Bloodbound

A Coven Expansion

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Chapter 1: Blood Magic

Feats

Blood Binding [15 XP, Sympathetic Magic]

Prerequisites: Sympathetic Magic 1, Taglock Binding

Blood is the most powerful taglock. With enough of it, you can forge an even stronger sympathetic link.

If you use a drop of blood as the taglock for Taglock Binding, it establishes a standard sympathetic link, instead of a weak sympathetic link.

Total Bloodbind [10 XP, Sympathetic Magic]

Prerequisites: Sympathetic Magic 1, Taglock Binding

A drop of blood is potent. *Soaking* the symbol in blood is simply overwhelming. If you soak the whole symbol in the target's blood while using Blood Binding, it establishes a strong sympathetic link. Soaking a typical hand-sized poppet or effigy requires 1 dose of blood, but larger symbols might require more.

Chapter 2: Contracts

Contract Law

Contracts are among the most complicated of all magics. In fact, much of the skill in using contracts lies in making them complicated enough to hide loopholes, or catches, to dupe the other party and come out on top. The other side of the coin is understanding them well enough to avoid being caught out by the same tricks.

Some players, and some GMs, will revel in this complication, loving the battle of wits as they open and close loopholes in the contracts they write. Others, however, will think it too much like work, preferring not to bog down play with such details. As such, there are two ways to use contracts in your game. The players and GM should agree on which method is being used before anyone takes feats from this chapter, to avoid confusion and disappointment.

The first way is to write them yourself—word for word. You can even put your character's signature upon them—perhaps in red pen—and use the piece of paper as a prop around the game table. The GM might offer you the chance to make a Test to spot a loophole, if they see one that you haven't, but ultimately, the words written upon the paper are the words that form the contract in-game.

The second method is for you just describe the intent of the contract to the GM. The GM can then call for a Test—possibly opposed by the other party in the contract—for your character to draft the contract. On a failure, the GM can invent a loophole to catch you out on, while on a success you write a clean contract, or could even catch the other party out.

Tests related to contracts use the Lore (Contracts) skill. Unlike most Lore skills, which are typically paired with Ken, most Lore (Contracts) Tests will use Wit. Writing and spotting loopholes and other tricks is less about rote learning, and more about outwitting the other parties to the contract.

Creating Contracts

In-game, a contract is a magical agreement brought into existence using a written document, signed in blood. A contract consists of three parts: stipulations, penalties, and signatories. All three must be present on the written document. The words upon the document form the binding rules of the contract—any spoken agreements do not matter, only what is written.

There are two steps to creating a contract. The first is writing the document, specifying the stipulations, the penalties, and who the signatories are to be. The second is getting each signatory to sign the document. The document must not be modified during the second step. If it is altered at any point after the first signatory signs, but before the last signatory signs it becomes void.

Once the last signatory signs it, the contract takes effect. Every signatory is immediately, magically aware of this, regardless of whether they are currently present. From this point onwards, the document used to create the contract is no longer relevant. It can be modified, or destroyed, without affecting the terms of the contract itself.

Not just anyone can write a magically-binding contract, although anyone can sign one. At least one of the people writing—and signing—the contract must have the feat Signed in Blood, in order to make it magically binding.

Several feats allow extra clauses to be specified upon a contract that a person helps to write. Firstly, note that a person must be a signatory upon the contract in order to use these—unless they have the Solicitor feat. Secondly, while a witch must learn the feat Signed in Blood before learning

any of these feats, some other creatures may have these feats without being able to write a contract independently. In this case, they can add these clauses to a contract they help to write, and sign, but they need someone with the Signed in Blood to create the contract in the first place.

Signatories

A contract comes into effect when it is signed in blood, by everyone it is to affect directly. A contract must specify all its signatories as part of the main text, before anyone signs it. These specified signatories are the only people who may be directly affected by the penalties of the contract—they are the ones who have agreed to its terms.

A signature does not need to be a name; it is often just an "X", or a paw-print. The important aspects are that it is made by the signatory, in the signatory's blood, with the intent to sign the contract. Note that, although they must intend to sign the contract, they might be doing so reluctantly. A contract signed under duress is still valid. Furthermore, there is no requirement that the signatory has even read the contract.

Stipulations

The first part of a contract, apart from the list of signatories, is the stipulations. These specify a set of things that must (or must not) happen, and which signatory is responsible for ensuring they occur. For example "Agatha must ensure that Brynston Tower falls by midnight," or "Agatha must not tell anyone about the Sword of Queen Grima."

