

G U R P S<sup>®</sup>

# VAMPIRE<sup>™</sup>

THE MASQUERADE



BY JEFF KOKE

BASED ON THE ORIGINAL GAME BY MARK REIN•HAGEN

**STEVE JACKSON GAMES**

GURPS

# VAMPIRE™

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## THE MASQUERADE

By Jeff Koke

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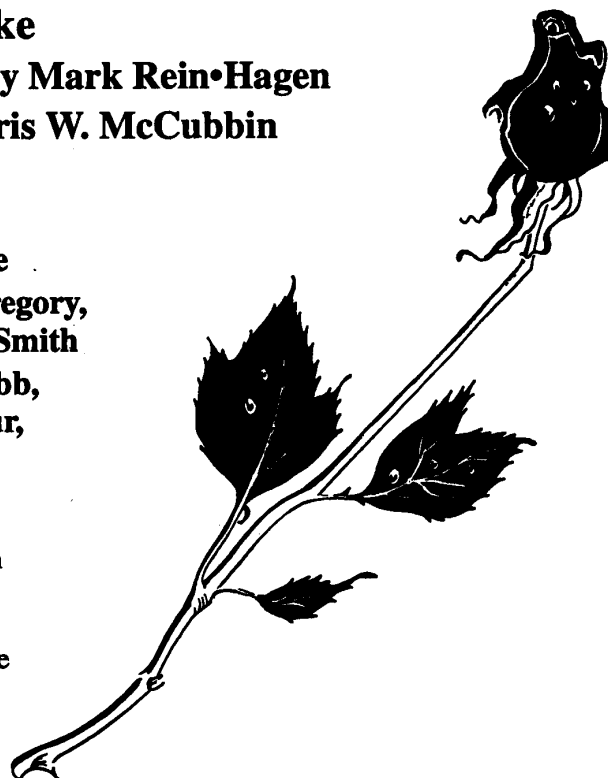
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*Dedicated to my beloved Angela. You are the beacon that banishes my darkness.*

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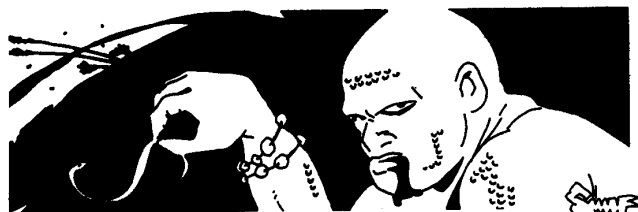


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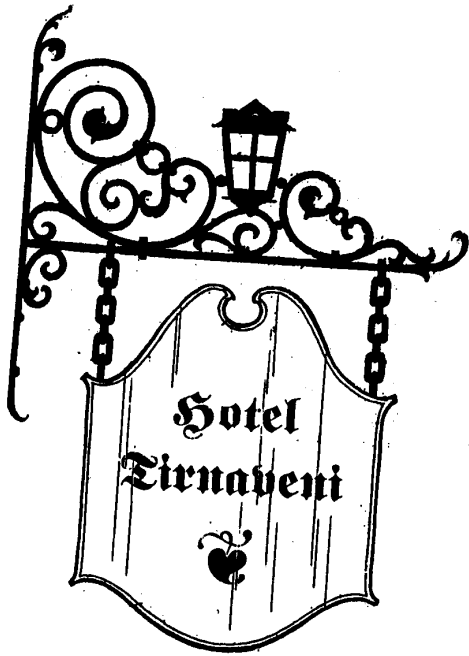
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100 Budapest St.  
Tirnaveni, Romania

July 1, 1993

Dr. Harold Mautzenberg  
Dept. of History  
Yale University  
New Haven, Connecticut

Dear Harold,  
Time is short and I have no strength to explain the whole story. I only hope that you will be able to help lift this burden. Suffice it to say that I have been on an incredible journey, through perils no one should ever have to face, and I am still alive.

I cannot vouch for my sanity, however, and my only goal right now is to remain hidden until I can regain some semblance of normality in my life. The horrors I have faced will be burned into my soul forever, but someday I may find the grace to accept what I have seen, even if I can never truly comprehend it.

As you can see, I have enclosed a packet of documents. These are copies of artifacts I have unearthed in the past five years. The trials I endured to obtain these strain the limit of human capability. I will not explain. You would never accept it.

I am sending these to you because, frankly, you are the only person out of everyone that I know that I feel I can truly trust. This may be a mistake, but I can no longer hold these secrets within myself. If you are one of them, I lose nothing - I can attract no more danger than I already face.

What you do with these documents is your business. I have verified them to the best of my limited ability, but you are much more skilled than I, and I feel sure you will be able to determine their authenticity. I only hope that if you decide to reveal any of this information, you choose your methods wisely. If you are discreet and remain anonymous, you may not draw the same dangerous attention that I am now forced to flee from.

I am not sending you these to put you in any jeopardy. You may, if you want, destroy these copies and go on with your life as though you had never received them. Remember, though, if you choose that path, you must live with the burden of this incredible discovery. As I am living with it now.

Someday, I hope to contact you when I feel it is safe. That day may never come, but I pray that we shall both see something positive from this unearthly revelation.

In all sincerity,

*Taylor*  
Taylor

Anno Domini 1481

Don Torquemada -

For favor, accepta mis disculpas mas humildes. My duties here have quite exceeded all expectations, and I have had little time to report my observations. Nonetheless, I feel that the quality of my findings will far outweigh my lateness in reporting to you.

As you recall from my last communication, I had set up a quite nice domicile, with plenty of room below for inquisition and experimentation. My continued thanks for your generosity in this matter. As you will soon find out, God's money has been well spent.

Since my previous letter, I have managed to capture three of the beasts that you call "estafadores," but which the local people term "wampyrs." Without offending you, I hope I can express my approval of their term; it captures the flavor of their most diabolical qualities. As you predicted, the Devil is strong in these creatures. I fear they are servants of the Dark Lord himself. Only God has given me the perseverance to succeed in my duties.

After numerous experiments, using the Church's infallible methods in addition to a number of unique ones that I was forced to develop, I have uncovered a wealth of information concerning these wampyrs. I only hope that the Church can make the best use of this knowledge.

I will bore you with my feeble prose no longer. Please accept this in God's name, with your infinite grace.

### Información General

The estafador, or wampyr, is a manlike creature that is neither dead nor alive. It can move, think (sometimes rather well) and often possesses incredible strength and agility. However, it has no breath in its lungs; it requires no food or water, and its heart does not beat. These facts in themselves would lead me to conclude demonic influence. However, there is more.

Contrary to the popular myths, they have no aversion to garlic or symbols of the church, unless the latter is wielded by someone of great faith (such as myself). The legend of being unable to enter a dwelling uninvited or cross running water is also false. They are able to go wherever they please, as I found out when one attempted my life. I was rescued by my chamber boy, however, and suffered no physical damage.

**A**nother rumour that I feel I must dispel is their supposed inability to see their reflection within a looking glass. They appear in mirrors quite readily, so this cannot prove to be an accurate test. I find it amazing how many of the old wives' tales I have shown to be false. This is truly fascinating work.

**T**o live, they must feed, and the only sustenance they desire or require is blood – be it human or animal. They seem to have a preference for human blood, and seem to replenish themselves faster with that variety. I cannot confirm the rumour that they do not age, but one of the ones I captured claimed to be over 80 years old, something that all know is impossible.

**A** stake in the heart is not sufficient to destroy one. This is very important as all of the literature and history suggest the opposite. The stake will render one immobile, but further treatment is required.

**T**heir true death can be achieved through the application of fire or sunlight, both of which will turn the demon to dust within minutes. I have only confirmed this with one subject, but from my discussion with the others, I feel that this must be universal.

**T**hey are also able to kill each other. I discovered this through an experiment of my own invention that I must confess is near to genius. I placed the remaining two in a sturdy cage, and over the next several days, only provided one with the precious blood they require to survive. I observed the other growing paler and more agitated as the days progressed. She appeared to be battling a state of total madness.

**A**s I predicted, she eventually succumbed to the state and went into what I can only describe as a blood-frenzy. She ripped into the other creature and defeated him through sheer force of will. Although he was full of blood (and these wampyrs grow stronger when they have blood), her determination was too great for him, and she sent him reeling to the ground. She drank his blood in huge gulps and continued drinking even when there was no blood remaining. Soon he was nothing more than a dried up husk, and her eyes fairly glowed with the completion of her madness. Alas, this discovery has left me with but one creature for study, but I hope to obtain more.

## Anatomía

**I** now move on to a description of their general appearance and anatomy. Being unliving, the skin of the estafador is very pale, only deviating from this state directly after the creature has fed. At this time, the face and hands gain a rosy hue, and the beasts could easily pass for human.



Although they do not need to breathe, they can approximate the motions, as they can for eating and drinking. I feel this is important to mention because this belies a great ability to hide among the people. You cannot be too careful; already I have had to eliminate two peasants who were abnormally pale of skin.

The creatures do not heal from wounds as humans do. I have done extensive tests on my subjects and (comparing them, of course, to tests on normal humans) discovered that they must heal themselves with the blood they drink. With this blood, they can heal much faster than humans can, but if deprived of blood, they deteriorate slowly, eventually falling into a deep sleep that lasts for months. During this sleep, which they termed "torpor," they can be easily destroyed by fire or sunlight.

### Conclusion

My only conclusion is that these creatures are humans who have been taken over, body and soul, by demonic forces. Although the traditional methods of exorcism have no effect on them, their bestial nature is undeniable. They appear to have magical healing abilities, and their undue strength and quickness can only be termed supernatural.

It is obvious to me, then, that the only solution to this problem is a mass extermination. I will of course shift the focus of my work here from study to elimination, and I hope you will instigate some manner of demon-hunt along the many avenues you have available.

I thank you for choosing me for this project. It has been very rewarding, even during the rare times that it became harrowing and dangerous. I look forward to your kind words when I return to España.

I will close this letter now, as I hear a disturbance downstairs. It is most likely simply a serving boy dropping a barrel of wine, but I must investigate.

Vaya con Dios,  
Su sirviente,  
Piedro Diega Montayon

*Dearest Julian,*

24 November, 1904

*If you are reading this then you must be aware of my death. In my heart of hearts, I knew destruction would come to me eventually, though I suppose that I never really allowed myself to fear death as I should have. My only regret is that any sadness should come to you.*

*Yes, I have deceived you – not out of any intent to harm you, but rather to keep you safe from the travails of a society that I felt would only bring you evil. But now that I am dead, I must tell you all.*

*~ What We Are ~*

*You and I are vampires. I know that you are aware of this fact, but only in the limited sense that I explained it to you after the Embrace. I am afraid I was not complete in my description of what it means to be Kindred. There is so much more that I did not tell you.*

*You are aware of the ways you can be harmed, so I will not waste time with that, but I will tell you of the blood you must drink. It is more than sustenance to replenish that which time takes away. With a concentrated effort, you may burn the blood within you to increase your strength, fend off the blistering sun or improve certain abilities. You can even heal yourself with this blood. Had you ever taken injury, I give you my oath that I would have told you this much. Alas, I now realize I protected you too earnestly.*

*You also have the ability to use certain supernatural powers. I did not teach you any of these (again to protect you with ignorance). I beg of you, please approach others of our kind – and I will explain how later in this letter – and request that they teach you. These powers I speak of we call "disciplines," and every one of us can learn a few. They will make your existence much easier since you will now have to hunt for yourself.*

## ~ Who We Are ~

Another falsehood that I fed you is that we are alone in our curse. I had hopes that I would go on forever, always able to shield you from our ugly society. Alas, no longer.

There are very many Kindred in the world, far more than you would believe — perhaps close to one thousand in America alone. I realize that this must come as a great shock to you, but it should be comfort as well. You are not alone now, and you never must be again. With that comfort, though, comes a price. You now must enter a wicked culture.

Our race has its roots at the beginning of history. The first vampire was the biblical Caine, who was cursed with an endless craving for blood for killing his brother. Caine was cast out of mortal society and wandered through the empty wilderness. He returned after a time to the mortal world and founded a city.

During his rule of this city, Caine created three vampire progeny, known as the second generation. They in turn, created the third generation, which may have been nine, twenty-seven, or one-hundred or more. No one knows for sure, but Caine forbade them to create any more.

Caine ruled until a great flood destroyed the city, whereupon he left to wander again. Left to their own devices, the third generation created more progeny, and some left to found other cities. The world expanded, and the Kindred expanded with it. The Kindred knew and respected each other, but most lived solitary lives, feeding upon mortal subjects.

Thus it went until we were forced to cooperate. Again, it was not always so. In ancient times, we were able to roam freely, feed on whomever we pleased and generally rule the land. However, in 1435, the Inquisition began, and although it mostly dealt with harmless old women and hermit heretics, some of its more able practitioners managed to destroy many Kindred. Never before had we feared extinction, but that dread now became great upon us. Something had to be done.

Although we were mostly solitary creatures at that time, we began to meet in secret, to develop some strategy and strength in a time of awful crisis. Thus was born the Camarilla.

The Camarilla is an organization that is devoted to the protection of vampires. They rule through traditions and laws, the foremost of which I have already taught you well: the Masquerade. The Masquerade is more than simply being secretive and wary of the eyes of mortals, however, it is influencing mortal society on a grand scale – directing their thoughts away from the superstitious and toward what they think of as rational.

Do not think the Renaissance was an accident of geography. It was carefully planned by the most scholarly Kindred as an avenue to steer mortal pursuits away from hunting witches. I have to chuckle whenever I think of the mortals' pride in that age. Without us, they would still be kneeling in grey cathedrals and using leeches to cure the plague.

It was during this time that I was stripped of my mortal existence and led, quite unwillingly, into the world of the Kindred. I had played a large part myself in the dawn of the age of reason, and when I discovered the hidden prodding that had led me toward my pursuits, I was outraged. I soon grew to accept my immortality and the culture that spawned it. But my indoctrination was bitter and my fragile psyche never fully recovered. This is one of the reasons I protected you from this savage world – there is little mercy in the hearts of the undead.

Over the next few centuries, the Camarilla grew, as did its influence. Few major events in our history since then have been clean of Kindred tinkering. Wars, coups, discoveries – all were planned or prodded by vampires in the highest seats of power, the invisible hands on the wheels of control.

I hope I do not lead you into thinking the Camarilla is simply a council of vampires who change history. It is an organization to which many Kindred – perhaps the majority – belong. It is made up of seven bloodlines, or clans. You are of the Ventrue bloodline, as am I and my sire before me. There are other clans that do not belong to the Camarilla, but they do not have the power or the influence that we do. I do not have the space to tell you of every clan and their position within the society. Once you have entered it, you will have many teachers.

## ~ Hierarchy ~

Traditionally, the rulers among vampires are the eldest. This is due as much to their reservoir of power as it is to their social standing. Recently, however, and sadly, the power over a city's Kindred falls to that city's "prince," be he eldest or not.

A prince rises to power by taking it, or by gaining the favor of the elders of a city. Most Kindred wish to be princes. This is because the prince has the power to sire childer – new Kindred. He can also grant anyone in his domain this luxury . . . or he can deny it. Without the prince's permission, a childe must be made in secret . . . which is what I have done with you. I know it is too late to correct my mistake – even writing this, I do not truly believe you will ever read it.

Just as all Kindred within a prince's domain owe loyalty to him (and feign it if they do not truly give it), each prince owes allegiance to his governing body. In most cases this is the Camarilla, but in the eastern half of America, a group known as the Sabbat (or Black Hand) holds power. The Sabbat is made up of vicious Kindred who uphold the Masquerade only when it suits them and generally work against everything the Camarilla stands for. As you are beginning to see, the society of vampires is not a utopia.

Each prince is advised by a group of elders. Though the elders do not make policy for the prince's domain, they hold great sway over the prince's decisions. If he should go against their wishes, they have the power to put someone else in his place. This is the thing that princes fear most.

## ~ Internal Struggles ~

The largest reason that I kept you ignorant of this infernal society is that while its aim is noble, it is defeated by its own weight of intrigue. Most Kindred want power, especially the newest generation. Power within our society is most easily gained by guile and subtle machinations – favors for certain elders, becoming the favorite of a prince, usurping a rival for control of a city. All these have been done so many times over the years that this type of maneuvering has become part of our very psyche.

You will soon be drawn into this world. I urge you to find a teacher you trust and learn of the ways to power. This is not to say that I wish you to become a schemer within the society, only that I believe you will be better off knowing their methods. With a complete knowledge of the intrigue that plagues our world, you will be armed to defend yourself if the need arises.

I hope do not give you the impression that our society is completely black and hopeless. There is a certain pageantry and pride that comes with it as well. We are the original creatures of the night, and with that designation comes a certain amount of responsibility. We have created a culture heavy with honor and dark with intrigue.

I should take a moment to discuss the darkest crime there is among the Kindred — Diablerie: the killing of one's own kind for power. I tell you this so that you will protect yourself. Though you are not long a vampire, you are of the sixth generation — which means you are only five steps removed from Caine. The lower a Cainite's generation, the more power he possesses. You have the potential to be very powerful. Other vile kindred will seek to steal your power, and in the process destroy you.

Killing a vampire of a lower generation is the only way one can lower one's own generation. To drink the blood, completely, of another of your kind is the most heinous crime any of us can commit. Kindred who practice Diablerie are universally despised, and thus their methods are secret, their tactics cunning. Be wary of them, Julian, for you are innocent and inviting.

### ~ A Final Note ~

On the reverse of this document is a location where you must go and present yourself to the prince of the city. She is a tolerant woman of the clan called Brujah. Take this letter and show it to her. It will explain your condition better than you can. This is very important, you must accept her as your ruler, and always show courtesy when dealing with her. She will give you aid, but only if you show her appropriate respect. Otherwise, she will attempt to control you or destroy you. Please do not let my irresponsibility lead to your demise . . . let my death mean something.

You will be asked to recite your lineage. I have reproduced it below for you to memorize. This is one of our most sacred traditions, so you must recite it word for word, without mistake. Be thankful your lineage is not long.

Remember again that you have the potential to be a very powerful vampire. There will be many, even among the prince's court, who will try to deceive you and use your power toward their own ends. Do not let this happen. In all your dealings, be firm and steadfast, and you will do well.

I hope that I have been able to adequately introduce you to a world that I know you must find surprising. I know that no simple letter can prepare you fully, and I understand that you may curse my name for keeping an entire world from you, but if you cannot find it in your soul to forgive me, at least keep my memory alive in your mind, even if it must be through hatred.

My deepest apologies and most fervent ambition for your well being,

*Christophorus*

As is the tradition, I recite the lineage of Julian, Ventrue of the Sixth Generation.

My name is Julian. I am Ventrue. My sire is Christophorus.

My name is Christophorus. I am Ventrue. My sire is Galen.

My name is Galen. I am Ventrue. My sire is Johann.

My name is Johann. I am sire of the Ventrue. My sire is Hren.

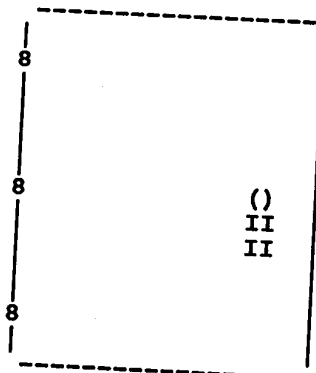
My name is Hren. My sire is Caine.

My name is Caine. I am he who sired all those of the Blood.

All Kindred are my childer.

My name is Julian, childe of Christophorus, childe of Galen, childe of Johann, childe of Hren, childe of Caine. Recognize my lineage.

[TEXT CAPTURE ON]  
atdt447-4449  
CONNECT 2400



--The Black Door--

Nom> Sebastian  
Key> \*\*\*\*\*  
Combination> \*\*\*\*\*

You are Sebastian [#687][Gangrel]. You have 30 minutes inside. Do not tarry.  
The day is March 12. You have entered 5 times. Your last visit was March 10.  
You have 1 letter waiting. Shall I read it to you, master? [Y/n] Yes

-----  
Date: 03-11-93 02:33  
From: Jyhad [#24][Ventruer]  
To: Sebastian [#687][Gangrel]  
Sub: I am worried.  
-----

Your answer about the Lupines has me puzzled. I no longer trust you Gangrel, if that is truly what you are. I have informed Lord X of my suspicions and I am sure he will contact you soon. In some form or another. He is not one to cross -- he is older than my grandsire.

If you are what you say you are, then you have nothing to fear. But if you are not, god help you, you will wish you had never seen this place. And you will not be the first who has entered where he was not welcome.

I have enjoyed our discussions, and so I hope that my fears are unfounded, but we can never be too careful. The Masquerade shall not end.

End of message.

\_>yhad

Your Mailbox contains 1 letter.  
[D,E,H,Q,R,S]: Q

Quit to the Courtyard.



[A,C,E,F,H,M,O,R,V,Z]: M

Entering Message Area #1: The Wall

[A,C,E,H,L,M,N,O,P,Q] [RETURN = Next Message]: A

Enter new area number [RETURN for list]:

[1] The Wall	[2] Conclave
[3] Sylvan Strains	[4] Vitriol
[5] Methuselah's Study	[6] The Love of Caine
[7] The Hunger	[8] Elysium
[9] Den of Wolves	[10] Machiavelli's Playground
[11] The Revolution	[12] Ghost in the Machine

Enter new area number [RETURN for list]: 4

Entering Message Area #4: Vitriol

Total Messages [367]

New Messages [3]

Last Message [364]

[A,C,E,H,L,M,N,O,P,Q] [RETURN = Next Message]:

-----  
Message [365]

Date: 03-11-93 20:43

From: Tattoo [#165][Brujah]

To: Saucy Jack [#21][Malkavian]

Sub: Mortals  
-----

There's nothing you can say that will convince me that mortal s are not inferior to Kindred. Don't give me that different but equal crap you keep spouting. No one's bying it.

@)^IF I FEED, and leave the poor shmuck alive, I can only drink about a third of his juice, right? Any more and he's going to the emergency room. That means if I want to fill up, I've got to hunt three times. OR, I could feed once, and fill up in one trip. That's better for everyone except the mortal. Isn't the preservation of secrecy a little more important than one INFERIOR mortal's life?

Tattoo ;:;:;=

End of Message.

[A,C,E,H,L,M,N,O,P,Q] [RETURN = Next Message]:

-----  
Message [366]

Date: 03-11-93 04:19

From: Caine's Brain [#84][Nosferatu]

To: Tattoo [#165][Brujah]

Sub: RE: Mortals  
-----

What you're not considering, you little whelp, is that murder is looked upon as a much more serious event that some drunk sorority girl's story of being bitten on the neck. Yes, you feed fewer times, but you draw the attention of the entire establishment. The police we control, but we don't have all the reporters in our pockets. And many of them are very resourceful.

I think your attitude is irresponsible and immoral. You are as lazy as you are ignorant. I think you're using your weak argument as an excuse for your inability to control your beast. All you Brujah are like that. Just accept it, but don't try to come up with some incredibly fallacious argument about the inferiority of mortals being an excuse for murder.

-- Caine's Brain --

End of Message.  
[A,C,E,H,L,M,N,O,P,Q] [RETURN = Next Message]:

-----  
Message [367]  
Date: 03-12-93 19:23  
From: Tattoo [#165][Brujah]  
To: Caine's Brain [#84][Nosferatu]  
Sub: You snobbish childe

-----  
What the hell&^] could you know about the inferiority of mortals, HIDING in your sewers all night, you hideous animal. The Brujah control their beast as well or BETTER than the sewer rats, and at least I can sta[7&nd to be in the same room with one.

The establishment only comes down on the stupid idiots who aren't good at making the murder LOOK LIKE A M URDER! I certainly don't leave big bite marks on the people's necks -- nobody sees me, nobody suspects, hell, nobody finds the body for weeks.

You can say what you want, boar face, but your hiding behind YOUR weakness. You traditionalists get me so riled. You don't have the guts to kill, so you write off killing as a fault, when truly it is an art.

Tattoo ;:;:;=  
End of Message.  
[A,C,E,H,L,M,N,O,P,Q] [RETURN = Next Message]:

No more messages.

[A,C,E,H,L,M,N,O,P,Q] [RETURN = Next Message]: A

Enter new area number [RETURN for list]: 2

Entering Message Area #2: Conclave

Total Messages [401]

New Messages [2]

Last Message [399]

[A,C,E,H,L,M,N,O,P,Q] [RETURN = Next Message]:

-----  
Message [399]  
Date: 03-10-93 04:10  
From: Faux Pas [#288][Toreador]  
To: Sebastian [#687][Gangrel]  
Sub: Who sired you, Outlander?

-----  
I can't believe that you truly believe that the Lupines are myths. No one believes that, especially the Gangrel. You must be joking.

I know they are not myths, for I have met a pack whilst travelling from Boston to Washington. They did not kill me, but I was lucky. One of them, a buck named Gregor, was a rare artist among them, and he appreciated my poetry. His influence among them is strong, and I find it very useful to have him as an acquaintance.

This brings me back to my original point. If we can ally with the other creatures -- yes even the magi -- we could take the world and own it outright. We could drop this infernal Masquerade and come out in the open. All of humanity would be our servants and we would never have to hunt again. Think of it. No more stifling of the arts by the conservative government, no more oppressive right wing to choose what lyrics are appropriate. We can forestall Gehenna forever.

P  
Faux  
s

End of Message.

[A,C,E,H,L,M,N,O,P,Q] [RETURN = Next Message]:

-----  
Message [400]

Date: 03-12-93 00:03

From: Bad Acid [#156][Malkavian]

To: Faux Pas [#288][Toreador]

Sub: And people call \*me\*.crazy  
-----

Come on, space head. You're not serious. Make friends with the wolves and the magi?

Think for a second, Faex Pez, where does our power over the world come from? It ain't sheer brute force. No way. It comes from subtle control, man, putting the right people under our belts and using them in the right ways. We're creatures of tact and guile, not ham-handed world domination. Yeah, we've got teeth and claws, but we use them when it is appropriate, in the cool, freaky nighttime.

Man, we could never trust the Lupines or the insane magicians -- they would kill us in our sleep the first chance they got.

-baD AcId

End of Message.

[A,C,E,H,L,M,N,O,P,Q] [RETURN = Next Message]:

No more messages.

[A,C,E,H,L,M,N,O,P,Q] [RETURN = Next Message]: Q

Quit to the Courtyard.

\*Lord X [#1][Ventrue] just entered from [Terminal].

\*Lord X [#1][Ventrue] is requesting CHAT.

-----  
Hello, Sebastian . . . or should I say Taylor?

Hello.

Yes, I've done some looking into your identity since Jyhad let me know what you told him. I found quite a few interesting things, mortal.

What are you going to do?

Come now, Taylor, does the the cat tell the mouse what he's going to do? No, just be prepared for something very bad. You should never have come here.

Try to find me.

-----  
\*Sebastian [#687][Gangrel] leaving CHAT.

[A,C,E,F,H,M,O,R,V,Z]: O

Leave the Black Door? Are you sure? [Y/N] Y

Keep your fangs sharp, Sebastian [#687][Gangrel].

ATHO  
NO CARRIER

[TEXT CAPTURE OFF]



# INTRODUCTION

*"Those who restrain desire, do so because theirs is weak enough to be restrained."*

— William Blake



There is a certain darkness that invades the lives of all people. It is not a physical darkness, though nighttime will certainly enhance the spirit. No, this is a darkness that comes from within. Some call it evil, others brutality. Still others ignore the darkness and seek to be rid of it by claiming that it does not exist.

*Yet it does exist, and it is inseparable from our humanity.*

Even those who know this would push this darkness away, attempt to quell the *sangre negra* that seeps into our veins. They do not realize that the very act of denying one's dark side is itself a type of evil. Others dive into the darkness full force, letting it overwhelm them, and in the deluge they lose themselves. Overcome by the blackness, they forget how to see.

Most of us try to reconcile our two sides, creating a balance. By accepting the evil within us, we can control it and use its power. This balance does not come easily, and it does not come without cost. It is a constant struggle that overshadows the tapestry of our lives.

Vampires are the symbols of this struggle. These darkly beautiful beasts attract us like a murder scene. They feed our morbid curiosity and trick us into thinking that we are observing something alien, when we are truly watching ourselves. Vampires mirror the state of humanity. They are at once beautiful and hideous, vibrant and unliving, powerful and dependent. They are cursed to stare their own evil in the face *every single day*, despising their thirst for blood, begging for the freedom of death, until the sheer weight of their immortality forces them to rise above their darkness and reach a state of humanity that is more than we can possibly hope to achieve.

This is why we both love and fear vampires. They represent the possibility of a reconciliation between good and evil that we can only dream of experiencing. They experience "life" with more art, passion and desire than can anyone who is mortal, yet they embody and express the evil that we fear, that we *know*, exists within all of us.

I can think of no better way for us to explore that darkness, to burn with that desire and experience that elusive state of balance, than by donning the vampire's cloak and sinking our teeth into something sweet.

— Jeff Koke

## About the Author

Jeff Koke is a graduate of Southwest Texas State University in English and philosophy. He works and writes for Steve Jackson Games, and his previous writing credits include "Jupiter Blues," from *GURPS Supers Adventures*, and "A Nile Elation," from *GURPS Time Travel Adventures*. He has edited too many books to count.

Besides being a frequent player and long-time fan of *GURPS*, Jeff likes to write short stories and poetry; he also plays guitar for a local rock 'n' roll band called *Love Blender*. He lives in Austin with his wife Angela and his dark-souled cat Sheba.

## About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of the *GURPS* system. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources now available include:

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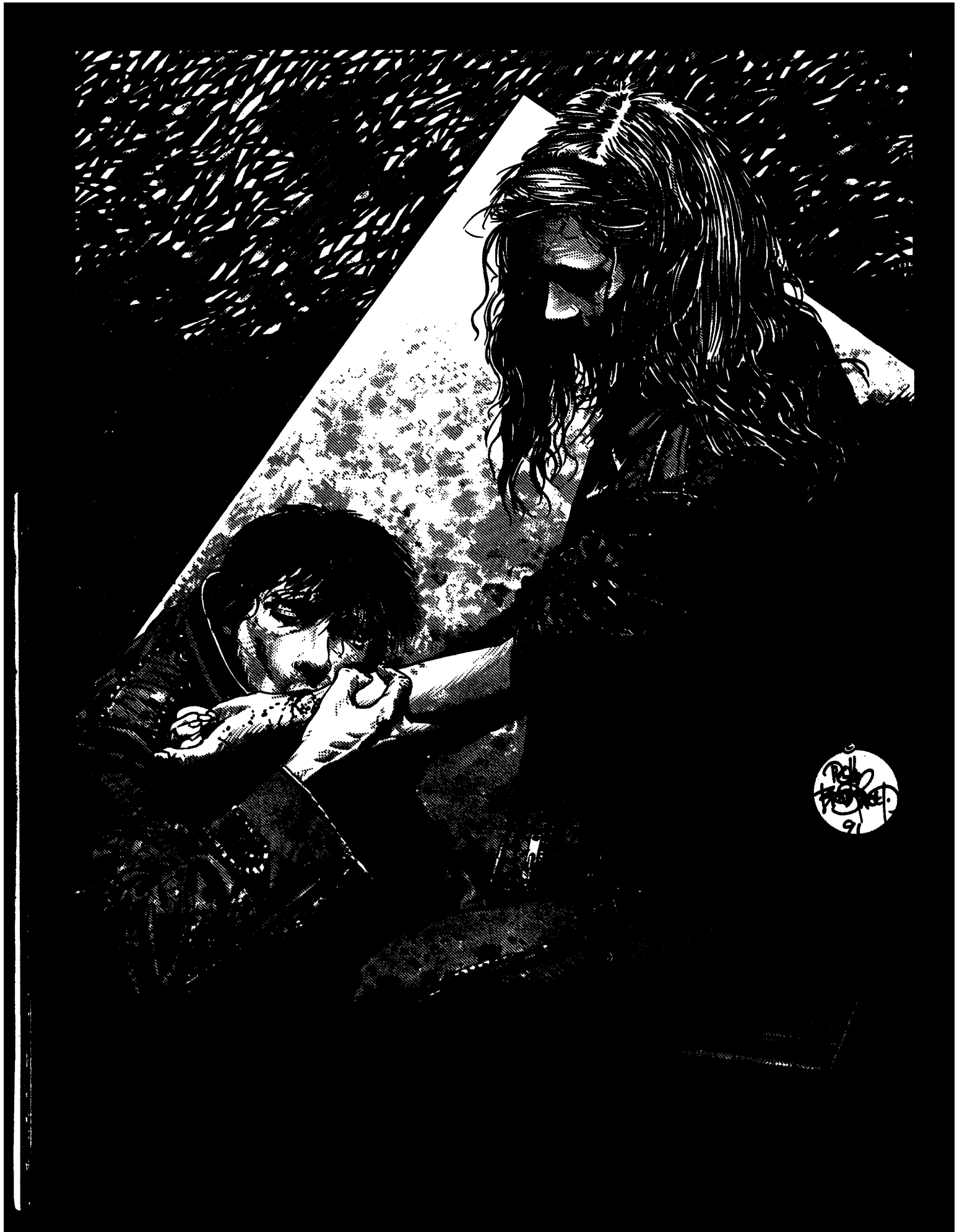
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## Page References

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set*, Third Edition. Any page reference that begins with a B refers to the *GURPS Basic Set* — e.g., p. B102 means p. 102 of the *GURPS Basic Set*, Third Edition. An M refers to *GURPS Magic*, and an F refers to *GURPS Fantasy*.



