even if they have nothing, they become threats to those who do.

Ancilla characters are embroiled in the affairs of the Kindred—for good but mostly for evil. Paranoia colors their existence, pulling at them no matter how hard they resist.

## Testing the Waters of Lethe

As ageless beings, vampires accumulate innumerable memories over the course of their long unlives. Notoriously, they cradle old grudges and remembrances of carefully-selected victories to their corpse-hearts like treasured babes. These are stories that define them, drive them, and that let them fall asleep at dawn. They grant the weary a balm of purpose, an armor of identity, and ward away the ennui and fatigue from the routines of feeding and fighting. And they're not necessarily true.

Vampires aren't perfect witnesses to their own past. Their brains don't deteriorate with age, but there's only so much information one person can

hold on to at a time, even when they're in perfect health. There are also many more reasons a person may be forgetful than just biological circumstances. Without knowing it, people can curate, edit, and exercise unpleasant memories to form more manageable narratives. They confuse themselves with wishful thinking, interpret what they witnessed wrongly, and gaslight each other into doubting their own minds. The Kindred can and often do the same. Furthermore, their memories are easily shaped by the whisperings of their Beast, the pressure of their ceaseless hunger, and the Blood.

*A Toreador woman recalls her past life in an enchanted light, romanticizing every aspect of her impoverished mortal days when she felt free and was in love.*

*A Nosferatu who hates the visage in the mirror recalls that they always felt beautiful before, even if that wasn't true.*

How much and how well a vampire character remembers their past is up to you. A Storyteller character may serve best as a detail-oriented, but unreliable, narrator of the past in a story of exploration and investigation. A powerful antagonist elder can be made more difficult to deal with, and more horrific, if their memory is

full of contradictions, and they are angry and confused because of it. The average ancilla player's character probably remembers their past in broad strokes which seem vivid when you don't look too closely, but have forgotten many details. Inured to the casual cruelties and constant compromises committed in the name of protecting their status, they have massaged their memories to a degree. Exceptions have been made to rules they still hold as unbreakable, and forgotten again so as not to disturb what they hold true about themselves and their convictions. The thicker the dust of centuries, the more thickly the river of memories run through the Blood. It can be a pale stream, dormant and half-forgotten until reawakened... or dark veins endlessly revisited, obsessively dredged and mined for precious jewels of reassurance and conviction.

*A Prince raised in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth sees themselves as a fair-minded and even-handed ruler, attributing their love for justice to their mortal days of anguished poverty, when their lands were forcibly appropriated by nobility to impel grain surpluses for export. Yet in the present nights, when this same ancilla appropriates the hunting grounds of weaker Kindred, they perceive no contradiction. Things are different now, and the Prince is only doing what is just.*

## Anchoring Delusions

Kindred who are in the business of curating their memories often choose to stay in echo chambers and associate primarily with those who support their illusions. Perhaps they gravitate to the descendants of old Touchstones who rely on them for support and see them as benevolent, if distant, family friends; they might surround themselves with loyal ghouls who indulge their blinkered visions for another sip from their alabaster wrists, or they seek comfort in the absolutist categories of sectarian conflict, amidst like-minded enemies and allies in the lockstep of war. Places, not just people, might also become sources of solace. Old quarters of the city, reminders of archaic industries, ornate graveyards, and bygone battlefields — these might become more regular haunts of ancillae who feel the anxieties and challenges of time and seek to keep connected to who they used to be.

Older vampires especially often resort to external means to support or shape their memories, such as diaries, portraits, legal papers, even sonnets, depending on their temperament and the time they're from. Such treasure troves of more-or-less encrypted secrets obviously can provide excellent story material and character motivations.

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### MEMORY AND THE POWERS OF THE BLOOD

Sometimes, the Disciplines of the Kindred can be used to affect memory. The Dominate powers Cloud Memory and The Forgetful Mind change the victim's perceptions and understanding of the past, causing memories to recede or be entirely rewritten. As a vampire ages, being the victim of such powers can have far-reaching repercussions. Many, perhaps most, ancilla worry about the reliability of their memories. Recollections of the past can prove false even without being subjected to supernatural power, but when Disciplines are taken into account, the mere act of forgetting takes on a sinister cast. Did I forget, or did someone make me forget? It's not unheard of for a vampire to discover that memories they've cherished for a hundred years were false, created for some sordid purpose by a rival. This can shake a Kindred's sense of self and propel them down the road to losing connection to humanity all the faster. What's worse, sometimes a vampire may discover that the memories they've lost weren't lost because of some malignant outside force, but because they themselves begged an ally to remove them. Who wants to remember all the horrors they have perpetrated? Better to forget and imagine yourself innocent.

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*Consciously seeking to forget or to reduce our burdens of shame, we thrust them out of sight, out of mind, out of our hands, and into the shadows, but our minds or souls recoil at this and scream in protest.*

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## The Sweet Sleep of Torpor

Even if the Blood cannot fully insulate an ancilla from a changing world's demands, the yawning maw of torpor might shelter them from the perturbations of the fitful ages, tempting the Kindred to just sleep it all away. Perhaps torpor might also help one to forget sins, shames, disappointments, losses, and all-too-painful glimpses into one's own nature as a Beast-damned fool; it is to sink into darkness, to let all conscious thoughts just fade away. But as Humanity ebbs, torpor's siren song grows ever harder to shake off; first, with each torpor lasting a year or two, then perhaps a decade or so, and even the most drastic changes might begin to feel inconsequential to slumbering Kindred, all the better for them to forget what they hate to remember, and cling on to what they cherish to recall.

Many ancillae have spots of darkness, gaps and lapses in their memory from time they spent in torpor. Perhaps even their memories of just before and after are affected. Rising from a decade of death-sleep to changed times is a confusing experience, and the Hunger Frenzy upon awakening takes over everything, so comforting in its primordial feed-or-starve simplicity.

## Unforgettable Regrets

Certain things are unforgettable: deeds or situations that the Kindred truly regrets but can't ever take back. They might have been things that caused Stains, such as being the indirect cause of the death of someone dear, or perhaps a great humiliation is enough to plant a deep regret. Distractions, murder

sprees, and meditation can't really repress such memories, and not even supernatural means are fully efficient: the memory itself might be repressed, but the feeling it caused remains.

You can play with the idea of unforgettable regrets by letting such a memory *haunt* a player's character. The negative memory causes physical tensions that spill over, damaging the character's sense of self and their relationships. They gain a custom Compulsion to re-enact or counteract the regret in situations that echo the original memory.

### EXAMPLE:

*Nadia lost her sister to drowning when she was a child, and she has always blamed herself. She is deathly afraid of water now but has a Compulsion to jump in if she ever sees the same type of situation about to play out again.*

For less specific situations, regrets can still be reflected in a character's Compulsions.

### Compulsion: Insurmountable Regrets

You're haunted by the memory of something you did or didn't do when it really mattered. Perhaps you had an enemy you failed to get revenge on before they were destroyed, you let an ally die when you could've saved them, or you Embraced a family member you should've let go of.

You gain the Compulsion to redo what you did wrong. With the Storyteller, add it to the list of possible Compulsions that can trigger for your character. It comes in two variants:



### REGRET OF INACTION

If you regret something you didn't do, this Compulsion causes an overwhelming desire to take action. When you suffer from it, you feel compelled to make the most aggressive choice when you find yourself in a dilemma. Actions taken to resist the Compulsion are done at a two-dice penalty. The Compulsion ends when you've given into it.