Stipulations may specify a time in which they must happen, but they do not have to. It is not always necessary—"Agatha must not tell anyone about the Sword of Queen Grima" simply applies forever. But for cases where it is necessary, its omission provides a common loophole. For example, "Agatha must ensure that Brynston Tower falls" is a stipulation that Agatha can never be penalised for breaking, as there is always the possibility that it will fall at some later date.

If a stipulation is violated—and any one of the signatories becomes aware of the vioaltion—then the penalties take effect upon the signatory who violated them. If multiple signatories violate their stipulations, they are all penalised.

Note that, unlike most Headology, it is not only belief that matters. A signatory must be aware of the violation, but the violation must also have actually occurred. Also, note that the signatory who learns about the violation may be the same signatory who will be penalised for it—you can never get away with intentionally breaching contract. If there is some ambiguity about whether a stipulation has been violated, then the GM is the final arbiter. However, the GM may call for the signatories to argue their cases, perhaps with associated Tests.

Penalties

Accompanying each stipulation in a contract, there should be a penalty. One penalty may cover multiple stipulations, and violation of one stipulation may trigger multiple penalties. However, penalties can only affect the signatories who violated the associated stipulations.

Several varieties of penalty are possible in a contract, but only one is possible for a novice contract-writer. Others must be learned through feats. Every signatory upon a contract becomes aware when a stipulation is violated and a penalty takes effect.

The standard penalty is forced action for the signatory who violated the stipulation. The contract should specify exactly what they have to do, and, if they violate their stipulation, the magic of the contract compels them to carry out the penalty to the best of their ability. The most common case is to simply force them to carry out the stipulation they violated, but others are possible.

In this case of a forced action penalty, the penalised signatory is magically compelled to carry it out above all else. In most cases they will retain a sense of self-preservation, but only so far as it is helps them to carry out the penalty. A penalty requiring a suicidal action overrides even this, however. As such, being under a penalty can be very dangerous. The magical compulsion continues until the penalty is completed—which may never happen, depending on how it is phrased.

If a player character winds up under a penalty, it should normally be possible to leave the player in control, as long as they co-operate. They character is in control of *how* they attempt to fulfil the penalty's obligations, as long as they give it their best effort. However, the GM retains the right to

take some control if the player is not following their character's magical compulsion.

Voiding a Contract

Various situations can cause a contract to become void. The most common one is when a contract is modified while it is being signed—after the first signatory signs, but before the last one does.

Otherwise, a contract can specify conditions under which it renders itself void. These conditions must be detected be a signatory, just like any violations of stipulations.

If a contract becomes void before it takes effect—if it modified while it is being signed, for instance—then it can never take effect. Anybody who later tries to sign the contract is aware that it is void. An entirely new document must be created in order to bring a contract into effect.

If a contract becomes void some time *after* it takes effect, then all its effects immediately end. No new penalties can take effect from that contract. Furthermore, any ongoing penalties immediately end, removing any magical compulsions. Every signatory on the contract becomes aware when an active contract is voided.

Feats

Signed in Blood [25 XP, Headology]

Prerequisites: None

You may create contracts, as long as you are one of the signatories. Your contracts are limited to only two signatories, unless you are helped by someone who can create contracts with more.

Solicitor [15 XP, Headology]

Prerequisites: Lore (Contracts) 1, Signed in Blood

You may create, or help to create, contracts even where you are not one of the signatories.

Multisign [10 XP, Headology]

Prerequisites: Lore (Contracts) 1, Solicitor

You may create contracts with more than two signatories—as many as you like. You may also allow a contract by another to have additional signatories, if you help them to create it.

Null and Void [10 XP, Headology]

Prerequisites: Lore (Contracts) 1, Signed in Blood

It is very difficult to undo a contract once it has come into effect, but with agreement of all the original signatories, it can be done. A contract can normally contain clauses that void it under certain conditions. Now, when you create, or help to create, a contract, you may add clauses that void previous contracts: either immediately, or under certain conditions. These conditions must still be detected by a signatory, as usual.

For this to work, every signatory upon the contract to be voided must be a signatory on the new contract. Exactly which previous contracts are to be voided must be specified. You may also create a contract without stipulations or penalties, with the sole purpose of voided earlier contracts.

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