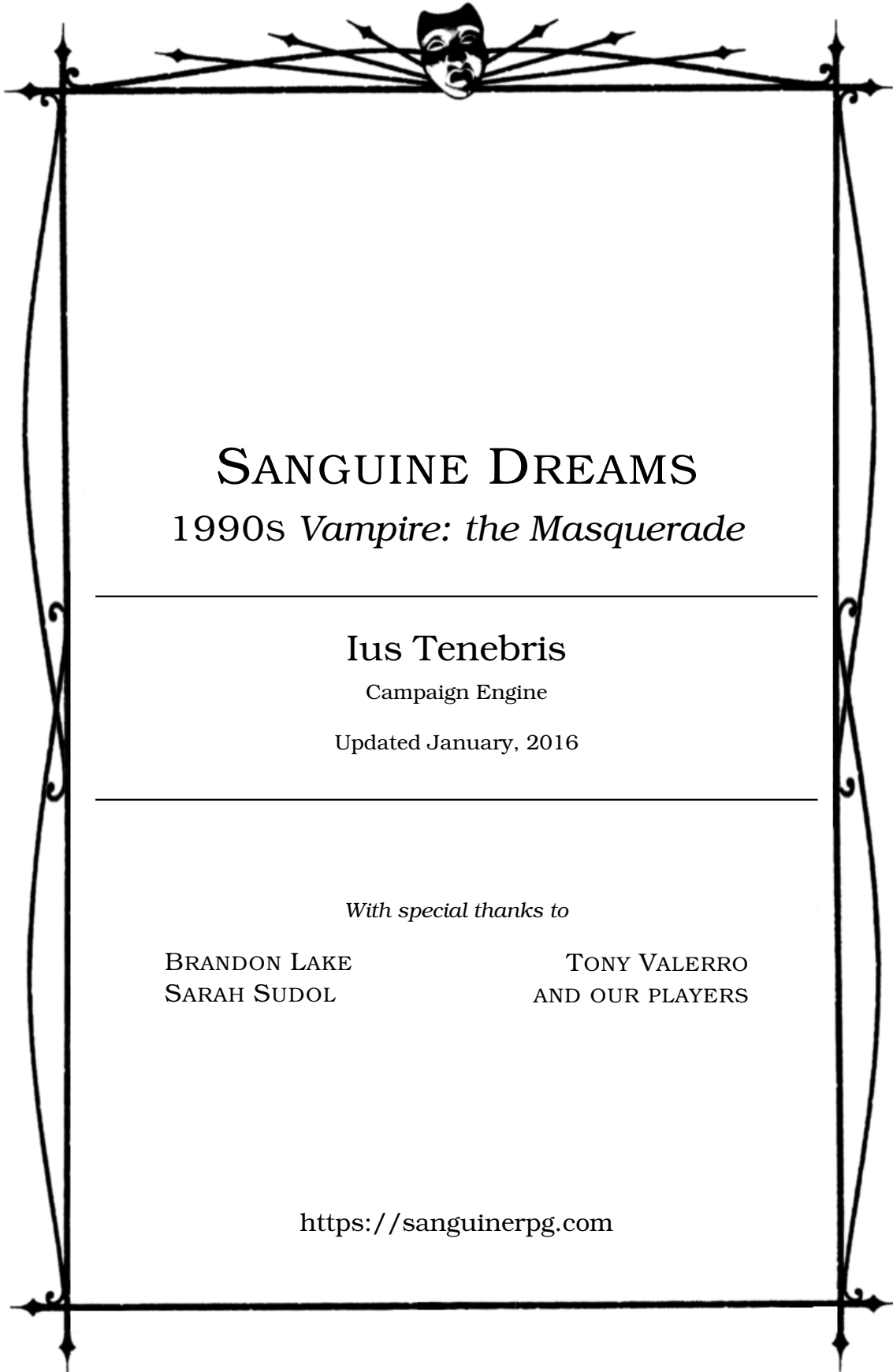


Sanguine Dreams

Sink your teeth in again ...

Vampire: the Masquerade





SANGUINE DREAMS

1990s Vampire: the Masquerade

Ius Tenebris

Campaign Engine

Updated January, 2016

With special thanks to

BRANDON LAKE
SARAH SUDOL

TONY VALERRO
AND OUR PLAYERS

<https://sanguinerpg.com>

For the players.

Never stop telling stories.

— *Poetics*

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1 Introduction

1.1 A Game of Make-Believe

Sanguine Dreams is a live-action role-playing game where we as players get to step outside of ourselves for a few hours each week and portray a character, one whose outlook and history is likely far different from our own. Taking place within White Wolf's *World of Darkness* setting, our troupe focuses on the political maneuverings and rich social interactions between characters, much like in a murder mystery or British drama.

Each of the characters presented in our weekly game are vampires, largely adhering to the societal norms presented in White Wolf's books, with matching game mechanics. In the more than fifteen years since *Vampire: the Masquerade, Revised* was released, games such as ours have identified aspects which need to be altered or adjusted to suit their particular group's play-style. Combined with the difficulty of obtaining the long out-of-print rule books, the players and Storytellers of *Sanguine Dreams* have come together to create this document, detailing our vision of *Vampire* and to make an introduction to the setting and game we love as straightforward as possible for our new and veteran players.

We in no way desire to infringe on the copyrights of *White Wolf* or its parent company *CCP North America*, and highly encourage our players to purchase their products where available; far more information can be found within the guides, rulebooks, and novels they have published than we could ever present in this collection, particularly as relates to the setting and history of the world in which our game takes place.

As the *World of Darkness* is a mature setting wherein which the themes of loss, terror, violence, seduction, and betrayal may take place, our game is only open to adults over the age of eighteen except by explicit parental permission.

While the stories that develop are largely shaped by the players, the small Storytelling staff presents the world at large and all non-player characters in the world. It is their job to help new players, adjudicate rules, provide the proper mood and setting, and encourage a healthy and productive gaming environment. As a player you should always feel free to speak your mind with them, and to write down any complaints or concerns so they can be addressed.

There are many rules and game mechanics in these pages, but the most important rules to which every player must adhere are as follows:


No Touching: Do not touch other players in ways they do not like or do not find appropriate. Similarly, if an interaction makes you feel uncomfortable, make it known so there is no confusion. Vampires are often portrayed as sensual creatures but it is essential to respect and value the personal feelings of the other players, far beyond the wants and habits yourself or the character you play.

No Stunting: Do not risk injury or damage to yourself or property by running, jumping, climbing, sliding, or otherwise taking gambles with your person. Vampires may be immortal monsters but we as players certainly are not, and need to take into consideration our limits as well as those of others, including the sites at which we play which may have their own rules and regulations regarding conduct or behavior.

No Weapons: While some characters may be armed to the teeth, there is no excuse for bringing any sort of weapon to a game site, including realistic-looking props. Empty holsters and sheathes to simulate having a weapon may be approved by the Storytellers, but please ask permission before bringing or wearing them, for everyone's comfort and safety.

No Drugs or Alcohol: Pretending to be a vampire is often difficult enough while sober, please do not attempt it while in an altered state. We play on private and public grounds where often the consumption of alcohol and drugs are prohibited, prescription or otherwise. For your safety and that of other players, those under the influence will be asked to leave the game site.

It's Only a Game: Vampires are not real. Nothing that happens to your character is real. If something befalls your character it does not reflect on you as a person; it is



merely a continuation of a story for which there are thirty or more authors, and not every chapter ends how you expect it to. There is no reason to be long upset about what happens at game, as we have built a positive and friendly out-of-character environment in which to enjoy this hobby.

Be Respectful of Others: This should go without saying. *Sanguine Dreams* is a collective of individuals who have come together to have fun and role-play. Be mindful of others' feelings and respectful of their boundaries, personal space, and attitude. Remember that everyone comes to the game for their own reasons, with their own aims, but foremost everyone is here for a good time. Work to facilitate a positive gaming environment for everyone. If a conflict arises, bring it to the attention of the Storytellers so they may mediate a resolution.

It's Everyone's Game: The Storytellers may have helped craft the world and the situations our characters find themselves in, but it is the playerbase that has made this game a thriving success for more than a decade. No one contributor is more important than any other and everyone should have equal chance to participate, enjoy, and add to this rich story.

Have Fun: We all know people who get too into games and are caught up on "winning" and "losing," as if every encounter bore the weight of the world. In collaborative storytelling, there truly aren't winners and losers—this is a group effort. Having character goals, diving into their mindset, and exploring their stories are the best ways to stave off boredom, but if you need specific suggestions, please talk to your fellow players and to the Storytellers—doubtlessly a solution will arise that is exciting while not detrimental to others' enjoyment as well. We're all here for entertainment and friendship.


1.1.1 Other Resources

In addition to the rich community of players and Storytellers we have built in the formation of *Sanguine Dreams* and its website found at <http://sanguinerpg.com>, the many books published by White Wolf are invaluable resources for delving into the themes, moods, and atmosphere of the World of Darkness. The rules in this specific volume take precedence over those appearing in others, but we highly encourage the perusal (and purchase) of the books listed below, and many others, for anyone wishing a deeper understanding of the setting, and the basis upon which we have built this rules document.

- **Laws of the Night: Revised** — the primary rulebook which inspired this tome, it is the backbone of live-action Vampire role-playing.
- **Guide to the Camarilla** (table-top) — there is no better book to understand the rich traditions and internal mechanizations of this global society.
- **Council of Primogen** (2nd edition, table-top) — the politics and underpinnings of the Primogen Council are often a mystery to new players, and this book illustrates how various Clans choose their Primogen, what makes them effective, and how they conduct business.
- Each of the revised edition **Clanbooks** — Every Clan has a single volume dedicated entirely to its history, internal structures, politics, and motivations. These are absolutely invaluable resources for anyone wishing to dive deeper into the culture and organization of their Clan.
- **The Prince's Primer** (2nd edition) — so, you want to be Prince?

All of the rules for play used by *Sanguine Dreams* are contained within this book and the additional guides we have made available for player use, save by Storyteller fiat or necessity. Other supplements we have created and which are available at game include:

- **The World Uncovered** — providing an overview of the world in general, the United States in particular, and the Bay Area in specific, this guide details the setting of our game, as seen through a vampire's eyes.

- 
- **Mortal Manipulations** — how the *Influence* and *Contacts* Backgrounds can be used to great effect, effectively a game within a game.
 - **Crimson Terrors** — the definitive guide to the Disciplines of *Thaumaturgy* and *Necromancy*, as well as the Clans that practice them.

1.1.2 The Two Golden Rules

Player Consensus:

If all players involved in a scene agree upon a resolution or effect that is not contrary to the spirit of the game's rules or setting, they may at their own discretion disregard or alter the rules to better enhance role-play for that specific scene.

The Storyteller's Prerogative:

The Storytellers may interpret, modify, alter, or disregard any and all rules for the sake of the flow of a scene, the quality of the story, or for other necessity. All such rulings or changes last for the scene in question only.

1.2 A World of Shadows

Imagine the world we know, but far darker, malicious, and selfish. Philanthropy is a foreign concept to most people, who each focus far more on their day-to-day existence and the threats others pose than the general welfare of their society. Violence is commonplace in the news, when it is reported at all, and people go missing far more often than we would be comfortable with.

The primary reason for this state of decay is that, for the past 500 years and even longer, vampires have been molding society, whether consciously or just by their very presence as they move through the shadows. These lords of the night have ruled humanity from their secretive havens, keeping their existence an almost impermeable secret while continuing to direct and shape its future.

Of the many vampire Clans, several have banded together for mutual aid and support, no matter how tenuous those alliances may be. Named "the Camarilla," this worldwide structure of vampires, calling themselves "kindred," don the façade and trappings of civility and publicly strive to be as humane and just as possible, sometimes denying their more base, brutal natures. Standing opposed to the Camarilla are its enemies: those in the religious organization called "the Sabbat," the young Anarch movement striving to define its own place, and those few Clans who have decided to stand apart from any greater political affiliation, doing business with whomever they so choose.

Sanguine Dreams is a Camarilla-based game, meaning the overwhelming majority of characters approved for play will be loyal to that Sect and to its tenets, more or less. Other vampires outside of Sonoma County and outside the Camarilla do exist, but every kindred (should) know the dangers of striking a bargain with *others*. More information regarding other Clans and the Camarilla can be found in their respective chapters.

Our game focuses on the political and interpersonal nature of vampire society, the court intrigue and social maneuvering of creatures who have spent decades perfecting their craft. While the concept of violence, that looming threat and horror of the setting, abounds in our week to week game, actual character-on-character physical combat is low. Characters designed to be purely muscle or otherwise physically dangerous may be bored or lack enough "excitement" to hold their interest—ours is a social game, like the great royal courts of old.

Specific notes on the setting, time-frame, and details about the world at large can be found on our website, which will explain in detail the current chronicle environment.



2 The CAG-SSU Club

Thanks to the hard work and diligence shown by many of our Sonoma State University student players, *Sanguine Dreams* hosts most of its games at the Rohnert Park university campus. This was a hard-won privilege and there are specific rules and guidelines that must be followed if we are to maintain our positive relationship with the college administration. The full club charter as well as membership roster can be found in a special forum at <https://sanguinerpg.com>

Under the auspice of the *Collaborative Association of Gamers and Story-tellers at Sonoma State University* (CAG-SSU) club, we are able to reserve rooms and legally hold our events at the college. That means we are bound by their constitution as well as general campus rules. As a summary, all players, whether they are students or not, must abide by the following at all times:

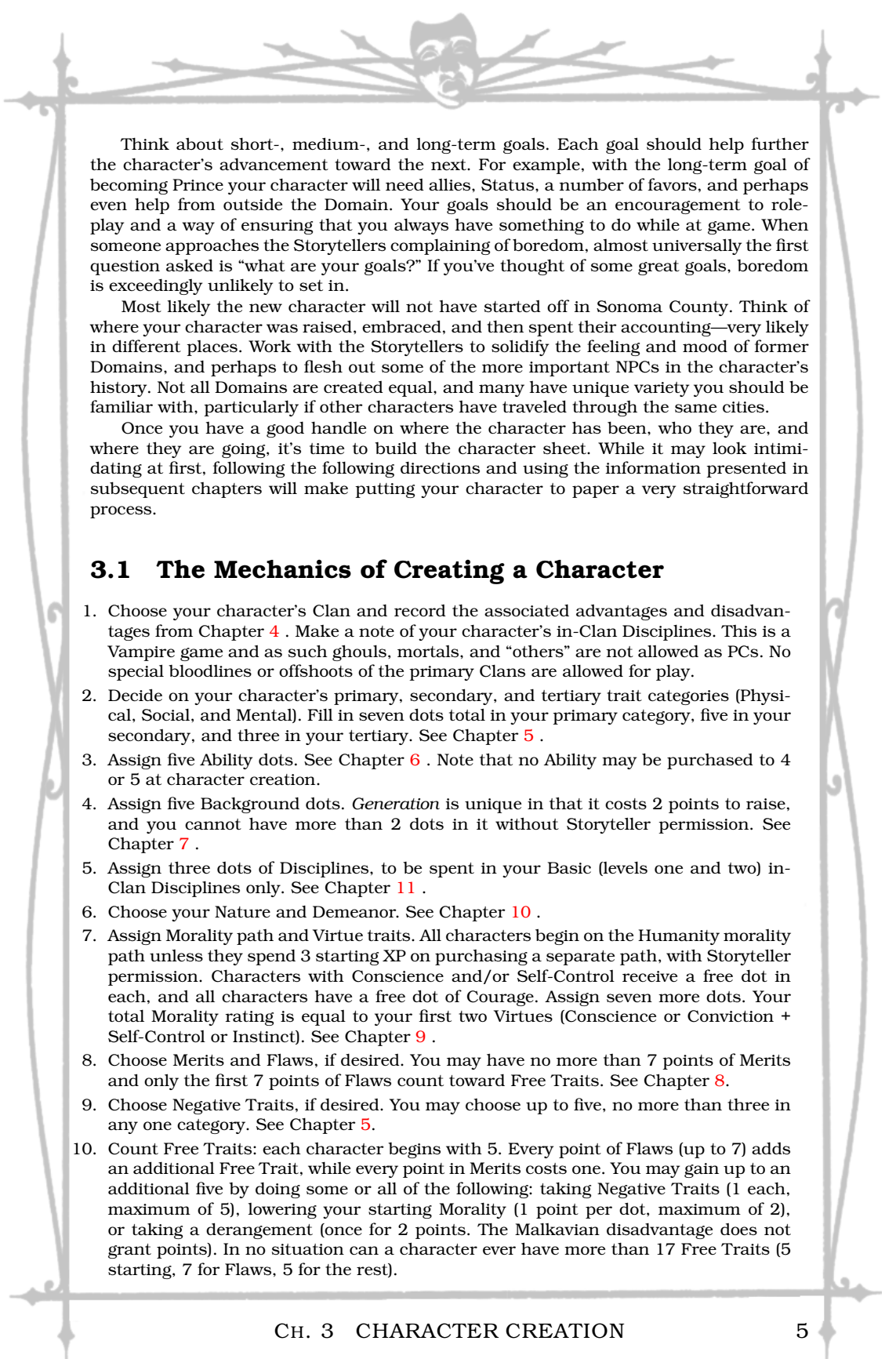
- On-campus games must be scheduled through the club, and players should not explore or enter classrooms or other campus locations not designated and reserved by the club. Barring special events this normally means the Ives Hall basement level, rooms 78 and 44.
- No smoking and absolutely no drinking or drugs while on campus. Self-explanatory, this rule is strongly enforced by both campus policy and state law.
- No weapons of any kind. We play on a public university and the merest presence or suggestion of weapons – even realistic, non-functional props can result in the most unfortunate of circumstances, the least of which being our removal from SSU.
- Clean up the game site. If there is trash discovered at our game site after we have left, even if it is not from our group, we will be held responsible for it. That means picking up cigarette butts, foodstuffs, and other trash. SSU endeavors to remain a clean campus and we must help accomplish that goal if we are to continue playing there.
- The club President is the final authority on all matters relating to using SSU as a game site. If there is confusion or questions relating to a school or club rule, they will make the final decision.
- The voting body of CAG-SSU is made up of current, full-time SSU students. Every player should make an effort to recruit more members, not just for *Sanguine Dreams* but for the club in general, which helps promote gaming of all kinds across the student body. Without active students as members and leaders of the club, we will lose the ability to play on campus.

3 Character Creation

Every player character (PC) in *Sanguine Dreams* is a vampire with a history, goals, motivations, and a character sheet. While in many games the character sheet comes first, our focus is on the collective story, and how each character can enhance and add to it.

Instead of starting out by creating a character sheet think of a living, breathing person to portray and then turn them into a vampire. Having an idea of your character's motivations and personality goes a long way to making them fun to portray, far more than having the "perfect" character sheet or being the most mechanically sound to perform one specific task. Much more important than what skills they'll have access to or what Disciplines may come naturally to them, think of the story of the character and you are sure to have a more rewarding experience.

Often great concepts can fit into multiple Clans, and so coming up with the circumstances of their embrace can be a great exercise. Answering our Character Questionnaire (available at game) will go a long way to helping you flesh out your character and background, and as an added bonus will even net you a few XP for filling it out.



Think about short-, medium-, and long-term goals. Each goal should help further the character's advancement toward the next. For example, with the long-term goal of becoming Prince your character will need allies, Status, a number of favors, and perhaps even help from outside the Domain. Your goals should be an encouragement to role-play and a way of ensuring that you always have something to do while at game. When someone approaches the Storytellers complaining of boredom, almost universally the first question asked is "what are your goals?" If you've thought of some great goals, boredom is exceedingly unlikely to set in.

Most likely the new character will not have started off in Sonoma County. Think of where your character was raised, embraced, and then spent their accounting—very likely in different places. Work with the Storytellers to solidify the feeling and mood of former Domains, and perhaps to flesh out some of the more important NPCs in the character's history. Not all Domains are created equal, and many have unique variety you should be familiar with, particularly if other characters have traveled through the same cities.

Once you have a good handle on where the character has been, who they are, and where they are going, it's time to build the character sheet. While it may look intimidating at first, following the following directions and using the information presented in subsequent chapters will make putting your character to paper a very straightforward process.

3.1 The Mechanics of Creating a Character

1. Choose your character's Clan and record the associated advantages and disadvantages from Chapter 4. Make a note of your character's in-Clan Disciplines. This is a Vampire game and as such ghouls, mortals, and "others" are not allowed as PCs. No special bloodlines or offshoots of the primary Clans are allowed for play.
2. Decide on your character's primary, secondary, and tertiary trait categories (Physical, Social, and Mental). Fill in seven dots total in your primary category, five in your secondary, and three in your tertiary. See Chapter 5.
3. Assign five Ability dots. See Chapter 6. Note that no Ability may be purchased to 4 or 5 at character creation.
4. Assign five Background dots. *Generation* is unique in that it costs 2 points to raise, and you cannot have more than 2 dots in it without Storyteller permission. See Chapter 7.
5. Assign three dots of Disciplines, to be spent in your Basic (levels one and two) in-Clan Disciplines only. See Chapter 11.
6. Choose your Nature and Demeanor. See Chapter 10.
7. Assign Morality path and Virtue traits. All characters begin on the Humanity morality path unless they spend 3 starting XP on purchasing a separate path, with Storyteller permission. Characters with Conscience and/or Self-Control receive a free dot in each, and all characters have a free dot of Courage. Assign seven more dots. Your total Morality rating is equal to your first two Virtues (Conscience or Conviction + Self-Control or Instinct). See Chapter 9.
8. Choose Merits and Flaws, if desired. You may have no more than 7 points of Merits and only the first 7 points of Flaws count toward Free Traits. See Chapter 8.
9. Choose Negative Traits, if desired. You may choose up to five, no more than three in any one category. See Chapter 5.
10. Count Free Traits: each character begins with 5. Every point of Flaws (up to 7) adds an additional Free Trait, while every point in Merits costs one. You may gain up to an additional five by doing some or all of the following: taking Negative Traits (1 each, maximum of 5), lowering your starting Morality (1 point per dot, maximum of 2), or taking a derangement (once for 2 points. The Malkavian disadvantage does not grant points). In no situation can a character ever have more than 17 Free Traits (5 starting, 7 for Flaws, 5 for the rest).

11. Spend Free Traits. These are spent the same as XP on page 95, save that you may purchase the *Generation* Background for two Traits each, and Physical, Social, and Mental traits only cost one apiece.
12. Calculate Willpower and Blood based on your Generation; see page 18.
13. Spend 20 starting XP as described in Chapter 20, including that which is required for playing an uncommon Clan or for starting on an alternate Morality path as listed below (note that either requires an extensive background to be approved):

Clan	XP Cost
Camarilla Seven	0 xp
Caitiff, Giovanni	3 xp
Follower of Set, Ravnos	6 xp
Assamite, Lasombra Anti-Tribu	9 xp
Alternate Morality Path	3 xp

3.2 Special Notes

- *Sanguine Dreams* uses descending trait caps: based on the Generation Background (see page 18), your secondary trait category maximum is two less than your primary, with your tertiary reduced by two more.
- Remaining at 13th Generation is now a Flaw worth 2 points (see Chapter 8).
- No character may begin play with level 4 or 5 Abilities, Disciplines, or Influences
- All characters require Storyteller approval before play. The existing game environment or other circumstances may make some concepts or Clans unsuitable for new characters.
- Filling out a full background and character questionnaire nets you 10 bonus XP
- No PC Venerates or Elders will be allowed for play, and the ability to become an Ancilla during game is an approval item. Only exceptionally rarely will characters be allowed to enter play as Ancilla.
- Please allow for at least one week after submitting your character for the Storytellers to review it, particularly if the character sheet includes unusual or rare elements, some examples of which follow. In the event that your character sheet or background includes any of these items, a character background (not just a brief time-line) and questionnaire is required before approval for play.

3.2.1 Sample Approval Items

While not all-inclusive, this list shows examples of items that require specific Storyteller approval before being allowed for play. If a character sheet, concept, or background includes one or more of these elements a full and complete background and questionnaire are required before the Storytellers will consider the request:

- Playing an unusual Clan or possessing a Morality path other than Humanity
- An out-of-Clan Discipline
- Interaction with truly noteworthy NPCs (Mithras, Villon, et al.)
- Merits or Flaws from other Sect books
- The ability to become Ancilla during play
- Over 150 years of unlife and/or more than 1 dot of the *Age* Background
- Unusual or high levels of the *Lore* Background
- Select Merits and Flaws such as *Enemy*, *Debt of Gratitude*, or *Status*



3.3 Character Sheets

After submission to and approval by the Storytelling staff, they will provide a printed copy of your character sheet. Until such time as your sheet has been logged by the Storytellers, we encourage you to “soft-play” your character, avoiding challenges where possible. This allows you to role-play your concept and try it out, though you should not assume any particulars of your sheet, especially strange ones, until it has been approved by the Storytellers.

Similarly, after XP expenditures are recorded (see Chapter 20) a new sheet will be issued, at which time you may start utilizing your new purchases. It is very important to keep a current copy of your character sheet on you while portraying your character, either at game or during a downtime scene, remembering that only those elements which are present on a Storyteller-printed sheet are valid for play.

During a game your character may lose or gain Traits, Blood, Willpower, or any number of other statistics. It is very important to keep an accurate count of the current status of your sheet to prevent mistakes in the use of your character’s capabilities. It is encouraged that you keep a pencil with your sheet and mark off expenditures as they occur, to ensure there is no question about the state of your character. This is particularly important in high-stress situations such as combat. The Storytellers will also endeavor to keep a current version of all character sheets available on the website, but it is every player’s responsibility to track their temporary expenditures and losses.

If at any time you believe a player is mistaken about what their character can do or what powers they possess you may ask for a Storyteller to verify their sheet and that it is being used appropriately. The scene should stop until such a verification can be made, to either correct a misinterpretation or confirm that play may continue. Our collective aim is to foster a positive and encouraging role-playing environment, one that is fair to all players.

See the section *Fair Play and Metagaming* in Chapter 19 for more information.

4 Thirteen Clans

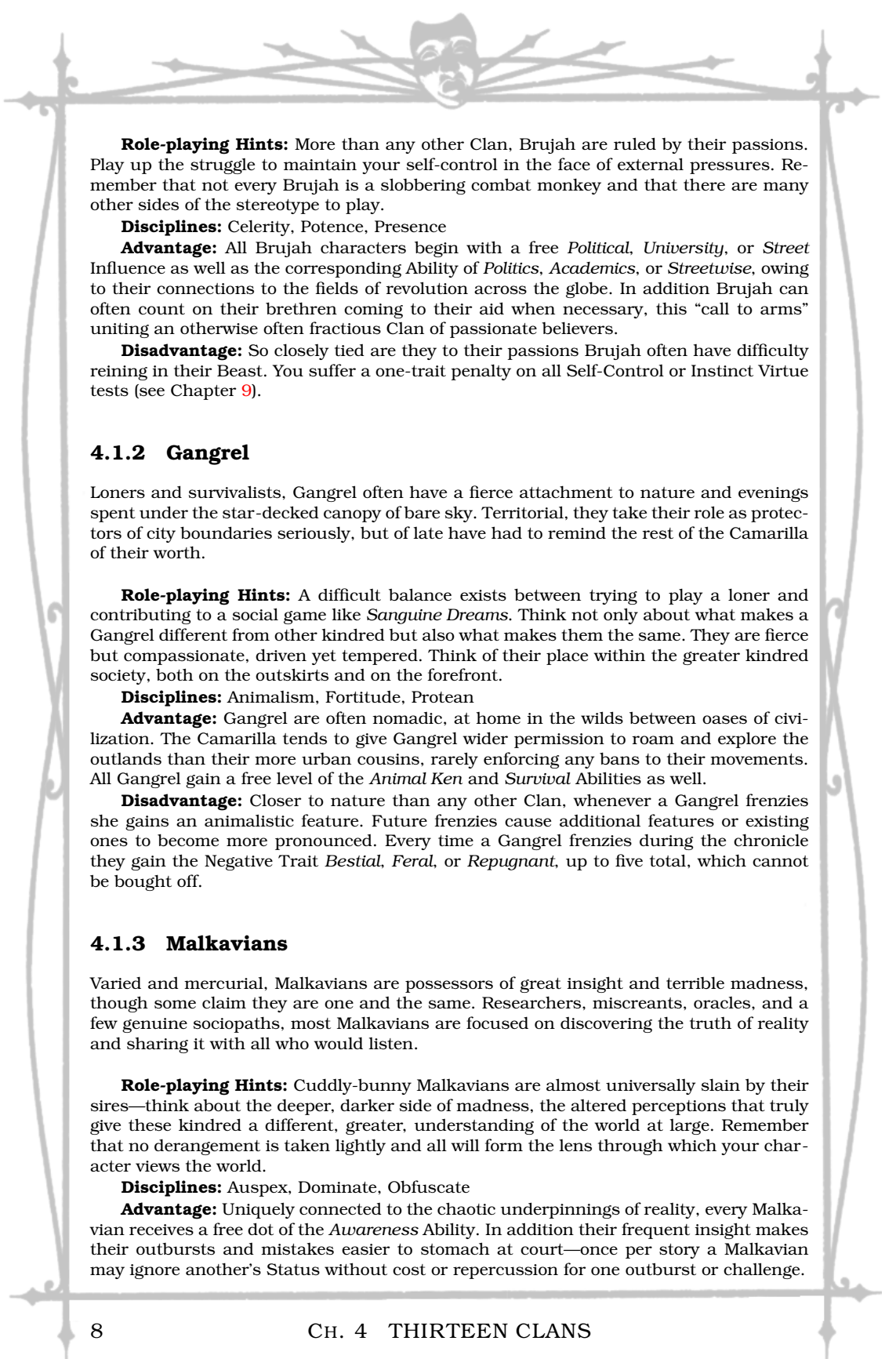
Though other bloodlines and offshoots exist, vampire culture on the whole recognizes thirteen distinct Clans, each descended from antiquity. Often defined by their Disciplines, or vampiric powers, each Clan tends to gravitate toward particular stereotypes or archetypes, though whether that is due to selection of similar-thinking kindred or something inherent in the blood is the subject of much debate among kindred scholars.

4.1 The Camarilla

Usually displaying a civil and rational countenance, the Clans making up the Camarilla have long stood together against the might of their enemies. Espousing a dedication to the ideals of humanity, reason, and propriety, the truly wise among them recognize that they are every bit as vicious and bloodthirsty as their enemies, even if expressed in differing ways.

4.1.1 Brujah

Fiery and passionate, the Brujah are a force to be reckoned with both socially and physically. While many appear to be no more than street thugs and punks, many hold onto the Clan’s more historic ideals of strategy and planning, becoming well-respected tacticians and leaders. Brujah are often found holding martial positions such as Scourge and Sheriff.



Role-playing Hints: More than any other Clan, Brujah are ruled by their passions. Play up the struggle to maintain your self-control in the face of external pressures. Remember that not every Brujah is a slobbering combat monkey and that there are many other sides of the stereotype to play.

Disciplines: Celerity, Potence, Presence

Advantage: All Brujah characters begin with a free *Political*, *University*, or *Street* Influence as well as the corresponding Ability of *Politics*, *Academics*, or *Streetwise*, owing to their connections to the fields of revolution across the globe. In addition Brujah can often count on their brethren coming to their aid when necessary, this “call to arms” uniting an otherwise often fractious Clan of passionate believers.

Disadvantage: So closely tied are they to their passions Brujah often have difficulty reining in their Beast. You suffer a one-trait penalty on all Self-Control or Instinct Virtue tests (see Chapter 9).

4.1.2 Gangrel

Loners and survivalists, Gangrel often have a fierce attachment to nature and evenings spent under the star-decked canopy of bare sky. Territorial, they take their role as protectors of city boundaries seriously, but of late have had to remind the rest of the Camarilla of their worth.

Role-playing Hints: A difficult balance exists between trying to play a loner and contributing to a social game like *Sanguine Dreams*. Think not only about what makes a Gangrel different from other kindred but also what makes them the same. They are fierce but compassionate, driven yet tempered. Think of their place within the greater kindred society, both on the outskirts and on the forefront.

Disciplines: Animalism, Fortitude, Protean

Advantage: Gangrel are often nomadic, at home in the wilds between oases of civilization. The Camarilla tends to give Gangrel wider permission to roam and explore the outlands than their more urban cousins, rarely enforcing any bans to their movements. All Gangrel gain a free level of the *Animal Ken* and *Survival* Abilities as well.

Disadvantage: Closer to nature than any other Clan, whenever a Gangrel frenzies she gains an animalistic feature. Future frenzies cause additional features or existing ones to become more pronounced. Every time a Gangrel frenzies during the chronicle they gain the Negative Trait *Bestial*, *Feral*, or *Repugnant*, up to five total, which cannot be bought off.

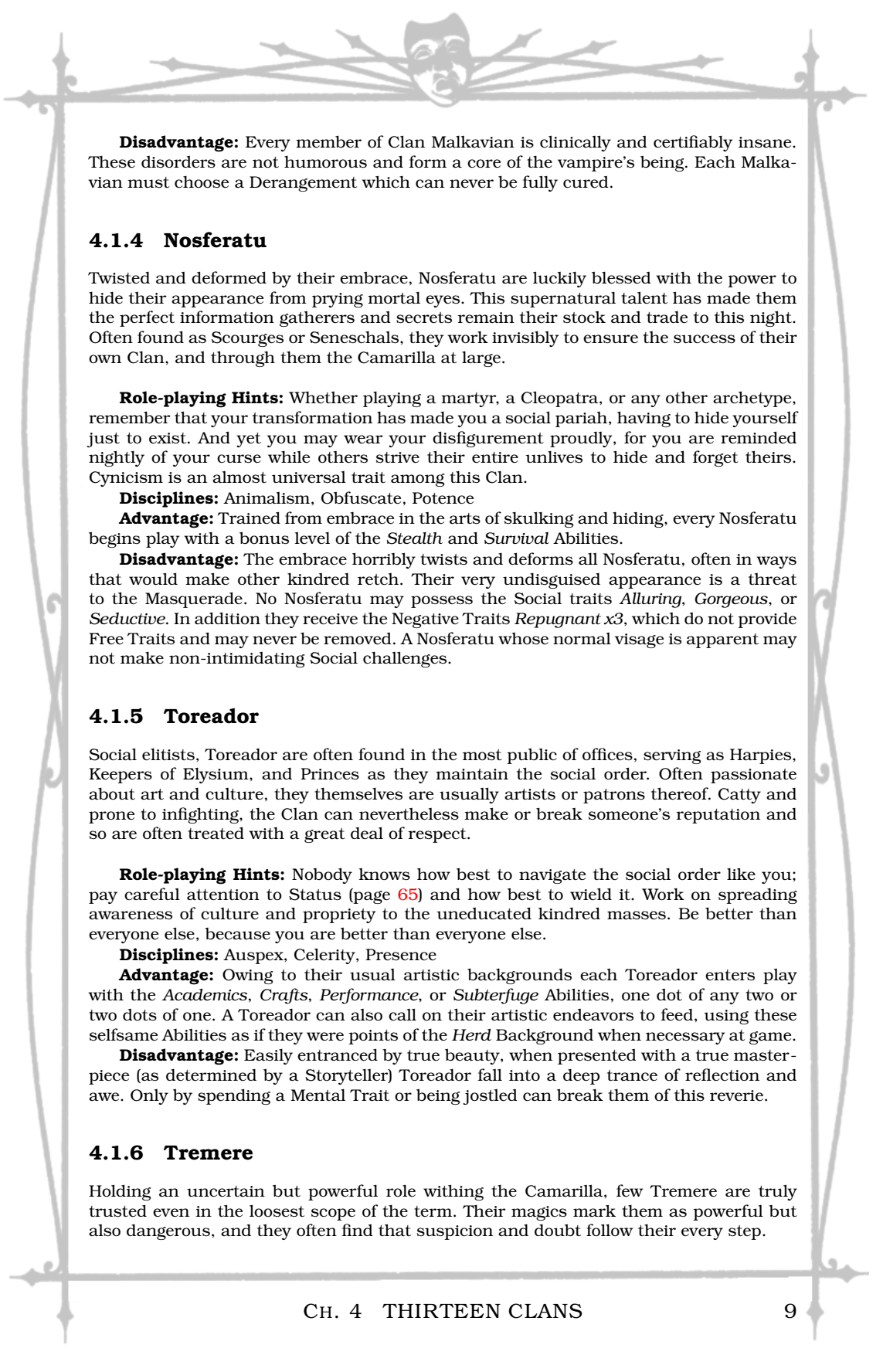
4.1.3 Malkavians

Varied and mercurial, Malkavians are possessors of great insight and terrible madness, though some claim they are one and the same. Researchers, miscreants, oracles, and a few genuine sociopaths, most Malkavians are focused on discovering the truth of reality and sharing it with all who would listen.

Role-playing Hints: Cuddly-bunny Malkavians are almost universally slain by their sires—think about the deeper, darker side of madness, the altered perceptions that truly give these kindred a different, greater, understanding of the world at large. Remember that no derangement is taken lightly and all will form the lens through which your character views the world.

Disciplines: Auspex, Dominate, Obfuscate

Advantage: Uniquely connected to the chaotic underpinnings of reality, every Malkavian receives a free dot of the *Awareness* Ability. In addition their frequent insight makes their outbursts and mistakes easier to stomach at court—once per story a Malkavian may ignore another’s Status without cost or repercussion for one outburst or challenge.



Disadvantage: Every member of Clan Malkavian is clinically and certifiably insane. These disorders are not humorous and form a core of the vampire's being. Each Malkavian must choose a Derangement which can never be fully cured.

4.1.4 Nosferatu

Twisted and deformed by their embrace, Nosferatu are luckily blessed with the power to hide their appearance from prying mortal eyes. This supernatural talent has made them the perfect information gatherers and secrets remain their stock and trade to this night. Often found as Scourges or Seneschals, they work invisibly to ensure the success of their own Clan, and through them the Camarilla at large.

Role-playing Hints: Whether playing a martyr, a Cleopatra, or any other archetype, remember that your transformation has made you a social pariah, having to hide yourself just to exist. And yet you may wear your disfigurement proudly, for you are reminded nightly of your curse while others strive their entire unlives to hide and forget theirs. Cynicism is an almost universal trait among this Clan.

Disciplines: Animalism, Obfuscate, Potence

Advantage: Trained from embrace in the arts of skulking and hiding, every Nosferatu begins play with a bonus level of the *Stealth* and *Survival* Abilities.

Disadvantage: The embrace horribly twists and deforms all Nosferatu, often in ways that would make other kindred retch. Their very undisguised appearance is a threat to the Masquerade. No Nosferatu may possess the Social traits *Alluring*, *Gorgeous*, or *Seductive*. In addition they receive the Negative Traits *Repugnant* x3, which do not provide Free Traits and may never be removed. A Nosferatu whose normal visage is apparent may not make non-intimidating Social challenges.

4.1.5 Toreador

Social elitists, Toreador are often found in the most public of offices, serving as Harpies, Keepers of Elysium, and Princes as they maintain the social order. Often passionate about art and culture, they themselves are usually artists or patrons thereof. Catty and prone to infighting, the Clan can nevertheless make or break someone's reputation and so are often treated with a great deal of respect.

Role-playing Hints: Nobody knows how best to navigate the social order like you; pay careful attention to Status (page 65) and how best to wield it. Work on spreading awareness of culture and propriety to the uneducated kindred masses. Be better than everyone else, because you are better than everyone else.


Disciplines: Auspex, Celerity, Presence

Advantage: Owing to their usual artistic backgrounds each Toreador enters play with the *Academics*, *Crafts*, *Performance*, or *Subterfuge* Abilities, one dot of any two or two dots of one. A Toreador can also call on their artistic endeavors to feed, using these selfsame Abilities as if they were points of the *Herd* Background when necessary at game.

Disadvantage: Easily entranced by true beauty, when presented with a true masterpiece (as determined by a Storyteller) Toreador fall into a deep trance of reflection and awe. Only by spending a Mental Trait or being jostled can break them of this reverie.

4.1.6 Tremere

Holding an uncertain but powerful role withing the Camarilla, few Tremere are truly trusted even in the loosest scope of the term. Their magics mark them as powerful but also dangerous, and they often find that suspicion and doubt follow their every step.



Role-playing Hints: Rule #1 is to read the Tremere Oath. Read it before every game and follow it to the letter. The Oath and internal Clan structure are what have kept the Tremere from being destroyed in the many wars since their inception. Know your place within the Clan and what is expected of you for advancement.

Additional Notes: Almost without exception Tremere PCs will enter play between Rank A3 and A5. All such characters will receive *Rite of Introduction* at no cost.

Disciplines: Auspex, Dominate, Thaumaturgy

Advantage: Being trained in the mystical arts, all Tremere begin play with one free *Occult Ability* and *Occult Influence*. In addition all requests for the aid of a Mentor will be met as if the player tied on the challenge.

Disadvantage: All Tremere are permanently one step blood bound to the Clan's highest-ranking members, and all failings are dealt with harshly. There is no room for mistakes within the pyramid.

4.1.7 Ventrue

The self-imposed and undisputed elite of kindred society, Clan Ventrue has an unshakable sense of Clan superiority. Architects of the Camarilla itself, they seek to rule the night from positions of power across the world. More so than any other Clan, Ventrue pride themselves on the specifics of their lineage, and great care is taken to prove themselves worthy of the noble blood bestowed them.

Role-playing Hints: You are the rightful voice of tradition in any Domain. Be vigilant against threats to the social order but know that your place is at the top, where you can lead with strength and determination, and by example. Think of how anachronistic your character may be, owing to the long accounting and tutelage required for all Ventrue. When reading the Clanbook pay particular attention to the organization of the Board of Directors.

Disciplines: Dominate, Fortitude, Presence

Advantage: Due to their keen financial sense all Ventrue possess an extra trait of the *Resources* Background that can never be lost. Additionally they possess one level of *Finance*, *High-Society*, or *Political Influence*. Because Clan Ventrue puts such a high premium on the lineage from which they descend, it is almost impossible to infiltrate the Clan.

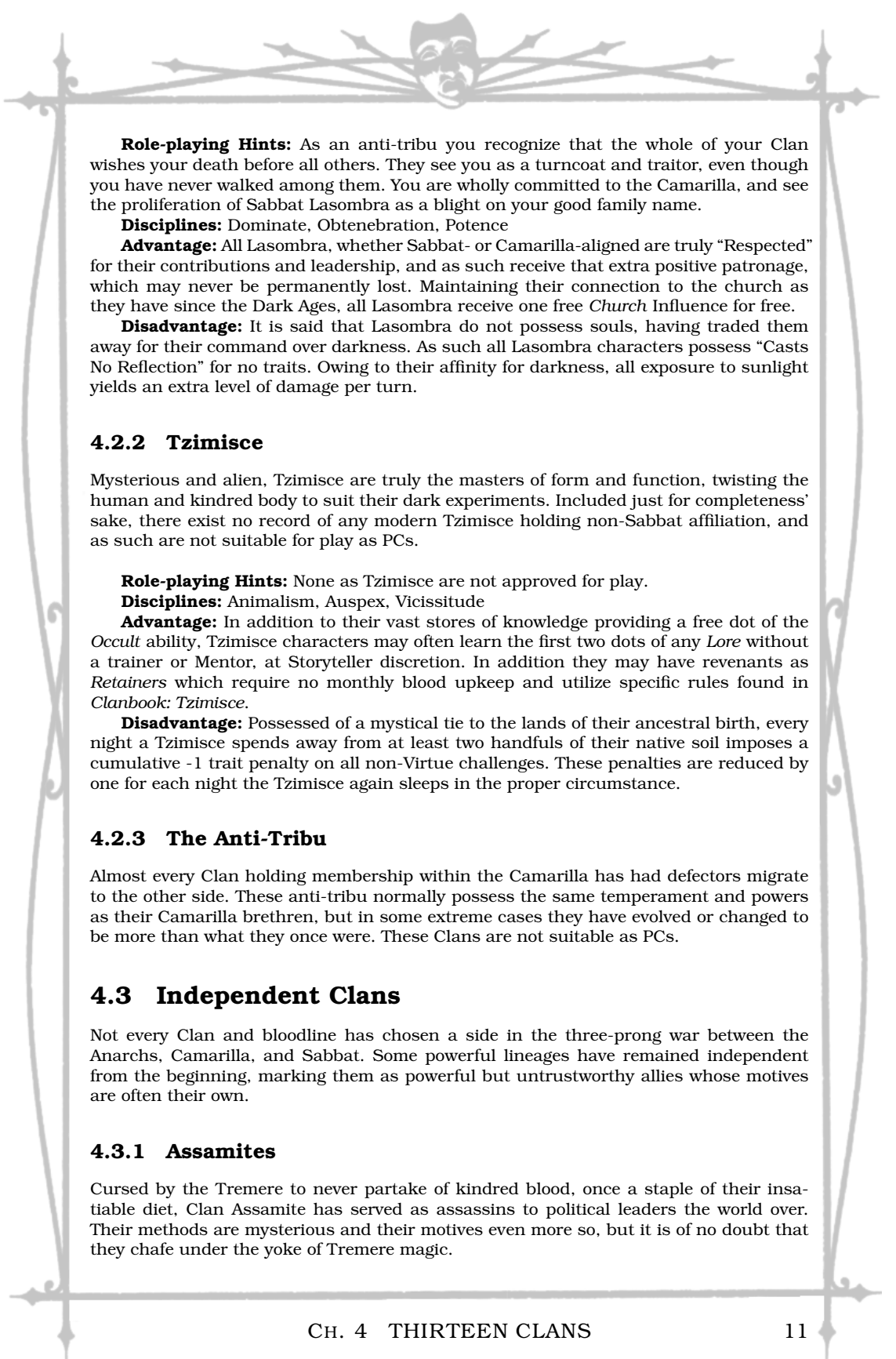
Disadvantage: All Ventrue have selective tastes, unable to gain sustenance from any prey not meeting their exacting standards. They possess the "Selective Digestion" Flaw for no traits, though it only penalizes them one point for the purpose of starting blood pool.

4.2 The Sabbat

A frightening and zealous religious order, the Sabbat is a mystery to most Camarilla kindred. Known for their campaigns of violence and destruction across all corners of the Earth, they seem to have little regard for the polite and social trappings of the Camarilla, particularly the rules regarding progeny and destruction. They have declared an unending war against the Camarilla and its elders, and are a constant external threat for Domains across the globe.

4.2.1 Lasombra

Unquestioned rulers of the Sabbat, the Lasombra have guided the ever-growing Sect since its inception. While it is almost unheard of for a Lasombra to be allied with another Sect, exceptions do happen, descending from potent bloodlines that have always been loyal to the Camarilla.



Role-playing Hints: As an anti-tribu you recognize that the whole of your Clan wishes your death before all others. They see you as a turncoat and traitor, even though you have never walked among them. You are wholly committed to the Camarilla, and see the proliferation of Sabbat Lasombra as a blight on your good family name.

Disciplines: Dominate, Obtenebration, Potence

Advantage: All Lasombra, whether Sabbat- or Camarilla-aligned are truly “Respected” for their contributions and leadership, and as such receive that extra positive patronage, which may never be permanently lost. Maintaining their connection to the church as they have since the Dark Ages, all Lasombra receive one free *Church Influence* for free.

Disadvantage: It is said that Lasombra do not possess souls, having traded them away for their command over darkness. As such all Lasombra characters possess “Casts No Reflection” for no traits. Owing to their affinity for darkness, all exposure to sunlight yields an extra level of damage per turn.

4.2.2 Tzimisce

Mysterious and alien, Tzimisce are truly the masters of form and function, twisting the human and kindred body to suit their dark experiments. Included just for completeness’ sake, there exist no record of any modern Tzimisce holding non-Sabbat affiliation, and as such are not suitable for play as PCs.

Role-playing Hints: None as Tzimisce are not approved for play.

Disciplines: Animalism, Auspex, Vicissitude

Advantage: In addition to their vast stores of knowledge providing a free dot of the *Occult* ability, Tzimisce characters may often learn the first two dots of any *Lore* without a trainer or Mentor, at Storyteller discretion. In addition they may have retainers as *Retainers* which require no monthly blood upkeep and utilize specific rules found in *Clanbook: Tzimisce*.

Disadvantage: Possessed of a mystical tie to the lands of their ancestral birth, every night a Tzimisce spends away from at least two handfuls of their native soil imposes a cumulative -1 trait penalty on all non-Virtue challenges. These penalties are reduced by one for each night the Tzimisce again sleeps in the proper circumstance.

4.2.3 The Anti-Tribu


Almost every Clan holding membership within the Camarilla has had defectors migrate to the other side. These anti-tribu normally possess the same temperament and powers as their Camarilla brethren, but in some extreme cases they have evolved or changed to be more than what they once were. These Clans are not suitable as PCs.

4.3 Independent Clans

Not every Clan and bloodline has chosen a side in the three-prong war between the Anarchs, Camarilla, and Sabbat. Some powerful lineages have remained independent from the beginning, marking them as powerful but untrustworthy allies whose motives are often their own.

4.3.1 Assamites

Cursed by the Tremere to never partake of kindred blood, once a staple of their insatiable diet, Clan Assamite has served as assassins to political leaders the world over. Their methods are mysterious and their motives even more so, but it is of no doubt that they chafe under the yoke of Tremere magic.



Role-playing Hints: As the appointed judge of all Cainites, yours is to know your targets and study them to make the moment of their death perfect. Take contracts only from Princes, and always, always receive payment in *vitae*. The Assamite stronghold must be stockpiled, and your tithes help the wisest among you come closer to breaking the vile Curse that has been so unjustly put upon you.

Disciplines: Celerity, Obfuscate, Quietus

Advantage: Trained often from birth to be killers, all Assamites receive one *Brawl* and one *Melee* Ability at character creation.

Disadvantage: Cursed to never imbibe kindred blood or commit diablerie, each point of kindred vitae you ingest inflicts one unsoakable Aggravated wound. Diablerie is all but impossible.

4.3.2 Caitiff

Those degenerates are too weak of either generation or vitae to express any traits normally associated with a specific Clan, forcing them to scratch out a living within or just outside the Camarilla hoping to gain some measure of protection from the evening's many other predators. With no Clan to protect them, and no organization on their own, they are all alone in a world that is not kind to fledgling vampires with little guidance. The Elders fear and hate these thin-bloods, though they are often tight-lipped about why exactly.

Role-playing Hints: Whether you choose to reveal yourself or not, you are at the absolute bottom of the pecking order, of every pecking order. Your blood is weak and you have a difficult time mastering Disciplines, so make many deals to ensure your survival. Be very afraid, and suck the marrow out of your potentially short life.

Disciplines: Special, see below.

Advantage: A Caitiff may learn any or all of the common eight Disciplines (Animalism, Auspex, Celerity, Dominate, Fortitude, Obfuscate, Potence, and Presence) without a teacher and for out-of-Clan cost. They may never teach anyone a Discipline they have learned.

Disadvantage: Being outcasts and disgraced, all Caitiff suffer the negative social stigma of being "*Caitiff*" which goes over and beyond the normal limit for Negative Status, and which can never be removed. In addition they may never learn the Advanced level of any Discipline without an appropriate teacher. Caitiff characters are unlikely to begin play lower than 12th Generation.


4.3.3 Followers of Set

Viewed by many as corrupters and predators of the weak and unsteady, the Settites are unquestionably adept at fulfilling requests most other Clans couldn't bear to suggest. They remain carefully neutral, even compared to other Independent Clans, and have managed to survive their many enemies' attempts to crush them by proving themselves invaluable, time and time again.