*I feel the bite, to be sure, and I want to struggle, but I lose all will when his beautiful sharp teeth enter my skin. I pray for it to be a dream. Even a nightmare has a joyful ending when the dreamer awakes.*

*But I do not sleep. I do not dream.*

*His mouth on my neck is hot and tender, the gentle motion of his lips sends electric shivers through my body, warming me in unusual places.*

*I begin to fade, to lose all hold on the conscious world, and I think – quite clearly – this is what it is to die. I am resigned to it, a relief after the terror of this languid embrace.*

*But I do not die. That would be too easy.*

*As the last shred of my mortal life begins to slip away, I feel a hot presence on my lips. I do not want to taste it, but something within compels me to drink. The liquid burns my mouth, my throat, my stomach. But in that inferno is a pleasure so great, a hunger so divine that I must drink more.*

*I barely notice that I am grasping this stranger's arm and sucking his blood through a deep cut. I care nothing for my surroundings. I only need blood.*

*The mingling of the pleasure and pain is exquisite agony. I want to die, but this new blood filling up my flesh is too rich and too resonant for words. I become a single thread in a tapestry so beautiful that its complete form can never be seen. For a moment I am part of a perfect universe.*

*After what seems like hours, he pulls his arm away. I am far from full, but he refuses my pitiful pleadings. His face holds a smile that should seem strange to me after this experience. But I cannot feel curiosity. I cannot care.*

*I now possess a soul that has lost all wonder.*



# Chapter 1:

# A WORLD OF DARKNESS



he world which you are about to enter will seem much like the one you and I live in today. The geography is the same, as is the history. But it is different, subtly, from our world. Sure, the same TV shows are popular and the same bands are touring the country, but the whole atmosphere of society is . . . darker, more sinister. Hopeless.

Oh yes, and there are vampires.

The existence of these night creatures by itself would be enough to change our world into the Gothic-Punk world of *GURPS Vampire*. Their behind-the-scenes scheming has done much to darken the collective ambiance of society. But there is more. People are more cynical. The world is going to Hell, and everyone knows it. You can either ride the rocket, and have as much fun as you can, or you can sink into despair. Either way, something is just over the horizon. Something sinister. *Il Finale*.

This attitude permeates everything – dress, culture, architecture. Buildings are monolithic and gray. Black is the color of choice, and the urban decay is spreading to engulf the countryside at every turn.

This chapter describes this world of darkness in detail: the culture and society of both the mortal masses and the vampire lords who prey upon them.

## Gothic-Punk



othic-Punk is a way of describing the setting in brief. It is a metaphor for our own world, an augury of what might be our future and a dark reflection of the world as it is now. It is a world with problems like our own, but where vampires are to blame for much of the misery.

The Gothic aspect describes the general atmosphere and institutions of mortal society. The Church is stronger because people always turn to the Church in times of crisis, and enough people have been touched by the Kindred to make a difference. The institutions under the Church's control tend to be even more conservative and resistant to change than those of our world. Architecture has a menacing gothic flavor to it; in fact, some skyscrapers in this world might be girded with gargoyles.

The Punk describes the way people live – gangs rule the streets and organized crime dominates the underworld (and is in turn dominated by the Kindred). Rock, punk and rap are even more of an escape and release, and rebellion is codified in styles of dress and speech. All in all, the world is more corrupt, more decadent and less humane than what any suburbanite would like to believe.

Ultimately, the GM will have to decide exactly how dark his Gothic-Punk world has become. He can lighten it, and make it more like the "real" world, or he can make it blacker still. The setting described in this book is merely a template for further development.

### Streets of Blood

*But first, on earth as vampire sent,  
Thy corpse shall from its tomb be rent;  
Then ghastly haunt thy native place,  
And suck the blood of all thy race.*

– George Gordon, Lord Byron

What is it like to live in a world of perpetual night? To dance under the blood-red moon? To lust for the blood of living, intelligent prey?

City life is a game of high-stakes and wildly changing odds. Long periods of peace can explode without warning into spasms of great strife and turmoil. The Vampire is an animal of twisted emotion and instinct. One Kindred's obsessions and perversions can suddenly bring him into conflict with another. Though the Kindred can live with one another in peace for years, eventually the truce ends and the cannibalistic war begins anew. The Jihad never truly ends – it only casts a smaller shadow for a time.

Normally, a balance is reached among the Kindred of a city, whether by formal or tacit agreement. Efforts are made to minimize conflict, though strife is often unavoidable. When conflict does occur, it is almost always hidden beneath the veil of the Masquerade, and rarely noticed by the mortals of the city. Thus may a war be waged without the elders fearing the return of the Inquisition. This war is the primal war between the elders of the Kindred. It is called the Jihad, and every vampire, knowingly or not, has a place in this endless conflict.

Some Kindred take no part in the society of the Damned, and maintain no connection with others of their kind. They are known as the Clanless, or the Caitiff. Cities are extremely large places and it is not difficult to isolate oneself from one's peers; indeed, it is said that the only Kindred who ever meet are the ones who wish to meet. However, sometimes even the most solitary vampires can be thrust into the politics of the day – in times of need, the Caitiff are mercilessly rooted out and questioned. The Justicars, enforcers of Kindred law, have been known to use solitary vampires as scapegoats for the crimes of others.

### Intrigue

Within Kindred society, much of existence is a struggle for power. This struggle is not for power over mortals – that comes easily – but power over other vampires. The prince fights the anarchs; the elders sway the prince; the clans form complex schemes to manipulate each other. All in all, the upper levels of Kindred culture are awash in several types of dark intrigue.

The power-politics around the prince can be quite dynamic, especially when more than one elder is present and attempting to sway the decisions of the prince. Each may attempt to threaten, cajole and even trick the prince into doing things a certain way, all the while feigning disinterest in the whole sickly affair of politics. The elders do not dare push things to the point where the prince is overthrown, but they will play the game very close to the edge. The Jihad exists on more than one level, and many different generations play this game.

By dwelling within a city overseen by a prince, a vampire must accept certain obligations. The city provides a certain security to all within, and to maintain that security, certain rules of behavior must be followed. In one form or another, most of these rules are nearly universal. They are known as the Six Traditions (see p. 32), and they are the oldest laws known to the Kindred – it is the prince who enforces them. Kindred relocating from San Francisco to Moscow can rightfully assume that these Traditions apply. Ignorance is no defense.

The anarchs rebel against all the strictures of the elders, their hated enemies, which are represented by the prince's power. These fledglings believe that there is little to fear in the modern world, and that the old superstitions and Traditions should be thrown away. Some believe that the Masquerade is but an embodiment of the terror of Kindred grown too old and too fearful. The prince must constantly work to keep the anarchs in line, and prevent them from creating any disruption in the Masquerade. Sometimes threats are not enough.

Most anarchs do not believe that the Gehenna is a threat, and many doubt that the original vampire was Caine. They simply do not believe these legends, and treat them as they do the stories of a Garden of Eden or a Tower of Babel. They suspect that the elders use such stories to put fear into ancillae and thereby control them all the better. Among the anarchs, it is considered bad form to admit to any faith in such myths. They chafe against the restrictions placed by the elders, and have not yet learned the wisdom of age. The fledglings are largely powerless within vampire society, so it is no great surprise that they rebel.

*Continued on next page . . .*

## Creatures of the City

### *Intrigue (Continued)*

The modern age has wrought much change in the soul of humanity, and it is from these humans that the new vampires are created. With the increasingly rapid changes in modern culture, many Kindred expect a wave of increasingly rebellious anarchs. Some within the Camarilla have called for a halt to the creation of all new vampires, but it is unlikely that any sort of ban could ever be enforced. Most elders simply trust that natural factors will take their course and that the most radical of the anarchs will be wiped out before they can give the vampire community away.

By agreement, though some say by nature, the vampire is a creature of the city. The wilds of the countryside are left to the werewolves and their ilk. This suits most Kindred. Why roam far and wide in search of sustenance when a few square blocks of even the smallest city provides more than enough vessels?

Younger Kindred sometimes feel the need to roam, but that desire usually fades as they age. Older Cainites are more likely to have become comfortable in one location and made their haven at that spot. Those who choose to wander will almost invariably come into contact with the Lupines (see p. 44), and the hatred between werewolves and Kindred runs deep.

Thus the city has become a gilded prison for the Kindred. Though the cities are the centers of civilization, and in this day and age often cover enormous expanses of terrain, they are still cells from which the Kindred are unable to escape. They are trapped in both body and spirit. Imprisonment only increases the tension between the vampires, and eventually caged animals always turn on one another.



## Overpopulation

Vampires are a unique species of animal just as humans are. They must obey the laws of evolution as well as the dictates of their environment. They have a place in the food chain; indeed, one could even speculate that they fill an ecological niche. There are definite limits to how many of their kind can be supported in a given area. When they cross over the limit, natural phenomena reduce the vampiric population back within its limits, just as with any other predator.

Kindred are unique among the creatures of the world in that they are not held in check by any other species. They are their own prey and predator, and control their numbers through intense competition. The Elders remember only too well that if their numbers grow too great they will attract the attention of the mortals. Although individual vampires are many times more powerful than their mortal prey, the sheer numbers of a humanity aware of their presence would quickly overwhelm them.

Only so many hunters can be supported by one herd. In years past only one Kindred lived within each city and each could claim it as his own domain. When cities were small, being a race of loners was an effective survival tactic. However, as cities have grown, so has the population of hunters. Now it is no longer rare for many to live within the same domain.

A large city, such as San Francisco or Hamburg, normally supports a vampire population of anywhere from 15 to 30 undead. Larger cities like New York or greater London hold a proportionately larger population, and less reside in smaller cities.

As a rule of thumb, assume that there is one vampire for every 100,000 mortals. Thus, the greater Chicago metropolitan area, a region of

seven million mortals, can reasonably support nearly 70 vampires. Often a prince will artificially regulate how many Kindred reside within the city, thus ensuring the sanctity of the Masquerade.

The cities could certainly hold more Kindred, but there are legitimate fears of discovery. The Masquerade is the preeminent concern of the elders – better that some anarchs die than all vampires be extinguished in another Inquisition. Extreme care is taken to insure that the existence of vampires is kept secret from the mortal population. Strict controls are kept over the creation of neonates, for a surplus of vampires increases the probability of discovery dramatically. The population is also restricted by the simple fact that few potential vampires survive their Becoming; many are driven mad by it and put down by their sire.

Despite this, however, there are currently far too many Kindred for the mortal population to support; the ranks of the anarchs have swelled to unprecedented proportions. Gradually the time of the “grazing” approaches – the time fearfully whispered of in Kindred legend as Gehenna.

## Normality

Most vampires desperately struggle to develop a semblance of normality in their lives and in so doing, escape the sordid truth of their existence. They create an artificial world around themselves, one that is bound to slip away with the passing years, but is pleasurable for the here and now. Some scholars among the Kindred postulate that a vampire needs this facade of life to retain his sanity. Falling into the “vampire-schtick” of the cinema and literature inevitably results in despair and eventual mental disintegration, but with a veil of denial, the vampire can find a certain amount of solace.

It has been put forth by those with learning that much of the mortal psyche survives the Becoming. That psyche, however, becomes overburdened by the supernatural drives, desires, and obsessions of the Beast. A certain amount of self-deception is necessary to retain one’s sanity.

## Social Distinctions



here are a number of different social castes among the Kindred. For the most part, Cainites are distinguished by a combination of age and generation (how many steps one is removed from Caine, the first vampire, in terms of ancestry). Although there is a degree of social mobility, the elders only trust those who have proven themselves, and the best way to prove oneself is to survive a few hundred years. The elders hold the power, so the elders determine who is accorded respect and status. Of course it is always possible to engage in diablerie and thereby lower one’s generation, but such kinslayers are seldom welcomed among the elders.

The highest status is that accorded to the Antediluvians – Cainites of the third generation. The lowest is that accorded to the childer and the Clanless, who are generally of the 13th or later generation and have only recently been Embraced. The list below gives a general idea of the Kindred Status (see p. 56) of various vampires.

### *Caitiff*

Even though many Caitiff are clanless but otherwise “normal” vampires, others have become so degenerate that they feed only off the weak and the dying. Some Caitiff live apart from vampire society on purpose, but many have been cast out. Some Caitiff were once a part of Kindred society, but have lost so much Humanity that they are unable to maintain relations with any other creatures. They know only survival, and live from night to night in search of food. Eventually they will die, but it may take many years.

### *Kindred Status -2*

## *The Primogen*

Most princes are “advised” by a group of elders who are collectively known as the primogen. Together, these elders are considered to be the most powerful Kindred in the city; individually, they either are not quite as powerful as the prince, or do not care to endanger or bore themselves with the duties of such.

The primogen is extremely influential, and serves as an important check on the dictatorial powers of the prince. At the same time, its members usually have their own agendas, and it is not uncommon for their bickering and infighting to cause as much trouble as any prince’s high-handed commandments.



## *The Elysium*

A prince often declares certain portions of his domain to be free from the taint of violence. Such locations are known as the Elysium, and they tend to be the places where the elders of the city spend most of their time. Much intrigue and debate occurs at these locations, and it is in the Elysium that the business of the city takes place. Though on rare occasions the sanctity of the Elysium is violated, usually the “Pax Vampirica” is upheld.

Normally certain buildings are designated to be a part of the Elysium, most commonly places devoted to the fine arts or places which are in some way artistically or intellectually stimulating. Thus the Elysium tends to include such places as the opera, theaters, art museums and art galleries. Sometimes the havens of certain Cainites or even nightclubs are so designated.

The rules for Elysium are typically quite simple. First and foremost, no violence is permitted on the premises against Kindred, kine or physical objects. On pain of Final Death, no art is to be destroyed (thus making the Toreador among the strongest supporters of this tradition). Elysium is considered neutral ground, with no conflicts between Kindred allowed upon its premises. Thus, while intrigue and verbal sparring can be quite fierce, rarely does the conflict escalate to violence. Finally, most consider it very bad manners to attract attention entering or leaving Elysium. Some areas are closed at night, and thus special arrangements have been made for Kindred to leave and enter.



### *Advantages of Princedom*

Many vampires seek the position of prince simply for the glory. There are, however, a number of advantages to the title which might not be readily apparent.

**Right to progeny.** The prince is the only vampire who is able to freely create progeny. No others have this freedom unless the prince grants it to them. The prince thus maintains a powerful control over other vampires, for most, at some point, wish to create a childe.

**Protection of the elders.** The primogen will generally support the prince as long as he maintains the Masquerade and suppresses the wilder stirrings of the anarchs.

**Political power within the Camarilla.** The prince has significant status and is listened to by most elders.

**Mastery over those who enter one's domain.** It is the prince's traditional right to exert control over all Kindred who enter his area of influence, and newcomers must report to the prince when they first arrive in the area. If they do not, it is considered within the prince's rights to punish them.

**Freedom to feed.** The prince is also able to limit (for the good of the city) the feeding of others. In the name of protecting the Masquerade, he may place restrictions on some or all of the Kindred who live within the city. Usually this affects where and from whom they may feed. If they disobey, he may accuse them of violating the Masquerade and punish them accordingly.

**Power over one's enemies.** The prince has the authority to call a Blood Hunt (see p. 34), and thus possesses the power of life and death over those who cross him. He is not allowed to kill at will, but if the prince determines that any have broken the Traditions, he may punish them accordingly. This provides a great deal of power, and thus is subject to much abuse.

### *Childe*

### *Kindred Status -1*

Vampires of this class have not yet been introduced to the prince, nor have they been released from their Sire. They are not considered to be full members of vampire society and are thus shown no respect. They are, in short, treated as children. The term is sometimes used out of contempt. Kindred who have committed especially stupid acts may be called and considered childe.

### *Neonate*

### *Kindred Status 0*

These vampires have been recently released and presented to the prince, though they have not yet made their mark in their society. The neonate is the caste of youngest vampires who have been released by their sire. If they behave themselves and do not join the anarchs, they eventually will become ancillæ, usually after 50 to 100 years.

### *Anarch*

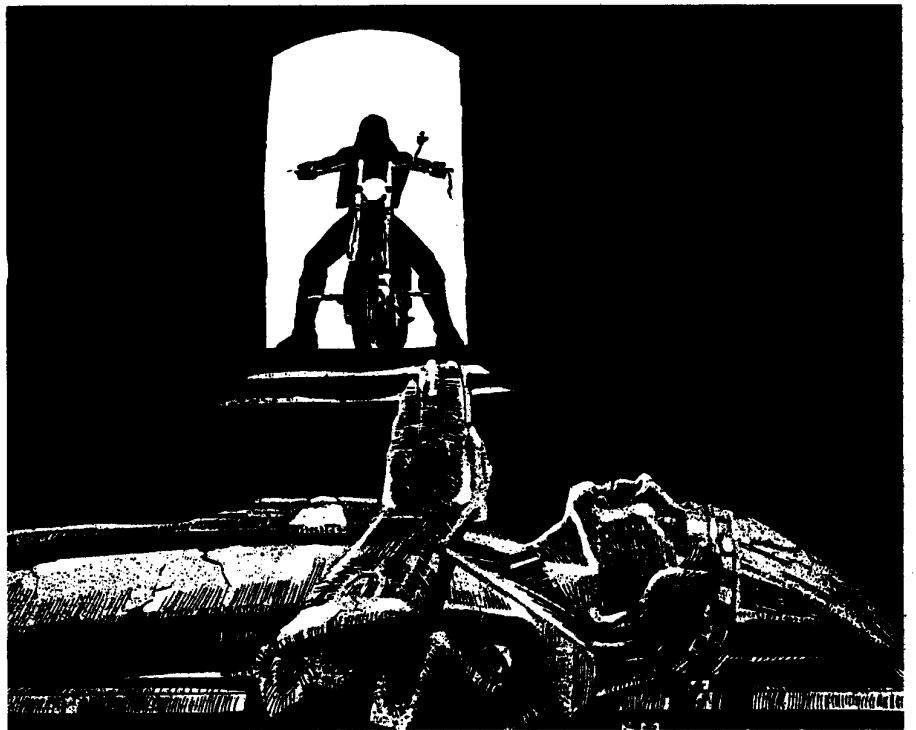
### *Kindred Status 1*

The anarchs have status because they are noticed and respected for what little power they have achieved. They are recognized for their energy, drive, and consistency. Though they are the enemies of the elders and especially the prince, they are still respected, if not openly, for by rebelling they have given themselves an identity.

### *Prince*

### *Kindred Status 2*

The prince is the vampire who regulates all Kindred activity within one city. Although he has considerable power he still must answer to his elders and leaders within the Camarilla. Usually a prince will have to be at least 50 years a vampire before taking that position. Princes often remain in their posts for very long periods of time, in which case they gain the Status dictated by their age, beyond that of a mere prince.



### *Ancilla*

### *Kindred Status 3*

These Kindred are still young, but have proven themselves to the Elders. The Ancillæ are the up-and-coming Cainites, the ones who play by the rules (mostly) in order to achieve greater power. This is the rank between neonate and elder, where the vampire is given increasing respect and power. Most have existed for one or two centuries in their vampiric form.

### *Justicar*

### *Kindred Status 4*

Justicars are the caretakers of the vampiric traditions. They are the lawgivers and thus, retain a great deal of respect. They are described in detail in the sidebar on p. 39.

### *Elder*

### *Kindred Status 5*

When vampires reach a certain age, there are few above them who still hold power in vampire society. The elders are the Kindred who are in control and who seek to dominate all the others. The elders are normally between 200 and 1,000 years old, but like all things undead, this can vary immensely. In Europe, a vampire has to be much older and more powerful to be considered an elder than does one in the New World.

### *Methuselah*

### *Kindred Status 6*

When a vampire reaches a particular age, somewhere between 1,000 and 2,000 immortal years, a profound change invariably overtakes him. It has long been argued whether this change is mystical, biological, or is in fact a social change brought about through changing needs and desires. Certainly, by the time a vampire reaches this age, a boredom and melancholy sets in, as well as an increased paranoia. Those who are weak, take risks, or unconsciously desire suicide do not survive to this age – only the very strongest attain the station of Methuselah.

As a means of self-preservation, Methuselaha retreat from the world and those younger than them. The constant struggle of facing the young reckless ones, who seek power through the blood of their elders, grows numbing. Eventually one of the anarchs will get lucky and dispatch the ancient. Thus the only option is to retreat fully from society, and go into torpor. Some Methuselaha remain involved in power struggles and the Jyhad of the Kindred, but do so in complete anonymity. Their status comes from an immense, almost uncontrollable, respect for their age; few vampires make it this far.

### *Antediluvian*

### *Kindred Status 7*

These are the most ancient vampires, and they are likely the most powerful creatures in the world. For the most part, they are considered to be the grandchilder of Caine, and are of the third generation. When they do involve themselves in the affairs of Kindred, they seldom leave things untarnished by their touch. The mere word of an Antediluvian is enough to provoke enormous strife and conflict among the Kindred. Their eternal struggle, the Jyhad, affects all the Kindred.

### *Anarchs*

The anarchs are enigmas. Though they be vampires, they strive to bring down everything that vampire society has worked for. Anarchs feel that the Camarilla is a set of shackles that is holding vampires back from true freedom.

The anarchs are not part of any particular group. In truth, "anarch" is merely a label that the Camarilla elders place on any Cainite who does not follow the Traditions (see p. 32). Members of the Sabbat are often called anarchs, though their agenda is different from that of most true anarchs.

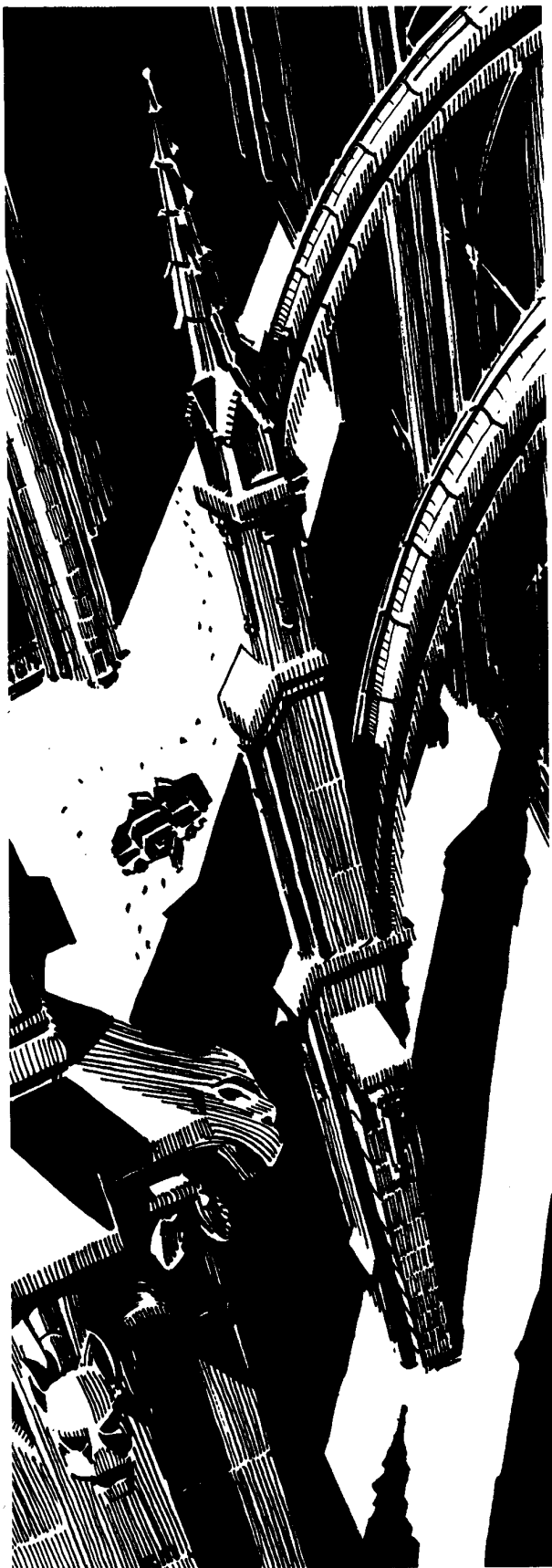


### *The Tradition of The Masquerade*

The First Tradition is the heart of what has become known as the Masquerade. Age-old law demands that the knowledge of the existence of true vampires be kept from mortal man. To reveal the truth would place the Kindred in dire jeopardy.

Violation of this tradition is the most serious offense a vampire can commit. The strengths and resources of humanity in the modern age are such that were human and Kindred to war, the survival of the Kindred would be in question. In more superstitious times, this tradition was less revered because mortals were more likely to accept the existence of vampires as supernatural beasts. Now, though, the government or the Church would spare no expense to eradicate the threat of vampires were their existence commonly known.

To violate this tradition is to risk one's own destruction and the destruction of all the Kindred.



*A World of Darkness*

## The Prince

The modern age (the last millennium by Kindred reckoning) has produced a new social order among the undead. At one time Cainites lived alone or with their broods; each was lord of its own city, and it is from that era that the Traditions came (see p. 32). Some gave themselves titles and honors, but this practice was unimportant as there were none but mortals to impress.

But when cities grew into metropolises, and there were enough vessels to support many Kindred, vampire society began to change. The age of the princes began.

The term prince, though sometimes used with contempt, is used to refer to the Cainite who holds domain over a specific metropolitan area. It is most often an elder or ancilla, but younger princes have been known. In formal terms, a prince holds the power of domain; he or she makes the laws and is responsible for keeping order. In practical terms, the prince is merely the one who is dominant and best able to keep the anarchs in their place. In the beginning, the strongest vampire in each city simply claimed domain. Over time, however, traditions have grown around the making and keeping of that claim. The Camarilla has codified and enforced these traditions.

After the Inquisition, the importance of the Masquerade was imprinted in the minds of the elders, and they increasingly distrusted the younger vampires, whom they called anarchs. The revolt of the sect known as the Sabbat was the source of much of their distrust, for they feared that it could happen again. The neonates being created by the 18th century were the children of a modern age, and alien to the mindset of the elders. After an incident in London in 1743 where the Masquerade was broken by an anarch, the Camarilla decided to formally acknowledge what had already been fact for many centuries – the power of the prince.

The term “prince” is simply that: a term. It is not a titular holding, nor a hereditary position of any kind. In fact, many Kindred object to the use of the term prince for those very reasons. It is simply the name and the assumption of rights that a powerful vampire might achieve. Not all cities even have princes; indeed, some are ruled by councils, while others are not ruled at all. The modern usage of “prince” is a reference to the age when each Kindred was the secret ruler over the city in which she lived, a practice most common in medieval Italy. In some places, titles such as Duke, Baron or Count (in their culturally correct forms) are used.

The prince does not truly reign over a city; rather, the position is akin to that of an overseer. Above all else, the prince is the final arbiter of disputes between the Kindred in his city and is responsible for ensuring that the Masquerade is preserved. The elders generally interpret this to mean that the prince must suppress and persecute the anarchs.

The Kindred in the city owe the prince no oath of fealty and must obey only as much as their cowardice demands. When the rule of a prince is questioned or thwarted, the prince must use force to maintain control. If he does not have enough power, then his rule is at an end. There are some princes who do not

understand the informality of their position; they believe themselves kings and their reigns involve much protocol and regal ritual. They hold court, and demand that all Cainites within their domain attend them while they pass judgment on those brought before them. The arrogance of these princes is often more than can be tolerated, but it is understandable – who but the insane or the truly egotistical would want such a dangerous position?

Many Kindred ignore the prince, just as they ignore all others of their own kind. The powerful beings who together comprise the Inconnu, and many of the elders, are not impressed by such idle pronouncements of power. They see the title as representative of the arrogance of one still young enough to lust for power. The prince is not an authority to whom they would bow. When they visit a city, it is to them that the prince would bow, if the prince is wise.

### *Taking Charge*

The prince is traditionally the eldest of a city's Kindred, though this is no longer universal. The method of "coronation" varies from city to city and prince to prince. It is normally a violent coup, for only those with power and ambition are able to hold their claim unchallenged. Typically the support of the elders of the city is required. The most powerful of these elders are known as the primogen, and they often form a council of advisors to the prince. The prince needs their sanction in order to rule. The primogen are described in detail in the sidebar on p. 27.

Anyone can make the claim of prinedom, but only when none opposes the would-be prince may he hold domain over the city. If there is a challenge, the contenders must battle one another until sovereignty is determined.

This warfare is not as simple as a duel, or even any sort of direct combat. It is, like all conflicts between vampires, a part of the great Jyhad in that it is a progression of games and maneuvers, tricks and threats, violence and bloodshed. The various elders, broods and coteries ally themselves with one side or the other – either out of strong personal belief, promises of great reward or threats of retaliation. Frequently, mortal institutions that are under a vampire's control, such as the police, banks or the media, may be employed in the war. Usually, the process ends with the death of one combatant or the other. It is rare that the winner is magnanimous, and even if he were, the far-sighted primogen would not allow it.

Coups are difficult due to the fact that the prince is personally very powerful and nearly always creates a brood to help protect him. Another consideration for a would-be insurgent is that taking on the prince usually means taking on the elders of the city. The elders, when united, have enough power to defeat all comers.

An attempt to usurp prinedom means a period of great instability, as the warfare can spill over into the mortal realm and threaten the Masquerade. Fear of this stays many elders from changing sides or dividing their support among two or more contenders.



### *The Tradition of Domain*

This tradition has faded in importance among older vampires as the population of the cities has risen so dramatically. Now, only the most powerful vampires in a city can claim domain over it. They do so according to the tradition, and pretend that all others live there only at the pleasure of the prince. Princes claim they possess the cities, and in most ways, they do. This tradition is used by them to support their claims. The very concept of prinedom rises from this tradition.

There is a prevalent misconception among anarchs that princes give different portions of their domain to favored associates as "turf." Though a prince only allows certain trusted Kindred to watch over portions of the city, this has only increased the cry for the rights of domain. Increasing numbers of Kindred are claiming "turf" within the city and treating it as their own private hunting ground. Broods or even solitary Kindred stake claim to certain prime areas of the city (such as slum areas) and attempt to prevent other Kindred from feeding there. Though the city is vast enough that such claims have little value, they seem to have a special worth to these downtrodden anarchs. Few if any princes actually grant territory, but that is not enough to prevent the anarchs from taking it for themselves.

Some of the younger Kindred have made attempts to revive the tradition of domain, seeing in it a similarity to some of the mechanics of organized crime. Small gangs will often attempt to establish turf within a city, often in opposition to the other Kindred of the city. This often becomes a difficult situation, with the fear of strife looming over everyone's heads. Because of this, gang problems within a city can easily endanger the Masquerade. If the gang supports the prince, its members may be tolerated, or they may have the power to resist all attempts to dislodge them. Elders do not like to confront gangs of anarchs. Though the elders possess superior power, there is still too much risk of death.

The anarchs primarily fight among themselves over turf, and usually do not attempt to prevent elders from feeding on their turf. Their activities are frowned upon by the prince, but as long as they do not threaten the Masquerade and do not get out of control, the anarchs are allowed to continue their battles. Indeed, many princes view it as a means of using the anarchs to suppress themselves, and will seek to provoke internal conflict.

*Continued on next page . . .*



## *The Tradition of Domain (Continued)*

In cities where the prince does not have a firm grasp on power, certain elders may claim domain on an area within the city. Their power may be respected by other primogen, and they may be tolerated by the prince if they in turn support him. The establishment of one or more domains within a city can create powerful political dynamics, as those domains, intentionally or not, create rival power bases. Occasionally, a prince is only the first among a group of equals, the chairman of a committee of elders, each of which stakes his own claim to a domain within the city.

Regardless of whether he has claimed domain or not, each Kindred is to some degree responsible for the area around his haven or the area which he frequents. Although the Kindred rarely involve themselves in mortal concerns, the affairs of the supernatural are another story. Kindred are expected to report details of strange events that occur in the vicinity of their territory to the prince.

Most elders support the prince because they do not wish to risk turmoil. They have grown protective of their long lives, and do all that they can to provide themselves with a stable environment. They are extremely conservative in all that they do, for they seek only to survive, not to promote change. Princes have been known to voluntarily abdicate their position, though this rarely occurs.

With the support of the primogen, it is nearly impossible to successfully challenge a prince, for these elders will direct their influence, followers and even personal powers to benefit the prince. Though many try to challenge the prince, most are destroyed before they even begin.

Thus, is it possible to rule the Damned.

## **The Six Traditions**

*Now this is the Law of the Jungle –  
as old and as true as the sky;  
And the Wolf that shall keep it may prosper,  
but the Wolf that shall break it must die.*

– Rudyard Kipling, "The Law of the Jungle"



The Six Traditions form the age-old code of laws of the Kindred, passed down from the early days following the kin-slaying that begat the second cycle. The Traditions are not formal, written laws, but they are nevertheless known by all Kindred. There are many variations, but though the words may vary, the intent endures.



It has become something of a ritual for them to be recited by a sire to his progeny just before presentation to the prince. Though the fledgling may know of the Traditions already, the words are still spoken. It is a vital element of the Becoming.