- **In a social setting:** Instead of hearing out the Primogen, the vampire immediately questions them, giving voice to their suspicions.
- **In a violent setting:** The vampire is overwhelmed by enemies. Instead of pulling back with their allies, they rush into combat on their own.
- **In a solitary setting:** Sunrise is fast approaching but the vampire passes by a potential victim on their way home and finds time for one last (ever?) hunt.

### REGRET OF ACTION

If you regret something you did, this Compulsion causes you to hesitate. When you suffer from it, you feel compelled to withdraw and think everything through thoroughly before you act. You incur a -2 penalty to all pools until you've had a chance to withdraw and spend a scene in solitude. If in combat, forego initiative ranking: you take action last. You can spend a level of Willpower to end the Compulsion early.

- **In a social setting:** The vampire makes a weak excuse to get out of the situation that they're in and find a place to brood.
- **In a violent setting:** The vampire freezes on the spot unable to decide which action to take, if any, or flees.
- **In a solitary setting:** The vampire is overcome with regret. They reconsider their situation from new angles and revisit old worries.

# Memoriam

Vampires are ageless, and ancilla characters may have centuries of unlife to look back on. Memoriam is how a player's character can relive scenes from their past, flashing back to solve mysteries, learn motives, and remember important memories, buried as they may be.

## Basic Memoriam Rules

In contrast to a regular flashback—a narrative tool employed by the Storyteller—a Memoriam is instigated by a player to expand upon their character's history in a way that benefits their situation in the present. A character enters Memoriam to recall events that happened to them, so as a baseline, they cannot recall a date before their birth or an event that took place while they were somewhere else. Multiple characters can enter Memoriam together if they were all present at the chosen time and place.

Storytellers and players should cooperate even more in Memoriam than in the regular chronicle—too many inconsistencies and divergences from the shared narrative work against dramatic unity, unless the chronicle intentionally takes on an aura of madness and nightmare.

**Note:** The basic rules for Memoriam printed in the 5th edition of *Vampire: The Masquerade* can still be used. These are a slightly streamlined version.

## Memoriam Goals

The player whose character undergoes Memoriam has some goal in the present they want to have achieved in the past. That player explains what they did, learned, or began in the past which might tie into the night's events, or they share when and where they think they knew important information they've currently forgotten.

The benefits of a successful Memoriam episode are roughly equal to one of the following (Set goal at the start of the Memoriam):

- Two temporary Background dots available for the rest of the session. These can represent cashing in favors (or boons) or the recollection of forgotten ties: "I used to know this guy Fenster, a forger by

family trade. I wonder what happened to his son."

- Four bonus dice to a single Skill test. These represent a specific advantage gained by recalling something from the past: "We were friends in 1978, what happened?" or "Now I remember, Billy the Kid taught me to throw a lariat."
- The answer to a major question, such as "Where was the access tunnel when this bank was built?" or "Who slew the former Prince of Miami during the Great Hurricane of 1926?" Ideally, it should provide a tangible clue relevant to the current story.

Storytellers should feel free to allow any number of possible goals in Memoriam, from recovering Willpower to learning the formula for an alchemical elixir or gaining readers' privileges at a key Nosferatu archive.

## Entering Memoriam

As memories fade, specific recall becomes strenuous, and the character entering Memoriam suffers a level of Aggravated Willpower damage as they do. The player selects the place and time their character seeks to remember, and if it's a blank spot the player hasn't decided anything about, so much the better! Make a note of it for future reference ("August 1918: drinking from flu victims and dodging the draft in Boston") and go.

## Running Memoriam

The Storyteller should present the player with three challenges (tests or contests) to reach their goal, unless the narrative would suffer from doing so.

Players whose characters aren't a part of the remembered events play other Storyteller characters, roleplaying in response to the actions of the character who entered Memoriam. This casting can offer some interesting contrast to their normal selves or it can underline the themes of their usual characters. Think of it as the equivalent of casting the regular actors as different characters in a flashback episode of a TV series, and consider rewarding experience points to players who enrich the experience.

The Storyteller should strive to clearly present the challenges of the Memoriam to keep it focused and moving at a brisk pace. It's also up to the Storyteller to decide when and how a Memoriam ends, either through success or irrevocable failure.

## Winding Back the Clock

Characters in a Memoriam would realistically have lower Traits than in the present, representing their reduced experience. However, calculating the difference would be too time-consuming for most troupes. Instead:

Assume that all Attributes and Skills remain the same, but subtract a dot in one Discipline for roughly every 50 years the Memoriam goes back (time spent in torpor is not included). Adjustments to Advantages and Flaws can be applied at the Storyteller's discretion.

The Storyteller should work to fit the character's past self into the fiction. If they should have access to a Haven they were expelled from in 1945, give it to them; if they should have fewer Resources because they made their fortune trafficking diamonds after the fall of the Soviet Union, lower it. The goal should be both entertaining drama and a consistent backstory.

Vampires start play in Memoriam at the same level of Hunger as they enter it unless the Storyteller deems otherwise.

## After Memoriam

If the majority of the challenges were successful, the players' characters gain the benefit they sought. If all challenges were successful, the Aggravated Willpower damage cost is also restored. Failing the majority of the challenges yields nothing except the bitter memories of past failures, and complete and utter failure might also yield a temporary Flaw or two.

Any Willpower damage sustained inside the Memoriam is kept in the present. Health damage sustained is also translated to Willpower damage, as traumas remembered now weigh on the psyche.

If a character enters torpor in Memoriam, they are assumed to have awoken somehow before the present day. (Use the torpor length for their Humanity at the time of the Memoriam, and block that period off from future Memoriam exploration.) A character still standing in the present cannot truly meet final death in Memoriam — they may appear to, but there'll be some dark and sinister explanation as to why they didn't.

## Why Revisit the Past?

Flashbacks of all kinds, including Memoriam, can be used to give depth to a story, offer context, and provide relevant backstory without having to start from the beginning. A well-timed flashback can help drive the plot forward by reminding players of their goals. A flashback can be an invitation to enter Memoriam, but it can also be how you start your session for the whole players' coterie or a quick reminder of what happened to the characters earlier.

Besides providing some potential mechanical benefits, Memoriam scenes and flashbacks can also:

- Evoke a deepened sense of the passing of eras and connect key moments from characters' memories to the troubles they face in the present.
- Complicate relationships between characters by letting the same Storyteller characters appear then and now, carrying old grudges or expecting debts to be repaid.
- Set the tone of your chronicle by taking a player's character back to a moment when they felt the way you want them to feel now. Or...
- Contrast a happy moment with a memory of horror and see how it changes everything for the player's character — and for the rest of the table who has to now play their characters as though everything is fine even though *they* see where the scene may be headed.
- Play with different settings and eras. You could even run a long Memoriam as an entire one-shot story for a break from the main chronicle.
- Explore players' characters' perspectives on a shared memory from different angles.
- Play up character conditions that affect memory, such as trauma that won't stay buried or memories that have been rewritten through Dominate.
- Reveal character secrets to the table (but not the other characters) to help everyone play more on them.
- Bring focus to a player's character's past, even their days of mortal existence, helping them connect to what they once were.