Role-playing Hints: Neither the Paths of Ecstasy nor Typhon are easy to role-play but when done well they can be incredibly fulfilling. Remember that your number one goal, above everything else, is to see your god risen from the grave as you yourself have been. None outside the Clan will serve him willingly, but they are weak and filled with frivolous desires. Fulfill them, and gain more followers for his eventual return.

Disciplines: Obfuscate, Presence, Serpents

Advantage: Focused on the weak and underhanded aspects of society, all Settites begin play with the *Streetwise* Ability and one dot of *Political*, *Street*, or *Underworld* Influence.



Disadvantage: Just as Set was banished into darkness so have the Settites been. Exposure to sunlight always yields one extra damage and bright lights of any kind, including spotlights, floodlamps, or flares impose a one-trait penalty on all challenges.

4.3.4 Giovanni

Both a family and a Clan, it seems every member is somehow related to one another through mortal ties. A powerful and organized force whose motives aren't well-known nor -understood by outsiders, rumors have time and again held true that they have access to resources and secrets not available to normal, Camarilla, kindred. All rules for Wraiths are found in the *Crimson Terrors* supplemental packet.

Role-playing Hints: Remember that you are an outsider but that you have the unique ability to get kindred what they need, even if they don't know what it is. Be secretive about your motives and your means, but always deliver on your promises.

Disciplines: Dominate, Necromancy, Potence

Advantage: Gain an automatic level in *Finance* or *Health Influence* and either a second dot in that Influence or a one-point wraith *Retainer*.

Disadvantage: There is no love within the Giovanni kiss. All Giovanni possess the Flaw *Grip of the Damned* for no points. In addition each Blood trait taken from a mortal inflicts a level of Lethal damage to the victim.

4.3.5 Ravnos

An international band of thieves, tricksters, and charlatans, the Ravnos are often chased from one city to another when they overstay their welcome. Members of this Clan seem incapable of controlling their predilections, resulting in more than one powerful kindred calling them a scourge on vampire-kind.

Role-playing Hints: Think beyond the stereotypical gypsy kleptomaniac—the Ravnos have a rich history and motives behind everything they do and how they act. You are a part of a noble and free heritage the likes of which no other kindred will ever understand, save perhaps your cousins in the Gangrel, even though they despise you for it.

Disciplines: Animalism, Fortitude, Obfuscate

Advantage: All Ravnos begin with one level of the *Streetwise* Ability and one dot of *Street* or *Transportation* Influence. Often their cons are so well-crafted that the victims would rather suffer than reveal they fell for the scheme, allowing the Ravnos to escape severe punishment.

Disadvantage: Each Ravnos suffers a weakness of character linked to a particular crime, be it theft, murder, short-changing, or any number of swindles. When presented with an opportunity to indulge in the chosen vice a Self-Control/Instinct test (difficulty three) must be thrown to avoid taking advantage of the opportunity.

4.4 “Others”

While there are other, less populated bloodlines and small caches of secretive kindred throughout the world, they are not allowed for play or numerous enough to make a recurring appearance in *Sanguine Dreams*. The Storytellers can tell you more if you are interested in the finer points of their effect on kindred history.



5 Traits

Also called “attributes” Traits are divided into three categories—Physical, Mental and Social—and are adjectives that serve two purposes: helping you role-play your character and providing a mechanical benefit when it comes to throwing challenges.

Each primary category is split into three sub-groups of related traits. Care should be taken when throwing a challenge to use the appropriate trait; it is unlikely that someone could be *Wiry* enough to fire a gun—such would be the province of a Dexterity-based trait instead.

Use these traits not only when building your character to shape how you want them to act, think, and appear, but also while playing the character as a reminder of how you should present yourself. Someone who is very *Patient* isn’t likely to fly off the handle often, much as someone who is *Graceful* won’t be tripping over their own feet.

If a trait is lost as the result of a challenge or other circumstance it is unavailable for claiming in future challenges that evening, unless it is refreshed through methods addressed in other sections of this guide.

The maximum number of traits in your primary category is determined by the Generation Background (see page 18), with the secondary and tertiary category caps descending by two each (e.g. a 13th generation kindred’s primary cap would be 10, secondary 8, and tertiary 6).

Only the following listed positive traits will be permitted for Camarilla kindred, and each are rated on the character sheet from zero to five.

5.1 Positive Traits

5.1.1 Physical Traits

Representing how hale and hearty your character is, physical traits measure a character’s ability to deal, avoid, and absorb damage and physical punishment where required. Of all trait categories, the greatest care must be chosen when entering into a Physical challenge to bid the correct type of trait.

Strength traits are used when relying on raw physical prowess, usually to deal damage to an opponent. Challenges with strength are most often retested with the *Melee* or *Brawl* Abilities, and can be enhanced through use of the Potence Discipline.

Dexterity traits can be used for offensive purposes but are usually used to avoid damage, such as when evading incoming attacks. The *Dodge* Ability is most often used as a retest when used in such a manner. Offensively Dexterity traits are often used when firing a gun or striking with speed instead of power.

Stamina represents the unyielding and immortal aspect of kindred nature. Used almost exclusively to withstand physical damage, challenges of stamina are retested using the *Survival* Ability. And, unlike the above, can often be used as a defense even when caught unawares or surprised.

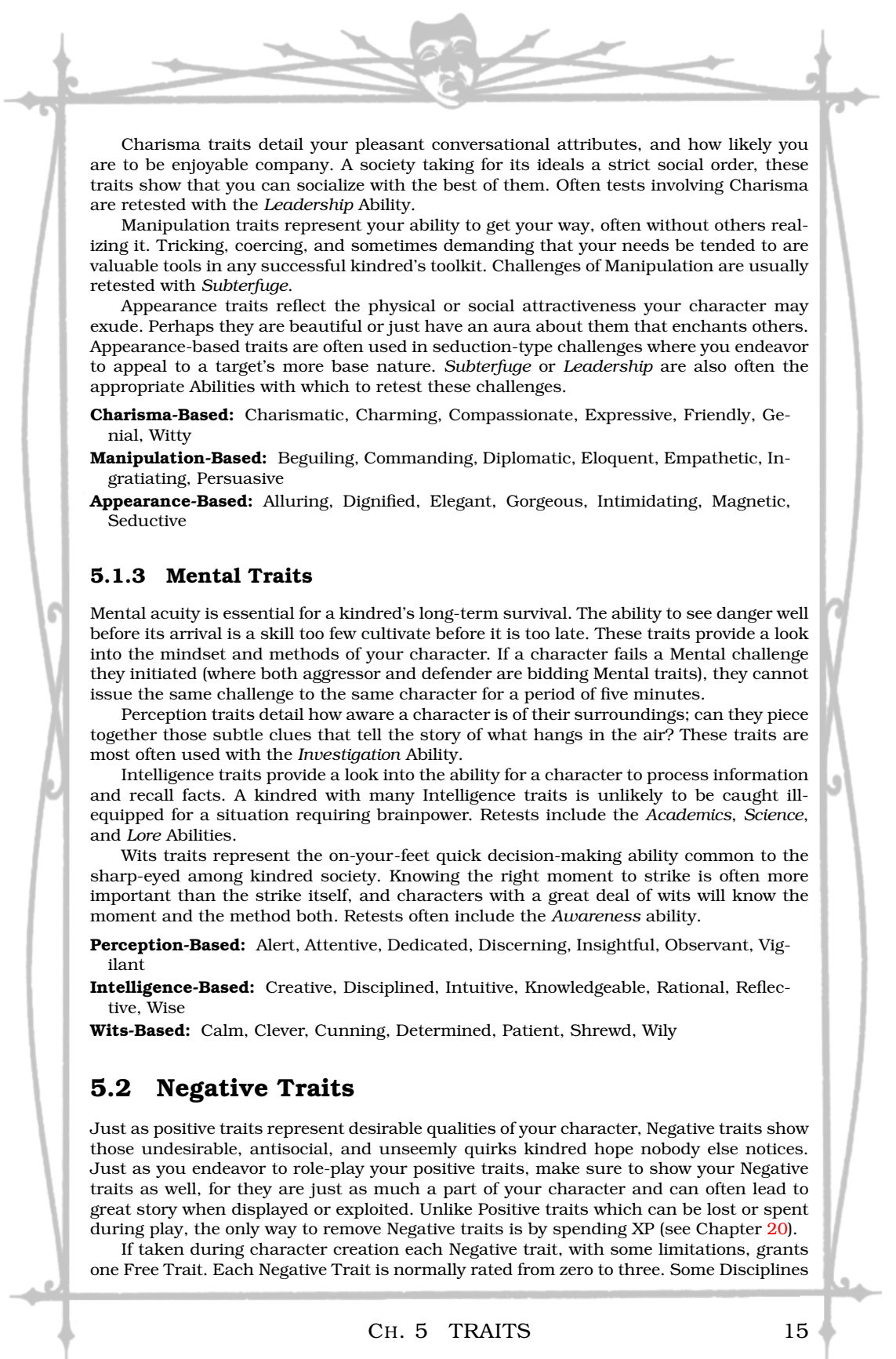
Strength-Based: Athletic, Brawny, Brutal, Ferocious, Fierce, Vigorous, Wiry

Dexterity-Based: Agile, Dexterous, Graceful, Lithe, Nimble, Quick, Steady

Stamina-Based: Enduring, Energetic, Resilient, Rugged, Stalwart, Tenacious, Tireless

5.1.2 Social Traits

The Camarilla places a high regard on those who can move through its social waters with grace and dignity, touting itself as a polite and genteel organization. Social traits represent your character’s ability to outplay others at the social games so popular in court. If a character fails a Social challenge they initiated (where both aggressor and defender are bidding Social traits), they cannot issue the same challenge to the same character for a period of five minutes.



Charisma traits detail your pleasant conversational attributes, and how likely you are to be enjoyable company. A society taking for its ideals a strict social order, these traits show that you can socialize with the best of them. Often tests involving Charisma are retested with the *Leadership* Ability.

Manipulation traits represent your ability to get your way, often without others realizing it. Tricking, coercing, and sometimes demanding that your needs be tended to are valuable tools in any successful kindred's toolkit. Challenges of Manipulation are usually retested with *Subterfuge*.

Appearance traits reflect the physical or social attractiveness your character may exude. Perhaps they are beautiful or just have an aura about them that enchants others. Appearance-based traits are often used in seduction-type challenges where you endeavor to appeal to a target's more base nature. *Subterfuge* or *Leadership* are also often the appropriate Abilities with which to retest these challenges.

Charisma-Based: Charismatic, Charming, Compassionate, Expressive, Friendly, Genial, Witty

Manipulation-Based: Beguiling, Commanding, Diplomatic, Eloquent, Empathetic, Ingratiating, Persuasive

Appearance-Based: Alluring, Dignified, Elegant, Gorgeous, Intimidating, Magnetic, Seductive

5.1.3 Mental Traits

Mental acuity is essential for a kindred's long-term survival. The ability to see danger well before its arrival is a skill too few cultivate before it is too late. These traits provide a look into the mindset and methods of your character. If a character fails a Mental challenge they initiated (where both aggressor and defender are bidding Mental traits), they cannot issue the same challenge to the same character for a period of five minutes.

Perception traits detail how aware a character is of their surroundings; can they piece together those subtle clues that tell the story of what hangs in the air? These traits are most often used with the *Investigation* Ability.

Intelligence traits provide a look into the ability for a character to process information and recall facts. A kindred with many Intelligence traits is unlikely to be caught ill-equipped for a situation requiring brainpower. Retests include the *Academics*, *Science*, and *Lore* Abilities.

Wits traits represent the on-your-feet quick decision-making ability common to the sharp-eyed among kindred society. Knowing the right moment to strike is often more important than the strike itself, and characters with a great deal of wits will know the moment and the method both. Retests often include the *Awareness* ability.

Perception-Based: Alert, Attentive, Dedicated, Discerning, Insightful, Observant, Vigilant


Intelligence-Based: Creative, Disciplined, Intuitive, Knowledgeable, Rational, Reflective, Wise

Wits-Based: Calm, Clever, Cunning, Determined, Patient, Shrewd, Wily

5.2 Negative Traits

Just as positive traits represent desirable qualities of your character, Negative traits show those undesirable, antisocial, and unseemly quirks kindred hope nobody else notices. Just as you endeavor to role-play your positive traits, make sure to show your Negative traits as well, for they are just as much a part of your character and can often lead to great story when displayed or exploited. Unlike Positive traits which can be lost or spent during play, the only way to remove Negative traits is by spending XP (see Chapter 20).

If taken during character creation each Negative trait, with some limitations, grants one Free Trait. Each Negative Trait is normally rated from zero to three. Some Disciplines



or situations may grant a character Negative Traits. Normally the same power cannot be used on a single character multiple times for greater effect, though the effects of different powers do stack. When in doubt see a Storyteller.

Special rules for Negative traits in Challenges can be found in Chapter 15.

Physical Negatives: Clumsy, Cowardly, Decrepit, Delicate, Docile, Flabby, Lamé, Lethargic, Puny, Sickly

Social Negatives: Bestial, Callous, Condescending, Dull, Feral, Naive, Obnoxious, Repugnant, Shy, Tactless, Untrustworthy

Mental Negatives: Forgetful, Gullible, Ignorant, Impatient, Oblivious, Predictable, Short-sighted, Submissive, Violent, Witless

6 Abilities

Abilities represent knowledge or skills that your character has learned through hard work, careful study, and repetition. Acting as retests for challenges and limitations on what your character can accomplish in a given situation, Abilities are some of the most-used elements on a character sheet.

Rated from zero to five, each dot represents increasing aptitude in a given area. One dot would represent enough skill that your character could arguably make a living, such as a small-time mechanic having one dot of *Repair*. Only truly gifted visionaries might ever achieve four or five dots in an Ability, let alone rate highly in several. While the mechanics for each Ability are presented below, possessing dots represents understanding and competency in the Ability as a whole, and not strictly just within the realm of challenges.

Here is the complete list for Abilities available to Camarilla kindred in *Sanguine Dreams*. Other Abilities may exist in rare and unique situations, as determined by the Storytellers. Some abilities such as *Crafts* or *Science* must be focused; *Crafts: Pottery* is a different skill from *Crafts: Blacksmithing* and so forth.

Abilities are most often used as retests in challenges (see Chapter 15) and also help determine whether or not a character can attempt a given task, based on their experience and knowledge; some challenges may not be possible for characters to attempt if they do not possess specific skills, such as picking locks or hacking computers.

Academics: Represents scholastic education and may aid in obscure general knowledge. One dot represents a Bachelor's degree while five is the equivalent of multiple PhDs, a true master of your field. Often soft sciences are represented as Specializations of this Ability.

Animal Ken: The ability to relate to or train animals and primary retest for Animalism.


Athletics: The appropriate retest for raw physical actions like running, climbing, or jumping. Also the primary retest for thrown weapons.

Awareness: You have honed your sensitivity to the supernatural energies around you. By spending an Awareness when a power fails in your presence you may gain a static Mental challenge against the power's user. Success reveals only that a power was attempted but not which power or by whom. You may retest this challenge by spending another Awareness.

Brawl: The primary retest for grappling and attacking while unarmed.

Computer: Used when dealing with advanced electronics.

Crafts: Represents the physical or mechanical perfection of a specific artistic medium. This Ability must be focused for a particular art form. The time to craft objects depends greatly on both the complexity of the item being created and the skill of the maker. See a Storyteller for more details regarding a desired project.



Dodge: The appropriate retest when avoiding danger via Dexterity-based traits when one is aware of the attack and can move; one cannot Dodge if they are caught un-awares.

Drive: Skill at advanced vehicular maneuvers.

Empathy: By spending an Empathy and winning a Social Challenge against a mortal you may determine if the last thing they said was a lie. The same test and cost may be used to determine anyone's Demeanor. This Ability also serves as the primary retest for Dementation.

Etiquette: Spending an Etiquette may help avoid social gaffes in high society situations.

Expression: This Ability represents the emotional content of a specific artistic medium, and must be focused appropriately.

Finance: By spending a level of Finance you receive a windfall of \$250 delivered to your haven, usable once per week per dot.

Firearms: Allows the use of Mental traits when firing a gun and is the primary retest thereof. Note that Celerity cannot be used to augment such Mental challenges.

Hunting: Representing a character's skill at finding sustenance it also adds to a character's starting blood pool each gather.

Intimidation: Primary retest for Dominate or when lording over others.

Investigation: Primary retest for Auspex and when making a dedicated search of an area.

Law: Knowledge of mortal law and its intricacies.

Linguistics: Each dot allows for one additional fluent spoken and written language, which must be specified on your character sheet.

Lore: This Ability represents the chance you possess rare or secret knowledge about the supernatural that you wouldn't otherwise have obtained, at Storyteller discretion. It is normally assumed that a character knows enough about their Clan, kindred nature, and the Camarilla to pass their Accounting and be Acknowledged. Those kindred with Age are presumed to have gathered even more information in their years of experience. Lores are most commonly focused into Clan-based, Sect-based, or regarding kindred nature, and all uses of Lore should be addressed to the Storytellers.

Medicine: Used in healing mortals under your care.

Melee: Primary retest for all attacks with a hand-held, close-range weapon.

Occult: Primary retest for Thaumaturgy and Necromancy, and represents general knowledge of the arcane.

Performance: Represents the display of physical exertion in an artistic way. Must be focused, often into Dance, Singing, or Acting.

Politics: By spending a Politics you may learn a kindred's Status, and perhaps some of their history at Storyteller fiat, such as where they were most recently Acknowledged.

Repair: Knowledge of machinery and how to fix it in an emergency.

Science: Represents knowledge of a physical laboratory science and its application. Must be focused into a specific academic discipline such as Botany or Chemistry.

Scrounge: A successful Static Mental challenge may yield miscellaneous equipment or single-use tools.

Security: Knowledge of practical intrusion countermeasures and how to bypass them.

Stealth: Primary retest for Obfuscate. For slipping though an area unnoticed without the aid of Disciplines, engage in a Mental versus Physical challenge, provided you have cover and opportunity.

Streetwise: As Etiquette for lower-class groups or situations.

Subterfuge: Retest for Serpents. By spending a Subterfuge and winning a Social Challenge after a conversation you may determine one of someone's relevant Negative Social traits (their choice).

Survival: The primary retest when resisting damage through Stamina traits, this Ability may also aid in finding shelter from the rising sun.



6.1 Additional Rules

- Spent Abilities refresh one dot per Ability per evening upon waking.
- Only one Ability may be purchased to level 5 per character.
- Most Abilities may be specialized once for 2xp (e.g. *Firearms: Light Pistols* or *Politics: City Government*), provided you have at least two dots of the Ability. Specializations grant +1 trait on tie resolution when their narrow focus is applicable. This bonus is only available when you have dots of the Ability remaining unspent, and you must declare if you are applying a specialization to a challenge before it is thrown. Specializations cannot be used in conjunction with Merits in challenges. Nor can Specializations apply to an entire Discipline, but may apply to certain powers in specific circumstances, at Storyteller discretion.

7 Backgrounds

Unlike Traits, which represent who your character is, and Abilities which showcase what your character can do, Backgrounds are a metric of what your character possesses, both materially and socially. Normally Backgrounds cannot be improved with experience without running scenes with the appropriate Storyteller to justify their advancement.

All Backgrounds available for Camarilla kindred are listed below:

Age: Each dot represents the benefit of around 100 years of unlife and grants three free Ability dots chosen from the following list: *Academics, Crafts, Etiquette, Expression, Finance, Hunting, Law, Linguistics, Lore, Medicine, Politics, Repair, Science* (classics only), *Scrounge, Security, and Streetwise*. Remember that being old does not automatically grant you age-related Status (see page 65), and that characters wishing to enter play with more than one dot of this Background will need specific Storyteller approval.


Allies: Representing mortal friends or agents you can call on for favors, *Allies* are halfway between *Contacts* and *Retainers*, in that each dot represents a group with a particular skillset such as locksmiths, bartenders, or nightclub owners. *Allies* are useful for getting low-level actions done during downtime, though calling on them too often may lead them to ask for favors from you. All *Allies* are under Storyteller control, and their specific archetype or skillset should be recorded when purchased. Each such Ally can be called on once per story, and no character can possess more than 10 total dots of *Allies*, each dot either making an existing group more useful or adding an additional archetype you can contact.

Alternate Identity: Each dot makes an assumed kindred identity more convincing or may instead be used for a new identity, to a maximum of five total dots. Make sure to work with a Storyteller and include details of your identity in your background, as these identities can take years to establish. Alternate Mortal identities are normally acquired through the use of *Influences*.

Contacts: See *Influences*.

Fame: Represents popularity in the mortal world in a specific area or societal group. This Background may be required to extend the reach of *Influences* beyond the local city. See the *Mortal Manipulations* packet for more information about using this Background.

Generation: The potency of your blood is determined by your Generation, defining how much Blood you may store and use per turn, starting and maximum Willpower, and how susceptible you are to specific powers such as *Dominare*. So important is this Background that each dot costs two Background points or two Free Traits. See the following table for the limits your generation imposes on your character sheet. Without points in this Background characters begin at 13th generation.



Generation	Trait Caps	Blood	Willpower
13th	10/8/6	10/1	2/6
12th	10/8/6	11/1	2/8
11th	11/9/7	12/1	4/8
10th	12/10/8	13/1	4/10
9th	13/11/9	14/2	6/10

Blood represents your maximum blood pool and maximum per-turn expenditure. Willpower represents your starting and maximum permanent Willpower traits.

Herd: You are in frequent contact with those who willingly let you feed from them, even if they don't realize your true nature. This Background refreshes once per week and may be used to gain easy access to vitae, one point per dot.

Influences: Influences are described fully in the separate *Mortal Manipulations* packet and represent subtle control over mortal circles such as *Media* or *High Society*. See the Storytellers for more information on the proper use of this Background.


Malkavian Time: *Malkavians only.* Representing the unconscious and unpredictable bursts of inspiration some Malkavians exhibit, this Background allows a character to, either during or immediately after a scene, ask a Storyteller for information relating to a the scene in question or a particular ongoing plot, which will be given a difficulty of one to five traits. The character's dots in this Background act as their traits for the Static test which determines whether or not they receive the information they seek. No character may benefit from this Background more than once per story.

Mentor: A more powerful kindred will grant you aid when asked. Speak with a Storyteller and make a simple test. Success means they help you without asking for a favor, a tie means they ask for payment after assisting you, and failure forces you to help them before they help. A Mentor may only be called upon once per story and their abilities increase with your dots in this Background, from answering esoteric questions through teaching you Disciplines, though they will never teach Clan-specific or Advanced powers, and will only ever teach as many levels as dots you possess in this Background. No character may have multiple *Mentors*, and their particulars should be worked out with the Storytellers.

Nosferatu Information Network: *Nosferatu only.* Representing the connections many Nosferatu have with their kin in other cities, this Background allows a character to, at the start of a session, ask a Storyteller for information relating to a particular character or remote Domain, which will be given a difficulty of one to five traits. The character's dots in this Background act as their traits for the Static test which determines whether or not they receive the information they seek. No character may benefit from this Background more than once per story.

Resources: Representing both the scale and luxury of your material holdings, *Resources* details how much "spending money" you have available each story and the general comfort level of your haven. How many locations you possess, their size, and general opulence, are all limited by your dots in this Background; work with a Storyteller to detail your holdings. When in doubt use modern prices for goods and services, and be aware that money gained through Resources cannot be hoarded without Storyteller approval.

Resources		
0 Traits	Poverty.	\$200
1 Trait	Small savings and a small apartment.	\$500
2 Traits	Modest savings and a home.	\$1,000
3 Traits	Significant savings and a large home.	\$3,000
4 Traits	Large savings and an estate.	\$10,000
5 Traits	Rich savings and estates.	\$30,000



Retainer: A notable employee or ghoul who will do your bidding. Each dot represents 5xp that goes into its sheet or an additional helper. All retainers are created and controlled by Storytellers. Each ghoul requires a blood investiture of one trait before the first game of each month. There is a limit of fifteen dots of this Background per character, however dispersed. For more information see *Ghouls and Retainers* on page 91.

8 Merits and Flaws

One of the most versatile aspects of character creation, Merits and Flaws represent those unique advantages and disadvantages which help distinguish one character from another. When creating your character you are limited to a total of seven points of Merits and only receive Free Traits for the first seven points of Flaws, making your selections very important. While most Merits and Flaws have mechanical effects, many have social repercussions as well which facilitate greater role-play. Additionally it is exceedingly difficult to develop Merits and Flaws after character creation, and plans to do so must be discussed with Storytellers.

With the wide array of *Vampire* sourcebooks available there are many places to find Merits and Flaws for your character. Here we have compiled a master list of every Merit and Flaw available in *Sanguine Dreams* along with a brief description of what the Merit or Flaw provides. In several cases the point values or effects of specific Merits and Flaws have been adjusted from the source material; use the values and description listed below. If necessary more information is available in the indicated sourcebook. Some *Sanguine Dreams*-specific Merits and Flaws are accessible to certain Clans only, and have been marked as such.

No Flaw will give characters a mechanical edge over others; this is represented most specifically in cases such as *Blind* and *Deaf* not making a character immune to the Discipline of Dominate. When there is a doubt as to the effects of particular Merits or Flaws, please see a Storyteller.

Only one Merit may be used per contender in a challenge, and it must be declared before the challenge is thrown. All relevant Flaws apply and must similarly be declared. No characters may purchase Merits or Flaws found in Clanbooks not their own, and no Camarilla kindred may have entries from the Sabbat or Anarch guides without specific Storyteller approval.

SD — Sanguine Dreams-specific
LotN — Laws of the Night
CG — Guide to the Camarilla

Clan — Clanbook (*Clan*)
Sabbat — Guide to the Sabbat
Anarch — Guide to the Anarchs

8.1 Physical Merits

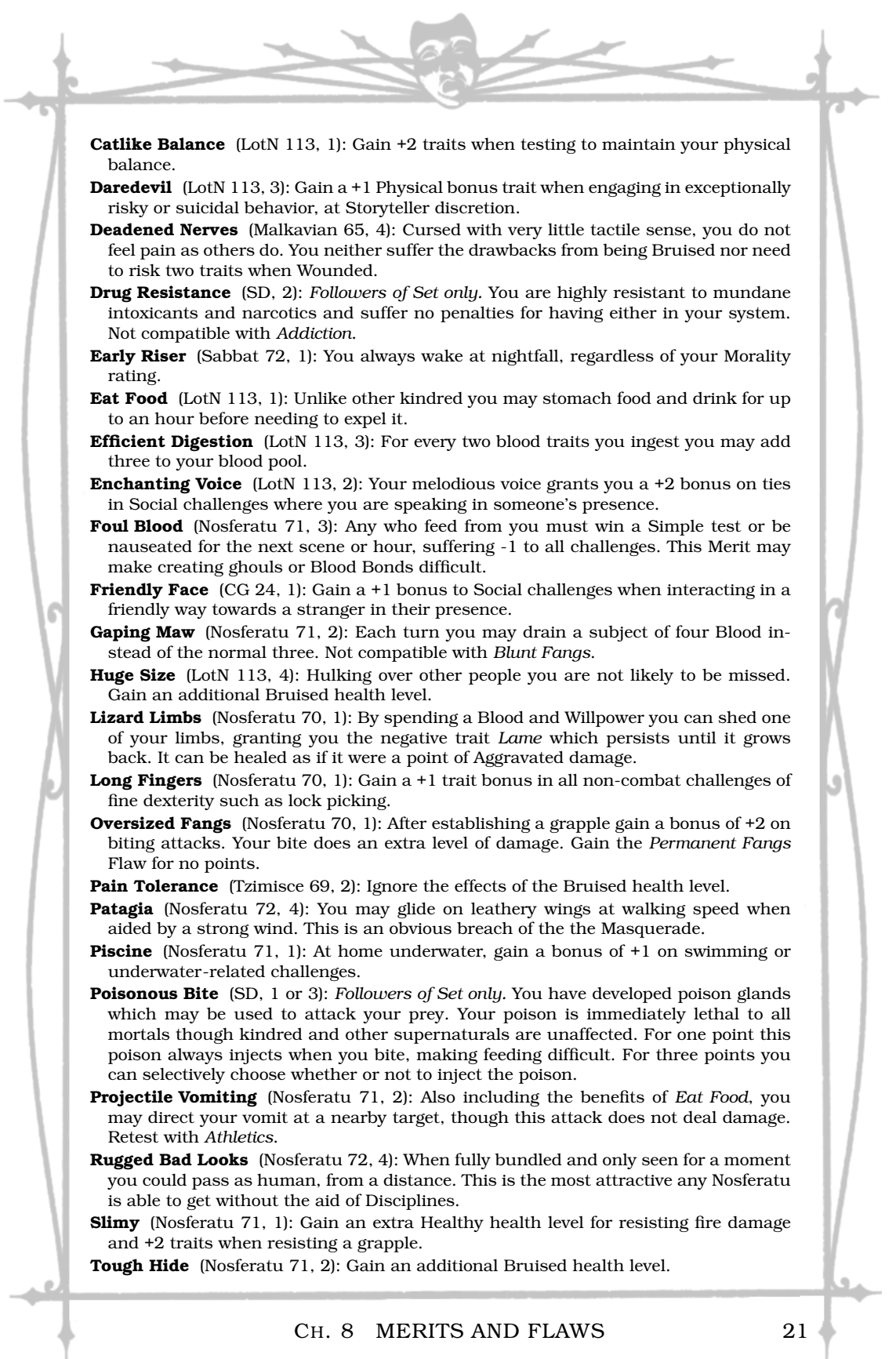
Ability Aptitude (SD, 1): Naturally proficient at some task, you gain a +2 bonus on ties for a single non-combat, non-Discipline Ability. For Abilities which require a focus such as *Crafts* or *Expression*, this merit only applies to one specific focus as they are treated as different Abilities.

Acute Sense (LotN 112, 1): Gifted with enhanced senses, gain a +1 bonus on perception or investigative challenges using that sense.

Ambidextrous (LotN 113, 1): Suffer no trait penalties when using an item with your non-dominant hand (normally -2 otherwise).

Blush of Health (LotN 113, 2): Naturally rosy and warm to the touch, this Merit negates 2 points of penalty for having low Humanity when dealing with mortals. Stacks with the ability to spend Blood for this effect.

Bruiser (CG 24, 1): Gain a +1 Social bonus when intimidating someone face to face.



Catlike Balance (LotN 113, 1): Gain +2 traits when testing to maintain your physical balance.

Daredevil (LotN 113, 3): Gain a +1 Physical bonus trait when engaging in exceptionally risky or suicidal behavior, at Storyteller discretion.

Deadened Nerves (Malkavian 65, 4): Cursed with very little tactile sense, you do not feel pain as others do. You neither suffer the drawbacks from being Bruised nor need to risk two traits when Wounded.

Drug Resistance (SD, 2): *Followers of Set only.* You are highly resistant to mundane intoxicants and narcotics and suffer no penalties for having either in your system. Not compatible with *Addiction*.

Early Riser (Sabbat 72, 1): You always wake at nightfall, regardless of your Morality rating.

Eat Food (LotN 113, 1): Unlike other kindred you may stomach food and drink for up to an hour before needing to expel it.

Efficient Digestion (LotN 113, 3): For every two blood traits you ingest you may add three to your blood pool.

Enchanting Voice (LotN 113, 2): Your melodious voice grants you a +2 bonus on ties in Social challenges where you are speaking in someone's presence.

Foul Blood (Nosferatu 71, 3): Any who feed from you must win a Simple test or be nauseated for the next scene or hour, suffering -1 to all challenges. This Merit may make creating ghouls or Blood Bonds difficult.

Friendly Face (CG 24, 1): Gain a +1 bonus to Social challenges when interacting in a friendly way towards a stranger in their presence.

Gaping Maw (Nosferatu 71, 2): Each turn you may drain a subject of four Blood instead of the normal three. Not compatible with *Blunt Fangs*.

Huge Size (LotN 113, 4): Hulking over other people you are not likely to be missed. Gain an additional Bruised health level.

Lizard Limbs (Nosferatu 70, 1): By spending a Blood and Willpower you can shed one of your limbs, granting you the negative trait *Lame* which persists until it grows back. It can be healed as if it were a point of Aggravated damage.

Long Fingers (Nosferatu 70, 1): Gain a +1 trait bonus in all non-combat challenges of fine dexterity such as lock picking.

Oversized Fangs (Nosferatu 70, 1): After establishing a grapple gain a bonus of +2 on biting attacks. Your bite does an extra level of damage. Gain the *Permanent Fangs* Flaw for no points.

Pain Tolerance (Tzimisce 69, 2): Ignore the effects of the Bruised health level.

Patagia (Nosferatu 72, 4): You may glide on leathery wings at walking speed when aided by a strong wind. This is an obvious breach of the the Masquerade.

Piscine (Nosferatu 71, 1): At home underwater, gain a bonus of +1 on swimming or underwater-related challenges.

Poisonous Bite (SD, 1 or 3): *Followers of Set only.* You have developed poison glands which may be used to attack your prey. Your poison is immediately lethal to all mortals though kindred and other supernaturals are unaffected. For one point this poison always injects when you bite, making feeding difficult. For three points you can selectively choose whether or not to inject the poison.

Projectile Vomiting (Nosferatu 71, 2): Also including the benefits of *Eat Food*, you may direct your vomit at a nearby target, though this attack does not deal damage. Retest with *Athletics*.

Rugged Bad Looks (Nosferatu 72, 4): When fully bundled and only seen for a moment you could pass as human, from a distance. This is the most attractive any Nosferatu is able to get without the aid of Disciplines.

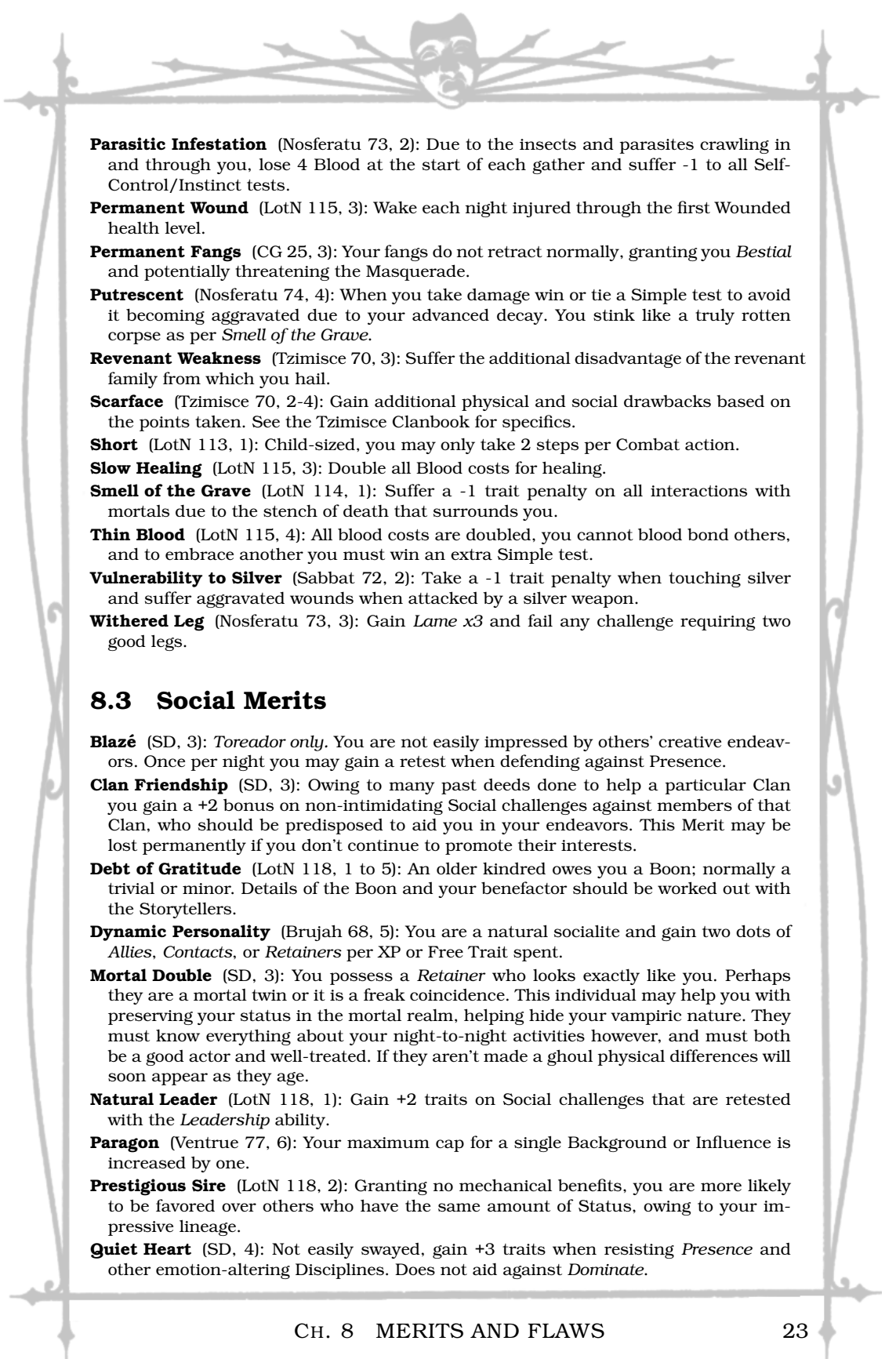
Slimy (Nosferatu 71, 1): Gain an extra Healthy health level for resisting fire damage and +2 traits when resisting a grapple.

Tough Hide (Nosferatu 71, 2): Gain an additional Bruised health level.



8.2 Physical Flaws

- Addiction** (LotN 114, 3): While under the effects of your chosen drug you suffer a Negative trait. When you are off it, suffer a different one.
- Anosmia** (Nosferatu 73, 2): Lose all tests relating to smell or taste, and you probably smell awful. Even *Heightened Senses* cannot help you.
- Bad Sight** (LotN 114, 2): Suffer a -2 trait penalty on all vision and ranged combat challenges. This Flaw is not correctable with glasses.
- Blind** (LotN 116, 6): You always suffer the effects of being in Darkness (see page 69) and fail any challenge requiring sight. You are not immune to *Dominare*.
- Blunt Fangs** (Nosferatu 72, 1): Grants an extra retest to any who are resisting your bite. You must make a new test every turn to continue feeding. Deal one Lethal damage per Blood trait drawn in this way.
- Contagious** (Nosferatu 74, 5): Dealing with so many dead bodies has made you highly infectious to mortals; any who interact with you must win a Simple test or fall victim to your plague, testing again in one week's time to attempt to recover.
- Deaf** (LotN 115, 4): You are automatically Surprised when attacked from behind and fail all auditory tests. This Flaw does not make you immune to *Dominare*.
- Deformity** (LotN 114, 3): A twisted and deformed body causes you to have a -1 penalty on all Physical and -2 on all Social challenges.
- Disease Carrier** (LotN 115, 4): Choose a virulent, infectious disease with Storyteller approval. Spend an extra Blood upon waking to avoid suffering from your disease that night. Any who feed from you must win or tie a Simple test to avoid contracting the disease temporarily.
- Disfigured** (LotN 114, 2): You may not take any Appearance-based Social traits and suffer a -2 penalty to all non-intimidating Social challenges.
- Dulled Bite** (CG 24, 2): As *Blunt Fangs* without the additional damage effect.
- Fangless** (Anarch 115, 2): You do not have fangs and must find another way to feed.
- Flesh of the Corpse** (LotN 115, 2): Each wound you heal punishes you with the Negative Trait *Repugnant* until you sleep.
- Forked Tongue** (SD, 2): *Followers of Set only*. Your tongue is forked, making speaking intelligibly difficult and perhaps posing a threat to the Masquerade. This Flaw does not mimic any of the benefits of *Tongue of the Asp*.
- Glowing Eyes** (CG 25, 2): Your bright eyes grant you *Bestial* and *Repugnant* and are an obvious breach of the Masquerade.
- Hard of Hearing** (LotN 113, 1): Suffer a -2 penalty on hearing-based tests.
- Inbred** (Giovanni 78, 1-5): Suffer Social and Physical penalties due to your disfigurement. See the Giovanni Clanbook for more information.
- Infectious Bite** (LotN 114, 3): Choose a virulent disease that lives in your system. Win or tie a Simple test after feeding or you transmit your disease to your victim. You cannot lick closed wounds you make while feeding.
- Infertile Vitae** (Sabbat 73, 5): You are incapable of siring childer, creating ghouls, or blood bonding others.
- Lame** (LotN 115, 3): You may only take 1 step per Combat action.
- Lazy** (Sabbat 72, 3): Suffer a -1 trait penalty on all spontaneous actions.
- Monstrous** (LotN 115, 3): Mechanically you possess the Nosferatu Clan disadvantage, though no true Nosferatu would confuse you for one of their own.
- Mute** (LotN 115, 4): You cannot speak or make yourself understood vocally.
- One Eye** (LotN 114, 2): -2 traits on all tests where depth perception would aid you, such as ranged combat.
- Open Wound** (SD, 2 or 5): You have one or more wounds that refuse to heal and continually seep blood, costing you one Blood trait at the start of gather. For five points this Flaw also includes the penalties of *Permanent Wound* and grants a corresponding Negative Social or Physical trait.



Parasitic Infestation (Nosferatu 73, 2): Due to the insects and parasites crawling in and through you, lose 4 Blood at the start of each gather and suffer -1 to all Self-Control/Instinct tests.

Permanent Wound (LotN 115, 3): Wake each night injured through the first Wounded health level.

Permanent Fangs (CG 25, 3): Your fangs do not retract normally, granting you *Bestial* and potentially threatening the Masquerade.

Putrescent (Nosferatu 74, 4): When you take damage win or tie a Simple test to avoid it becoming aggravated due to your advanced decay. You stink like a truly rotten corpse as per *Smell of the Grave*.

Revenant Weakness (Tzimisce 70, 3): Suffer the additional disadvantage of the revenant family from which you hail.

Scarface (Tzimisce 70, 2-4): Gain additional physical and social drawbacks based on the points taken. See the Tzimisce Clanbook for specifics.

Short (LotN 113, 1): Child-sized, you may only take 2 steps per Combat action.

Slow Healing (LotN 115, 3): Double all Blood costs for healing.

Smell of the Grave (LotN 114, 1): Suffer a -1 trait penalty on all interactions with mortals due to the stench of death that surrounds you.

Thin Blood (LotN 115, 4): All blood costs are doubled, you cannot blood bond others, and to embrace another you must win an extra Simple test.

Vulnerability to Silver (Sabbat 72, 2): Take a -1 trait penalty when touching silver and suffer aggravated wounds when attacked by a silver weapon.

Withered Leg (Nosferatu 73, 3): Gain *Lame* x3 and fail any challenge requiring two good legs.

8.3 Social Merits

Blazé (SD, 3): *Toreador only*. You are not easily impressed by others' creative endeavors. Once per night you may gain a retest when defending against Presence.

Clan Friendship (SD, 3): Owing to many past deeds done to help a particular Clan you gain a +2 bonus on non-intimidating Social challenges against members of that Clan, who should be predisposed to aid you in your endeavors. This Merit may be lost permanently if you don't continue to promote their interests.

Debt of Gratitude (LotN 118, 1 to 5): An older kindred owes you a Boon; normally a trivial or minor. Details of the Boon and your benefactor should be worked out with the Storytellers.

Dynamic Personality (Brujah 68, 5): You are a natural socialite and gain two dots of *Allies*, *Contacts*, or *Retainers* per XP or Free Trait spent.

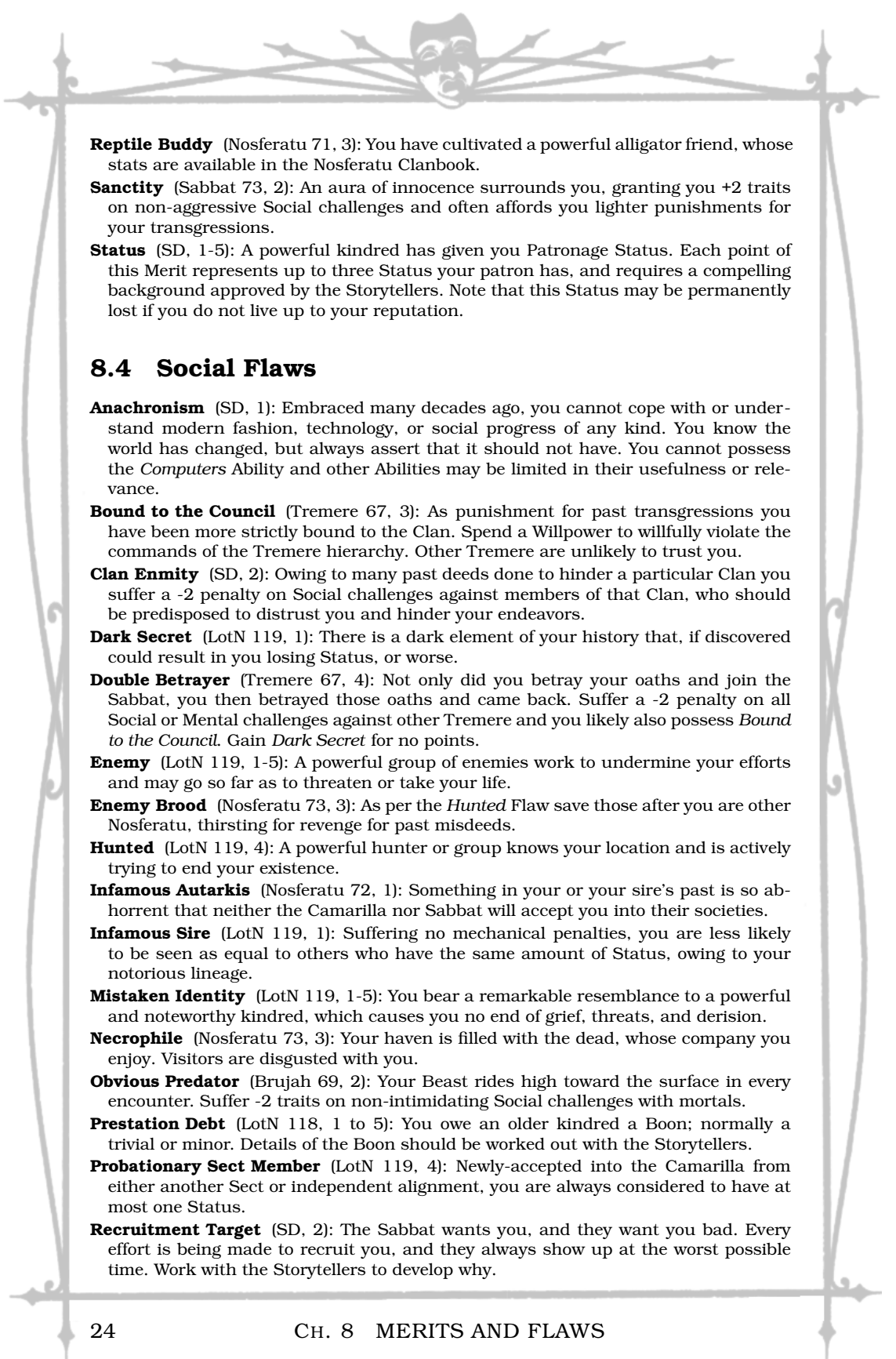
Mortal Double (SD, 3): You possess a *Retainer* who looks exactly like you. Perhaps they are a mortal twin or it is a freak coincidence. This individual may help you with preserving your status in the mortal realm, helping hide your vampiric nature. They must know everything about your night-to-night activities however, and must both be a good actor and well-treated. If they aren't made a ghoul physical differences will soon appear as they age.

Natural Leader (LotN 118, 1): Gain +2 traits on Social challenges that are retested with the *Leadership* ability.

Paragon (Ventrue 77, 6): Your maximum cap for a single Background or Influence is increased by one.

Prestigious Sire (LotN 118, 2): Granting no mechanical benefits, you are more likely to be favored over others who have the same amount of Status, owing to your impressive lineage.

Quiet Heart (SD, 4): Not easily swayed, gain +3 traits when resisting *Presence* and other emotion-altering Disciplines. Does not aid against *Dominate*.



Reptile Buddy (Nosferatu 71, 3): You have cultivated a powerful alligator friend, whose stats are available in the Nosferatu Clanbook.

Sanctity (Sabbat 73, 2): An aura of innocence surrounds you, granting you +2 traits on non-aggressive Social challenges and often affords you lighter punishments for your transgressions.

Status (SD, 1-5): A powerful kindred has given you Patronage Status. Each point of this Merit represents up to three Status your patron has, and requires a compelling background approved by the Storytellers. Note that this Status may be permanently lost if you do not live up to your reputation.

8.4 Social Flaws

Anachronism (SD, 1): Embraced many decades ago, you cannot cope with or understand modern fashion, technology, or social progress of any kind. You know the world has changed, but always assert that it should not have. You cannot possess the *Computers* Ability and other Abilities may be limited in their usefulness or relevance.

Bound to the Council (Tremere 67, 3): As punishment for past transgressions you have been more strictly bound to the Clan. Spend a Willpower to willfully violate the commands of the Tremere hierarchy. Other Tremere are unlikely to trust you.

Clan Enmity (SD, 2): Owing to many past deeds done to hinder a particular Clan you suffer a -2 penalty on Social challenges against members of that Clan, who should be predisposed to distrust you and hinder your endeavors.

Dark Secret (LotN 119, 1): There is a dark element of your history that, if discovered could result in you losing Status, or worse.

Double Betrayer (Tremere 67, 4): Not only did you betray your oaths and join the Sabbat, you then betrayed those oaths and came back. Suffer a -2 penalty on all Social or Mental challenges against other Tremere and you likely also possess *Bound to the Council*. Gain *Dark Secret* for no points.

Enemy (LotN 119, 1-5): A powerful group of enemies work to undermine your efforts and may go so far as to threaten or take your life.

Enemy Brood (Nosferatu 73, 3): As per the *Hunted* Flaw save those after you are other Nosferatu, thirsting for revenge for past misdeeds.

Hunted (LotN 119, 4): A powerful hunter or group knows your location and is actively trying to end your existence.

Infamous Autarkis (Nosferatu 72, 1): Something in your or your sire's past is so abhorrent that neither the Camarilla nor Sabbat will accept you into their societies.

Infamous Sire (LotN 119, 1): Suffering no mechanical penalties, you are less likely to be seen as equal to others who have the same amount of Status, owing to your notorious lineage.

Mistaken Identity (LotN 119, 1-5): You bear a remarkable resemblance to a powerful and noteworthy kindred, which causes you no end of grief, threats, and derision.

Necrophile (Nosferatu 73, 3): Your haven is filled with the dead, whose company you enjoy. Visitors are disgusted with you.

Obvious Predator (Brujah 69, 2): Your Beast rides high toward the surface in every encounter. Suffer -2 traits on non-intimidating Social challenges with mortals.

Prestation Debt (LotN 118, 1 to 5): You owe an older kindred a Boon; normally a trivial or minor. Details of the Boon should be worked out with the Storytellers.

Probationary Sect Member (LotN 119, 4): Newly-accepted into the Camarilla from either another Sect or independent alignment, you are always considered to have at most one Status.

Recruitment Target (SD, 2): The Sabbat wants you, and they want you bad. Every effort is being made to recruit you, and they always show up at the worst possible time. Work with the Storytellers to develop why.