Some Kindred maintain that these codes were originally conceived by Caine himself when he sired the second generation of Kindred. Thus, it is possible that these words are those of the ancient one himself, as he spoke them to his progeny. However, it is far more likely that the Traditions were created by the Antediluvians in their attempt to restrict their own progeny. The earliest tradition is that of the Masquerade, which has existed for quite some time, though probably not in as rigid a form as it is now. It was not until the Inquisition that it was reaffirmed and its wording and intent greatly strengthened.

The Traditions are couched in fairly formal terms. These are the words and phrases of the elders, and not necessarily how they would be expressed by the anarchs, if the anarchs follow them at all. Many younger Kindred see the Traditions in an entirely different light.

The traditions are based on ideas, not words, but the following is the most common wording of the Traditions known:

### **The First Tradition: The Masquerade**

*Thou shalt not reveal thy true nature to those not of the Blood. Doing such shall renounce thy claims of Blood.*

### **The Second Tradition: The Domain**

*Thy domain is thine own concern. All others owe thee respect while in it. None may challenge thy word while in thy domain.*

### **The Third Tradition: The Progeny**

*Thou shalt only Sire another with the permission of thine elder. If thou createst another without thine Elder's leave, both thou and thy Progeny shall be slain.*

### **The Fourth Tradition: The Accounting**

*Those thou createst are thine own children. Until thy Progeny shalt be Released, thou shalt command them in all things. Their sins are thine to endure.*

### **The Fifth Tradition: 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.*

### **The Sixth Tradition: 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.*

## The Tradition of The Progeny

Throughout most of vampiric history, the "elder" of this tradition was one's sire, though a looser interpretation has evolved in recent times. Many princes have stipulated that they are the elder referred to in this tradition and refuse all who dwell within their domain the right of creation without permission. They insist on their approval before any mortal is Embraced and often kill those who disobey. Most Kindred obey, but more out of fear than respect.

In a situation where a neonate has already been created, the prince can do a number of things. He may claim the individual as his own; he may declare the neonate and his sire outcast, or he may even put them both to death. The Camarilla officially supports the right of a prince to restrict the creation of new vampires, understanding that it is the only way to control the population of anarchs.

Those of the Old World, the Europeans, are even stricter on this point than the upstart Americans. One's own sire must be consulted, and if a prince has claimed domain over the area where one has one's haven, permission must be sought from him as well. No tolerance is given to those who do not do so.



*A World of Darkness*

## Lextalionis

*Hurled headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky  
With hideous ruin and combustion down  
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell  
In adamantine chains and penal fire.*

— John Milton, *Paradise Lost*



The Traditions do not stand alone, for there is and always has been a system of punishment for those who transgress them. The system is simple: a vampire who breaks the rules is slain. Those who violate the Traditions and thereby anger the elders are hunted down and extinguished by all those who hear the call. This credo of "just retribution" is known formally as the Lextalionis, and more commonly as the Blood Hunt.

Tradition demands that the Lextalionis can only be called by the eldest Cainite in a city. In modern times, this individual is considered to be the prince, even if he is not truly the eldest. Other elders or even ancillæ could call for a Hunt, but few Kindred would respond, for they risk the wrath of the prince in so doing. Normally, a prince will only call a Hunt over a breach of one of the Six Traditions. If a prince calls a Hunt purely for his own purposes, few will aid him in the Hunt, and the prince will lose considerable respect.

Assisting one upon whom the Hunt has been called is a serious insult to the prince. Betraying the offender is often the only recourse to having the Lextalionis called upon oneself as well. Sometimes a prince will be insulted if a particular Cainite does not participate in the Hunt. If the prince is powerful enough, and the crime great enough, he may have the authority to insist that all Kindred who live within the city participate.

Before the imagery becomes too ingrained, it should be pointed out that the Blood Hunt is not truly a formal hunt. The vampires do not gather in a convenient park with their packs of frothing hellhounds, and then set off across the city as the prince blows a horn. It is both more informal and more serious than that. The hunters spread out over the city and scour the streets for the individual whom they pursue, calling in others once they track him down. In true Kindred tradition, it is a secretive and stealthy hunt. Mortals rarely realize anything is amiss; they usually notice only that it is a strange night, full of bizarre happenings. If the police are controlled by the prince or one of his minions, they will either be pulled back from the streets or mustered to assist in the search (without truly realizing for whom it is they search).

The Hunt can be viewed as a violent form of excommunication. Sometimes the subject is not killed, but is merely maimed and then released outside the perimeter of the city. The Kindred against whom the Hunt is called becomes *persona non grata*. Any who find the offender have the right, in the Prince's name, to conduct summary justice upon the outcast. They may also partake of the offender's blood, which is more potent than normal human blood. This is why the youngest Kindred are often the most avid pursuers in the Hunt.

The Lextalionis is not called lightly. Most Kindred can count on one hand the number of Blood Hunts they have heard of, let alone participated in. The Camarilla reserves the right to an informal tribunal of sorts, most often after the fact. Evidence is presented to the Conclave for and against the offender, and the prince's decision is either ratified or dismissed. The prince who has his decision reversed suffers no formal punishment, but often loses considerable respect, and could open himself up to a coup attempt.

Sometimes the offender survives the hunt (perhaps under the protection of an enemy of the prince) and may actually plead his case. Often, the threat of the Conclave, and the beginning of its proceedings, are enough to dissuade a prince



from calling a Hunt. Tradition dictates, however, that once a Blood Hunt has been called, it cannot be stopped.

An outcast may attempt to flee the city and find refuge elsewhere. Many Princes will offer this alternative to the offender instead of calling the Hunt. Though the outcast may flee, the Hunt remains permanently in effect in that city, regardless of who ascends to power in the future.

The Hunt is usually the business of the Kindred of that city alone, and word of it rarely travels far. In some cases, however, the crimes of the outcast are so heinous that emissaries have been sent to the Princes of other cities so that a Hunt may be called there as well. The most famous example of this was the outcry in the aftermath of the Whitechapel, England, slayings during the latter half of the nineteenth century. A Hunt was called against the offender throughout Europe and much of North America. The culprit, however (the self-proclaimed Lord Fianna), remains uncaught.

## Sects



ver the past few centuries groups known as sects have appeared among Kindred society. Many ancients deride the existence and concept of sects as "modern foolishness. The blood is all that matters," but still the power and influence of these organizations grow. Well over half of the Kindred in existence belong to one sect or another; the rest either maintain their independence or are attached exclusively to their bloodline. The largest and most dominant sect is the Camarilla, though the smaller Sabbat contends with it on every front. Though the Inconnu claim they are not a sect, they appear to have some sort of organization and stay well clear of the other sects.

## The Camarilla

The Camarilla is the largest single sect of vampires as well as the most open; theoretically any vampire may claim membership, regardless of lineage. In fact, the Camarilla assumes that all vampires are members of their sect – whether they want to be or not. The founders of the sect view it as the Great Society of undead, and take offense at any suggestion otherwise.

## The Tradition of The Accounting

One who sires a childe assumes responsibility for that childe's existence. If the childe is unable to endure the burden of its new existence, then it is the sire's responsibility to take care of the matter. If the childe attempts to betray the Kindred and threaten the Masquerade, it is up to the sire to prevent him. While still a childe, under the direct care of one's sire, a vampire has no rights.

If a childe takes actions which threaten the security of other Kindred, they hold the sire responsible. The sire must carefully weigh the maturity of the childe he has spawned. He does not want to remain responsible for the childe forever (though very long childhoods are not unknown), but at the same time he does not want to release the childe before it is ready.

Long ago, release involved introducing the childe to one's own sire, but that has since changed; now, the sire introduces the childe to the prince in whose domain sire and childe dwell. Until that time, the prince is under no obligation, unless he chooses otherwise, to recognize the childe as one of the Blood. Unless the sire protects the childe, any may kill or feed from it.

Following the release, the vampire is allowed to dwell in the city with full rights. If the prince does not accept the childe, he must leave and find some other city in which to live.

The release is a great rite of passage, for the sire no longer retains any responsibility for the childe. It is the activity of the childe-no-more that determines if he is accepted as a full member of the community and considered a neonate. If he continues to be rash and foolish, he remains a childe in the eyes of all. If he shows the wisdom his new existence demands, others will accord him the respect given to an "adult."



### *The Tradition of Hospitality*

Though vampires are loathe to travel (the risks are tremendous), they occasionally do. Ancient custom dictates that when entering a new domain, a city claimed by an elder, the newcomers must present themselves to the elder. This was so even before there were princes, in a time where there was only one Kindred in each city. It was simply a tradition of politeness; one knocks before entering.

The procedure varies in formality from location to location, and even from prince to prince. Some require formal presentation and the recital of one's lineage, such as it is known. Others are happy if simple contact is made with an underling. Those who do not bother to present themselves had better have the power to withstand the prince's anger.

The prince has the right to refuse acceptance in his domain to any he chooses. This rarely occurs, except when the newcomer has a poor reputation or many enemies. Even those who do not present themselves at all, but are later discovered are not often chased from the city. They are roughly presented to the prince, shown their place, and released into the streets once again.

Over time, this tradition has become a primary means for the prince to maintain power, for it gives him the right to question all who enter his domain. He may not have the power to expel the more formidable interlopers, but his right to examine all is unquestioned.

Some Kindred bristle at the thought of having to "present" themselves for acceptance. Many are too proud and have a strong independent streak. The anarchs have too little respect for the traditions, while the Methuselahs have too little respect for the princes. The Methuselahs see themselves as demigods towering above mortal and Kindred alike and needing to bow to none. To them, abasing oneself before another is unthinkable. They existed long before the princes ruled, and can see beyond the prince, knowing who pulls the strings.

Many Kindred never present themselves, choosing instead to live in darkest obscurity. They hide in the cold, quiet places and rarely venture forth. They are tolerated as long as they remain unobtrusive. The Nosferatu are the best at this, for their powers augment such activities. These reclusive Kindred are known as the Auktarkis, for they refuse to become a part of vampire society.

The Camarilla's primary concern is the maintenance and preservation of the Masquerade. The sect was organized in the 14th century in response to the growing influence of the Inquisition. Historically, there have been many attempts by the leaders of the Camarilla to assert more authority over other aspects of vampiric existence. Each time, that attempt has failed in a wave of bloodshed. The princes do not brook interference into what they consider to be their historical rights and privileges, nor do the Methuselahs desire a competitor who could thwart their aims. Therefore, the Camarilla remains a divided sect of only moderate influence. The elders who control it use it as yet another means to oppress and manipulate the anarchs.

It is thought the Ventrue played a primary role in bringing together the seven founding clans of the Camarilla. Their efforts and imagination certainly lie behind its improbable origin. Though the Camarilla holds itself open to all bloodlines, those that choose to participate represent only slightly more than half of the known clans. Only seven of the 13 clans were among its founders, and only these clans regularly attend meetings of the Inner Circle. Individuals from other clans may be a part of the Camarilla, but no other clan as a whole is.

The Camarilla does not openly recognize the existence of the Antediluvians. Statements about them are publicly derided. As far as the Camarilla is concerned, they are but myth.

### *Conclave*

Conclaves are important and potentially dangerous political events in the Camarilla. Open to any and all, they are the means through which the Camarilla functions as a sect. Much care is taken to insure the secrecy of the Conclave site before the meeting as well as its physical security while the meeting is in progress; an enemy of the Camarilla could take such an event as an opportunity for mass assassination. The Conclave may last anywhere from a few hours to many weeks.

Usually, Conclaves are only called when they are needed and are held in the geographic region most concerned with the problem at hand. Tradition holds that Conclaves may only be called by a Justicar. Those who gather to witness a Conclave are part of what is known as an Assembly. Members of the Assembly have the right to address the Conclave if supported by at least two members of the Conclave. Each vampire who attends the Conclave gets one vote – a Justicar serves as chairman.

The primary function of the Conclave is to make recommendations on matters brought before it. Any Kindred may bring a matter before the Conclave, and most concern the adjudication of grievances between Kindred. Often complaints against princes are brought up at Conclaves, as are petitions by princes to deal especially harshly with the anarchs in a city. Essentially, any action that would be considered a breach of tradition must be discussed and agreed upon by a Conclave in order to avoid future punishment by the Camarilla.

The Conclave interprets the Six Traditions and, in some instances, may even establish new ones. It may also call Blood Hunts, even against princes, who are otherwise safe from them. In times past, Conclaves have been convened for the sole purpose of removing a prince from power. The Camarilla has always vigorously maintained its right to depose the rulers of the cities. The Justicars themselves do not have this power, though they may call a Conclave to achieve this end.

Decisions made by the Conclave may be challenged by undergoing an ordeal. This can be nearly any sort of exacting trial, mission or quest, which is given by the Conclave to test the suspect. Such ordeals may last only a minute or may take many years, and if not completed satisfactorily, the officiating Justicar is free to assign any penalty. If the crime is considered too great to allow the vampire to complete an ordeal, the offending Kindred may face a challenge by one of his



accusers. The two antagonists battle one another in ritual combat. This may be a duel fought without weapons but with each opponent blindfolded, or a contest where each drinks the other's blood until one of the two is extinguished.

There is usually something of a population explosion after a Conclave, as princes reward those who voted in their favor by allowing them to produce progeny. Many times an orgy of destruction counterbalances this growth as the losers pay the ultimate price.

Conclaves can only be called by a Justicar, who may do so at any time. However, most Justicars have arranged for regular Conclaves to be held at which all Kindred are welcome. For instance, every three years a Conclave meets in New Orleans.

### *The Inner Circle*

Every 13 years there is a meeting of the Elders of each clan. This is the true hub of the Camarilla. Compared to this assembly, all other Conclaves are but puppet shows. The Inner Circle always meets in Venice, just it has done for the past 500 years.

Each bloodline is allowed one representative to sit on the Inner Circle. Only this individual may vote, though all those who attend may speak. The eldest member of each clan present casts the vote for that clan. It is a gerontocracy, a rule by the eldest. This is a primary reason why the anarchs are so frustrated.

The chief function of the Inner Circle is to appoint the Justicars, the judges of the sect. One Justicar is chosen from each of the seven clans. They act of their own accord, but are required to take the decisions of the Inner Circle under consideration. By decree of the Inner Circle, Justicars may deal as they choose with members of the Camarilla who transgress the Traditions. The seven Justicars hold the true power in the Camarilla.

The appointment of a Justicar is a long, drawn-out political battle, for while the major bloodlines would each like to select the representative of their choice, it is difficult to obtain the majority needed. The losers in the intrigue end up with a Justicar of young years or weak powers who will be ignored for 13 years. Thus, those finally appointed tend to be compromise candidates or chosen from the lower rungs of a line. Sometimes, even obscure Kindred are chosen by elders who believe they will be easy to manipulate once appointed.

### *The Tradition of Destruction*

This tradition has caused more controversy than any other, and reinterpretations are continually being discussed. It seems to imply that the right of destruction is limited to one's own bloodline. Only the sire has the right to destroy his progeny.

However, the shift in meaning of the word "elder" has resulted in most princes claiming this right over all those who dwell within their domains. They claim that only they have the power of life and death, and for the most part this interpretation has been supported by the Camarilla. The veracity of this claim is the source of much of the conflict between many of the older and younger vampires.

Most princes strictly enforce their monopoly on the tradition of extinguishment. All others are forbidden to destroy other Kindred. If a vampire is ever caught in such an act of "murder," then no punishment may be considered too severe. Often the perpetrator of such a deed will be destroyed in turn. The prince will usually investigate any death in order to find the killer. Of course, the higher the status of the destroyed vampire, the more thorough the search for his murderer will be.

Only in times of great strife do younger vampires dare slay each other, though the elders are said to do so all the time. A would-be kinslayer had best step carefully.

Most often, the prince enforces his right of destruction by calling a Blood Hunt, which is discussed on p. 34. Only if a prince openly calls a Blood Hunt is he allowed to slay one of the Kindred.

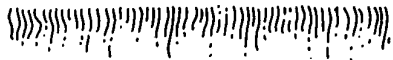
## The Embrace

The Embrace is the Kindred term for the act of creating another Vampire. Any Vampire can perform this act, but the Tradition of Progeny dictates that the prince must give his permission before any childe is created.

To perform the Embrace a Cainite first must drain all the blood from a human. Once the last drops of blood have been swallowed, the drinker must immediately cut himself and place some blood on the victim's lips. If this is not done within ten seconds, the victim will die.

No one whose blood has been drained in this manner can resist drinking the blood offered – the need is too great. The first drops of blood rouse the mortal, and cause him to crave more. At this point the Vampire must place the wound to the victim's mouth. If not stopped, he will drink until he drains his entire HT in Blood Points from the Vampire. However, he only needs to drink one Blood Point to survive and become a vampire. Most sires give five or six Blood Points to their new childe so that they do not start out hungry and overly prone to frenzy.

After the Embrace, the sire can teach the childe about his new situation, or he can abandon the new vampire, leaving him to face his Beast alone. The sire can keep his childe hidden from Vampire society for months, years, decades or forever. Until the neonate is presented to the prince, though, he will not be accepted into the Kindred world.



*A World of Darkness*



## The Sabbat

Known to many as the Black Hand, the Sabbat is rumored to have evolved from a medieval death cult. Little of its nature has changed since then. It is the largest sect next to the Camarilla, and is aggressively attempting to increase its domain.

The Black Hand rules through fear, hatred, anger and physical violence. In North America, it holds undisputed control over Detroit, Toronto, Montreal, New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Portland, and is close to gaining supremacy in Boston and Baltimore. Until recently, Miami was also under Sabbat control, but recent events have caused a swing in the power balance there.

The Sabbat is organized in units known as "packs" which are strongly loyal to one another, feeding and traveling as one group. Indeed, in the Camarilla, it has become a derogatory term to call a coterie a "pack."

Members of the Sabbat come from many different bloodlines, though two clans dominate the organization: the Lasombra and Tzimisce. Though it may be possible to join the Sabbat, almost all members are childe of older members. The Black Hand requires strict devotion and adherence to the will of the group.

The Sabbat initiation procedure is designed to destroy any vestigial will in a new vampire. Initiates are slain, slowly and painfully, and then given the Blood. This blood doesn't come from one member of the Sabbat, but from as many as are present at the initiation, combined into a chalice. Once the Initiate has been given the Blood, he is buried alive, and must crawl out in order to live. Those who do not spend eternity buried under the earth. The process of digging out from the grave tears the Initiate's humanity from him and opens him to the subjugation and brainwashing of the Sabbat.

Once the Initiate breaks free, he is Blood Bound to the pack that Embraced him. In a strange ritual, which occurs over two more nights, the Initiate is given more Blood.

The Black Hand is concerned solely with power in all its forms. It is actively engaged in Diablerie (see p. 86) and has a fanatical opposition to life and its trappings. The Sabbat views mortals as lesser beasts to be dominated and used as the need requires. The Sabbat worships at the places of the dead – cemeteries, tombs and charnel houses. The members of the Sabbat understand themselves to be undead, and behave accordingly. Any who oppose them are burnt; indeed, the Sabbat packs seem to have a fascination with fire, though they are no more immune to it, or the fear of it, than any other Kindred.

The members of the Sabbat revel in being vampires and living out their instincts. They find other Kindred contemptible because they try so hard to retain their humanity. For the Sabbat, this is the greatest blasphemy.

The Sabbat often sends packs into cities held by the Camarilla, either to scout out the opposition or to hunt for those who have fled from the covens. Camarilla politics are invariably complicated by the presence of Sabbat Kindred.

The Sabbat is said to engage in a strange sort of diablerie, wherein its members ritually butcher the elders of their kind so that stronger, more aggressive and younger Kindred may take their place. However, like so much else spoken of among Kindred outside the Sabbat, this is unconfirmed. The princes of the major cities worldwide would give much to gain hard facts about the workings of the Sabbat. All of them fear the danger of its steady growth.

In the end, nothing certain can be said of the Sabbat. Indeed, all that the Camarilla believes about it could be false, rumors spread by Antediluvians who wish the two sects to fight. It is unlikely, but all too possible.

## Bloodlines



any modern philosophers argue that the present age has caused an apathy and disinterest ties of faith, nation, and blood. Certainly for the Kindred, the concerns of faith and nation are as dead as ever, but none care more dearly for the ties of blood.

While those of the Blood seem to be loners by nature and necessity, the need of society and structure seems to tug at them as strongly as it does mortals. This is most evident in the importance of lineage to the Kindred. Much of the respect one is due is based on the identity of one's sire, and the sire's sire, and so on. Even the most moronic of Kindred is entitled to some respect if his lineage is of regard.

At one time each vampire could name his sire, and his sire's sire, and so on all the way back to Caine. The importance of bloodlines has diminished of late, as Kindred became more and more removed from Caine. Their connections to the elders of import are lessened by the many generations between them. The relative peace offered by the Camarilla has made them soft and self-satisfied, and they have lost respect for the elders. As might be expected, this is deeply resented by the conservative elders. Most Kindred created in this century know little of their lineage and seem to care even less.

Even so, within the world of the vampire the bloodright of one's clan is still of crucial consequence. Most vampires can trace their general lineage, if not the precise bloodline, back to an Antediluvian. While the founder of the bloodline may no longer exist, or at least have dropped from sight, all of his progeny still hold many traits in common. Each clan possesses certain gifts and curses associated with it that others do not share; more importantly, members of the same clan hold similar values and virtues.

Represented within the Camarilla are seven major clans, though Kindred of any bloodline are welcome. There are allegedly 13 distinct clans, as well as innumerable minor bloodlines. Two of the clans are said to be of the Sabbat, while the remaining four clans owe allegiance to neither sect.

There are likely many more unknown bloodlines, especially when one considers the mysterious eastern Kindred, who undoubtedly have their own unique divisions.

The seven clans of the Camarilla are described briefly below. For more complete descriptions and game statistics, see Chapter 5.

### Brujah

see p. 118

The Brujah can trace their roots back to ancient Babylon, and the clay tablet libraries of the first scholars. They were the lovers and guardians of knowledge, and the founder of their line was the inventor of written language. However, in their quest for freedom, they slew their founder and were banished from the First City. Today the Brujah are scorned as riffraff who have lost their heritage and are



### Justicars

It is at first difficult to grasp the relationship of the Conclave and the Justicar. The Conclave is forbidden by tradition to pass any judgment directly upon any member of the Camarilla. This tradition limits the possibility of any abuse of power. The Conclave's only avenue of control lies in these judges, whom they appoint to pass sentence for them.

Justicars have the only true authority, which they hold over all the Camarilla, and indeed all Kindred, except those who sit on the Inner Circle. They have the ultimate decision-making and adjudication power over matters involving violation of the Six Traditions. No member of the Camarilla is considered above them in this area. If one of the Blood is found to have violated the Traditions, it is a Justicar who decides the punishment. There are no guidelines concerning the punishment; it is left to the discretion of each Justicar. Their decisions are often harsh. They are supposed to hold a Conclave each time they wish to pass judgment, but over the years the Justicars have assumed more and more power and no longer feel the need to do so.

Justicars can call a Conclave at any time, either to confirm a ruling or to make a momentous decision a Justicar does not care to make himself.

The decision or action of a Justicar can only be challenged by another Justicar. If a major point of contention arises between Justicars, a Conclave is held where the Justicars come together and resolve the dispute. The resolution usually comes in the form of a vote, but sometimes, depending on the dispute, personal challenges can arise.

Many Elders resent the authority of the Justicars, and some among them are very outspoken in their opposition. Most accept it, however, for fear of opposing the Justicars, who are frequently of considerable age.

Justicars often have coterie of other vampires who do their bidding; these Kindred are known as Archons. These are often the brood of the Justicar and are always willingly blood bound to them. They enforce the Justicars' will and report breaches of the Traditions. The Archons are the eyes and ears of the Justicars.



### *The Inconnu*

"Inconnu" is the term used to describe those vampires who have distanced themselves from the others of their kind. It is not so much a sect as it is a classification. The Inconnu are old and powerful, and as such have little need, and less desire, for the company of their brethren. They tend to live in the wild among the animals and sleep within the earth when the sun is in the sky. (It is unknown how they manage to live in peace with the shape-changers who rule the wild areas.) Certain Inconnu still live within the cities, and may even be interested in the Jyhad, but by the rules of their sect may not become involved in it. Some have attended Camarilla Conclave meetings, creating great awe in the other Kindred. The Inconnu, like all Kindred, are always invited.

Most of the Inconnu have grown so old that they may sleep for months or years before awakening. They are like the Antediluvians in that they are no longer completely of this world, but have grown apart from it. Most of them are several millennia old and are the most powerful vampires most Kindred will ever encounter.

Many of the Inconnu are members of the fourth and fifth generations who were at one point or another involved in the Jyhad. They have won their places in the hierarchy of Kindred by dint of age or through the devouring of their own elders. They have gone into hiding out of fear for their existence and out of distaste for the modern world. They believe that only by removing themselves from the world can they escape the Jyhad. Despite the best efforts of the sect, some of its members still become involved in the Jyhad. As a whole, the Inconnu punish all of their order who continue to take part in the Jyhad or meddle in the affairs of lesser Kindred. This is their only law.

A sizable minority of the Inconnu have actually achieved Golconda (see p. 87). This may explain their distaste of the Jyhad and their rational approach to many problems among the Kindred.

The Inconnu will allow no Kindred to harm or injure any of its members, no matter what those members have done. All rights to punishment are reserved solely to themselves, but it is very difficult to contact them to petition for such. In the end, the Inconnu are a most enigmatic and mysterious sect. Their organization and priorities are unknown, if indeed it can even be said that they have such.

without pride. For over a millennium they have been the rebels among the Kindred, forever questioning and testing the Traditions.

The clan is very poorly organized; its members meet only irregularly, and share little in common besides their love of rebellion. They are among the few supporters of the anarchists, and aiding them is one of the only matters upon which they ever agree. They are often underestimated, as much by themselves as anyone.

### **Gangrel**

see p. 120

Clan Gangrel is one of the few clans whose founder is still involved in and concerned with the welfare of her progeny. Her concern for them is matched only by her concern for her mortal descendants – the Gypsies. Though many Antediluvians use their progeny as pawns in the Jyhad, the Gangrel pride themselves on their freedom from such manipulation. There is a close bond between the clan and the Gypsies. In recent years, as Gehenna approaches, their interaction has been considerable.



## Malkavian

see p. 122

The history of the Malkavian clan is completely shrouded in the past. The Malkavians themselves have many tales about their origin, but even they do not believe most of them. A favored legend among the Kindred is that the founder of the house was cursed by Caine, and his descendants have lived with the madness since. The Malkavians have always existed on the periphery of the vampire culture, watching, but never truly involving themselves in it. Long ago, before the curse and the madness, their founder was said to be the greatest among the third generation. Now it is his machinations that keep the weakest of those involved in the Jyhad "alive."

## Nosferatu

see p. 124

It is the unfortunate plight of the members of this clan to display the Beast within their hearts upon their countenances. Though their founder was known for his rabid predilections and monstrous impulses, the Nosferatu of today are known for being cool-headed. They tend to choose only the most depraved individuals as progeny, but somehow the members of this clan seem to retain their sanity better than most vampires.

The founder is said to have been a man of regal visage who incurred the wrath of Caine for his barbaric activities and was thereby cursed with the face of a hag. The savagery of his soul is reflected upon his face and that of all his progeny.

Of course, many clans have legends in which an all-powerful Caine curses their founder just as God cursed Caine. It is not likely that all of these stories are true, but some, such as this, might be. Presently, the Nosferatu clan is estranged from their founder, and do not serve him – at least to their knowledge.

## Toreador

see p. 126

Throughout history, the Toreador have been involved in the arts. This tradition is said to have begun with the first progeny of the founder, a pair of beautiful and artistically gifted twins. Their sire was a leader of the cabal of third-generation vampires who slew their own sire. Though ruthless, he doted upon his progeny, proffering them far more independence than any other fourth-generation vampires were given. They used their freedom to nurture the full panorama of the arts, and their sire protected them through war and famine. To this day, the Toreador claim that they are watched over by Arikel, their founder. Though the Toreador are not as formally organized as some other clans, they are furiously loyal to one another and to the art they claim to serve.

## Tremere

see p. 128

The Tremere are unique; no other clan has a history as rich, yet as short, as theirs. Long ago, there were others of their line who were not warlocks, nor did the Clan have mastery over the discipline of Thaumaturgy. Less than 1,000 years ago, a metamorphosis occurred. Deep in the Romanian mountains, in the district known as Transylvania, a group of magi from an ancient order were Embraced by a foolish clan leader. Combining their new powers with their ancient lore, the magi were quickly able to assume control of the clan. They Embraced many others from their arcane order, and drank the blood of all the Elders of their clan. It is even hinted that the most powerful among them managed to hunt down and slay the founder of the line. The Tremere have adopted the most rigid hierarchical system among all the clans, and this has allowed them to achieve great power within Kindred society. The other clans distrust the Tremere, both out of fear and a sense that something is not quite right with them. The political center of the Tremere clan is in Vienna.



## The Arcanum

The formation of the Arcanum can be traced to the mystical "War of the Roses" centered around Paris in the late 1800s (a conflict unrelated to the English Baronial wars). A war of words, as well as (so they claimed) mystic forces, arose between two orders of Rosicrucians. The struggle between the orders became such a public scandal (and entertainment, hence the Parisian newspapers' "War Of The Roses" brand) that many of both groups' most brilliant scholars and practitioners left their respective orders. These dissidents came together to form the Arcanum. The order persists to this day.

Though the Arcanum has been in existence for less than 300 years, its traditions reach much farther back. The core of the Arcanum consists of a group that calls itself the "White Monks." It is believed that these so-called White Monks were somehow involved in the Inquisition, and learned of the Kindred then. However, they maintain no formal connections with the Inquisition, and do not engage in witch hunts. The Arcanum studies, but does not destroy.

The Arcanum has three known Foundation houses – one in Boston, one in Paris, and the third in Vienna. Its members, recruited from the cream of intellectual society, are concerned more with theory than practice. They seem solely devoted to the gathering and studying of occult-related information, and are focused primarily on the past rather than the modern world. There are some members who have shown a degree of interest in the here and now, but it is believed that these members, and the Arcanum itself, think the Kindred long dead. They seem to be more interested in phenomena of a less tangible nature: magic, miracles, hauntings and such.

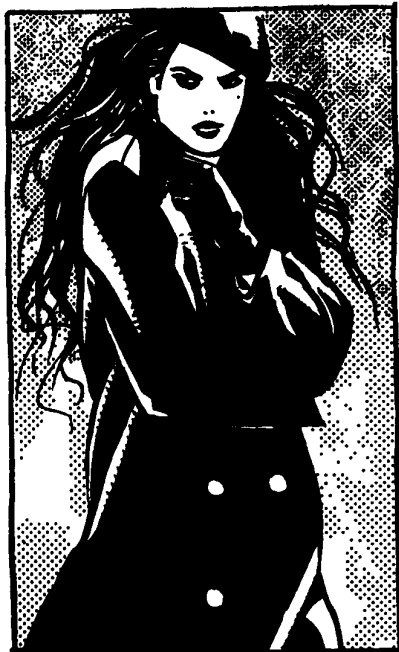
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### *The Arcanum (Continued)*

The existence of the Arcanum does cause the Kindred some concern, since evidence of Kindred activity can and often does appear as signs of more nebulous supernatural activity. A miscalculation could lead the Arcanum right to their doorstep.

The Inner Circle of the Camarilla has proclaimed a general edict, forbidding any Kindred from interfering with members of the Arcanum. Their activity should be monitored, if encountered, and reported, but no action is to be taken against them. The concern among the Kindred is that any confrontation could prove disastrous by providing the proof that the groups have been waiting for.



### Ventrue

see p. 130

The Ventrue suspect their founder has been slain by one of the Brujah clan. Though this is a blow to their pride, it has given them some distance and protection from the chaos and strife of the Jyhad. Without the intrigues and demands of a god-like founder, the Ventrue have achieved a remarkable independence from the Antediluvians. They do not know how much truth is contained in this legend, but it is nonetheless one of the basic tenets of their clan, no matter how much other Kindred scoff at it.

Much of the respect accorded to the Ventrue clan is due to the independence they are perceived to have from the Antediluvians. It is out of pride for this respect they are given that they conceal their persecution of the Brujah clan. More princes and Justicars come from the Ventrue clan than from any other; they are clearly the leaders of the Camarilla. The Ventrue have regular clan meetings in various parts of the world, including a Grand Council in London every seven years.

### Caitiff

see p. 131

Some Kindred do not have a clan at all, but are of bastard blood. This is sometimes because they were abandoned by their sire, or were Embraced by an outcast vampire. A combination of a thinness of blood and a lack of social training has made them clanless. This is a fairly recent phenomenon, and thus they are disdained by many of the other Kindred. Though many Caitiff are considered to be pariahs or anarchists, not all of them are outcasts. Some are accepted among the Damned, but none have yet reached an age where they have achieved any real power. Indeed, it seems as though the greatest explosion of the Clanless has occurred in the last 50 years.

### Other Clans

There are many clans besides the ones described above. These clans do not claim membership in the Camarilla, though individual members of such lines may do so. Some clans are members of the Sabbat, while others are truly independent of any sect.