## Extended Memoriam Rules

These rules can be used to modify or add to the basic systems, depending on the kind of story you are telling and what you want from your Memoriam.

### Story-Driven Memoriam

While Memoriam scenes are traditionally initiated by players, the Storyteller can also initiate Memoriam to reveal something a player's character has buried deep in the recesses of their petrifying minds. You can flashback to a Memoriam at any point where it would deepen the story (and not interrupt the linear narrative in a damaging way).

#### EXAMPLE:

*Afong is walking through the busy party district of Berlin at night when she picks up the scent of soup. She'd keep walking except it seems to be the exact soup her old aunt used to make her at the end of Monsoon season. She can all but feel the freshness of the air on her cold skin. Suddenly, Afong is taken back, before the Cultural Revolution, before she met the Ventre in the blue suit.*

For Story-driven Memoriam scenes, it's best to let something within the story trigger them. Perhaps an echo of a heated conflict in the past, a certain scent or sound, a tactile sensation, or the smile on the face of a particular mortal reminds a player's character of something they have lost. Whatever the impulse or trigger might be, it acts as a tantalizing preview of a past memory. If the player wishes to go deeper, the player must pay the cost as usual for the Memoriam to begin for real. Unlike player-driven Memoriam, where the player seeks a specific benefit, the potential reward is here decided (but not necessarily disclosed) by the Storyteller.

Use One-Roll Conflicts (see "Advanced Systems" in *Vampire*) in combination with freeform play to resolve such Memoriam quickly. This allows the cutting in and out more seamlessly within a session of play: a vampire feels a reminder of the past, allows themselves to indulge and empower that stirring with the Blood, and has an instantaneous flashback that is resolved quickly, with a dream-like logic, before cutting back to the present with some manner of mechanical benefit. This allows the fantasy of

immortality, the allure of the power and knowledge of the ages, to become more apparent in play and can help ancilla characters feel more like they have the weight of history behind them.

If the player doesn't want to pursue the Story-driven Memoriam when it's introduced, they can enjoy or suffer the fleeting sensation for what it is. Returning to such a memory at a later date, they will have to initiate the Memoriam as normal.

Storyteller-driven Memoriam should not count towards the usual once per story per character rule, to allow the players the opportunity to initiate Memoriam of their own volition. Whether you'd like to restrict player-driven Memoriam at all is up to you, but it might be worthwhile to waive this restriction as well.

#### EXAMPLE:

*Lisbet is in a sonic art installation when her memories are provoked; intrigued, she decides to dive deeper into the Storyteller's dangled vision of her past. As the Storyteller describes the acoustics of the choir singing for mass inside the wood and stone of Aarhus Cathedral, her senses are cast back into another age. Lisbet is young again, mortal, and a faithful lay member chuckling to herself as she witnesses a debate between her Bishop and a visiting Jesuit.*

*The Storyteller deems the reward for this Memoriam to be knowledge of the whereabouts of a golden thorn, purported to be from Christ's Crown of Thorns. The Jesuit priest had brought this relic to demonstrate the holiness of their order; however, historical records show it was lost on this journey.*

*As play continues, the Storyteller decides that if the Bishop wins this theological debate, the visiting Jesuit will forfeit the relic. If Lisbet and the supporting players' characters are able to assist the Bishop to gain this victory in a One-Roll Conflict, then Lisbet will gain the knowledge of the relic's whereabouts in the present. If Lisbet and the supporting characters fail, there's no harm done, and we understand a little more about Lisbet.*

## Building the City

Vampires are nothing without mortal settlements and dwellings to shelter and feed them—apartment blocks and skyscrapers teeming with the hot, delicious rush of kine. They lurk in cities because it's where their food source can be found, yet, ironically, those cities can be said to feed upon the Kindred in turn, consuming and subsuming their individual unives into their own stories of change, growth, and decay. Kindred have personal histories,

yes, but their stories are caught up in the larger stories of immigrations and provinces, interstates and political lines. When an ancilla recalls the past, what else about the past is revealed alongside that journey into memory?

A humble backwater today might once have been a boomtown of opportunity coveted by quarrelsome coteries, yet little remains of their ambitions and passions, every trace of their existence and *vitae* soaked into the hungry earth. A gleaming metropolis

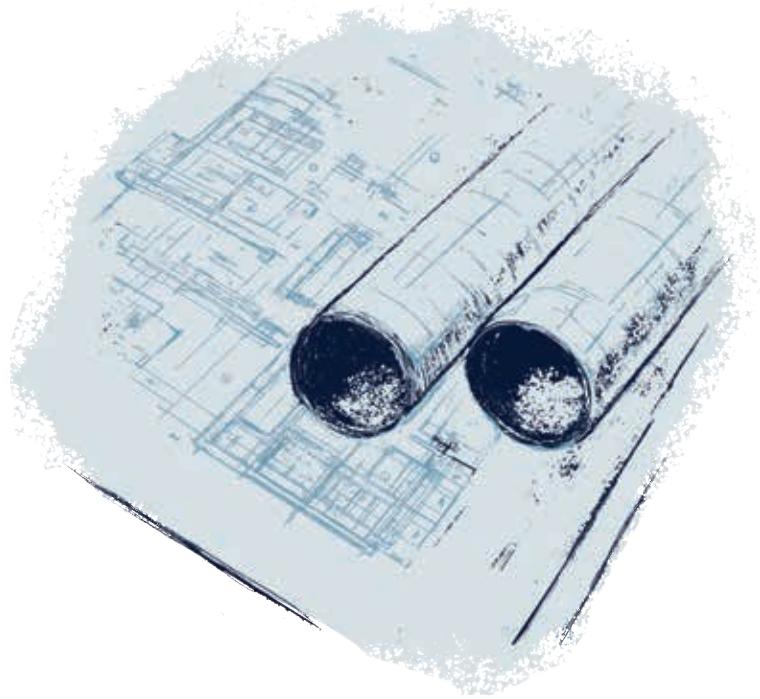


might be built upon the burial-mounds of Indigenous peoples murdered by settling colonists, undead or alive. History does not only hold the weight of personal secrets, no matter how powerful these individual persons might be, but also stands testament to the secrets of entire societies, washed away like sand upon the shore.

Just as Kindred might bury their own secrets to ease their nightly existences, so too do the cities of your chronicle swallow terrible truths of the past,

the bloody revelations waiting in the suburbs and streets of the midnight sprawl. The places Kindred battle over are not immune to the scouring of time, and with story-driven Memoriam, Storytellers can reveal their secrets and tragedies alongside the personal stories of sects and courts. Such scenes can be inspired by the sprawl of a city's streets and the huddles of its thickening shadows, from things as simple as the shapes of cobblestones or the heights of its skylines. Furthermore, they help deepen the





sense that a long time has passed around the Kindred players' characters.

Any Memoriam that results from surroundings and subcultures that are well-known to the player's character should benefit from a dice bonus for the duration of the scene. Similarly, characters may incur a dice penalty if their surroundings have changed in such a way as to cause confusion and upset.