Sire's Resentment (LotN 119, 1): A falling out with your sire has caused them to work to ensure that other potent members of the Sect will not aid you. You may not possess the Mentor Background.

Special Responsibility (Sabbat 73, 1): Charged with completing an onerous task, there is no way out of this assignment.

Status (SD, 1-5): A powerful kindred has punished you with Negative Patronage Status. Each point of this Flaw represents up to three Status your detractor has, and requires an appropriate back-story approved by the Storytellers.

Stench (Nosferatu 72, 1): Lose all ties on Stealth challenges automatically owing to your offensive odor. This includes uses of Obfuscate.

Traitor (Nosferatu 74, 2): You continually provide information about the secrets and plans of your allies to a third party. Every session you must provide the Storytellers with what information you are revealing or your own secrets may start getting out.

Ward (SD, 2-4): You are devoted to the protection of a particular mortal who for some reason is special to you, and who should never learn you are a vampire. They are however often getting into trouble or otherwise drawing unwanted attention. Seeing them in danger, or knowing they are in trouble and being unable to aid them, forces a Self-Control/Instinct test versus four traits. The more points this Flaw is worth, the more frequently and severely your ward will require help.

8.5 Mental Merits

Calm Heart (LotN 116, 3): Your unflappable resolve grants you +1 to all Courage and Self-Control/Instinct tests. Brujah may not take this Merit.

Code of Honor (LotN 116, 1): Having worked out a specific set of morals and ethics separate from your Morality path with the Storytellers, gain a retest in Social or Mental challenges which may cause you to violate your code.

Coldly Logical (CG 25, 1): Almost robotic in temperament, gain +1 trait when someone is attempting to sway you through a Social challenge.

Common Sense (LotN 116, 1): The Storytellers may urge you against taking potentially disastrous actions. This Merit is well-recommended for new players.

Compassionate (Brujah 68, 4): You may spend a second Willpower to gain an additional retest on all Conscience tests.

Concentration (LotN 116, 1): You may ignore situational trait penalties from physical or mental distractions when engaged in a task requiring focus.

Dragon's Temperament (Tzimisce 69, 3): At the start of each session you or the Storytellers may switch your Nature.

Eidetic Memory (LotN 116, 2): You have nearly perfect recall and may remember even minute details with a Static Mental test.

Gifted (SD, 3): *Toreador only*. Naturally gifted in a single form of *Crafts* or *Expression*, projects based on your specified skill-set may require half the normal amount of time to complete, at Storyteller discretion.

Greater Colors (SD, 3): *Toreador only*. Able to perceive a greater degree of colors than normal kindred, your world is awash with amazing patterns. You may ask two questions with a single successful *Aura Perception* but are more easily entranced by objects—regular works of art or performances will subject you to your Clan disadvantage if you fail a Simple Test.

Immaculate Aura (Malkavian 64, 1): Your aura never shows signs of active Derangements.

Introspection (Sabbat 73, 1): Gain a +2 trait bonus on Subterfuge or Aura Perception challenges against someone who shares your Nature or Demeanor.

Iron Will (LotN 117, 4): Gain +3 traits when defending against Dominate or mind-altering magic. Does not protect against Presence or other social powers.

Light Sleeper (LotN 116, 2): You suffer no trait penalties while active during daylight hours, and have an easier time of rousing yourself during the day, represented by a -2 difficulty for the requisite test. You may rise earlier and stay awake later than your Morality rating would otherwise dictate.

Natural Linguist (LotN 116, 2): Gain 2 languages per dot of *Linguistics*.

Pelagic Harmony (Lasombra 64, 3): Gain an extra temporary Willpower when in sight of the sea.

Time Sense (LotN 116, 1): You always know the time down to the exact minute.

Weather Sense (Lasombra 63, 1-3): You may make a Static Mental test to predict upcoming weather. See the Clanbook for more details.

8.6 Mental Flaws

Amnesia (LotN 117, 2): You do not remember anything about your mortal life or accounting, the events of which are up to the Storytellers.

Compulsion (SD, 1): Spend a Willpower to avoid engaging in your compulsion for a scene or hour. Work out the specifics of your compulsive action with a Storyteller, which should be role-played frequently. For more serious compulsions or obsessions see Chapter 12.

Conspicuous Consumption (LotN 118, 4): Only gaining sustenance from the organ meats of your victims, you must kill to feed. You must take *Eat Food* and cannot have dots of the *Herd* Background.

Deep Sleeper (LotN 117, 1): All tests to wake during the day are increased by 2, and you wake later and sleep earlier than your Morality rating would dictate.

Flashbacks (Sabbat 73, 6): Wracked with flashbacks from the many traumatic events of your existence, your starting Willpower each gather is determined by a Simple test: winning means you are full, a tie that you are at half, and failure that you only have 2. These totals are your maximum before losses from previous activities are included.

Guilt-Wracked (CG 25, 4): You must pass a Courage check to feed or you cannot bring yourself to do so. You are likely to often be hungry or starving.

Hatred (SD, 2): When presented with the object of your hate pass a Self-Control/Instinct test of 4 traits or fly into Frenzy.

Hemetic (Anarch 114, 4): Unable to stand the taste of blood, you must make a Static Physical test versus 6 traits to keep down vitae after feeding.

Image Obsession (SD, 2): *Lasombra only*. Incapable of seeing your own image, you constantly fret and primp, obsessed with your imagined appearance.

Inept (SD, 4): An exceptionally slow-learner, double all XP costs for Abilities and you may never have any Ability higher than 2.

Lunacy (LotN 117, 2): Suffer a -1 penalty to Self-Control/Instinct challenges during the waxing or waning moon, -2 during the full moon.

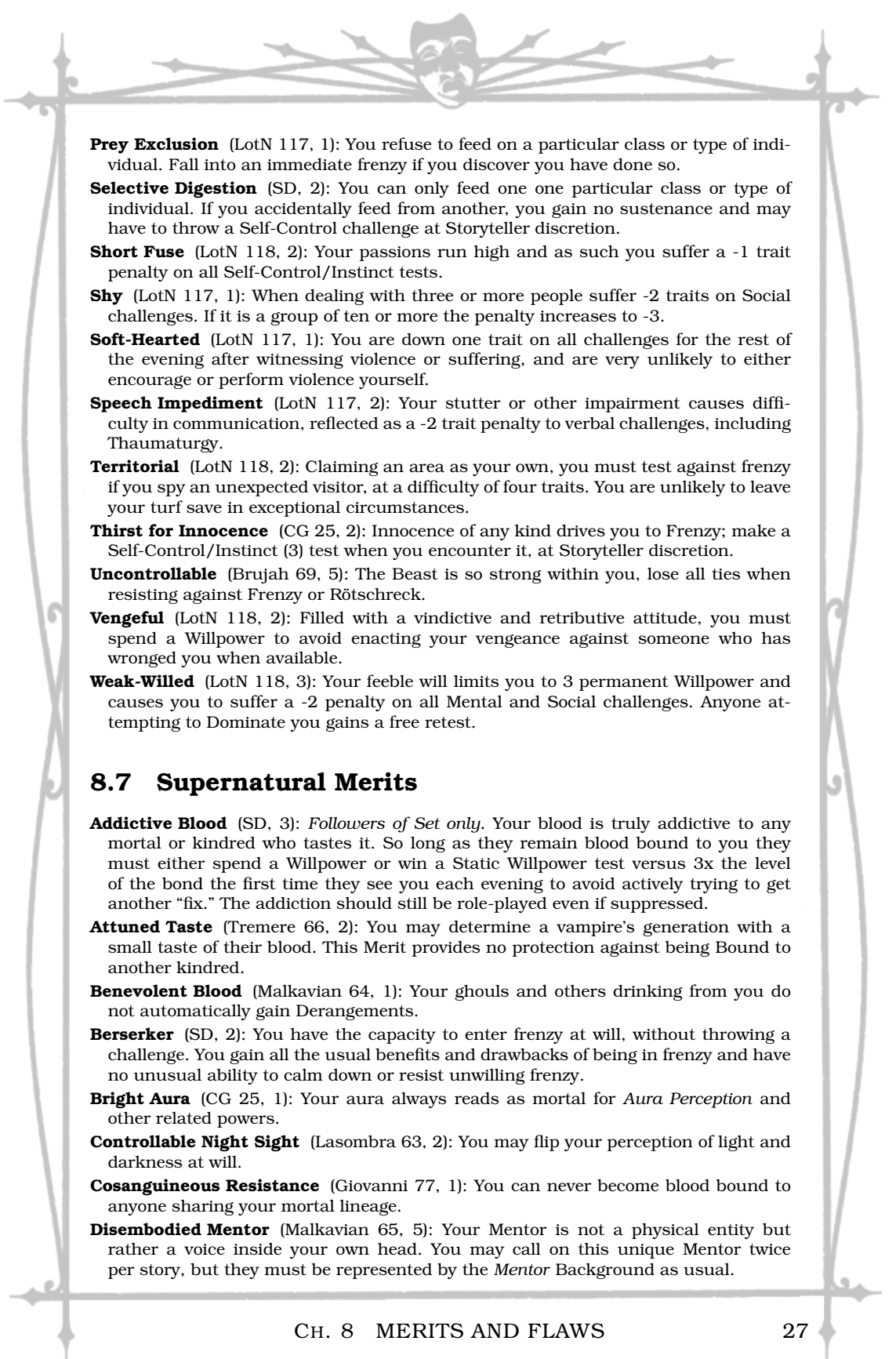
Nightmares (LotN 117, 1): Suffering from frequent nightmares, you have a -1 trait penalty to all challenges at Storyteller discretion, normally decided night-to-night.

Pelagic Compulsion (Lasombra 64, 2): Tied to the sea, suffer a cumulative -1 trait penalty to all challenges for each night you have been unable to visit the ocean.

Phobia (LotN 117, 2): When presented with the object or situation you fear pass a Courage test against 4 traits or flee.

Poor Taste (SD, 1): *Toreador only*. You are a true poseur, completely unable to distinguish between great art and utter trash, and wholly incapable of creating any yourself. You may not possess any dots in the Abilities *Expression*, *Crafts*, or *Performance*.

Poseidon's Call (Lasombra 64, 1): In calm or clear weather suffer a -1 penalty to all Self-Control/Instinct and Courage tests, but gain +1 in storms.



Prey Exclusion (LotN 117, 1): You refuse to feed on a particular class or type of individual. Fall into an immediate frenzy if you discover you have done so.

Selective Digestion (SD, 2): You can only feed one one particular class or type of individual. If you accidentally feed from another, you gain no sustenance and may have to throw a Self-Control challenge at Storyteller discretion.

Short Fuse (LotN 118, 2): Your passions run high and as such you suffer a -1 trait penalty on all Self-Control/Instinct tests.

Shy (LotN 117, 1): When dealing with three or more people suffer -2 traits on Social challenges. If it is a group of ten or more the penalty increases to -3.

Soft-Hearted (LotN 117, 1): You are down one trait on all challenges for the rest of the evening after witnessing violence or suffering, and are very unlikely to either encourage or perform violence yourself.

Speech Impediment (LotN 117, 2): Your stutter or other impairment causes difficulty in communication, reflected as a -2 trait penalty to verbal challenges, including Thaumaturgy.

Territorial (LotN 118, 2): Claiming an area as your own, you must test against frenzy if you spy an unexpected visitor, at a difficulty of four traits. You are unlikely to leave your turf save in exceptional circumstances.

Thirst for Innocence (CG 25, 2): Innocence of any kind drives you to Frenzy; make a Self-Control/Instinct (3) test when you encounter it, at Storyteller discretion.

Uncontrollable (Brujah 69, 5): The Beast is so strong within you, lose all ties when resisting against Frenzy or Rōtschreck.

Vengeful (LotN 118, 2): Filled with a vindictive and retributive attitude, you must spend a Willpower to avoid enacting your vengeance against someone who has wronged you when available.

Weak-Willed (LotN 118, 3): Your feeble will limits you to 3 permanent Willpower and causes you to suffer a -2 penalty on all Mental and Social challenges. Anyone attempting to Dominate you gains a free retest.

8.7 Supernatural Merits

Addictive Blood (SD, 3): *Followers of Set only.* Your blood is truly addictive to any mortal or kindred who tastes it. So long as they remain blood bound to you they must either spend a Willpower or win a Static Willpower test versus 3x the level of the bond the first time they see you each evening to avoid actively trying to get another “fix.” The addiction should still be role-played even if suppressed.

Attuned Taste (Tremere 66, 2): You may determine a vampire’s generation with a small taste of their blood. This Merit provides no protection against being Bound to another kindred.

Benevolent Blood (Malkavian 64, 1): Your ghouls and others drinking from you do not automatically gain Derangements.

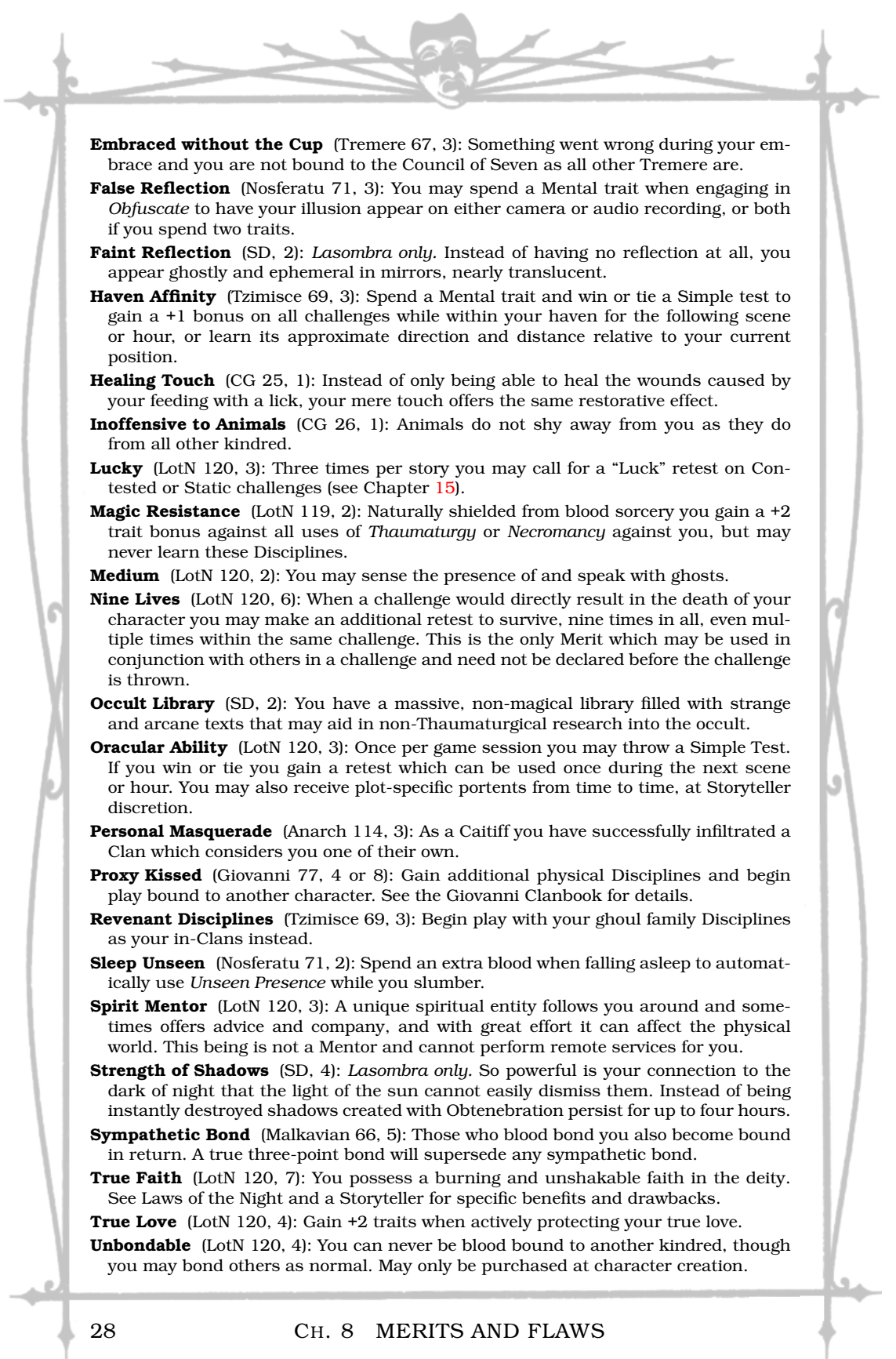
Berserker (SD, 2): You have the capacity to enter frenzy at will, without throwing a challenge. You gain all the usual benefits and drawbacks of being in frenzy and have no unusual ability to calm down or resist unwilling frenzy.

Bright Aura (CG 25, 1): Your aura always reads as mortal for *Aura Perception* and other related powers.

Controllable Night Sight (Lasombra 63, 2): You may flip your perception of light and darkness at will.

Cosanguineous Resistance (Giovanni 77, 1): You can never become blood bound to anyone sharing your mortal lineage.

Disembodied Mentor (Malkavian 65, 5): Your Mentor is not a physical entity but rather a voice inside your own head. You may call on this unique Mentor twice per story, but they must be represented by the *Mentor* Background as usual.



Embraced without the Cup (Tremere 67, 3): Something went wrong during your embrace and you are not bound to the Council of Seven as all other Tremere are.

False Reflection (Nosferatu 71, 3): You may spend a Mental trait when engaging in *Obfuscate* to have your illusion appear on either camera or audio recording, or both if you spend two traits.

Faint Reflection (SD, 2): *Lasombra only*. Instead of having no reflection at all, you appear ghostly and ephemeral in mirrors, nearly translucent.

Haven Affinity (Tzimisce 69, 3): Spend a Mental trait and win or tie a Simple test to gain a +1 bonus on all challenges while within your haven for the following scene or hour, or learn its approximate direction and distance relative to your current position.

Healing Touch (CG 25, 1): Instead of only being able to heal the wounds caused by your feeding with a lick, your mere touch offers the same restorative effect.

Inoffensive to Animals (CG 26, 1): Animals do not shy away from you as they do from all other kindred.

Lucky (LotN 120, 3): Three times per story you may call for a “Luck” retest on Contested or Static challenges (see Chapter 15).

Magic Resistance (LotN 119, 2): Naturally shielded from blood sorcery you gain a +2 trait bonus against all uses of *Thaumaturgy* or *Necromancy* against you, but may never learn these Disciplines.

Medium (LotN 120, 2): You may sense the presence of and speak with ghosts.

Nine Lives (LotN 120, 6): When a challenge would directly result in the death of your character you may make an additional retest to survive, nine times in all, even multiple times within the same challenge. This is the only Merit which may be used in conjunction with others in a challenge and need not be declared before the challenge is thrown.

Occult Library (SD, 2): You have a massive, non-magical library filled with strange and arcane texts that may aid in non-Thaumaturgical research into the occult.

Oracular Ability (LotN 120, 3): Once per game session you may throw a Simple Test. If you win or tie you gain a retest which can be used once during the next scene or hour. You may also receive plot-specific portents from time to time, at Storyteller discretion.

Personal Masquerade (Anarch 114, 3): As a Caitiff you have successfully infiltrated a Clan which considers you one of their own.

Proxy Kissed (Giovanni 77, 4 or 8): Gain additional physical Disciplines and begin play bound to another character. See the Giovanni Clanbook for details.

Revenant Disciplines (Tzimisce 69, 3): Begin play with your ghoul family Disciplines as your in-Clans instead.

Sleep Unseen (Nosferatu 71, 2): Spend an extra blood when falling asleep to automatically use *Unseen Presence* while you slumber.

Spirit Mentor (LotN 120, 3): A unique spiritual entity follows you around and sometimes offers advice and company, and with great effort it can affect the physical world. This being is not a Mentor and cannot perform remote services for you.

Strength of Shadows (SD, 4): *Lasombra only*. So powerful is your connection to the dark of night that the light of the sun cannot easily dismiss them. Instead of being instantly destroyed shadows created with *Obtenebration* persist for up to four hours.

Sympathetic Bond (Malkavian 66, 5): Those who blood bond you also become bound in return. A true three-point bond will supersede any sympathetic bond.

True Faith (LotN 120, 7): You possess a burning and unshakable faith in the deity. See *Laws of the Night* and a Storyteller for specific benefits and drawbacks.

True Love (LotN 120, 4): Gain +2 traits when actively protecting your true love.

Unbondable (LotN 120, 4): You can never be blood bound to another kindred, though you may bond others as normal. May only be purchased at character creation.



8.8 Supernatural Flaws

13th Generation (SD, 2): No additional penalty other than being 13th generation.

Ancestral Soil Dependence (Tzimisce 70, 2): Double the penalty for not sleeping in native soil.

Beacon of the Unholy (CG 26, 2): Suffer the effects of *True Faith* when near any place of worship as your evil and supernatural aura recoils in horror. Hunters have an easier time picking you out of a crowd.

Bound (CG 26, 2): Begin play three points bound to another character, normally an NPC. Work out the details with the Storytellers.

Can't Cross Running Water (LotN 121, 2): Streams and rivulets at least 2' deep are impassible unless you are inside a closed vehicle.

Cast No Reflection (LotN 121, 1): Your body does not appear in mirrors or other reflective surfaces, which can be an obvious breach of the Masquerade.

Clan Weakness (Anarch 114, 2): As a Caitiff you suffer another Clan's weakness not already described by other Flaws. Available to Caitiff characters of any Sect.

Cold Breeze (CG 26, 1): Suffer a -1 penalty on all Social tests with mortals as a chill wind follows you everywhere.

Cursed (LotN 120, 1-5): Unique and custom problems follow you everywhere. Work with a Storyteller to define the limits and effects of your curse.

Dark Fate (LotN 121, 5): All of your plans will fall to ruin and you will be slain or otherwise removed from play at a time and manner of the Storytellers' choosing with no chance to escape it.

Death's Reflection (Lasombra 65, 3): Instead of the usual Clan disadvantage your reflection presents your true age, a dessicated and decayed corpse.

Deathsight (CG 26, 2): Gain the traits *Callous* and *Oblivious* as you see no beauty in the world around you; everything appears to be in a constant state of disrepair and decrepitation.

Decrepitude (Anarch 114, 3): Your weakened body does not heal normally; when suffering aggravated wounds win or tie a Simple test to avoid gaining permanent *Repugnant* traits, limit of five.

Eerie Presence (LotN 121, 2): Your disquieting presence causes you to be -2 traits on all non-intimidating Social challenges with mortals.

Enemy of Shadows (SD, 4): *Lasombra only*. Not only are you not immune to your own *Shroud of Night*, any *Arms of the Abyss* you create (including those through *Black Metamorphosis*) may attack you instead of your intended target. Win or tie a Simple test each time you create tentacles or else they consider you their primary foe.

Grip of the Damned (LotN 121, 4): Instead of causing the Kiss when feeding, your bite causes nothing but terror and pain, making feeding or establishing herds difficult.

Haunted (LotN 121, 3): A malicious wraith haunts you forever, causing mischief and problems in your night to night existence.


Heartless (SD, 4): Someone has used the advanced level of *Serpentis* on you, granting you all the benefits and drawbacks of that Discipline, but you do not have possession of your own heart. If another kindred has it, likely an Elder Follower of Set, you must obey them or risk destruction. If it is simply missing, the stress of not knowing may result in penalties similar to the *Nightmares* Flaw.

Infectious (Malkavian 66, 3): Those you feed upon gain one Derangement for every three Blood traits you take, which fades in one week.

Light-Sensitive (LotN 122, 5): Sunlight causes double damage and even the light of the full moon causes one lethal wound per turn.

Lord of the Flies (CG 26, 2): The constant presence and buzzing of flies causes you to suffer a -1 penalty on all Social or *Stealth*-related challenges, including *Obfuscate*.

Magic Susceptibility (SD, 2): Naturally weak against blood sorcery you suffer a -2 trait penalty against all uses of *Thaumaturgy* or *Necromancy* against you.



Nosferatu Caitiff (SD, 2): Embraced as a Nosferatu, the blood didn't fully take hold and you have been ousted as a Caitiff. You may not begin play with any Appearance-based Social traits and each one costs 4xp to purchase.

Ravaging Years (Anarch 114, 2): Your body is not truly immortal and ages one year for every 25 you exist. Aggravated wounds also speed this process, one year per wound.

Repelled by Crosses (LotN 121, 3): Spend a Willpower to remain in an area where a cross is visible for the next scene or hour. Touching or being touched by a holy symbol causes aggravated wounds.

Repelled by Garlic (LotN 121, 1): Spend a Willpower to remain within 10' of garlic for the next scene or hour. If a clove of garlic is ever forced into your mouth, suffer an aggravated wound.

Scales (SD, 1-3): *Followers of Set only.* During your embrace the blood of Set twisted your body, hardening patches of it into scales. Gain the Negative Trait *Bestial* once for each point of this Flaw.

Shadow Walker (Giovanni 78, 6): You travel the Shadowlands as you move through the physical world, subject to all of the creatures and obstacles therein.

Stigmata (Malkavian 66, 2-4): Seep blood through open wounds and gain various penalties depending on the severity of this Flaw. See the Malkavian Clanbook for specific details.

Superstition (Anarch 115, 1-5): You believe in and are affected by popular vampire stereotypes which worsen with more points in this Flaw.

Taint of Corruption (SD, 1): Plants wither at your approach and will die if you touch them. Gardens are all but off-limits to you.

Thaumaturgically Inept (Tremere 67, 5): All blood magic casting times are increased by five minutes, all related tests are at +1 difficulty, and you suffer a -1 trait penalty for all Social tests against higher-ranking Tremere.

Touch of Frost (LotN 121, 1): Your skin is ice-cold, making physical contact with you uncomfortable for mortals. Suffer a -1 Social trait penalty against any mortal who has touched or been touched by you.

Uncontrollable Night Sight (Lasombra 64, 2): Your perception of light and darkness switch randomly. At the start of every scene throw a Simple test; a loss results in light and darkness inverting unfavorably for the scene.

9 Morality and Virtues

9.1 What is Morality

Within every vampire is the Beast, a destructive and terrifying entity entirely concerned with two things: feeding and survival. The Beast is only kept at bay by a kindred's strict adherence to a set of principles akin to a code of ethics: their Morality.

We as players recognize that stealing from others is bad, hurting them is worse, and murder is a terrible crime. Born of humanity, all kindred begin with this same set of principles, called the Morality path of Humanity. Humanity's dictates of right and wrong are easily understandable, since they mirror our own. As a kindred begins to accept their predatory place in the world however, their Humanity begins to slip, causing them to find increasingly malicious and violent actions justifiable or even acceptable. The lower one falls on any Morality path, the closer they are to falling to the Beast, forever lost in an eternal frenzy that from which there is no return, but conversely the better equipped they are to handle the dark and sometimes violent acts which may be necessary for their continued survival.

While Humanity is by far the most common Morality path, there are others which kindred have developed over the centuries to keep the Beast at bay and still further their individual aims. These paths represent a truly alien mindset from our own, and can be

very difficult to role-play. On some paths for example murder may be perfectly acceptable but failing to research long-forgotten lore is as deplorable as mass slaughter would be to us. It is only through a strict adherence to a Morality path that a kindred is able to maintain their balance against the overwhelming fury of the Beast.

The different values of Humanity and what constitutes a sin at each level is presented below, and the sins and tenets of other paths can be found by asking the Storytellers. Please note that most kindred do not know that other schools of thought exist, and the process of translating Humanity's moral compass to something so alien is not a journey lightly or easily taken. In fact, trying to change one's morality can only ever result in one of three outcomes: the character becomes horrified at the prospect of losing everything they are and abandons the journey, the character fails and loses to the Beast, or the character succeeds and becomes a fledgling follower of a new path of Morality. New characters may enter play on an alternate Morality path by spending 3 XP and providing the Storytellers with a very compelling background and history. Existing characters must find a willing teacher currently on the desired path.

A character's Morality rating is relevant to their nightly existence in several ways—not only do they rise earlier and stay awake longer each evening with a higher path rating, but if they fall into torpor the minimum amount of time that passes before they wake is directly related to their Morality rating. Actions during the day are also more difficult the closer a kindred is to the beast: one may never bid more than three-halves of their Morality in named traits, rounded down. Characters with low (or no) Humanity have difficulty interacting peacefully with mortals. On non-intimidating Social challenges with mortals, vampires suffer a penalty of seven minus their current Humanity rating; those on alternate paths have an effective Humanity of zero for such tests.

This distance from the trappings of humanity present itself in different ways: as a character's Humanity slips they may not blink or fidget as much and will stop breathing save to speak. They stare at others like a lion watches a gazelle; an experience that is most unsettling to mortals. Their skin grows ashen and papery, becoming unsightly. The reality is that the Beast has neither need nor desire to fit into mortal society and so little by little these little automatic actions that help with fitting in fall away. Because the effects of low Humanity are behavioral as well as visual, even Obfuscate cannot hide the fact that the character is becoming something truly monstrous.

This change of behavior and outlook is so noticeable that kindred are easily able to determine the relative connection others have to their humanity. With a Static Social challenge against another vampire (retested with *Empathy*) a kindred can tell whether they are at high Humanity (8-10), medium Humanity (5-7), low Humanity (2-4), or inhuman (1 or on a different Morality path). Kindred with high or middle Humanity are often rightly disturbed by the casual or nonplussed way in which lower-Humanity kindred discuss their night to night endeavors, while those lower in Humanity may consider others to be "soft" or in denial of the realities of life as a predator.

Your starting Morality rating is found by adding your Conscience/Conviction and Self-Control/Instinct traits together.

The Sins of Humanity & Length of Torpor		
10	Selfish thoughts	Two Days
9	Minor selfish actions	One Week
8	Injury to others (Accidental or otherwise)	One Month
7	Theft	Six Months
6	Accidental violation (Drinking too much from a vessel)	One Year
5	Unreasoning destruction (People or property)	Five Years
4	Impassioned violation (Manslaughter, killing while in frenzy)	Ten Years
3	Planned violation (Murder, savored exsanguination)	Fifty Years
2	Casual violation (Thoughtless killing, feeding past satiation)	100 Years
1	Utter perversion	500 Years



9.2 Virtues

Each Morality path has three Virtues which represent your character's ability to adhere to the path and control their Beast. Humanity utilizes the traits *Conscience*, *Self-Control*, and *Courage*, but other paths may use *Conviction* or *Instinct* instead.

Conscience represents how sorry your character feels when they commit a sin, based on the chart above. If you truly repent your actions, represented by winning a Virtue test, you will not lose a dot of Morality.

Self-Control is the ability for you to avoid flying into an anger-fueled frenzy when attacked, threatened, or in danger. Someone with a high *Self-Control* is unlikely to fly off the handle easily.

Courage dictates how easily your character responds to frightening or potentially lethal situations. The Röttschreck is a blind terror frenzy that high levels of *Courage* can prevent.

Conviction represents the character's ability to steel their resolve and swear that they will rise above their temporary failings. It is a cold and dispassionate trait that demands strict adherence to an internal moral compass.

Instinct is very different from *Self-Control* in that those with *Instinct* are in harmony with the Beast and often welcome its rampages. Such characters cannot normally test to avoid frenzy, fully embracing the destruction.

9.2.1 Mortals and Morality

Vampires are unique in the World of Darkness in that they have to actively fight against a powerful internal force trying to drive them to depravity. Humans, no matter how violent, do not have Virtue or Morality traits and are never at risk for frenzy or slipping further into the Beast's clutches.

Humans and most non-vampire supernaturals are never required to make Morality or Conscience tests. Lacking the capacity to frenzy as kindred do, whenever they are faced with great stress, as would otherwise be represented by a *Self-Control* or *Courage* check, they are likely to react either with mortal rage or great fear, without the benefit of a challenge.

All mortals and their reactions to stimuli are under Storyteller control.

9.3 Virtue Tests

In certain situations your character's resolve may be tested, either when attempting to restrain the Beast or when you suffer a lapse of ethics and violate the tenets of your Morality path. In all such cases a static Virtue test will determine the repercussions and may even change the direction of your character.

Normally only two retests are available for any Virtue test: you may spend a Willpower for one retest and you may also spend a corresponding temporary Virtue trait itself to gain another. If you fail the challenge after spending a Virtue trait for a retest, not only do you lose the trait permanently but you suffer additional penalties as described below. If however falling to frenzy or Röttschreck would violate a character's Nature they may receive an additional retest once per night as their core ideals steel their resolve against the Beast.

You may never bid more traits in a *Self-Control/Instinct* or *Courage* test than you have current Blood in your system. If your character is particularly low on Blood, represented by having two traits or fewer, the difficulty for these Virtue tests is increased by one as the need for sustenance whips the Beast into action.

9.3.1 Conscience/Conviction

When you commit a sin equivalent to those listed at or below your current Morality rating a Conscience/Conviction test determines whether or not you lose a permanent dot of Morality. The difficulty of this Static test is half the rating of the sin, rounded down to a minimum of one trait. If you spend a Conscience or Conviction trait to retest and still lose, you additionally gain a permanent Negative trait associated with your sin, as chosen by a Storyteller. Typically only one Morality test is made per scene, barring exceptional circumstances.

9.3.2 Self-Control/Instinct

When incited to frenzy a character may make a Self-Control test to restrain the Beast, with a difficulty determined by the type and severity of the stimulus. Failing this challenge immediately places you into an anger frenzy as described on page 81. If you succeed you need not make further tests against that same stimulus for the rest of the scene, unless it intensifies in difficulty.

Those with Instinct are unable to resist frenzy unless they possess twice the stimulus difficulty in Instinct traits. Instead they may make tests to guide or control their frenzy after it has begun, but their control only lasts for one turn per successful test. Even if successful they cannot stop the destructive nature of the Beast, but they can choose targets for their rage, including inanimate objects. This control also allows them to exert some measure of tactics and higher-thinking for the specific turn, such as not using Masquerade-breaking levels of Celerity. All other benefits and drawbacks of frenzy apply.

Losing a Self-Control/Instinct test when you have spent a Virtue trait for a retest causes you to also gain the permanent Negative trait *Callous* or *Feral*, which may be bought off normally.

Self-Control/Instinct Difficulties	
1 Trait	Smell of blood when hungry
2 Traits	Sight of blood when hungry, life-threatening situation
3 Traits	Physical provocation or attack, taste of blood when hungry
4 Traits	Loved one in danger, humiliated
5 Traits	Outright humiliation, mortal insults

9.3.3 Courage

All characters regardless of Morality path possess Courage, the ability to stay the Beast in its efforts to flee a potentially dangerous situation such as fire or the sun. While you may not be required to test against fire that is under your control, someone brandishing fire at you will almost always require a test. Failure means you fall to Röttschreck, a blind panic described on page 81. Success allows you to withstand the stimulus for the next ten minutes unless the difficulty increases, which necessitates a new challenge.

Spending a Courage for a retest and still losing also grants you the permanent Negative trait *Cowardly* or *Submissive* which can be bought off with experience.

Courage Difficulties	
1 Trait	Being bullied, a flicked lighter, sunrise
2 Traits	Brandished torch, obscured sunlight
3 Traits	Bonfire, uncovered window during daylight
4 Traits	House fire, being burned
5 Traits	Trapped in a burning building, direct sunlight



10 Other Statistics

In addition to attributes, Abilities, Backgrounds, Disciplines, and the rest there are additional elements to a character sheet which demand particular attention. These include Blood, Willpower, and a character's Nature and Demeanor.

10.1 Blood

Cursed to never again enjoy the taste of regular food and drink, blood is the sole nourishment on which a kindred can survive. In fact, kindred cannot ingest any other sustenance, as their body violently rejects it within seconds. Normally obtained by attacking or seducing mortals, more desperate kindred may resort to feeding off of animals or even raiding a blood bank, though such pales in comparison to the taste of fresh blood taken directly from a human.

Once a vampire imbibes blood it becomes *vitae*, imbued with the power of the Beast and capable of fueling a kindred's many superhuman abilities. Blood may be used to:

Wake each night: a kindred automatically expends one blood trait to wake every evening unless they are in torpor.

Heal wounds: described in more detail in Chapter 18, the only way a vampire can heal is through the expenditure of blood.

Activate Disciplines: some Disciplines such as *Celerity* or *Thaumaturgy* require the use of blood to activate.

Gain Physical traits: by spending a Blood vampires can gain a bonus trait on ties for Physical challenges. Bonus traits that do not cause a vampire to exceed their generational maximum (as if Physical were their primary category, see page 7) are retained for the scene or combat. If a character increases their total over their generational limit, the extra only applies for the first Physical challenge subsequently thrown. A character may not gain a bonus greater than half their permanent Physical traits, round up.

Create a ghoul: by feeding a mortal a full point of Blood they gain some semblance of the vampire's powers. More information on ghouls can be found on page 91.


Hide their Predatory Nature: by spending a Blood one can breathe the semblance of life into their skin, negating up to 2 traits of penalty for having low Humanity for a scene or hour. This effect stacks with the Merit *Blush of Health*.

Emulate natural processes: with the expenditure of a Blood a vampire may, for a scene or hour, enliven their body into the semblance of life. They may have a functioning heartbeat, warm their flesh, or even have intercourse, each of which costs a separate Blood trait.

Create a Blood Bond: described further in Chapter 19, even a single taste of *vitae* is enough to form a Blood Bond in another, whether mortal or kindred.

There is a limit to how much Blood a kindred can have within their system at any one time which is based on the Generation Background. More potent characters possess a larger potential Blood pool and in some cases can even spend more than the usual one Blood per turn in a frightening display of their undead prowess. Spending Blood is a reflexive action and may be done at any time. Some powers or situations may require spending more Blood than your character's Generation would allow in one turn—in this case the expenditures may require multiple turns, with effects taking place after all costs are paid.

When a kindred is low on Blood, represented by having five traits or fewer in their system, they risk frenzy at the sight or smell of blood as described in Chapter 9. If a kindred falls to two or fewer traits in their system they become ravenous and all Virtue



test difficulties increase by one. As you cannot bid more traits in a Self-Control/Instinct or Courage test than you have Blood in your system, having a low Blood pool all but ensures frenzy will follow.

If a kindred is forced to spend Blood when they have none in their system, either to wake up or through other means, they instead take a level of unsoakable Lethal damage and instantly fall to frenzy. Characters may not willingly spend Blood they do not possess.

Vampires are highly sensitive to substances present in the blood they ingest. Drugs, alcohol, or other substances diffused in the blood may do more than just add taste—there may be real consequences for the kindred by way of temporary Negative Traits if they partake too heavily of intoxicated prey. The specific repercussions, as determined by a Storyteller, will remain until the traits of *vitae* that caused the drawbacks are used, following the last-in, last-out method. For kindred who spend as little Blood as possible these penalties can last a week or more.

This means that if a vampire gains one trait of tainted Blood that makes them *Lethargic* for instance, they cannot be rid of the Negative trait until they have exhausted all of the blood that was in their system before they gained the trait as well as the problematic traits themselves.

10.1.1 Starting Blood Pool

Each character is assumed to arrive at gather at their maximum Blood pool, as determined by their Generation, minus any points in Blood- or feeding-related Flaws. This penalty can be offset by Blood- or feeding-related Merits and points in the *Hunting* Ability. Use of the *Herd* Background can also offset this starting penalty. Downtime activities, such as routinely using the power of *Earth Meld*, healing a great deal of damage, casting pre-gather Thaumaturgical rituals, maintaining Ghouls (see Chapter 19), and other like activities may further lower your starting Blood pool; please inform the Storytellers of any actions your character has taken during the week that may require Blood expenditures prior to entering play.

If you are unsatisfied with the amount of Blood in your character's system either before play or during gather you may ask a Storyteller to run a feeding scene where your character goes on the hunt, looking for sustenance.


10.2 Willpower

Vampires are often willful creatures, having to resist the dark pull of their Beast and the manipulative influence of other predators at every turn. How resolute a character stands in the face of adversity is represented by their Willpower pool.

Willpower is a special type of trait that is directly related to your character's Generation Background. Lower generation characters begin play with more Willpower and have a higher maximum, while higher generation vampires both begin play with fewer and cannot ever amass as much. Willpower once used, is slow to return, refreshing at a rate of one per week, every Sunday before gather. Additionally, if while running a scene with a Storyteller they determine that you have exemplified your character's nature, they may award you one additional recovered Willpower.

The primary functions of Willpower are to resist the influence of others and to power Disciplines such as *Psychic Projection* or *Quell the Beast*. When you are the defender in a Social or Mental challenge you may spend a temporary Willpower to gain a retest that cannot be cancelled, representing your determination not to be swayed by another. You may also use Willpower to retest Virtue challenges, where your strength of resolve helps keep the Beast at bay.

Willpower however has additional uses and benefits. Once per night per trait category—Physical, Social, and Mental—you may spend a Willpower to completely refresh all traits lost due to challenges or other effects, though this can only be done outside of challenges. Similarly if a Storyteller declares that a particular challenge requires a certain



level of Ability to attempt (e.g. *Security* to pick a lock) you may spend a Willpower to be allowed the challenge even if you do not meet the prerequisites.

By spending a Willpower trait you may temporarily suppress the effects of an active Derangement for the scene, which gives you time to leave the area or otherwise avoid the situation which has triggered the malady. Through a great deal of effort and many Willpower expenditures, it may be possible to overcome a permanent Derangement.

Through your force of will, represented by spending a temporary Willpower, you may completely ignore all wound penalties up to and including *Incapacitated* and also guide yourself in Frenzy or Röttschreck for a single turn. In addition if you believe a trigger for frenzy may be present in a scene, you may pre-emptively spend a Willpower to steel yourself against it, preventing the need for a test, but this can only be done before the trigger is present, and then at Storyteller discretion. This expenditure represents your character keeping things together just long enough to leave the situation. Frenzy is explored more fully on page 81.

Mortals rarely possess more than one or two Willpower.

10.3 Nature and Demeanor

Every kindred's personality is defined by two aspects: that which lives at their core and that which they show the world. These archetypes are respectively called your Nature and Demeanor and they play important roles both in the way your character interacts with others and mechanically from a gameplay perspective.

One's Demeanor may change from week to week, the kindred endeavoring to show a personality best suited for a given situation. Younger characters are more likely to change their Demeanors while older or less mercurial kindred have fallen into regular and comfortable routines that reliably serve them well. Natures on the other hand almost never change, representing an outlook and methodology to their schemes that lays at the center of their being. Selecting the right Nature and Demeanor at character creation can help you shape how you role-play the character and may act as guiding principles for the many interactions the character will have with others.

A character's Nature has mechanical benefits and drawbacks as well. If falling to frenzy would cause the character to violate his Nature, once per evening he may get an additional retest to avoid the ravages of the Beast by drawing on their inner motivations. However if another character discovers their true Nature, they may forever bid it as a Negative trait in any applicable challenges, as determined by the Storyteller. Kindred are usually very careful to keep their true motives and schemes carefully hidden from curious onlookers.

10.3.1 Sample Archetypes

Architect — build something for the future, leave a lasting impression

Autocrat — take charge and do things right

Bon Vivant — you live only for pleasure and sensation

Bravo — others just get in the way unless you rein them in

Caregiver — you strive to comfort and protect others

Celebrant — indulge in your passions, whatever they may be

Child — others must protect and care for you

Competitor — everything is a contest that you must win

Conformist — fall in line, following orders

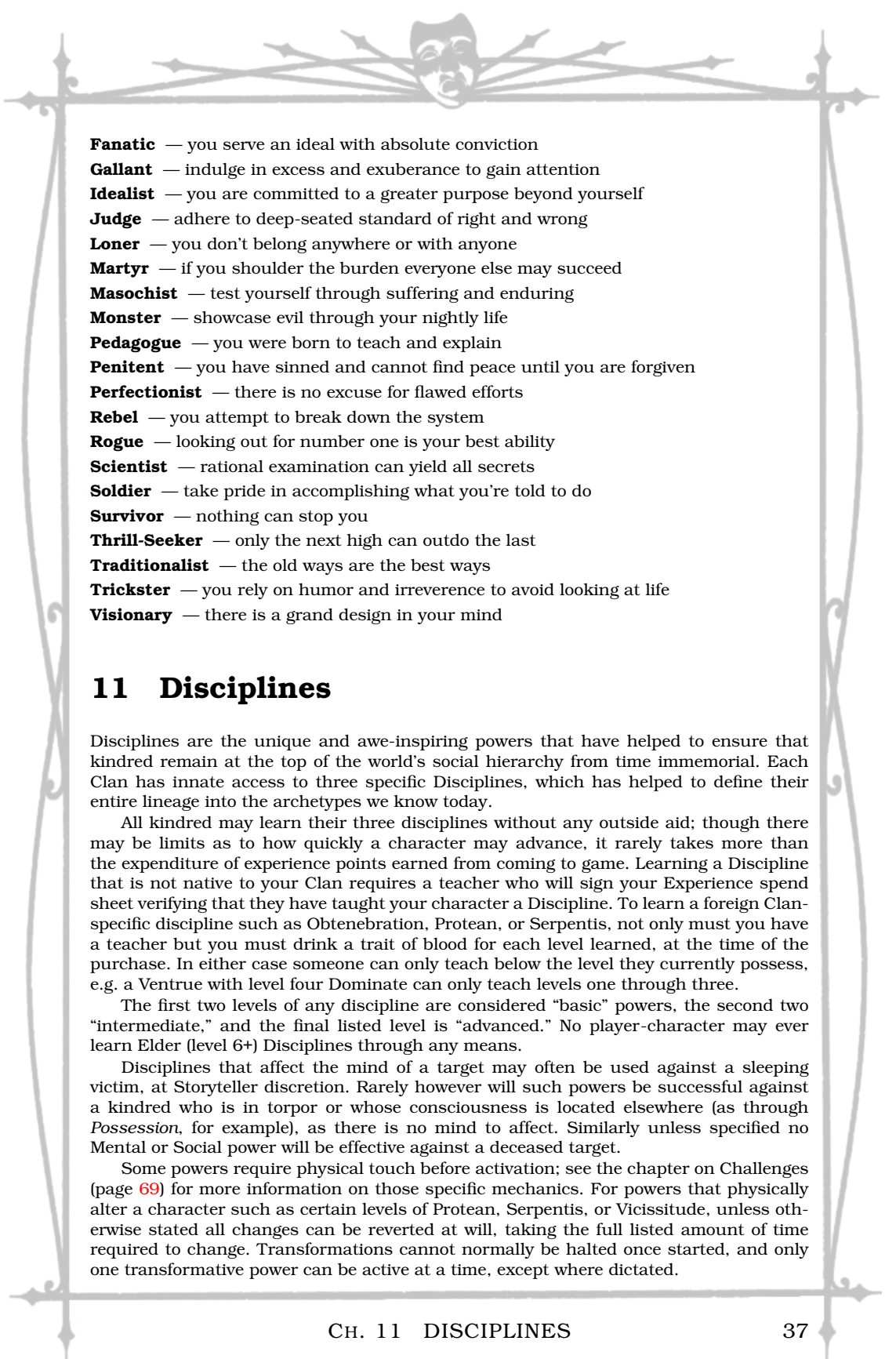
Conniver — get someone else to do your job

Curmudgeon — everything is terrible and you're going to let everyone know it

Dabbler — never stop learning and trying new things, new experiences

Deviant — you have no care for social etiquette or rules of behavior

Director — impose order on others



Fanatic — you serve an ideal with absolute conviction
Gallant — indulge in excess and exuberance to gain attention
Idealist — you are committed to a greater purpose beyond yourself
Judge — adhere to deep-seated standard of right and wrong
Loner — you don't belong anywhere or with anyone
Martyr — if you shoulder the burden everyone else may succeed
Masochist — test yourself through suffering and enduring
Monster — showcase evil through your nightly life
Pedagogue — you were born to teach and explain
Penitent — you have sinned and cannot find peace until you are forgiven
Perfectionist — there is no excuse for flawed efforts
Rebel — you attempt to break down the system
Rogue — looking out for number one is your best ability
Scientist — rational examination can yield all secrets
Soldier — take pride in accomplishing what you're told to do
Survivor — nothing can stop you
Thrill-Seeker — only the next high can outdo the last
Traditionalist — the old ways are the best ways
Trickster — you rely on humor and irreverence to avoid looking at life
Visionary — there is a grand design in your mind

11 Disciplines

Disciplines are the unique and awe-inspiring powers that have helped to ensure that kindred remain at the top of the world's social hierarchy from time immemorial. Each Clan has innate access to three specific Disciplines, which has helped to define their entire lineage into the archetypes we know today.

All kindred may learn their three disciplines without any outside aid; though there may be limits as to how quickly a character may advance, it rarely takes more than the expenditure of experience points earned from coming to game. Learning a Discipline that is not native to your Clan requires a teacher who will sign your Experience spend sheet verifying that they have taught your character a Discipline. To learn a foreign Clan-specific discipline such as Obtenebration, Protean, or Serpentinis, not only must you have a teacher but you must drink a trait of blood for each level learned, at the time of the purchase. In either case someone can only teach below the level they currently possess, e.g. a Ventrue with level four Dominate can only teach levels one through three.

The first two levels of any discipline are considered “basic” powers, the second two “intermediate,” and the final listed level is “advanced.” No player-character may ever learn Elder (level 6+) Disciplines through any means.

Disciplines that affect the mind of a target may often be used against a sleeping victim, at Storyteller discretion. Rarely however will such powers be successful against a kindred who is in torpor or whose consciousness is located elsewhere (as through *Possession*, for example), as there is no mind to affect. Similarly unless specified no Mental or Social power will be effective against a deceased target.

Some powers require physical touch before activation; see the chapter on Challenges (page 69) for more information on those specific mechanics. For powers that physically alter a character such as certain levels of Protean, Serpentinis, or Vicissitude, unless otherwise stated all changes can be reverted at will, taking the full listed amount of time required to change. Transformations cannot normally be halted once started, and only one transformative power can be active at a time, except where dictated.

11.1 Animalism

This power represents control over the animal kingdom, and is retested by the *Animal Ken* Ability. Usually possessed by the Tzimisce, Gangrel, Nosferatu, and Ravnos Clans, it is only able to affect animals with vermin-level intelligence or better; this Discipline is wholly unusable on insects or similar lower-functioning creatures. Statistics for and availability of particular animals are at Storyteller discretion.

- 1 – Feral Whispers:** By looking into the eyes of an animal you may speak verbally with it. With a Static Social challenge versus 6-8 traits you may issue simple commands which will be followed to the best of the animal's usually limited ability for the next scene or hour.
- 2 – Beckoning:** By calling out to animals you may summon them to your presence. Spend a Social Trait for each animal desired and role-play making the squawks, barks, howls, or other noises indicative of the chosen species. If present, the nearest applicable animals will hear the call and respond. Alternatively you may endeavor to call to a specific animal, such as a favored pet.
- 3 – Quell the Beast:** Touching or meeting the gaze of a victim allows you to temper their passions. With a successful contested Social Challenge you force your subject to be *Submissive* x2 for an hour or scene, also negating their ability to spend temporary Willpower. If your target is in the midst of Frenzy or Röttschreck this power instead instantly snaps them back to lucidity with no other effect, without requiring any additional tests on the part of the frenzying kindred. In either case, using this power against another supernatural creature, requires you to spend a Willpower before engaging in the challenge. Multiple uses of this power are not cumulative.
- 4 – Subsume the Spirit:** By locking eyes with an animal you may move your consciousness into it, causing your body to fall limp. This power requires no test but necessitates that you spend a Social trait to enact it. You are limited by the physical constraints of your new form, but by spending additional Social traits you may transfer the ability to use social and mental powers, as seen on the chart below.