These independent clans include the feared Assamite assassins, the loathsome Followers of Set, the mercenary Giovanni family and the rakish Ravnos.

## Witch Hunters



It is an ancient truism among the Kindred that they are their own greatest foes. Certainly no other beings are so adept at killing, and nothing is as capable of such hate as another of their own kind. However this is no longer as true as it once was. With the advent of modern technology, old superstitions and fears have fallen away. Humanity no longer fears the dark; it no longer realizes that it should.

The Kindred have many enemies among the mortal kind. They are generally referred to as witch hunters, though not all of them wish to do the Kindred harm. The name is simply a legacy of a darker time.

### The Government

How much do the world governments suspect? How much do they know? It is hard to say. Many governments have agencies or departments devoted to the investigation of paranormal occurrences, but many, especially within the military, seem to be devoted to extra-sensory phenomena, like ESP, clairvoyance and telekinesis. In general, it seems clear that the Masquerade has been successful and that they know quite little.

In the United States, interest in Kindred activity can be traced to two agencies: the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the National Security Agency.

The FBI is believed to contain several individuals who may suspect the truth. Some of the investigations into paranormal phenomena in the '50s and '60s may have turned up some Kindred-related information. Originally formed to counter the impact of suspected "Communist Thought Control" research, a new department, commonly referred to as Special Affairs (though its members rarely identify themselves as such), became involved in ongoing investigations. However, it has dwindled significantly in power and membership over the years. Proof of suspected activities is demanded by the FBI before action can be taken, and proof is what has thus far eluded them. Circumstantial evidence no doubt abounds, but that last, necessary piece of tangible evidence has escaped them. So far.

Some believe the NSA keeps an active file on vampire-related events, but treats it as a subclassification of mass murders. They have certainly not made the connections that would reveal the whole picture. The NSA is a giant fact-sifting agency. Concerned with national security from an internal perspective, the NSA routinely flags police and news reports that contain "interesting or anomalous" facts. Investigation only occurs after the computer, or a reviewer, notices undue occurrences that may be related. Should those connections be made, the resources that could be brought to bear are truly frightening. In recent years, much of the attention of the Camarilla has been focused on this agency, and word has been spread that no one should engage in activities that would be flagged by these computers. As of yet, no vampire has been able to infiltrate retainers into the agency.





### *The Lupines*

Werewolves, or Lupines, are the mortal enemies of Vampires, and have been since the dawn of time. They tend to live in tightly knit tribes connected by family ties, and can be somewhat rustic in outlook and brusque in manner. The tribes are highly secretive and insular, despising outsiders. Any Vampire who intrudes on their land is hunted down and summarily executed. Lupines are ferocious fighters and it is almost impossible to sway them from their aims. It is most dangerous to gain their enmity. Only the Gangrel have any contact with the Lupines, and even they do not often reveal their true nature to their werewolf "acquaintances." On most nights of the full moon, whole tribes of Lupines go on a mad rampage, and all those caught in their path, mortal or otherwise, are slain.

### *The Magi*

These practitioners of arcane lore are not to be trifled with. These are magicians of great power, and most of them follow the traditions of the ancient Order of Hermes. Though they are not active enemies of the Kindred, they will eliminate any who get in their way. However, it is said that they despise members of the Tremere Clan, and brand them as traitors. They maintain a Masquerade as vigorously as do the Kindred. This alone serves to minimize conflicts.

Recently, the Center for Disease Control, based in Atlanta, has become deeply concerned over the increasing incidents of AIDS being transmitted without apparent intimacies of any sort. They have begun to worry that the virus no longer requires sexual contact to be spread. Before news begins to spread, they have begun an enormous investigation.

Britain also has a government organization that is investigating mysterious occurrences, but it is very difficult to trace. There is some suspicion that this group is actually of a quasi-mystical nature, possibly with ties to societies and cults that date back hundreds of years. British Kindred have reported instances of unnerving accuracy in the investigations of Scotland Yard following unfortunate Kindred-related occurrences. There is a persistent rumor that the authorities there have destroyed at least two vampires within the last 75 years . . . with full knowledge of their victims' true natures. Another rumor that crops up occasionally is that this group is actually controlled by a Methuselah who uses it to eliminate his enemies.

The old KGB was reportedly familiar with some aspects of Kindred society, and had even begun to use neonates in some of their operations. Though the USSR is now no more, the KGB still operates largely unchecked, most especially those operatives based out of the Gornovski Gulag, located in Siberia. It is generally thought, however, that the KGB is the pawn, not the manipulator. Though little information is available, it is widely believed that the Soviet state was the domain of a group of Kindred who were the controllers and instigators of Communism, and that some colossal mishap has recently changed the power structure of the area.

### *The Inquisition*

It is generally acknowledged that the Roman Catholic Church learned of the Kindred during the years of the Inquisition. Instituted in 1229, the Inquisition concerned itself with the suppression of various heresies spreading through Europe. Partially in response to the rise of the Catharist heresy in the south of France and northern Italy, Pope Innocent IV approved the use of torture in 1252.

There are tales that the Catharist beliefs were supported by many Kindred in the south of France, and that some of them fell into the hands of the Inquisition when their brethren were forced to confess their heresy. If this is so, it could explain much concerning the rapid escalation in the tyrannical practices of certain leaders of the Inquisition. Perhaps they had seen proof, with their own eyes, of "evil incarnate" in the world.

Whatever the truth of those events during the 13th century, all indications are that certain factions within the Church remain aware of, and concerned about, the existence of vampires. Indeed, the Inquisition continues still, albeit in a different form and with a different name.

Today the Inquisition is an organization of scholars and researchers of the occult, as well as a clearing house for many of the greatest vampire hunters. While originally only an investigative committee for heresy, it became a ruthless organization devoted to the elimination and torture of undesirables, a tradition which it

has not entirely renounced. Though the Inquisition is no longer supported or sanctioned by the Church, most of its members are from the Catholic Church. Though they have taken a new name, "The Society of Leopold," and say they are only interested in research, they are preeminent among the witch hunters. They are well aware of the best ways to immobilize and kill vampires, and keep most of the oldest records.

However, they still do not know very much about the Kindred of today. Mainly they study old records and engage in endless speculations, and at times they embark on hunts and hold trials. They rarely kill their suspects, at least not right away, but hold elaborate trials first. Their eventual aim is to rid the world of the supernatural.

The Inner Circle of the Camarilla has decreed that they are to be avoided and left alone at all costs – better to give them nothing to study rather than give the whole world something to focus its attention upon. A collection of crackpots is much easier to deal with than a band of martyrs. The Inquisition has retained much of its old reputation and is widely despised and feared. None but the most naive believe that they have truly "reformed," especially those vampires who lived through the first period of persecution. Many anarchs take every chance they can to torment, lure and embarrass members of the Inquisition, despite the decrees made by the Inner Circle.

Among the most influential members of the Society of Leopold are the Dominicans, who can trace their involvement back to the first Inquisition, which they partially oversaw. Many Kindred fear continued Dominican involvement, forgetting the circumstances and climate that contributed to the Inquisition. They also forget the fact that St. Thomas Aquinas, the renowned philosopher and theologian, was a Dominican during that period. The exact interest and concerns of the Dominicans remain unclear today.

There are also reports of a radical splinter group within the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits, who are in the midst of a controversy with the Holy Office. Rumors persist that this may have some connection to the destruction of some Kindred in Algeria about five years ago. A former Jesuit brother by the name of Sullivan Dane is believed to have been responsible. Dane may have been able to use the Algerian incident as proof to some of his former Jesuit brothers that the Kindred threat was real, not imagined by him. He and some of his brethren are reputedly at odds with their superiors and the Holy Office over the matter.



## Ghouls

Ghouls are humans who have drunk a Vampire's blood, without having their blood drained first. Kindred create ghouls as servants and retainers because they are loyal and can function in mortal society with little fear of being discovered. They also serve well as protectors of a Vampire's haven during the daytime when a Cainite is most vulnerable.

One drink of Kindred blood is enough to create a ghou, but if a Vampire wants a loyal servant, he should have the mortal drink three times, causing him to be Blood Bonded to the Vampire. (See *Blood Bond*, p. 84.) As long as the Vampire feeds blood to the ghou once per year, the Blood Bond cannot be broken.

Ghouls gain a few supernatural powers upon drinking the blood of the Kindred. As long the ghou drinks Kindred blood at least once a month, these powers will remain active, but should a month pass without fresh blood, the ghou becomes mortal again (although if he was Blood Bonded, the bond remains). Once mortal, he may crave a return to the supernatural life, or he may be relieved to be free of the trappings of the undead.

When a mortal becomes a ghou he gets ST+2, and the ability to use the Wolf Claws Discipline at IQ level. These claws cause Aggravated Wounds to Vampires. They do not age as long as they drink Vampire blood each month, but if they turn back to a mortal from lack of blood, they will age the lost time over the next few hours. If this ages them past their normal lifespans, they crumble to dust. Ghouls also gain the ability to use the Vampire blood in their systems the same way that Vampires can (see p. 77), but they lose their Kindred blood at one point per day, and must drink from their master if they wish to have more. Ghouls also gain the Berserk disadvantage, and can frenzy in much the same way as Kindred, though they do not drink the blood of the victims of their rage.

If a player wants to play a ghou as a PC, this costs 45 points. However, if the ghou is Blood Bonded to a Vampire, being a ghou is a disadvantage worth -5 points.

## Hellhounds

Hellhounds are merely dogs that have been made into ghouls. Many Kindred convert their pets to Hellhounds to give them the added benefits of the supernatural.

Like ghouls, Hellhounds gain ST+2 and do not age as long as they are fed vampire blood monthly. Their claws and teeth cause aggravated wounds to vampires, and do an extra +2 damage beyond those of normal dogs. They are prone to frenzy, like Kindred, and they are truly fearsome enemies in this state. Unlike ghouls, however, they have no special ability to use the Kindred blood in their system.

# GENERATIONS



**K**indred produce progeny, much as mortals do, and different generations exist among them in much the same manner. There exist more than 13 generations of Kindred, and the more distant a Kindred is from Caine, the first vampire, the weaker that Kindred is as well. Kindred are commonly identified by the generation they belong to. Player characters will always be of the 13th generation (unless they have bought the Generation advantage).

It is important to understand that generation does not necessarily indicate age. A vampire of the 10th generation could be twice as old as a vampire of the sixth generation.

Remember, if characters engage in the practice of diablerie, the slaying and drinking the blood of Kindred of earlier generations (see p. 86), they may raise their effective generations. For example, if an 8th generation vampire slays and drinks the remaining vitae of a 7th generation vampire, his effective generation will become 7th, not 8th.

The listings below describe the special powers of vampires of different generations. These differences are quite significant, and give the Kindred of earlier generations considerably more raw power than those of more recent lineage. The table on p. 59 lists the various advantages gained by lower generation Kindred.

## Caine

**K**radition holds that Caine, the Biblical slayer of his brother Abel, is the Sire Of All Kindred. There is much controversy over this within the Kindred community, as there are none still existing who can claim with utter certainty to have met Caine. Certainly, those of the second generation would know, but they're not talking. Some of the third generation who yet exist claim to have met a being who may have been Caine, or simply a powerful Kindred of the second generation.

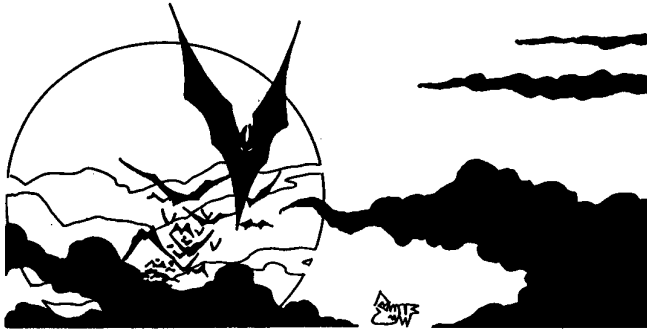
It is an unresolved question – a mystery of heritage.

## Second Generation

**T**he oral histories from the most reliable sources place the number of second generation Kindred at three. Caine in his sorrow created them to live with him in his great city of Enoch. Nothing is known about these three.

One can assume that they were slain either during the Deluge or in the First War following the Flood. As one might expect, all those of age are reluctant to speak of their sires and the great strife that overcame them all. Undoubtedly, some know more than they are revealing.

Were any of the second generation still in existence today, they would be powerful beings: akin to demigods, perhaps.



## Third Generation

**I**t is believed that seven members of the third generation exist, though the names of only two, Lucian and Mekhet, are widely known. In common argot, they are referred to as the Antediluvians, and they are the founders of the 13 vampire clans. All remain hidden, lost in the workings of the Jyhad, the war that has lasted nearly as long as recorded history. They continue their struggle, but now instead of openly warring on the battlefield, they use subterfuge, guile and outright deceit. Their primary activity seems to be tracing the activity of each other and thwarting whatever moves their opponents make.

These moves seem to range from things as petty as the acquisition of a piece of artwork or property, to grand schemes involving nations. Those of the third generation see themselves as manipulators and dominators, split between those who would live within the mortal world and those who would live without. It is unclear if this reflects the origins of the Jyhad, or is just what it has degenerated into. There are other suspicions, based on the origins of the word Jyhad. Some among the third generation may indeed have reached Golconda and are attempting to assist others of their kind attain this state. They must war with the other Ancients who do not wish this to come to pass.

Those of the third generation are powerful beings, with abilities and powers only guessed at by their lessers. Some say they are the last generation to have true mastery over the powers of life and death, and can only die the Final Death if they choose or are slain by one of equal power. Is this, perhaps, the Jyhad? A maneuvering to see who shall be the last of their kind?

## Fourth and Fifth Generations

**T**hese vampires are known as the Methuselahs, for they are nearly as powerful and secretive as the Antediluvians. Those of the fourth and fifth generations are most often the pawns of choice in the Jyhad, as they may have political power among the other Kindred. As a result, their numbers have dwindled significantly with the actions of the Antediluvians. Few of this generation remain active, and many have become Inconnu out of fear of the Jyhad and diablerie. The Inner Circle of the Camarilla is said to be composed of Kindred of the 4th generation. There are even rumors that the true purpose of the Camarilla is to blunt the efforts of the third generation to manipulate the younger generations.

Though the blood of Caine begins to dilute somewhat at this distance, those of the fourth generation are still extremely powerful. It can be assumed they have reached their maximum potential in two or three Disciplines.

## Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Generations

**A**mpires of these generations are powerful enough to think they can resist the workings of their elders, and so remain deeply involved in Kindred society. They control the Camarilla (at least they think so), comprise the majority of the princes, and are the primogen of many cities. Those who remain in positions of visibility tend to be important figures: leaders of clans or bloodlines, or princes of great cities. Most of the princes of European cities tend to be of the sixth generation. Princes of American cities tend to be of the seventh or eighth generation.

Members of these generations have most commonly reached their maximum potential in one or two Disciplines.

Interestingly, the members of the eighth generation seem to be the last Kindred viewed as "elders." Perhaps it is because the majority of them were created before the modern age, and that is evident in their manner and bearing.

## Ninth and Tenth Generations

**T**hough they are sometimes called elders, these Kindred often associate themselves with members of the younger generations. Members of these generations are frequently called Ancillæ, though of course this is based on age more than generation. Most were created in the modern era, and thus are somewhat alien in temperament to the older Kindred. In more ways than one, they bridge the gap between the anarchs and the elders.

## Eleventh, Twelfth, and Thirteenth Generations

**T**he most recent generations of Kindred are often called neonates. Most characters belong to these generations. They are still powerful creatures, but the special gifts of Caine's blood (the unique powers and abilities) are rarely found here. Born within recent memory, the Kindred of these generations are products of societies that have received the benefits of, and been victims of, rapid change.

## Fourteenth and Fifteenth Generations

**T**here are exceedingly few Kindred of these generations, and none beyond. Indeed, those of the 15th generation have failed to sire any progeny. Their blood is far too thin, and they are too far removed from Caine, to be able to pass on the curse.





*I cannot explain what makes the streets so inviting. The feel of hard pavement against the heels of my boots. The perfume of wet asphalt and the reflection of moonlight in the rainbow-colored pools. The treasured solitude of nighttime in the city. I would not give up my new life for the promise of Nirvana.*

*The neon gateway ahead dispels my reverie, and my mouth waters in anticipation of tonight's hunt.*

*I enter the club through a side door that few people use. Once inside among the twisting bodies and the flashing lights, I begin to search for prey. Man or woman – it doesn't matter tonight.*

*I move smoothly through the throng of dancers, catching eyes and flickering smiles, looking for that perfect victim. Then I spy her.*

*She stands with her back to a support beam, moving her hips gently to the throbbing rhythm. Her face holds a look of longing; it practically screams "Take me, I am alone."*

*She catches my stare and immediately I turn to walk toward her. She smiles slightly and begins to dance with more energy. My attention has fueled her excitement, and she wants to show me that she's willing. She is the perfect victim.*

*Too perfect.*

*As I come within arm's reach, her hands magically grow claws. Before I can realize my mistake, she rakes terrible furrows across my cheek. They burn with unnatural pain. I fall to one knee in agony.*

*"This is my hunting ground, Brother," she yells into my ear over the music. "Next time, I will not be so kind."*

## Chapter 2: CHARACTERS

*During my first experiment, a kind of enthusiastic frenzy had blinded me to the horror of my employment; my mind was intently fixed on the consummation of my labour, and my eyes were shut to the horror of my proceedings. But now I went into it in cold blood, and my heart often sickened at the work of my hands.*

*– Frankenstein, Mary Shelley*



Kindred can be as varied as mortals. Yet there is a basic solidarity, a unity, that ties them together. They are bound by their curse, and thus, they will have certain similarities.

Because the soul responds to the trauma of the Embrace in predictable ways, there are patterns among the personalities of Kindred, most notably along clan lines, but also in more subtle ways. Many react with violence, sinking into the abyss and allowing the Beast to overwhelm them. Some react with fear and withdrawal. Others rejoice in their new powers and their unexpected immortality; they pursue the arts and express themselves with the limitless passion of the undying.

# Character Types



The following pages list the various character types that Kindred tend to fall into. Of course, many others are possible, and players may not want to play any of these. These are merely guidelines to provide a spark for the development of a unique vampire personality.

The clan notations after each type are the typical clans that one would find such a vampire, not requirements for character creation in any way.

## *Criminal*

Most Kindred are criminals by definition. They must either attack or kill mortals to survive. Some restrict themselves to killing animals, but even this is illegal in most places. Others develop a herd of followers and retainers who don't mind being fed from, or they kill the worst section of society – rapists, murderers and drug pushers – and thus feel justified in their actions.

Nevertheless, some Kindred take to the murderous lifestyle that is presented them. These criminals use their powers to steal and rape, and they have no compassion or courtesy toward their victims. They feed on whomever they desire, and often kill their prey. Most criminals will sink to a low level of Humanity (see p. 75) and have little desire to increase it.

Kindred who remain criminals long enough may make their way into the big crime cartels – the mafia or the *medelln*.

*Advantages:* Danger Sense will be very useful, as will Intuition.

*Disadvantages:* Greed, Sadism, Bully, Reputation.

*Skills:* All Thief/Spy skills are appropriate, plus many Combat skills.

*Clans:* Brujah, Malkavian, Nosferatu, Toreador, Tremere.

## *Dilettante*

A dilettante is someone who eschews the traditional Protestant work ethic, opting for a more laid-back lifestyle. This includes artists, students, gamblers, musicians and poets. Dilettantes will while away the night at parties and other social gatherings, or spend the waking hours buried in a book, oblivious to their surroundings. Many are independently wealthy and have no need to work to survive.

Dilettantes still participate in adventures – in fact, they relish them. But adventures will be undertaken for the sheer experience, not for any pre-set purpose, and the Dilettante will rarely be the leader of a group, instead content to sit back and enjoy the ride.

*Advantages:* Musical Ability, Eidetic Memory, Wealth.

*Disadvantages:* Absent-Mindedness, Compulsive Carousing.

*Skills:* Artistic skills are common. Savoir-Faire and other Social skills, Professional skills.

*Clans:* Malkavian, Toreador, Ventrué.

## *Drifter*

Drifters travel from place to place, never happy unless they're on the road. They rarely make close friends, but have hundreds, or even thousands, of acquaintances wherever they go. Drifters tend to feed on whoever is available, rarely developing a group of repeat victims, or herd. They are typically self-reliant, with the ability to fight and defend themselves with little trouble.

Drifters are sharp of wit, as well, always knowing the right time to leave a bad situation – especially if they create it.

*Advantages:* Common Sense, Alertness, Absolute Direction.

*Disadvantages:* Compulsive Behavior (Wandering), Impulsiveness.

*Skills:* Combat skills, many different levels of Area Knowledge.

*Clans:* Brujah, Gangrel, Nosferatu.

## *Entertainer*

As opposed to Dilettantes, Entertainers are Kindred who use their artistic skills to earn money, advance their careers or simply gain influence. Successful vampire Entertainers might be rock 'n' roll musicians, TV news announcers, movie stars, stand-up comics, or anything else.

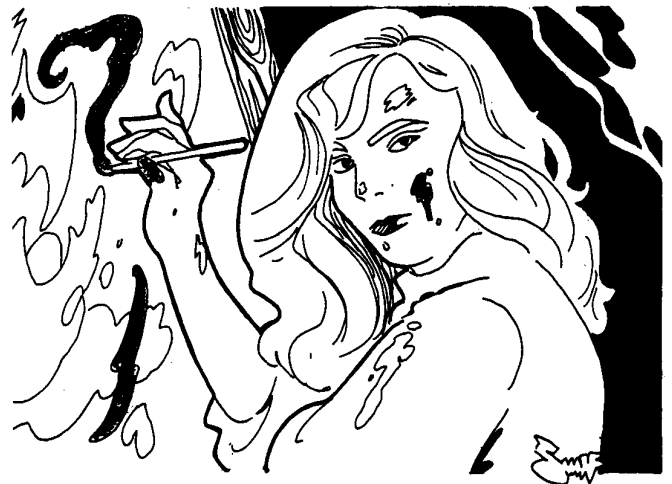
Entertainers will often have Reputations, recognized whenever they show up at a club or a party. While this always helps with Reaction bonuses, it could be severely damaging if the star's nocturnal habits became front-page news. Entertainers have to be extremely secretive about their Kindred nature.

*Advantages:* Musical Ability, Charisma, Reputation, Appearance.

*Disadvantages:* Overconfidence, Greed.

*Skills:* Musical Instrument or Singing, Performance, Acting.

*Clans:* Brujah, Malkavian, Toreador, Tremere.



### **Investigator**

While not too common among vampires, the Investigator can be a very interesting character. Usually more hero than vigilante, the Investigator can be a cop, federal agent or private detective. The Investigator likes nothing better than to get to the bottom of some heinous crime or baffling conundrum.

Investigators will often find themselves facing down their own kind. The more criminal-minded Kindred have no compassion for their victims and often kill indiscriminately. Investigators may work toward stopping them.

Other investigators may be of questionable morals, working privately for a Prince or Justicar. In this case, there is no higher purpose behind the Investigator's actions, just profit.

*Advantages:* Alertness, Danger Sense, Combat Reflexes.

*Disadvantages:* Overconfidence, Sense of Duty, Duty.

*Skills:* Thief/Spy skills, Social and Combat skills.

*Clans:* Gangrel, Tremere, Ventrue.

### **Kid**

The Embrace is not discriminatory. Though most Sires prefer to Embrace a neonate at a mature age, it is not unknown for children to become vampires. If they have a kind Sire, they are taken care of until they adjust to their new position in society. Child Kindred left to fend for themselves usually end up wild street urchins or vicious and scheming gang-bangers.

Vampires never age, and child vampires have an unusual advantage as they are generally mature beyond their appearance and can go places that may be forbidden to adults. The shady politician might not think twice about the 10-year-old boy overhearing his diabolical plans, while he would definitely have an eavesdropping adult "eliminated."

However, Kids are also forbidden from many places that vampires like to frequent – dance clubs, pool halls and the like – and children out late at night are more likely to draw unwanted attention.

*Advantages:* Double-Jointed, Alertness.

*Disadvantages:* Youth, Impulsiveness, Gullibility.

*Skills:* Athletic and Thief/Spy skills.

*Clans:* Any.

### **Outsider**

An Outsider is anyone who is generally unaccepted by "normal" society. This could be someone as ordinary as a homosexual or as unusual as an Australian aborigine. This type of person often seems outwardly unremarkable, but inside he is battling with a Social Stigma or damning Reputation. The personality of an Outsider can vary from manic/depressive, with the accompanying mood swings, to overly cheerful and optimistic, knowing that being accepted is not as important as accepting himself.

*Advantages:* Empathy, Strong Will (Normal and Courage; see p. 56).

*Disadvantages:* Social Stigma, Reputation.

*Skills:* Social skills are recommended, Acting and Diplomacy especially.

*Clans:* Brujah, Gangrel, Malkavian, Nosferatu, Toreador.

### **Politician**

The image of an undead Machiavelli walking the corridors of power is a powerful one. Kindred have much to gain by having some of their own in political office. Who better to suck the blood of the people?

Most starting characters will not be able to play high-powered politicians, but they can start out as city councilmen, mayors or perhaps even state senators. It should provide an interesting challenge for the PC to keep the ravenous press from uncovering his horrendous secret.

*Advantages:* Status (Mortal, see p. 56), Reputation, Wealth.

*Disadvantages:* Megalomania, Greed, Delusions

*Skills:* Politics (of course), other Social skills, Professional skills, often Law.

*Clans:* Tremere, Ventrue.

### **Professional**

The yuppie vampire is an uncommon one. Most Kindred will not be able to find professions that allow them to remain asleep during the day. However, there are notable exceptions. Night school teacher, doctor, salesman and reporter are all professions that a vampire could take.

Depending on the hours worked, though, these occupations leave little time for adventure. The player and GM will have to work out the details of the job and how it affects the vampire's personal life.

*Advantages:* Wealth.

*Disadvantages:* None.

*Skills:* Professional, Scientific or Social skills.

*Clans:* Toreador, Tremere, Ventrue.

### **Punk**

One of the more common types of vampire is the punk – the rebellious immortal who wakes at sunset, parties till 4:00 am, and fights, hunts and feeds before sunrise. His existence is nothing more than an eternal savage party. Unlike the Dilettante, the Punk feels that violence and excessiveness are the best forms of expression.

Punks care little for the whims of humanity. They blend into the city's club scene and mosh out their endless lives. If they are manipulative, they are blunt and brutal; mostly they don't give a damn.

Punks, both mortal and Kindred, are despised by the establishment. The more sophisticated Tremere and Ventrue often feel that the Punks' wretched excess will be the downfall of the entire vampire society.

*Advantages:* Toughness, Combat Reflexes.

*Disadvantages:* Bloodlust, Sadism, Overconfidence.

*Skills:* Combat skills, Thief/Spy skills, especially Street-wise, Survival (Urban).

*Clans:* Brujah, Gangrel, Malkavian.

# Appearance and Style



Kindred have an unerring sense of style. One of the greatest appeals of this genre is its unique aesthetic flavor. It is a genre in which most of the characters are attractive and debonair. The rest are hideous, like the Nosferatu, but remain intriguing through a sense of grace and acceptance. Rarely are vampires merely average-looking. One could almost never call one plain.

## General Appearance

Vampires are universally pale of skin. This is because there is no blood flowing through the arteries near the surface. Their skin is tight over their bones, giving them a gaunt appearance and exaggerating their skeletal features. Naturally, Kindred tend to favor social groups where this look is considered attractive – punks, night owls and the very wealthy, to name a few.

Other than these basic characteristics, Kindred can be of any size, age, sex or race, and they usually have better-than-average appearance. This may be because many choose to Embrace long-time lovers, and most can have their choice of lovers, usually choosing the most attractive or exotic. The hideous Nosferatu become that way after the Change, and many retain an underlying beauty that belies their superficial ugliness.

## Style

Vampires who socialize are usually very *correct* in their appearance and clothing for their social group. They don't wish to draw attention to themselves, so the *most* daring thing they would do is be groundbreakers and fashion tem-

plates – role models for young wannabes. This might put them in the spotlight, but in a harmless way.

Individual clans have certain unspoken guidelines of style. Certainly some Kindred reject their clan's stereotypical dress and presentation, but most follow it to some degree. See each clan's description in Chapter 5 for more information about appearance and style.

## Using Style in a Game

Part of good roleplaying and character development is determining the PC's style and how it affects the campaign. It is often better for a player to describe his character's attitude through his dress and demeanor than to simply state it. For example, telling the GM that your vampire has a happy-go-lucky attitude toward everything is not as useful as saying that he dresses casually, almost to the point of sloppiness. He doesn't care as much if the clothes are in style or clean, just that they are comfortable. He carries himself buoyantly and always seems to have a smile on his face.

These kinds of descriptions will help the GM set the scenes during adventures and they will also give other players a better idea of who is in their group. It is much easier to roleplay your character when you have a clear picture of your companions.

GMs should also be sure that their NPCs have a clear sense of style. Although all vampires will have a certain style, they will all be different, and the one who dresses in a spiky leather jacket and stiletto heels to convey her sense of rebelliousness is a separate personality from the one who wears loose cotton shirts and torn jeans to show the same attitude.



# Advantages, Disadvantages and Skills



early all of the advantages, disadvantages and skills from the *Basic Set* are useful in a *Vampire* setting. However, there are many that have different interpretations, and several new ones that require explanation.

## Starting Points

Most beginning vampires will be 200 to 300-point characters. Part of this high point value (compared to normal human starting value) is due to the 55-point Vampire Template (see below). But vampires are simply very powerful creatures, capable of incredible feats and mystical powers.

Vampires should be allowed 40 points in disadvantages beyond those that are required by the template. In addition, they should be allowed no more than 60 points in Disciplines at the start of play. The recommended point range also assumes that most of the PCs will be 13th generation. If this is not the case, the GM should allow more points with which to build vampires.

If the GM wants experienced Kindred in his campaign, he can waive the 60-point limit on Disciplines, and start his characters at 500 or 600 points. This leads to very high-powered roleplaying.

## The Vampire Template

Playing a vampire costs a base 55 points. This breaks down as follows. All Kindred are Unaging (15 points) and have the ability to heal themselves with the use of stored blood (Blood Healing; 25 points). They do not breathe and will not suffocate or drown (Doesn't Breathe; 30 points). They all have a special Vampiric Invulnerability that costs 100 points. These new advantages are described fully on p. 57.

Vampires have a set of required disadvantages, as well. They are plagued with Röttschreck, a profound phobia of sunlight and fire (-10 points). They suffer from Sundeath, which means they take damage from sunlight (-40 points), and they lose 1 Blood Point every night (The Draining; -10 points). They cannot heal naturally as mortals do, but must instead heal themselves with the blood they steal from others (Unhealing; -20 points). They all have the Berserk disadvantage (-15 points), which they call frenzy, and which they must constantly battle with willpower. Finally, all vampires have a deadly Secret (-20 points), for which they would be hunted down were it revealed. All these disadvantages are discussed, starting on p. 63.

## Advantages

### Alertness

see p. B19

This advantage is common among Kindred. Most vampires have an uncanny knack for picking out minutiae and hearing things that are too faint for mortal ears. It is not universal, however, and some vampires are as unalert as any mortal.

### Appearance

see p. B15

This is described in detail on the previous page. As noted, Appearance plays a large part in the *Vampire* genre. Most Kindred are either attractive or ugly, with very few in-between.

### Animal Empathy

see p. B19

The Beast that hides within all vampires is strong within the animals of the wild. Many Kindred can tap into that

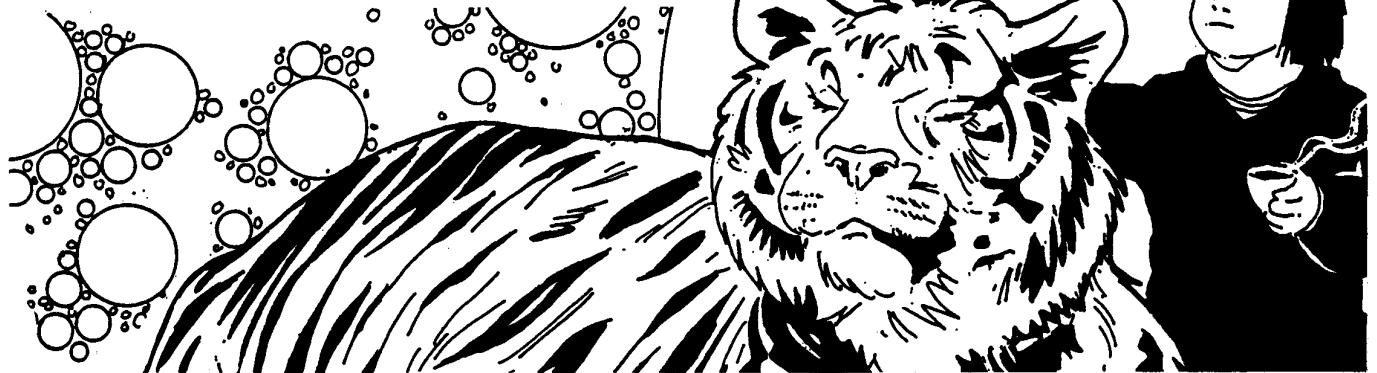
connection and are alive with the spirit of the animal world. This advantage is very common, especially among the Gangrel, who possess it almost universally. It is thought that the Caitiff also associate well with animals, though this may just be a rumor.