#### **EXAMPLE:**

*Chan, a fist-fighting Brujah famed among Singapore's Anarchs, spends his free nights enjoying the night air of the wharves along the Singapore River, much like he did during his mortal days as a lighterman navigating for trading vessels. Even though that business, and in fact, the entire industry and the political economy around it, no longer exists, and the whole area's become a tourist trap, Chan still finds the sounds and smells of the river comforting. He enjoys the sounds of partying coming from the bars and restaurants as he hunts.*

*When a rude sunburnt tourist from who-knows-where is harassing some girl with his unwanted attentions, Chan cannot help but grimace... He sinks briefly into an unbidden Memoriam, recalling his mortal days during the colonial era, when his British employers would harangue him, slap him, hurl*

*insults comparing his intelligence to that of a dog or a monkey, and his smile tightens when he remembers how he'd stand for hours in the sweltering heat, enduring the abuse for a few cents of pay, a few grains of rice.*

*If Chan wishes to play out the Memoriam, he could ask the Storyteller to lead him deeper into the memory, and he'd gain a bonus for being in familiar surroundings. But he cuts it short. After all, he is a busy vampire. There's a whole Camarilla Court waiting to have their faces beaten into pulp, and all Chan needs from the past right now is a brief reminder of how his foreign masters used to give him shit.*

## **Twisting the Knife: Memoriam for Loss**

Story-driven Memoriam scenes can be used to win benefits, but also to portray the possibilities of loss, degeneration, and despair. In the standard Memoriam, the player's character has a chance to gain something. But you can also flip the script—instead the challenges within must be defended against or averted to protect or preserve what one has. Using Memoriam for this type of goal can be a way to explore the revelation of buried memories and the resulting trauma—for a more tragic and difficult game.

**EXAMPLE:**

Alexander's troupe likes their game to sting them where it hurts. The players' coterie have just been through a difficult mission to save one of their mortal descendants, the grandchild of the Brujah Mary. It was close, and they almost didn't make it. Alexander knows that Mary's player will appreciate being pushed a little further, and he knows Mary killed her firstborn mortal child—so he lets the reunion scene lead Mary into a flashback to that memory. Now Mary has to succeed against the challenge of the Memoriam or risk frenzying in the present and killing her grandchild.

**Bestial Memoriam**

The Beast is ever present, even in a Kindred's memories of mortal life. Hunger subtly shapes what vampires focus on when they enter Memoriam, as well as how those they meet in the Memoriam interact with and perceive them. A vampire in the grip of their Hunger might have their memories twisted to suit the mindset of an undead Beast. In cases where a Frenzy-threatened player's character enters a Memoriam, or when a player rolls a messy critical or bestial failure, you may initiate a *Bestial Memoriam*.

In the Bestial Memoriam, the events of the past are twisted into their darkest version. Memories are experienced as especially tense and violent; they become full of regret and other heavy emotions, and paranoia rules in situations where the player's character can fear they might have revealed their vampiric or, if mortal, inherent evil nature to someone around them.

To streamline the effects of such a Bestial Memoriam, the Storyteller can award the player's character with temporary two-dot Flaws that last for the rest of the story. A messy critical or bestial failure can result in either the two-dot Flaw of Infamy or Despised (see Backgrounds in *Vampire*), as a result of the vampire having revealed themselves to be a monster amongst company they shouldn't have or having alienated people in the past with their undead nature. At the Storyteller's discretion, if such a Bestial Memoriam took place in a time far removed from the present, where there are no likely surviving witnesses, this can be reduced instead to the one-dot Flaws of Dark Secret or Disliked, reflecting how some figures in vampiric society continue to jeer and gossip about the character's past indiscretions and lapses.

**EXAMPLE:**

The tired Gangrel renegade, Overbury, recalls a Memoriam to gain a temporary Mawla, an advisor who can provide him with the shelter he desperately needs. Alas, he rolls a bestial failure on one of the challenges within the Memoriam; instead of getting a Mawla's help, he instead gains the Despised Flaw, as a result of his past humiliation of a Ventre neonate for their carelessness and cowardice. Ventre have long memories and even longer reach of their influence, and Overbury's reputation suffers in the present as a result.

After exiting a Beastly Memoriam with a gained Flaw, ask the player what it cost them to preserve their Humanity during this time of terror.

**EXAMPLE:**

Zahra succeeds on all her Challenges, and rolls a messy critical in the process! The group tries to figure out together what bestial mess Zahra could have gotten into just to preserve her Humanity... Who are the people she alienated with her vampiric powers in the urge to protect them, who even now fear and despise her? This is the stuff of vampiric drama, the torments of an immortal existence.

**Torpor Memoriam**

Even torpor is no foolproof defense against reminders from the past. When a vampire is in torpor, their mind may still be active; indeed, a vampire can enter Memoriam in this state. This is perhaps most helpful when a player's character is in torpor and cannot be found, rescued, or awakened; it allows the group to play together in some way, even if the player's characters are currently separated due to their physical conditions. This is most suitable to roleplay the moments before a vampire stirs from torpor, with the last fleeting visions of dream translating into reality, as the vampire segues from nightmares into waking fury or from beautiful dreams into hopeful bliss.

During torpor, the dreamlike state of Memoriam play is exaggerated and intensified—the psychological defenses of the waking world are not there to protect a Kindred from the chaos of their memories. Especially dramatic Memoriam scenes are suitable for vampires in such a vulnerable state.

A generous Storyteller can provide unusual rewards for vampires in torpor, which are usually beyond the scopes of Memoriam to provide. In this case, torpor is an excellent time to confront a vampire with their innermost failings and the stings of their conscience to hold them against the highest standards of their Convictions.

A reward the Storyteller can provide in such a Memoriam is a 3-dice bonus, which also sets three challenges for the vampire to overcome; this dice bonus can only be used on a Remorse test (see “Humanity” in *Vampire*) which takes place upon completing the Memoriam, usually as the dreamer wakes. At the Storyteller’s discretion, a critical

success might result in the creation or recovery of a new or lost Conviction, and with that a Touchstone as well. This Touchstone should be someone the player’s character already knows or will meet very soon — or even the focus of the Memoriam itself.

As usual, if any challenges are failed, the Memoriam ends without the reward being earned; more severely, due to the dangerous intensity of these emotions and memories, any failed challenges can also count as the vampire having violated a Conviction, which probably incurs Stains. In either case, the Storyteller should collaborate with the table to craft a narrative which is suitable for these results, describing how the vampire awakens from torpor with a lightened heart or with hatred and terror deep upon their lips and fangs.

#### **EXAMPLE:**

*When the Second Inquisition reached the Vienna Chantry, the ancilla Christoph received a merciful fate; he merely entered a state of torpor, buried and ignored under piles of rubble. When his old coterie mates dig him out, he appears to be little more than an insensate corpse, but within his inner world, he’s anything but unconscious.*

*The Storyteller offers Christoph’s player a Torpor Memoriam with a glimmer of when Christoph experienced the power of sorcery for the first time, the thrill and optimism before the Pyramid enchain him to an unlife of scheming for higher-ranked clan elders. Somewhere in his dreamstate, Christoph grasps a chance to re-connect with those old ambitions.*

*If Christoph’s player accepts this Memoriam, the Storyteller and the rest of the group collaborate a narrative where he has to relive memories of ill-treating his apprentices, just as he was ill-treated by his own seniors in the clan, of how he once wished for a more idealistic approach to magic and learning. If Christoph can overcome the challenges, he may make his next Remorse test with a 3-dice bonus. He critically succeeds and removes all Stains from his Humanity tracker. In addition, the Storyteller decides to reward him with the chance to gain a new Conviction if he so wishes.*



# Stealing Memories for Fledglings

Using Memoriam to access history need not be only for ancilla characters. Kindred can access the memories of past events belonging to *other* vampires through certain means. One way is by using Blood Sorcery. You'll find three Rituals below offering the possibility. Thin-Blood Alchemy can be another path. You can use the Chemically-Induced Flashback, a secret of the Ashfinders, from *Cults of the Blood Gods*, for instance, or come up with your own experimental concoction with enough toxic waste, Storyteller grace, and the rules in *Blood Sigils* (pp. 81–86).