For each Social trait spent on this possession you gain a semi-permanent Negative trait of *Feral* until you spend a Willpower to remove it on a one-for-one basis. These traits and your expenditures to remove them should be logged with the Storytellers.

You are not aware of anything that happens to your body, and any damage you suffer while in animal form is sympathetically transferred to your torpid corpse. To leave the body you must declare so at the beginning of the combat turn. If your host is still alive at the end of that turn you return and wake normally. If you take damage during the turn you escape, throw a Simple Test: a tie means you behave as that animal for the rest of the scene after your return, while a loss results in you instantly frenzying. If your animal is killed before you can escape, you fall Incapacitated with lethal damage.

If your defenseless, nearly-torpid body is staked your consciousness instantly returns to it, but you are rendered helpless per normal. If your body is torpored your mind returns and you fall to slumber. If however you are slain while your mind is possessing the animal, you cannot leave it (without use of a power like *Psychic Projection*) and your soul dissipates with the coming dawn.

Subsume the Spirit	
1 Trait	Simple Possession
2 Traits	Can use Auspex
3 Traits	and Presence and Animalism
4 Traits	and Dementation and Dominate

- 5 – Drawing Out the Beast:** In lieu of making a Self-Control/Instinct test to avoid Frenzy you may issue a Social Challenge to a human or vampire within range. If you succeed, your beast enters them and they suffer your frenzy instead, leaving



you under the effects of *Quell the Beast* and also unable to frenzy until your Beast returns at the frenzy's conclusion. If the target leaves the scene before the frenzy is exhausted however you will continue to suffer these effects until you act in a monstrous enough fashion in the Beast's presence to "convince" the Beast to come back.

If the target in the grips of your Beast dies in your presence you immediately suffer the full wrath of the Frenzy and cannot use Willpower to attempt to control it.

11.2 Auspex

Sharpening the senses to superhuman levels, the *Investigation* Ability is used to retest this gift used by the Malkavians, Toreador, and Tremere. When challenging someone using Obfuscate, the Auspex user, who is the defender, may add their level in Auspex (1-5) as bonus traits. This bonus may also be applied at Storyteller discretion when using Auspex to aid in the search or investigation of an area.

1 – Heightened Senses: Improving some or all of your senses to twice their normal effectiveness you may detect uses of Obfuscate and observe goings-on from far distances. Should your senses be overwhelmed however by loud noises or lights, you will be unable to use this power for the remainder of the scene unless you spend a Willpower to do so. In addition you will be stunned for some moments, as determined by a Storyteller. This power may help a kindred find their way in nearly absolute darkness (see Chapter 16).


2 – Aura Perception: By staring at someone for a full three seconds (one combat turn) you may ask one of the following questions and receive a truthful answer by winning a Static Mental challenge against their current Mental traits: What is your current mood or emotional state? What sort of creature are you (human, ghoul, vampire, other)? Are you under the effects of magic? Have you committed diablerie (see page 88)? Was the last thing you said a lie (applicable on mortals only)? Are you currently under the effects of an active Derangement? This power has no function on dead mortals or torpid vampire bodies, including those using powers like *Possession* or *Psychic Projection*.

In addition if you suspect a ghost or psychic entity is in the area you may spend a Mental trait and then make this test, which allows you to see that an aura is present, but not enough to identify an individual or ask any of the above questions.

3 – Spirit's Touch: By touching an object and concentrating for a full turn you may sense traces of emotion left within an object. Spend a Mental trait to ask one of the following questions per application of this power: Who was the last person to significantly touch this item? Was this object used in any emotionally-charged events? What strong emotions drove someone holding this object? If you are attempting to gain insight about someone who was using Obfuscate, a separate static Mental challenge may be required to learn their true identity, at Storyteller discretion.

4 – Telepathy: By projecting your thoughts into a visible subject's mind, requiring a Contested Mental challenge retested with *Investigation*, you may establish a connection after spending a full turn in concentration. This power only functions while the two participating characters are in close proximity, typically line-of-sight or line-of-effect. If either character leaves the immediate area contact is broken. The minds of supernatural creatures are more difficult to break into and require the expenditure of a Mental trait before you attempt the challenge.

If successful you enter the subject's surface thoughts and may ask the following questions, in addition to those allowed by *Aura Perception*: What is the appearance of a person/place/item about which you are speaking? What have you omitted from the answer to a recent question, if any? What is the true answer to a question you lied about? What memories do you have about (a specific element) of current conversation?



While in their surface thoughts you may also project your own thoughts, allowing for two-way communication. While just listening to someone's surface thoughts is a passive and unobtrusive activity, directly interacting with them through communication will alert them to the foreign presence. Subjects who are aware of your mental presence and are uncooperative require you to issue a Contested Mental challenge (defended against with *Subterfuge*) for each question.

Telepathy also allows you to probe deeper, delving into the hidden recesses of your subject's mind. This process is invasive and clearly announces your presence. Asking any of these questions requires a separate Mental Challenge, against which the defender may bid their full permanent Mental Trait total, using *Subterfuge* to retest. If asking these questions of a supernatural creature, each question requires the expenditure of a Mental Trait before the challenge: What is one of your Flaws? What is one of your Negative Traits? What is one of your Derangements? In all cases the subject chooses the information to reveal if there are multiple possible answers, and you must spend the Mental trait even if the target is willing.

If you suspect a telepathic conversation is occurring in your vicinity you may make a Static Mental challenge against the initiator of the Telepathy to listen in to the ongoing conversation.

Telepathy is often role-played in more grand or invasive fashion by invoking the first Golden Rule between players, but the core mechanics of the power are presented here and will stand in the case of conflict; all other effects are by mutual player agreement only.

5 – Psychic Projection: Leaving your body behind by spending a Willpower, your spirit may move in any direction the speed of thought and through any physical barrier. Your Psychic form looks like the idealized version of yourself, and cannot be concealed or obscured through disguise or powers such as *Obfuscate*. To materialize in the physical plane costs an additional Willpower, and such manifestation lasts for one turn. While manifesting you may speak normally and can be heard and may use Mental or Social Disciplines by spending a Mental trait before making the attempt.


While projecting you are totally unaware of injury that may befall your body though you can always find your way back by virtue of a tiny silver cord that links your consciousness to your torpid form. Other psychic entities may endeavor to follow or even attack your cord however, as you may theirs in a battle of Willpower.

If your defenseless body is staked you immediately rush back to it, but are rendered helpless as normal. If you are torpored you likewise return to your now-inert body. If however your body is slain while you are active in the Psychic realms, you become instantly aware of it and are trapped there, unable to affect the physical world save as described above. In this sad case your soul dissolves with the local dawn.

Projecting characters are still limited to their normal senses of sight and smell, though they cannot touch or interact with any physical object, even when manifesting. Darkness penalties (see Chapter 16) apply as normal. While traveling at great speeds you are not able to observe your surroundings clearly or perhaps at all. The hand sign representing this power's use is a closed fist held vertically below the chin.

11.3 Celerity

Practiced by the Assamite, Brujah, and Toreador, Celerity allows a kindred to move faster than humanly possible, allowing for truly superhuman feats. Activating Celerity costs one Blood trait per combat turn, regardless of the level(s) used. Mental and Social actions may not be taken during Celerity follow-up rounds. One cannot normally use *Obfuscate* while in Celerity, and all uses of Celerity other than *Alacrity* are obvious to all observers. All challenges taken during Celerity rounds use their standard retests. Curiously Celerity does not cause thrown objects to travel faster or harder than normal.

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- 1 – Alacrity:** A single action may be taken at any time during the combat turn, including pre-empting other challenges. You may take one step, interact with the environment, draw a single weapon, or step between two combatants. You may neither step out of a challenge nor initiate direct challenges with others.
- 2 – Swiftiness:** This level of movement breaks the Masquerade as you receive a single follow-up after the Everyman round, moving faster than is humanly possible.
- 3 – Rapidity:** In tests of Dexterity while you have Celerity active you may now throw the bomb which defeats rock and paper but loses to scissors. You must declare that you can throw the bomb before the challenge is thrown. See Chapter 15 for more information.
- 4 – Legerity:** Moving as a blur you may take a second follow-up round which comes after the Swiftiness round.
- 5 – Fleetness:** In challenges of Dexterity with Celerity active, you now win all ties. You must declare the use of this power before a challenge is thrown. If multiple contenders are using win all ties powers, compare traits as normal.


11.4 Dementation

A strange and mostly-unknown discipline only recently discovered in Sabbat Malkavians, Dementation is a power that inflicts confusion and psychological torture on its victims. The appropriate retest is *Empathy*.

- 1 – Passion:** With a Social challenge you may dull your victim's senses, granting them the Negative Trait *Submissive* or ramp them up, granting them *Impatient*, either one for a full scene or hour.
- 2 – The Haunting:** Terrifying nightmares follow your target as you make their reality truly terrifying. Choose what sense is affected, spend a blood, and succeed in a Social challenge to bestow the Derangement *Schizophrenia* on your victim (see page 53) for the next scene or hour.
- 3 – Eyes of Chaos:** By studying the world or its inhabitants you may gain insight as to its inner workings. If you study an individual for a full turn and spend a Mental trait you may learn their Nature with a successful Contested Mental challenge. Failing this challenge wracks you with the Toreador Clan disadvantage until you are disturbed as you study the person's intricate patterns. If you study the world itself and spend a Mental trait you cannot be surprised in combat for the next scene or hour.
- 4 – Voice of Madness:** By speaking aloud to your victims in a reasonable tone you can cause panic and rage. Spend a Blood and then speak for a full turn. With a mass Social challenge you may force all kindred in the area who are able to hear you to test for Rōtschreck using Self-Control/Instinct versus four traits. You must also test, though only against three traits. Mortals are automatically feared and flee in blind panic, likely not remembering their actions or the situation at hand.
- 5 – Total Insanity:** You must create an approved "derangement deck" to use this power, which contains the approved *Sanguine Dreams* Derangements that can be afflicted on your target. By capturing your target's attention for a full turn and spending a Blood you may make a Social challenge. Success cripples the target's mind as they suffer five active Derangements at once for the next scene or hour, drawn randomly from your deck.

11.5 Dominate

A powerful mind-controlling discipline wielded by the Giovanni, Lasombra, Tremere, and Ventrue, *Intimidation* is used to retest these Mental challenges. No-one can be Dominated to act in a self-destructive or suicidal manner, and your commands must be verbal and typically in a language the subject understands. Dominate is completely ineffective



against vampires of a lower generation; when using this Discipline against another kindred, if the challenge succeeds you must declare your generation to the target. If your *vitae* is less potent than theirs, the Dominate does not take effect, though your character does not know why it failed. Dominate functions on a character's actions and cannot be used to affect their emotions.

1 – Command: You may give a single-word command of action to someone who meets your gaze, which must be simple and easily understood. The Command will be followed for no longer than 10 minutes.

2 – Mesmerism: You may now lay a more complicated Dominate within your subject, even including a trigger or activation hook, e.g. “when you next see the Prince, ask him for a kerchief.” This Dominate may still only contain one action to be performed. Only one Mesmerism may be implanted in a subject at a time, with new Dominators making a Static Mental challenge against the original one's traits. If successful the new Mesmerism supplants the old, regardless of the Dominators' Generations. As with *Command*, actions dictated through *Mesmerism* cannot last more than 10 minutes.

3 – Forgetful Mind: By speaking with your subject for up to 15 minutes and with a successful Mental challenge you may rewrite memories of up to the same length, filling them with as much or as little detail as you would care to. If you believe a particular memory has been falsified with this power you may similarly challenge to bring forth the original memories. In either case you must specify the time and date, such as “8:35pm on the 1st of July, this year.” In the event a memory has been altered, a similar Simple test must be thrown as above. At Storyteller discretion the use of this power in conjunction with *Telepathy* may reveal additional altered memories.

4 – Conditioning: Bending the mind of your victim to your will, a captive can be turned into a useful tool. After an hour of intense interrogation make a Mental challenge. The Conditioning only succeeds if this process continues, every night, until you have accrued more successes than they have permanent Willpower. Those so conditioned no longer receive a test to resist your future Dominates and you may issue them without making eye contact; being in their presence is sufficient. You may layer multiple Mesmerisms in the subject, up to their permanent Willpower. A subject so conditioned receives a free retest against all uses of Dominate by other individuals while they remain your thrall. In addition, a Mesmerism from another Dominator does not replace or override those already in place unless it directly contradicts an implanted directive, though the above Static test is required in any case.

While Conditioned mortals lose all sense of individuality and blindly follow instructions, kindred thralls act more as Manchurian Candidates, waiting for the triggers to follow your prescribed demands. By wilfully avoiding your presence it is possible for a thrall to break out of your influence after several weeks. Needless to say, a victim can only be Conditioned by one Dominator at a time.

5 – Possession: By touching a mortal you may move your consciousness into their body, your own falling lifeless to the floor. Spend a Willpower and issue a Mental challenge. If successful you must spend one Mental trait to engage the Possession, and may spend more to allow additional powers to transfer with you, per the chart below. You are not aware of anything that happens to your physical body, and any damage your host suffers while you possess it is sympathetically transferred to your torpid corpse.

To leave the body you must declare so at the beginning of the combat turn. If your host is still alive at the end of that turn you return and wake normally. If the body is killed before you can escape, you fall Incapacitated with lethal damage. If you take damage during the turn you escape, throw a Simple Test; a loss results in you instantly frenzying as you return to your kindred body.

If your defenseless, nearly-torpid body is staked your consciousness instantly returns to it, but you are rendered helpless per normal. If your body is torpored your

mind returns and you fall to slumber. If however you are slain while your mind is possessing the mortal, you cannot leave it (without use of a power like *Psychic Projection*) and your soul dissipates with the coming dawn.

Possession	
1 Trait	Simple Possession
2 Traits	Can use Auspex
3 Traits	and Presence and Dominate
4 Traits	and Dementation and Animalism

11.6 Fortitude

The vampire's reputation for being indestructible is likely owed to uses of this power, which protects Gangrel, Ravnos, and Ventruue from being injured. While there are no applicable retests for the use of Fortitude itself, all tests to absorb damage with Stamina traits are retested with the *Survival Ability*.

- 1 – Endurance:** Replace your Wounded and Incapacitated health levels with additional Bruised levels; you do not suffer the normal effects for being severely injured until reaching Torpor.
- 2 – Mettle:** Gain an additional Healthy health level.
- 3 – Resilience:** When you suffer aggravated damage you may make a Simple test to reduce a single wound to lethal. If you expend a Stamina trait you win on ties.
- 4 – Resistance:** When you suffer lethal or bashing damage you may make a Simple test to reduce a single wound to nothing. If you expend a Stamina trait you win on ties. This power stacks with Resilience, allowing you to test a single aggravated wound to nothing, if successful in both challenges. Note that to win ties on both Simple tests you must expend two Stamina-related traits.
- 5 – Aegis:** By spending a permanent Willpower, kindred possessing this level of Fortitude can shrug off even the most damaging blows, becoming truly immortal for the current combat turn. Not only are they immune to further damage, they also erase all damage already taken this turn. To avoid being staked this power must be used before the two Simple tests are thrown. Burning for Aegis in this way removes a permanent Willpower trait from your sheet, first drawing from unspent Willpower if available (e.g. someone starting with 4 permanent Willpower and 2 unspent would be reduced to 3 permanent and 1 unspent).


In addition, characters with this level of Fortitude may bid the win-all-ties Stamina trait of *Aegis* in tests to resist damage. This trait cannot be used offensively, does not prevent touch-based attacks from succeeding, and does not count toward trait totals, but can never be lost due to losing challenges and has no cost to use. Additionally the trait *Aegis* can be “expended” to win ties in testing down damage with Fortitude levels three and four. You may not utilize this use of *Aegis* if you possess no Stamina-related traits.

11.7 Necromancy

See the *Crimson Terrors* rules addendum for all aspects of Necromancy and wraiths.

11.8 Obfuscate

The power to conceal the wielder from the minds of those nearby, this power is used to great effect by the Assamite, Followers of Set, Malkavian, Nosferatu, and Ravnos Clans. Obfuscate conceals the user, their clothes, and small held items and possessions. The user of Obfuscate is the aggressor in all challenges relating to its use, but may add their



level of Obfuscate (1-5) as bonus traits in such tests. Since Obfuscate clouds the mind, individuals affected by it will take reasonable precautions to avoid bumping into the user, such as walking around them or holding a door open for them to follow on their way out. Obfuscate will always be broken if the user interacts with their environment in a meaningful way, including moving furniture, walking through a conversation, splashing in a puddle, bumping noisily against something, using a Presence power, moving in Celerity, or issuing a Physical Challenge. *Stealth* is the appropriate retest for Obfuscate.

- 1 – Cloak of Shadows:** While remaining motionless in a pool of shadow or nearly total concealment behind an object, none will observe your presence. This concealment is broken if you move, speak, or your hiding place is illuminated. The hand sign to represent use of Level 1 or 2 Obfuscate is a hand held open in front of the mouth.
- 2 – Unseen Presence:** You may now walk slowly (1 step per full combat turn) while using Obfuscate, though staying to the shadows is highly encouraged from a role-play perspective. You may only enter Obfuscate in areas meeting the requirements for *Cloak of Shadows*.
- 3 – Mask of a Thousand Faces:** While using this power your facial features become bland and unremarkable, making you a generic “everyman,” of your gender and of average height and weight. So dramatic is this blurring of features that appearance-based Negative Social traits (such as *Bestial* and *Repugnant*) are suppressed while you are hidden by this power, at Storyteller discretion.

By spending a Mental trait you may assume a specific set of features instead of a generic face, though in both cases neither your clothing nor carried items altered by the illusion. Through this trait expenditure you can alter your apparent height and weight slightly as well, or even your gender. Regardless of appearance you continue to rely on your own Social traits. To convincingly appear as someone who possesses more Social traits than you, you must spend Blood to make up the difference, giving your illusion more validity. This application does not actually grant you any additional traits, and you may only spend Blood to emulate traits up to your normal generational cap. Talk to a Storyteller when attempting to masquerade as another character.

Mask of a Thousand Faces is also the only Obfuscate power that can be used while moving in Celerity, and which permits the use of Presence while active.


- 4 – Vanish from the Mind’s Eye:** You may now initiate your use of Obfuscate even when individuals are observing you, leaving them to not worry about where you went. This power acts as a mob challenge, you versus all onlookers, who may activate Auspex in response to this challenge. If performed in combat this power activates at the end of the combat turn (see Chapter 16).

You may now whisper while in Obfuscate and not automatically drop into visibility to all; however those hearing you may test as if you had interacted with your environment.

- 5 – Cloak the Gathering:** By spending one Mental trait per subject (up to 5) you may use your lower powers of Obfuscate on willing individuals so long as they remain within 10’ of you. Only one power can be imparted at a time; you could not grant both *Mask of a Thousand Faces* and *Unseen Presence* at once. Nor may an individual be under multiple instances of the same level of Obfuscate at the same time. Anyone attempting to pierce this effect must test against you; success means they see through the entire illusion. If a single individual breaks their Obfuscate by interacting with his environment or other action, only they are revealed. This power may only be used on targets who are both willing and conscious.

11.9 Obtenebration

A Discipline steeped in mystery, only the stoic Lasombra have claimed mastery over its dark secrets. All challenges for Obtenebration are retested with *Occult*. A practitioner



may see through their own Obtenebration shadows without penalty but all others suffer the effects of blindness (see Combat, page 74). All shadows created with Obtenebration dissipate immediately if subjected to true sunlight.


- 1 – Shadow Play:** By controlling natural and supernatural shadows, you may help yourself or hinder foes, even in areas of great brightness. By spending a Blood you may choose one of several effects: grant yourself +1 Trait in challenges of Stealth, gain +1 Trait in challenges of Intimidation, or inflict a foe with the Negative trait *Clumsy* with a Mental versus Physical challenge, retested with *Occult*.
- 2 – Shroud of Night:** Spend a Blood to create a globe of inky darkness roughly 10' in diameter anywhere within 50' of you. Anyone entering the Shroud gains the Negative trait *Clumsy* though you must best a target in a Mental versus Physical challenge to summon it on their location, retested with *Occult*. The Negative trait Shroud issues is not cumulative with that from Shadow Play. You may move the shroud at a walking pace (1 step per combat turn) so long as you maintain full concentration.
- 3 – Arms of the Abyss:** You may summon inky tentacles from a nearby shadow by spending a Blood and spending one Social trait per arm, to a maximum of one-third your permanent Social traits, rounded down. These arms are treated as NPC assistants for the purpose of Mob Combat. If acting independently they possess three traits and no Abilities or Disciplines.
- 4 – Black Metamorphosis:** Spending two Blood traits and a Social trait allows you to sprout four Arms of the Abyss from your own body, which grants you the traits *Intimidating* x3 and the ability to see through all mundane darkness. In addition to helping you in Mob Combat, at the conclusion of each combat turn you may make a Static test against an opponent in melee range; success means you may either deal 1 Lethal or grant the victim *Clumsy* as a dark tentacle numbs a limb. The same target may only receive one negative trait this way.
- 5 – Tenebrous Form:** Collapse into a puddle of infinite darkness roughly conforming to a humanoid shape by spending three Blood traits and spending three full turns in concentration. While in this form you may see through all natural darkness without penalty and cannot be harmed by physical attacks, though magic, fire, and sunlight function normally. You are unaffected by gravity, allowing you to climb up any vertical surface, and may slip through any small crack or hole. By making a Mental versus Physical challenge you may wrap yourself around someone's face, mirroring the effects of *Shroud of Night*.

While in this form you take an additional level of damage from fire, sunlight, and magical effects, and your capacity to use Disciplines is greatly hindered by your lack of eyes, vocal chords, and usable Blood pool.

11.10 Potence

Showing truly inhuman strength Brujah, Giovanni, Lasombra, and Nosferatu kindred can perform truly amazing feats, though any use of Intermediate or Advanced Potence is an obvious breach of the Masquerade. Potence augments other challenges and as such does not have retests of its own. Curiously Potence does not allow thrown weapons or objects to travel faster or farther than normal.

- 1 – Prowess:** Once per evening you may refresh your Strength-based traits at no cost. In addition your brawl and melee attacks may cause Lethal damage if you choose.
- 2 – Might:** In tests of Strength you may now use the Might retest, which settles the matter definitively—there are no further retests after Might has been called, though its use can be canceled by an opponent also using this power.
- 3 – Vigor:** In challenges of Strength you may now throw the bomb, which beats paper and rock but loses to scissors. You must state before the test is thrown that you are able to throw the bomb. See Chapter 15 for more information.

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- 4 – Intensity:** When entering a test of Strength you may bid the singular trait *Intense*, which can never be lost but does not count toward tie resolution. If you possess no other Strength traits you may not use Intensity.
- 5 – Puissance:** In a Strength-based contest you may win all ties and also deal an extra level of Lethal damage, but the use of this power must be declared prior to the challenge being thrown. If used in a challenge this power prevents you from pulling your punch in any way. Items not used as designed or possessing the Negative Trait of *Fragile* may very well break with this level of Potence, at Storyteller discretion.

11.11 Presence


The seductive lord of the manor with his fancy galas and impeccable smile, wooing the hearts of visitors from across the land—this is the result of well-practiced applications of Presence, a force of personality few can resist. Wielded by the Brujah, Followers of Set, Toreador, and Ventrue, it is devastating in the right hands. All Presence tests are retested by the *Leadership* Ability.

- 1 – Awe:** By spending a Social trait you draw everyone's attention to you for a moment, catching the eye of everyone in the room. To forcibly meet someone's gaze in order to use another power on them, such as Dominate, you must best them in a Social challenge. Awe may be used as a retest in all Social challenges by similarly spending a Social Trait.
- 2 – Dread Gaze:** By baring your fangs and hissing you may drive away an unwanted guest with a Social challenge. If successful the subject flees in terror from your presence and will stay away for the scene or hour. If they are forced to confront you or escape is impossible they must bid an extra trait in all challenges against you due to fear. This power is an obvious breach of the Masquerade and is an offensive Discipline.
- 3 – Entrancement:** By besting your subject in a Social challenge they will be favorably disposed toward you and will not insult or attack you for the rest of the scene or hour, barring hostile actions on your part toward them. They are encouraged to role-play as if you are an ally or friend, or at the least neutral, if they started off as hostile.
- 4 – Summon:** Your mastery of Presence is such that you can call individuals to you, even across great distances. With a Social challenge you can force someone to approach, though targets out of the immediate scene require a Willpower expenditure to reach. Your Status applies to this challenge. Ask a Storyteller to perform the challenge on your behalf; you are not aware of its failure or success unless the individual arrives. If successful the subject will make reasonable haste to arrive at your location to be in your presence, though they will not know the supernatural nature of the compulsion to see you. They will not travel through or to any knowingly dangerous situation, or go to those who they believe wish them harm, and all Summons are broken at daybreak. If the summoner leaves the immediate area the Summon is likewise broken.

You can only Summon individuals you know, at minimum those with whom you have had several minutes of conversation. If a person is Summoned by multiple individuals, the most potent Generation wins. In the case of ties the first Summon overrides others until completed or broken.

In the event you have interacted with someone using *Mask of a Thousand Faces* to impersonate the individual you wish to Summon, whomever is closest to you, whether the actual target or the illusion, will suffer its effects. When in doubt see a Storyteller.

- 5 – Majesty:** By spending a Willpower you exert your force of personality over everyone in the area for a full scene or hour. As long as your Majesty is active nobody may insult or act aggressively toward you. A subject may contest your Majesty with a Social challenge, in which you are the aggressor, but must spend a Willpower to do



so. Failure means the same subject may not re-contest your same Majesty within the same scene. If you take a hostile or offensive action the aura fades instantly and many onlookers may be outraged with the sudden shift of emotions. If you enact Majesty near other kindred they receive an automatic test to avoid its effects without the need to spend Willpower.

11.12 Protean


Command over the wilds and the rampaging Beast within themselves are the hallmarks of Clan Gangrel, who alone boast this transformative power. All transformations take place at the resolution of the relevant combat turn. There are no challenges associated with Protean and as such no specific retests.

- 1 – Eyes of the Beast:** A rather glaring breach of the Masquerade, this power causes a kindred's eyes to glow bright red, granting them the ability to see in normal darkness (see Chapter 16) but suffering the Negative Trait *Bestial*. There is no cost to activate this power.
- 2 – Earth Meld:** While touching raw soil, spend a Blood trait to meld slowly into the ground, taking your full turn and concentration. While so submerged your spirit is diffused and almost entirely hidden from spirits or curious investigators. If the soil is disturbed (by someone digging with a shovel, for instance) you explode out of the dirt, unable to act in the first turn.
- 3 – Feral Claws:** By spending a Blood these claws emerge from your fingers at the end of the turn. Dealing an Aggravated wound if used to attack, they also grant a +1 bonus for tie comparison. Attacks with claws use the *Brawl* Ability for retests. You may not hold weapons with this transformative power active.
- 4 – Shape of the Beast:** By spending a Blood and waiting three full turns, though the process can be expedited one turn per extra Blood spent, your person and small personal possessions are transformed either into a wolf or bat. While in wolf form you gain the traits *Quick* and *Brutal* and the effects of Feral Claws. While in bat form you take no penalties for movement and can fly but may only bid three traits when acting offensively. Other Gangrel animal forms may be allowed by the Storytellers but will share the traits presented here. *Eyes of the Beast* and *Mist Form* may be used while so transformed.
- 5 – Mist Form:** By spending a Blood and waiting three full turns, expedited one turn per extra Blood spent, your body turns into an insubstantial mist, able to move at normal pace (1-3 steps) in any direction. You become immune to mundane attacks and take one less level of damage from fire and sunlight. You are still affected normally by magical attacks and have no blood with which to fuel other powers. If you fall to any frenzy you leave Mist Form automatically.

11.13 Quietus

Practiced solely by the dangerous Assamite assassins, *Quietus* is a mystical Discipline that leaves their victims helpless. Most powers do not have retests of their own, relying on *Brawl*, *Melee*, and perhaps *Athletics* where appropriate. Any poisons created through vitae become inert at sunrise.

- 1 – Silence of Death:** By spending a Blood you create a stationary field of absolute silence in a 10' radius around yourself wherein which no sound can be created or escape, though muffled sounds can enter, lasting for a scene or hour.
- 2 – Scorpion's Touch:** Each Blood trait you fuel into this power is converted into a potent contact poison that causes victims to lose a Physical trait above any lost from a challenge. You may coat a weapon with a number of doses up to its bonus traits, and/or hold one dose in your mouth to spit at an opponent. The poison is touch-based and attacks need not deal damage to be successful in delivering its effects.



Each attack inflicts one dose of poison, and each dose of poison takes a full turn to create.

- 3 – Dagon's Call:** After successfully touching your target you may at any point in the scene declare that you are using this power. Inform the Storytellers how many Willpower you are spending; for each Willpower spent your target must make a Static Physical challenge against your traits or suffer a lethal wound.
- 4 – Baal's Caress:** As Scorpion's Touch, save this poison causes an aggravated wound to victims and objects and must enter the target through a successful attack. No weapon may have more than one magical effect on it at one time.
- 5 – Taste of Death:** By spending a Blood you can make a single ranged attack against a single target within 10', spewing caustic acid which deals two aggravated wounds. Retest with *Athletics*.

11.14 Serpentis

Only the Egypt-based Followers of Set possess this almost magical Discipline, bringing them closer to their sleeping god. Specific retests are noted below.


- 1 – Eyes of the Serpent:** Make a Social challenge against your target, who must have met your gaze. If successful your target is completely immobilized, barring injury or attack, so long as you hold their attention. Retest with *Subterfuge*.
- 2 – Tongue of the Asp:** Turning your tongue into a sensitive weapon you may use it to navigate dark places (see Combat on page 74) and strike for Aggravated damage from several feet away (retest with *Athletics*). After a successful strike you may drink using the tongue on successive turns, activating the Kiss. This is a transformative power.
- 3 – Skin of the Adder:** Spend a Blood and a Willpower to transform into a large man-snake hybrid at the end of the turn. Gain the bonus traits *Lithe* and *Wiry*. You need not grapple first before making a bite attack. Your bite deals an additional Lethal wound if you win a Simple test after a successful biting attack. Gain the Negative traits *Bestial* and *Repugnant* while in this form, though you may activate *Tongue of the Asp*.
- 4 – Form of the Cobra:** By spending a single blood and concentrating for three full turns you transform to a literal giant cobra with a bite that is lethally poisonous to mortals. You may fit through small spaces and suffer no penalties related to movement. Gain a +2 bonus on challenges to initiate, maintain, or escape from a grapple. You may activate *Tongue of the Asp* while in this form.
- 5 – Heart of Darkness:** On the evening of the new moon you may remove the heart of a willing subject and place it in a clay urn, rendering them immune to staking and gaining +1 on tests to avoid frenzy. The subject also loses access to the *Empathy* Ability and also the Social traits *Friendly*, *Empathetic*, or *Genial*. If the heart is staked the body is also, and if the heart is subject to even one level of damage from the sun or fire, the body explodes into ash. This ritual takes two hours to perform.

11.15 Thaumaturgy

See the *Crimson Terrors* supplement for rules governing Thaumaturgy.

11.16 Vicissitude

A terrifying power and science practiced solely by the *Tzimisce*, Vicissitude allows its wielder to shape flesh and bone with surgical precision. Retests are performed with *Crafts: Body Crafts* and some tests may require levels in *Medicine* to succeed.

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- 1 – Malleable Visage:** Able to mold your own face, altering your appearance and voice, this power costs one Blood to use and takes several minutes. Copying another's appearance requires making a Static Social challenge against their Social traits. Success allows you to copy their face but not use their Social traits in challenges. Alternatively you may give yourself *Repugnant* up to three times.
 - 2 – Fleshcraft:** Perform drastic alterations to the soft tissue of your victim, as per *Malleable Visage*. In addition you may move and shape tissue, permanently removing one of your subject's Physical traits in exchange for an additional Healthy health level, or the reverse, though multiple applications of this effect do not stack. This power cannot be used in combat and takes time to exercise. Each alteration costs one Blood trait.
 - 3 – Bonecraft:** Now able to bend and shape bone to your will, you may now alter a subject's height and body structure or create terrifying natural weapons which deal Lethal damage. Each modification costs a single Blood trait, but if used without *Fleshcraft* your subject suffers one Lethal wound per application. This power is not usable in combat though the weapons created by it are.
 - 4 – Horrid Form:** Transforming yourself into a terrifying monster with black, rubbery skin and wholly unnatural protrusions and appendages, any who have not seen this power used before must make a Courage check at four traits or suffer Röttschreck. Requiring two Blood to activate, you are granted *Bestial*, *Feral*, and *Repugnant* as Negative Social traits but also the Physical traits of *Brawny*, *Ferocious*, *Dexterous*, *Quick*, *Enduring*, and *Stalwart*. Your unarmed attacks deal Lethal wounds and cause an additional level of damage. This power lasts until sunrise or until dismissed.
 - 5 – Bloodform:** Collapsing individual limbs or your whole body into an animated pool of vitae, this transformative power has no cost and takes effect at the end of the combat turn. Each limb so transformed becomes one Blood trait with your body making up the rest. If partially transformed you may return lost limbs either by being in contact with the pool or by spending a like number of Blood traits to regrow the wound, making the separated blood pool inert. If fully transformed you may not use powers requiring voice, but are immune to all damage save from fire or sunlight. If all of the Blood is imbibed or destroyed you meet Final Death.

11.17 Combination Powers

In the many centuries since each Clan's founding some few talented individuals have mastered their innate Disciplines to such a degree that they are able to use two powers in tandem, creating a new *Combo Power* that often has effects over and beyond their component Disciplines. These inventions often took decades if not longer to develop, and many are reluctant to give up their secrets easily or cheaply.

Knowledge that these powers exist may require *Lore* in a specific Clan, and learning them takes both dedicated effort and a great deal of role-play. No character may ever learn another Clan's combo powers except where referenced below.


11.17.1 Assamite Combo Powers

Forced March — Requires Celerity 2, Fortitude 2 — Costs 6 XP

Often needing to travel long distances through hostile terrain, some Assamites have harnessed the ability to recoup the Blood expended on *Celerity* for such excursions, sharply decreasing their time in the open. In any downtime scene where your character is moving on foot a considerable distance you may divide the normal travel time by your levels in *Celerity*. Each hour or part thereof you only need spend half your levels of *Celerity* in Blood points to maintain this pace. You may not use this power more times per night than you have levels in *Fortitude*.

Shadow Feint — Requires Celerity 2, Obfuscate 2 — Costs 6 XP

Keeping one's enemies off-balance is a time-honored tradition among assassins and



the Assamites have incorporated this tactic into their potent arsenal. When activating *Celerity* for the turn, spend an additional Blood trait and use your Everyman action only for Dodging. Gain a +2 bonus on all ties for physical challenges during the *Swiftness* and *Legerity* follow-up rounds.

11.17.2 Brujah Combo Powers

Burning Wrath — Requires Celerity 3, Potence 3 — Costs 9 XP

Able to focus their rage into a tangible and terrifying display, Brujah who have mastered this ability can strike their foes with unrelenting force. By spending a Blood trait their skin glows red and sometimes even emanate a fine crimson mist but the true benefit of this power becomes evident when they attack: all successful brawling attacks this turn deal pure aggravated damage.

Iron Heart — Requires Potence 3, Presence 3 — Costs 9 XP

Able to steel their minds against outside influence, a Brujah who possesses this power may spend a Willpower in order to win all ties when defending against *Dominance*, *Presence*, or mind-altering *Thaumaturgy* in the current Scene. By spending a second Willpower he may confer this power on another for the next scene or hour, though this individual only receives an additional retest against such powers.

Pulse of Undeath — Requires Auspex 1, Potence 3 — Costs 3 XP

By focusing their *Heightened Senses* through their supernatural strength, a Brujah having learned this Discipline may determine whether or not a nearby character possesses any of the three physical disciplines—Potence, Celerity, and Fortitude—by besting them in a Static Mental challenge, retested with *Investigation*. By spending Mental traits he may determine their respective levels, one trait per Discipline.

11.17.3 Follower of Set Combo Powers

True Love's Face — Requires Obfuscate 3, Presence 3 — Costs 9 XP

Through careful application of *Mask of a Thousand Faces* and a successful *Entrancement* the Setite appears to be his target's closest ally, one with whom they share an emotional bond. The Setite does not instinctively know who they appear to be and must deduce this information from the behavior of his subject.

Typhonic Beast — Requires Potence 3, Serpents 4 — Costs 11 XP

A more potent version of *Skin of the Adder* which may represent a truly unflappable devotion to their god, a Setite wielding this power is a terrifying sight to behold. In addition to the effects of that Discipline, both positive and negative, they gain the traits *Observant* x2, *Wiry*, *Lithe*, and *Enduring* as they become a truly mythic hybrid of man and serpent. This power costs three Blood and a Willpower to activate.


11.17.4 Gangrel Combo Powers

Claw Immunity — Requires Animalism 2, Fortitude 4 — Costs 4 XP

At home in the wilds, some Gangrel have developed supernatural defenses against natural predators that may take hostile actions on their travels. A Gangrel possessing this power spends two Blood and specifies a type of natural animal such as bear or wolf. When attacked by an animal of that kind, all intermediate *Fortitude* powers are twice as effective, meaning two levels of damage may be tested down per attack instead of just one. This power lasts until sunrise or until reactivation with a different specified animal.

Flesh Wound — Requires Fortitude 2, Obfuscate 3 — Costs 9 XP

Masters of resilience, Gangrel have a well-earned reputation for near-invincibility. With the advent of this discipline those rumors have grown exponentially. Activated by spending a Blood, all damage taken in the next scene or hour fails to leave a visible



wound or mark, possibly causing attackers to give up their assault against their “invincible” foe. In reality this power relies on *Obfuscate*, and so may be seen through with *Auspex* per normal. After appearing to shrug off an attack which deals at least Lethal damage you gain a +2 bonus on Social challenges relating to intimidation for the rest of the scene against anyone who is affected by your illusion.

See the Reflected Form — Requires *Auspex* 4, *Protean* 4 — Costs 9 XP

Comfortable with the art of transforming their own bodies, Gangrel who have learned this power have sharpened their senses to be able to detect this ability in others. Utilizing a specialized *Aura Perception* challenge the Gangrel may see the most powerful transformative power their target possesses (normally the highest-level Discipline). By spending a Mental trait they may see all shapes the subject regularly uses, and by spending a second Mental trait all forms the individual is capable of may be determined. This power does not reveal any information related to *Mask of a Thousand Faces*; it applies to true transformative powers only.

11.17.5 Lasombra Combo Powers

Shroud of Absence — Requires *Dominate* 3, *Obtenebration* 3 — Costs 9 XP

Mimicking the effects of *Obfuscate*, the Lasombra who has mastered this power is able to create an area into which no outsider looks unless their attention is specifically called there. As this is a *Dominate* effect, it only works on equal or higher-generation kindred. To enact this power the Lasombra spends a Blood and makes a Static Social challenge against seven traits. Anyone wishing to peer into the area affected, roughly a 10' diameter sphere, must win a Social challenge to do so, wherein the Lasombra is the aggressor. Retests are made with *Intimidation*.

11.17.6 Ravnos Combo Powers

Sympathetic Agony — Requires *Animalism* 4, *Fortitude* 4 — Costs 11 XP

Used to being on the receiving end of physical punishment, some Ravnos have managed to turn the tide against their assailants, forcing them to feel the sting and hurt they would deliver unto others. When a Ravnos with this power takes damage they may spend a Blood and spend Social traits up to the number of wounds taken. Their attacker will, for the rest of the scene, suffer wound penalties as if they have received the same number of wounds, which cannot be healed through Blood. These effects last for one scene or hour and cannot torpor other kindred.

Mask of Cathay — Requires *Animalism* 3, *Obfuscate* 3 — Costs 7 XP

Spending so long traveling among tight-knit mortal communities, enterprising Ravnos have discovered how to hide their true nature from hunters and those who would wish to find the devils in their midst. By spending a Willpower and 1 Blood their aura shines as brightly as a mortal's, they gain the Merit *Eat Food*, and they suffer no social penalties for having low Humanity for the rest of the evening.

11.17.7 Toreador Combo Powers

Bliss — Requires *Dominate* 2, *Presence* 3 — Costs 7 XP

Able to turn their Clan disadvantage as a source of strength, enterprising Toreador have learned to keep their Beast at bay with the power of beauty. Immediately after having been affected by the Toreador Clan disadvantage, you may make a Static Mental challenge against twice the value of your Conscience, Self-Control, or Courage Virtue at Storyteller discretion, with no applicable Ability retest. If successful you gain an extra temporary trait of that Virtue for the next scene or hour. Only Toreador on the Morality path of Humanity may use this power.

Doubletalk — Requires Auspex 2, Celerity 1, Obfuscate 1 — Costs 5 XP

Also available to select Malkavians and Tremere, *Doubletalk* is an ability that has made its way through Toreador courts for centuries if not millennia, and is one of the more “easily”-obtained Combo Powers. When activated, requiring a Blood and Static Mental challenge (retest with *Performance*) against six traits, this power’s user is able to speak whole sentences between other words for the rest of the scene, sounding to all observers as “uh,” “er,” or “hmm.” In this manner two individuals possessing knowledge of this Discipline may have two conversations simultaneously; very popular when discussing private or sensitive topics in public. Any character possessing this Discipline may make a Static Mental challenge against seven traits to determine that it is being used in their presence, though the Blood expenditure and additional test are required to understand or partake in the message.

Soul Painting — Requires Auspex 4, Presence 2 — Costs 9 XP

A truly rare gift even among Combo Powers, *Soul Painting* allows a Toreador to capture a subject’s very essence in a portrait, able to be perceived by sensitive observers. When a painting featuring a particular kindred subject is completed, the Toreador makes a Static Social challenge against nine traits. If successful, the art captures the subject’s Nature. By then spending up to three Social traits they can encourage the following qualities to be present in the work, one per trait: rough gauge of Humanity (with unflattering results if the subject is on a different Morality path), Willpower, Conscience/Conviction, Self-Control/Instinct, or Courage. Other kindred with his power immediately see the extra included elements. Particularly observant or sensitive characters, at Storyteller discretion, may make a Static Mental challenge against twice the number of qualities present to detect the same.

11.17.8 Tremere Combo Powers

Thaumaturgical Sight — Requires Auspex 2, Thaumaturgy 1 — Costs 3 XP

A specialized use of *Aura Perception*, you become keenly aware of all uses of Blood magic in your line of sight for as long as you maintain your Auspex. To determine the specifics of an effect you witness, succeed in a Static Mental challenge with a Storyteller (retested with *Occult*) against a difficulty they set, usually based on the level and rarity of the power in question. You automatically know the identity and function of any powers you yourself possess, but in all cases may only identify a single power per full turn, which requires your full concentration (as per *Aura Perception*). This power costs one Blood trait per activation and can be maintained for up to one minute.

11.17.9 Ventrue Combo Powers

Denial of Aphrodite’s Favor — Requires Dominate 3, Fortitude 3 — Costs 10 XP

Masters of all they survey, Ventrue who have learned this powerful Discipline are able to protect themselves from *Presence* in much the same way *Dominate* functions. This power costs nothing to activate once learned and allows its user to automatically ignore all uses of *Awe*, *Dread Gaze*, and *Entrancement* used by those of higher generation.

Lifesong — Requires Dominate 1, Presence 1 — Costs 4 XP

Learning how the mind of one’s opponent works is a powerful step to success. With the development of this power many Ventrue have expedited the process of knowing their enemy. During a conversation with a Mortal he may make a Contested Mental challenge, retested with *Empathy* and resisted with *Subterfuge*. If successful he learns the target’s Nature.



12 Derangements

Derangements are terrifying maladies which twist the perceptions of those suffering from them, and should not be chosen lightly. Most derangements have specific triggers or situations that cause them to activate, including stressful events such as those listed in Chapter 9 under “Virtue Tests.”

The mechanical effects of a Derangement may be suppressed temporarily (for the scene or hour) with the expenditure of a Willpower trait, but to be truly cured takes months and perhaps years of dedicated rehabilitation. This section explores many, but not all, of the potential afflictions which can cripple kindred. Other potential Derangements may be found in various Clanbooks but require specific Storyteller approval before they are accepted for play.

Antisocial — This label might be considered a misnomer, as people with antisocial personality disorder are not necessarily shy or reclusive, nor do they lack social skills. Oftentimes, the opposite is the case—a person is very socially domineering, even aggressive. Antisocial personality disorder refers to a lack of compassion, empathy, and superego/conscience. The person simply cannot care about any being other than himself, and almost always places his own wants and needs above those of others. People with this disorder casually lie, cheat, steal, and exploit, and a few even rape and kill. Most psychologists and law enforcers consider this the “serial killer disorder.” Ted Bundy, John Wayne Gacy, and other monsters are classic examples of offenders who, while legally sane and capable of making moral distinction, simply don’t care.

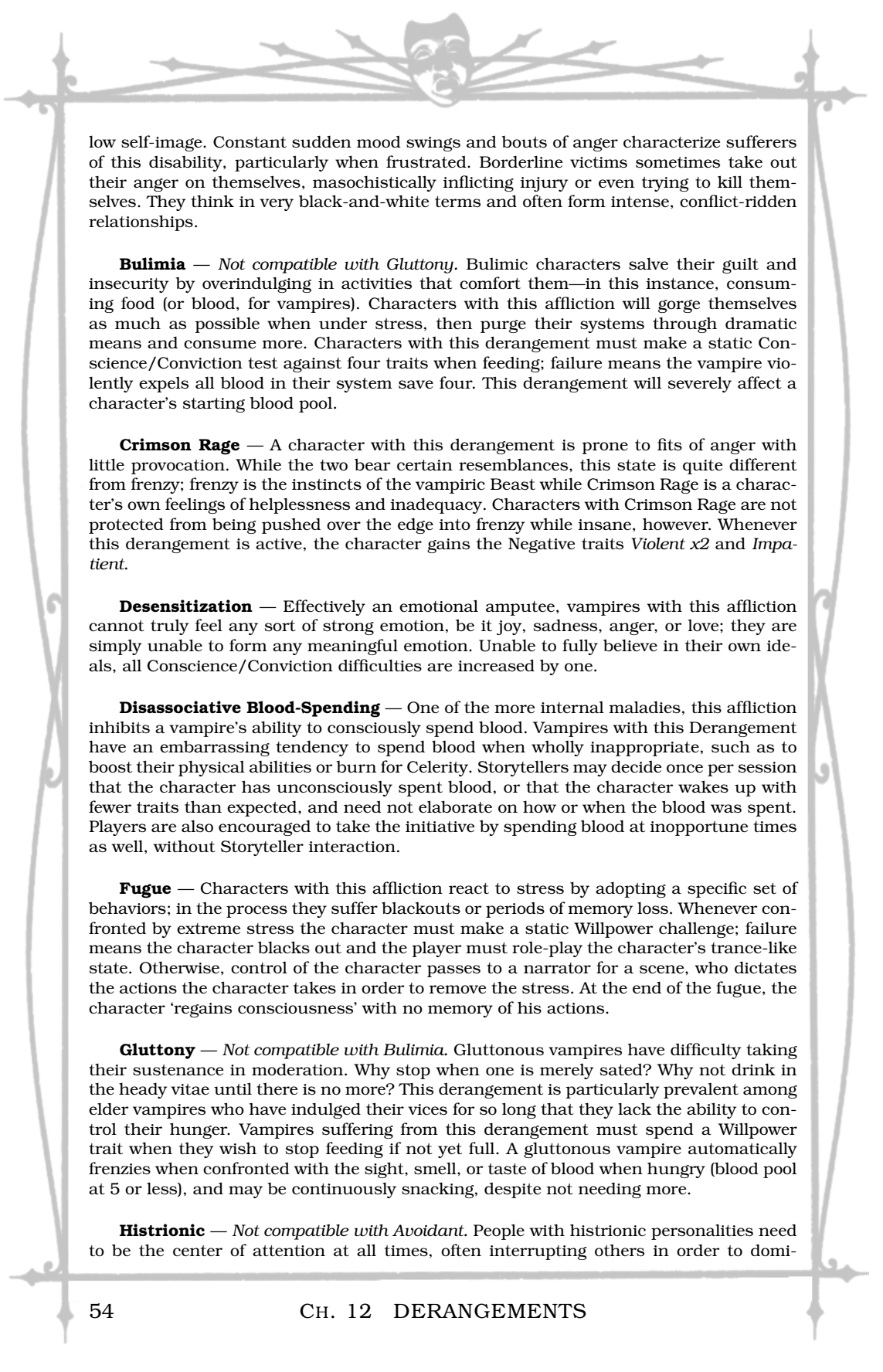
Avoidant — *Not compatible with Histrionic.* Avoidant personality disorder is characterized by extreme social anxiety. Vampires with this condition often feel inadequate, avoid social situations, and seek isolation for their nightly routines. They fear rejection and social humiliation, often needlessly so. They prefer routine and exaggerate the potential difficulties of new situations to rationalize avoiding them. Some display an imaginative bent, creating fantasy worlds in which they are dominant, loved, or triumphant. Avoidant people yearn for social relations yet feel unable to attain them. They are frequently depressed and have low self-confidence.

Berserk — You have a tremendous difficulty controlling your anger and frustration. When confronted with stressful situations, you often lose control, lashing out at those unfortunate enough to cross your path, whether friend or foe. You must win or tie two Simple tests to avoid frenzy, thrown after the initial Self-Control/Instinct challenge.

Blood Sweats — When you’re stressed, you get so nervous and agitated that your state of mind affects your body. Much as a mortal might become jumpy and break out in cold sweats, you become likewise ill at ease. The sweat in your case, however, is blood that works its way to your skin. This blood is very obvious in your sleeping environs, not to mention staining your clothes and making you a disturbing sight to vampires and mortals alike. Blood sweats cause you to begin play each night an additional point down in your blood pool. In addition, the blood is quite obvious (your clothes are stained soon after changing and you perspire continuously), and you’re often nervous and twitchy. You are down 2 Blood each gather.

Blood Taste — You hate the taste of blood. Your body craves it, but you think it tastes disgusting. You go out of your way to feed on drunks (the alcohol helps kill the taste), even hanging out in bars. You must win or tie a static test each time you feed to see if you spit out the blood. If you fail the test, you must burn a Willpower if you wish to keep the noxious fluid in your mouth. Suffer a -4 penalty to your starting Blood pool each gather.

Borderline — Vampires with borderline personality suffer from mood instability and



low self-image. Constant sudden mood swings and bouts of anger characterize sufferers of this disability, particularly when frustrated. Borderline victims sometimes take out their anger on themselves, masochistically inflicting injury or even trying to kill themselves. They think in very black-and-white terms and often form intense, conflict-ridden relationships.

Bulimia — *Not compatible with Gluttony.* Bulimic characters salve their guilt and insecurity by overindulging in activities that comfort them—in this instance, consuming food (or blood, for vampires). Characters with this affliction will gorge themselves as much as possible when under stress, then purge their systems through dramatic means and consume more. Characters with this derangement must make a static Conscience/Conviction test against four traits when feeding; failure means the vampire violently expels all blood in their system save four. This derangement will severely affect a character's starting blood pool.

Crimson Rage — A character with this derangement is prone to fits of anger with little provocation. While the two bear certain resemblances, this state is quite different from frenzy; frenzy is the instincts of the vampiric Beast while Crimson Rage is a character's own feelings of helplessness and inadequacy. Characters with Crimson Rage are not protected from being pushed over the edge into frenzy while insane, however. Whenever this derangement is active, the character gains the Negative traits *Violent x2* and *Impatient*.