### Charisma

see p. B19

After the Embrace, many Kindred gain an ability to lead others and sway them to do their will. Some do this through the various disciplines (see Chapter 4), but many others have the Charisma advantage.

Charisma is definitely not required for vampires, but it is quite common.



### ***Eidetic Memory***

*see p. B20*

Eidetic Memory works in a *Vampire* setting much the same as it does in any other *GURPS* background. It adds a skill bonus for the use of any magical spells, as well as any Disciplines the PC might have.

### ***Empathy***

*see p. B20*

Many Kindred seem to be able to read mortals' thoughts. This is not the case, but it is common among vampires to have a connection to strong emotions, an almost mystical ability to sense what others are feeling. This is represented by the Empathy advantage, which will be quite common among the Cainites.

The GM can have Empathy actually *be* a psionic ability, or he may simply rule that it is just a "sixth sense" that has a rational explanation. Also, he may determine that in his world, only vampires have this power, or he may allow mortals to possess it. Either way the effect is the same as described in the *Basic Set*.

### ***Magical Aptitude (Magery)***

*see p. B21*

Magery gives a vampire the ability to cast spells. In some campaigns, this will mean only the spells given in the *Thaumaturgy* section, beginning on p. 109. However, the GM is free to include other spells from the *Basic Set* or *GURPS Magic*.

All Tremere vampires will have at least Magery 1, and many will have higher levels. One level of Magical Aptitude is always transferred upon the victim during the Embrace, so a non-magical mortal who is Embraced by someone with Magery, will gain one level of Magery. A mortal who is already blessed with Magery will get an additional level, provided it doesn't exceed the three level limit.

Magery has no effect on the skill level or aptitude for Disciplines other than Thaumaturgy.

### ***Patrons***

*see p. B24*

In the Gothic-Punk world of *GURPS Vampire*, Patrons and mentors appear often. The social hierarchy of the Kindred culture is such that the more powerful vampires take the lesser ones under their tutelage, training and teaching them to rise among the ranks of their peers. The interconnections and political power-plays add spice to the *Vampire* campaign, and many plots will revolve around this Machiavellian maneuvering.

Almost invariably, Patrons will be other vampires – Justicars or Elders. It is not unheard of, however, for a Neonate to retain a corporate Patron, or another Patron who is unrelated to vampire society.

### ***Reputation***

*see p. B17*

Often, vampires will use their unique talents to rise above mundane "human" existence. Certainly, more than a few Kindred have found fame on local and national levels. Other vampires pursue a life a crime or depravity and garner a negative Reputation among mortals as well as their fellow Cainites.







A vampire's Reputations among mortals and other vampires should be kept separate. Reputations that affect the mortal population do not always affect other Kindred. And a reputation among vampires will never give a reaction bonus among humans.

For example, a vampire PC might have the Reputation as a brutal killer (-3) among all vampires in the campaign (small class of people), recognized all the time. This works out to -5-point disadvantage. This same character might also have the Reputation as a well-known poet (+2) among everyone, recognized sometimes. This would be an advantage worth 5 points. So the advantage and disadvantage would cancel each other out.

### Status

see p. B18

Like Reputation, Status must be subdivided into two groups: Kindred Status and Mortal Status. Mortal Status follows the table found on p. B191. A vampire who is also a doctor or a city councilman will have Mortal Status 1.

Kindred Status represents the character's standing in the Society of Cainites. Use the following table to determine Status and Position.

Level	Position
7	Antediluvian
6	Methuselah
5	Elder
4	Justicar
3	Ancilla
2	Prince
1	Anarch*
0	Neonate
-1	Childe
-2	Catiff



\*Although Anarchs are universally disliked by the Camarilla, they have gained a small measure of Status simply through their group's bold actions. They are respected and often feared.

Note that some of these positions may overlap. In that case, use the higher Status. For example, a Prince who is also Ancilla would be Status 3, while an Ancilla who is a Justicar would be Status 4.

Vampires must pay for Mortal and Kindred Status separately, since they will rarely affect each other. Mortals know nothing of Kindred society, and Kindred care little for Mortal stature.

### Strong Will

see p. B23

Strong Will is perhaps the single most important advantage to a vampire. Rare is the Kindred who lacks this advantage in some form. For vampires, Strong Will is actually four separate advantages: Conscience, Self-Control, Courage and Normal Strong Will. These may seem like imaginary distinctions, but each plays a separate, important role.

*Conscience* is what allows a character to retain Humanity in the face of inevitable brutality. All vampires have a level of Humanity (see p. 75) that they must keep up to avoid sinking into the bestial nature that is part of all Kindred. Whenever a vampire performs a brutal, inhuman act, he must make a Will Roll, adding in his bonus for Conscience, to avoid losing Humanity. If he makes the roll, he has appropriately dealt with the guilt and accepted the monstrous nature of his being – if he fails, he loses Humanity and slips further toward the Beast. The Strong Will bonus for Conscience counts only toward rolls to preserve Humanity. Conscience costs 1 point per +1 bonus.

*Self-Control* is used to resist the frenzy, which is a special form of the Berserk disadvantage (see p. 61). Whenever a vampire is hungry (i.e., low on Blood Points; see p. 77), he is more likely to simply lose control and feed on the nearest available source, be it friend or foe. Anger can also provoke frenzy, sending the character into a blind rage. To avoid this, he must make a Will Roll, adding in any bonus from Self-Control. If he succeeds, he has kept the frenzy in check and can continue his actions until the next roll is required. The GM is the final arbiter as to when a Self-Control Will Roll is required. Self-Control costs 1 point per +1 bonus.

*Courage* applies to the vampire's most basic fear – Röttschreck – the fear of fire and sunlight. Against other fears, the character's Normal Strong Will bonus applies (see below). When faced with fire or sunlight, Kindred must make a Fright Check, adding in any Courage bonus. If they fail, the GM should consult the Fright Check Table on p. B94. Courage costs 1 point per +1 bonus.

*Normal Strong Will* simply applies to anything not covered by the other three classes. This includes Fright Checks for fears other than fire and sunlight, resisting Intimidation and Interrogation, etc. Normal Strong Will costs 1 point per +1 bonus.

Any character can have any combination of these advantages. For example, Trevor might list his character's strong will as follows:

Strong Will:

Normal: +1

Conscience: +0

Self-Control: +3

Courage: +4

In Trevor's case, if he had a 10 IQ, he would roll vs. a 10 to retain Humanity after a brutal act, vs. a 13 to resist going into frenzy, vs. a 14 to face fire and sunlight without any dire effects and vs. an 11 for any other Will Roll that was required of him. In total, this advantage costs him 8 points.

## New Advantages

### *Ally Group*

### *Variable*

Ally groups are composed of NPCs, controlled by the GM. A lawman who regularly calls out the posse should take the posse as an Ally Group. A gang leader would have his members as an Ally Group. Strength and frequency of appearance govern an Ally Group's point value.

A small group (2 to 5 people) costs 10 points. Examples include an infantry squad or a small gang.

A medium-sized group (6 to 20 people) costs 20 points. Examples include gangs who ride with the player characters, deputies in a large city, or an Indian Warriors' Society.

A large group (20 to 1,000 people) or a medium-sized group with some formidable individuals costs 30 points. Examples include an Indian tribe, an Army troop, or, when Indian magic works, a Society of Medicine Men.

An entire government, the Sioux Nation, or some similar group may be purchased as a Patron, but cannot be an Ally Group.

### *Point Level*

The individuals in an allied group normally are 75-point characters. They may be increased to 100-point Allies by raising the *base* cost of the group by 10 points. Allies of more than 100 points must be bought individually.

### *Frequency of Appearance*

If the Ally Group appears almost all the time (roll of 15 or less): triple the listed value.

Unlike most advantages, Strong Will in *GURPS Vampire* can be raised after character creation. As a vampire clashes with the Beast, he may develop an increased resistance. However, point costs for raising Strong Will after character creation are doubled.

### *Wealth*

see p. B16

Kindred will find it very useful to have a stash of readily available cash handy. Since most vampires will not have steady jobs, the Wealth advantage will be helpful. For extremely wealthy vampires, who have spent centuries amassing their fortunes, the following level of the wealth advantage may be useful.

### *Multimillionaire*

25 points/level

A character with the Filthy Rich advantage can buy additional levels of Wealth, at 25 points per level. Each level of Multimillionaire increases the total wealth of the PC by a factor of 10 (1 level increases to 1,000 times the average, level 2 would increase this to 10,000 times the average, and so on). For every level of Multimillionaire, the character also gets a free level of Mortal Status, to a maximum bonus of +2 over the free level already given for high Wealth (see p. B18). Note that this Status only applies if the PC is open about his true level of Wealth.

If the Ally Group appears quite often (roll of 12 or less): double the listed value.

If the Ally Group appears fairly often (roll of 9 or less): use the listed value.

If the Ally Group appears quite rarely (roll of 6 or less): halve the listed value (round up).



The player chooses the Ally Group on character creation. The GM should feel free to fill in the details, including the circumstances under which the Ally Group may be available. The GM may also require the Unusual Background advantage to explain the ties between the character and the Ally Group.

A PC should get no character points for betraying, attacking, or endangering his Ally Group. If the betrayal is prolonged or severe, the ties between the PC and his Ally Group are broken; the Ally Group and points are lost.

If a PC and his Ally Group part ways amicably, the PC should not be penalized. The point cost of the Ally Group may buy another Ally Group met during role-playing, or individual members of the group may continue as Allies (see p. B24). At the GM's discretion, remaining points may be traded in for money (see p. B83), reflecting parting gifts.

### *Herd*

A Herd is a special form of Ally Group for the *GURPS Vampire* setting. People in your herd are mortals who either know your nature and accept it, or think you are a lunatic/visionary and enjoy letting you drink their blood. Either way, you can feed on members of your Herd without fear of resistance or being reported to the authorities. Members of your herd will sometimes help you, but not as reliably as a normal Ally Group, so when figuring the point cost of a Herd, use half the listed value after figuring the size of the group and the frequency of appearance.

### *Blood Healing*

*25 points*

Blood Healing is the Vampiric ability to restore lost Health through the use of stored blood. It is the *only* way for vampires to heal themselves (see the *Unhealing* disadvantage, p. 64). Blood Healing allows the Vampire to restore 2 hit points for every Blood Point spent. Blood Points are discussed on p. 77.

To use this power the vampire must be completely still and concentrate for 1 second per Blood Point spent. Only vampires of generations earlier than 12th can spend more than 1 Blood Point per second (see *Generation*, p. 59).

*Example:* A vampire healing 8 points of HT would need to spend 4 Blood Points and concentrate, immobile, for 4 seconds. Partial Blood Points cannot be spent, so restoring 1 point of HT still costs 1 Blood Point.

### *Contacts*

*Variable*

A Contact is an NPC, like an Ally or a Patron. However, the Contact only provides *information*. Contacts may be anything from a wino in the right gutter to the Chief of State of a country, depending on the character's background. The Contact has access to information, and he is already known to and guaranteed to react favorably to the character. The Contact may want a price, in cash or favors, for the information. The Contact is always played and controlled by the GM and the nature of the price must be set by the GM.

The GM may assume that a Contact is, in general, well-disposed toward the PC. However, the Contact is *not* an Ally or Patron, and is no more likely to give special help than any other generally friendly NPC!

A Contact doesn't have to be created when the PC is first developed. Contacts may be added later. When appropriate, the GM can turn an existing NPC into a Contact for one or more players, possibly in lieu of character points for the adventure in which the Contact was developed and encountered.

Whatever the case, the Contact can provide information only about his own area of expertise. The technician at the forensics lab probably has no information about currency transfers, and the VP of the local Takashi branch probably can't do a ballistics comparison. The GM assigns a skill (Streetwise for a minor criminal, Forensics for a lab tech, etc.) to the Contact. All attempts to get information from him require a secret roll by the GM against the Contact's "effective" skill. Note that the effective skill is not necessarily the NPC's *actual* skill; the actual skill can be set by the GM if the NPC comes into regular play. For instance, the president of a local steel mill might actually have business related skills of 16-18, but he has an *effective* skill of 21, making him worth 20 points, because he himself has good connections!



Point values for Contacts are based on the type of information and its effective skill, modified by the frequency with which they can provide information and the reliability of the information. Importance of information is relative and the list of possible Contacts is virtually endless; a few are listed below as a guide to help the GM determine value.

#### Types of Information

**Street Contacts.** These are minor criminals, derelicts, street thugs, gang members, small-time fences and other streetwise NPCs who provide information on illicit activities, local criminal gossip, upcoming crimes and so forth. Base cost is 5 points for "unconnected" Contacts (not part of the local criminal organization; Streetwise-12) and 10 points for "connected" Contacts (Streetwise-15). If the Contact is a major figure in a criminal organization (the Don, Clan Chief, or member of the "inner circle" of the family; Streetwise-21), the cost doubles to 20 points.

**Business Contacts.** Executives, business owners, secretaries – even the mail room flunky – can provide information on businesses and business dealings. Base cost depends on how much the contact can be expected to know: 5 points for a mail boy or typists (effective skill 12), 10 points for the president's secretary (effective skill 15), 15 points for an accountant (effective skill 18) or 20 points for the president or Chairman of the Board (effective skill 21).

**Military Contacts.** Anyone from enlisted grunts up to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Military contacts can provide information on troop movements and assignments, missions and goals, details on secret weaponry and contractors, or Pentagon-level strategy. Cost depends on the rank (and thus amount of access) of the character: 5 points for a buck private or new recruit (effective skill 12), 10 points for an NCO (effective skill 15), 15 points for officers anywhere up to Major (effective skill 18) or 20 points for a field general or member of the Joint Chiefs (effective skill 21).

**Police Contacts.** This includes anyone connected with law enforcement and criminal investigations: beat cops, corporate security, government agents, forensics specialists, coroners, etc. Cost depends on access to information or services. Beat cops and regular private security officers are 5 points (effective skill 12); detectives, federal agents, or record clerks are 10 points (effective skill 15); administrators (lieutenants, captains, Special Agents in Charge, Head of Departmental Security, etc.) are 15 points (effective skill 18) and senior officers (sheriffs, chiefs of police, District Superintendents, Security Chiefs, etc.) are 20 points (effective skill 21).

#### Doesn't Breathe 30 points

You don't require air to survive. If you are underwater, you will not drown (though you still suffer damage from extreme pressures). You cannot be choked or strangled, and you will not suffocate from smoke or other gases. All vampires have this advantage.

Note that vampires can *pretend* to breathe – that is, they can contract and expand their diaphragms to cause air to move in and out of their lungs, but they receive no benefit from this action, other than to better pass for human.



#### Fashion Sense

5 points

You are never caught by surprise when fashions change; your look is always one step ahead of the crowd. You have the ability to create a fashion statement out of the cheapest and most nondescript materials. Someone with this advantage and the Artist skill has the potential to be a successful fashion designer.

Fashion Sense gives you a +1 to all reaction rolls in social situations where you have the chance to plan your attire in advance.

#### Generation

Variable

A vampire's Generation describes how removed he is from Caine, the original vampire. The closer to Caine you are, the more powerful. Most beginning characters will start out as 13th Generation, which is the default and costs no points. Each level after reduces the Generation by one. It is recommended that the GM not allow any player character to start the game earlier than 8th Generation.

A vampire's Generation determines how much blood his body can hold and how quickly he can utilize that blood. Blood Points and how to spend them are described on p. 77. The chart below shows each Generation's advantages.

Generation	Blood Pool	Blood Points/Turn	CP cost
13th	HT	1/turn	0
12th	HT+1	1/turn	5
11th	HT+2	2/turn	15
10th	HT+4	2/turn	25
9th	HT+6	3/turn	35
8th	HT+10	4/turn	60
7th	HT+15	5/turn	75*
6th	HT+20	6/turn	100*
5th	HT+30	8/turn	125*
4th	HT+40	10/turn	160*
3rd	HT+60	15/turn	200*

\*Not recommended for starting characters.



### **Regnancy**

### **Variable**

You hold one or more other vampires in thrall, through the Blood Bond. The mechanics of Blood Bonds are described in the *Permutations* chapter on p. 84. Basically, the Blood Bond allows you to easily manipulate and control those Kindred whom you have bonded. This advantage also applies to ghouls which you have bonded (see p. 45).

The point cost of Regnancy depends on the number and power of the vampires that you control. It costs 15 points for every 100 points you have in thrall (round to nearest hundred). For example, if you begin the game with one 100- to 150-point vampire in thrall, that advantage costs 15 points. Two vampires at 100 points would cost 30 points, but two 150-point vampires would cost 45 points. And so on.

If a player character Blood Bonds someone during the course of play, this *does* increase his point total, and the GM can either assign some disadvantages to balance out the point total (like a Sense of Duty to the thrall), or he can make the player spend earned character points to pay for the advantage. Alternately, the GM can simply have the PC raise his point total to compensate.

### **Unaging**

### **15 points**

You will never grow old. Your age is fixed at the moment of the Embrace and will never change. You never have to make aging rolls, but you cannot get any points for taking the Age disadvantage! All vampires are Unaging.

### **Unfazeable**

### **15 points**

Nothing surprises you – at least, nothing that's not obviously a threat. The world is full of strange things, and as long as they don't bother you, you don't bother them. You are exempt from Fright Checks, except those relating to Röttschreck, and almost no reaction modifiers affect you, either way. You treat strangers with distant courtesy, no matter *how* strange they are, as long as they're well-behaved. You will have the normal reaction penalty toward anyone who does something rude or rowdy, but you will remain civil even if you are forced to violence.

This advantage is incompatible with all Phobias except the vampire's crippling fear of sunlight and fire, and even then, the vampire gets a +2 bonus to Strong Will: Courage. A character with this advantage is not emotionless – he just never displays strong feelings. The stereotypical Maine Yankee or English butler has this advantage.

This advantage must be roleplayed fully, or the GM can declare that it has been lost.

### **Vampiric Invulnerability**

### **100 points**

Unlike vampires in myth and legend, Kindred *can* be hurt by normal weapons. They just can't be killed by them.

The most important facet of Vampiric Invulnerability is that it makes vampires virtually immortal. They can only be *killed* by sunlight, fire or the claws or teeth of another undead creature. They take damage from weapons and may fall unconscious from their wounds, but they *will not die* unless they are burned, exposed to sunlight or wounded by a ghoul or another vampire.

Vampiric Invulnerability allows Kindred to be reduced to -HT before having to make any HT rolls to remain conscious. In addition, they suffer none of the debilitating effects of injury (reduced Move, etc.); they can simply "shake off" most wounds until they reach zero HT. Below zero HT, they suffer from shock (see p. B126) and are at half Move, but do not have to roll to remain conscious, until they are reduced to -HT. Note that -HT doesn't mean the same as "below zero." If HT is 12, then -HT is -12.

Once at -HT, they must roll each turn to remain conscious and lose 1 Blood Point per turn as well. If they fall unconscious and lose all their Blood Points, they do not die, but go into torpor (see p. 83). No matter how serious their wounds, they can recover through Blood Healing (see above) as long as they are conscious and have Blood Points to spend. A vampire who is in torpor and has no Blood Points will eventually regain consciousness (though he may be killed by sunlight before then), but will be unable to heal himself and will remain at -HT until he can feed or is fed by someone else. He can move, but only very slowly (1 hex per turn).

See *Injury and Death*, pp. 80-83, for more on torpor and death.

## Disadvantages



*I am a man of very strong passions, and, while I am stirred by them, nothing can equal my impetuosity; I forget all discretion, all feelings of respect, fear and decency; I am cynical, impudent, violent and fearless; no feeling of shame keeps me back, no danger frightens me; with the exception of the single object which occupies my thoughts, the universe is nothing to me.*

*Confessions, Jean-Jacques Rousseau*

### **Berserk**

*see p. B31*

The existence of a vampire is often a struggle between cool self-control and the passions of the Beast. Because balance comes with such difficulty, and Humanity among Kindred is treasured, Berserk is a universal disadvantage among Cainites.

In Kindred parlance, the state is called frenzy, and it is a constant presence in their lives. Any sort of stress can provoke it, and the rules governing it are much the same as those on p. B31. How frenzy is handled in a *Vampire* campaign, and what specifically can provoke it, is discussed in detail on p. 78.

### **Delusions**

*see p. B32*

The Embrace is not a kind mistress. She forever scars the minds of those she visits. Many Kindred develop strange psychoses upon becoming vampires, or shortly thereafter. Some of these will be expressed as delusions. These delusions can be as mild as "garlic will kill me if I eat it" (-1 point) to as severe as "Caine is my Sire" (-15 points).

Malkavian and Brujah clan members are more susceptible to this kind of mental aberration, but delusions can be found among any Kindred, be they Camarilla, Sabbat or Caitiff.

### **Intolerance**

*see p. B34*

Many Kindred will have feelings of animosity toward members of their own kind, for some reason or another. Clan differences can cause Intolerance, like the Ventrue's general dislike of the Tremere, but the disadvantage is not required in these cases. Camarilla vampires are usually Intolerant of Caitiff and those from other sects, like the Sabbat or the Inconnu.

Also, Kindred feel a universal distrust of Werewolves. This can grow into the Intolerance disadvantage if a PC wants to play it that way. Some vampires might even be Intolerant of all mortals!

### **Megalomania**

*see p. B34*

Megalomania among vampires is not only the desire to hold great sway over the

masses of ignorant mortals, but to rise through the ranks of Kindred society and eventually determine much of the policy of the Inner Circle.

Many Megalomaniacs will practice Diablerie (see p. 86), hoping to gain power and stature by lowering their Generation. Others will use fanatic energy to impress and influence Elders and Justicars. A Megalomaniac in the world of the Kindred is an individual to be watched and reckoned with.

### **Odious Personal Habits**

*see p. B26*

Under the power of the Beast, Kindred perform some reprehensible, even disgusting, acts. However, most try to control it and at least hold the appearance of humanity.

Other vampires are less concerned. They may engage in disgusting acts for the mere fun of it, or to sadistically antagonize curious mortals. Some examples of appropriate Odious Personal Habits for vampires are: Only Feeds on Small Children (-10 points), Does Not Clean After Feeding (-5 points), Keeps Mementos of Victims (-15 points), etc.





**Phobia: Röttschreck**

*see p. B35*

Vampires can have any type of Phobia that mortals do, though fear of darkness and fear of blood would be especially crippling. However, all Kindred are plagued with Röttschreck, an intense fear of sunlight and fire.

Röttschreck is a -10-point disadvantage, and Fright Checks are required whenever a vampire is faced with either threat (at the appropriate modifiers for the level of danger). Any bonus from Courage (see p. 56) adds to the initial Will Roll.

If a vampire wishes to use fire or deliberately enter a sunlit area, he must make a Will Roll, plus Courage bonus, subtracting any modifiers the GM feels are fair. The following table shows some typical modifiers.

Lighting a cigarette .....	no modifier
Sight of a torch .....	-1
Lighting a campfire .....	-2
Bonfire .....	-4
Cloudy day .....	-4
Direct application of fire .....	-6
Full sunlight .....	-10
Trapped in a burning building .....	-10

These modifiers don't take distance into account and assume that the affected vampire is within 10 yards of the source. Of course, a vampire who is 50 yards away from a cigarette lighter would have little to fear. Halve the modifier for each additional 10 yards of distance from the source of the fear.

**Vow**

*see p. B37*

Vampires may take a Vow for a number of reasons – to protect a loved one, to serve the Camarilla, or to restrict themselves to a certain type of vessel from which to feed, like the Ventrue's required Vow (see p. 130).

**Weak Will**

*see p. B37*

In *GURPS Vampire*, Weak Will acts much the opposite of Strong Will, in that it is divided into the same four subsections. However, Weak Will is *very* uncommon in vampires; they must simply face down too many internal crises to have Weak Will. (The Brujah are an exception to this rule; they must start out with Weak Will: Self-Control).

Nevertheless, for completeness it is presented here. Each level of Weak Will for each of the subsections (Conscience, Self-Control, Courage and Normal Weak Will) is -2 points. A character *cannot* have Strong Will and Weak Will for the same aspect of Will. However, a character could have Normal Strong Will +3, Courage +2 and Self-Control -2. This represents a vampire who is normally very strong-willed, but has trouble resisting frenzy. The total point cost for this character's Will would be +1 (+5 for the Strong Will and -4 for the Weak Will).

**Other Common Disadvantages**

Other disadvantages appropriate for Kindred characters are Bloodlust, Bully, Compulsive Behavior, Impulsiveness, Overconfidence, Paranoia, Sadism, Split Personality and Stubbornness.

## New Disadvantages

### **Blood Bonded**

**-40 points**

You are under the powerful emotional control of another vampire, through the Blood Bond (described on p. 84). Your Regnant can ask you to perform any task, and you will find it very difficult to resist. He may be a kind master, or he may not, but the Thrall does not have any choice.

If you are Blood Bonded in the course of the game, the GM may allow you to take an appropriate advantage (such as a Patron), to balance out the cost, or he may allow you to spend points on skills or attributes to bring your character up to its original point total.

### **The Draining**

**-10 points**

All Kindred experience the Draining. At the end of each night, vampires lose one Blood Point (see p. 77). They can do nothing to stop this loss, and Blood Points lost this way can only be replaced by drinking the blood of another creature.

This is a significant disadvantage because the use of Blood Points is the only way a vampire can heal himself. If a character has no Blood in his Blood Pool and he experiences the Draining, he loses 2 hit points instead. If he falls to -HT before he regains Blood Points, he will go into Torpor (see p. 83).

### **Secret**

**Variable**

A Secret is some aspect of your life (or your past) that you must keep hidden. Were it made public, the information could harm your reputation, ruin your career, wreck your friendships, and possibly even threaten your life!

The point value of a Secret depends on the consequences if the Secret is revealed. The worse the results, the higher the value, as follows:

**Serious Embarrassment.** If this information gets around, you can forget about ever getting a position at court, gaining a knighthood, or marrying well. Alternatively, your Secret could be one that will simply attract unwanted public attention if it is known. **-5 points.**

**Utter Rejection.** If your Secret is discovered, your whole life will be changed. Perhaps you will lose your patron, and be rejected by friends and loved ones. Perhaps you will merely be harassed by admirers, cultists or long-lost relatives. **-10 points.**

**Imprisonment or Exile.** If the authorities uncover your Secret, you'll have to flee, or be imprisoned for a long time (GM's decision). All vampires have at least this severe of a Secret; see below. **-20 points.**

**Possible Death.** Your Secret is so terrible that you might be executed by the authorities, lynched by a mob or assassinated if it were ever revealed – you would be a hunted man. **-30 points.**

If a Secret is made public, there will be an immediate negative effect, as described above, ranging from embarrassment to possible death. There is a lasting effect – you suddenly acquire new, permanent disadvantages whose point value equals *twice* that of the Secret itself! The points

from these new disadvantages go first to buy off the Secret, and may then (at the GM's option only) be used to buy off other disadvantages or (rarely) to buy new advantages. Any unused points are lost, and the character's point value is reduced.



The new disadvantages acquired must be appropriate to the Secret and should be determined (with the GM's assistance) when the character is created. Most Secrets turn into Enemies, Bad Reputations, and Social Stigmas. They might also reduce your Status or Wealth – going from Filthy Rich to merely Very Wealthy is effectively a -10-point disadvantage. Some Secrets could even turn into mental or physical disadvantages, though this would be rare.

Similarly, if the GM allows you to buy off old disadvantages with the new points, these too must be appropriate to the Secret. The most common disadvantages that could be bought off are Duties and Dependents.

In general, a Secret appears in a particular game session if the GM rolls a 6 or less on three dice before the adventure begins. However, *as for all other disadvantages of this type*, the GM need not feel constrained by the appearance roll – if he thinks the Secret should come into play, it does!

When a Secret appears, it is not necessarily made public. The character must somehow prevent the Secret from being revealed. This may require him to cave in to blackmail or extortion, to steal the incriminating documents, or even to silence the person who knows the Secret. Regardless of the solution, however, it's only temporary – the Secret will appear again and again until it is finally bought off. Secrets may be bought off automatically through exposure (see above) or with earned character points over the course of play.



### *Vampiric Secrets*

The Secret that all Kindred share is "I am a vampire." Were this revealed to the general public, the PC would undoubtedly be imprisoned or captured for experimentation. Of course, vampires can have other secrets besides. For example, someone who practices Diablerie would have a -30-point Secret. The punishment is destruction for these Kindred criminals.

Other possible Vampiric secrets include possessing unsanctioned childer (i.e., neonates created without the prince's permission), being an informant for another prince or elder, or being Blood Bonded to a particular vampire.

### *Sundeath* -40 points

Direct sunlight is death to vampires. Any time a vampire is exposed to sunlight, he takes 1d of damage per minute. If the light is diffused by something (clouds, fabric or smoke), the damage comes over a longer period of time. For exam-

ple, on a very cloudy day, a vampire might take 1d of damage every 5 minutes. Partial damage is not possible, however, and if the same vampire could get to darkness before 5 minutes were up, he would take no damage. Sunlight that is focused or intensified in some way would cause more damage. As always, the GM makes the final decision about how much damage is caused.

See p. 81 for a complete description of the effects of sunlight on vampires.

### *Unhealing* -20 points

Mortals recover naturally from their wounds, albeit slowly. Vampires, on the other hand, will never heal naturally. They must spend Blood Points to regain lost Health. Neither First Aid nor any other medical care will help regain lost hit points. Of course, vampires do not lose hit points from bleeding or infection, so their wounds can never get worse from lack of treatment.

## Skills

### *Acting* see p. B62

The ability to feign attitudes and emotions is practically essential for vampires to maintain their secrecy in a world of mortals. Not everyone will have invested points in the Acting skill, but most will have a decent default. Since rolls vs. Acting will come up often in most games, players are encouraged to write their default skill on their character sheet if they don't spend points on the skill.

### *Diplomacy* see p. B63

Diplomacy also plays a large part in the public lives of Kindred. The skill will be used when dealing with mortals as well as when dealing with the prince or the Inner Circle.

### *Fast-Talk and Streetwise* see pp. B63 and B68

These skills are highly useful in the depths of the city, where safety may depend on someone's ability to talk his way out of a tough situation or find his way around the bleak underbelly of the dark metropolis.

### *Scrounging* see p. B67

This skill is very important in this setting, since most stores and services do not function during the hours that vampires prowl the streets. It will allow vampires to get

hard-to-find items and obtain basic services during the night, when they are active.

### *Survival (Urban)* see p. B57

This skill covers the *physical* part of staying alive in a city environment, whether it's overpopulated or empty. The *social* problems of city survival are covered by the Streetwise skill. A specialist in urban survival could (for instance) locate manholes from above and below; quickly locate building entrances, exits, stairwells, and so on; recognize and avoid physically dangerous areas, like crumbling buildings; make and read city maps, and find his way out of strange city areas; find places to escape from harsh weather; and locate common types of buildings or businesses without asking anyone, just by his "feel" for the way cities are laid out.

### Other Common Skills

Skills that will be useful in a *Vampire* setting include: Combat Skills, Computer Operation, Driving, First Aid, Interrogation, Law, Leadership, Linguistics, Lockpicking, Mechanic, Merchant, Musical Instrument, Occultism, Physician, Politics, Savoir-Faire, Scientific Skills, Shadowing, Stealth.



## New Skills

**Appreciate Beauty (Mental/Very Hard)** Defaults to appropriate art/craft, IQ-5 or Savoir-Faire-5

This is the ability to appreciate the beauty of a work of art, a delicate melody, a fine meal or a well-made weapon or tool. It also applies to aspects of nature (a waterfall, a field of flowers or a gorgeous sunset). It also offers the chance to *specialize* (see p. B33), at +5 for one type of beauty, but -1 at others.

A successful skill roll allows identification of the value and tradition of an artistic performance or item. A critical success grants some insight into the maker's or performer's personality (learning some of the person's mental advantages and disadvantages).

Appreciation skills are studied by people who wish to appear cultured. They are also useful to artists and merchants in the appropriate field. This is a very common skill among members of the Toreador clan.

**Intimidation (Mental/Average)** Defaults to ST-5 or Acting-3

Intimidation is a social "influence" skill, used for persuasion. The essence of intimidation is to convince the subject that you are able and willing, and perhaps eager, to hurt him.

Intimidation may be substituted for a Reaction roll in any situation, though it is at a -3 penalty when used in a request for aid. A successful Intimidation roll gives a Good (though not friendly) reaction. A failed roll gives a Bad reaction. Most people will remember an intimidation attempt, whether successful or not, for a long time; it can permanently affect an NPC's attitude.