## Blood Sorcery Rituals

### *Level 1*

#### SHARED MEMORY

Memoriam is usually a solitary experience, but the Tremere learned long ago to become observers to another's Memoriam by imbibing their vitae. Blood Bonds can be formed when engaging in this Ritual, keeping its use reasonably rare.

**Ingredients:** One Rouse Check's worth of vitae from the Kindred undergoing Memoriam for each additional participant in this Ritual, a wooden or stone chalice, and dried berries of deadly nightshade.

**Process:** The sorcerer carefully muddles the plant matter into the vitae, then each participant drinks of it.

**System:** The Memoriam works as usual, but anyone drinking one Rouse Check's worth of the mixture also enters Memoriam. Participants observe the events and can offer advice but cannot directly influence the events.

If used in conjunction with other Rituals or powers (such as Guided Memory), only one character can gain benefits other than information.

### *Level 2*

#### STOLEN MEMORY

A Kindred gets more than their Disciplines through the Embrace. Bits and pieces of their sire's memories

haunt their vitae, and if they know how, they may access them in glimpses. This Ritual allows the blood sorcerer to access their sire's memories, even without their sire's consent or presence.

**Ingredients:** Your own vitae; a black scrying mirror or, in a pinch, a bowl of water; and something belonging to your sire.

**Process:** The sorcerer smears their vitae on the mirror or lets it drop into the water. Holding the item belonging to their sire, they look into the mirror and count down from twenty, letting themselves fall into a meditative state. At the Storyteller's discretion, characters can travel further back through the Blood, accessing the memories of their grandsire or great-grandsire, with a Difficulty increase of 2 per generation past their sire.

**System:** The Memoriam works as usual, but the stolen memories fade like a dream once out of the Memoriam. The sorcerer will have to write down what they experienced within a scene or two to retain the information.

### *Level 4*

#### GUIDED MEMORY

*This Ritual originally occurred in the Players Guide.* 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. In addition to allowing the vampire to recall another's memories, 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 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's 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 pays the cost. 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. Table 4 provides additional modifiers.

### **TABLE 4: ADDITIONAL GUIDED MEMORIAM MODIFIERS:**

THE SCENE TAKES PLACE...	PENALTY
During or after your mortal life	-1 Die
Less than a century before your mortal life	-2 Dice
One or two centuries before your mortal life	-4 Dice
Three or more centuries before your mortal life	-6 Dice

## **Engaging the Whole Table**

Memoriam scenes are, by design, focused on a single player's character, which makes it important that the Storyteller doesn't let them take over completely—assuming you still want the rest of the troupe to have fun. Here is some advice on how to run them in a way that keeps the whole table engaged:

- Memoriams are where the Relationship Map can really shine, and the age of the players' characters can be a huge boon. Characters with interconnected histories can find themselves showing up in their coterie-mates' memories, allowing them to play themselves.
- When sorcery is involved, the characters—not just the players—can find themselves fully integrated into the memories and able to participate and recall the details. Entire sub-stories can be played out this way if needed.
- Make sure everyone has one or several roles to play during the Memoriam. While the bulk of play will probably be driven by the player whose character is the focus, it is important to make sure all players have something to do. You can help this along by giving each “setting” character a motivation for the scene; for instance, working against the focus character.
- It's not necessary to get big roles during such scenes; it might be a good change of pace for a player, used to emotionally intensive scenes with their usual characters, to play multiple smaller roles in support of the Memoriam! This also serves to lighten the Storyteller's load, as the evoking of these pasts becomes easier with so many diverse voices and portrayals.
- Players who are not the focus of the Memoriam can take up the role of antagonists who represent the challenges that must be overcome in order for the Memoriam to succeed; this can be a welcome or refreshing change, allowing a controlled and limited amount of adversarial play between the players' characters in this way. Of course, it might also lead to misunderstandings or resentment at the table, so it can be good to discuss it in advance.

- Try not to run too many Memoriams in sequence to prevent the pacing of your chronicle from being adversely affected. Players who are invested in the main timeline of events might find it distracting or confusing with one Memoriam after another; while each scene is significant perhaps to a particular player or two, the net effect can be disruptive. At the worst, too many Memoriam can result in a sort of Memoriam “arms-race” to gain control over the narrative decisions of the chronicle, which is something that should be resolved outside of play, not in it.

## Making Secrets Shared

In roleplaying, the best secrets are spilled. Depending on the troupe and your preferred playstyle, you may want to hold on to your secrets for a long time, or you may want them out for maximized drama and effect. Flashbacks and Memoriam can be an efficient way to get the hidden out into the open.

During Memoriam scenes, players have the opportunity to reveal things about their characters' pasts and motivations to the rest of the table. Among groups with a more secretive approach to their characters' dealings and personal histories, Memoriam scenes can be a chance to reveal or explore things in the open among the players, without the information becoming accessible to their characters.

On the other end of play preferences, Memoriam scenes can also be fruitful for more open groups willing to not only share secrets in play but also to collaborate on defining what these secrets are. For groups with such an open policy of narrative collaboration, old agendas and dirty mysteries can be created in Memoriam between the player-led Memoriam antagonists and allies and the player's character in focus. This requires a very collaborative culture at the table and a high degree of trust to ensure that the sharing, revealing, and definition of such secrets and setting information is consistent with the table's overall preferences and the tone of the chronicle. ■





Appendix I

# LORESHEETS

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# BIRTH OF THE ANARCH FREE STATES

The Second Anarch Revolt started with the toppling of the old Camarilla Prince in Los Angeles in 1944. Soon violence gripped the city, with Anarch gangs seeking out Camarilla holdouts, those loyal to the old order seeking to escape or make a glorious last stand. Havens burned, Kindred met their ends, and the Anarchs triumphed.

Due to the legendary nature of those nights of revolution, many of the Kindred who were there enjoy bragging about it. Some of those who were not there have made up invented histories for themselves, pretending that they too were part of this great event.

Now in the wake of the Third Anarch Revolt, being connected to the birth of the Anarch Free States in Los Angeles carries a certain cachet. You are an original revolutionary.



## LORE

**• Fake Revolutionary:** You've been telling people stories of your exploits in Los Angeles in the fateful first nights of the Revolt. They're not true, but who cares? You'll take the status that comes with being a revolutionary hero. You get a bonus die to all attempts to rally, cajole, and manipulate Anarchs. However, if you meet someone who genuinely was in Los Angeles at that time, you must succeed at a Manipulation + Subterfuge test (Difficulty 4) to convince them you are what you claim you are.