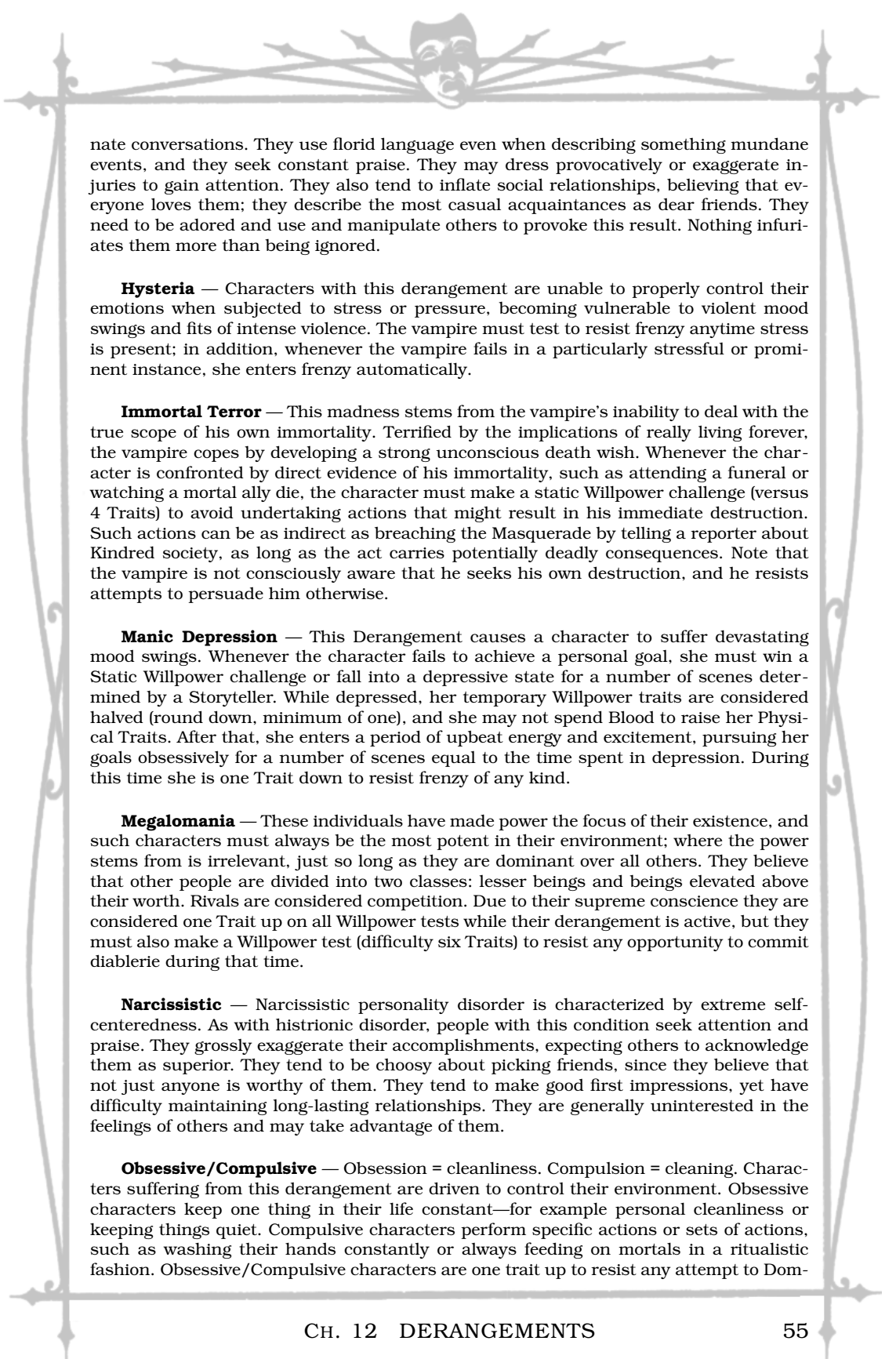
Desensitization — Effectively an emotional amputee, vampires with this affliction cannot truly feel any sort of strong emotion, be it joy, sadness, anger, or love; they are simply unable to form any meaningful emotion. Unable to fully believe in their own ideals, all Conscience/Conviction difficulties are increased by one.

Disassociative Blood-Spending — One of the more internal maladies, this affliction inhibits a vampire's ability to consciously spend blood. Vampires with this Derangement have an embarrassing tendency to spend blood when wholly inappropriate, such as to boost their physical abilities or burn for Celerity. Storytellers may decide once per session that the character has unconsciously spent blood, or that the character wakes up with fewer traits than expected, and need not elaborate on how or when the blood was spent. Players are also encouraged to take the initiative by spending blood at inopportune times as well, without Storyteller interaction.

Fugue — Characters with this affliction react to stress by adopting a specific set of behaviors; in the process they suffer blackouts or periods of memory loss. Whenever confronted by extreme stress the character must make a static Willpower challenge; failure means the character blacks out and the player must role-play the character's trance-like state. Otherwise, control of the character passes to a narrator for a scene, who dictates the actions the character takes in order to remove the stress. At the end of the fugue, the character 'regains consciousness' with no memory of his actions.

Gluttony — *Not compatible with Bulimia.* Gluttonous vampires have difficulty taking their sustenance in moderation. Why stop when one is merely sated? Why not drink in the heady vitae until there is no more? This derangement is particularly prevalent among elder vampires who have indulged their vices for so long that they lack the ability to control their hunger. Vampires suffering from this derangement must spend a Willpower trait when they wish to stop feeding if not yet full. A gluttonous vampire automatically frenzies when confronted with the sight, smell, or taste of blood when hungry (blood pool at 5 or less), and may be continuously snacking, despite not needing more.

Histrionic — *Not compatible with Avoidant.* People with histrionic personalities need to be the center of attention at all times, often interrupting others in order to domi-



nate conversations. They use florid language even when describing something mundane events, and they seek constant praise. They may dress provocatively or exaggerate injuries to gain attention. They also tend to inflate social relationships, believing that everyone loves them; they describe the most casual acquaintances as dear friends. They need to be adored and use and manipulate others to provoke this result. Nothing infuriates them more than being ignored.

Hysteria — Characters with this derangement are unable to properly control their emotions when subjected to stress or pressure, becoming vulnerable to violent mood swings and fits of intense violence. The vampire must test to resist frenzy anytime stress is present; in addition, whenever the vampire fails in a particularly stressful or prominent instance, she enters frenzy automatically.

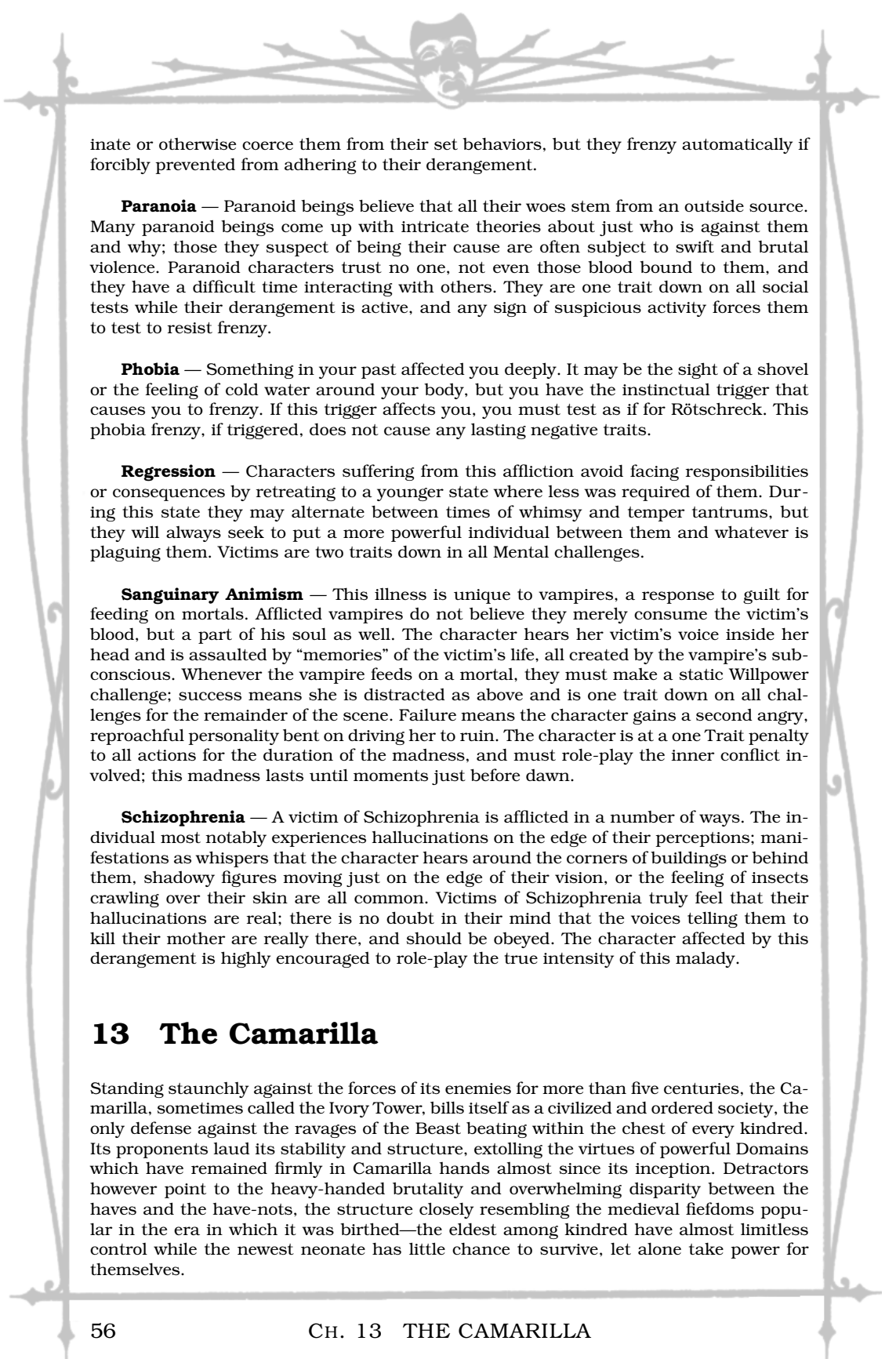
Immortal Terror — This madness stems from the vampire's inability to deal with the true scope of his own immortality. Terrified by the implications of really living forever, the vampire copes by developing a strong unconscious death wish. Whenever the character is confronted by direct evidence of his immortality, such as attending a funeral or watching a mortal ally die, the character must make a static Willpower challenge (versus 4 Traits) to avoid undertaking actions that might result in his immediate destruction. Such actions can be as indirect as breaching the Masquerade by telling a reporter about Kindred society, as long as the act carries potentially deadly consequences. Note that the vampire is not consciously aware that he seeks his own destruction, and he resists attempts to persuade him otherwise.

Manic Depression — This Derangement causes a character to suffer devastating mood swings. Whenever the character fails to achieve a personal goal, she must win a Static Willpower challenge or fall into a depressive state for a number of scenes determined by a Storyteller. While depressed, her temporary Willpower traits are considered halved (round down, minimum of one), and she may not spend Blood to raise her Physical Traits. After that, she enters a period of upbeat energy and excitement, pursuing her goals obsessively for a number of scenes equal to the time spent in depression. During this time she is one Trait down to resist frenzy of any kind.

Megalomania — These individuals have made power the focus of their existence, and such characters must always be the most potent in their environment; where the power stems from is irrelevant, just so long as they are dominant over all others. They believe that other people are divided into two classes: lesser beings and beings elevated above their worth. Rivals are considered competition. Due to their supreme conscience they are considered one Trait up on all Willpower tests while their derangement is active, but they must also make a Willpower test (difficulty six Traits) to resist any opportunity to commit diablerie during that time.

Narcissistic — Narcissistic personality disorder is characterized by extreme self-centeredness. As with histrionic disorder, people with this condition seek attention and praise. They grossly exaggerate their accomplishments, expecting others to acknowledge them as superior. They tend to be choosy about picking friends, since they believe that not just anyone is worthy of them. They tend to make good first impressions, yet have difficulty maintaining long-lasting relationships. They are generally uninterested in the feelings of others and may take advantage of them.

Obsessive/Compulsive — Obsession = cleanliness. Compulsion = cleaning. Characters suffering from this derangement are driven to control their environment. Obsessive characters keep one thing in their life constant—for example personal cleanliness or keeping things quiet. Compulsive characters perform specific actions or sets of actions, such as washing their hands constantly or always feeding on mortals in a ritualistic fashion. Obsessive/Compulsive characters are one trait up to resist any attempt to Dom-



inate or otherwise coerce them from their set behaviors, but they frenzy automatically if forcibly prevented from adhering to their derangement.

Paranoia — Paranoid beings believe that all their woes stem from an outside source. Many paranoid beings come up with intricate theories about just who is against them and why; those they suspect of being their cause are often subject to swift and brutal violence. Paranoid characters trust no one, not even those blood bound to them, and they have a difficult time interacting with others. They are one trait down on all social tests while their derangement is active, and any sign of suspicious activity forces them to test to resist frenzy.

Phobia — Something in your past affected you deeply. It may be the sight of a shovel or the feeling of cold water around your body, but you have the instinctual trigger that causes you to frenzy. If this trigger affects you, you must test as if for Röttschreck. This phobia frenzy, if triggered, does not cause any lasting negative traits.

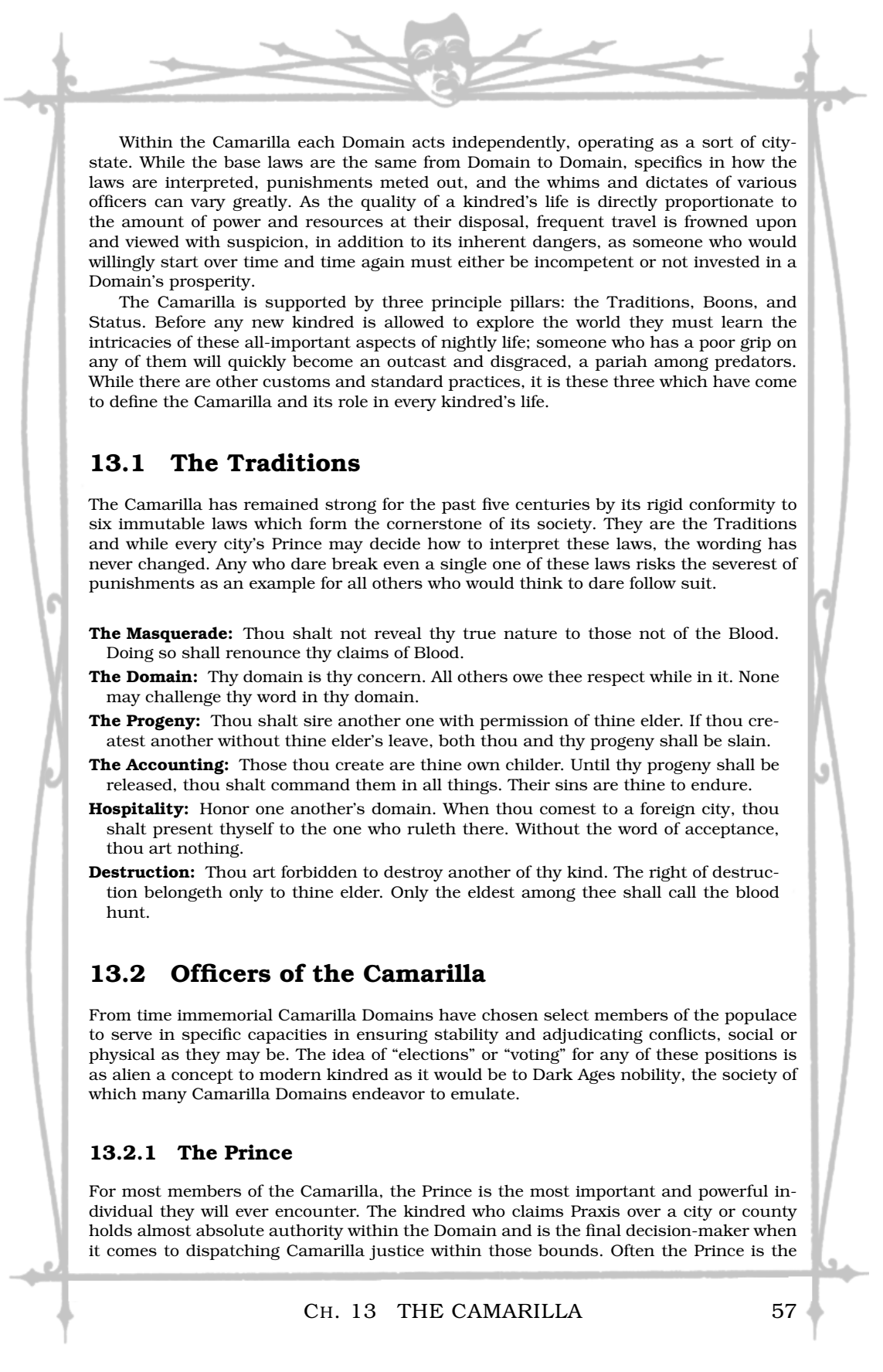
Regression — Characters suffering from this affliction avoid facing responsibilities or consequences by retreating to a younger state where less was required of them. During this state they may alternate between times of whimsy and temper tantrums, but they will always seek to put a more powerful individual between them and whatever is plaguing them. Victims are two traits down in all Mental challenges.

Sanguinary Animism — This illness is unique to vampires, a response to guilt for feeding on mortals. Afflicted vampires do not believe they merely consume the victim's blood, but a part of his soul as well. The character hears her victim's voice inside her head and is assaulted by "memories" of the victim's life, all created by the vampire's subconscious. Whenever the vampire feeds on a mortal, they must make a static Willpower challenge; success means she is distracted as above and is one trait down on all challenges for the remainder of the scene. Failure means the character gains a second angry, reproachful personality bent on driving her to ruin. The character is at a one Trait penalty to all actions for the duration of the madness, and must role-play the inner conflict involved; this madness lasts until moments just before dawn.

Schizophrenia — A victim of Schizophrenia is afflicted in a number of ways. The individual most notably experiences hallucinations on the edge of their perceptions; manifestations as whispers that the character hears around the corners of buildings or behind them, shadowy figures moving just on the edge of their vision, or the feeling of insects crawling over their skin are all common. Victims of Schizophrenia truly feel that their hallucinations are real; there is no doubt in their mind that the voices telling them to kill their mother are really there, and should be obeyed. The character affected by this derangement is highly encouraged to role-play the true intensity of this malady.

13 The Camarilla

Standing staunchly against the forces of its enemies for more than five centuries, the Camarilla, sometimes called the Ivory Tower, bills itself as a civilized and ordered society, the only defense against the ravages of the Beast beating within the chest of every kindred. Its proponents laud its stability and structure, extolling the virtues of powerful Domains which have remained firmly in Camarilla hands almost since its inception. Detractors however point to the heavy-handed brutality and overwhelming disparity between the haves and the have-nots, the structure closely resembling the medieval fiefdoms popular in the era in which it was birthed—the eldest among kindred have almost limitless control while the newest neonate has little chance to survive, let alone take power for themselves.



Within the Camarilla each Domain acts independently, operating as a sort of city-state. While the base laws are the same from Domain to Domain, specifics in how the laws are interpreted, punishments meted out, and the whims and dictates of various officers can vary greatly. As the quality of a kindred's life is directly proportionate to the amount of power and resources at their disposal, frequent travel is frowned upon and viewed with suspicion, in addition to its inherent dangers, as someone who would willingly start over time and time again must either be incompetent or not invested in a Domain's prosperity.

The Camarilla is supported by three principle pillars: the Traditions, Boons, and Status. Before any new kindred is allowed to explore the world they must learn the intricacies of these all-important aspects of nightly life; someone who has a poor grip on any of them will quickly become an outcast and disgraced, a pariah among predators. While there are other customs and standard practices, it is these three which have come to define the Camarilla and its role in every kindred's life.

13.1 The Traditions

The Camarilla has remained strong for the past five centuries by its rigid conformity to six immutable laws which form the cornerstone of its society. They are the Traditions and while every city's Prince may decide how to interpret these laws, the wording has never changed. Any who dare break even a single one of these laws risks the severest of punishments as an example for all others who would think to dare follow suit.

The Masquerade: Thou shalt not reveal thy true nature to those not of the Blood. Doing so shall renounce thy claims of Blood.

The Domain: Thy domain is thy concern. All others owe thee respect while in it. None may challenge thy word in thy domain.

The Progeny: Thou shalt sire another one with permission of thine elder. If thou create another without thine elder's leave, both thou and thy progeny shall be slain.

The Accounting: Those thou create are thine own childer. Until thy progeny shall be released, thou shalt command them in all things. Their sins are thine to endure.

Hospitality: Honor one another's domain. When thou comest to a foreign city, thou shalt present thyself to the one who ruleth there. Without the word of acceptance, thou art nothing.

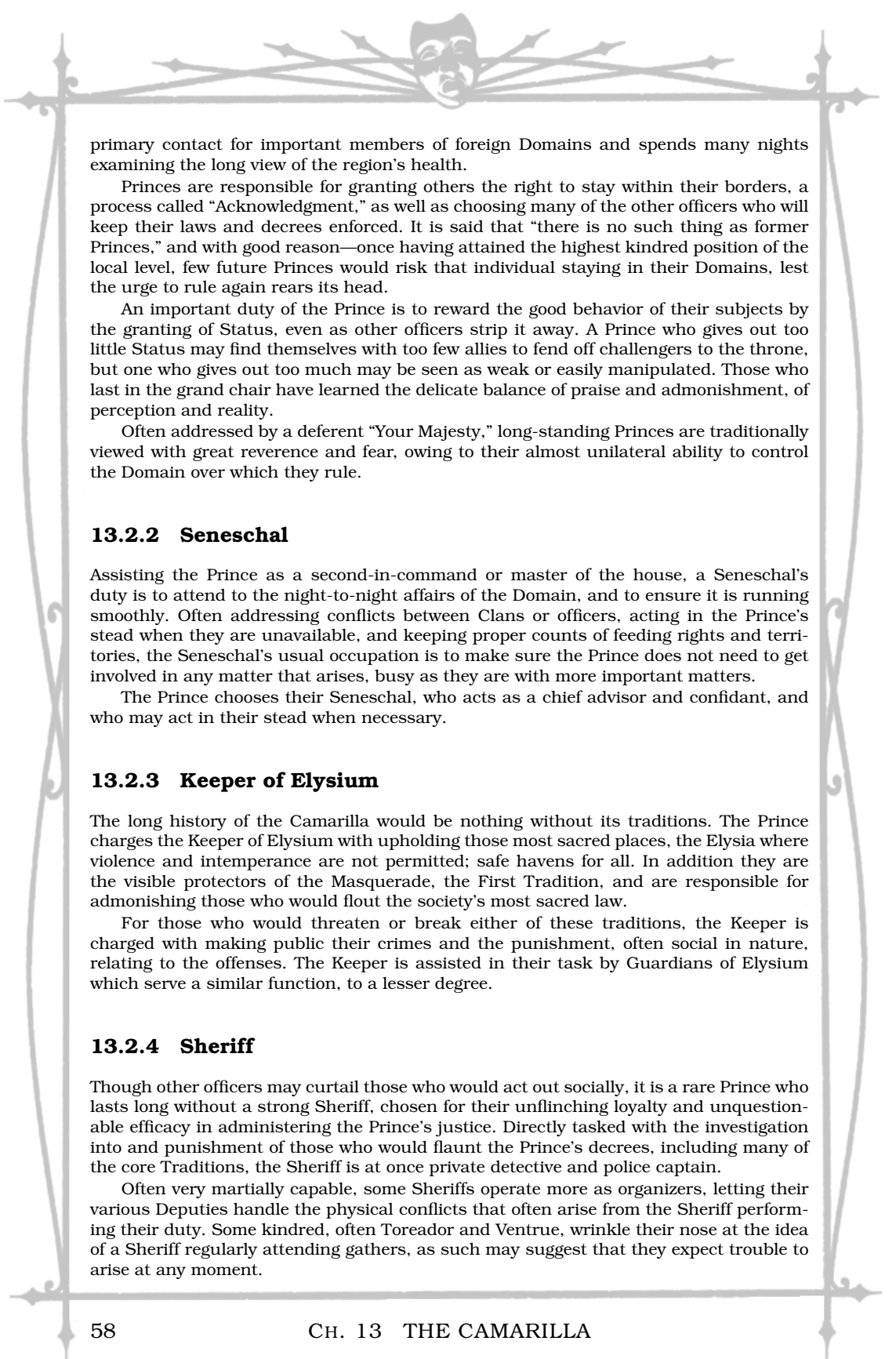
Destruction: Thou art forbidden to destroy another of thy kind. The right of destruction belongeth only to thine elder. Only the eldest among thee shall call the blood hunt.

13.2 Officers of the Camarilla

From time immemorial Camarilla Domains have chosen select members of the populace to serve in specific capacities in ensuring stability and adjudicating conflicts, social or physical as they may be. The idea of "elections" or "voting" for any of these positions is as alien a concept to modern kindred as it would be to Dark Ages nobility, the society of which many Camarilla Domains endeavor to emulate.

13.2.1 The Prince

For most members of the Camarilla, the Prince is the most important and powerful individual they will ever encounter. The kindred who claims Praxis over a city or county holds almost absolute authority within the Domain and is the final decision-maker when it comes to dispatching Camarilla justice within those bounds. Often the Prince is the



primary contact for important members of foreign Domains and spends many nights examining the long view of the region's health.

Princes are responsible for granting others the right to stay within their borders, a process called "Acknowledgment," as well as choosing many of the other officers who will keep their laws and decrees enforced. It is said that "there is no such thing as former Princes," and with good reason—once having attained the highest kindred position of the local level, few future Princes would risk that individual staying in their Domains, lest the urge to rule again rears its head.

An important duty of the Prince is to reward the good behavior of their subjects by the granting of Status, even as other officers strip it away. A Prince who gives out too little Status may find themselves with too few allies to fend off challengers to the throne, but one who gives out too much may be seen as weak or easily manipulated. Those who last in the grand chair have learned the delicate balance of praise and admonishment, of perception and reality.

Often addressed by a deferent "Your Majesty," long-standing Princes are traditionally viewed with great reverence and fear, owing to their almost unilateral ability to control the Domain over which they rule.

13.2.2 Seneschal

Assisting the Prince as a second-in-command or master of the house, a Seneschal's duty is to attend to the night-to-night affairs of the Domain, and to ensure it is running smoothly. Often addressing conflicts between Clans or officers, acting in the Prince's stead when they are unavailable, and keeping proper counts of feeding rights and territories, the Seneschal's usual occupation is to make sure the Prince does not need to get involved in any matter that arises, busy as they are with more important matters.

The Prince chooses their Seneschal, who acts as a chief advisor and confidant, and who may act in their stead when necessary.

13.2.3 Keeper of Elysium


The long history of the Camarilla would be nothing without its traditions. The Prince charges the Keeper of Elysium with upholding those most sacred places, the Elysia where violence and intemperance are not permitted; safe havens for all. In addition they are the visible protectors of the Masquerade, the First Tradition, and are responsible for admonishing those who would flout the society's most sacred law.

For those who would threaten or break either of these traditions, the Keeper is charged with making public their crimes and the punishment, often social in nature, relating to the offenses. The Keeper is assisted in their task by Guardians of Elysium which serve a similar function, to a lesser degree.

13.2.4 Sheriff

Though other officers may curtail those who would act out socially, it is a rare Prince who lasts long without a strong Sheriff, chosen for their unflinching loyalty and unquestionable efficacy in administering the Prince's justice. Directly tasked with the investigation into and punishment of those who would flaunt the Prince's decrees, including many of the core Traditions, the Sheriff is at once private detective and police captain.

Often very martially capable, some Sheriffs operate more as organizers, letting their various Deputies handle the physical conflicts that often arise from the Sheriff performing their duty. Some kindred, often Toreador and Ventrue, wrinkle their nose at the idea of a Sheriff regularly attending gathers, as such may suggest that they expect trouble to arise at any moment.



13.2.5 Scourge

Not every kindred belongs in a proper Camarilla Domain—enemies of the Sect, notorious interlopers, or even mortal Hunters may make their home in a Prince's Domain. To weed out these harmful influences a Prince will often choose a Scourge, charged with removing those elements that are neither Acknowledged nor desired in a Domain.

This position has fallen out of fashion since its height in the late middle ages, but with recent movements by Anarchs, the Sabbat, and other forces, some Princes feel it is necessary to remind these unaligned kindred that their Domain is not a safe haven for their indulgences.

Assisted by Huntsmen, the Scourge is an even less popular sight at gather than the Sheriff for what their position represents. Most often their duties are extremely martial in nature, and Scourges are chosen for their brutality, as it doesn't take long for word of a Domain's ability to clean itself of undesirables to spread to others who may have otherwise desired to visit.

13.2.6 The Primogen Council

Not every position in the Camarilla is chosen by the Prince. While in more traditional European Domains the Primogen Council is more a collection of advisors chosen specifically by the Prince, in the more progressive Americas the Primogen Council has come to represent the most important members of each Clan, where they collectively address Domain issues and advise the Prince on the will of the Populace, which he may ignore at his own peril.

Each Primogen is seen as the embodiment of their Clan—if someone strikes a Primogen, it is often seen as equivalent to striking each member thereof. Similarly, if a Primogen lashes out, be it socially or physically, against another member, some see that as a declaration of war between that individual and an entire Clan.

Issues often before the Council often include feeding territories, grievances between Domain members that need not involve other officers, and the long-term stability of the region, whether through cooperation or by staying away from each others' projects.

Each Clan has their own method of choosing their Primogen, but often the individual who sits upon the Council is the oldest or most powerful member of a given Clan.


13.2.7 Harpies

Analogous to a modern high school cheerleading squad, each Domain has within it those kindred who delight in pointing out the social failings and missteps of others. These individuals are called "Harpies," and the label is not a positive one, referencing the winged horrors that cackled at helpless travelers in ancient Greece before descending on them to rend their flesh.

One of the Primogen Council's most important duties is to select a Lead Harpy, which not only serves as a major point of contact for other Domains, but also is tasked with the publicizing of all noteworthy scandals within a Domain—who yelled at whom, who arrived insultingly underdressed for a grand event, who was caught discussing treason, and so forth.

The singular purpose of this Lead Harpy is to maintain the social order by way of Status—making sure that those who have it are continuously acting in ways congruent with their labels, striking down those who reach too high above their station, and maintaining the status quo where, over time, the truly great will rise while all others will stay small and unimportant.

Harpies are often unliked by their targets, but universally recognized as being essential for the prosperity of a Domain; those in power want to ensure their rivals number very few, while those young or low kindred want to see the high and mighty be taken down a notch or two.



Often releasing reports about the goings-on within a Domain, the news they bring is not always of scandal, but also of boons owed and events from far-off Domains.

13.2.8 The Others

While a Prince may name individuals to other positions, the Camarilla as a whole only recognizes those listed above as being worthy of Status and recognition. There are however other accepted positions whose power dwarfs even that of the Prince, and it is a smart kindred who forgets they ever heard titles like “Archon” or “Justicar,” the very mention of which may bring unflinching and unrelenting wrath down upon them.

13.3 Other Customs and Procedures

In addition to the all-important Traditions and Status within the Camarilla, there are other common or well-defined practices which almost every kindred should be aware of. These include how favors are traded, the process through which one sires a child, places of safety and respite, properly arriving in a new Domain, and the ultimate penalty for crimes against the Camarilla.

13.3.1 Acknowledgment

Acknowledgment is the process through which a kindred receives both permission to stay within a given Domain and protection under the laws and Traditions of the Camarilla. While the formality of asking permission to stay is as varied as the Princes who grant it, typically a kindred who desires to visit or reside in a new home will write to their Primogen or the Seneschal, who will bring the request to the Prince.

When the kindred arrives in their hopeful new home it is traditional for them to make themselves known at Elysium where they will wait for permission to visit the Prince. If they are expected they will often find their Primogen or the Keeper waiting for them. Unexpected kindred will likely be found by the Keeper or a Guardian, who will then inform the Primogen or Prince that a visitor has arrived.

If a kindred possesses positive standing Acknowledgment is usually little more than a formality, though a vital one. The Prince or his officers will ascertain why the kindred is relocating, their purpose for choosing this Domain in particular, and whether the kindred is likely to be a benefit to the area. If so, they are welcomed as a member of the local Camarilla, entitled to the rights and privileges thereof but also beholden to its rules and responsibilities.

Some Princes may demand some proof be made of the kindred’s worthiness, either by the support of their new Primogen or through the exchange of a Boon. While such a process could be an insult to well-known or respectable kindred, younger individuals with little proven value can expect to be met with some scrutiny.

A kindred seeking Acknowledgment within a Domain is functionally asking permission to stay, use the resources of, and contribute to their new city. While a short-term visitor must receive the Prince’s blessing to exist within his borders, as it is his Domain, they may not necessarily ask for formal Acknowledgment, as their primary allegiance rests in their home Domain. There is no precedent for requesting or granting “temporary” Acknowledgment; either someone is welcome in a Domain or they are not.

Kindred who are not a part of the Camarilla, either by Clan affiliation or personal choice, must strike a difficult balance with the local establishment. Kindred who are Acknowledged are members of the Camarilla; those desiring to live outside its protections and strictures must find other means of guaranteeing their survival. They have no rights under the Camarilla Traditions, but often either formal treaties or local custom might give them some manner of protection from hostile or aggressive actions. In truth, the only protection an Independent or unaligned kindred has within a Camarilla court is the populace’s fear of reprisal, either from the Prince or from the victim’s Clan.



13.3.2 Holding Courts and Gathers

Within a Domain local kindred meet to discuss the politics of the night, air grievances, and make deals to further their own aims. Such a gathering may be hosted by almost any resident, and usually all Acknowledged kindred are invited. Private meetings are rarely called gatherings unless a large number of individuals are invited.

The host of a formal gather may earn prestige and Status for providing a pleasant or entertaining evening, seeing to their guests' needs, and taking care of any small issues which may arise. However should the gather go poorly due to their shortcomings or shortsightedness they may receive scorn and derision, particularly from the Harpy who is always watching for kindred who err in the social arena.

Traditionally gathers hosted or called by a Prince are called courts and designate that the sovereign will receive petitions, hold official meetings, Acknowledge new kindred, and make announcements. In America many Princes set aside specific or recurring times to hold court, even at other kindred's gathers, a departure from the European tradition of holding proper court only by special decree.

13.3.3 Embrace and the Accounting

While every Clan has its own traditions and customs when it comes to the selection and embrace of a new childe, let alone what happens afterward, there are some aspects of the process which are standard throughout the Camarilla.

The Right of Progeny can only be granted by a Domain's Prince, which permits a kindred to embrace a single individual. Often granted in exchange for Boons or services rendered, permission may be given to embrace a particular individual or anyone in general. Once negotiated for and received, the would-be sire may then embrace.

The embrace begins by the sire draining their target of all blood. At the moment of death they are fed a small amount of the sire's vitae, which will bring the Beast to life within the new vampire. However nothing is without risk and the success of the embrace is not guaranteed.

Once the childe awakens, normally within a few minutes, they feel the first ravages of the Beast. Unused to its power they are utterly incapable of stopping themselves from lashing out at their surroundings; forward-thinking sires have sources of vitae handy both to feed the new vampire and also as targets for the blind rage of their progeny.

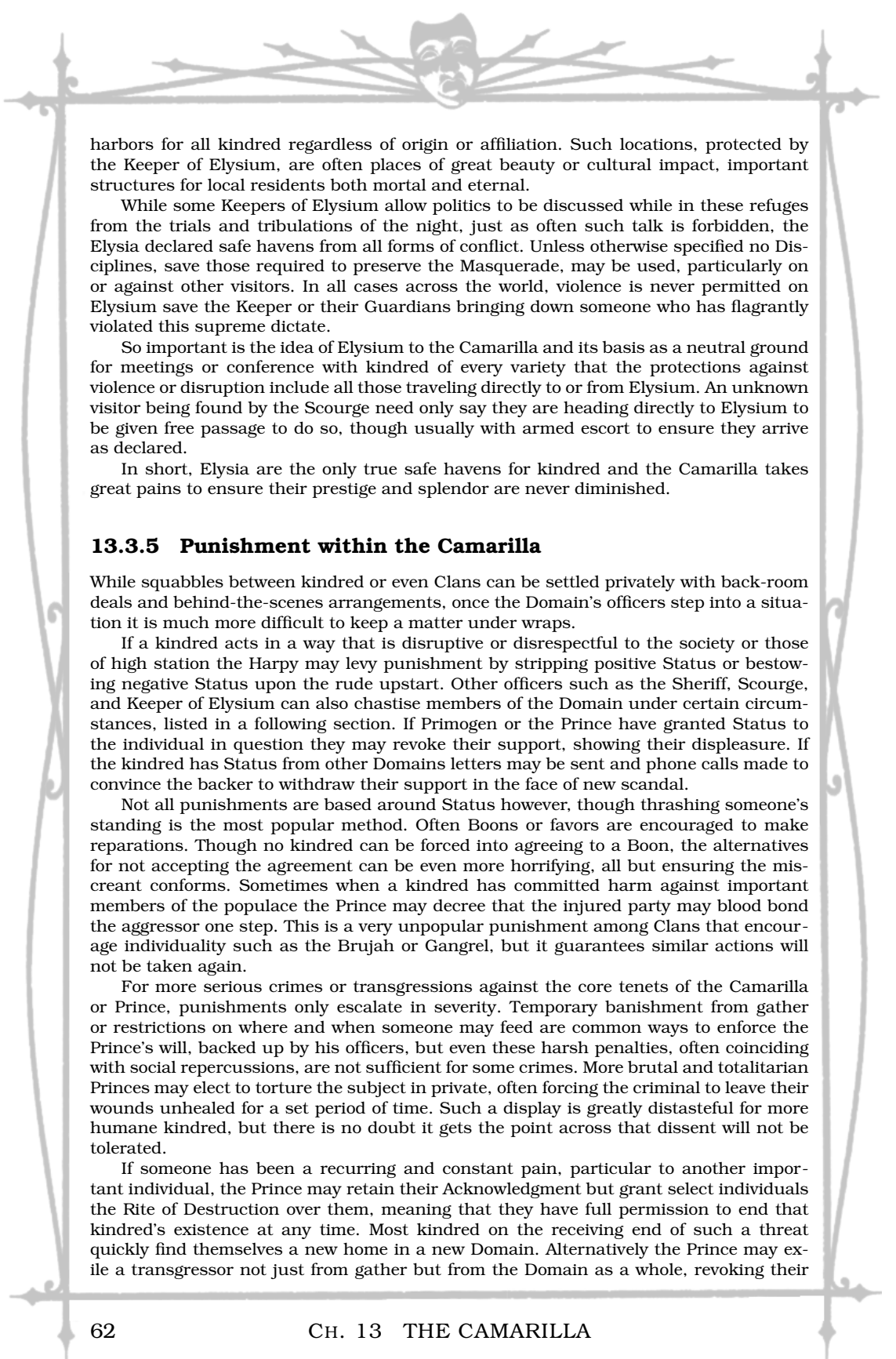
As the awakened vampire returns to their senses, instruction begins. This period, called the Accounting, usually lasts between five and twenty years and is when the sire educates their childe in both how to survive as a vampire and the laws and rules of Camarilla society. While we as players may read a game book and understand the society, to actually live within it takes endless nights of practice and patience.

The Accounting is a dangerous time for both sire and childe—not only is the sire giving up much of their time and resources to raise the fledgling vampire but they are also held responsible for any mistakes or missteps their childe takes. The Camarilla is not a forgiving society and in this instance the sins of the childe are certainly the sins of the sire, both being severely punished for any slights of tradition or law.

Once the sire believes the childe is ready to be released from Accounting and presented to the Camarilla as a fully-fledged member, further meetings with the Prince are requested, wherein which the Prince may test the knowledge and education of the new kindred. If the Prince's expectations are met the childe is granted formal Acknowledgment before the entire court and is now responsible for themselves, though often sires will keep a tight leash on their progeny for several more years as missteps would speak ill of their tutelage.

13.3.4 Elysium

One of the longest-lasting and most respected customs among all kindred-kind, rumored even to predate the Camarilla, is that of Elysium, the creation and maintenance of safe



harbors for all kindred regardless of origin or affiliation. Such locations, protected by the Keeper of Elysium, are often places of great beauty or cultural impact, important structures for local residents both mortal and eternal.

While some Keepers of Elysium allow politics to be discussed while in these refuges from the trials and tribulations of the night, just as often such talk is forbidden, the Elysia declared safe havens from all forms of conflict. Unless otherwise specified no Disciplines, save those required to preserve the Masquerade, may be used, particularly on or against other visitors. In all cases across the world, violence is never permitted on Elysium save the Keeper or their Guardians bringing down someone who has flagrantly violated this supreme dictate.

So important is the idea of Elysium to the Camarilla and its basis as a neutral ground for meetings or conference with kindred of every variety that the protections against violence or disruption include all those traveling directly to or from Elysium. An unknown visitor being found by the Scourge need only say they are heading directly to Elysium to be given free passage to do so, though usually with armed escort to ensure they arrive as declared.

In short, Elysia are the only true safe havens for kindred and the Camarilla takes great pains to ensure their prestige and splendor are never diminished.

13.3.5 Punishment within the Camarilla


While squabbles between kindred or even Clans can be settled privately with back-room deals and behind-the-scenes arrangements, once the Domain's officers step into a situation it is much more difficult to keep a matter under wraps.

If a kindred acts in a way that is disruptive or disrespectful to the society or those of high station the Harpy may levy punishment by stripping positive Status or bestowing negative Status upon the rude upstart. Other officers such as the Sheriff, Scourge, and Keeper of Elysium can also chastise members of the Domain under certain circumstances, listed in a following section. If Primogen or the Prince have granted Status to the individual in question they may revoke their support, showing their displeasure. If the kindred has Status from other Domains letters may be sent and phone calls made to convince the backer to withdraw their support in the face of new scandal.

Not all punishments are based around Status however, though thrashing someone's standing is the most popular method. Often Boons or favors are encouraged to make reparations. Though no kindred can be forced into agreeing to a Boon, the alternatives for not accepting the agreement can be even more horrifying, all but ensuring the miscreant conforms. Sometimes when a kindred has committed harm against important members of the populace the Prince may decree that the injured party may blood bond the aggressor one step. This is a very unpopular punishment among Clans that encourage individuality such as the Brujah or Gangrel, but it guarantees similar actions will not be taken again.

For more serious crimes or transgressions against the core tenets of the Camarilla or Prince, punishments only escalate in severity. Temporary banishment from gather or restrictions on where and when someone may feed are common ways to enforce the Prince's will, backed up by his officers, but even these harsh penalties, often coinciding with social repercussions, are not sufficient for some crimes. More brutal and totalitarian Princes may elect to torture the subject in private, often forcing the criminal to leave their wounds unhealed for a set period of time. Such a display is greatly distasteful for more humane kindred, but there is no doubt it gets the point across that dissent will not be tolerated.

If someone has been a recurring and constant pain, particular to another important individual, the Prince may retain their Acknowledgment but grant select individuals the Rite of Destruction over them, meaning that they have full permission to end that kindred's existence at any time. Most kindred on the receiving end of such a threat quickly find themselves a new home in a new Domain. Alternatively the Prince may exile a transgressor not just from gather but from the Domain as a whole, revoking their



Acknowledgment. Such a person, were they to stay in the local area, would not have the protections of the Traditions, including the prohibition against killing other kindred—a very disadvantageous position for them to be in.

The most serious punishment a Prince can levy upon one of his subjects is called the *Lextalionis*, or “Blood Hunt.” This decree, once made, may never be revoked and so is only used in the most dire of circumstances against the most troubling and violent of offenders. The Prince holds a special court gathering at Elysium, calling every Acknowledged member to hear the proclamation. Once assembled, the Prince reads the list of the criminal’s transgressions and orders that all kindred Acknowledged in that Domain, from that night until the end of nights, are to make all efforts to hunt down and destroy the named kindred within that Domain. The Prince then signs the scroll in blood, casts it into a flaming brazier, and declares the Hunt begun. Contrary to almost any other situation in Camarilla society, the traditional prize for taking down a Blood Hunted kindred is the right to diablerize him, unless explicitly forbidden by the Prince at the time the announcement is made. In modern nights most Princes specifically deny this historic privilege, though they are expected to offer other rewards.

Any kindred found to be harboring a fugitive of justice may be subject to terrible punishments levied by the Scourge, Sheriff, or other officers. In the case of a Blood Hunted kindred being protected, they themselves will become the subject of a new Blood Hunt. Camarilla justice is brutal, merciless, and unforgiving.

13.3.6 Boons

In a world where kindred have the capacity to amass more wealth and resources than many small countries, the exchange of favors is far more valuable than material goods. These favors are called Boons and their use is an essential aspect of every Camarilla kindred’s unlife. Boons are inviolable, and to break an agreement once made is to forever be outcast, hunted and hated in every respectable Domain across the globe. Often the exchange of Boons or their use is called “prestation.” Boons typically come in five varieties, in order of increasing severity:

Trivial Boons are exceedingly small and without risk or discomfort. A kindred of standing holding the door for one that has none, or offering a moment of their time for a private conversation.

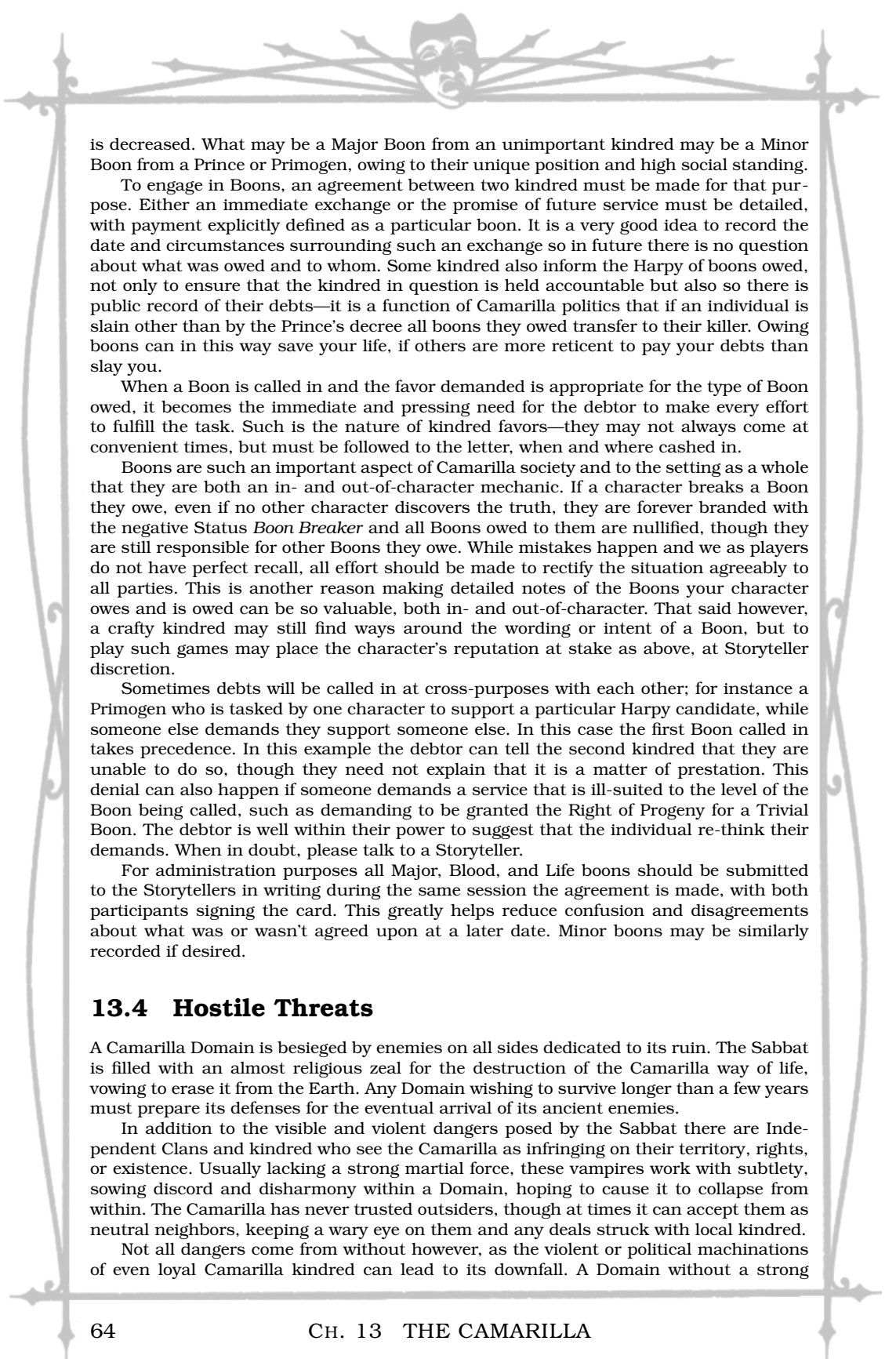
Minor Boons represent favors that may cause some small hardship or giving up a limited resource. Recommending someone for a position or teaching a basic level of a common Discipline, for example.

Major Boons are large favors that can represent severe sacrifices of time or effort which and may bring problems for the kindred in debt. Supporting political actions that harm one’s own Clan, teaching hidden secrets or higher-levels of Disciplines, and coming to the social defense of a deplorable kindred are examples of Major Boons.

Blood Boons are only appropriate where someone risked very real danger to help or aid another, such as entering into combat against a lesser opponent, sacrificing a truly significant portion of one’s holdings or political capital, or taking an action that causes them real and lasting political harm. At this level a kindred may even demand that the debtor drink from them, establishing or furthering a Blood Bond.

Life Boons are the rarest of boons, issued only when someone has truly saved another’s life and/or put their life on the line in service to another. This is a terrible debt to owe, for anything and everything can be demanded in exchange, including the murder of other kindred.

Boons are a valuable resource not just to collect from others but also to owe; if your potential service is valuable, the person whom you owe will have a vested interest in your well-being and continued good standing, keeping their boon powerful. If you are an outcast your ability to affect real change may be limited, and thus the value of your debts



is decreased. What may be a Major Boon from an unimportant kindred may be a Minor Boon from a Prince or Primogen, owing to their unique position and high social standing.

To engage in Boons, an agreement between two kindred must be made for that purpose. Either an immediate exchange or the promise of future service must be detailed, with payment explicitly defined as a particular boon. It is a very good idea to record the date and circumstances surrounding such an exchange so in future there is no question about what was owed and to whom. Some kindred also inform the Harpy of boons owed, not only to ensure that the kindred in question is held accountable but also so there is public record of their debts—it is a function of Camarilla politics that if an individual is slain other than by the Prince's decree all boons they owed transfer to their killer. Owing boons can in this way save your life, if others are more reticent to pay your debts than slay you.

When a Boon is called in and the favor demanded is appropriate for the type of Boon owed, it becomes the immediate and pressing need for the debtor to make every effort to fulfill the task. Such is the nature of kindred favors—they may not always come at convenient times, but must be followed to the letter, when and where cashed in.