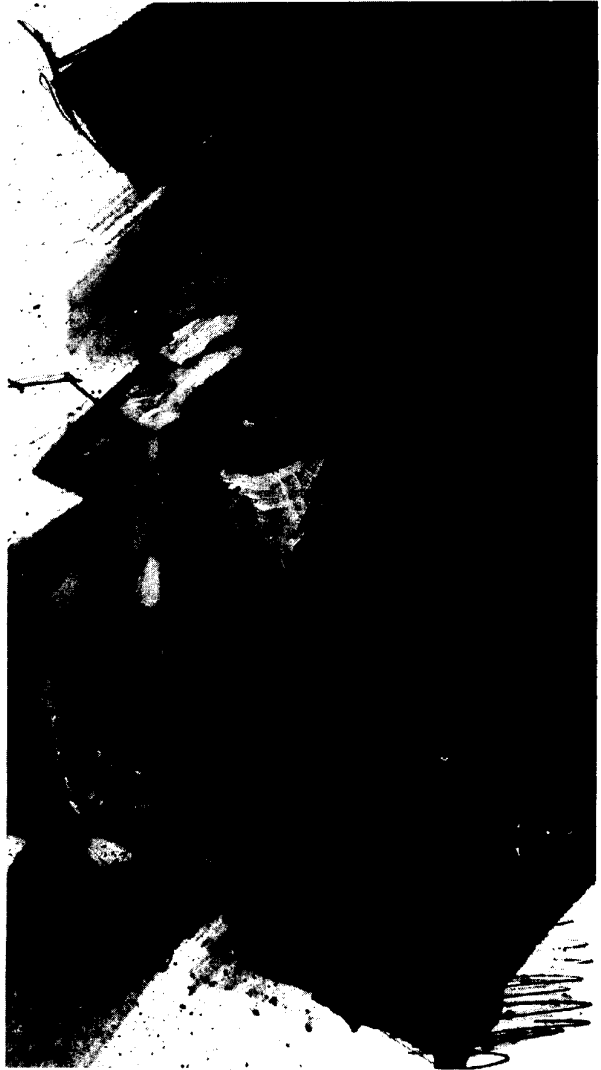
When Intimidation is used against a PC (or, at the GM's option, against a NPC), this can also be rolled as a contest of Intimidation vs. Will. See *Influence Rolls*, sidebar, p. B93.

**Modifiers:** Up to +2 for displays of strength or bloodthirstiness, or +3 for superhuman strength or inhuman bloodthirstiness, such as that possessed by vampires. Appropriate reputation modifiers certainly count! +1 for each 6" of height that you have over the subject, -1 if you are shorter (-2 if more than 6" shorter). +2 for Hideous appearance.

The GM may give a further +1 bonus for witty or frightening dialogue, but should apply a penalty if the attempt is clumsy or inappropriate.

Fearlessness counts *against* intimidation attempts. The GM may apply any level of penalty if the PCs are attempting to intimidate somebody who, in his opinion, just can't be intimidated. This includes anyone with the Unfazeable advantage (see p. 60).

**Magical and Psionic Modifiers:** Spells and psi talents can be used to frighten people. If any such ability is used to supplement an attempt to intimidate, allow +2 for a successful attempt - +4 for a critical success. A failure has no effect unless the GM wants to penalize a critical failure in some creative way.

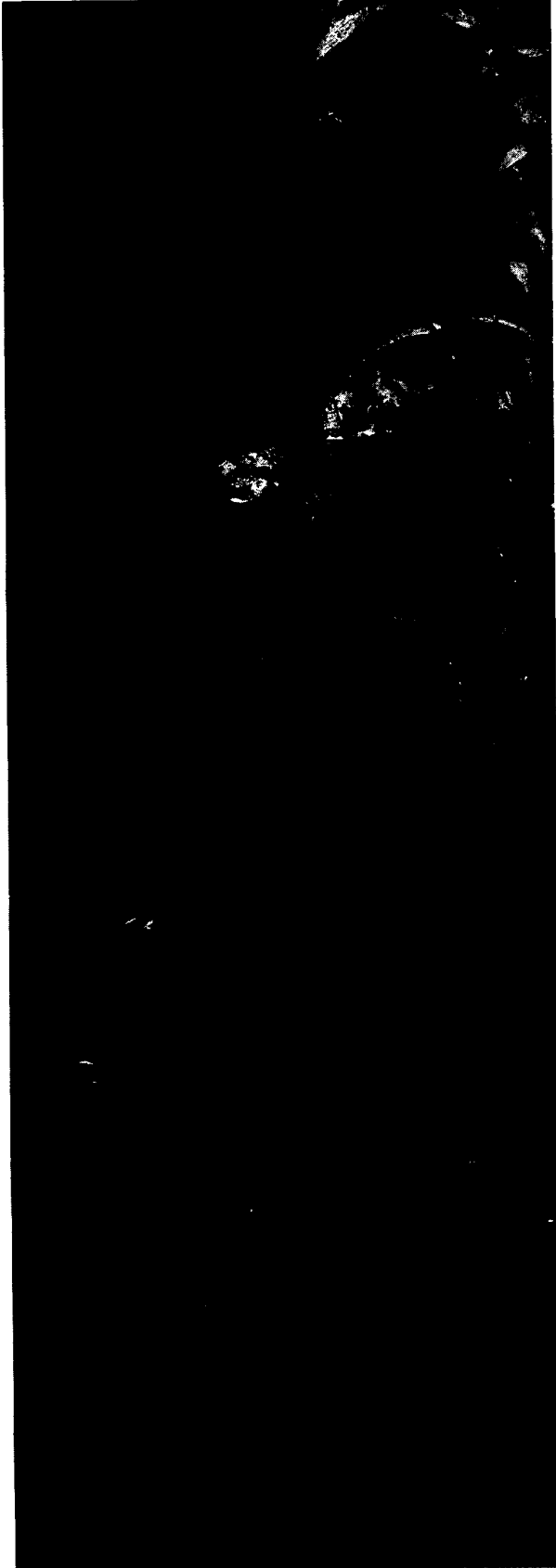


**Intimidating a Group:** This skill may be used against several people at once. For every five targets you attempt to intimidate with a single roll, apply a -1 penalty to your skill - up to a maximum of -5 (25 people). A single person cannot intimidate a group of larger than 25 people. A group of characters may attempt to intimidate a group of larger than 25 - 3 characters could intimidate up to 75 (3x25) people! Use the bonuses of the *best* intimidator in the group, and the penalties of the toughest target in the enemy group.

**Running a Bluff:** If the PC can make both a Fast-Talk and an Intimidation roll, and roleplays it well, he can appear intimidating even when he can't back it up. This is the only way to intimidate some people (martial arts masters, world leaders, bellicose drunks). Success on both rolls gives a Very Good reaction. Success on one and failure on the other gives a Poor reaction. Failure on both gives a Very Bad reaction.

Note that Interrogation skill can default to Intimidation-3. It will not help you tell a good answer from a bad one, but it can get people to talk.

# Disciplines



Disciplines are special powers that are available to vampires. There are many of them and they are described in detail starting on p. 95. Each character has a Power Level for each Discipline (except Thaumaturgy; see below), showing how many powers under that discipline he can use. Each of the powers will have a skill level.

Three of the disciplines – Celerity, Fortitude and Potence – have no powers under them, but instead grant temporary advantages to their users once invoked. These are called Augmenting Disciplines. The Power Level of these Disciplines determines the duration and intensity of the augmentation.

The last Discipline, Thaumaturgy, is merely a collection of magic spells that vampires who have Magery can learn and use. It does not use Power Levels like the other Disciplines.

Each level of Power for standard disciplines costs 2 character points, while the costs for Augmenting Disciplines are based on the Power Level (see the tables below and on the next page). Point costs for the spells under Thaumaturgy are the same as for magic spells as detailed in the *Basic Set* (see p. B146).

Otherwise, The individual powers under each discipline are treated as M/VH skills and are purchased just like mental skills. Each level of Power in a standard discipline allows you to use that many of the Discipline's powers, starting from the first. For example, someone with Power 4 in Animalism could spend points in Sweet Whispers, The Beckoning, Song of Serenity and Sharing of the Spirits. He could not even attempt Drawing Out the Beast, though. Power 5 is the highest level for any Discipline.

Each time a discipline is used, it costs Power $\times$ 2 points of Fatigue. However, if the vampire doesn't wish to use Fatigue or has none left, he can spend 1 Blood Point for every 2 Fatigue required.

The table below lists the various powers under each Discipline and the Power Level effects.

<i>Discipline</i>	<i>Notes</i>
<b><i>Animalism (2 points/level)</i></b>	
Power 1: Sweet Whispers	Speak with animals
Power 2: The Beckoning	Call animals to you
Power 3: Song of Serenity	Soothe savage beasts
Power 4: Sharing of Spirits	Possess an animal
Power 5: Drawing out the Beast	Transfer your frenzy
<b><i>Auspex (2 points/level)</i></b>	
Power 1: Heightened Senses	Extraordinary perception
Power 2: Aura Perception	Read auras
Power 3: The Spirit's Touch	Gain object impressions
Power 4: Unveil the Shrouded Mind	Read another's thoughts
Power 5: Abandon Earthly Form	Separate mind from body



**Celerity (Augmenting Discipline)**

Power 1 (4 points)	+1 to Move for 10 minutes
Power 2 (8 points)	+2 to Move; +1 attack per turn; duration 30 min.
Power 3 (16 points)	+4 to Move; +1 attack per turn; duration 1 hour
Power 4 (24 points)	+6 to Move; +2 attacks per turn; duration 2 hrs.
Power 5 (48 points)	+10 to Move; +2 attacks per turn; duration 6 hrs.

**Dominate (2 points/level)**

Power 1: Command the Wearing Mind	Give a simple command
Power 2: Mesmerize	Plant a suggestion
Power 3: The Forgetful Mind	Remove memories
Power 4: Conditioning	Train someone to be a faithful servant
Power 5: Possession	Take over another's mind and body

**Fortitude (Augmenting Discipline)**

Power 1 (4 points)	+1 Damage Resistance duration 10 minutes
Power 2 (8 points)	+2 Damage Resistance duration 30 minutes
Power 3 (16 points)	+4 Damage Resistance duration 1 hour
Power 4 (24 points)	+6 Damage Resistance duration 2 hours
Power 5 (48 points)	+10 Damage Resistance duration 6 hours

**Obfuscate (2 points/level)**

Power 1: Cloak of Shadows	Hide within the shadows
Power 2: Unseen Presence	Become difficult to see
Power 3: Mask of a Thousand Faces	Disguise yourself
Power 4: Vanish from Mind's Eye	Completely disappear
Power 5: Cloak the Gathering	Extend your powers to others

**Potence (Augmenting Discipline)**

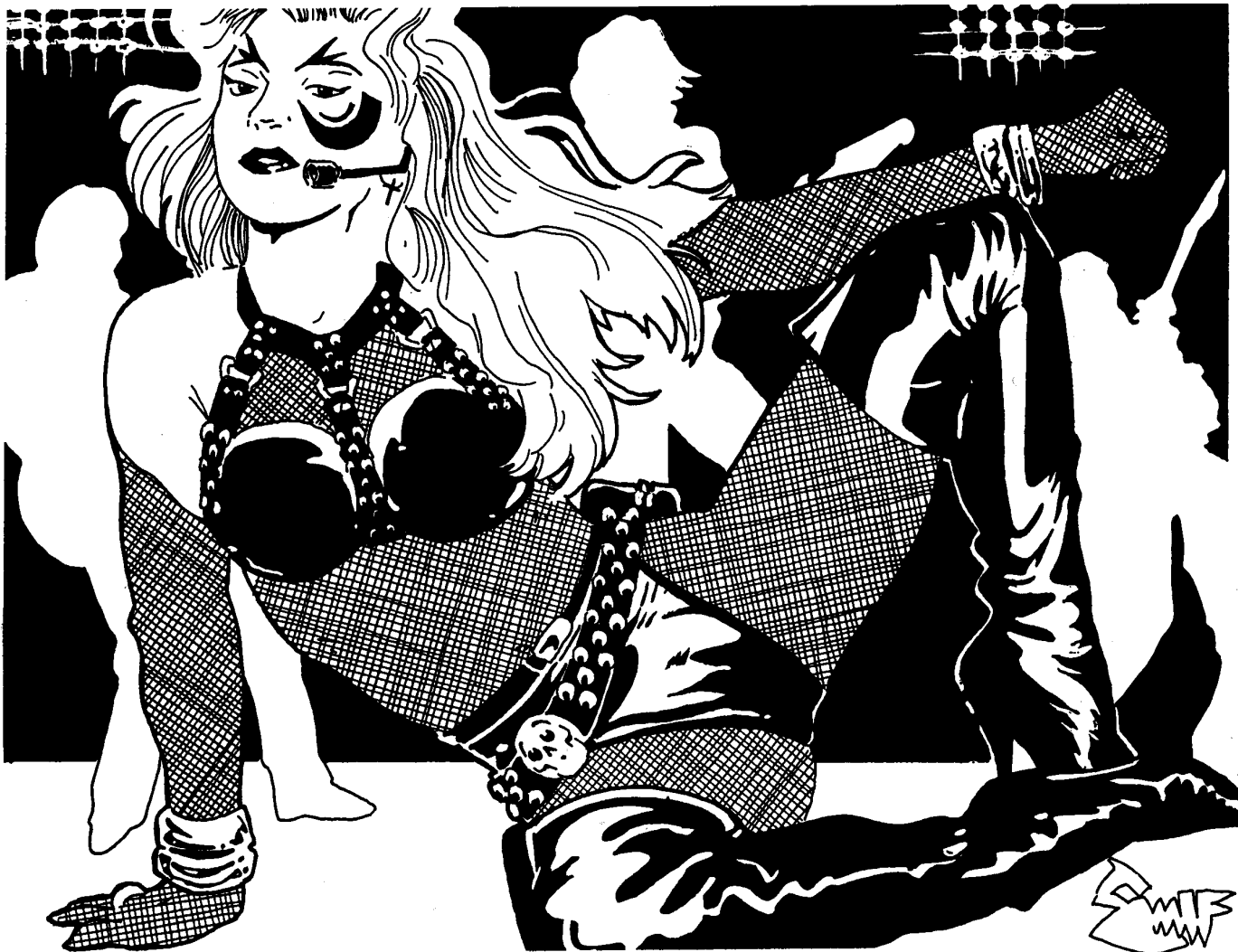
Power 1 (4 points)	+1 ST for 10 minutes
Power 2 (8 points)	+2 ST for 30 minutes
Power 3 (16 points)	+4 ST for 1 hour
Power 4 (24 points)	+6 ST for 2 hours
Power 5 (48 points)	+10 ST for 6 hours

**Presence (2 points/level)**

Power 1: Awe	Instill fascination in others
Power 2: Dread Gaze	Cause fear in mortals
Power 3: Entrancement	Make others to serve you
Power 4: Summon	Call someone from afar
Power 5: Majesty	Everyone will fear and respect you

**Protean (2 points/level)**

Power 1: Gleam of the Red Eyes	See in the dark
Power 2: Wolf Claws	Grow deadly claws
Power 3: Earth Meld	Sink into the Earth
Power 4: Shadow of the Beast	Transform into a wolf or bat
Power 5: Form of Mist	Turn into a cloud of mist



### Thaumaturgy

Although all Kindred refer to it as such, Thaumaturgy is not truly a Discipline. Instead, it is the practice of magic by vampires, almost exclusively by those in Clan Tremere. Characters with Thaumaturgy must have at least one level of Magical Aptitude, and must learn the spells they want to use, just like any other magical spells. Of course, these spells must also be bought with character points. See pp. 109-113, and the section on magic in the *Basic Set*, starting on p. B146.

### Clan Disciplines

Each clan has disciplines that its members are especially proficient in. For example, Brujah are proficient in Celerity, Potence and Presence. To reflect this, a player must pay double point cost for disciplines and powers that are not part of his clan's repertoire; this includes both Power Level and skill level.

Caitiff, or non-Camarilla vampires, can choose any three disciplines for their proficiencies, and pay normal point costs for them. But if they want more, they must pay the inflated cost. Caitiff can choose Thaumaturgy as one of their original three disciplines, but if that PC chooses to join the Camarilla (see p. 131), he will be of the Tremere clan.

### Clan Disciplines Chart

Clan	Disciplines
Brujah	Celerity, Potence, Presence
Gangrel	Animalism, Fortitude, Protean
Malkavian	Auspex, Dominate, Obfuscate
Nosferatu	Animalism, Obfuscate, Potence
Toreador	Auspex, Celerity, Presence
Tremere	Auspex, Dominate, Thaumaturgy
Ventrue	Dominate, Fortitude, Presence
Caitiff	Any three*

\*The clanless Caitiff do not have any specific clan Disciplines, but they may choose three initial Disciplines in which to be proficient. Any past those original three will cost them double points.

### Choosing a Clan

Characters in *GURPS Vampire* must either play one of the seven Camarilla clans described in Chapter 5, or be Caitiff, or clanless. Each clan has strengths and weaknesses.

The strengths are shown above. Each clan is proficient at specific Disciplines. The weaknesses come in the form of required disadvantages. These weaknesses are described fully under each clan's description in the *Clans* chapter, but following is a brief summary.

### Clan Weaknesses

**Brujah:** Frenzy easily. Must start the game with Weak Will: Self-Control -4 and can never raise it beyond +1.

**Gangrel:** Become more animal-like after each frenzy. Every frenzy causes an animal feature to appear. Every five features lower the PC's Appearance by one level.

**Malkavian:** Must take at least a -10-point Delusion or other Mental disadvantage (Paranoia, Intolerance, Cowardice, etc.).

**Nosferatu:** Must take the Appearance (Ugly) disadvantage.

**Toreador:** Must take a special -10-point form of the Absent-Mindedness disadvantage.

**Tremere:** Must drink the blood of the seven elders of the clan. This means they are close to being Blood Bonded to seven Kindred.

**Ventrue:** Must take a -10-point Vow to only drink blood from a certain class of vessel: animals, young men, virgins, etc.

## Humanity and Blood Pool



To finish out the *Vampire* character, the player needs to figure two new statistics: Humanity and Blood Pool. These are described in detail in the *Permutations* chapter, but following are brief descriptions.

### Humanity

Humanity is the level to which the character has resisted the pull of the Beast. A high Humanity score is good because it is the highest number someone can roll against to resist frenzy (regardless of his level of Self-Control). It also affects how well a vampire can act during the day and how long he will remain in Torpor (see p. 83). Humanity starts out at 12, but can go as high as 20 and as low as 3 as the GM gives out or takes away Humanity from the characters.

#### Character Points and Humanity

In some campaigns, the GM may allow the characters to start out with a Humanity score that is higher or lower than 12. This should be carefully monitored, however, since it could be abused. A player should come up with a good explanation as to why his character's Humanity is lower or higher than normal.

Each point of Humanity is worth 5 character points. So if a vampire starts the game with a Humanity of 14, he would have to pay 10 points for this. Or if he took Humanity 8, he would gain the equivalent of a -20-point disadvantage. These points *do* count toward the 40-point limit on disadvantages.

### Blood Pool

Blood Pool is a measure of how much blood is in a vampire's body. For a 13th-generation vampire who has his Blood Pool at maximum, it would be equal to his HT. Lower generations have higher Blood Pools (see p. 59). The Blood Pool is made up of *Blood Points* which can be spent to heal the vampire, to raise attributes temporarily, or to perform other feats. The GM can have all new characters start with full Blood Pools, or he may have them roll randomly to determine exactly how much blood is in their bodies at the start of the game. (2d works well for this roll, provided the result is less than or equal to the PC's maximum Blood Pool.)



# Sample Vampire: Glider

13th-generation Malkavian; Age 33 (appears 21); 6'1",  
165 lbs.; Brown hair, blue eyes.

ST: 10 [0]      IQ: 13 [30]      Speed: 6

DX: 12 [20]      HT: 12 [20]      Move: 6

Dodge: 6      Parry: 6 (Brawling)

Damage: *Thrust* 1d-2, *Swing* 1d

Blood Pool: 12      Humanity: 13

No armor or encumbrance

Point Total: 255

## Advantages

Alertness +2 [10]

Appearance (Attractive) [5]

Blood Healing [25]

Doesn't Breathe [30]

Strong Will:

Normal: +0

Conscience: +2 [2]

Self-Control: +1 [1]

Courage: +3 [3]

Unaging [15]

Vampiric Invulnerability [100]

## Disadvantages

Absent-Mindedness [-15]

Berserk (Frenzy) [-15]

The Draining [-10]

Phobia: Röttschreck [-10]

Secret (Vampire) [-20]

Sundeath [-40]

Unhealing [-20]

## Quirks

Prefers to feed on young women [-1]

Regards himself as a poet [-1]

Talks down to mortals [-1]

## Disciplines

Auspex (Power 2) [4]

Heightened Senses-14 [8]

Aura Perception-14 [8]

Celerity (Power 3) [32] (Non-clan discipline, double cost)

Dominate (Power 1) [2]

Command the Wearied Mind-13[4]

Obfuscate (Power 1) [2]

Cloak of Shadows-13 [4]

## Skills

Acting-16 [8]; Brawling-13 [4]; Carousing-12 [2]; Diplomacy-17 [12]; Driving (Car)-12 [2]; Economics-10 [½]; Fast-Talk-15 [6]; Guns (Pistol)-11 [1]; Knife-12 [2]; Leadership-14 [1½]; Mechanic (Auto)-15 [6]; Occultism-11 [½]; Poetry-12 [1]; Politics-11 [½]; Psychology-13 [4]; Research-12 [1]; Savoir-Faire-12 [1]; Stealth-15 [8]; Street-wise-12 [1].

## Languages

English-14 [native tongue]; Russian-12 [1].

## Characters



Glider was born James Cavanaugh in 1960. His parents were both lower middle class, and he had just finished high school when his father got him a job at the same garage he worked at. James hated it, but didn't have the guts to tell his old man.

To channel his rebellion, he went out almost every night – to discos and night clubs – and he got involved with several of the “wrong type” of people. He fell heavily into drugs and alcohol and had soon sold his soul to the dealer that he'd been buying from.

The dealer's name was Ace McKendrick. Unknown to James and everyone else, he was a vampire – a true Malkavian who thought it was the funniest thing in the world to see mortals screw up their lives with the dope he was selling. Ace took James under his wing and taught him the business. James quit the garage and moved away, telling his parents that he didn't know what he wanted, except something more than this. He has never spoken to them since.

After three years, Ace grew to like James, who had since taken the nickname Glider for his uncanny ability to enter and leave a room without being noticed. He was a natural dealer and competent enforcer, and he had a swift sarcastic wit that had more than once humiliated Ace in good humor. In his 15 years as a vampire, Ace had never Embraced anyone. Now he chose Glider. James was 21 years old.

After the agonizing ecstasy of the Embrace, Glider tried to take in his new situation. He was both disgusted and thrilled at the prospect of living out eternity off the blood of mortals. He eventually adjusted, but not before acquiring the Malkavian's typical outlook. Existence is just too weird to take seriously.

It's been 12 years since the Embrace, and Glider has since left Ace and the drug business for better things. He went to visit the “old country” – Romania, Transylvania and Russia – and returned with a broader mind and a new respect for elders. He runs an all-night coffee shop/poetry house in downtown Austin, Texas, where Bohemian wannabes flock by the thousands. He feeds mostly on the young women who congregate in the bar district on the weekends, and he has a comfortable existence. He stays clear of the politics of the Camarilla, but does not shirk his duties as a member.

# Vampire Hunters



Although this book concentrates on how to play vampire characters, it's also possible that the players will not want to be vampires, but rather to hunt them.

To create a vampire hunter, use the character generation rules from the *Basic Set*. The point total of the PC should be equivalent to the average of the vampires he will be hunting, unless the party is large, and the number of vampires is small. If this is the case, the GM should adjust point totals accordingly.

## Special Hunter Advantages

If the GM wishes, he can introduce the following two advantages into his campaign for use by PC vampire hunters or NPCs. Vampires are not allowed to have these advantages. It is up to the GM to decide whether other supernatural creatures, like ghouls and werewolves, can possess either of these advantages.

### *Resistance to Disciplines* *10 points for first level 5 points/level afterward*

You are less susceptible to the mystical powers that vampires possess. Like Psionic Resistance or Magic Resistance, each level of this advantage subtracts from the caster's effective skill with any vampiric power he uses on you. If a power requires you to make a roll to resist the effects, your level of Resistance to Disciplines adds to your skill. In addition, you are able to resist Dominate powers, which are normally not resistable by mortals. To resist any Dominate power, you roll vs. Will, plus your level of Resistance to Disciplines.

Resistance to Disciplines does not protect from the spells under Thaumaturgy, but Magic Resistance (p. B21) does.

### *True Faith* *15 points*

You have a profound religious faith which protects you, to some extent, from becoming the prey of vampires. In order to be protected, you must have some sort of physical symbol of your faith to defend yourself with – a crucifix, Torah, Koran, Buddhist prayer-wheel or Hindu idol are all appropriate, but the object must be one revered by *your* religion – a devout Moslem will gain no benefit from wielding a crucifix.

A vampire can not approach within a yard of a holy object wielded by someone with True Faith. If somehow forced into this radius, the vampire must leave by the most direct route possible. If he cannot leave without coming closer to the holy object, he must make a Will Roll. If he succeeds, he may run past the holy object and its bearer to escape, pushing the bearer aside if necessary (but using only the minimum force required to escape). If the roll is failed, the vampire is cowed. He must cower, helplessly, and cannot move, defend himself or take any other action. Being brought within 1 yard of a holy object and a believer with True Faith will immediately snap any vampire out of frenzy (see p. 78).

In order to keep the True Faith advantage, the believer *must* behave in a manner consistent with his religion. This may involve a Code of Honor, Sense of Duty or Vow, and if any of these are broken, the GM may decree that the True Faith advantage is lost. It is *not* however, necessary for someone with True faith to be kind, loving or law-abiding. A violent bigot or religious terrorist can be just as sincere in his religious devotion as a saintly ascetic.

*Note:* This advantage may not be appropriate to all campaigns. It's best suited to a traditional or romantic campaign – if the GM wants a darker, more cynical campaign he's free to ignore the rules for True Faith or sacred objects below.

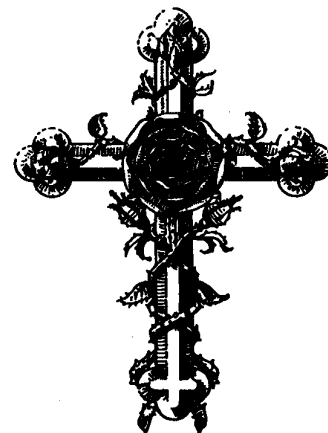
### *Sacred Objects*

If a sacred object wielded by someone with True Faith is brought into contact with the vampire's skin, the vampire takes 1d damage per turn of contact. All DR from clothing is *doubled* for protection against this attack, and even the flimsiest cloth will offer 1 DR of protection, but Toughness and natural DR do *not* protect. A cowed vampire gets an extra Will roll each turn that he takes damage from a holy object – if he makes that roll, he may use active defenses to protect himself, and attempt to flee the area.

Blessed waters or oils may be flung at the vampire by somebody with True Faith at a range of up to 3 hexes. These attacks require a roll vs. Throwing to hit, and each ounce of liquid flung does 1d damage, -1 point for each hex of range.

Some religions use sacred incense or heavy perfumes. The scent of such substances, when lit or poured by a person with True Faith, does no damage to the vampire, but provokes something very like a severe allergic reaction. The vampire's senses become greatly impaired – -5 to all perception rolls, -2 to all combat rolls, including attacks and active defenses.

Finally, a sacred object can be placed by someone with True Faith and will retain its potency for 24 hours. Thus a crucifix will protect an atheist if it was hung around his neck within the last 24 hours by someone with True Faith, or holy wafers crumbled in a vampire's haven will prevent the vampire from resting there, if placed by someone with True Faith within the last 24 hours.







*I perch on the edge of this mountain of glass and steel with a hot, dank wind in my face. The city is spread out below me like a diseased heart. Lights and sirens crawl down its bloated arteries in search of criminals who will never be caught.*

*I am one of those criminals.*

*Although I am not empty of blood, the hunger waits in the back of my soul like a sleeping tiger in a cage. Soon it will need release. Soon I will feed.*

*But not yet.*

*I have grown more beastly in the passing weeks and cannot travel among mortals any longer. I feel my humanity slip away, yet I cannot bring myself to care. I have tortured and killed and done unspeakable acts, and I cannot bring myself to feel one shred of guilt or remorse.*

*I am an animal.*

*Two hundred feet below me a lone figure walks. I reach out with the tendrils of my senses. It is a woman walking alone, perhaps returning home from a play. She thought she might save a few dollars and forego the taxi. Stupid mortal.*

*I do not need blood, but I will not pass up such a delicious opportunity. Maybe I will not kill her. It will be worth my time just to see her expression when she first glimpses my hideous visage. The short, choked scream as she looks into the face of death.*

*I will teach her to respect the demons of the night.*

# *Chapter 3:*

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# PERMUTATIONS

*The more conscious I was of Goodness and of all that was "good and beautiful," the more deeply I sank into my mire and the more ready I was to sink in it altogether.*

*– Notes from Underground, Fyodor Dostoevsky*



here is more to creating and playing a vampire than statistics and rules. There are special aspects of the Kindred nature that must be discussed at length. This chapter covers the advanced facets of vampire character design and play.

## Will Rolls

*The need comes upon me, a wash of lust and craving which I cannot resist. Like a tree against the storm, I do not bend but eventually I will break. I may wait, containing my desire for week upon week, allowing the agony to mount, but eventually I can resist no more and I must kill again . . .*

— *Soul Whisper*, Thomas Braundenburg

**M**uch of the drama in a *Vampire* campaign will center around the success or failure of Will Rolls. Many of a vampire's enemies are within his own twisted psyche. He must master the frenzy, control Röttschreck and defend his Humanity to the last breath. All of these are accomplished with Will Rolls.

Of course, Will Rolls will come up in many other circumstances, as in any other *GURPS* game. But in the Gothic-Punk world of *Vampire*, they center around the vampire's defense from his own instinctive brutality.

### When to Make Will Rolls

Will Rolls are *not* needed every time a character wants to control the Beast. It is assumed that minor instinctive drives

and slight hunger pangs are part of the Kindred's everyday existence and are easily dealt with. It is only when the hunger grows too great or the need to hunt becomes overwhelming that Will Rolls become required.

In general, there are three basic occurrences that will lead to a Will Roll.

If a vampire is provoked, humiliated or very hungry for blood (5 Blood Points or less), he must make a Will Roll to avoid frenzy (see p. 78). The Self-Control Strong Will bonus adds to this roll.

If someone performs a brutal act, or is in some way in danger of losing points of Humanity, he can make a Will Roll to avoid the Humanity loss (see below). The Conscience aspect of Strong Will adds to this roll. If the roll is made, the character has dealt with the nature of his actions, and does not lose any Humanity at that time. Further brutality will require another roll.

Finally, vampires must make a Fright Check (which is a specific type of Will Roll) whenever they are faced with fire or sunlight. The Courage aspect of Strong Will adds to this roll. See the description of Röttschreck on p. 62.

## Humanity

**H**umanity is a measure of how much of a vampire's mortal nature remains despite the curse of Caine. Humanity influences how well a vampire is able to resist all his newly unearthed urges and instincts. It is one of the most important statistics, for as it drops, so does the character's connection to human nature. If a character's Humanity drops below 3, he becomes a totally inhuman monster and is no longer under the control of the player. A new character must be created if the player wishes to continue playing.

This is one of the reasons vampires struggle to preserve Humanity, but there are many others. For instance, the less Humanity a vampire has, the deeper he sleeps, and the more

difficult it is for him to wake up in an emergency. He also tends to go into a frenzy more often in stressful situations, as he finds it difficult to control his primal instincts when he is in danger. The actions taken when in frenzy could lead to even more Humanity loss.

Humanity can be seen as what separates a vampire from a human. Vampires with high Humanity are the most human, while those with low Humanity are brutal and monstrous. Of course, it's not as clean-cut as that; many humans have a low Humanity – sadistic killers for example – so it's possible for a vampire to be even more human than some humans.





Humanity ranges from 3 (a complete monster, barely capable of any act of goodness) to 20 (a nearly deific creature who is more Humane than most humans).

### Effects of Humanity

*Appearance.* To a large extent, Humanity determines how human vampires appear and how easily they can pass for human in the general populace. The less Humanity a character possesses, the more bestial he appears. Vampires with a Humanity of less than 8 will be easily spotted among humans, though their true natures will not necessarily be recognized. Treat this as a -1 Reaction penalty for every point of Humanity below 8.

*Waking.* Vampires tend to sleep very deeply and, even if there is danger, can be difficult to wake up. During the day, a vampire must make an IQ-5 roll to awaken without aid, or IQ-2 if someone is trying to wake them up. After being awakened, a player cannot roll higher than his character's score in Humanity for any skill or perception roll. This applies to rolls for Disciplines as well. This penalty is in effect at any time during the day. Once the sun goes down, the restriction no longer applies.

*Self-Control.* Humanity directly affects Will Rolls when someone attempts to resist going into frenzy. The Will Roll must be *below* the PC's Humanity score, regardless of his level of Self-Control. Therefore, as a vampire sinks into the abyss of bestiality, he can not long resist the call of the wild. As Humanity is lost, the character comes slowly closer to the day when he loses all self-control.

*Torpor.* The length of time spent in torpor is also directly affected by the Humanity level. The lower the character's Humanity, the longer he remains in torpor. See p. 83 for more about Torpor.