**• Connections:** You were not there for the Revolt, but you know someone who was. Once per story, you can contact them and ask a question related to Anarch politics or the history of the Free States and get an honest answer.

**•• Original Rebel:** You were in Los Angeles at the time of the Second Anarch Revolt. You fought to free your city from the oppression of the Camarilla. You know how to rebel and receive a bonus die to all tests involving a revolution against Camarilla hegemony.

**••• Hero of the Revolution:** Not only were you in Los Angeles, you were pivotal to the success of the Revolt and your compatriots know it. You fought in a crucial battle or stopped an important VIP from escaping. Once per story, you may call on former allies to summon an Anarch gang to your aid. There's five of them, all neonates, with 4 dots in Disciplines each (with no power higher than level three) and a General Difficulty of 4/3. They only help if the action can be presented as part of the righteous struggle against the Camarilla.

**•••• Legacy of the Revolution:** What has happened before can happen again. Once per chronicle, you can ignite a proper, domain-wide Anarch Revolt in any city you visit, subject to Storyteller approval. The Revolt has a decent chance of success but you will need to participate in decisive battles and risk your unlife to make sure.

# CHILDE OF THE REVOLUTION

The French Revolution was a time of tremendous upheaval, unleashed brutality, and political change. The elite Camarilla old guard lost a lot of control from their old aristocratic and landlord roots, while the newly formed Bohemians rallied entrepreneurial and reformist younger generations to tip the balance of power.

The infighting, rioting, and war escalation allowed the Anarchs to roam Paris unimpeded for several years and to recruit in numbers. The Camarilla elite worked towards culling these upstarts and driving them out after the Restoration.

Kindred who made it through the Revolution can tell many stories of this unique time, its careless brutality, its vibrant hope for change, its dark memories of the dead and dying, and streets running with blood.



## LORE

**• Rousing Speech:** You underwent a time of unique political change and breathed an atmosphere of contestation. When arguing in favor of going against the established order, you can add two dice to a Persuasion or Leadership test.

**•• Under the Guillotine:** You participated in frantic celebrations under the Guillotine, where people would slather themselves with blood. You have learned to keep a cool head amid complete crowd chaos. Once per story, you may reroll a failed Hunger Frenzy test.

**••• Bal des Victimes:** After the Revolution, you attended the famed Bal des Victimes, where mourners of revolutionary violence could connect and share their grief over the death of their loved ones. You might be mourning someone yourself or just used the meetings for connections. You can get +2 dice on social tests if you find a way to connect to your target through grief, or +3 if the target was another Bal des Victimes participant.

**•••• Friend of Beaumont:** You were close to Félicien Beaumont and helped him advance his political agenda and secure important positions in the heat of the Revolution. You have remained in his circle of protégés ever since. Beaumont counts as a five-dot Mawla, but once per story, he'll request something from you in return, the equivalence of one minor boon.

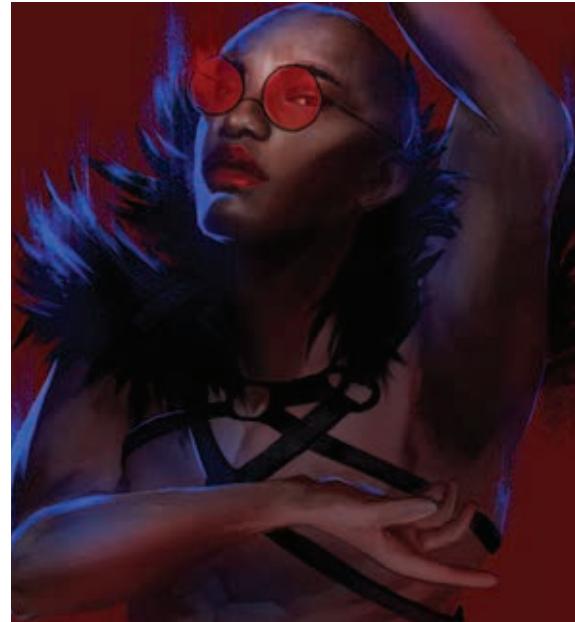
**•••• Bohemian Affinities:** Your influence with the reformist Revolutionary faction is extensive, as you provided help to their cause, or maybe you were Embraced in their group. You get five dots to distribute among Haven, Contacts, and Resources. Furthermore, and can access the Halls of Montmartre location (p. 42), using it as a hideout from time to time.

# DESCENDANT OF DRACULA

(TZIMISCE CHARACTERS ONLY)

**A**s Vlad Tepes moved Europe, he made many enemies, not least among the Kindred. But where he moved, he also took childer, and his childer took childer too. At least, that's what the rumors say. It's known that for a time, it was all the rage to be a childe of Dracula. Young Kindred, eager to set themselves apart, perhaps deserted by their actual sires, claimed the title often enough. Some hinted coquettishly at their mysterious ancestral lands, carrying a jar of dirt for the aesthetic of it, others did so with the reluctance of those who know that the honor of belonging to a bloodline many would see ended is a most uncertain one.

Tonight, only a few would openly claim the bloodline of the Impaler as their own. Some even suggest that Tepes' childer were all destroyed in the last century, perhaps by Dracula himself. Nonetheless, you are just one such descendant.



## LORE

• **Blood of the Dragon:** Your vitae carries a hint of Dracula's legendary strength. Once per story, you can amplify your physical prowess, gaining an additional die to all Physical tests for one scene.

•• **Of the Earth:** Your connection to the land is profound. Once per story, you can dig yourself down in the ground to mend all levels of Aggravated Willpower or Physical damage over 48 hours. The use of Earth Meld is optimal, though a shovel is permissible.

••• **Charisma of the Count:** Your lineage grants you an otherworldly charm. You gain a free specialty in Persuasion and receive a bonus die to all tests involving seduction or charm.

•••• **Whispers in the Blood:** Vlad has taught himself countless Disciplines. Your Blood is also full of potential and unawakened powers. Once per story, you may use any power you don't already know as long as it is on a current or lower level of a Discipline you already have levels in.

••••• **Dracula's Chosen:** Among the descendants of the Dragon, you're considered to be the main heir. You gain the grudging respect and jealousy of your bloodline. Once per story, you can call in a favor, the equivalent of up to a major boon, from your relations. Your relatives will expect you to favor them in turn, or at least prove yourself worthy of your title. Should you fail, the machinations to replace you will no doubt begin.

# THE ORDER OF REPENTANTS

The Repentants are Kindred who lost much of their humanity but regained enough to maintain control. They now devote themselves to repenting the vile actions they performed while the Beast controlled them. To join their ranks, you must convince the order of your will to pay for your sins, usually by prostrating yourself in front of a whole chapter of other Repentants.

In many ways, being one of the Repentants is similar to belonging to a monastic order as the rules are strict and many. A Repentant exists in fear for what happens if they give in to the whispers of the Beast, and some take extreme measures to stay on that narrow path of self-control. This may involve self-inflicted pain, asceticism, or extensive meditation. Some become self-absorbed in their martyrdom, finding a sort of enjoyment in the constant punishment.