Boons are such an important aspect of Camarilla society and to the setting as a whole that they are both an in- and out-of-character mechanic. If a character breaks a Boon they owe, even if no other character discovers the truth, they are forever branded with the negative Status *Boon Breaker* and all Boons owed to them are nullified, though they are still responsible for other Boons they owe. While mistakes happen and we as players do not have perfect recall, all effort should be made to rectify the situation agreeably to all parties. This is another reason making detailed notes of the Boons your character owes and is owed can be so valuable, both in- and out-of-character. That said however, a crafty kindred may still find ways around the wording or intent of a Boon, but to play such games may place the character's reputation at stake as above, at Storyteller discretion.

Sometimes debts will be called in at cross-purposes with each other; for instance a Primogen who is tasked by one character to support a particular Harpy candidate, while someone else demands they support someone else. In this case the first Boon called in takes precedence. In this example the debtor can tell the second kindred that they are unable to do so, though they need not explain that it is a matter of prestatation. This denial can also happen if someone demands a service that is ill-suited to the level of the Boon being called, such as demanding to be granted the Right of Progeny for a Trivial Boon. The debtor is well within their power to suggest that the individual re-think their demands. When in doubt, please talk to a Storyteller.

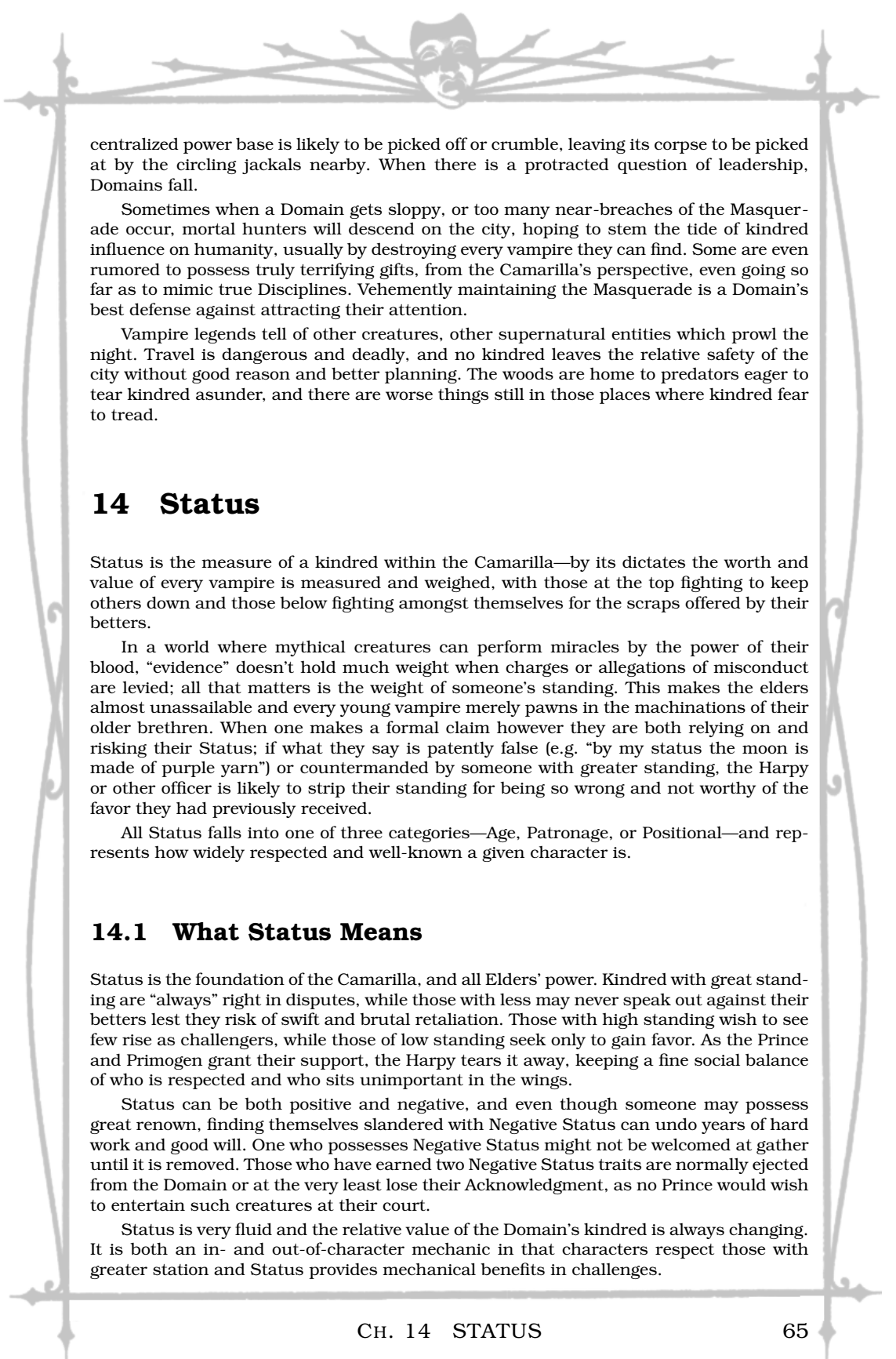
For administration purposes all Major, Blood, and Life boons should be submitted to the Storytellers in writing during the same session the agreement is made, with both participants signing the card. This greatly helps reduce confusion and disagreements about what was or wasn't agreed upon at a later date. Minor boons may be similarly recorded if desired.

13.4 Hostile Threats

A Camarilla Domain is besieged by enemies on all sides dedicated to its ruin. The Sabbat is filled with an almost religious zeal for the destruction of the Camarilla way of life, vowing to erase it from the Earth. Any Domain wishing to survive longer than a few years must prepare its defenses for the eventual arrival of its ancient enemies.

In addition to the visible and violent dangers posed by the Sabbat there are Independent Clans and kindred who see the Camarilla as infringing on their territory, rights, or existence. Usually lacking a strong martial force, these vampires work with subtlety, sowing discord and disharmony within a Domain, hoping to cause it to collapse from within. The Camarilla has never trusted outsiders, though at times it can accept them as neutral neighbors, keeping a wary eye on them and any deals struck with local kindred.

Not all dangers come from without however, as the violent or political machinations of even loyal Camarilla kindred can lead to its downfall. A Domain without a strong



centralized power base is likely to be picked off or crumble, leaving its corpse to be picked at by the circling jackals nearby. When there is a protracted question of leadership, Domains fall.

Sometimes when a Domain gets sloppy, or too many near-breaches of the Masquerade occur, mortal hunters will descend on the city, hoping to stem the tide of kindred influence on humanity, usually by destroying every vampire they can find. Some are even rumored to possess truly terrifying gifts, from the Camarilla's perspective, even going so far as to mimic true Disciplines. Vehemently maintaining the Masquerade is a Domain's best defense against attracting their attention.

Vampire legends tell of other creatures, other supernatural entities which prowl the night. Travel is dangerous and deadly, and no kindred leaves the relative safety of the city without good reason and better planning. The woods are home to predators eager to tear kindred asunder, and there are worse things still in those places where kindred fear to tread.

14 Status

Status is the measure of a kindred within the Camarilla—by its dictates the worth and value of every vampire is measured and weighed, with those at the top fighting to keep others down and those below fighting amongst themselves for the scraps offered by their betters.

In a world where mythical creatures can perform miracles by the power of their blood, “evidence” doesn’t hold much weight when charges or allegations of misconduct are levied; all that matters is the weight of someone’s standing. This makes the elders almost unassailable and every young vampire merely pawns in the machinations of their older brethren. When one makes a formal claim however they are both relying on and risking their Status; if what they say is patently false (e.g. “by my status the moon is made of purple yarn”) or countermanded by someone with greater standing, the Harpy or other officer is likely to strip their standing for being so wrong and not worthy of the favor they had previously received.

All Status falls into one of three categories—Age, Patronage, or Positional—and represents how widely respected and well-known a given character is.

14.1 What Status Means

Status is the foundation of the Camarilla, and all Elders’ power. Kindred with great standing are “always” right in disputes, while those with less may never speak out against their betters lest they risk of swift and brutal retaliation. Those with high standing wish to see few rise as challengers, while those of low standing seek only to gain favor. As the Prince and Primogen grant their support, the Harpy tears it away, keeping a fine social balance of who is respected and who sits unimportant in the wings.

Status can be both positive and negative, and even though someone may possess great renown, finding themselves slandered with Negative Status can undo years of hard work and good will. One who possesses Negative Status might not be welcomed at gather until it is removed. Those who have earned two Negative Status traits are normally ejected from the Domain or at the very least lose their Acknowledgment, as no Prince would wish to entertain such creatures at their court.

Status is very fluid and the relative value of the Domain’s kindred is always changing. It is both an in- and out-of-character mechanic in that characters respect those with greater station and Status provides mechanical benefits in challenges.

14.1.1 Visiting Another Sect

While every sect has some form of Status system, confirmed members of other Sects and those who are truly Independent only respect Age-related Status Traits; their enemies' fancy titles or reputation does not impress them.

14.1.2 Status in Challenges

When defending in a Social Challenge against another kindred, one's Status total (positive minus negative) may be added bonus traits for the purpose of tie resolution, and any Negative Status may be called just like Negative Social traits. Status may also be added to the aggressor's total if their presence is known (e.g. not hiding in Obfuscate). Simple ignorance of someone's station or identity is no defense against its effects.

Status typically only applies to Contested challenges, and never against mortals. Status may apply against ghouls, at Storyteller discretion.

14.2 Age-Related Status


Kindred Age	Generation	Title	Status Traits
0 - 100	$\leq 11^{th}$	Neonate	(None)
100 - 250	$11^{th} - 9^{th}$	Ancilla	Recognized
250 - 450	$9^{th} - 8^{th}$	Venerate	Potent, Venerated
450+	$8^{th} - 7^{th}$	Elder	Potent, Venerated, Established
All age-related titles require Storyteller approval			

Neonates are easily the most visible and numerous members of kindred society, across all Sects. Usually less than one hundred years deceased, these fledgling vampires are the youngest and most inexperienced predators, still learning the ins and outs of undead life. Often looked down upon by their elders for their immaturity and lack of finesse when dealing with kindred politics, the harsh and top-down structure of the Camarilla guarantees that any Neonate wishing to get ahead will have to be truly exceptional. Usually these kindred think in human time-frames and as such their plans rarely extend longer than a year or two, though their first-hand connection to the modern nights often makes their advice or ability to adapt to new situations valuable to more aged or static kindred.

Ancillae are those kindred who, by benefit of their age and strength of blood, have garnered fame and respect, at least enough to begin climbing the social ladder of kindred society. Most often between 125 and 250 years dead, these kindred have shown a deep understanding of kindred politics as well as the uncanny ability to outwit, outplay, and simply outlast other individuals. If Neonates are seen as children, an Ancilla is a young adult, able to make their own decisions and largely able to comport himself without making a mockery of his Clan or lineage. In respect for their accomplishments and their ability to execute plans in the order of decades, the Camarilla *Recognizes* their value and rewards them with Status.

Venerates form the rigid backbone of kindred society. Between 250 and 450 years old, these powerful vampires have proven themselves to be true predators, with the strength of blood to match their commitment to survival in an environment when so many do not reach half this old. Venerate kindred use Ancillae and Neonates as their pawns in their great, sometimes unfathomable, machinations against their enemies. Kindred of this age realize that direct conflict and violence against their foes will too often risk their own destruction; such are the tactics of younger and weaker minds. Having served the tenets of the Camarilla for so long and so faithfully, their elders make public record of their *Potency* and the *Veneration* owed them by other, lesser, kindred.

Elders are those truly rare individuals whose existence predates the Camarilla itself. Their plans sublime, the power contained in their blood almost unimaginable, Elders



form the truly elite among vampire society. They wield their younger allies with the skill and precision of a tactical surgeon, making waves and continences that extend for multiple decades if not longer, organizing whole lineages of kindred, who are often ignorant of the fact that they have been manipulated at all, to see their will done. These kindred have their fingers on the pulse of the continental or global stage, and little occurs that escapes their notice or foreknowledge. These kindred, so long-lived and their resources almost limitless, are fiercely defensive, knowing better than any other that a single moment of weakness or ill-preparation could end everything they have built. These aged vampires rarely appear at gather, greatly preferring to send agents on their behalf, even when dealing with such important individuals as Princes. Remembering the very birth of their respective Sects, Elders are rewarded for their *Potency*, the very real awe and *Veneration* all owe them, and the fact that their guidance has lead to the *Established* norm in the fabric of kindred culture.

Of course there are older kindred, the mention of which make even the truly old shudder; those titans of the world whose very footsteps created and felled whole nations and empires, by whose wisdom the very Camarilla itself was founded when tonight's Elders were mere Neonates. None can say anything about their plans, their goals, or even if such human concepts are still applicable to these predators who have survived to become the almost literal immortal elite of the world. What games these Luminary and Sacrosanct kindred play is an utter mystery to even the most perceptive of Elders, who fear that they themselves are merely pawns in some greater Jihad.

Age-related titles and Status are not automatically granted merely for existing, or for having a certain potency of blood or prestige of lineage; the character must have the public support of a number of his betters who accept him among their number before the Camarilla will recognize their accomplishment. To be raised in age category, for example from Neonate to Ancilla, the petitioner must have the public and vocal support of 10 Ancillae, or 5 Venerates, or 3 Elders, or a like combination thereof.

If on the other hand someone has proven themselves truly unworthy of the respect owed someone of their age, a like number of kindred organized in decrying the individual will cause him to drop in age category, and likely cause much larger scandal to be placed upon him for such visible missteps.

14.3 Patronage Status

Patronage Status traits are those given to a character by other, more respected, kindred, and may be either positive or negative. They represent either accolade or punishment, and the weight of the person who gave the status can weigh heavily on those seeking to revoke it. Traditionally any simple adjective may be used, but it is common practice to not grant someone Status that could otherwise be granted by a Camarilla position. The rules governing Patronage Status in the Camarilla are as follows:

- Venerate and younger kindred may have up to 3 positive Patronage Status
- Traditionally non-Camarilla Clans may only have 2 positive Patronage Status traits.
- All kindred may receive up to 2 Negative Patronage Status traits.
- Caitiff automatically receive an additional Negative Patronage Status trait "*Caitiff*" which can never be removed and does not count against the normal cap of 2 Negative Status traits.
- Lasombra automatically receive the additional positive Patronage Status trait "*Respected*" which can never be removed and does not count against their positive Status trait cap.
- Any character may grant another kindred a Patronage Status trait (either positive or negative) if their total status is more than twice the total of the recipient. This requires the permanent expenditure of a positive Patronage Status trait by the granter.
- Ignoring another's Status for one challenge or outburst requires the permanent expenditure of a positive Patronage Status trait; status is too important to be easily

ignored. If a character has no positive Patronage Status to burn, they must publicly proclaim how *Rude* they are to do so.

- To remove a Negative Patronage Status trait from yourself you may either permanently expend a positive Patronage Status trait to cancel it out or convince someone else to erase it, following the usual rules for granting Status.
- Revoking a Patronage Status trait you yourself have granted costs nothing, whether positive or negative, though any expenditures made to grant the initial status are not returned.
- A character in possession of Negative Status may not receive further positive Patronage until such has been removed, either by burning a positive Patronage or by the powers of another.
- Patronage status must be unique; one cannot be *Dignified x2*, for example.

While any positive adjective that is not already provided by a given Officer Position (see below) is generally acceptable for Patronage Status, over the years there are some labels which have become common or traditional to bestow on deserving kindred. This list is far from exhaustive and should be used as a guide when giving out positive Status:

- | | |
|--------------|------------------|
| • Admired | • Insightful |
| • Adored | • Praised |
| • Brave | • Resourceful |
| • Cherished | • Respected |
| • Courageous | • Trustworthy |
| • Courteous | • Well-Connected |
| • Favored | • Wise |

14.4 Positional Status

Each Camarilla position grants Positional Status, which is lost when the position is vacated. All positions also confer the ability to grant or strip Patronage Status to an individual as detailed below. All primary positions confer “permanent” Positional Status traits and a single “removable” Positional Status trait; assistant positions only confer a single “removable” Positional Status trait. Only Positional Status may be used to affect Status per the powers of a given position.

Permanent Positional Status may never be lost while a character holds a given position, while removable Positional Status may be stripped by the individual(s) who appoint the position as a means of punishment; a Prince picks the Sheriff, an entire Clan chooses their Primogen for example.

In the following list the underlined Status trait is removable. Positional Status “spent” to affect another’s are not lost, and so count for standing and Social Challenges, but may not be used again to affect status in the same month.

- **Prince** – *Well-Known*, *Famous*, *Exalted*, and *Loyal*. May grant Positive to or remove Negative Status from any individual within her Domain.
- **Seneschal** – *Cherished*, *Esteemed*, and Influential. Speaks with the Prince’s voice and ability when the Prince is unavailable.
- **Sheriff** – *Feared* and Trusted. May strip Positive Status from or grant Negative Status to those who refuse official questioning or judgment.
- **Keeper of Elysium** – *Honorable* and Just. May strip Positive Status from or grant Negative Status to those who threaten or breach the Masquerade or Elysium.
- **Scourge** – *Feared* and Trusted. May strip Positive Status from or grant Negative Status to those who harbor willfully unacknowledged kindred.
- **Primogen** – *Revered* and Dutiful. May grant Positive Status to or remove Negative Status from their Clan.

- **Lead Harpy** – *Influential* and Well-Known. May strip Positive Status from or grant Negative Status to any member of the Domain who has been involved in a publicized scandal.
- **Assistants** – Guardian, Huntsmen, Harpies, and Deputies receive Trusted. Clan Whips receive Dutiful, and all possess the powers of their senior officers, when invoked on their behalf.

14.4.1 Limits on Officers' Abilities to Affect Status

- No officer may affect the Patronage Status of kindred who are of equal or greater standing, or affect the same individual's standing more than once a week.
- No officer may affect the standing of others more times per story than the number of Status traits their office provides (e.g. a Primogen twice).
- For determining who the Lead Harpy can affect or how often they may levy Status per month, add the number of sitting Primogen to their Positional Status total. This extra Status does not count in Challenges or in any other situation; it is solely used to determine who the Harpy can affect.
- Assistant positions wield the abilities of their bosses when acting as such. For example in absence of the Primogen, a Whip may grant Status to a member of their Clan, using the Primogen's standing in place of their own. Any primary officer may reverse a Status adjustment levied by an assistant in their name without cost, at any time.
- If an officer levies Status upon someone else and then is removed from position, they may only freely remove that Status if they continue to have more standing than the recipient.
- "Acknowledged" is a unique Positional Status that comes from being a member of the Camarilla and accepted into a Domain, and is granted (or revoked) by the Prince at no cost to himself.

14.5 Examples of Status Totals

Venerate Prince: Maximum of 11 Status –
4 from position, 3 unique patronage, 3 age, Acknowledged

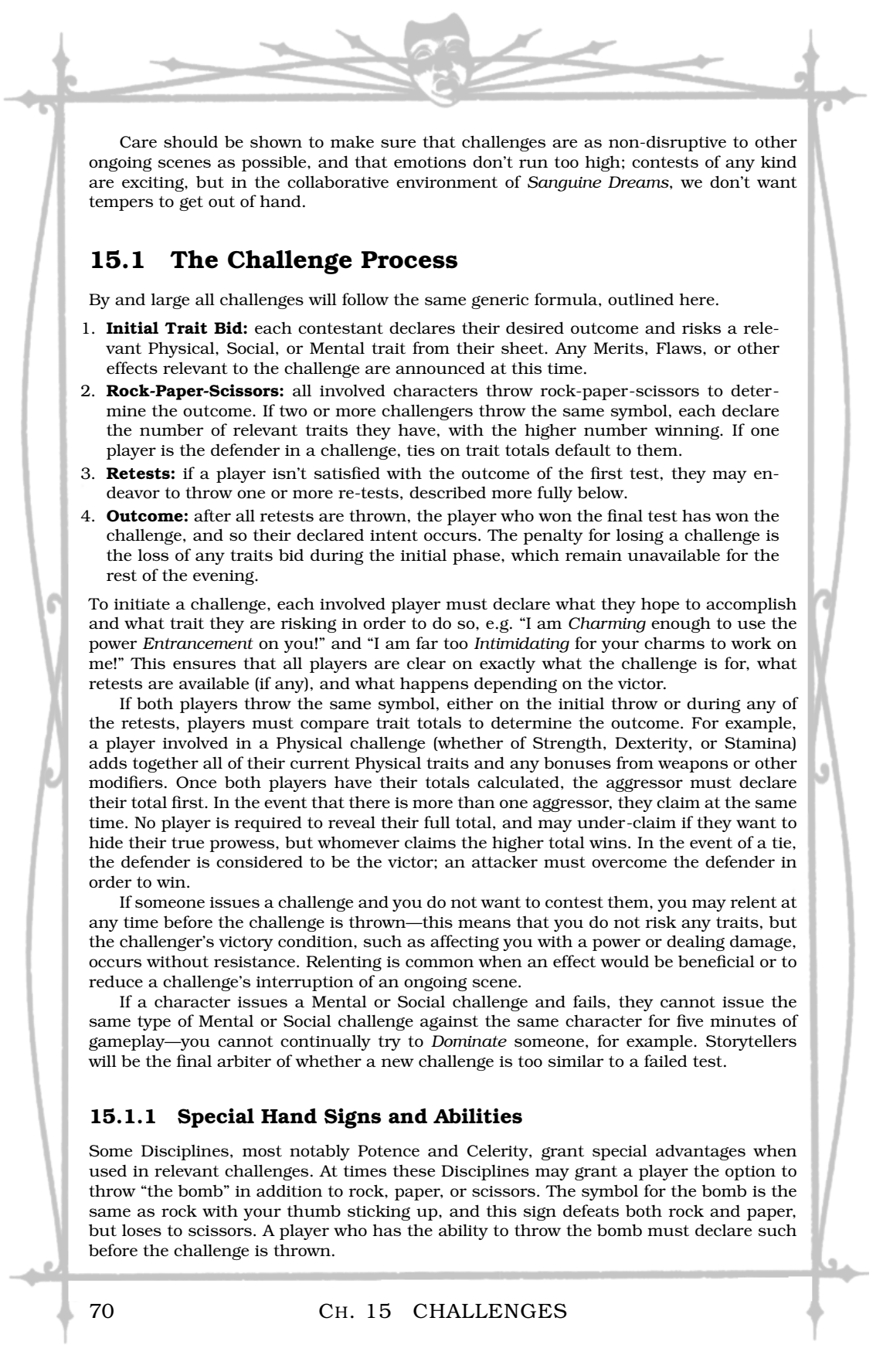
Ancilla Primogen: Maximum of 7 Status –
2 from position, 3 unique patronage, 1 age, Acknowledged

Neonate Caitiff Huntsman: Maximum of 3 effective Status –
1 from position, 2 unique patronage, Acknowledged, -1 for the permanent Negative trait *Caitiff*

15 Challenges

Vampire: the Masquerade is a social game, where the political machinations of each character are what drives both the night-to-night and overarching stories. Even with the focus on interpersonal interaction, some direct conflict is unavoidable. While role-playing through conflict is optimal, to help facilitate the resolution of what happens in the event that role-play isn't sufficient, there is a simple method to determine the outcome: rock, paper, scissors.

While the process of throwing a challenge has a great deal of nuance and multiple options for players wanting to come out on top, the actual mechanics for throwing a challenge are very simple: two players declare their intention and throw rock, paper, or scissors to determine who comes out on top. Rock defeats Scissors which defeats Paper which in turn defeats Rock. This section dives into the many complications that can arise in the throwing of challenges, but as far the overall mechanic goes, it is no more difficult than this childhood game.



Care should be shown to make sure that challenges are as non-disruptive to other ongoing scenes as possible, and that emotions don't run too high; contests of any kind are exciting, but in the collaborative environment of *Sanguine Dreams*, we don't want tempers to get out of hand.

15.1 The Challenge Process

By and large all challenges will follow the same generic formula, outlined here.

1. **Initial Trait Bid:** each contestant declares their desired outcome and risks a relevant Physical, Social, or Mental trait from their sheet. Any Merits, Flaws, or other effects relevant to the challenge are announced at this time.
2. **Rock-Paper-Scissors:** all involved characters throw rock-paper-scissors to determine the outcome. If two or more challengers throw the same symbol, each declare the number of relevant traits they have, with the higher number winning. If one player is the defender in a challenge, ties on trait totals default to them.
3. **Retests:** if a player isn't satisfied with the outcome of the first test, they may endeavor to throw one or more re-tests, described more fully below.
4. **Outcome:** after all retests are thrown, the player who won the final test has won the challenge, and so their declared intent occurs. The penalty for losing a challenge is the loss of any traits bid during the initial phase, which remain unavailable for the rest of the evening.

To initiate a challenge, each involved player must declare what they hope to accomplish and what trait they are risking in order to do so, e.g. "I am *Charming* enough to use the power *Entrancement* on you!" and "I am far too *Intimidating* for your charms to work on me!" This ensures that all players are clear on exactly what the challenge is for, what retests are available (if any), and what happens depending on the victor.

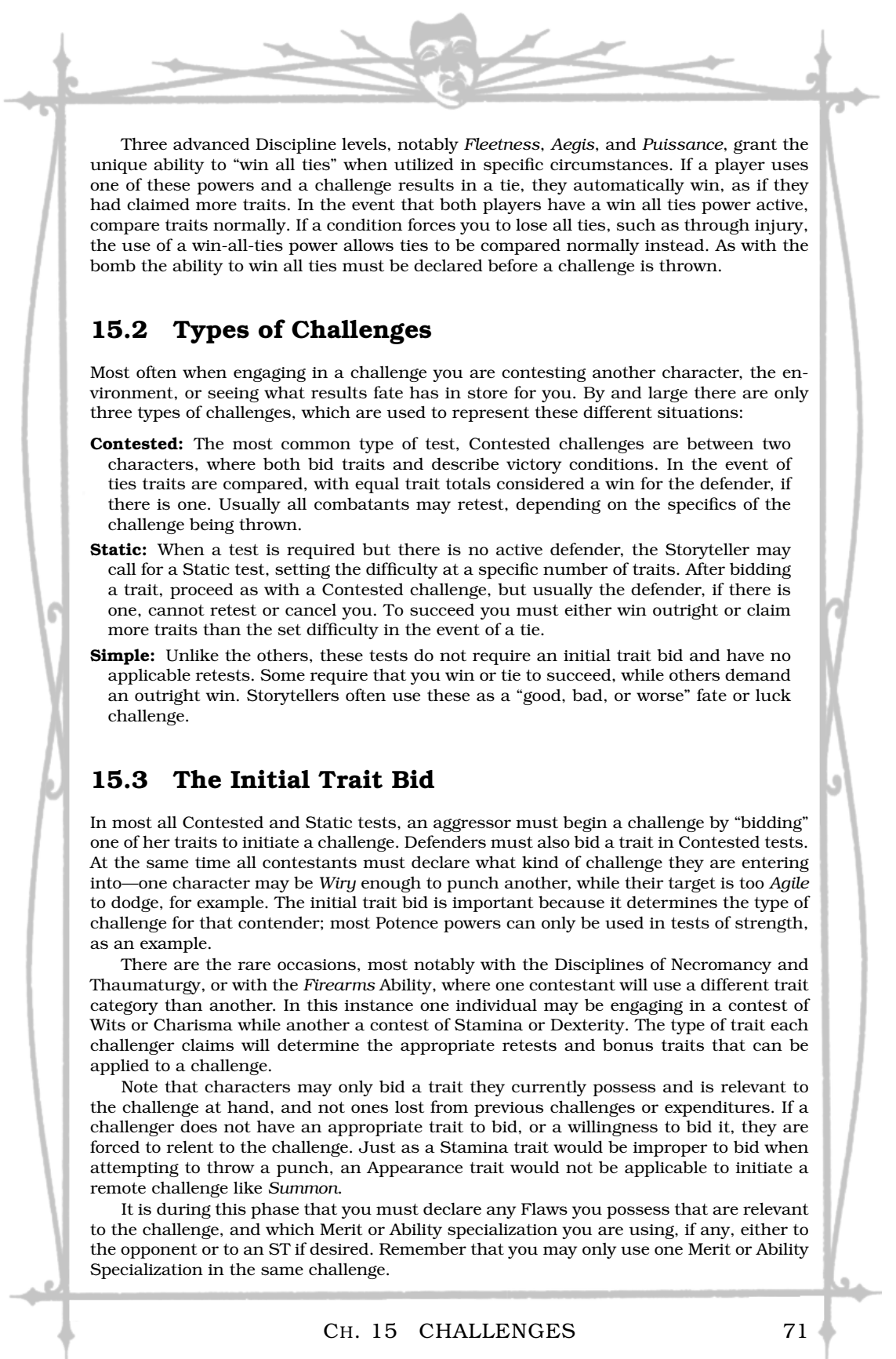
If both players throw the same symbol, either on the initial throw or during any of the retests, players must compare trait totals to determine the outcome. For example, a player involved in a Physical challenge (whether of Strength, Dexterity, or Stamina) adds together all of their current Physical traits and any bonuses from weapons or other modifiers. Once both players have their totals calculated, the aggressor must declare their total first. In the event that there is more than one aggressor, they claim at the same time. No player is required to reveal their full total, and may under-claim if they want to hide their true prowess, but whomever claims the higher total wins. In the event of a tie, the defender is considered to be the victor; an attacker must overcome the defender in order to win.

If someone issues a challenge and you do not want to contest them, you may relent at any time before the challenge is thrown—this means that you do not risk any traits, but the challenger's victory condition, such as affecting you with a power or dealing damage, occurs without resistance. Relenting is common when an effect would be beneficial or to reduce a challenge's interruption of an ongoing scene.

If a character issues a Mental or Social challenge and fails, they cannot issue the same type of Mental or Social challenge against the same character for five minutes of gameplay—you cannot continually try to *Dominate* someone, for example. Storytellers will be the final arbiter of whether a new challenge is too similar to a failed test.

15.1.1 Special Hand Signs and Abilities

Some Disciplines, most notably Potence and Celerity, grant special advantages when used in relevant challenges. At times these Disciplines may grant a player the option to throw "the bomb" in addition to rock, paper, or scissors. The symbol for the bomb is the same as rock with your thumb sticking up, and this sign defeats both rock and paper, but loses to scissors. A player who has the ability to throw the bomb must declare such before the challenge is thrown.



Three advanced Discipline levels, notably *Fleetness*, *Aegis*, and *Puissance*, grant the unique ability to “win all ties” when utilized in specific circumstances. If a player uses one of these powers and a challenge results in a tie, they automatically win, as if they had claimed more traits. In the event that both players have a win all ties power active, compare traits normally. If a condition forces you to lose all ties, such as through injury, the use of a win-all-ties power allows ties to be compared normally instead. As with the bomb the ability to win all ties must be declared before a challenge is thrown.

15.2 Types of Challenges

Most often when engaging in a challenge you are contesting another character, the environment, or seeing what results fate has in store for you. By and large there are only three types of challenges, which are used to represent these different situations:

Contested: The most common type of test, Contested challenges are between two characters, where both bid traits and describe victory conditions. In the event of ties traits are compared, with equal trait totals considered a win for the defender, if there is one. Usually all combatants may retest, depending on the specifics of the challenge being thrown.

Static: When a test is required but there is no active defender, the Storyteller may call for a Static test, setting the difficulty at a specific number of traits. After bidding a trait, proceed as with a Contested challenge, but usually the defender, if there is one, cannot retest or cancel you. To succeed you must either win outright or claim more traits than the set difficulty in the event of a tie.

Simple: Unlike the others, these tests do not require an initial trait bid and have no applicable retests. Some require that you win or tie to succeed, while others demand an outright win. Storytellers often use these as a “good, bad, or worse” fate or luck challenge.

15.3 The Initial Trait Bid

In most all Contested and Static tests, an aggressor must begin a challenge by “bidding” one of her traits to initiate a challenge. Defenders must also bid a trait in Contested tests. At the same time all contestants must declare what kind of challenge they are entering into—one character may be *Wiry* enough to punch another, while their target is too *Agile* to dodge, for example. The initial trait bid is important because it determines the type of challenge for that contender; most Potence powers can only be used in tests of strength, as an example.

There are the rare occasions, most notably with the Disciplines of Necromancy and Thaumaturgy, or with the *Firearms* Ability, where one contestant will use a different trait category than another. In this instance one individual may be engaging in a contest of Wits or Charisma while another a contest of Stamina or Dexterity. The type of trait each challenger claims will determine the appropriate retests and bonus traits that can be applied to a challenge.

Note that characters may only bid a trait they currently possess and is relevant to the challenge at hand, and not ones lost from previous challenges or expenditures. If a challenger does not have an appropriate trait to bid, or a willingness to bid it, they are forced to relent to the challenge. Just as a Stamina trait would be improper to bid when attempting to throw a punch, an Appearance trait would not be applicable to initiate a remote challenge like *Summon*.

It is during this phase that you must declare any Flaws you possess that are relevant to the challenge, and which Merit or Ability specialization you are using, if any, either to the opponent or to an ST if desired. Remember that you may only use one Merit or Ability Specialization in the same challenge.



15.3.1 Negative Traits

Just as positive traits may be used to initiate a challenge, there exist Negative traits which, if used correctly, can make engaging in a challenge more risky for an opponent. Common sources of Negative traits are those chosen during character creation (see Chapter 3), the use of weapons, or Flaws such as *Flesh of the Corpse*. If you believe an opponent possesses Negative traits that would apply to the ensuing challenge, you may call one or more of them out before the challenge is thrown. For each Negative trait you guess correctly, the opponent must bid an additional trait to continue the challenge; if they lose the test, all risked traits are similarly lost.

If however you incorrectly guess a Negative trait, you yourself must bid an additional trait in order to continue the challenge. Negative traits are never lost and do not run out; they apply to every relevant (Mental, Social, or Physical) challenge until they are bought off with XP (see Chapter 20) or the effect that grants them has worn off.

Only Negative Traits that are relevant to the current challenge are applicable to call; appearance-based Negatives such as *Bestial* or *Repugnant* are only applicable in local challenges where their true form is apparent (e.g. not using *Obfuscate*). Similarly a Storyteller may rule that someone firing a gun is not hindered by their being *Lame* if standing still. When in doubt, ask a Storyteller.

Similarly to positive traits, Negative traits should be well role-played as they give as much, if not more, personality to your character than their more admirable qualities.

Falling to the “Wounded” wound level also requires characters, whether aggressive or defensive, to bid an additional trait to continue all challenges.

15.3.2 Not having enough traits

If a character is forced to bid more named traits than they possess at the time of the challenge, whether from wound penalties, Negative traits, or other factors, they cannot continue the challenge and so must relent. Remember that bonus traits such as from weapons, Status, or spending Blood do not count as named traits and so are not biddable in a challenge—they are used for tie comparison only.

Any kindred who finds himself low on traits may want to refrain from engaging in challenges to ensure they aren’t caught completely defenseless should the occasion arise.

15.3.3 Ties with No Defender

In situations where both contestants are attacking or are considered aggressors, the normal rule of “ties go to the defender” does not apply, since there is no specific defender. If such a challenge results in a tie and both claim equal traits, both characters lose any traits bid as if they failed the challenge outright. In this case there is simply no winner and no victory conditions occur.

Alternatively if all involved players agree, the combatants may throw another test, with the winner decided by one throw. In the case of yet another tie, this last test is repeated until a clear victor emerges.

15.3.4 Sacrificing Traits

Some powers, including *Possession*, *Telepathy*, *Subsume the Spirit*, and some uses of both Necromancy and Thaumaturgy, require a character to sacrifice traits in order to prolong, enhance, or create an effect. Unless specified in the writeup for that power, all such traits must be expended prior to the challenge being thrown.



15.3.5 Challenges with No Valid Defender

Occasionally a character will wish to throw a challenge against someone who is not a valid target—investigating someone for using *Mask of a Thousand Faces* when they aren't, or trying to *Command* someone of lower Generation, for example. While this situation will usually be handled by the first Golden Rule, a popular option is for the character, who does not know their target isn't subject to the challenge, to risk traits and perhaps spend retests as applicable in the attempt, even though there is no hope for success. When in doubt please talk to a Storyteller.

15.4 Retests and Canceling

In the event that a Contested or Static challenge doesn't go your way, you may be able to “retest” and gain a second (or even third) bite at success. Each type of retest may only be used when applicable, and only once per challenge per contender. When all retests have been thrown, the challenger who won the last test has won the challenge. Potential retests include:

Ability: if a character possesses a relevant Ability for the challenge, they may expend one dot for the evening in order to gain a retest. This is the most common use of Abilities during a game session. This retest can be canceled by a relevant Ability.

Discipline: though rare, some Discipline powers such as *Awe* or *Might* allow for a retest in specific challenges, as detailed in their writeups. This retest can be canceled by the same Discipline.

Merits: some Merits such as *Luck* may grant a retest, if the Merit's use is declared before the challenge is thrown. Merit retests cannot be canceled.

Willpower: available only to the defender in Mental or Social challenges, by spending a temporary Willpower trait they may gain an additional retest. This retest cannot be canceled.

Situation: in rare cases the Storyteller may dictate that the environment will grant one side or both a retest, such as fighting in darkness. Situational retests may be canceled or not by Storyteller decision, and would usually require a relevant Ability. If all combatants are subject to the same situational retest it is often omitted.

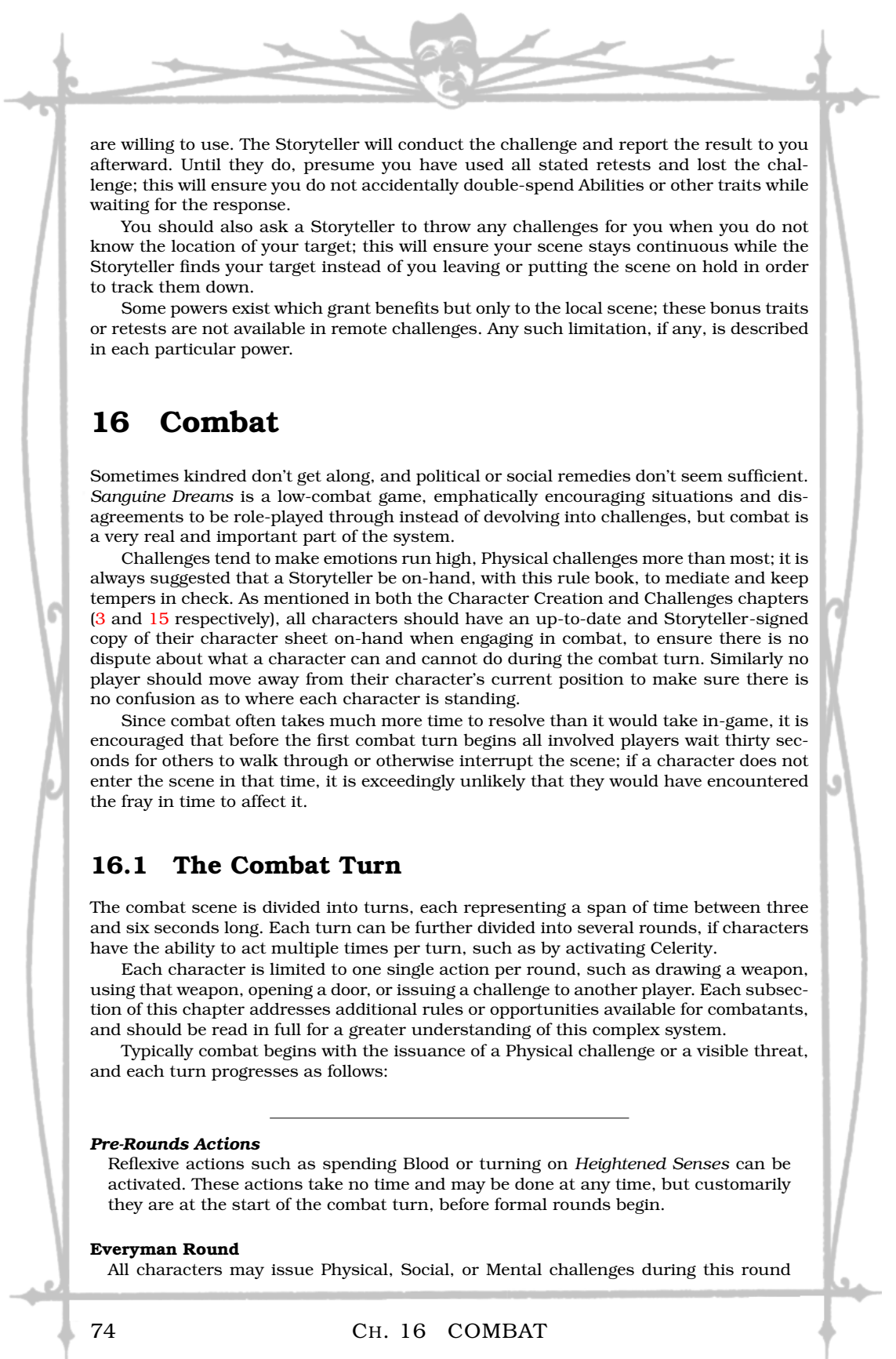
Overbid: a unique retest, attempting an Overbid represents the belief that your character is simply too powerful to be so easily stopped. By voluntarily losing your initial bid trait(s) and risking a new one you may declare your intent to Overbid. If your current named trait total is at least twice the defender's, you gain an additional retest, though your initial trait remains lost, even if you ultimately win the challenge. Remember that named traits do not include bonus traits from weapons, Status, or other miscellaneous sources. Overbid retests cannot be canceled.

If one character endeavors to retest a challenge by using an Ability or Discipline and their opponent wants to stop them, they may “cancel” that retest by using a like Ability or Discipline, as detailed above. If you cancel a given retest however you may not then use the same retest—canceling someone's Ability retest with your own Ability prevents you from calling for an Ability retest in the same challenge.

The opportunities to retest and cancel are optional, and need not be taken if not desired. Please be careful to note all expenditures made from retesting or canceling, as they are spent whether or not the challenge is ultimately successful in your favor.

15.5 Remote Challenges

Not all challenges are conducted strictly by the players involved. Challenges where one character may not instantly know the outcome, such as *Summoning* someone from a great distance, should be performed by a Storyteller. Inform the Storyteller of the challenge you wish to throw, your number of relevant traits, and any applicable retests you



are willing to use. The Storyteller will conduct the challenge and report the result to you afterward. Until they do, presume you have used all stated retests and lost the challenge; this will ensure you do not accidentally double-spend Abilities or other traits while waiting for the response.

You should also ask a Storyteller to throw any challenges for you when you do not know the location of your target; this will ensure your scene stays continuous while the Storyteller finds your target instead of you leaving or putting the scene on hold in order to track them down.

Some powers exist which grant benefits but only to the local scene; these bonus traits or retests are not available in remote challenges. Any such limitation, if any, is described in each particular power.

16 Combat

Sometimes kindred don't get along, and political or social remedies don't seem sufficient. *Sanguine Dreams* is a low-combat game, emphatically encouraging situations and disagreements to be role-played through instead of devolving into challenges, but combat is a very real and important part of the system.

Challenges tend to make emotions run high, Physical challenges more than most; it is always suggested that a Storyteller be on-hand, with this rule book, to mediate and keep tempers in check. As mentioned in both the Character Creation and Challenges chapters (3 and 15 respectively), all characters should have an up-to-date and Storyteller-signed copy of their character sheet on-hand when engaging in combat, to ensure there is no dispute about what a character can and cannot do during the combat turn. Similarly no player should move away from their character's current position to make sure there is no confusion as to where each character is standing.

Since combat often takes much more time to resolve than it would take in-game, it is encouraged that before the first combat turn begins all involved players wait thirty seconds for others to walk through or otherwise interrupt the scene; if a character does not enter the scene in that time, it is exceedingly unlikely that they would have encountered the fray in time to affect it.

16.1 The Combat Turn

The combat scene is divided into turns, each representing a span of time between three and six seconds long. Each turn can be further divided into several rounds, if characters have the ability to act multiple times per turn, such as by activating Celerity.

Each character is limited to one single action per round, such as drawing a weapon, using that weapon, opening a door, or issuing a challenge to another player. Each subsection of this chapter addresses additional rules or opportunities available for combatants, and should be read in full for a greater understanding of this complex system.

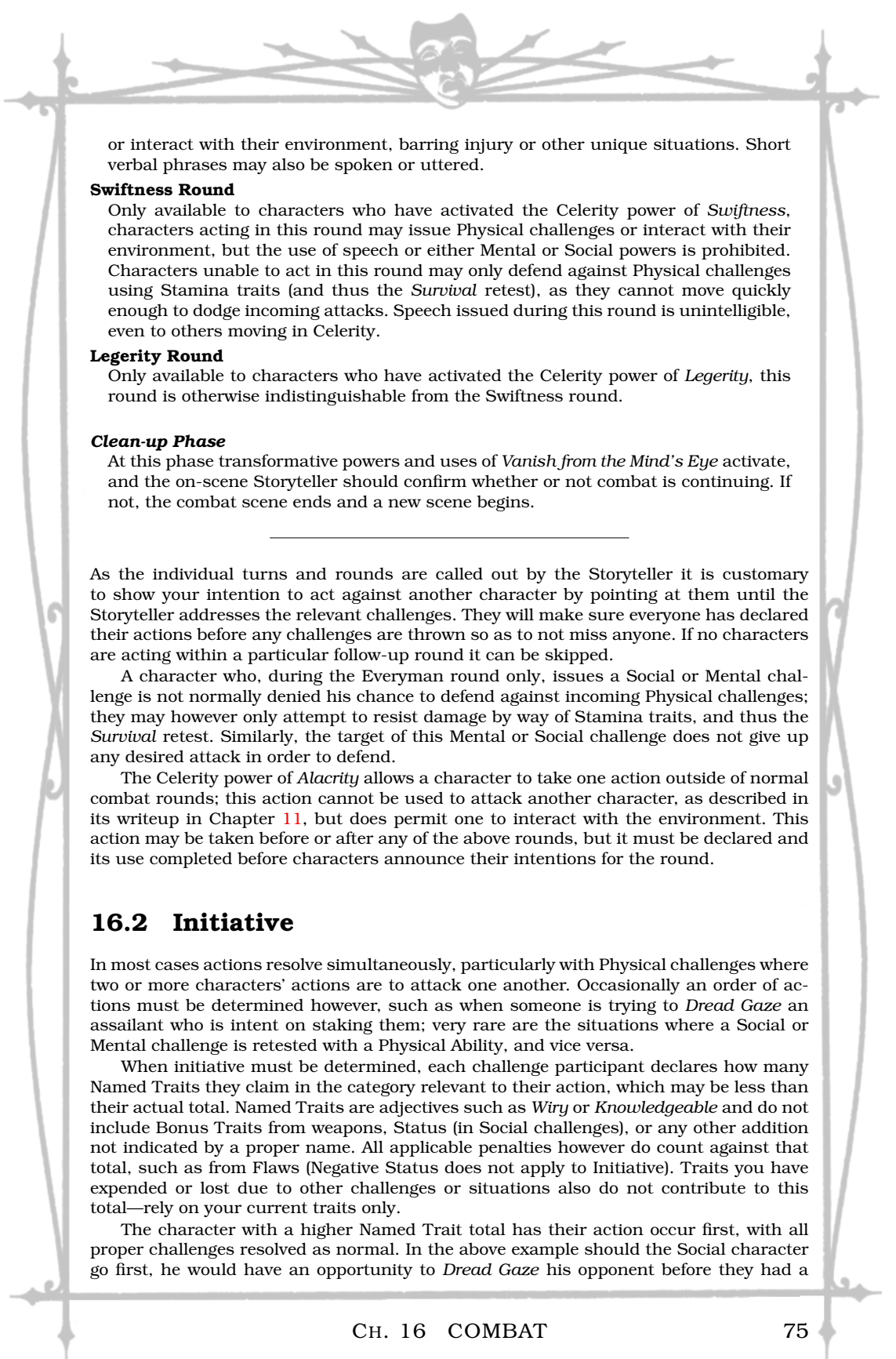
Typically combat begins with the issuance of a Physical challenge or a visible threat, and each turn progresses as follows:

Pre-Rounds Actions

Reflexive actions such as spending Blood or turning on *Heightened Senses* can be activated. These actions take no time and may be done at any time, but customarily they are at the start of the combat turn, before formal rounds begin.

Everyman Round

All characters may issue Physical, Social, or Mental challenges during this round



or interact with their environment, barring injury or other unique situations. Short verbal phrases may also be spoken or uttered.

Swiftess Round

Only available to characters who have activated the Celerity power of *Swiftess*, characters acting in this round may issue Physical challenges or interact with their environment, but the use of speech or either Mental or Social powers is prohibited. Characters unable to act in this round may only defend against Physical challenges using Stamina traits (and thus the *Survival* retest), as they cannot move quickly enough to dodge incoming attacks. Speech issued during this round is unintelligible, even to others moving in Celerity.

Legerity Round

Only available to characters who have activated the Celerity power of *Legerity*, this round is otherwise indistinguishable from the Swiftess round.

Clean-up Phase

At this phase transformative powers and uses of *Vanish from the Mind's Eye* activate, and the on-scene Storyteller should confirm whether or not combat is continuing. If not, the combat scene ends and a new scene begins.

As the individual turns and rounds are called out by the Storyteller it is customary to show your intention to act against another character by pointing at them until the Storyteller addresses the relevant challenges. They will make sure everyone has declared their actions before any challenges are thrown so as to not miss anyone. If no characters are acting within a particular follow-up round it can be skipped.

A character who, during the Everyman round only, issues a Social or Mental challenge is not normally denied his chance to defend against incoming Physical challenges; they may however only attempt to resist damage by way of Stamina traits, and thus the *Survival* retest. Similarly, the target of this Mental or Social challenge does not give up any desired attack in order to defend.