### Gaining and Losing Humanity

Humanity is one of the most flexible statistics a character will have. Throughout the course of a game, a vampire will lose and gain Humanity. There are several instances where this can happen.

*Acts of Unnecessary Brutality.* Vampires must feed, yes, but they do not have to kill when they feed, and they never have to hurt a victim. Kindred who kill a victim while feeding, or generally show a lack of concern over a vessel's well-being must make a Will Roll, plus Conscience bonus, to avoid losing 1d points of Humanity. Other inhuman acts require this roll as well.

*Frenzy.* If a character allows himself to sink into frenzy, voluntary or not, his actions may cause him to lose Humanity, at the GM's discretion.

*Displays of Heroism or Uncommon Compassion.* Kindred can regain Humanity by performing acts that show that they have kept a connection with mortal values. A vampire who rescues someone from a mugger would be justified in receiving 1 or 2 points of Humanity, while someone who braves a burning building to rescue a baby should receive 8-10 points for his extreme courage. As a PC's Humanity increases, so should the difficulty of gaining points.

# Blood Pool

*Why do your locks and rumpled clothes show  
'Tis more than usual sleep has made them so?  
Why are the kisses which he gave betrayed  
By the impression which his teeth have made?*

— Ovid



The Blood Pool is simply a measure of how much blood a vampire has in its system. The Pool can be empty, which means that the character has used up all available blood in his body. He will then lose 2 hit points the next time the rules require him to lose a Blood Point (such as when a night passes). In other words, when the Blood Pool is empty, there are no Blood Points to use.

Blood Pool has an important influence on resisting frenzy. Since frenzy is often caused by hunger for blood, the amount of blood in the Blood Pool figures into how likely a vampire is to go into frenzy. If a character has less than 5 Blood Points, he will be at a -1 to his Will Roll for every point below 5. For example, if a vampire has 2 Blood Points left in his Pool, and he must roll to avoid frenzy, he would be at a -3 to Will.

Some Kindred of earlier generations will have Blood Pools larger than their HT (see p. 59).

## Using Blood Points

Every night of existence uses up one Blood Point. However, characters can decide to use Blood Points for other purposes. The number of Blood Points someone can use per turn is determined by his generation (see the table on p. 59). When a Blood Point is used, it is gone. The only way it can be replenished is through feeding.

❖ One Blood Point can be spent to restore 2 hit points, but only if the vampire is standing completely still and is not distracted by something (like combat). To perform this, the character must concentrate for at least one second. See *Blood Healing*, on p. 58, for more information.



❖ One Blood Point can be spent to take the place of 2 points of Fatigue when using a Discipline.

❖ One Blood Point can add +2 to any skill roll the character chooses. The player must announce the expenditure of a Blood Point, and the bonus counts only for the next roll. This also requires a turn of concentration.

The effects of this *can* be accumulated, provided the vampire can concentrate for the required amount of time and spends the Blood Points necessary. So if a character wanted to spend 3 Blood Points, he could get a +6 bonus on a skill roll. The player *must* specify, however, which skill he wants the bonus to apply to.

❖ One Blood Point can increase ST by 2 for *one turn*. This is cumulative, so a vampire who wanted to burn 10 blood points in one turn could perform an incredible feat of strength, with his ST at +20. This *can* be combined with the increase granted by Potence.

❖ A vampire can give a portion of his Blood Pool to another, thus enabling him to restore hit points or take special actions. This requires slashing open an artery and letting the other character drink from it. Some may frenzy and attempt to drink more than they should, so this action can be somewhat dangerous. Additionally, if this is the third time the recipient has drunk a certain Kindred's blood, he will become Blood Bonded to the donor unless he is already currently Bonded to another vampire (see p. 84).

## Gaining Blood Points

When a vampire drinks the blood of an animal or human, he gains nourishment — the blood essential for a vampire to live. This is quantified as Blood Points. If a vampire drinks to his Blood Pool's maximum, he is full and cannot benefit from drinking more. He *can* drink more, however, if he wants to, but it doesn't add to his Blood Pool nor does it remain in his system for later use. A vampire can drink up to three times his total Blood Pool if necessary to drain the blood of a human or animal. However, the Cainite's skin gains a very rosy hue, and the vampire may even appear bloated.

If a vampire drinks all of a person's blood, that person will die. If more than half is drunk, the vessel will need to be hospitalized and might die (mortals drop 2 hit points for every point of blood taken). If characters do not want to risk losing Humanity, they'd better learn to control themselves.

One point of blood can be drained from a human or animal in one turn. Vampires can drink it more slowly if they wish, and many do so to eke more pleasure out of the experience.

Once a human is bitten, he no longer resists the attack of the vampire and indeed becomes a full partner in the ecstasy. Thus, the vampire usually need not fear the victim once the teeth have sunk in. In the cases of exceptionally strong-willed individuals, resistance may continue. A Will



Roll at -5 is required, and if failed, they are drawn into the seduction of the Kiss. Some mortals, given the opportunity, learn to enjoy the Embrace and may develop a lust for it.

If a vampire drinks more than half of a victim's Blood Pool, that person's life is in serious danger, and some sort of treatment is usually necessary to ensure the victim's survival. If more than three-fourths of a victim's blood is taken, immediate hospitalization is required or the vessel will surely die.

A wounded character usually has less blood than normal. Assume that a normal-sized human has one fewer Blood

Point for every 2 HT missing. Vampires do not lose blood to wounds in this way.

### *Blood Potency*

While some animals may have much more blood than a human by volume, it is far less nourishing and therefore is worth fewer Blood Points. Old blood is never as potent as fresh blood, unless it is extraordinarily potent, e.g. the blood of an elder, in which case it will maintain its vitality for some time.

If a vampire drinks the blood of an Ancient, the amount of blood taken in a turn may be worth 2 Blood Points or more. Therefore, it is possible by feeding from such creatures to gain a tremendous amount of Blood Points in a short amount of time. Elders concentrate the blood they drink, thereby increasing their effective Blood Pools. The same amount of blood from an elder can contain more Blood Points than that of a neonate.

Essentially, elders have much larger Blood Pools than other vampires, although they are not physically larger. They are able to contain the blood only because they are able to concentrate it. Thus, if another vampire drank that blood, he would receive a highly concentrated dose.

The table below shows some typical Blood Pool sizes.

<i>Source</i>	<i>Blood Pool size</i>
Vampire	10-50
Werewolf	25
Average Human	10
Child	6
Cow	5
Dog	2
Cat	1
Plasma Bag	1
Rat	1/2
Bird	1/4

## **Frenzy**



vampires, like mortals, are creatures of instinct. However, the instincts of the vampire are those of a hunter, not a gatherer. Vampires are the ultimate predators and stand at the apex of the food chain. They are highly developed killing machines – the harbingers of death.

For vampires to survive in modern society, however, they must learn to keep the Beast in check. The instincts of violence so essential in the wild serve only to endanger the vampire in today's complex world. The Beast's rage has its uses, but the blindness it creates far outweighs its benefits.

Vampires struggle to suppress the Beast, but, no matter how hard they try, they do not always prevail. And when it gets loose, the havoc it creates goes far beyond the horror of any mortal rage.

In game terms, this struggle with the Beast is covered by the Berserk disadvantage, although with vampires the results of losing control are different, slightly, from mortals.

See p. 61 and p. B31 for more about the Berserk disadvantage.

As discussed earlier, there are times when the GM will require a character to make a Will Roll, adding in any bonuses he may have for Self-Control (see p. 56). If the vampire makes his roll, he can go about his business. He has kept the Beast at bay – at least for now. If he fails the Will Roll, though, he has lost control, and the Beast takes over part, if not all, of his actions.

### **Provocation**

It is always up to the GM to decide what circumstances might provoke a frenzy. He may ignore some very blatant factors, but force the players to roll for what they consider very minor things. His interpretation of the nature of the Gothic-Punk world is reflected in the frenzy rolls he asks the players to make.

The types of provocation are left intentionally vague so that they work in whatever way best suits a GM's campaign. A more action-oriented campaign with Kindred who can be fairly sure of themselves will not include many frenzy rolls. On the other hand, a campaign that focuses on the characters' essential weaknesses will use Will Rolls to force the vampires to examine and confront these weaknesses.

Hunger often provokes the frenzy and can result in the death of a vessel as the vampire drinks it dry. This occurs only if the character is hungry (5 Blood Points or less), and is brought on by the sight, taste or smell of blood. The vampire also suffers a penalty to avoid frenzy; -1 for every Blood Point below 5.

A frenzy can also be provoked through anger and can turn into a great vampiric rage. Rage can be ignited by many factors, and these vary widely from character to character. It is most often provoked by humiliation or taunting.

### The Roll

A vampire does not have to resist the frenzy, but if he wishes to do so, he must make a Will Roll, with a certain modifier. A success allows a character to hold the Beast in check. Note that if the provocation is still in effect (the smell of blood or a taunting foe, etc.), the vampire has to re-roll every minute.

A character's Humanity score directly affects his Will Roll in that he must roll less than his Humanity, regardless of what his Will might be. For example, if a vampire has a Humanity of 10 and a Will of 14 (including his Self-Control bonus), he would have to roll below 10 to avoid frenzy. But if his Humanity were 14 or above, he would roll vs. 14.

The table below indicates some common modifiers to the Will Roll.

<i>Provocation</i>	<i>Modifier</i>
Smell of blood (when hungry)	minus the number of Blood Points below 5
Sight of blood (when hungry)	minus twice the number of Blood Points below 5
Taste of blood (when hungry)	minus three times the number of Blood Points below 5
Being bullied	-2
Life threatened	-2
Taunting	-2
Provoked into anger	-4
Lover in danger	-5
Outright humiliation	-7

### Roleplaying the Frenzy

During a frenzy, a vampire is capable of nearly any sort of immoral, risky and psychotic behavior. While in a frenzy, a character must behave with animalistic abandon, concerning himself only with immediate gratification - whether that means a berserk attack or stark raving madness depends on the stimuli. No logical thought occurs and all reactions are instinctive and emotional.

If blood is available, the character will drink until he can

drink no more (even beyond his Blood Pool size; see p. 77). A frenzied vampire may kill a vessel, for he is consumed by the desire for blood. If no blood is nearby, he will rush off in search of it. The character becomes enraged and attempts to destroy everything and anything in sight. While he will attack enemies first, if his friends get in the way (or there are no enemies nearby), he will attack them as well.

However, while in a frenzy, the character gains some benefits as well as the obvious drawbacks. First, the vampire does not need to make any Will Rolls to do anything. He is immune to Röttschreck, other Fright Checks, etc. Anyone using a Domination power on him is at -5.

Although frenzy is basically a mindless rage, the vampire can exert some slight control over his character. If he makes a Will Roll at -5, and spends a Blood Point, he can control himself for one minute. After the minute is gone, though, the frenzy returns.



If a player describes actions for his character that go against what the GM believes to be appropriate during a frenzy, he should either disallow them, or deduct character points. Frenzies are not trivial.

Frenzies vary in duration. The GM must decide when one will end. In some ways, a frenzy moves along a simple cycle. When things calm down and the tension level falls, the frenzy slowly comes to a stop. Generally, this works out to 2d minutes after the source of the frenzy is gone. For example, if a vampire frenzied because some punk was taunting him, and the punk ran off to safety when he saw the Beast take hold, the frenzy would last for 2d minutes after the punk was gone. The character should never know when the frenzy will fade, though.

A person's friends can help him overcome a frenzy by confronting him and speaking with him. A successful Diplomacy or Psychology roll will reduce the duration by 1d minutes. If this reduces it to zero or less than zero, the frenzy dies. If the roll fails, the frenzied vampire must make a Will Roll (plus Self Control) to keep from attacking the would-be counselor.





## Injury and Death



One of a vampire's defining characteristics is his ability to sustain massive wounds without apparent effect. It's almost as if Kindred were invulnerable to most damage. This is not true. Vampires take damage as easily as any mortal, but they are able to better withstand the severe debilitating effects of heavy wounds. And if they are hit with enough damage to stop them or render them unconscious, they will not die from these wounds, unless their source is one of the very few things that can actually kill a vampire.

### Injury

When a vampire sustains an injury, mark off hit points as normal. However, Kindred do not suffer any movement or skill penalties until their HT reaches zero. They also will not be affected by crippling injuries as long as their HT is positive. This is why a vampire can take two or three good hits from a weapon and appear to ignore it. Their bodies do not have the living systems that mortals do – the systems that fail and cause their owners to slow down when wounds are sustained.

Once at zero or below, the actual structure of a vampire's body is beginning to give out. They are at half Move and suffer penalties from shock as normal (see p. B126). They can also suffer crippling injuries. Even at this stage, they are formidable opponents since they can stay conscious and fighting without having to make any rolls.

At -HT, vampires must begin making rolls every round to stay conscious. *Note that -HT is not the same as "below zero."* If a vampire's HT is 12, -HT is -12. Instead of Health rolls, as normal characters would make, they roll vs. Will, adding in any bonus for Normal Strong Will (see p. 56). As

long as they keep making Will Rolls, they can continue fighting. But as they take more damage, they will start losing precious blood.

After -HT, Kindred do not lose any more hit points. Instead, they lose Blood Points, at a rate of -1 for every 2 points of damage that gets through DR. If a vampire is at -HT and loses all his Blood Points, he immediately goes into Torpor. If he is at -HT and sustains an aggravated wound (see p. 82), he will die the Final Death.

### Types of Injury

Though they are powerful, there are many ways to inflict harm upon a vampire. Some are common to mortals, while others are specific to vampires. These sources of injury are described below.

#### Combat

Like anyone else, vampires can sustain injuries during combat. Except as detailed above, combat is run exactly as shown in the *Basic Set*.

#### Falling

Occasionally, characters will fall, and the fear of that occurring is essential to maintaining suspense during the game. If the players are not afraid of their characters' taking damage from a fall, they will take all sorts of out-of-character risks. True, a vampire might never die from a fall, but he still suffers the pain and incapacitation that a fall creates. And Blood Points are precious; using them to heal damage from a fall is wasteful.

Vampires, like any other character, can use Acrobatics to reduce the relative distance of a fall by 5 yards.

### Fire

Fire is quite hazardous to vampires – they fear it more than nearly anything else. Fire always causes aggravated damage, and therefore it can kill vampires. Although any amount of flame can harm a vampire, they can resist part of the severity by making a HT roll.

When coming in contact with fire, a vampire must make a successful HT roll, or he takes twice the normal fire damage for that amount of flame. If the roll is successful, he takes the normal damage *minus* the amount he made the roll by. So a vampire who is burned by a lighter flame might not take any damage on a successful HT roll, but one pushed into a roaring fire will inevitably take damage, the severity of which is determined by the success or failure of the roll. Any vampire can spend 1 Blood Point for an automatic success on this HT roll. This automatic success reduces the damage taken by 2d.

On a critical failure, the fire does *three times* normal damage and maims the victim in some way – loss of an eye, hideously scarred face, *et cetera*.

Note that since fire causes aggravated injury, any damage from fire when a vampire is at -HT will kill him, and hit points lost from fire damage should be recorded separately from normal damage because it requires more Blood Points and time to heal than normal wounds. Also, extreme heat (200+ degrees) can harm vampires in much the same way as fire, but is usually not as deadly.

### Sunlight

Sunlight is another of the few ways to truly kill a vampire. Sunlight causes aggravated wounds, and each turn a vampire is exposed to sunlight, he is burned. He can resist the effects in much the same way as he can absorb damage from fire.

In direct sunlight, a vampire takes 1 die of damage per minute. A successful HT roll will absorb this damage, but each roll is at a cumulative -1 for each additional minute spent in the sunlight. So the first few minutes of sunlight are easily defended against, but the longer a vampire stays in the light, the harder it becomes to withstand. As with fire above, a Blood Point may always be spent for an automatic success on the HT roll. By spending his Blood Points, a vampire with a large Blood Pool could stay out in the sun for nearly an hour without having to make any rolls.

The diffusion of the light affects the amount of damage taken. The damage is the same, but it is spread out over a longer time. Sunlight diffused by fog might cause 1d of damage every 3 minutes. Only one HT roll per die of damage is allowed to resist the effects of the sunlight. Heavy clothing and tinted windows protect much like cloud cover, but they will not stop the effects of sunlight completely. If a vampire takes any damage from sunlight when he is at -HT, he is completely destroyed.

There are some “sun lamps” commercially available that produce ultraviolet light like that of the sun. Though these lamps are not nearly as deadly as the sun, they can still irritate or even harm vampires, though the damage will be at least half or less of that of real sunlight, and it will not

cause aggravated injury. A vampire cannot be destroyed with a sun lamp.

The following chart gives some examples of typical damage from sunlight in various circumstances:

Condition	Damage
Direct sunlight	1d/minute
Direct sunlight with heavy clothing	1d/3 minutes
Indirect sunlight (sunlit room)	1d/2 minutes
Sun obscured by clouds	1d/4-5 minutes
Indirect light with heavy clothing	1d/6 minutes
Twilight or early dawn	1d/ 8 minutes

Since sunlight causes aggravated wounds, damage caused by it should be recorded separately. These hit points take longer and require more Blood Points to heal.

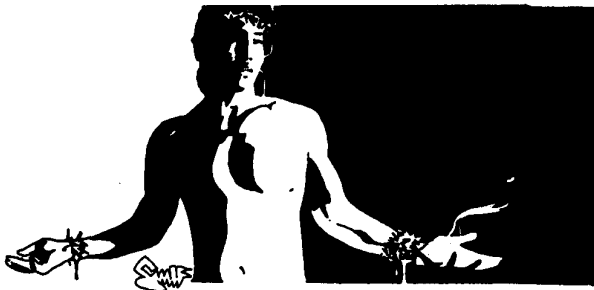
### Deterioration

Vampires deteriorate through lack of healing. If a vampire has been staked through the heart and cannot move, he will still lose one Blood Point per day. Once all Blood Points have been lost, the vampire will begin to lose hit points at the rate of 3 per day. Once the vampire reaches -HT, she enters torpor. Note that vampires cannot “die” because of deterioration.

### Disease

Though vampires can catch and even transmit human diseases, they cannot die from them. Most human diseases are ineffective against vampires, since the Kindred are technically not alive. In this case, someone who picks up a disease becomes a carrier, transmitting the disease to anyone he feeds from.





There are rumors of "blood diseases" that can harm Kindred. If these do exist, they will affect vampires in the same way that normal diseases affect humans. They cannot kill Kindred, though. The worst effect one would have is to reduce a Cainite to torpor.

### Stakes

A wooden stake through a vampire's heart does not cause death, but does completely immobilize the victim. Over time, the vampire will deteriorate due to a lack of blood, eventually falling into a full torpor. Of course, fire or sunlight may destroy him first. It is extremely difficult to aim a stake precisely through the heart during combat. Wielding a stake uses the Knife skill, but is at a -2 because it is not balanced like a knife. The heart is an additional -6 to hit. An attacker must have at least ST 13 to penetrate the ribcage and the heart with a wooden stake, and the stake itself must be sharpened to a precise point.

If a vampire is sleeping or unconscious, a regular Knife skill roll, at no penalty is required to hit the heart, since there is much more time to position the stake. Once staked, vampires are completely immobilized; they can take no physical action. They remain conscious and can spend Blood Points to heal themselves, but cannot remove the stake or prevent the daily loss of Blood.

Once a vampire has been thus immobilized, he may be killed by burning, sunlight or any other aggravated wound.

### Extreme Cold

Though vampires cannot die from cold, they can suffer the effects of frostbite and even become entirely frozen in severe temperatures. Cold is especially dangerous because vampires do not have any body warmth except in the minutes immediately following a feeding. Since they generate no body heat, clothing does not protect them from the effects of the cold.

Characters need to make HT rolls every ten minutes after they have been outside in the cold for a certain period of time. This varies depending on how cold it is, but it's usually half an hour for temperatures between zero and -50 degrees Fahrenheit. Colder temperatures would take effect sooner, and temperatures warmer than zero have no effect. Each successful roll forestalls any damage from the cold. A failed roll calls for 1d damage for every 10 degrees below zero (round to the lower temperature; -5 degrees would cause 1d damage, while -32 would call for 4d damage). Vampires can burn a Blood Point to create an automatic success on any HT roll to resist cold.

### Permutations

## Healing

Vampires are undead and never recover naturally from wounds. They must always use Blood Points to heal themselves. One Blood Point heals 2 hit points; this always takes at least one turn to accomplish.

Normally, a vampire must remain still when healing, taking no other action, but with extreme effort, he can attempt to heal while performing other actions. A Will-5 roll will allow a vampire to heal himself while doing something else. However, if the roll fails, the character does not gain any hit points, and loses the Blood Point anyway. A critical failure results in the character *losing* the amount of hit points he was attempting to heal. Success indicates the character heals successfully.

### Aggravated Wounds

Vampires occasionally suffer wounds so severe they cannot simply use Blood Points to heal them. These are known as aggravated wounds, and are commonly created by sunlight, fire or the claws and teeth of other undead – including other vampires, ghouls and hellhounds (see p. 45) and Lupines. Aggravated wounds require both blood and time to heal.

Hit points lost to an aggravated wound can only be healed at the rate of 3 per day of rest and cost of 5 Blood Points per 3 hit points healed. Three additional hit points can be healed during a night if the character spends 5 additional Blood Points and makes a Will Roll at -5. Because they have different healing requirements, aggravated wounds should be indicated on the character sheet separately from normal wounds.

Depending on the campaign, there may be other things that can cause aggravated injury – lasers, radiation, etc. The GM has the final say as to what types of injuries are aggravated.

## Final Death

Though vampires are no longer mortal, they still face the possibility of dying. It may be comforting to imagine vampires as virtual gods, capable of doing impossible acts and of withstanding nearly anything, but there are ways to kill even vampires. A player's vampire character may be reduced to unconsciousness and torpor many times throughout a campaign, and he will still be able to return to play eventually, but if the PC experiences Final Death, the vampire is gone forever. The player must begin again with a new vampire.

Inflicting aggravated wounds on a severely injured vampire is the most common way in which he can be extinguished. If a vampire sustains an aggravated wound while he has no Blood Pool and is at -HT, he is utterly destroyed. Sometimes the Final Death results in the complete and rapid disintegration of the body, and within minutes all that will be left is a pile of ashes.

Vampires can also be killed if all the blood is sucked from them by another of their kind. This is called Diablerie and is discussed on p. 86.

A vampire whose body is *completely destroyed* is also killed. Decapitation or being drawn and quartered is not sufficient, though the victim must have another vampire reconstruct his body and feed him blood to reawaken. Ultimately, the GM must decide if the damage to the body is severe enough to warrant the Final Death.

## Torpor

As demonstrated above, death does not come easily to vampires. However, when their injuries grow too great, they go into a very deep sleep known as torpor.

When a vampire becomes injured beyond -HT and loses all Blood Points as well, the vampire goes into torpor (or, if the injury is aggravated, the result is Final Death). The character is completely immobilized and unconscious, though more powerful Kindred (such as the Antediluvians) can still use some of their Disciplines in this state.

Torpor is no beauty sleep. It is similar to a coma for mortals, and adversely affects either the victim's mind or his body. When a vampire emerges from torpor, he has lost a point from one of his attributes, *permanently*. It can only be replaced by the expenditure of character points. The player may decide which attribute takes the reduction.

Vampires with a Humanity of 19 or 20 come out of the deep sleep within a day or so, while those with less Humanity sleep for a few weeks to a few months. The blood of an Ancient can sometimes prematurely revive a vampire in torpor, at the GM's discretion.

Humanity	Length of Torpor
20	One day
19	Two days
18	Three days
17	Five days
16	One week
15	Ten days
14	Two weeks
13	Three weeks
12	One month
11	Six months
10	One year
9	Five years
8	Ten years
7	20 years
6	50 years
5	75 years
4	One century
3	Five centuries

While in torpor, a vampire uses blood normally at the rate of one per day, but once the blood is gone, no hit points are lost.

A character may go into torpor voluntarily. When the character goes to sleep, the player simply informs the GM that his character is entering torpor. Many ancient Cainites voluntarily enter this state in a protected place to avoid the risk of frenzies or other dangers. Voluntary torpor does not require the loss of a point from an Attribute.



# Blood Bond



It is possible to create a Blood Bond with another vampire, thereby turning the Bonded one into a servant and, in some ways, a lover. Blood Bond is spoken of as holding Regnancy over another. The one who commands the Bonded vampire is known as the Regnant, whereas the one who is held in Regnancy is commonly known as the Thrall. Usually the elders are Regnants and neonates are Thralls, but not always. An essential strategy in the Jyhad is to hold many in Regnancy, for it gives the Regnant powerful and trustworthy retainers. For this reason, Blood Bond is sometimes known as Blood Oath. Many Kindred are suspicious of one another, for they are never sure who are the Thralls of Ancients, and who are not.

When a character starts the game with another vampire in Thrall, he must take the Regnancy advantage, described on p. 60. If a vampire PC becomes Blood Bonded to another Kindred, sire or not, he must take the Blood Bonded disadvantage, described on p. 63.



## Creation of the Bond

The Blood Bond is created by the exchange of blood between two vampires. The Thrall must drink the Regnant's blood three times, on three different occasions (on different days). It can be any amount of blood; even a sip, or just a taste if the Regnant is an Ancient. Unlike the limitations of the Dominate Discipline (see p. 102), it is possible for weaker blood to hold Regnancy over more potent blood. Thus, a 10th-generation Kindred could hold Regnancy over one of the 9th generation.

The more times the Thrall drinks blood, the more the Bond is reinforced. Most Regnants have their Thralls drink their blood several times a year to reinforce the bond. Many Regnants fear that if the Bond is broken, their Thralls will desire revenge. This is perhaps why so many Thralls are fairly well-treated by their Regents; after all, any servitude can be overcome. Extreme hate can weaken even the Blood Bond.

Once a vampire has been Blood Bonded, he cannot be Bonded by another, unless the first Bond is broken. Kindred can only be Bonded to one vampire at a time, and are thus safe from it if already Bonded. However, some vampires know rituals which allow the tie to be created with a number of different vampires if the Thrall-to-be drinks of their blood at one sitting. In fact, one of the most severe punishments of the Camarilla is to be forced to drink the blood of all the Kindred attending a Conclave. Usually the feelings produced by such a widespread Bond are more diffuse than normal, but they are no less powerful. The attachment is to the group and not any one individual.

All characters are already on their way to being Blood Bonded, for their sires have already given them at least one taste of blood. Thus, if the character partakes of his sire's blood two more times, he will be held in Regnancy. In some cases, the vampire will start the campaign held in Regnancy by his sire. Tremere neonates are also one step toward being Bonded to their clan as a whole.

## Power of the Bond

Bonding is primarily an emotional power. A Thrall views the vampire to whom he is Bonded as the central figure in his life and is invariably obsessed with him. Though he may despise his Regnant, he will do nearly anything to aid him. He will do nothing to harm his Regnant and will even attempt to protect him against enemies. It is very likely that the Thrall understands what is happening to him, intellectually at least, but he will be unable to do anything about it.

The Blood Bond is like falling in love – once it happens, the Thrall is caught in its grip until somehow he breaks free. The character may know he is in love, and hate what it makes him do, but that does not stop him from being in love and it doesn't prevent him from doing some of the inane things people in love sometimes do. The Blood Bond is possibly the closest approximation of that vaunted emotion many vampires ever reach. When roleplaying Blood Bond,



use this “love” metaphor to understand just how deeply and completely the character is obsessed with the Regnant. Regnants who have high Humanity levels may return this “love” to some degree.

One of the primary powers a Regnant has over his Thrall is that he is able to Dominate the Thrall without eye contact. As long as the Thrall is able to hear the words of his Regnant, he can be Dominated. Any attempt to resist use of the Dominate discipline is at a -4 when Blood Bonded.

Blood Bond sometimes (but not always) gives the Regnant insight into the mood and feelings of the Thrall, and he may even know where the Thrall is from moment to moment, if the Blood Bond has been held long enough.

If a Regnant asks a favor of his Thrall, he will perform the task if it is at all possible. However, if it requires him to risk his life, he does not have to do it. Even love is not that blind. Even so, if there is an emergency and the Regnant is being attacked, the Thrall’s first instinct is to go to aid him. Self-sacrifice is not unknown, especially if the Bond has been reinforced over the years. If the Thrall is treated well, the Bond is reinforced and it grows stronger – if he is humiliated and degraded, the hate that will develop will diminish the Bond’s influence on the Thrall.

At the GM’s discretion, a Thrall can resist the effects of a Blood Bond with a Will Roll. The Thrall must make this

roll with a penalty equal to twice the number of times he has drunk the blood of his Regnant in the last year. If the roll is successful, the Thrall can refuse any one request the Regnant makes.

If the character simply wishes to plot against his Regnant, each successful roll would allow him to take one significant action that goes against the Regnant’s wishes. However, if he wants to actively attack his Regnant, the penalty is *doubled!*

It is possible to break a Blood Bond, but it can be difficult. It requires five such Will Rolls over a long period of time, but also necessitates that the character completely avoid his Regnant. If a Thrall does not see the Regnant for some time, and does not interact with the object of his attachment, the Bond will eventually die away. The breaking of a character’s Blood Bond cannot be achieved through experience points or successful rolls; it must be roleplayed, and depends largely on the personality of the character who has been bonded.

It is whispered that the Sabbat knows of ways to break the Bond, but it is said one must pledge to the sect before the process will be imparted. Whatever the case, those who most resent their Bondage and retain the free will to act independently flee to the Sabbat – fearing less the Black Hand than continued servitude to an elder.

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## Character Goals

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he chronicle of a vampire’s existence is not merely a montage of violence and feeding, political maneuvering and Machiavellian intrigue. Certainly, those elements have their place, but most Kindred have hopes for something better, something that rises above the brutal monotony of their existences.

### Rebirth

Despite the tragedy of their being, vampires can escape their curse and become mortal again. Though exceedingly difficult, it is a major theme of many campaigns and something that will direct the ambitions and thoughts of many characters.

Truly exquisite moments can be created in roleplaying through the search for Rebirth. When characters who have searched together for Rebirth finally arrive at the point where it is possible, they must decide whether they wish to actually become mortal again.

Rebirth is never possible to accomplish through strict rules, but must instead be a primary element of the story and a part of the roleplaying. There are a variety of myths and legends among the Kindred about how Rebirth might come about. The decision of which myths are true and which are false is up to the GM. However, it is possible, and even perhaps advisable, to make Rebirth impossible if it is not the focus of the campaign. If the GM wishes to include it, though, here are some ideas on how vampires might achieve Rebirth.

If a vampire manages to kill his sire, and his sire's sire, and his sire's sire's sire, he may break free of the curse. This is not always the case, however, for sometimes one must progress all the way up the bloodline to an Antediluvian or possibly even beyond. Why it is possible for some to slay only their masters and be freed, while others must go further along the bloodline, is unknown. If there is a logic to it, it has not yet been discovered.

If a vampire sacrifices himself for another person and dies in the attempt, then it is possible that the death may be that of a mortal. The sacrifice was so great that in death the vampire is restored to mortal form. In situations where a character has recently died, this can shine new light on the situation. This sort of "poetic justice" might not be appropriate in some campaigns, but those with a romantic flair may benefit greatly.

There are a number of complicated rituals that can end the Curse and rescue a character from the Damned. These rituals must be researched, the "ingredients" found, and the proper time and place decided. If one factor is wrong, the ritual could end in death, not salvation.

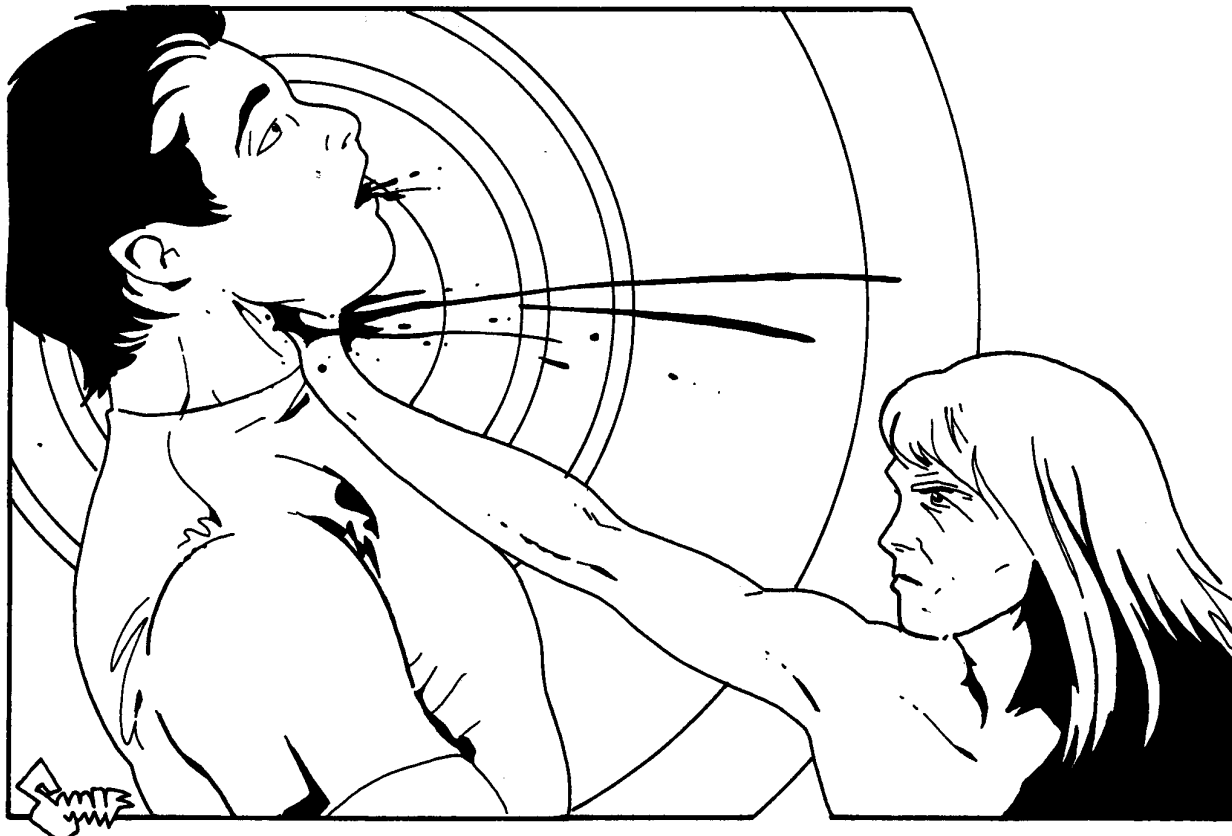
It is said that at the final point of the Golconda ritual (see below), it is possible to choose to be mortal, rather than attaining Golconda itself. Many elders deny this, but as it is unlikely they have reached Golconda, it is difficult to decide whether they know the truth.