*To be a Repentant, something must've happened that caused the character to drop in Humanity and to regain it again. If there isn't already something in your backstory that fits, you committed an atrocity and have since saved more lives than you took. Choose a method for how your character keeps on the right track and how they're trying to make amends. You could also include a goal that would make the character leave the Order of Repentants.*

## LORE

• **Sponsorship:** Repenting is easier with someone to support you and keep you focused on the horror's you've committed. You gain a three-dot Mawla from the Order who'll help you once per story. They may also interfere in other ways if they hear of you straying from your path.

•• **Surface Empathy:** Being part of a community that requires you to lay bare your worst regrets has taught you to look beyond the surface. Once per session, you get +2 dice in an Insight or Persuasion test.

••• **Flagellation:** Self-punishment is the key to keeping the Beast in check. You get one extra die to resist Frenzy but need to severely punish yourself for it later that night, inflicting 1 Aggravated damage. If you forget, you automatically fail your next Frenzy test.

•••• **Superior Focus:** Monastic methods of self-regulation have taught you to focus on what you want, whether it's obsessing over your own evil or moving towards a goal. You can reroll one bestial failure roll per story without sacrificing Willpower.

••••• **Benevolence:** You are devoted to saving your immortal soul, or at least acting as though you could. You can reroll one failed Remorse test per story or let another player reroll theirs.

# THE RED LADY

**T**here is a Toreador ancilla somewhere in Prague called “the Red Lady.” She’s important in the local Camarilla, but not the strictest when it comes to her alliances, since she’s famous for her parties where no one asks questions about what affiliation you belong to. It’s a perfect place to disappear into a crowd, make deals with people you shouldn’t do business with, or just give in to some base, carnal desires. What happens in her parties, stays in her parties. But break that agreement, and you’ll never be invited again, or worse.



## LORE

• **You Gotta Know Somebody:** You have a contact who can get you into one of the Red Lady’s famous parties.

•• **Person of Interest:** The Red Lady is known for her tastes in younger Kindred, even though her particular preferences vary and shift, and many opportunities arise if you embody what she currently favors. You happen to possess some quality she likes. Add one die in Charisma tests when in her presence or toward her partygoers.

••• **A Pretty Pet:** To be one of the Red Lady’s favorites comes with a long list of perks, as she happily shares her vast resources with you. You are one of her current pets. She is the equivalent of a two-dot Mawla, and you also gain a dot in Herd and one in Resources. These dots will stay as long as you have her good graces and disappear if you lose them.

•••• **A Trusted Friend:** You are one of her recruiters and a trusted enforcer of her will. Once per story, the Red Lady will attend one of your gatherings, and as a token of goodwill and your glorious mutual history, she will grant you a favor. When this occurs, also add one dot in Status (Camarilla).

•••• **Red Haze:** The Red Lady’s tastes are broad, ranging from the pedestrian to the exotic to the forbidden—the amaranth. Of course, it wouldn’t befit one of her station to display these telltale signs of a murderous appetite, so she had one of her devoted acolytes develop a method to remove these pesky marks. Once per story, the Red Lady will cleanse your Blood and aura of any evidence of diablerie.

# THE VANDERBILT VENTRUE

(VENTRUE CHARACTERS ONLY)

The Vanderbilt family was one of the most influential families in late 19th century New York, their immense wealth amassed through the business of railroads and shipping. Cornelius Vanderbilt was the richest man in America by his death in 1877, and his son William Henry Vanderbilt doubled the fortune in the following decade until his own untimely and suspicious death. The epitome of Gilded Age opulence, the Vanderbilts held almost royal status in American society. The main family themselves were mortals, but the same cannot be said for their wider circle of friends and relatives. At the height of their fortune, the Vanderbilts were all but surrounded by Ventrue. You were one of the parasites on the corpse of the gilded family, making alliances to keep as much of it to yourself as possible.



## LORE

**• Well-connected:** You are a cousin or descendant of the Vanderbilt Ventrue. Once per story, you can call upon a distant relative for a minor favor. This could be access to a social event, a small financial loan, or a recommendation from someone influential.

**• Financial Problem-solving:** Gain an additional dot in Resources. Additionally, you can spend a level of Willpower to gain a temporary Retainer (such as a private investigator, legal counsel, or a mortal bodyguard) for the duration of the story.

**•• Someone of Worth:** You were one of the Four Hundred, the crème de la crème of fashionable New York society. You gain an extra die in Social tests when interacting with high society figures, both mortal and Kindred. Additionally, you have a knack for reading social situations, allowing you an extra die to tests to gauge someone's intentions no matter their status.

**••• In the Know:** You became privy to some of the most closely guarded secrets in the Vanderbilt inner circle. Once per story, you can blackmail a suitable ancilla or elder Storyteller character—even antagonists. You can make the attempt on an additional victim but a test of Manipulation + Intimidation or Persuasion at Difficulty 5 is needed. The consequence of failure is never mild.

**•••• Ancient Pact:** You have knowledge of the occult ritual William Henry Vanderbilt and Alva Vanderbilt performed to double the family fortune. You can perform it, too. The ritual requires the sacrifice of a mortal of great promise—someone at the cusp of fame or with extraordinary talent, manifested as a rare Dyscrasia. If performed, the Ancient Pact Ritual gives extraordinary luck in financial matters. You gain +2 successes on any test connected to finances, financial crime, or the investigation of such. However, it comes with a curse. You get -1 die to all tests that would incur final death if failed. The pact lasts for a story and must then be renewed.

# Appendix II

# AUTHENTICITY

# IN HISTORICAL

# ERAS

*In Memoriam* supports playing flashback scenes set during the personal history of your character. Portraying history authentically can raise unexpected issues at the game table. Taking the troupe's boundaries and preferences seriously is always a good idea and particularly so when playing a scene set in a historical era that may involve difficult themes and topics. As always, you should discuss these themes or topics with your troupe, whether during session zero or after the chronicle is already underway.

The core principle of playing considerately is to focus on the actual people you're playing with and ensure they have a good experience. What do these specific people in your game need to enjoy their play? The ones right in front of you, each and every one of them?

Typically, players and Storytellers need to feel safe with the troupe, they need to feel listened to, and they need to be able to trust everyone at the table. If you manage to create an environment with these things, it's much easier for everyone to enjoy themselves.

## Navigating Horror

**Vampire** is a horror roleplaying game, and just like horror cinema, *fun* isn't always the operative word which can lead to problems. The "fun" of vampire often comes from portraying a blood-sucking monster grappling with their own humanity and finding a place for themselves in a world that is filled with other monsters. Enjoyable play may see one or more of the players' characters descending to the depths of depravity or confronting their own personal devils in a world filled with evil. Playing in such a world often brings difficult topics to the fore.

What constitutes a difficult topic varies from person to person, and may even differ based on the other players at the table or bystanders who might overhear the game session. Something that's completely fine for one player might be an absolute no-go zone for another. In the same way, some players may want to explore sensitive topics that you wouldn't expect them to. When everyone is

on the same page, you can dive into some aspects of the story while avoiding others that might cause players to seek out a new gaming table. This is why discussion and listening to the needs of everyone at your table is so important.

In a horror roleplaying game, we often focus our attention on the awful, the terrifying, the disquieting, and the downright evil. Human history presents a vast tableau of horrors to choose from for the purposes of your game.