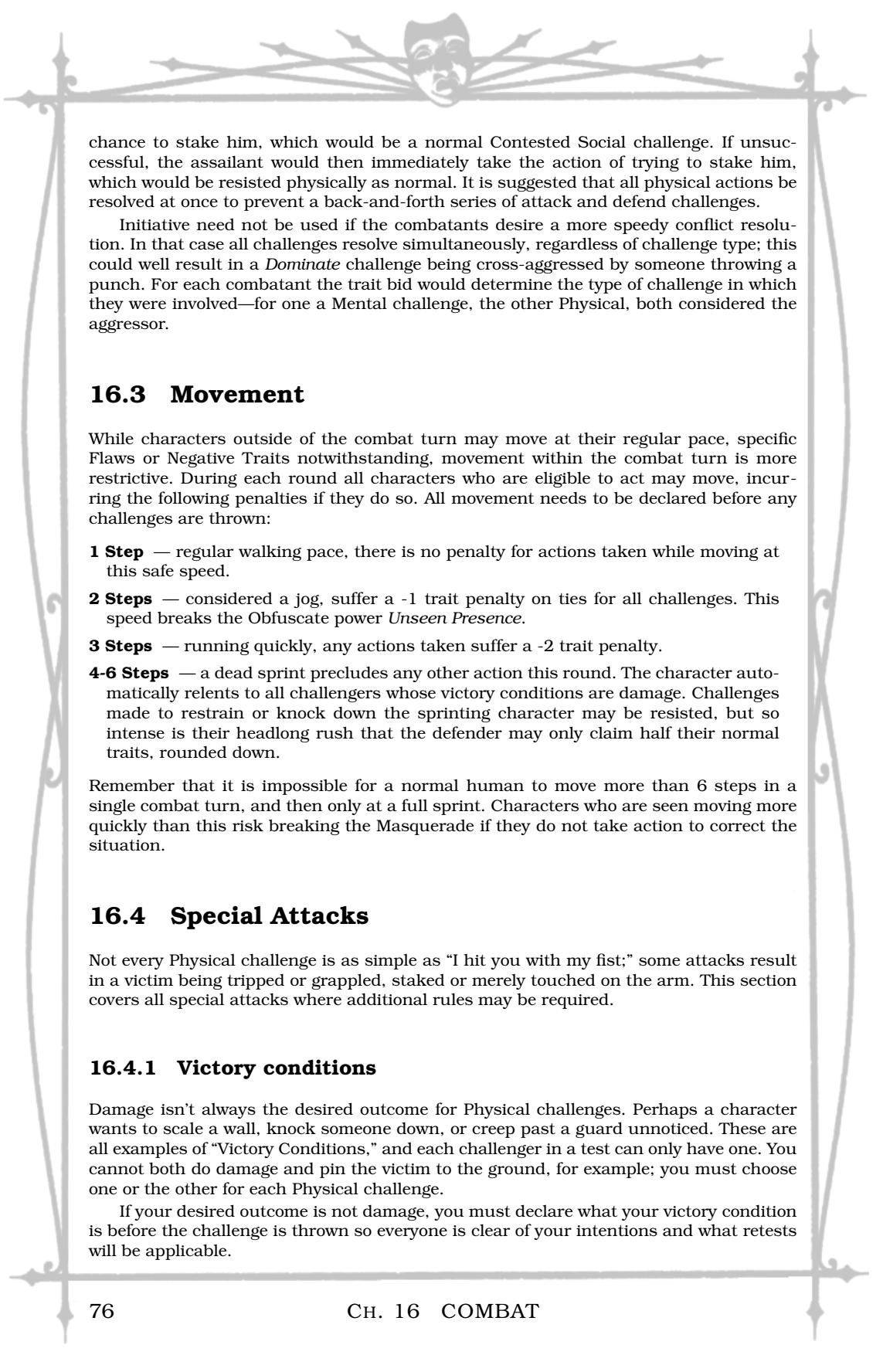
The Celerity power of *Alacrity* allows a character to take one action outside of normal combat rounds; this action cannot be used to attack another character, as described in its writeup in Chapter 11, but does permit one to interact with the environment. This action may be taken before or after any of the above rounds, but it must be declared and its use completed before characters announce their intentions for the round.

16.2 Initiative

In most cases actions resolve simultaneously, particularly with Physical challenges where two or more characters' actions are to attack one another. Occasionally an order of actions must be determined however, such as when someone is trying to *Dread Gaze* an assailant who is intent on staking them; very rare are the situations where a Social or Mental challenge is retested with a Physical Ability, and vice versa.

When initiative must be determined, each challenge participant declares how many Named Traits they claim in the category relevant to their action, which may be less than their actual total. Named Traits are adjectives such as *Wiry* or *Knowledgeable* and do not include Bonus Traits from weapons, Status (in Social challenges), or any other addition not indicated by a proper name. All applicable penalties however do count against that total, such as from Flaws (Negative Status does not apply to Initiative). Traits you have expended or lost due to other challenges or situations also do not contribute to this total—rely on your current traits only.

The character with a higher Named Trait total has their action occur first, with all proper challenges resolved as normal. In the above example should the Social character go first, he would have an opportunity to *Dread Gaze* his opponent before they had a



chance to stake him, which would be a normal Contested Social challenge. If unsuccessful, the assailant would then immediately take the action of trying to stake him, which would be resisted physically as normal. It is suggested that all physical actions be resolved at once to prevent a back-and-forth series of attack and defend challenges.

Initiative need not be used if the combatants desire a more speedy conflict resolution. In that case all challenges resolve simultaneously, regardless of challenge type; this could well result in a *Dominant* challenge being cross-aggressed by someone throwing a punch. For each combatant the trait bid would determine the type of challenge in which they were involved—for one a Mental challenge, the other Physical, both considered the aggressor.

16.3 Movement

While characters outside of the combat turn may move at their regular pace, specific Flaws or Negative Traits notwithstanding, movement within the combat turn is more restrictive. During each round all characters who are eligible to act may move, incurring the following penalties if they do so. All movement needs to be declared before any challenges are thrown:

- 1 Step** — regular walking pace, there is no penalty for actions taken while moving at this safe speed.
- 2 Steps** — considered a jog, suffer a -1 trait penalty on ties for all challenges. This speed breaks the Obfuscate power *Unseen Presence*.
- 3 Steps** — running quickly, any actions taken suffer a -2 trait penalty.
- 4-6 Steps** — a dead sprint precludes any other action this round. The character automatically relents to all challengers whose victory conditions are damage. Challenges made to restrain or knock down the sprinting character may be resisted, but so intense is their headlong rush that the defender may only claim half their normal traits, rounded down.

Remember that it is impossible for a normal human to move more than 6 steps in a single combat turn, and then only at a full sprint. Characters who are seen moving more quickly than this risk breaking the Masquerade if they do not take action to correct the situation.

16.4 Special Attacks

Not every Physical challenge is as simple as “I hit you with my fist;” some attacks result in a victim being tripped or grappled, staked or merely touched on the arm. This section covers all special attacks where additional rules may be required.

16.4.1 Victory conditions

Damage isn’t always the desired outcome for Physical challenges. Perhaps a character wants to scale a wall, knock someone down, or creep past a guard unnoticed. These are all examples of “Victory Conditions,” and each challenger in a test can only have one. You cannot both do damage and pin the victim to the ground, for example; you must choose one or the other for each Physical challenge.

If your desired outcome is not damage, you must declare what your victory condition is before the challenge is thrown so everyone is clear of your intentions and what retests will be applicable.



16.4.2 Staking

Often the most efficient way to immobilize a kindred, melee weapons with the “Staking” quality (see Chapter 17) may be used to pierce a character’s heart. Small shafts of wood like pencils or thin dowels are not sufficient to stake a vampire, though a broken chair leg may be, at Storyteller discretion.

If a melee attack with an applicable weapon succeeds in doing damage to the target, not reduced to zero by armour or other protective measures, damage is applied as normal and the attacker then engages in two Simple Tests. If both tests succeed with either a win or tie, the victim is staked, unable to move or act in any way, including activating Disciplines or spending Blood. More information about the condition of being staked can be found in Chapter 18.

Should the attacker fail either of the follow-up Simple Tests, combat proceeds as normal, with a new challenge (and two Simple Tests) required to stake the victim again; it is generally assumed that the attacker will retain the weapon in-hand.

Successfully staking a mortal will result in their instant and gruesome death.

16.4.3 Grappling

At times a character wishes merely to restrain another character instead of dealing damage. Engaging in a Physical challenge with the victory condition of “grappling” can accomplish this, always retested with the *Brawl* Ability. If successful, the actions of both parties are greatly limited—no longer can they take steps, and physical attacks are limited to biting or brawling strikes against their opponent. Barring exceptional circumstances, individuals may only grapple or be grappled by one other person at a time.

During each round the victim of a grapple may endeavor to break free with either a Strength- or Dexterity-based Physical challenge as you try to maintain the grapple. If they are able to act in rounds that you are not, such as due to higher levels of Celerity, you may still resist their attempts to escape with a Strength-based challenge as you hold them tightly, in a singular exemption to the rule that you cannot be the aggressor in combat rounds in which you cannot normally act.

16.4.4 Biting/Feeding

Once engaged in a grapple, a vampire may endeavor to bite their opponent in a subsequent combat round, either for damage or to drink their blood, both of which require a new Physical challenge. Most often a vampire’s fangs elongate at the moment of the strike, whether the intent is to drink or deal damage. When used to deal damage in this way a vampire’s supernatural fangs cause an Aggravated wound. See Chapter 19 about the effects of feeding on victim and attacker alike.

16.4.5 Touch-Based Powers

No power may affect another character without a challenge. In the case of touch-based powers such as *Quell the Beast* or *Dagon’s Call*, a firm grip or contact must be made for the power to succeed. Such is accomplished with a Strength- or Dexterity-based Physical challenge. The defender’s only recourse to avoid the touch is a Dexterity-based dodge, if they are not already engaged in an aggressive Physical action. The Dexterity test represents them twisting or moving so as to prevent the necessary full contact, even if they are unaware of the reason for the grip. Attempting to resist the contact with a Stamina trait can not succeed because it does not prevent the physical connection.

Even if a handshake or other willing contact is offered, it is not sufficient for a power’s use; a challenge must be initiated, though the handshake is a great way to masquerade one’s true intentions.



16.4.6 Two-Weapon Combat

While it is possible to wield weapons in both hands (normally suffering a -2 penalty for challenges using the off-hand item), attacking with two weapons at once is not possible. At the beginning of a challenge you must declare which weapon, if any, you are using for the attack. You may only apply the rules governing that one weapon to the challenge; from a mechanical standpoint the other weapon does not exist.

16.4.7 Called Shots

By and large “called shots” directed at particular parts of an enemy’s anatomy are not allowed in this system. If someone has an item card for armour, that protection is assumed to protect against all relevant attacks. Victory conditions such as “disarm” or “knockdown” are absolutely valid, but declaring that you are shooting your opponent in the face in order to ignore armour or inflict two victory conditions is not.

A Storyteller may, at their discretion, impose a trait bonus (to the defender) or penalty (to the attacker) in cases where environmental factors such as cover or concealment make getting a clear shot difficult.

16.5 Fair Escape

If a character is able to escape a dangerous situation without being impeded, they may declare “Fair Escape” and retire from the scene, unable to return or interact further with it. Fair Escape may only be declared if the character is not under immediate threat and has a clear means of escape; those in the middle of martial combat cannot simply walk away unscathed. Often used by bystanders who want to leave the scene without the burden of combat’s specific movement rules, those who have successfully evaded their pursuers may also claim it, at Storyteller discretion. Some conditions which may mitigate the ability to declare Fair Escape include:

- **Ranged Weapons:** A character may still be affected by damaging ranged attacks even if there are no assailants in melee range. In this case the Storyteller may rule that the escaping character may not flee the scene until they are no longer under threat of being shot.
- **Lack of Exits:** Being sealed or caught inside a room with no unblocked exits will preclude any character from escaping the scene unless they are allowed to leave.
- **Pursuit:** A character wishing to escape someone chasing them must either out-run or find a way to hide before they can claim Fair Escape. Barring specific Flaws or Negative Traits all characters have the same movement options during combat, and so chases should be arbitrated by Storytellers. In the case of Celerity use, it is generally assumed that a character with higher levels of Celerity, and both a willingness and the Blood to power it, will either overtake or escape someone with less Celerity.

16.6 Special Circumstances

Not every physical altercation is created equal. Sometimes one or more characters will have the drop on their victim, or terrain or other situational modifiers may make attacking or defending more difficult. The Storyteller on scene is encouraged to give reasonable penalties or benefits to characters who are fighting in uneven circumstances. For example, a combatant who declares that they are not looking into an opponent’s eyes (to avoid being subject to Dominate or *Quell the Beast*, for instance) may find themselves at a -2 penalty as they have a harder time predicting their opponents’ actions.



16.6.1 Mob Combat

Any time multiple challengers desire to affect one target, or when circumstances allow one aggressor to affect multiple defenders, challenges should be resolved as a single massive challenge, collectively called “mob combat.” While the rules for mob combat follow the regular challenge progression in most respects, there are specific differences which are presented here. This section describes a single defender against multiple attackers, but the same rules apply for one aggressor versus multiple defenders (such as in the case of Obfuscate or weapons with the *Spray* quality).

A single defender may be subjected to a limited number of hostile challenges per round. During the Everyman each character need only defend against the first hostile Social and Mental tests levied against them, ignoring future challenges of the same type. In the case of multiple like challenges, use the rules for Initiative to determine which challenge takes precedence. Physical challenges, available in any round, are limited to a maximum of five, provided the subject is fully surrounded. Storytellers may rule that less than optimal circumstances may reduce the number of viable attacks against them.

When attacking as part of a mob challenge, use the rules for a standard challenge as normal; bidding traits, retesting or canceling if desired, and either succeeding or failing as usual. Mob combat differs from regular contests in the mechanics used by the defender. The defender chooses one target for their action, whether offensive or defensive, and only loses traits if they lose against that one target, regardless of other assailant’s victories, and only after the whole challenge has been completed. A defender wishing to retest against his attackers need only spend one Ability relative to their chosen action in order to retest against everyone. If an attacker cancels the retest it is canceled against them only, and the challenge may proceed as usual against all others. If the defender wishes to cancel he must do so individually, expending one Ability for every canceled challenge.

In a mob combat challenge all tests may be thrown at once or individually as determined by the defender. If a defender won the challenge against his chosen foe he would not lose any traits, regardless of how many other attackers bested him, though each of their victory conditions would take effect.

Storytellers may rule that ranged attacks must be resisted by a defensive challenge instead of contributing to a mob, to prevent the occasion where the defender retests a Firearms test with Brawl or similar.


NPC assistants involved in mob combat, including those created with *Splinter Servant* or *Arms of the Abyss*, do not have individual victory conditions or engage in independent challenges and instead grant their controller bonus traits, up to +4, respecting the limits of five attackers for physical challenges in mob combat.

16.6.2 Surprise

Not every character can perfectly predict when and where they will be attacked. Sometimes a close ally will turn unexpectedly, a nearby kindred may fall to Frenzy, or they walk into a well-prepared ambush. In such cases they are considered surprised, which gives their attackers a distinct advantage.

When a would-be aggressor proclaims a Physical challenge (e.g. “I am *Brawny* enough to punch you”) and either the victim’s player is too surprised to respond within a reasonable time-frame or when they decide that their character is suitably surprised, the following rules take effect. *Sanguine Dreams* expects its players to role-play their characters true to form, and sometimes that means being the victim and being caught unawares. There is no situation which guarantees a victim is surprised, including attacking from behind or immediately from Obfuscate. Any question as to whether or not a character is surprised should be directed toward a Storyteller who will assess the situation.

The surprising character’s benefit is that they may take one action before the start of normal combat turns. Their (usually) Physical challenge is issued, to which the defender may only resist the damage through Stamina traits and the *Survival* Ability—*Dodge* is



not applicable since the victim is unaware of the attack. In this way surprise all but guarantees that touch-based attacks succeed.

Immediately following this single action, the regular combat turn will begin as outlined above, if necessary. Surprise does not grant any special retests, bonus traits, or any unique ability to shape an encounter—the singular benefit is a preemptive strike before their opponent can react.

16.6.3 Fighting in Darkness

Very few kindred are well-equipped to handle areas of true darkness, rare in these modern nights. Normally found underground or in secluded rooms, all challenges taken within an area of severe to absolute darkness suffer the following penalties: -2 traits on tie resolution, the automatic failure of all powers requiring sight, and any successful challenge may be retested due to the situational retest *Darkness*. Typically when all contestants are equally disadvantaged all trait and retest penalties are waived to ease gameplay.

There are however powers and Abilities that may offset the situational penalties—*Heightened Senses*, *Tongue of the Asp*, and *Eyes of the Beast* may all be used to lower the trait penalty by one; if a character activates several of these powers, they can reduce the penalty to zero but never gain a trait bonus. A character who has reduced their trait penalties to zero may be considered to have line of sight on others when required for Discipline use or ranged weapons.

The only way to counter the Darkness situational retest is the Sabbat-only ability *Blindfighting* which not only cancels the automatic retest but may also be used in mob combat, a single expenditure canceling all such retests.

16.7 Diablerie

The worst sin in the Camarilla, diablerie is an act even more disgusting than the murder of another kindred. Through the process of diablerie a vampire not only destroys the body of their victim but drains their soul as well, empowering their own abilities at the expense of the spirit's eternal rest. What's worse, the rush of power committing such a deplorable act brings is as far different from the taste of kindred *vitae* as *vitae* is from animal blood, making it unquestionably addictive.


Rarely does diablerie happen by accident—even when in the midst of the most violent frenzy kindred will stop far before absorbing the soul of another. Diablerie is a willing act that scars a kindred's psyche with its evil for all to see.

16.7.1 Engaging in the Amaranth

The process of diablerie starts by incapacitating the target, either by staking or beating them until they fall torpid. Once immobilized the would-be diablerist begins draining the victim of all their blood, typically by drinking. At any point so far the attacker can decide to stop the process, through drinking the last point of blood, without challenge or drawback.

Once all the blood has been drawn however, the diablerist continues drinking, absorbing the very essence of their victim's health. The attacker engages in a Physical challenge with his target for each of the victim's remaining health levels, if they aren't already in torpor. The victim can only bid Stamina traits and the attacker Strength traits. Neither side may retest, but the challenge may be repeated for a given health level until one side has run out of traits and cannot continue.

Once the victim is bloodless and in torpor, either from trauma inflicted while being immobilized or through his attacker's feeding, the final test begins. One last set of Physical challenges decides whether the diablerie succeeds, using the same rules as for



draining health levels, save that the defender is up three traits. The defender need not bid a trait to resist this challenge as his soul strives to avoid being devoured. If at any point the attacker stops drinking or cannot continue the challenge due to trait loss, the victim's soul departs normally. In some rare cases even failure at this state may brand someone with the marks of a diablerist.

If the attacker is ultimately successful, the body crumbles to ash and the diablerist immediately makes a Self-Control/Instinct test against five traits; they have absorbed the very soul and essence of another kindred into themselves and the Beast surges through their veins with wild abandon.

16.7.2 Changing your Mind

Before health levels are being drained, the attacker may decide without test or penalty to stop the process of diablerie. During this time they can react to outside stimulus as normal, the true thrill of the act has not yet blinded them to the world.

Once health levels have started draining however changing your mind is incredibly difficult. The attacker must spend a Willpower trait and succeed a Static Mental challenge against six traits to willfully pull away. At this point in time the attacker is completely immune to Mental and Social Disciplines, so caught up are they in the Beast's desire for the finest meal ever conceived. At the same time however they are unable to defend themselves, resisting attacks only with Stamina traits and with the *Survival* ability.

16.7.3 Benefits and Drawbacks of Diablerie

Once the diablerie succeeds the attacker is overwhelmed with a euphoria unmatched by any drug ever harvested or invented. All rewards of diablerie are at Storyteller discretion, but often characters discover that they have absorbed Abilities, Traits, and perhaps even Disciplines or Merits of their victim. The real prize however is if the victim was of more potent blood than the diablerist—if so, the diablerist immediately gains one dot of the Generation Background, and all of the increased privileges that Generation may afford them.

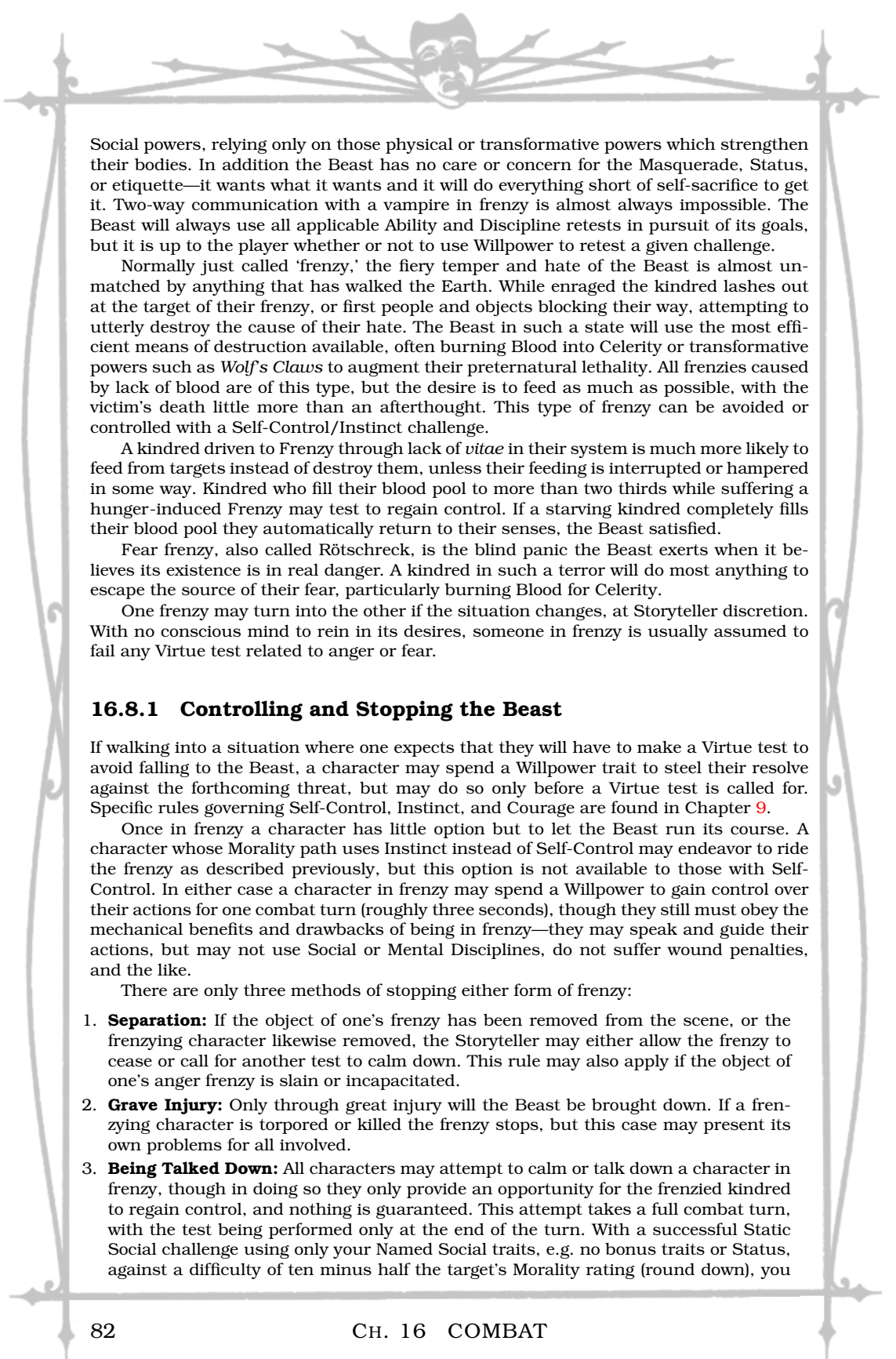
While all detriments of diablerie are at Storyteller discretion, almost unerringly the diablerist's aura is stained with dark, inky veins that are unmistakable in nature, visible to any who have the power of *Aura Perception* and even to some powers of *Thaumaturgy*. What's more, the attacker may have absorbed more than just the positive aspects of their victim; Flaws, Negative Traits, and even Derangements are all likely outcomes of this gruesome and deplorable act.

Diablerie, the worst crime in the whole of the Camarilla, is usually punished by an immediate and unflinching *Blood Hunt*, marking the transgressor as an enemy of all the Ivory Tower stands for. See Chapter 13 for more information on this harshest of penalties.

16.8 Frenzy and Rötschreck

Inside each kindred lies the Beast, a primordial power that wants only for two things—to kill and to survive. Even the most rational and reflective kindred can feel its desire resonating in their chest, and as kindred slip down the rungs of Morality their actions are more and more likely to be ruled by those two simple motivations, the Beast drawing closer and closer to the surface of their night to night existence.

When a vampire loses control, normally due to some external stimulus as detailed in Chapter 9, their frenzy is always either driven by rage or fear. Both types of frenzies have the same mechanical effects, but are very differently role-played, owing to the powerful instincts driving them. When in frenzy the kindred's rational mind is wholly gone, subsumed by the raw emotions of the Beast itself. A frenzied character is immune to all wound penalties, through *Incapacitated*, and need not risk an initial trait to resist Mental or Social Disciplines. As a drawback however, they themselves cannot use any Mental or



Social powers, relying only on those physical or transformative powers which strengthen their bodies. In addition the Beast has no care or concern for the Masquerade, Status, or etiquette—it wants what it wants and it will do everything short of self-sacrifice to get it. Two-way communication with a vampire in frenzy is almost always impossible. The Beast will always use all applicable Ability and Discipline retests in pursuit of its goals, but it is up to the player whether or not to use Willpower to retest a given challenge.

Normally just called ‘frenzy,’ the fiery temper and hate of the Beast is almost unmatched by anything that has walked the Earth. While enraged the kindred lashes out at the target of their frenzy, or first people and objects blocking their way, attempting to utterly destroy the cause of their hate. The Beast in such a state will use the most efficient means of destruction available, often burning Blood into Celerity or transformative powers such as *Wolf’s Claws* to augment their preternatural lethality. All frenzies caused by lack of blood are of this type, but the desire is to feed as much as possible, with the victim’s death little more than an afterthought. This type of frenzy can be avoided or controlled with a Self-Control/Instinct challenge.

A kindred driven to Frenzy through lack of *vitalis* in their system is much more likely to feed from targets instead of destroy them, unless their feeding is interrupted or hampered in some way. Kindred who fill their blood pool to more than two thirds while suffering a hunger-induced Frenzy may test to regain control. If a starving kindred completely fills their blood pool they automatically return to their senses, the Beast satisfied.

Fear frenzy, also called Röttschreck, is the blind panic the Beast exerts when it believes its existence is in real danger. A kindred in such a terror will do most anything to escape the source of their fear, particularly burning Blood for Celerity.

One frenzy may turn into the other if the situation changes, at Storyteller discretion. With no conscious mind to rein in its desires, someone in frenzy is usually assumed to fail any Virtue test related to anger or fear.

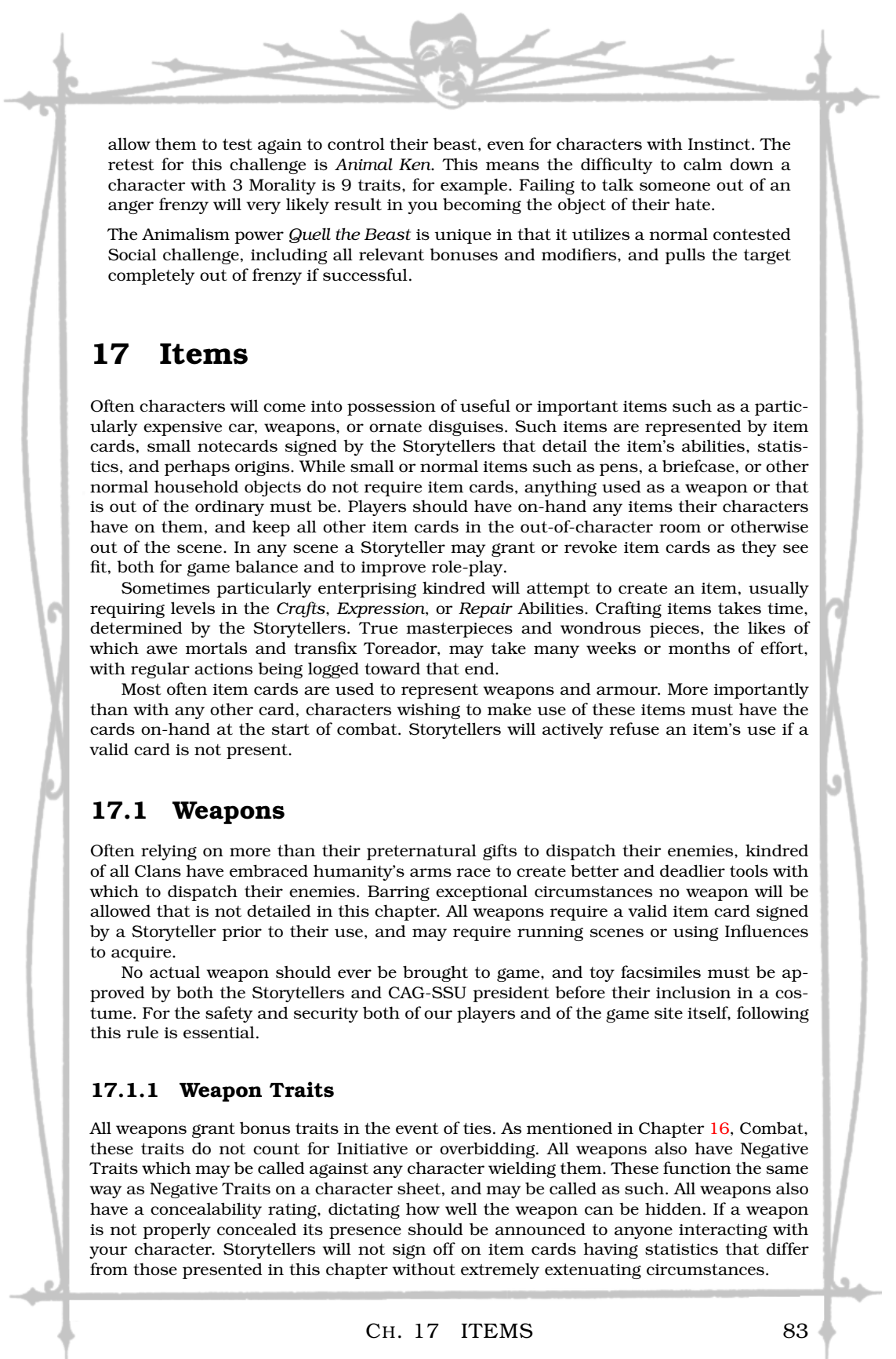
16.8.1 Controlling and Stopping the Beast

If walking into a situation where one expects that they will have to make a Virtue test to avoid falling to the Beast, a character may spend a Willpower trait to steel their resolve against the forthcoming threat, but may do so only before a Virtue test is called for. Specific rules governing Self-Control, Instinct, and Courage are found in Chapter 9.

Once in frenzy a character has little option but to let the Beast run its course. A character whose Morality path uses Instinct instead of Self-Control may endeavor to ride the frenzy as described previously, but this option is not available to those with Self-Control. In either case a character in frenzy may spend a Willpower to gain control over their actions for one combat turn (roughly three seconds), though they still must obey the mechanical benefits and drawbacks of being in frenzy—they may speak and guide their actions, but may not use Social or Mental Disciplines, do not suffer wound penalties, and the like.

There are only three methods of stopping either form of frenzy:

1. **Separation:** If the object of one’s frenzy has been removed from the scene, or the frenzying character likewise removed, the Storyteller may either allow the frenzy to cease or call for another test to calm down. This rule may also apply if the object of one’s anger frenzy is slain or incapacitated.
2. **Grave Injury:** Only through great injury will the Beast be brought down. If a frenzying character is torpored or killed the frenzy stops, but this case may present its own problems for all involved.
3. **Being Talked Down:** All characters may attempt to calm or talk down a character in frenzy, though in doing so they only provide an opportunity for the frenzied kindred to regain control, and nothing is guaranteed. This attempt takes a full combat turn, with the test being performed only at the end of the turn. With a successful Static Social challenge using only your Named Social traits, e.g. no bonus traits or Status, against a difficulty of ten minus half the target’s Morality rating (round down), you



allow them to test again to control their beast, even for characters with Instinct. The retest for this challenge is *Animal Ken*. This means the difficulty to calm down a character with 3 Morality is 9 traits, for example. Failing to talk someone out of an anger frenzy will very likely result in you becoming the object of their hate.

The Animalism power *Quell the Beast* is unique in that it utilizes a normal contested Social challenge, including all relevant bonuses and modifiers, and pulls the target completely out of frenzy if successful.

17 Items

Often characters will come into possession of useful or important items such as a particularly expensive car, weapons, or ornate disguises. Such items are represented by item cards, small notecards signed by the Storytellers that detail the item's abilities, statistics, and perhaps origins. While small or normal items such as pens, a briefcase, or other normal household objects do not require item cards, anything used as a weapon or that is out of the ordinary must be. Players should have on-hand any items their characters have on them, and keep all other item cards in the out-of-character room or otherwise out of the scene. In any scene a Storyteller may grant or revoke item cards as they see fit, both for game balance and to improve role-play.

Sometimes particularly enterprising kindred will attempt to create an item, usually requiring levels in the *Crafts*, *Expression*, or *Repair* Abilities. Crafting items takes time, determined by the Storytellers. True masterpieces and wondrous pieces, the likes of which awe mortals and transfix Toreador, may take many weeks or months of effort, with regular actions being logged toward that end.

Most often item cards are used to represent weapons and armour. More importantly than with any other card, characters wishing to make use of these items must have the cards on-hand at the start of combat. Storytellers will actively refuse an item's use if a valid card is not present.

17.1 Weapons

Often relying on more than their preternatural gifts to dispatch their enemies, kindred of all Clans have embraced humanity's arms race to create better and deadlier tools with which to dispatch their enemies. Barring exceptional circumstances no weapon will be allowed that is not detailed in this chapter. All weapons require a valid item card signed by a Storyteller prior to their use, and may require running scenes or using Influences to acquire.

No actual weapon should ever be brought to game, and toy facsimiles must be approved by both the Storytellers and CAG-SSU president before their inclusion in a costume. For the safety and security both of our players and of the game site itself, following this rule is essential.

17.1.1 Weapon Traits

All weapons grant bonus traits in the event of ties. As mentioned in Chapter 16, Combat, these traits do not count for Initiative or overbidding. All weapons also have Negative Traits which may be called against any character wielding them. These function the same way as Negative Traits on a character sheet, and may be called as such. All weapons also have a concealability rating, dictating how well the weapon can be hidden. If a weapon is not properly concealed its presence should be announced to anyone interacting with your character. Storytellers will not sign off on item cards having statistics that differ from those presented in this chapter without extremely extenuating circumstances.

Possession of several levels of a relevant Ability, such as *Firearms*, *Melee*, or *Athletics* may, at Storyteller discretion, allow you to innately know the attributes and traits, both positive and Negative, of a given weapon presented to or used against you.

Unless specifically noted on the item card all weapons take one action to draw, and can only be used once drawn. Some weapons have additional abilities, noted on in their description and detailed below:

Fully Automatic: Firearms with this ability are able to shoot all of their ammunition in one burst, dealing an automatic extra level of damage on a successful challenge, but requiring the weapon to be reloaded before it can be fired again.

High-Caliber: Some select firearms cause crippling wounds in their victims. After a successful challenge win or tie a Simple test to deal an extra level of damage.

Speed: These quick weapons provide an extra +1 trait bonus when used against someone wielding a weapon with the *Heavy*, *Clumsy*, or *Slow* Negative traits, if called against them.

Spray: Able to strike up to three adjacent targets who are at least 10' away from the shooter, use the rules for Mob Combat (see page 79) to resolve such challenges.

Staking: Melee weapons made of wood have a chance to immobilize kindred targets. After a successful damaging attack, make two Simple tests. If you win or tie both, the subject is immobilized, per "Being Staked" in Chapter 18.

Two-Hand Requirement: These large weapons are impossible to wield one-handed.

17.1.2 Melee Weapons

All melee weapons use the *Melee* Ability for retests and are generally available, with some effort required to track down more exotic items. All ax damage bypasses shields and actually destroy them after three successful hits.

Weapons	Traits	Conceal.	Dmg	Special
Club	+1, <i>Clumsy</i>	Jacket	1B	
Small Ax	+2, <i>Clumsy</i>	Jacket	1L	
Knife	+2, <i>Short</i>	Pocket	1L	
Stake	+2, <i>Clumsy</i>	Jacket	1L	Staking
Short-sword	+2, <i>Short</i>	Jacket	1L	
Large Ax	+3, <i>Clumsy, Heavy</i>	Trenchcoat	2L	Two-Hand
Rapier	+3, <i>Fragile</i>	Trenchcoat	1L	Speed
Staff	+3, <i>Heavy</i>	N/A	2B	Staking, Two-Hand
Broadsword	+3, <i>Heavy</i>	Trenchcoat	2L	
Greatsword	+4, <i>Clumsy, Heavy</i>	N/A	2L	Two-Hand

17.1.3 Thrown and Projectile Weapons

All thrown and projectile weapons use the *Athletics* Ability for retests. Acquiring grenades requires the use of *Police* Influence 5 or *Underworld* Influence 4. Crossbows cannot be used to attack more than once a turn, and a quiver is not concealable.

Weapons	Traits	Conceal.	Dmg	Special
Dagger	+1, <i>Clumsy</i>	Pocket	1L	
Molotov Cocktail	+2, <i>Fragile</i>	Jacket/NA	1A	Spray, Two-Hand
Grenade	+2, <i>Clumsy</i>	Jacket	2L	Spray, Two-Hand
Crossbow	+2, <i>Heavy, Slow</i>	N/A	2L	Two-Hand
Spear	+3, <i>Clumsy, Heavy</i>	Trenchcoat	1L	Two-Hand
Longbow	+3, <i>Fragile, Heavy</i>	N/A	2L	Two-Hand

17.1.4 Firearms

Utilizing the *Firearms* retest, all firearms are assumed to have the capacity to fire 10 bullets without reloading, unless specified on the item card. Please carry item cards representing any additional ammunition. Reloading a firearm takes one action. Shotguns may only be fired twice in a turn, regardless of the level of *Celerity* possessed. Sniper Rifles and Assault Rifles are not available to the general public, requiring the use of *Police* or *Underworld* Influence 5 to obtain. Other firearms are available if legally registered, otherwise requiring *Police* or *Underworld* 3. Vampires only take Bashing damage from firearms of any caliber.

Weapons	Traits	Conceal.	Dmg	Special
Pistol	+2, <i>Loud</i>	Pocket	2L	
Heavy Pistol	+2, <i>Loud</i>	Jacket	2L	High-Caliber
SMG	+2, <i>Loud</i>	Jacket	2L	Fully Automatic, Spray
Rifle	+3, <i>Loud</i>	N/A	2L	Two-Hand
Shotgun	+3, <i>Loud</i>	Trenchcoat	3L	Spray, Two-Hand
Sniper Rifle	+3, <i>Loud</i>	N/A	2L	High-Caliber, Two-Hand
Assault Rifle	+3, <i>Loud</i>	N/A	2L	Fully Auto, Spray, Two-Hand

17.2 Armour

Many kindred who anticipate violence in their future decide to augment their supernatural toughness with more mundane methods of protection, namely armour. All armour provides additional Healthy health levels (see page 86) against specific types of damage suffered while worn; most do not protect against bullets except where specifically noted below. Ballistic Vests specifically do not provide any protection against melee weapons while other armours do. To obtain a Reinforced Vest or Riot Suit a character must utilize *Police* or *Underworld* Influence 4, but all other armours are readily available, with some time investment to acquire rare or uncommon items.

If damaged, armour can be repaired by someone with the requisite *Crafts* Ability and an amount of time determined by the Storytellers, usually at least one full day per health level repaired.

Armour	Health	Negative	Conceal.	Special
Leather	1		N/A	
Chain Mail	2	<i>Heavy</i>	Trenchcoat	
Ballistic Vest	2	<i>Heavy</i>	Jacket	Ballistic
Reinforced Vest	2	<i>Heavy</i>	Jacket	Ballistic
Plate Mail	3	<i>Clumsy, Heavy</i>	N/A	
Riot Suit	3	<i>Clumsy, Heavy</i>	N/A	Ballistic

17.2.1 Shields

Rare in the modern age, hand-held shields are still useful to some when protecting against incoming attacks. All shields grant bonus traits when defending against melee or unarmed attacks, but not when attacking or against ranged or ballistic attacks save where designated. Riot Shields are only available through use of *Police* or *Underworld* Influence 4. No shield is concealable.

Shields	Traits	Special
Impromptu/Environmental	+1, <i>Clumsy</i>	
Small Shield	+1	
Large Shield	+2, <i>Heavy</i>	Ranged
Riot Shield	+3, <i>Clumsy, Heavy</i>	Ranged, Ballistic

18 Health and Healing

Vampires do not require food, water, or air, and will never die of old age. The two feelings that drive every kindred are the desire to feed, and the desire to survive. Inflicted damage notwithstanding, a kindred will return to state in which they were embraced every evening, including hair length and color, scars and tattoos, even perhaps wounds suffered before they died. That said, though vampires are difficult to kill they aren't immune to damage and cannot heal naturally as other creatures may – only through the expenditure of blood will undead flesh knit itself back together.

Each character begins play with nine empty health levels which are crossed off as they take damage. If every box is filled the character is in very real danger of meeting the Final Death from which there is no return. These health levels are divided into categories, with increasing penalties for being damaged as detailed below. Barring specific Disciplines, Merits, or Flaws, all vampire characters have the same number of health levels when they begin play.

Each damage category is cumulative; *Wounded* characters also suffer the penalties for being *Bruised* and so forth.

Healthy: 2 boxes. Suffering no penalties, if you are damaged at all it is likely just cosmetic, mainly bumps and bruises.

Bruised: 3 boxes. Starting to feel the pain with broken bones and other injuries, you are down one trait on all tie comparisons.

Wounded: 2 boxes. Likely suffering from broken bones and other mass trauma, engaging in any challenge is a strenuous affair requiring that you bid an additional trait. You also automatically lose all tie comparisons. If you are using a power that allows you to win all ties, compare them as normal instead.

Incapacitated: 1 box. Knocked near to unconsciousness, you are completely helpless and unmoving for ten minutes. After that time you remain almost entirely immobilized save from the occasional hoarse whisper. Mortals falling to Incapacitation require swift medical attention or face certain death.

Torpor: 1 box. A death-like sleep, you are both unable to perceive the world around you or act in any way. The length of your torpor is directly related to your Morality rating (see page 86). Mortals do not possess this wound level and are instead killed immediately.

The Standard Vampire Health Track				
Healthy	Bruised	Wounded	Incap.	Torpor
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

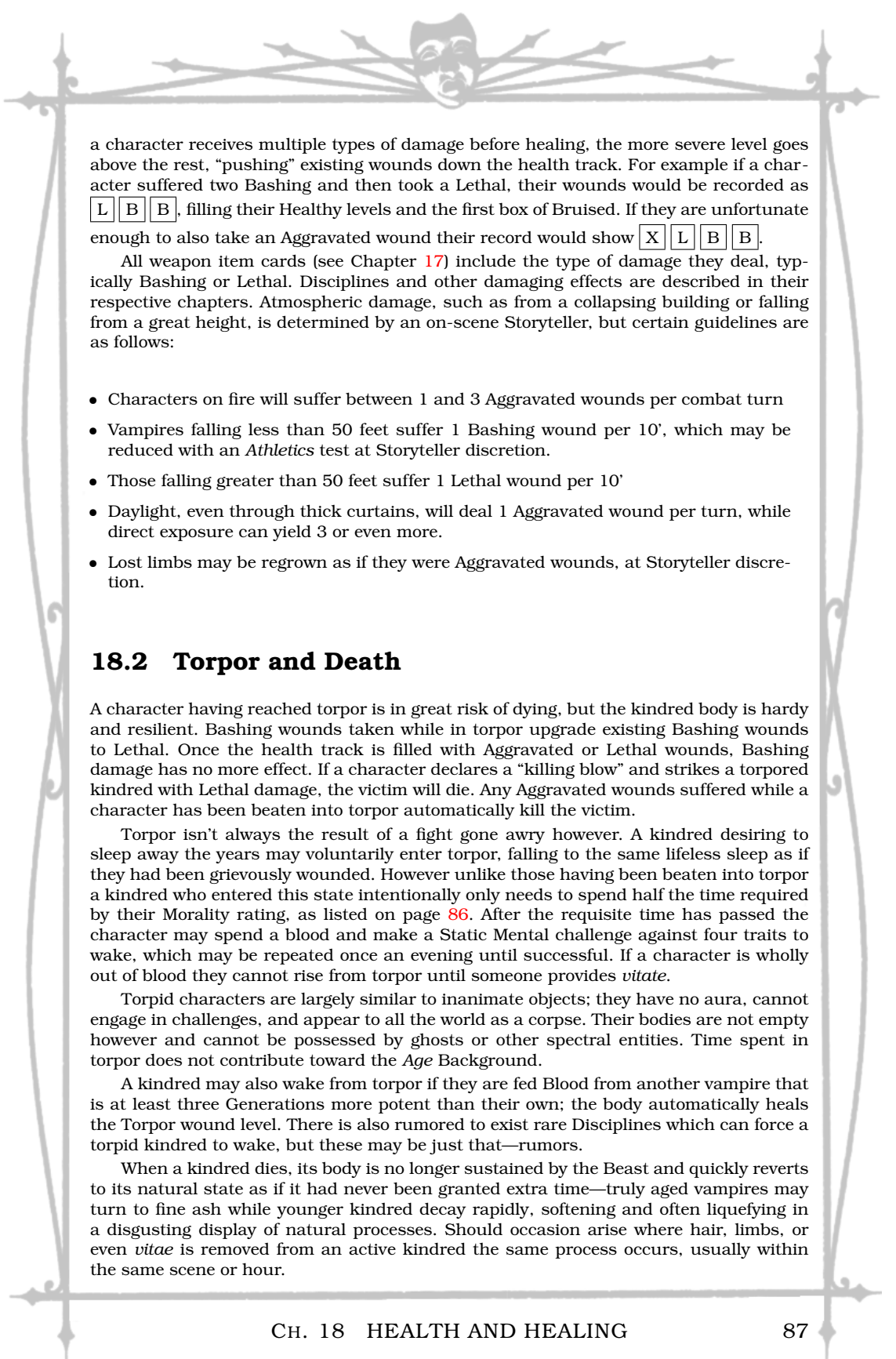
18.1 Types of Damage

Bashing Damage is the least likely to seriously injure a kindred, normally inflicted by punches, kicks, and like attacks. So rugged are they that vampires halve all Bashing damage received, rounding up, to a minimum of one box.

Lethal Damage represents wounds that are more serious or life-threatening, such as from bladed weapons or blows fueled with supernatural powers like *Potence*. Lethal wounds are likely to cripple mortals in short order.

Aggravated Damage is terrifying even to the undead for these wounds take a great deal of effort and Blood to heal, and very likely can result in their Final Death. A vampire suffers Aggravated wounds from fire, sunlight, the fangs of another kindred, and some supernatural powers such as *Wolf's Claws*.

If your character suffers injury, make a note on your character sheet for the wound(s) suffered—typically a 'B' for Bashing, 'L' for Lethal, and an 'X' for Aggravated damage. If



a character receives multiple types of damage before healing, the more severe level goes above the rest, “pushing” existing wounds down the health track. For example if a character suffered two Bashing and then took a Lethal, their wounds would be recorded as

L	B	B
---	---	---

, filling their Healthy levels and the first box of Bruised. If they are unfortunate enough to also take an Aggravated wound their record would show

X	L	B	B
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All weapon item cards (see Chapter 17) include the type of damage they deal, typically Bashing or Lethal. Disciplines and other damaging effects are described in their respective chapters. Atmospheric damage, such as from a collapsing building or falling from a great height, is determined by an on-scene Storyteller, but certain guidelines are as follows:

- Characters on fire will suffer between 1 and 3 Aggravated wounds per combat turn
- Vampires falling less than 50 feet suffer 1 Bashing wound per 10', which may be reduced with an *Athletics* test at Storyteller discretion.
- Those falling greater than 50 feet suffer 1 Lethal wound per 10'
- Daylight, even through thick curtains, will deal 1 Aggravated wound per turn, while direct exposure can yield 3 or even more.
- Lost limbs may be regrown as if they were Aggravated wounds, at Storyteller discretion.

18.2 Torpor and Death

A character having reached torpor is in great risk of dying, but the kindred body is hardy and resilient. Bashing wounds taken while in torpor upgrade existing Bashing wounds to Lethal. Once the health track is filled with Aggravated or Lethal wounds, Bashing damage has no more effect. If a character declares a “killing blow” and strikes a torporized kindred with Lethal damage, the victim will die. Any Aggravated wounds suffered while a character has been beaten into torpor automatically kill the victim.

Torpor isn't always the result of a fight gone awry however. A kindred desiring to sleep away the years may voluntarily enter torpor, falling to the same lifeless sleep as if they had been grievously wounded. However unlike those having been beaten into torpor a kindred who entered this state intentionally only needs to spend half the time required by their Morality rating, as listed on page 86. After the requisite time has passed the character may spend a blood and make a Static Mental challenge against four traits to wake, which may be repeated once an evening until successful. If a character is wholly out of blood they cannot rise from torpor until someone provides *vitae*.

Torpid characters are largely similar to inanimate objects; they have no aura, cannot engage in challenges, and appear to all the world as a corpse. Their bodies are not empty however and cannot be possessed by ghosts or other spectral entities. Time spent in torpor does not contribute toward the *Age* Background.

A kindred may also wake from torpor if they are fed Blood from another vampire that is at least three Generations more potent than their own; the body automatically heals the Torpor wound level. There is also rumored to exist rare Disciplines which can force a torpid kindred to wake, but these may be just that—rumors.

When a kindred dies, its body is no longer sustained by the Beast and quickly reverts to its natural state as if it had never been granted extra time—truly aged vampires may turn to fine ash while younger kindred decay rapidly, softening and often liquefying in a disgusting display of natural processes. Should occasion arise where hair, limbs, or even *vitae* is removed from an active kindred the same process occurs, usually within the same scene or hour.



18.3 Healing Damage

As Blood maintains a kindred's night to night existence so too does it have the capacity to heal any wounds suffered. For each Blood trait spent two Bashing wounds may be healed, or one Lethal. Damage is healed from right to left, meaning Bashing is always healed before Lethal and Lethal before Aggravated.

Aggravated wounds however are not so easily cured, requiring a full day's unbroken rest, three Blood, and a Willpower for each wound. There is no way to hasten recovery from such grievous injuries, and most kindred wisely avoid situations in which they could be so seriously damaged.

Humans are much more fragile than kindred and can only recover naturally and without assistance from the most topical of wounds. If a human ever becomes Bruised with Lethal damage or Wounded with Bashing damage they will require hospitalization to heal. Any human who suffers Lethal damage in their Wounded health boxes or enough Bashing to Incapacitate them requires immediate hospitalization or faces death. Humans who receive any amount of Aggravated damage must start receiving care within the same scene or risk severe and permanent problems at Storyteller discretion. Ghouls are considered mortals for the purpose of damage, though of course they can heal Lethal and Bashing wounds as vampires can, provided they have enough *vitalae* in their system (see Chapter 19).

18.4 Being Staked

An innate aspect of the kindred condition, the reasons for which have been debated from time immemorial, being staked is terrifying and debilitating experience for any kindred regardless of age or experience. If a vampire's heart is pierced by a shaft of wood (see the specific rules in Chapter 16, Combat) they instantly lose any and all control they have over their bodies. Appearing to any observer to be in torpor, unable even to move an eyelid, the true terror of being staked is that the kindred is fully conscious of everything going on around them yet remains powerless to do affect it.

While staked a kindred can see, hear, and feel like normal, and can later recall the events surrounding their staking, but are completely incapable of speech, Discipline use (including purely mental powers such as *Auspex*), spending Blood or Willpower, or movement of any kind. Their mind may be awake and fully conscious but they have no ability to interact with the world. Also, unlike torpor, a staked kindred must still spend Blood every evening when they would normally wake. A staked kindred may however enter into voluntary torpor as described above.

In short, a character who is staked is in very real trouble. While they are able to bid Stamina-based traits to avoid further damage, and resist Mental or Social powers as normal, they are unable to activate any Disciplines or use Physical or Social Abilities to help them do so; they are at the absolute mercy of their captors.

The only way to recover from being staked is for another character or environmental circumstance to remove the wood from the heart.

19 Additional Systems

Not every aspect of game fits into nice categories. This chapter focuses on those unique or specific rules and mechanics that wouldn't be appropriate under previous headings. In this section other aspects of both the game itself and kindred life are explored.



19.1 Fair Play and Metagaming

Sanguine Dreams is a collaborative, cooperative game wherein which dozens of people come together to try and build compelling and amazing stories within the setting known as the World of Darkness. Not every player has the same understanding of the setting, the rules, or the social aspect of live-action role-playing, and it is important that we all work together to make sure that we promote a welcoming and open environment for all players, whether new to the game or well-versed in its nuances.

Playing fair means making sure that your actions, both in- and out-of-character, fall within the rules as presented in this book, as well as within the bounds of good conduct. Deliberately misinterpreting or misquoting rules, taking advantage of another player's lack of familiarity with the setting or system, and other examples of poor sportsmanship are severely looked down upon, and anyone who repeatedly abuses the collaborative trust of the game will face serious repercussions. Even though we may portray horrible monsters of the night in-character, it is our duty to help each other out-of-character to understand the rules, the setting, and how to contribute to a great story—the best way you can help is to lead by example.

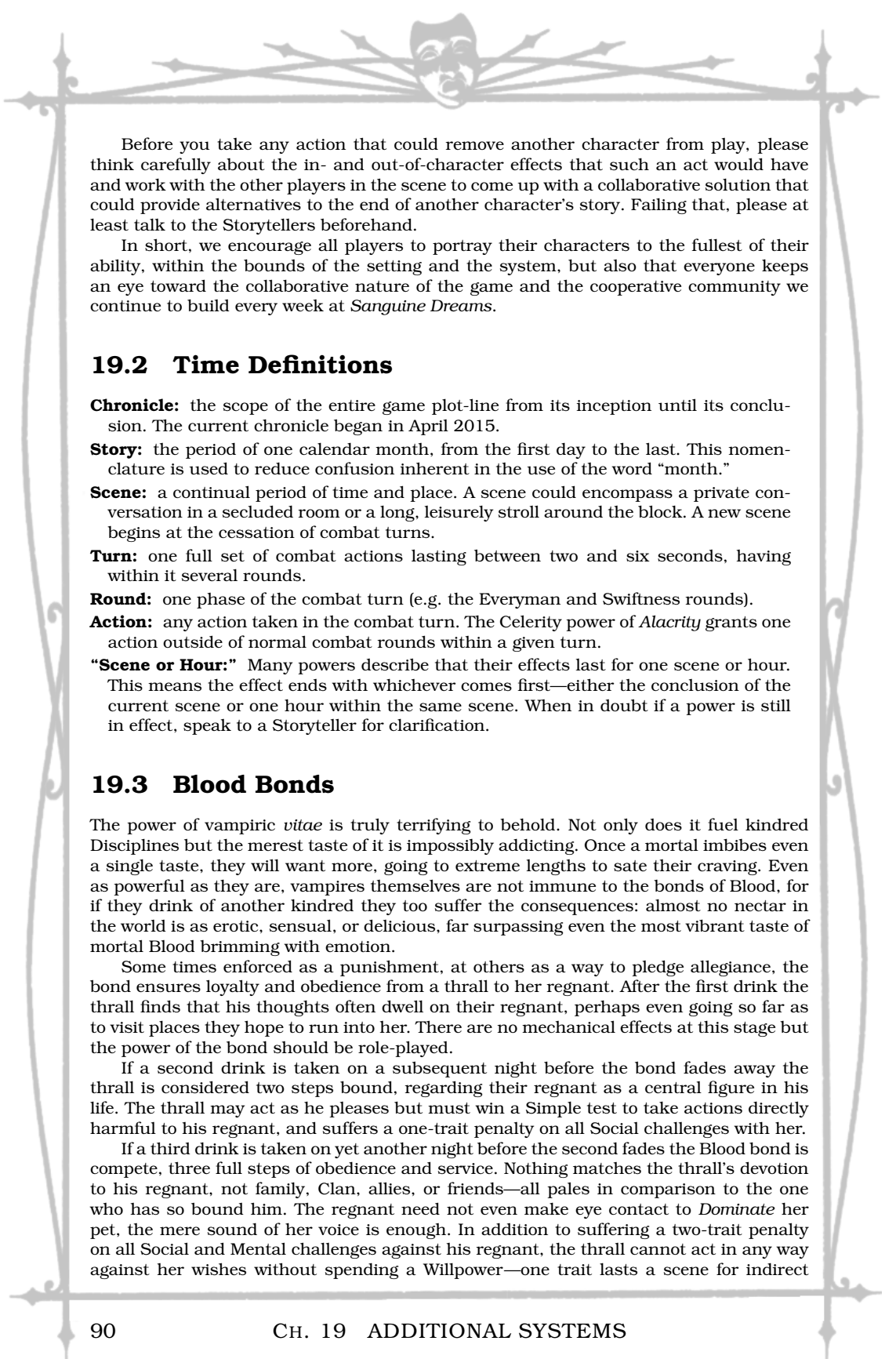
“Metagaming” is a special term that means using out-of-character information to influence your in-character decisions or actions. If a previous character of yours learned that the Toreador Primogen had violated the dictates of the Prince, it would be metagaming for your new character to reveal or act on that information unless they had verifiable means through which they discovered the same. Metagaming could also be creating a character to avenge your previous character's death, or specifically to bolster another character's endeavors. In short, metagaming is cheating, like stealing money from the bank in Monopoly or hiding cards up your sleeve in poker, allowing you to benefit from aspects of the game that you have no right to.

It is human nature to talk about things that are exciting, and by and large each of us are excited to play at *Sanguine Dreams* and explore how our stories twist and turn each week, but almost invariably the largest source of (usually unintentional) metagaming is caused by someone talking about their character or scenes they were involved in, and other parties taking that information in-character, perhaps believing that it was relayed to their character, or not realizing that it was a purely out-of-character discussion. The easiest way to prevent this type of metagaming is simply to not talk about your character, your character sheet, or current goings-on with other players. That doesn't mean stop talking about Vampire altogether, as there is plenty of interesting story to be found in the World of Darkness, but simply that it is a good idea not to discuss secrets, plots you are involved in, or upcoming events that are currently relevant with others, unless you do so specifically in-character.

19.1.1 “For the Good of the Game”

Vampire is not a game where everyone gets what they want; all too often nobody at all gets to see their plans realized, and the eternal struggle against crippling loss is an ongoing theme in *Sanguine Dreams*. Some times characters are presented with opportunities to advance their own endeavors or get ahead, but to do so they must take actions that could be detrimental the game as a whole, whether it means killing other characters or running them out of the Domain.

While every player is entitled to portray their character in a realistic way that is true to their concept, it is important to remember that there are more than thirty other players who come together to build a collaborative story, and at times “what the character would do” is not beneficial to the game. The Storytellers try to discourage the introduction of characters who are merciless killers or hold detrimental grudges against other kindred, but the largest onus is on each individual player to recognize that by making another character unplayable, whether through death, incapacitation, or exile, they are in all likelihood forever cutting short that character's story in a way that is unsatisfying and perhaps hurtful to the other player.



Before you take any action that could remove another character from play, please think carefully about the in- and out-of-character effects that such an act would have and work with the other players in the scene to come up with a collaborative solution that could provide alternatives to the end of another character's story. Failing that, please at least talk to the Storytellers beforehand.

In short, we encourage all players to portray their characters to the fullest of their ability, within the bounds of the setting and the system, but also that everyone keeps an eye toward the collaborative nature of the game and the cooperative community we continue to build every week at *Sanguine Dreams*.

19.2 Time Definitions

Chronicle: the scope of the entire game plot-line from its inception until its conclusion. The current chronicle began in April 2015.

Story: the period of one calendar month, from the first day to the last. This nomenclature is used to reduce confusion inherent in the use of the word "month."

Scene: a continual period of time and place. A scene could encompass a private conversation in a secluded room or a long, leisurely stroll around the block. A new scene begins at the cessation of combat turns.

Turn: one full set of combat actions lasting between two and six seconds, having within it several rounds.

Round: one phase of the combat turn (e.g. the Everyman and Swiftess rounds).

Action: any action taken in the combat turn. The Celerity power of *Alacrity* grants one action outside of normal combat rounds within a given turn.

"Scene or Hour:" Many powers describe that their effects last for one scene or hour. This means the effect ends with whichever comes first—either the conclusion of the current scene or one hour within the same scene. When in doubt if a power is still in effect, speak to a Storyteller for clarification.


19.3 Blood Bonds

The power of vampiric *vitae* is truly terrifying to behold. Not only does it fuel kindred Disciplines but the merest taste of it is impossibly addicting. Once a mortal imbibes even a single taste, they will want more, going to extreme lengths to sate their craving. Even as powerful as they are, vampires themselves are not immune to the bonds of Blood, for if they drink of another kindred they too suffer the consequences: almost no nectar in the world is as erotic, sensual, or delicious, far surpassing even the most vibrant taste of mortal Blood brimming with emotion.

Some times enforced as a punishment, at others as a way to pledge allegiance, the bond ensures loyalty and obedience from a thrall to her regnant. After the first drink the thrall finds that his thoughts often dwell on their regnant, perhaps even going so far as to visit places they hope to run into her. There are no mechanical effects at this stage but the power of the bond should be role-played.

If a second drink is taken on a subsequent night before the bond fades away the thrall is considered two steps bound, regarding their regnant as a central figure in his life. The thrall may act as he pleases but must win a Simple test to take actions directly harmful to his regnant, and suffers a one-trait penalty on all Social challenges with her.

If a third drink is taken on yet another night before the second fades the Blood bond is complete, three full steps of obedience and service. Nothing matches the thrall's devotion to his regnant, not family, Clan, allies, or friends—all pales in comparison to the one who has so bound him. The regnant need not even make eye contact to *Dominare* her pet, the mere sound of her voice is enough. In addition to suffering a two-trait penalty on all Social and Mental challenges against his regnant, the thrall cannot act in any way against her wishes without spending a Willpower—one trait lasts a scene for indirect



actions or for only a single turn if he tries to attack physically. While a character may be one or two steps bound to multiple characters, the devastating power of the full bond prevents him from being thrice bound to anyone else at the same time, and the wishes of their three-step regnant override those to whom he may bound to a lesser degree.

19.3.1 Resisting the Bond

Escaping a blood bond is no easy task, even for the strongest of wills. A one- or two-step bond fades one level in twelve months minus the thrall's permanent Willpower, to a minimum of one month, and at Storyteller discretion. The time may be reduced if the character actively resists seeing their regnant, often requiring the expenditure of Willpower as they attempt to wean themselves off the "high" he feels in her presence. A character who increases their permanent Willpower total, through XP expenditure or other means, similarly decreases the length of time the bond holds sway.

A three-step bond however is an entirely different level of enforced dedication. This bond does not fade unless the thrall can completely avoid the presence of their regnant for a period of twelve months minus the thrall's permanent Willpower. Even a single evening spent in their regnant's presence may reset this timer, at Storyteller discretion. Attempting to resist this level of connection may require frequent Willpower spends to avoid the compulsion to attend to the regnant's needs.

If a vampire is three steps bound to a kindred who dies, they may suddenly feel that "something important" happened, but not know the exact cause of the sensation. Though they continue to be bound three points to the deceased, and likely spending many of their nights pining or searching for them, the connection will wane in the same time-frame as a two-point bond.

In all cases, particularly abusive or hostile regnants may find their thralls slipping away faster than expected while more compassionate ones may see their servants staying loyal for far longer than normal. It is often rumored that a sure-fire way to break a bond is to deal the killing blow to one's regnant. Like all whispered knowledge in kindred society however nothing is certain, particularly murderous advice seeping in from the shadows.


19.4 Ghouls and Retainers

The *Retainers* Background provides characters with mortal assistants who are more competent and well-rounded than those granted by *Allies* or *Influences*. These non-player characters are under the full control of the Storytellers but are crafted with your desires in mind; if you are looking for a high-powered banker you won't receive a street thug, for example.

For every dot in the *Retainers* Background you may pick up an additional base-build assistant or add five XP to an existing retainer. This way they may grow and become more useful to you as your needs develop and change. All characters are limited to a total of fifteen points in the *Retainers* Background, whether spread among many assistants or few, though no single Retainer can have more than five dots devoted to it. A specific retainer may be used to increase the amount of *Influences* a character can control, with more information appearing in the *Mortal Manipulations* supplement.

Ghouls are a special kind of retainer and possess many abilities normal mortals do not. Regularly invested with your Blood, they possess not only a greater capacity to serve but usually an unshakable loyalty enforced by the blood bond. These creatures, neither fully alive nor dead, gain powerful bonuses while the *vitalis* stays in their system:

Disciplines: all Ghouls eventually develop one or more Disciplines possessed by their kindred regnant, though almost never more than two or three powers at maximum. Particularly long-serving Ghouls may learn a first Intermediate power, but these are the exception and not the rule. All Disciplines learned are at Storyteller discretion and control. No ghoul may teach Disciplines to others.



Immortality: while kindred blood courses in their veins the aging process stops, rendering them immune to death by natural causes. In this way some servants have faithfully attended their masters for decades if not longer.

Healing: able to shrug off wounds much in the same way kindred do, ghouls are able to use their stored *vitae* to heal as their vampire masters can. No Ghoul can heal Aggravated wounds however.

Increased Traits: fueled by supernatural power, a ghoul's trait caps increase by one each to 9, 7, 5 for Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary categories (in the case of a regular human). They do not automatically gain additional traits, merely the capacity to gain more than the normal, mortal maximum.

The first point of Blood invested to a mortal infuses them with the immortality of a ghoul for one month. All mortals are able to hold the equivalent of two additional traits of *vitae* in their system which can be used to heal or invoke Celerity. If a ghoul does not receive more Blood before the end of the month, one of these extra traits is absorbed to prolong their immortality for another month. If a ghoul ever runs out of *vitae* they immediately lose access to all associated benefits and powers; their body no longer supernaturally sustained. They age one full year per hour until they reach their true age, possibly even dying if they have been in service long enough. A starved ghoul is a terrifying sight to behold as they attack any kindred they can identify trying to prolong their own life.

Animal ghouls are treated the same as humans, though they usually possess greatly inferior trait caps and Abilities than their human counterparts. As animals are regularly afraid or hostile toward vampires, gaining one's trust well enough to have it feed from a kindred may be exceptionally difficult without the *Animal Ken* Ability or the *Animalism* Discipline.

While their unending loyalty makes them the perfect servants, the jealousies inherent in such a relationship make maintaining multiple ghouls difficult at best as each tries to outdo the other for their regnant's favor, sometimes even going so far as to kill their competition.

For each ghoul, which must be represented by at least one dot of *Retainer*, their master is down one Blood trait during the first game of each month, representing the regular upkeep required to maintain them.

Often ghouls will begin to take on the appearance or mannerisms attributed to their regnant's Clan; Nosferatu ghouls begin to look quite unattractive, Malkavian ghouls become deranged, and so forth. The specific effects of ghoul creation and maintenance are up to the Storytellers.


Typically ghouls are not considered "supernatural" creatures for the purpose of Disciplines effects or other powers.

19.5 Downtime Actions

The characters of *Sanguine Dreams* exist more than only at the Sunday night gather, and often many endeavors require mid-week scenes or conversations, such as travel to foreign domains or investigations into the activities of others. These opportunities for role-play are called downtime scenes and may take place between players or with the involvement of Storytellers. Downtimes can be run in-person, over the phone, even via our online message board.

While we highly encourage players to run scenes with each other outside of game, if your scene is likely to impact the world at large or involve numerous or important NPCs it is imperative that a Storyteller be involved to ensure a cohesive continuity for the game as a whole.

In addition it is important to keep the Storytellers apprised of your character's night to night activities as they may be interrupted or preempted by the actions of others. For regular or recurring actions submitting a brief overview is sufficient, giving the Storytellers an idea of your usual actions. Please remember that no downtime scene is set in



stone until you receive the all-clear from a Storyteller, and keep that fact in mind as you interact with others during the week.

19.6 Feeding and Living Night-to-Night

It can be safely presumed that any character which is viable for play has passed their Accounting (where applicable) or has otherwise figured out how to eke out a manageable nightly existence as a vampire. Barring specific notification to the contrary, Storytellers will assume your character is able to keep reasonably fed, as described in “Starting Blood Pool” in Chapter 10, stay out of trouble with mortal or undead authorities, and manage their average affairs without incident.

Even with all of the supernatural gifts bestowed on vampires there is however a limit to the amount they can accomplish in a given time frame. Between regularly feeding, managing estates, staying in contact with *Allies* and *Retainers*, and checking in on their various projects, a kindred may quickly find himself without the resources to take on more. It is important to keep the Storytellers abreast of the projects your character is currently undertaking, so they can warn you when the schedule is starting to fill up, and also to give you regular progress updates. Unless a project and the time spent to further it is logged with the Storytellers it should not be presumed to happen.

Certain Merits or Flaws notwithstanding, which provide their own opportunities and drawbacks, it is presumed that vampire characters are able to feed without drawing undue attention to their activities. This includes carefully selecting prey to make sure they only receive untainted blood, feeding in private or in the comforts of their own home, and making sure they aren't taking enough to leave lasting damage. Undue haste, lack of preparation, or an inability to plan ahead may all make feeding more complicated.

Traditionally a vampire feeds from a human by piercing their flesh with their fangs, which elongate as they strike. This type of assault normally induces a rush of euphoria in the victim, often called “the Kiss,” and which causes the target to stop resisting, caught in an orgasmic rush of endorphins so long as the vampire continues drinking. Sedated in such a way, the prey will often forget specifics of the encounter and the fact that they were attacked at all. Vampires are able to feel some semblance of the emotions running through their prey as well, and so also receive a small measure of the rush, making feeding an exciting experience. Kindred targets, having passed through the unfathomable feelings of death and rebirth, may choose to give in to the Kiss or not at their discretion.

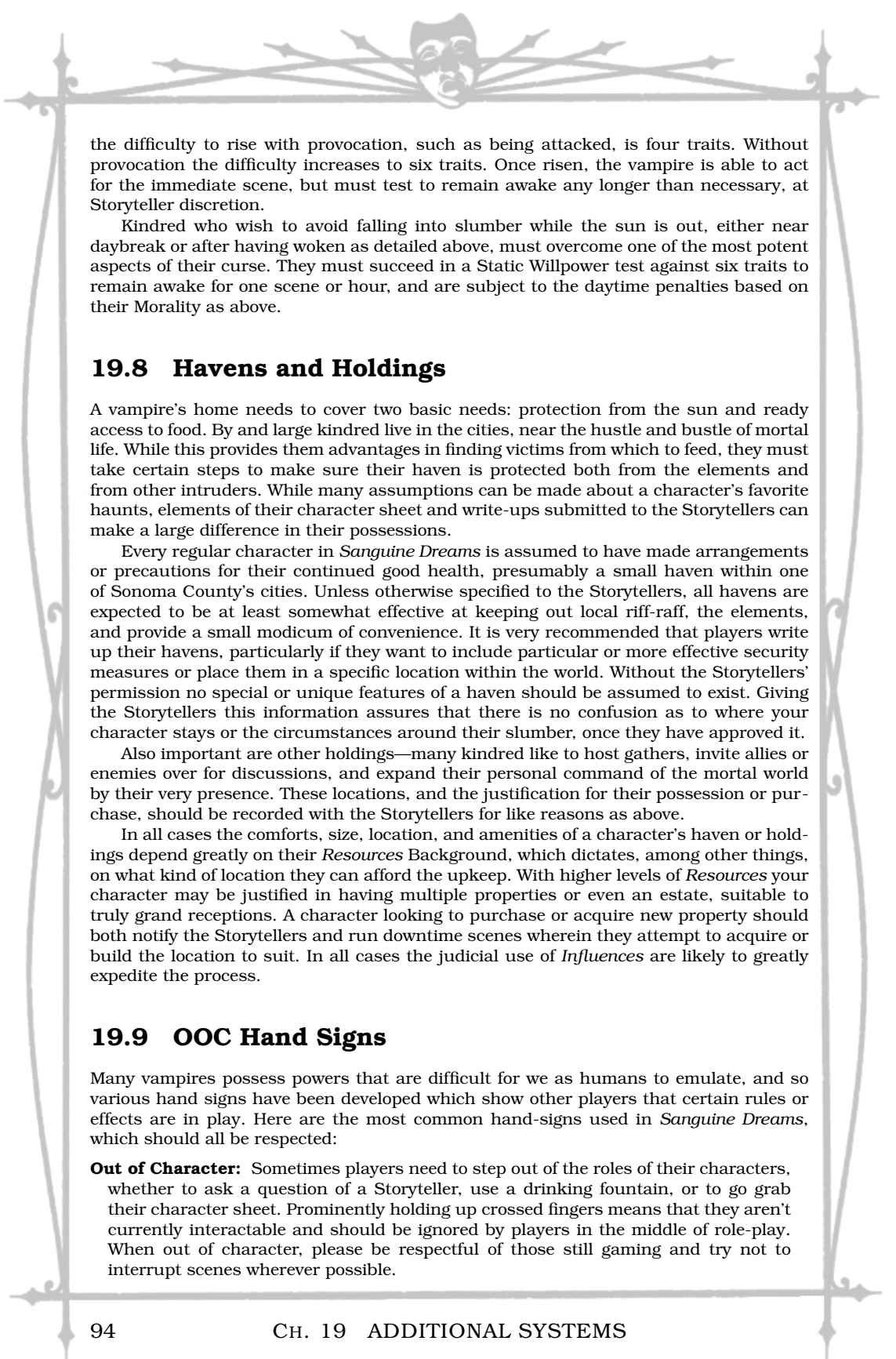
For each full turn of drinking a vampire drains up to three Blood traits, certain Merits or Flaws notwithstanding. If the attacker engages in other actions during Celerity follow-up rounds, the amount taken is reduced by a like amount. Humans and animals being fed from suffer a phantom box of Bashing damage for every trait drained, which fades in a few days, the effects of which are at the Storytellers' discretion. A human who has been drained four or more blood traits will require swift medical attention or face death.

Feeding from a diseased or sick host may impart penalties to the attacking vampire at Storyteller discretion, which only fade after the tainted blood is spent, following a “last in, last out” method.

19.7 Actions During the Day

Cursed to forever shun the light of day, vampires are not well-suited to participating in mid-day activities. When they are roused, kindred are sluggish and lethargic, unable to wield their full undead might against those who would trespass against them. A vampire may not bid more than three-halves their Morality traits (see page 30), rounded down, in Named traits in any challenge while the sun is up. Bonus traits such as those from weapons may be applied normally, but the closer one is to the Beast, the less able they are to will their bodies into action.

If a character wishes to wake up during the day, a Static Mental challenge is required, which includes the above trait limits. Certain Merits and Flaws notwithstanding



the difficulty to rise with provocation, such as being attacked, is four traits. Without provocation the difficulty increases to six traits. Once risen, the vampire is able to act for the immediate scene, but must test to remain awake any longer than necessary, at Storyteller discretion.

Kindred who wish to avoid falling into slumber while the sun is out, either near daybreak or after having woken as detailed above, must overcome one of the most potent aspects of their curse. They must succeed in a Static Willpower test against six traits to remain awake for one scene or hour, and are subject to the daytime penalties based on their Morality as above.

19.8 Havens and Holdings

A vampire's home needs to cover two basic needs: protection from the sun and ready access to food. By and large kindred live in the cities, near the hustle and bustle of mortal life. While this provides them advantages in finding victims from which to feed, they must take certain steps to make sure their haven is protected both from the elements and from other intruders. While many assumptions can be made about a character's favorite haunts, elements of their character sheet and write-ups submitted to the Storytellers can make a large difference in their possessions.

Every regular character in *Sanguine Dreams* is assumed to have made arrangements or precautions for their continued good health, presumably a small haven within one of Sonoma County's cities. Unless otherwise specified to the Storytellers, all havens are expected to be at least somewhat effective at keeping out local riff-raff, the elements, and provide a small modicum of convenience. It is very recommended that players write up their havens, particularly if they want to include particular or more effective security measures or place them in a specific location within the world. Without the Storytellers' permission no special or unique features of a haven should be assumed to exist. Giving the Storytellers this information assures that there is no confusion as to where your character stays or the circumstances around their slumber, once they have approved it.

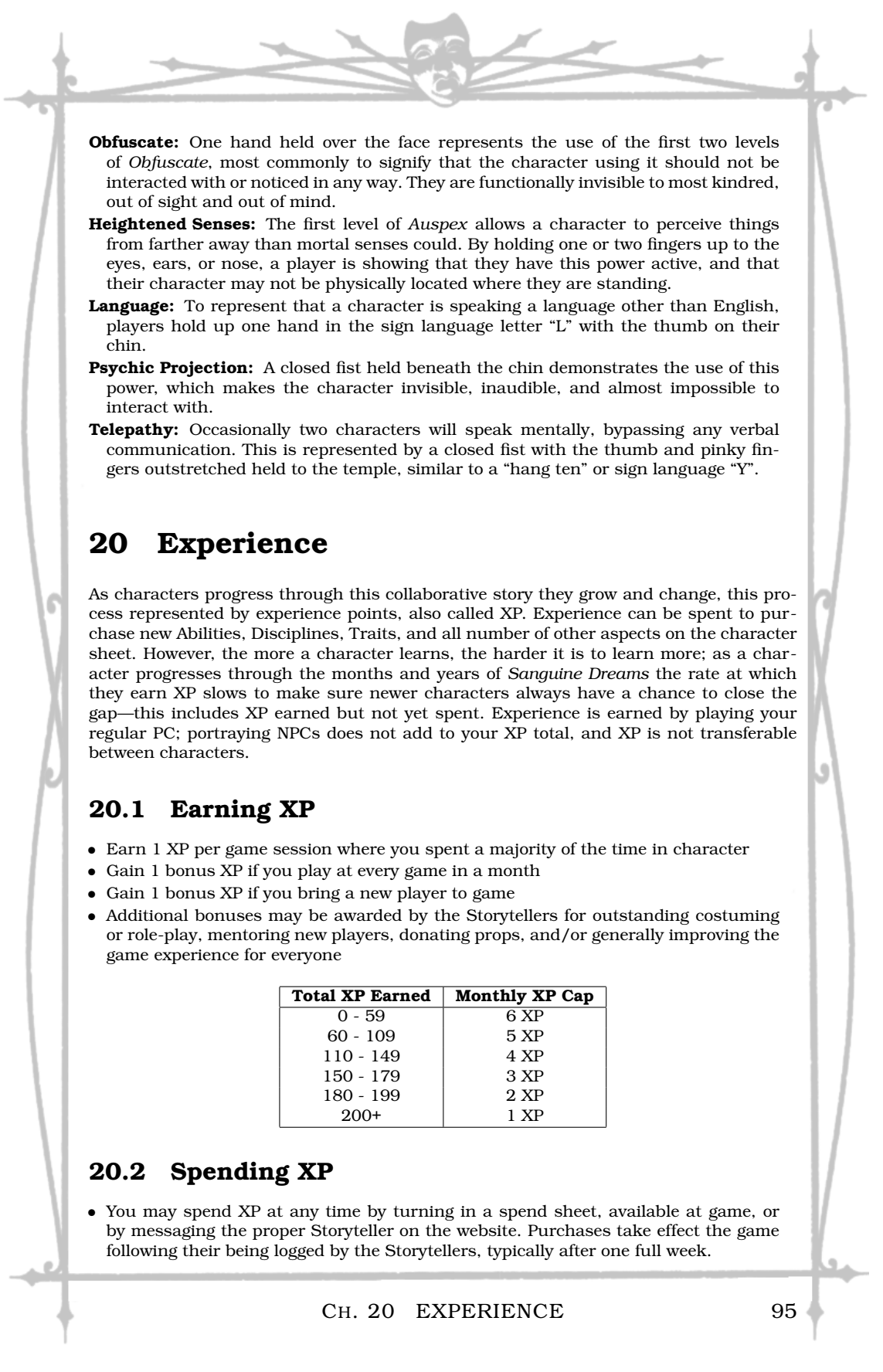
Also important are other holdings—many kindred like to host gathers, invite allies or enemies over for discussions, and expand their personal command of the mortal world by their very presence. These locations, and the justification for their possession or purchase, should be recorded with the Storytellers for like reasons as above.

In all cases the comforts, size, location, and amenities of a character's haven or holdings depend greatly on their *Resources* Background, which dictates, among other things, on what kind of location they can afford the upkeep. With higher levels of *Resources* your character may be justified in having multiple properties or even an estate, suitable to truly grand receptions. A character looking to purchase or acquire new property should both notify the Storytellers and run downtime scenes wherein they attempt to acquire or build the location to suit. In all cases the judicious use of *Influences* are likely to greatly expedite the process.

19.9 OOC Hand Signs

Many vampires possess powers that are difficult for we as humans to emulate, and so various hand signs have been developed which show other players that certain rules or effects are in play. Here are the most common hand-signs used in *Sanguine Dreams*, which should all be respected:

Out of Character: Sometimes players need to step out of the roles of their characters, whether to ask a question of a Storyteller, use a drinking fountain, or to go grab their character sheet. Prominently holding up crossed fingers means that they aren't currently interactable and should be ignored by players in the middle of role-play. When out of character, please be respectful of those still gaming and try not to interrupt scenes wherever possible.



Obfuscate: One hand held over the face represents the use of the first two levels of *Obfuscate*, most commonly to signify that the character using it should not be interacted with or noticed in any way. They are functionally invisible to most kindred, out of sight and out of mind.

Heightened Senses: The first level of *Auspex* allows a character to perceive things from farther away than mortal senses could. By holding one or two fingers up to the eyes, ears, or nose, a player is showing that they have this power active, and that their character may not be physically located where they are standing.

Language: To represent that a character is speaking a language other than English, players hold up one hand in the sign language letter “L” with the thumb on their chin.

Psychic Projection: A closed fist held beneath the chin demonstrates the use of this power, which makes the character invisible, inaudible, and almost impossible to interact with.

Telepathy: Occasionally two characters will speak mentally, bypassing any verbal communication. This is represented by a closed fist with the thumb and pinky fingers outstretched held to the temple, similar to a “hang ten” or sign language “Y”.

20 Experience

As characters progress through this collaborative story they grow and change, this process represented by experience points, also called XP. Experience can be spent to purchase new Abilities, Disciplines, Traits, and all number of other aspects on the character sheet. However, the more a character learns, the harder it is to learn more; as a character progresses through the months and years of *Sanguine Dreams* the rate at which they earn XP slows to make sure newer characters always have a chance to close the gap—this includes XP earned but not yet spent. Experience is earned by playing your regular PC; portraying NPCs does not add to your XP total, and XP is not transferable between characters.

20.1 Earning XP

- Earn 1 XP per game session where you spent a majority of the time in character
- Gain 1 bonus XP if you play at every game in a month
- Gain 1 bonus XP if you bring a new player to game
- Additional bonuses may be awarded by the Storytellers for outstanding costuming or role-play, mentoring new players, donating props, and/or generally improving the game experience for everyone

Total XP Earned	Monthly XP Cap
0 - 59	6 XP
60 - 109	5 XP
110 - 149	4 XP
150 - 179	3 XP
180 - 199	2 XP
200+	1 XP

20.2 Spending XP

- You may spend XP at any time by turning in a spend sheet, available at game, or by messaging the proper Storyteller on the website. Purchases take effect the game following their being logged by the Storytellers, typically after one full week.

- Individual Abilities, Backgrounds, Disciplines, Virtues, and Willpower may only be increased by one dot each per week.
- Influences may only be purchased at level 1 with XP, future growth must be done through the Influences rules. See the *Mortal Manipulations* packet for more information.
- Learning an out-of-Clan Discipline requires a teacher who possesses more dots in the Discipline than that which you are learning to sign off that they are teaching you.
- A Clan-specific out-of-Clan Discipline requires not only a teacher as above but also the consumption of a trait of Blood from that Clan per level at the time of purchase.
- Out-of-Clan Combo Powers are not permitted.
- Backgrounds may not be purchased without running relevant downtime scenes with a Storyteller.
- Only one Ability may be raised to 5 per character.
- Purchases lost during play still count against your earned XP total without refund.
- Note that not all Merits can be purchased after character creation, nor all Flaws or Negative Traits bought off.

Item	XP	Item	XP
Physical Trait		Virtue Trait	3
Social Trait	2	Morality Trait	2
Mental Trait		Willpower Trait	3
Ability	1	Removing a Neg. Trait	2
Ability Specialization	2	Removing a Flaw	2x Traits
Background Trait	1	Buying a Merit	2x Traits
'In Clan' Discipline	3, 6, 9 [†]	'Out of Clan' Discipline	4, 7, 10 [†]

[†] Cost for Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced levels, respectively

21 The Role of Storytellers

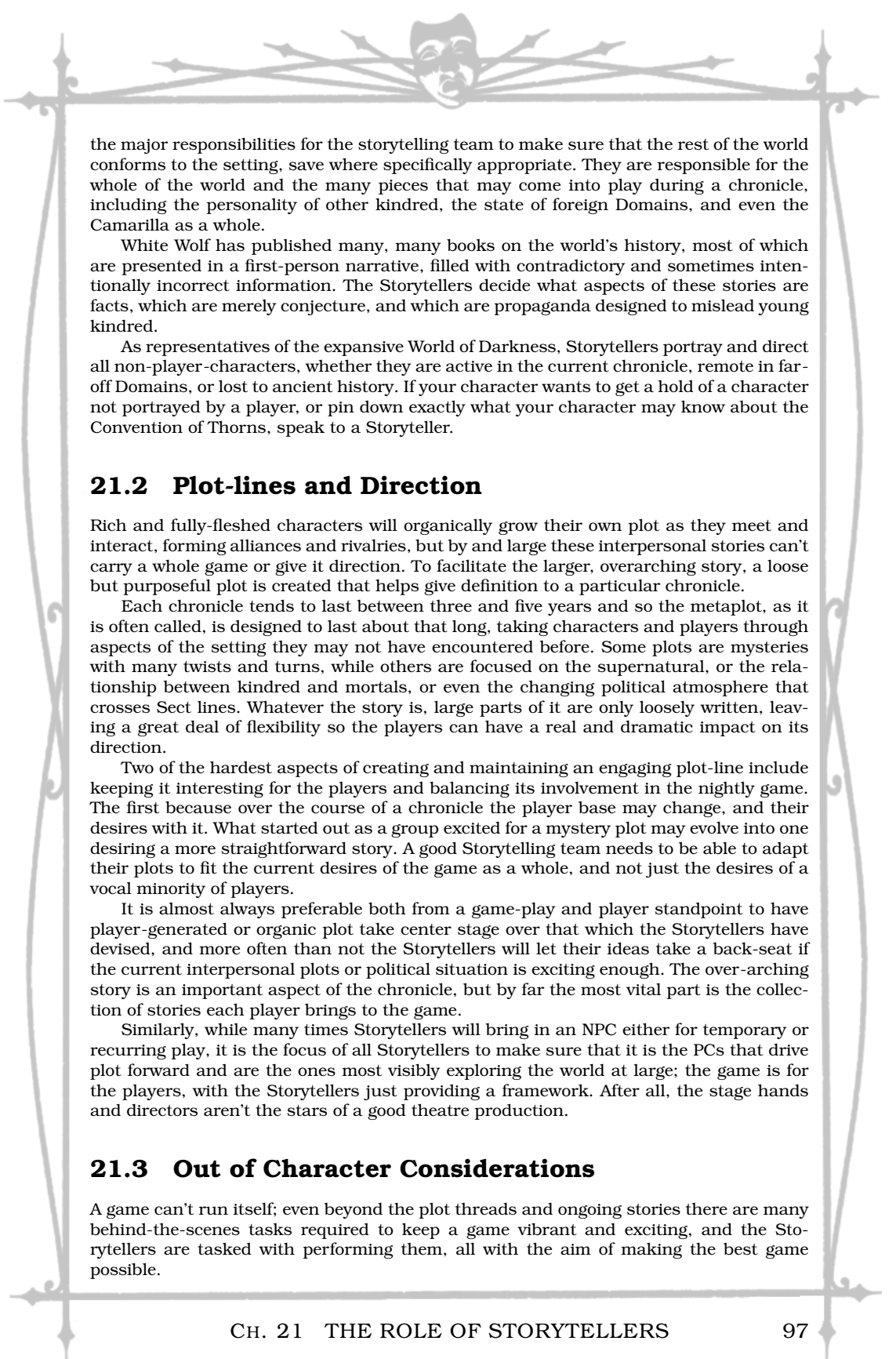
Helping lead every chronicle is a team of Storytellers, whose purpose is to improve the game and the player experience by providing opportunities to explore rich aspects of the setting at large, create plots and puzzles to be uncovered, portray non-player characters, and to make final adjudication when it comes to rules and fair play. In this section we detail what responsibilities the Storytellers shoulder and how best to present suggestions.

An important note is that while the Storytellers may create the over-arching plot lines and direction of the game, setting the mode and tone of the world in general, *Sanguine Dreams* is far from their game—the game belongs to the players, and it should be their experience as a whole, not solely the ideas of the Storytellers, which defines the game we play every week.

21.1 A Dark, Wide World

While the richest and best stories stem from interactions between player-driven characters, the World of Darkness is vast and it is the role of the Storytellers to present the rest of the world and its many denizens. They portray everyday figures in the street, shadowy antagonists, and others designed to flesh out the setting.

In addition to portraying individual or groups of NPCs, the Storytellers are responsible for presenting an internally-consistent world to the player-base. As written the World of Darkness has more than three thousand years of vampiric influence, and many stories and characters have found their way into popular lore and kindred culture. It is one of



the major responsibilities for the storytelling team to make sure that the rest of the world conforms to the setting, save where specifically appropriate. They are responsible for the whole of the world and the many pieces that may come into play during a chronicle, including the personality of other kindred, the state of foreign Domains, and even the Camarilla as a whole.

White Wolf has published many, many books on the world's history, most of which are presented in a first-person narrative, filled with contradictory and sometimes intentionally incorrect information. The Storytellers decide what aspects of these stories are facts, which are merely conjecture, and which are propaganda designed to mislead young kindred.

As representatives of the expansive World of Darkness, Storytellers portray and direct all non-player-characters, whether they are active in the current chronicle, remote in far-off Domains, or lost to ancient history. If your character wants to get a hold of a character not portrayed by a player, or pin down exactly what your character may know about the Convention of Thorns, speak to a Storyteller.

21.2 Plot-lines and Direction

Rich and fully-fleshed characters will organically grow their own plot as they meet and interact, forming alliances and rivalries, but by and large these interpersonal stories can't carry a whole game or give it direction. To facilitate the larger, overarching story, a loose but purposeful plot is created that helps give definition to a particular chronicle.

Each chronicle tends to last between three and five years and so the metaplot, as it is often called, is designed to last about that long, taking characters and players through aspects of the setting they may not have encountered before. Some plots are mysteries with many twists and turns, while others are focused on the supernatural, or the relationship between kindred and mortals, or even the changing political atmosphere that crosses Sect lines. Whatever the story is, large parts of it are only loosely written, leaving a great deal of flexibility so the players can have a real and dramatic impact on its direction.

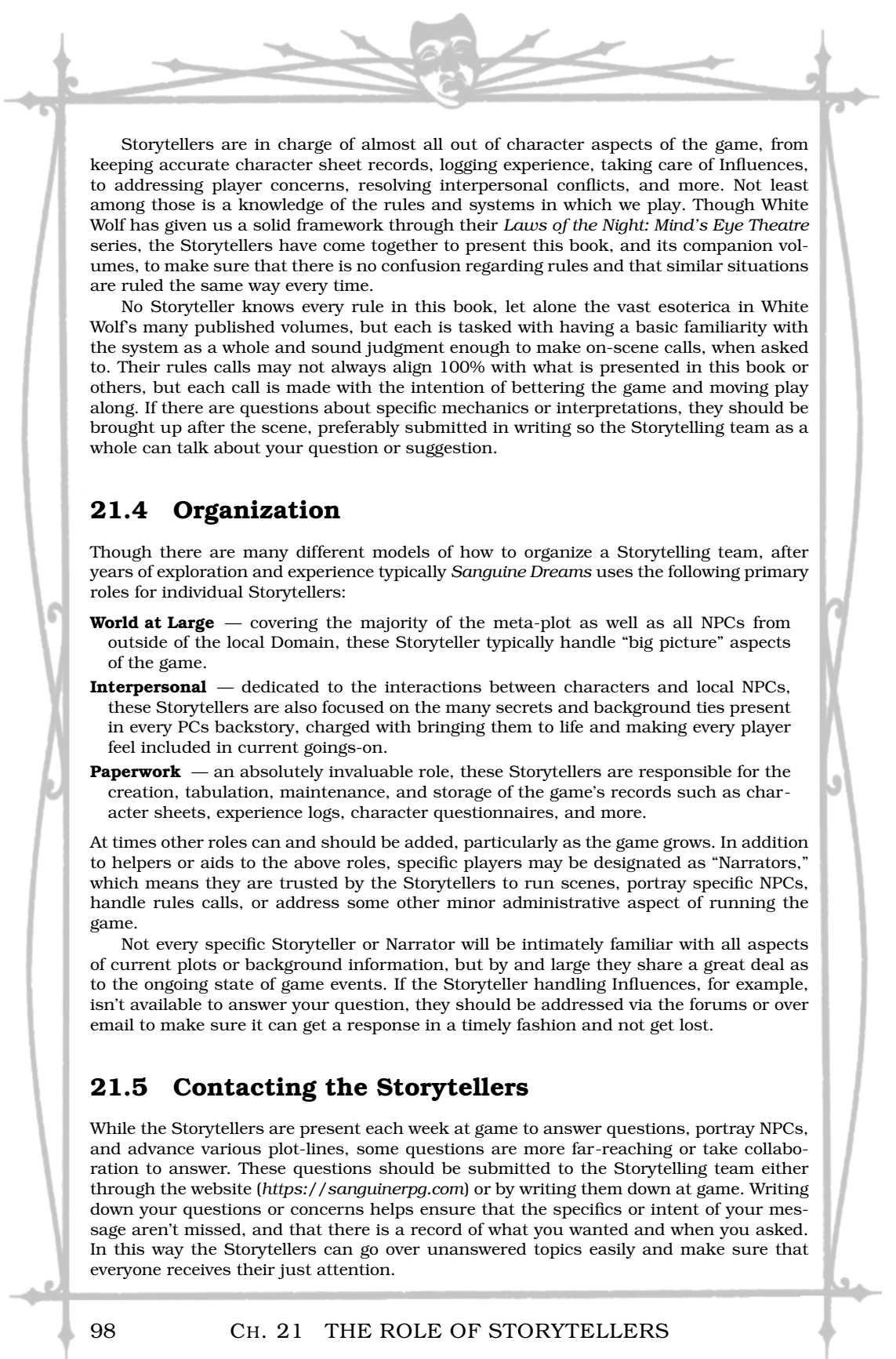
Two of the hardest aspects of creating and maintaining an engaging plot-line include keeping it interesting for the players and balancing its involvement in the nightly game. The first because over the course of a chronicle the player base may change, and their desires with it. What started out as a group excited for a mystery plot may evolve into one desiring a more straightforward story. A good Storytelling team needs to be able to adapt their plots to fit the current desires of the game as a whole, and not just the desires of a vocal minority of players.

It is almost always preferable both from a game-play and player standpoint to have player-generated or organic plot take center stage over that which the Storytellers have devised, and more often than not the Storytellers will let their ideas take a back-seat if the current interpersonal plots or political situation is exciting enough. The over-arching story is an important aspect of the chronicle, but by far the most vital part is the collection of stories each player brings to the game.

Similarly, while many times Storytellers will bring in an NPC either for temporary or recurring play, it is the focus of all Storytellers to make sure that it is the PCs that drive plot forward and are the ones most visibly exploring the world at large; the game is for the players, with the Storytellers just providing a framework. After all, the stage hands and directors aren't the stars of a good theatre production.

21.3 Out of Character Considerations

A game can't run itself; even beyond the plot threads and ongoing stories there are many behind-the-scenes tasks required to keep a game vibrant and exciting, and the Storytellers are tasked with performing them, all with the aim of making the best game possible.



Storytellers are in charge of almost all out of character aspects of the game, from keeping accurate character sheet records, logging experience, taking care of Influences, to addressing player concerns, resolving interpersonal conflicts, and more. Not least among those is a knowledge of the rules and systems in which we play. Though White Wolf has given us a solid framework through their *Laws of the Night: Mind's Eye Theatre* series, the Storytellers have come together to present this book, and its companion volumes, to make sure that there is no confusion regarding rules and that similar situations are ruled the same way every time.

No Storyteller knows every rule in this book, let alone the vast esoterica in White Wolf's many published volumes, but each is tasked with having a basic familiarity with the system as a whole and sound judgment enough to make on-scene calls, when asked to. Their rules calls may not always align 100% with what is presented in this book or others, but each call is made with the intention of bettering the game and moving play along. If there are questions about specific mechanics or interpretations, they should be brought up after the scene, preferably submitted in writing so the Storytelling team as a whole can talk about your question or suggestion.

21.4 Organization

Though there are many different models of how to organize a Storytelling team, after years of exploration and experience typically *Sanguine Dreams* uses the following primary roles for individual Storytellers:

World at Large — covering the majority of the meta-plot as well as all NPCs from outside of the local Domain, these Storyteller typically handle “big picture” aspects of the game.

Interpersonal — dedicated to the interactions between characters and local NPCs, these Storytellers are also focused on the many secrets and background ties present in every PCs backstory, charged with bringing them to life and making every player feel included in current goings-on.

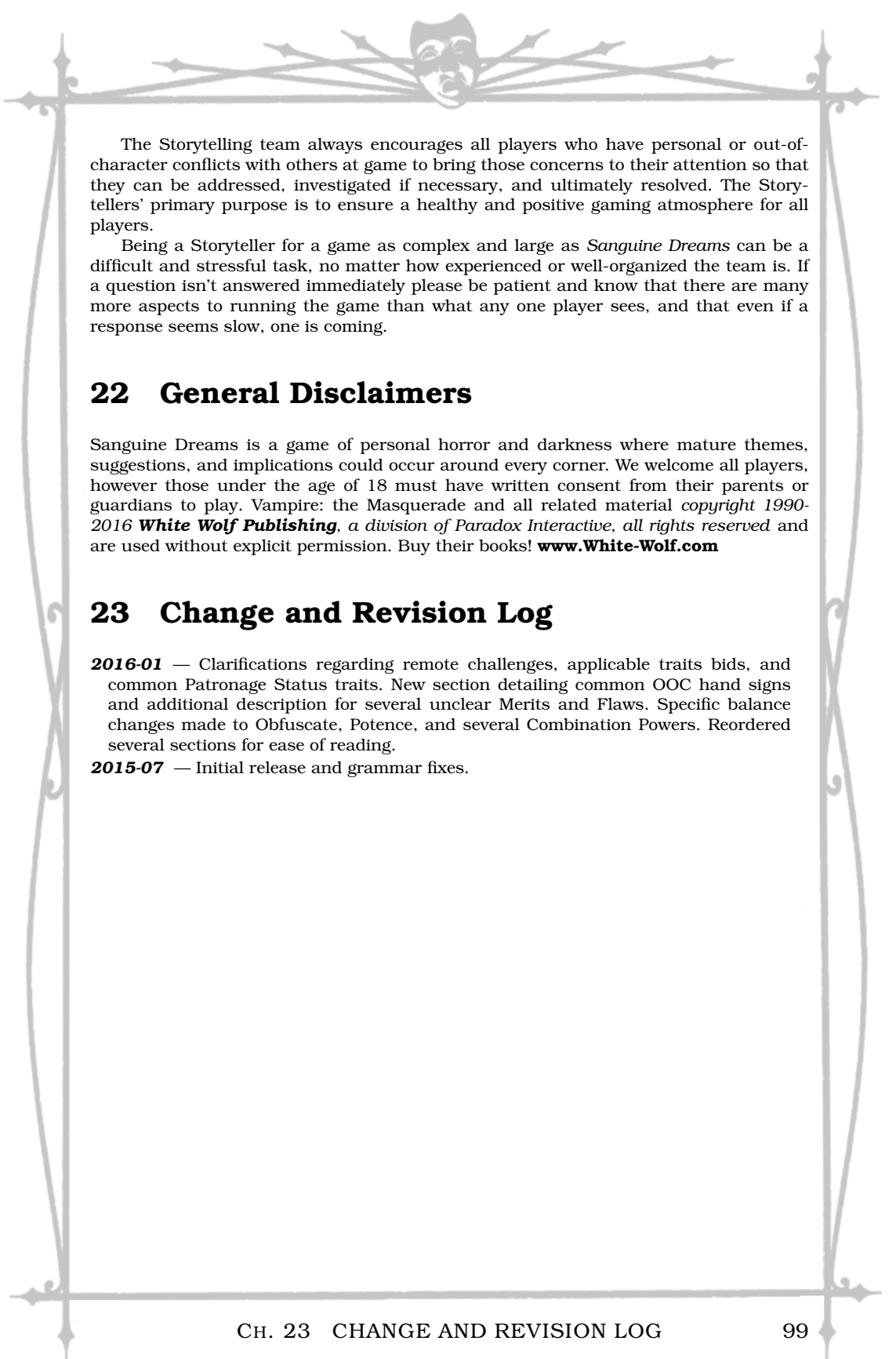
Paperwork — an absolutely invaluable role, these Storytellers are responsible for the creation, tabulation, maintenance, and storage of the game's records such as character sheets, experience logs, character questionnaires, and more.

At times other roles can and should be added, particularly as the game grows. In addition to helpers or aids to the above roles, specific players may be designated as “Narrators,” which means they are trusted by the Storytellers to run scenes, portray specific NPCs, handle rules calls, or address some other minor administrative aspect of running the game.

Not every specific Storyteller or Narrator will be intimately familiar with all aspects of current plots or background information, but by and large they share a great deal as to the ongoing state of game events. If the Storyteller handling Influences, for example, isn't available to answer your question, they should be addressed via the forums or over email to make sure it can get a response in a timely fashion and not get lost.

21.5 Contacting the Storytellers

While the Storytellers are present each week at game to answer questions, portray NPCs, and advance various plot-lines, some questions are more far-reaching or take collaboration to answer. These questions should be submitted to the Storytelling team either through the website (<https://sanguinerpg.com>) or by writing them down at game. Writing down your questions or concerns helps ensure that the specifics or intent of your message aren't missed, and that there is a record of what you wanted and when you asked. In this way the Storytellers can go over unanswered topics easily and make sure that everyone receives their just attention.



The Storytelling team always encourages all players who have personal or out-of-character conflicts with others at game to bring those concerns to their attention so that they can be addressed, investigated if necessary, and ultimately resolved. The Storytellers' primary purpose is to ensure a healthy and positive gaming atmosphere for all players.

Being a Storyteller for a game as complex and large as *Sanguine Dreams* can be a difficult and stressful task, no matter how experienced or well-organized the team is. If a question isn't answered immediately please be patient and know that there are many more aspects to running the game than what any one player sees, and that even if a response seems slow, one is coming.

22 General Disclaimers

Sanguine Dreams is a game of personal horror and darkness where mature themes, suggestions, and implications could occur around every corner. We welcome all players, however those under the age of 18 must have written consent from their parents or guardians to play. Vampire: the Masquerade and all related material *copyright 1990-2016 White Wolf Publishing, a division of Paradox Interactive, all rights reserved* and are used without explicit permission. Buy their books! www.White-Wolf.com

23 Change and Revision Log

2016-01 — Clarifications regarding remote challenges, applicable traits bids, and common Patronage Status traits. New section detailing common OOC hand signs and additional description for several unclear Merits and Flaws. Specific balance changes made to Obfuscate, Potence, and several Combination Powers. Reordered several sections for ease of reading.

2015-07 — Initial release and grammar fixes.