The most effective horror is often personal, and **Vampire** is the Storytelling game of personal and political horror. The personal generally refers to the struggle each vampire has with their Hunger. Are they attempting to act like a moral person despite the fact that their inner voice is constantly telling them to drink that succulent mortal dry? Or have they given in, falling ever further on the downward spiral?

The political is about the society Kindred exist in. It can be about finding or forging a place for oneself amidst the endless betrayals of the Kindred community, but it can also be about how mortals mistreat each other. Kindred are predators and often thrive in conditions where mortals suffer, bringing that suffering to the fore in the game.

## Navigating Authenticity

When considering historical authenticity, the thing to look at is how that suffering intersects with the personal experiences of the players at the table. There are specific themes that require attention: racism, bigotry, homophobia, transphobia, fascism, violence (particularly sexual violence and murder), slavery, and genocide, among others.

Going through these examples, you may ask: Aren't all of these present in the modern day as well? And the answer is obviously yes. Indeed, historical horrors we have not escaped are often the ones requiring the most consideration at the table. For some, historical ills that have receded into the past are often easier to deal with in a game since they feel less personal to the players.

A common idea when playing scenes set in historical periods is that everything needs to be

authentic. This is often to increase the perceived verisimilitude of the story but can also be out of a sense of honoring the people of the past and their struggles, to show off the players' knowledge of history, or simply because that's the way it was and we shouldn't avoid confronting the horrors of the past. Many players, however, are just in it for a good story and it only needs to be as "authentic" as the latest Hollywood blockbuster or Netflix series. Few troupes have the knowledge to achieve 100% accuracy, and even fewer would probably genuinely want to, even if it was possible.

If you're adding *In Memoriam* to a new or existing chronicle, or even just dealing with Memoriam as a system, many topics have probably already been discussed. Many sensitive topics don't need further discussion, such as avoiding egregious gore related to teeth or eyes or descriptions of vermin if someone at the table has said that they should be off-limits. Many social topics, however, may feel like they need to be included to be historically accurate or not including them may be too limiting. Consider an explicit discussion of the following topics with your troupe:

- **Language and Slurs:** People don't talk the same way they did 100 years ago, or even just a decade or three ago. What sort of outdated language or slurs (if any) are acceptable to use as part of the game (and by whom)?
- **Racial, Ethnic, or Gender Discrimination:** To what extent does explicit or implicit discrimination affect characters or feature in the story (whether the focus of a story or in the background)?
- **Sexual Mores:** Attitudes towards sexual activity vary widely in contemporary society and historical time periods were no different. These attitudes may encompass a viewpoint towards violence we may find callous or cavalier today. Is there any need to include or exclude sexual activity in historical time periods differently than in the modern day?
- **Attitudes Towards Human and Animal Life:** It's not uncommon to play a character in a roleplaying game whose attitude towards the sanctity of human life is different from our own. This difference may be highlighted when

playing in a world that resembles ours. Often tied to race-, gender-, or age-based discrimination, the portrayal of violence, including things like hate crimes and executions as a form of criminal punishment, may need to be discussed.

- **Slavery and Genocide:** These are historical crimes that weigh heavily, and if it seems they might come up as part of the setting of your game, they should be discussed.

When in doubt, you're probably not doing the world a disservice by leaving a historical detail off camera. This is particularly true if you're playing in a public setting or if the players in your troupe are not particularly interested in exploring historical injustices in a serious manner.

## Navigating the Troupe

The composition of your troupe, your players, and their needs and wishes matters a lot when determining how to play in a historical era. Players are different, and sometimes people may have preferences that are the opposite of each other. This is why it's important to discuss these issues (either during session zero or in an ongoing conversation) and find a way that works for everyone at the table.

This is particularly important when it comes to players from groups that have been historically discriminated against. The questions are: how much is that discrimination going to be present in the game, and what form might it take?

In this, it's especially important to listen to those players (and this includes the Storyteller) who are impacted by this type of discrimination in real life. You may find that people have different answers:

- It's quite common that, although **Vampire** is a horror game, and discrimination is indeed horrible, players who already face it in daily life don't want to experience it in the game in a fictional context. Thus, a gay player doesn't want to encounter homophobia in a **Vampire** game or a woman doesn't want to participate or observe stories that involve gender-based discrimination.

- Exactly because the matter is personal to them, someone specifically wants to explore the discrimination they experience in real life in the context of the game, perhaps from a new angle. Is it different to deal with hate when you are a vampire, with all the capabilities for bloody revenge that entails?
- It could be possible that the same player is eager to include such discrimination in play but only with certain restrictions, such as slurs are not used at all, slurs are only used by players of a community reclaiming them, or the troupe only consists of members of the community dealing with said discrimination.
- After agreeing that some portrayals seemed historically accurate or authentic and would honor the people portrayed, one member of the troupe changes their mind after play has begun. Sometimes what is abstract in a discussion before play begins hits differently than expected during play.

People don't have to be consistent with their preferences either. Someone might want to explore discrimination in one game and absolutely avoid it in another. For example, a woman playing in an all-woman troupe might be comfortable exploring the historical oppression of women while that same woman might be uncomfortable doing so in a troupe where she's the only woman player.

Because of this, it's difficult to offer cookie-cutter solutions about how to deal with difficult topics in your game. Rather than following a one-size-fits-all solution, discussion and listening to each other is paramount.

Experience suggests that who you play with matters a lot. Typically, when players feel that they can trust their troupe, it's possible to explore more difficult themes. This is why when running a game in a convention setting or in a similar venue where players don't know each other, it's probably a good idea to err on the side of caution and focus on horror themes that don't play into real life problems such as racial discrimination. Remember, you can also always use the tools introduced in the section Advice for Considerate Play in **Vampire**.

# Examples

Here are a few examples of how consideration can play out in the context of a historical scene:

**RACISM AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR:** You're running a flashback scene set in the Great War. The vampire characters try to stave off destruction in the battlefields of Europe while wrestling with the awful moral realities of feeding from terrified, possibly starving soldiers and civilians. Can they try to save their humanity by helping a young soldier stay alive even as they drink the lifeblood of his dying comrade?

There were a number of Black soldiers fighting the war as well, and some of the players in the troupe are Black, playing Black characters. Historically, these soldiers faced racism in addition to the terrors of trench warfare. In the game, you have to figure out how you want to play this. Highlighting the experiences of these soldiers can be extremely interesting and poignant, but you should sound out your players to hear what their thoughts are. Do they want to make it about racism, or is it more interesting to focus on the terrors of war? Or do the players feel that these are intertwined and should be explored as such?

Note that if it feels like there's no agreement among the troupe, it's a good idea to err on the side of caution.

**THEY'RE COMING FOR YOU:** Three of the Kindred history sections in this book—the Montmartre Massacre, the Bloodhunts of Prague, and the Great Unification—involve vampiric authorities sending out their minions to destroy their enemies en masse. This has parallels to a multitude of real historical events where various authoritarian leaders have sent out death squads to arrest and murder large numbers of political enemies, such as in Argentina and Chile, or targeted people for genocide simply because of who they were.

It may not be immediately obvious who are the players personally touched by such history in their real lives. When you discuss the theme, you can make a choice between focusing on these real-life parallels, playing them down by focusing on the vampiric nature of the fictional events, or simply using different historical events instead. ■



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