## Diablerie

It is possible for vampires to garner immense powers, advancing even in the potency of their blood, and approaching the quintessential power of Caine. In fact, it is the lure of just such power that created and now fuels the eternal conflict between the Kindred – the great Jyhad. It is the lust for this power that causes neonates to slay their sires, and it is the fear of this lust that causes elders to persecute their fledglings.

The process through which a vampire kills another in order to rise in power is called diablerie, or the Amaranth. The Amaranth is a legendary undying flower, a treasure beyond price, and according to legend was given to an elder a week before he was attacked. "Diabolist" is the epithet for one who hunts his own kin for their blood.

When a Kindred drinks from another until all his blood is drained away, and continues to drink until he is extinguished (brought to -HT) the very essence of the vessel is



transferred. Not only is the vessel killed, but the vessel's life-force is passed along to the slayer.

If the vessel was a vampire, and was of an earlier generation than the vampire who drank the blood, the slayer's effective generation is lowered by one. This provides many benefits: it allows the Diabolist to be able to Dominate a larger number of the Kindred (you can only Dominate vampires who are of a later generation) and possess and use a larger Blood Pool (see *Generation*, p. 59, for more details). If the vessel's generation was more than three earlier than the attacker, then it may be possible for more than one Diabolist to drink and thereby reduce a generation.

If a vampire wishes to continue drinking and drain the life-force of a vampiric vessel, even after all the blood is drained, he must make a Strength roll at -5. Success indicates that the target loses 2 hit points. No blood is actually drained, but instead the very spirit of the vampire is taken from the body. The ST roll must be repeated every round that the Diabolist wants to keep drinking. Once the vessel reaches -HT (that is, if the victim's HT is 12, -HT is -12), he dies the Final Death, and his life-force is passed along to the drinker. If the vessel was not of an earlier generation, this does not mean very much. Such cannot be done with mortals, for their life-force has already been extinguished by the time they lose all their Blood Points.

Each time a player character does this, the GM should require a Will Roll to avoid losing points of Humanity, especially if the one whom they have slain displayed any sort of good or noble tendencies.

## Golconda

*Should the whole frame of nature round him break,  
In ruin and confusion hurled,  
He, unconcerned, would hear the mighty crack,  
And stand secure amidst a falling world.*

— Horace, "Odes"

*GURPS Vampire* campaigns often center around the Hero's Journey — the quest to discover who one really is. It is the journey of Prometheus, the Greek hero who brought us fire.

At the point where a vampire overcomes sin and approaches the end of the quest, two things can happen. Either he becomes mortal once again, or he becomes a new kind of vampire: one who no longer feels the urge to frenzy, the need to feed or the desire to sin so strongly.

Golconda is a state of being wherein the character manages to control his frenzies and restrain the Beast. All Kindred of clear mind seek this state unless they want a total release from their undeath. Golconda is not an easy state of being to attain, but for many it is the only goal worth achieving. It is not a reconnection to one's mortality. In fact, the opposite is true — Golconda is an acceptance and hence a control over one's bestiality. Golconda is the final acceptance of one's curse and the subsequent power over it.

Basic to Golconda is the act of remorse. This is not necessarily any sort of religious repentance, but rather a more personal and immediate realization of the sins one has com-

mitted. The character must make some sort of penance, such as donating to a charity, aiding someone in need, or in some cases even punishing himself. The worse the sins, the more he needs to do.

Game Masters should almost never allow a character to reach Golconda. Only if the vampire does a superb job of trying to make things right, and experiences profound remorse for his actions, should he even have a chance. The GM must ask himself whether the character truly feels remorse and compassion. How well has the player roleplayed through the whole process of grief and regret? Golconda should never be easily earned. In most cases, it should occur only at the end of an entire campaign. A new campaign could begin with the same character, but with an entirely different concept and motif.

It should take many game sessions to complete the process. More than one character can attempt to reach Golconda, but it is normally something only a few achieve.

In some ways, Golconda can be seen as a movement within the Kindred, but if it is a movement, it does not have much organization. Some who have reached Golconda are very evangelistic and encourage others to follow the same path to peace. They wish to bring all of the Kindred into the sanctity Golconda offers. Some even travel from city to city speaking about Golconda, and encouraging those who are interested to learn more. They do not reveal the secrets of Golconda, for each supplicant must learn of it on his own, but they will give hints.

There is said to be an Antediluvian who has reached Golconda and supports those who spread word of it. This Ancient's role in the Jyhad is said to be one of thwarting the others from succeeding in their plots to destroy the Kindred. Only those among the Inconnu would know anything of this creature. Of course, the critics of the Golconda movement decry the whole movement as being but a minor intrigue in the great Jyhad. The truth of the matter will perhaps never be known until the night of Gehenna.

## Quest

There aren't really any rules for determining when a character reaches Golconda, for this is something that must come about as a part of roleplaying. Golconda is a sublime and nearly intangible state of being. Thus, it is the GM's responsibility to set the conditions for when the change can occur. The player might not even know his character has reached Golconda until the GM allows him make a few rolls differently.

Golconda is akin to a quest — a spiritual and mental journey into one's own self. Often the quest for Golconda takes one to the astral plane or into the chaos of one's own mind. *The roleplaying involved can be extremely powerful, and should only be attempted after the character has been developed over a number of adventures and the player has a firm grasp of who and what the character is.* Golconda is about the transformation of a personality, and thus the character must have a complete and detailed personality for it to be any fun.

The quest for Golconda often begins with a vampire's search for who and what he is. In the first part of the adven-



ture, the GM needs to build a desire for Golconda and increase its allure to the participants. Slowly the Kindred should begin to realize what it is all about.

The second stage generally revolves around the search for an elder who can tell the questers more about Golconda. Normally this is one of the enigmatic members of the Inconnu (see p. 40) – someone who has already attained Golconda. This mentor must be convinced to aid the visitors who wish to reach Golconda and may require the completion of different “tasks” to prove the supplicants’ worthiness.

The characters must prove they do indeed feel remorse. The tasks are likely to require them to make up for past deeds, to right old wrongs, or even to go back to the families of their past victims and aid them. The roleplaying involved dredges up everything that has happened throughout the campaign and makes the vampires relive it.



When they have finally proven themselves to the mentor (though it is possible only one of the characters will prove himself sufficiently), he will initiate the final stage of the quest – the ritual. This ceremony can last several weeks or several months, and involves many quests into the dreams of the supplicant. This stage is known as the Suspire, and many stories are told of it. The dreams are said to be provoked by draughts of blood from one’s closest companions, who travel with the supplicant through the world of dreams.

The mentor must oversee the Suspire, and often it takes place at his or her haven. No one truly knows what occurs at this ritual, for only those who successfully attain Golconda live through it, and they never speak of their experience. Most of those who do survive join the Inconnu and live out their lives apart from mortal civilization. (Note: not all of the Inconnu have reached Golconda – only a significant minority.)

However, despite all the roleplaying involved, there are a few practical criteria for reaching Golconda. These are as essential as the story and roleplaying elements discussed above. First of all, the character’s Humanity rating must be a 14 or higher (if it ever falls below a 14, then the character falls from Golconda). Second, the character’s Conscience bonus from Strong Will must be at least +4 (unlike most advantages, these can be raised after character creation). Finally, over the duration of the quest for Golconda, the character must make innumerable Will Rolls to overcome all urges to frenzy, do wrong or waver from the true path. This reflects the determination of the character to reach Golconda and the self-affirmation that the quest provokes. Any failed rolls could require the supplicant to start over from scratch.

#### *Benefits of Golconda*

Once Golconda is reached, the character is at peace with himself. He no longer exists in a life filled with horror and self-pity. He finally masters the Beast within by accepting that the Beast is a part of him.

There is only one major benefit for reaching Golconda, but this one is enough. When a vampire reaches Golconda, he no longer frenzies, nor is he prone to the Röttschreck. No Will Rolls involving either of these need ever be made for as long as he remains in Golconda. Note that this means the vampire will gain 25 points as those intrinsic disadvantages (Berserk and Röttschreck) no longer affect him.

A lesser benefit is the fact that the vampire does not need to drink blood as often. The character only loses one Blood Point per week, rather than one Blood Point per day. This reduces the Draining disadvantage cost to -3 points instead of -10.

Rumors also exist of Kindred in Golconda utilizing the full potential of their vampiric form. Thus, instead of being limited by their clans or generations to what Disciplines they may take and how many blood points they can spend, characters in Golconda may develop any powers and spend all their blood at once, if they wish. If the GM decides that these rumors are true, then vampires who reach Golconda become the equivalent of 2nd-generation Kindred, nearly reaching the legendary power of Caine.

# The Prelude

*Before me floats an image, man or shade,  
Shade more than man, more image than a shade;  
For Hades' bobbins bound in mummy-cloth  
May unwind the winding path;  
A mouth that has no moisture and no breath  
Breathless mouths may summon;  
I hail the superhuman;  
I call it death-in-life and life-in-death.  
— Byzantium, William Butler Yeats*



art of the unity that bonds all vampires is that they were once mortal. Through the Embrace, they lost their mortality and became undead. Many treasure their former lives, conducting their Kindred existence as twisted shadows of their mortal selves. Others try to forget that they were mortal, instead reveling in the pleasure and power that is intrinsic to their new being.

Regardless, the vampire's past is what most defines his possibilities in the present and the future. To help players and GMs develop a clear picture of each vampire's former existence, we present the Prelude.

The Prelude is a short, one-on-one roleplaying session that covers a character's life up to the point that the campaign will begin. It is only one method among many. Players may simply want to develop written biographies to present to the GM that cover everything presented in the prelude. Or the GM may allow players to develop their PC's pasts as an ongoing process throughout the first few game sessions. Even more lenient GMs may not care whether the players develop pasts for their characters or not. The Prelude, however, can prove very useful for those players and Game Masters who want detailed, exciting histories combining the imagination and inspiration of both.

The Prelude is more than a tool to develop personal histories. It provides a chance for the player and the GM to develop a rapport and gives both a better understanding of the motivations and secret desires of the character. The GM will use the history developed during the Prelude throughout the campaign, drawing from it for adventure ideas and roleplaying opportunities. Both the player and the GM will emerge with a more-complete picture of the whole character, from his sense of style to his tragic weaknesses.

## Technique

Each player undergoes the prelude alone, unless two or more characters were friends and spent a lot of time together before the Embrace. While the GM spends time with each player separately, the rest can socialize and start to get excited about what lies ahead.

The GM will need to direct the player much more than usual. He should give him lots of decisions to make. GMs may need to play through things quickly, unless they are willing and able to spend more time (which can enable the creation of very detailed characters). Characters almost never engage in combat during the prelude. If they do, the GM simply describes the results of any fights, without any

rolls. Usually, though, the Prelude involves much more significant life decisions.

During the Prelude, be sure to let the player have a chance to interact with both the setting and the rules. The GM should give him a chance to explore both. If the player wants to change a few character statistics during the prelude, the GM should let him, as long as it is done for a rational reason and not as an attempt to create a super-character.

There are many ways to progress through a character's life; any way that helps mold a complete character is fine. During the course of the prelude, the GM will want to explain the full background of the character, including the origins of significant NPCs – Contacts, Allies and the Herd, if any. Also, the PC has any level of Wealth, the origin of this money should be explored. The player should have a firm idea of the details of his social position.

The GM should play through one or more typical scenes from the character's life to give the player a sense of how the character lived as a mortal. He can get the player into a vampire mindset by illustrating the bland tedium of the character's mortal existence. This scene can be something so mundane and common that it will radically juxtapose with the horror of becoming a vampire (which occurs next). It is often the mundane that gives scope to the magnificent.

It can proceed something like this: "You're coming home from work on a Friday and the traffic is especially foul. You've had a bad day at the agency, and find it hard to hold back your temper. You climb up the three flights of stairs to your apartment and try to unlock the door, but your key won't work. What do you do?"

As the GM describes things, the player can interrupt with his own ideas and details concerning what is going on. The GM can also include details that provoke the player into feeling the emotions of his character – "Your father is in a coma in the hospital." Of course, once the character becomes a vampire, he can't freely visit anymore. The father may awaken or may die, but the character may never see him again. In many cases, upon becoming a vampire, the player will feel a profound and overwhelming sense of loss – allowing the true horror of the game to come across.



## Questions and Answers

Described below are some questions which should be answered by the end of the Prelude. If there is no time for a full prelude, the GM can at least make an effort to answer these questions. It often helps to write out the answers, even if both have undergone the full prelude.

Beneath each question is a list of what sorts of things the player should ask himself, as well as some advice to the GM on how to run the prelude in relationship to the question. The GM does not need to ask every question, but it is a good idea to have the answers to most of them.

### *How old are you?*

How old were you when you "died?" What year were you born? How many years has it been since the Embrace? How old do you look?

If the current game year (the year when you intend to begin the campaign) is 1993, and the character is about 37 years old (19 years as a human, 18 years as a vampire), then you could start the Prelude in 1965, when the character was only nine years old. Since one of the objects of the prelude is to give the player as much freedom as possible when determining the course of her character's life, starting young is useful. Sometimes it is easier to assign dates and such after the prelude is over.

### *What was unique about your childhood?*

How did you spend your early years – the period when your basic motivations and attitudes were forged? Where did you go to school? Who were your parents? Did you travel very much? What was high school like? Did you go to college? Did you run away from home? What sports, if any, did you play?

You should try to give each player a sense of his character's childhood, and provide something special to remember it by. Concentrate especially on things that will affect the character's future life. Perhaps you can even bury some adventure leads as you progress through his childhood: old friends who may reappear during the campaign, or adults who took a special interest in the development of the child.

You might include subtle clues in the prelude concerning how the character was being watched over by his sire, even in childhood. Sometimes a vampire is especially taken by a child and spends years watching him grow up, Embracing him once he is fully grown.

### *What kind of person were you?*

Were you a good person? Were you popular? Did you have a family or live alone?

Once the character is fully grown, you must establish the setting just as you would do at the beginning of an adventure. Briefly describe to the player what the character's adult life was like, perhaps letting him invent most of the basic details. You need to give him the chance to roleplay the character as a mortal, interacting with the other humans in his life.

### *When did you first meet a vampire?*

When did you first realize that you were being stalked? What made you first believe in vampires? Were you afraid? Incredulous? Angry?

There are countless different circumstances surrounding the Embrace; however, like sharks, vampires usually spend a considerable amount of time stalking their prey prior to the actual attack. Evoke and describe the sensation of being watched; slowly build up the tension and suspense. The player knows what's coming, especially if he knows the GM is using this book, but sometimes that can make the tension all the more palpable. A character may notice a person constantly watching him; whenever he turns around, however, the person is gone. Though the character may try to lose the stalker, somehow he never can.

### *How did the Embrace change you?*

Was the Embrace painful? Did you get a kinky pleasure out of it? Did the hunger tear at you? Did it frighten you? Did it feel right?

You should play through the transformation in detail, allowing the player to actually feel the trauma of being changed. If the player is attacked by the vampire, then make it horrific and let the player make rolls to push the vampire away. However, such attempts are all ineffective or short-lived. Depending on the type of campaign you intend to run, you can add in details that make the personal horror overwhelming. The sire might throw the character's spouse into a cell with him, as the new vampire begins to grow hungry. Try to lure the character into committing that first horrible act, but encourage temperance as well. You might want to roleplay this part out in detail, allowing the player to make the rolls for his character as he must hunt and feed.

### *Who was your sire?*

Was your sire brutal, arrogant, or wise? What did you know about him or her? Did you get along with your sire? Did you know your sire at all?

Many neonates know nothing about vampire society, for they have been kept in the dark by their sire. Most sires consider themselves the princes of their progeny, ruling over them and treating them like slaves. They are reluctant to introduce them to other Kindred.

However, there is a significant number who reveal the nature of the Kindred world to their progeny right off, helping the neonate deal with the social and political demands and adjust to the overwhelming horror of the situation.

### *How did your sire treat you?*

How long did you stay with your sire? What was your sire like? Did he aid or hinder you? How long was your "apprenticeship?" Where did you live? Where did you go? Why did your sire Embrace you?

The sire is the most important person in a neonate's first few years. The treatment the new vampire receives from his sire will make a big difference in the PC's personality. It will be the primary indication of how he will interact with other Kindred. Most sires keep their progeny with them for

many years, training and tutoring them, and keeping them as companions. Many such fledglings are told nothing of vampiric society at large, and are even prevented from interacting with it. Sires do this because they are intensely jealous and wish to forge the personality of their child without interference.

There are many reasons why a vampire will create progeny. As Game Master, you must determine why the sire of the character created him. Maybe he believes he can somehow use the progeny to regain humanity, or perhaps he simply wants company. Does he want a slave, or a pawn in a political game?

#### ***Were you presented to the prince?***

Did the prince welcome you to the city with open arms, or was he reluctant to accept you? Did he need to be bribed or threatened? Are you on the run from the prince? Is he your enemy?

Eventually, the character is released into the world and given her freedom. The sire relinquishes all hold, and in so doing, no longer has responsibility for the neonate. This moment is marked by the age-old tradition of presenting the neonate to the prince.

The prince may accept the newcomer reluctantly, angrily, with good grace, or (on rare occasions) with great kindness. Normally this depends on the sire's relationship with the prince. The most important consideration, however, is whether the sire asked for permission before or after the Embrace. A surprising number of vampires do not bother to gain permission from the prince first, but insist upon it later (most likely because they probably wouldn't be given permission before).

The character might be released because he has become too dangerous to keep. In some cases, a neonate only conclusively learns that there are others of his kind after release.

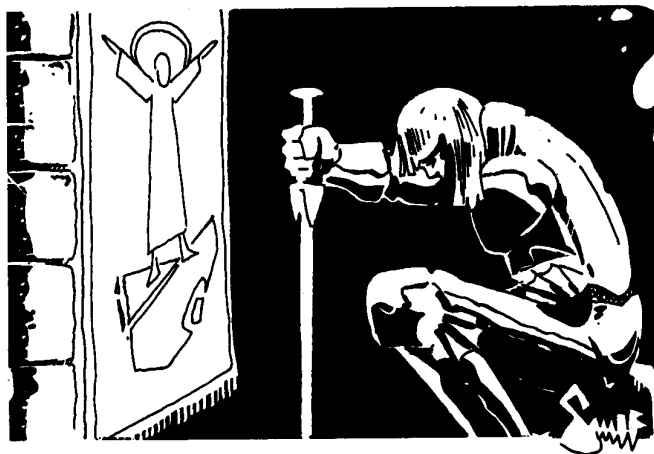
In terms of roleplaying, make sure the sire explains the Six Traditions handed down from Caine. It starts out with the neonate being told of his clan and generation: "You are of the Eleventh Generation from Caine, of the Clan Tremere, and so his words are not so distant from you, for they were spoken by him to his Fledgling and so unto you." The Six Traditions are described in Chapter 1, *A World of Darkness*.

#### ***How did you meet the others in your brood?***

Were you brought together through chance or design? Do you get along with the others? Are you united in purpose and attitude? How long have they been together in the city?

Before the campaign begins, the characters need to trust each other, or at least be able to stand one another; otherwise the adventures will go nowhere or self-destruct. If the Game Master is the only glue holding the coterie together, then their relationship won't last very long. Let the characters forge their own ties and give them the responsibility for maintaining them.

Each character needs to meet the others at some point, and it is best if this is some sort of unique meeting. It can be done two at a time, so that each character has a unique



relationship with one or two other characters, or you can have everyone meet all at once and get it over with. It is not suggested that you wait until the game begins before you introduce the characters. It is generally best to solidify a relationship between them before the action gets hot and heavy.

#### ***Where is your haven?***

Where does your character live? Where does he hide during the day?

Some Kindred have an actual home in which they reside, while others have a particular part of the sewers where they like to lie. Others, particularly the more paranoid Kindred, have many secret places where they might spend the day.

#### ***What are your habitual feeding grounds?***

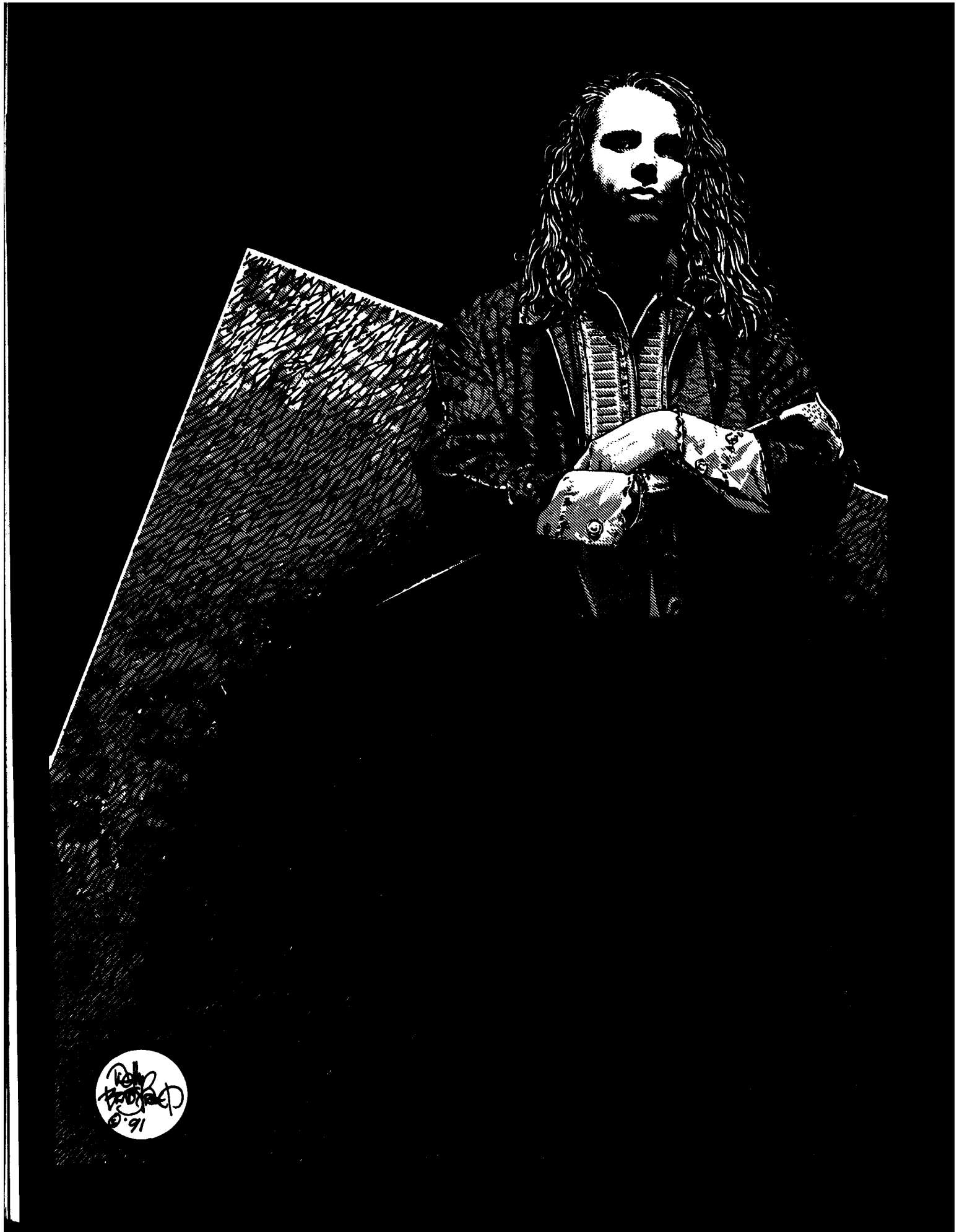
Whom do you feed upon, and where? Do you have a domain you seek to protect? Is your favorite hunting ground used by others? Do you compete with others for the same vessels? Do you ever kill when you feed?

It is likely that a vampire maintains regular sources of food near his haven. As long as he is near his haven, he can feed without requiring a roll or any roleplaying. But you need to detail this source of blood – does he feed from the inmates of an asylum? Go club-hopping every night? Or do children come over to his house each evening for piano lessons?

#### ***What are your primary motivations?***

Do you have any enemies, anyone you wish to seek vengeance against? Do you have any desire to return to your old life? What is it that you search for most avidly?

Your characters' primary motivations are central to understanding who and what they are. After they cease being human, vampires' priorities and standards often change, usually drastically. Things that were once important no longer are, and new values become central in their lives. If a player wants a complete character, he must first understand what drives him and keeps him from depression and total aimlessness (which can be interesting to play as well). The character types listed in the *Characters* chapter can be of great assistance in determining the PC's motivations.



15.0  
© 1991  
D. J. [unclear]

*I reach the door of the enclave and pause, reflecting on my task.*

*This council of mortals is not expecting me, yet their purpose – as they have repeatedly affirmed in their hollow whispers – is to destroy me.*

*I shall destroy them first.*

*I take the form of the mist and creep languidly beneath the door. Inside the antechamber, I regain my Earthly form and extend my hearing to take in their hushed conversation.*

*They speak of bold attacks, daylight raids on the havens of the undead. But their words are empty. These humans have no power. They are the witch hunters. Enemies of the Kindred. They deserve to burn in their mortal Hell.*

*The door cracks easily under the weight of my boot, and as it does I draw the full power of Majesty into my aspect. Fifty round eyes stare at my haunting, powerful countenance.*

*I bare my fangs and allow the claws to grow from my fingers. I loose a low growl in my throat. The voice of the Damned.*

*All within are awestruck, unable to move, speak or pray for their pathetic lives. All save one. He comes at me with a terrible rage distorting his face. He reaches for my throat, and I feel something that resembles pity as I snap his brittle neck. The remaining men stare blankly as his body slumps to the floor.*

*Waiting no longer, I move among the stunned mortals, tearing out their throats and drinking until I am full. I leave them slaughtered like sheep, a circle of once-brave hunters.*

*A circle of fools.*

# *Chapter 4:*

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# DISCIPLINES



he curse of vampirism is not without its benefits. While the Embrace robs its victims of a certain portion of their humanity, and dooms them to a life of darkness and blood-hunger, there is great power in undeath. And all vampires can employ this power, to some extent.

The Kindred term their various supernatural abilities Disciplines, and they are what make vampires more than mortals. Through these arts, vampires can increase their Strength or Speed, communicate with animals, manipulate others and even cause deadly harm to humans and other Kindred.

The origin of these “mystical” powers is unknown to almost all vampires. Normally, Kindred simply accept the Disciplines as yet another indication of their superiority over all other creatures that walk the earth. Whatever their source, Disciplines are integral to a vampire’s existence.

# The Structure of the Disciplines



Most of the Disciplines have a selection of five Powers beneath them. Whereas the Discipline describes the general aspect of the ability, the Power indicates the specific form that aspect takes. For example, the Auspex Discipline governs the Kindred's enhanced sensory perception – their phenomenal ability to garner information from the world around them, beyond that of mere mortals. The Spirit's Touch is a Power beneath Auspex, and it specifically allows a vampire to gain impressions of whoever last touched a certain object.

Each vampire will have a Power Level, from 1 to 5, for each Discipline he knows. This Power Level dictates how many of the Powers the character can use, starting from the least powerful (listed first) to the most powerful (listed last). To illustrate, if a vampire has Power Level 3 in Animalism, he can use the Powers Sweet Whispers, The Beckoning and Song of Serenity. He cannot attempt Sharing of Spirits or Drawing out the Beast until he uses character points to raise his Power Level.

For each Power, a vampire will have a skill level. This determines how well the character knows the Power. All Powers are bought as M/VH skills with no default. At least one point must be spent on a Power for it to be used.

Power Level determines the *number* of Powers someone knows under each Discipline, but if a character's Power Level is higher than the Power he is using, he adds the *difference* to his skill roll when determining success or failure. For instance, if a vampire has Power Level 5 in Dominate, and uses Command the Wearyed Mind (Power 1), he can add +4 to his skill roll to use that Power.

## Augmenting Disciplines

Three Disciplines are different from the others, and require some explanation. Celerity, Fortitude and Potence do not have any specific Powers beneath them. Instead they raise a character's performance in some way. Celerity increases Move, Fortitude adds to DR, and Potence boosts a Cainite's Strength. The Power Level of Augmenting Disciplines dictates the amount of increase and the length of time that increase remains in effect.

A vampire does not have to use his highest level of power in an Augmenting Discipline if he does not want to. He can choose to use any level of power equal or less than his highest.

## Point Costs

Disciplines are not free. Vampires must spend points on them as they would for any other skill or advantage. Standard Disciplines cost 2 points per Power Level. In addition, each power under the Disciplines must be bought as a Mental/Very Hard skill, using the point costs in the *Instant Characters* section of the *Basic Set*. The spells under Thaumaturgy are bought as Mental/Hard skills, and the user must have at least one level of Magery to use them.

*Augmenting Disciplines* have a separate point-cost structure. Use the following table to determine the point cost of any Augmenting Discipline.

Power Level	Point Cost
1	4 points
2	8 points
3	16 points
4	24 points
5	48 points

For normal, starting vampires, it is recommended that the GM put a cap of 60 points to be allowed for Disciplines and Thaumaturgy spells, unless the character has paid points for the Generation advantage. In this case, allow 10 more points per generation below 13th. It is unrealistic for 13th-generation Kindred to have a large selection of high-powered Disciplines.

## Thaumaturgy

Not really a Discipline, Thaumaturgy describes a style of magic practiced by vampires. Instead of powers, Thaumaturgy includes a selection of magic spells, which function under the same rules as those presented in the *GURPS Basic Set*, on p. B146.

The user of the Thaumaturgy spells must have at least one level of Magical Aptitude, and many of the spells require that the caster be a vampire, or they only affect Kindred. Normally, only members of the Tremere clan have access to these spells, but if the GM wishes, he can allow a member of another clan, or a Caitiff character, to learn Thaumaturgy.

## Clan Disciplines

Each of the Camarilla clans is proficient in three distinct Disciplines (see below for a chart of clan disciplines). The members of those clans can spend points to buy Powers normally. But if a clan member wishes to buy a Discipline that is outside of his clan's repertoire, he must spend *double* points on it. This includes points for the skill costs.

*Example:* Genevieve is of the Nosferatu clan, 13th generation. She can choose from Animalism, Obfuscate and Potence as clan disciplines. She does not have to put points into all or any of them, but she chooses to get Power Level 2 in Animalism (allowing her to spend points on the Sweet Whispers and The Beckoning Powers; she buys both at IQ+1). In total, Animalism costs her 4 points for the Discipline, plus 24 points for the Powers, equaling 26 points.

She also buys Power 1 in Potence, costing 4 points. But now she wants to have some skill in the Presence discipline, which is not one of her clan Disciplines. She buys Power 1, costing 4 points (double), and the Awe Power at IQ level, costing 16 points. This puts her total at 50 points, which is well under the maximum allowed.





### Clan Disciplines Chart

Clan	Disciplines
Brujah	Celerity, Potence, Presence
Gangrel	Animalism, Fortitude, Protean
Malkavian	Auspex, Dominate, Obfuscate
Nosferatu	Animalism, Obfuscate, Potence
Toreador	Auspex, Celerity, Presence
Tremere	Auspex, Dominate, Thaumaturgy
Ventrue	Dominate, Fortitude, Presence
Caitiff	Any three*

\*The clanless Caitiff do not have any specific clan Disciplines, but they may choose three initial Disciplines in which to be proficient. Any that they want that are not of those original three will cost them double points.

### Fatigue Costs

Using the Cainite powers has a draining effect. Like the use of magic spells, each use of a Power costs Fatigue points. When a Power is used, it drains 2 points of Fatigue per level of Power. So if someone uses the Entrancement Power (which is Power 3), it would drain 6 points of Fatigue. The same applies to Augmenting Disciplines – each level of Power used drains 2 points. Note that for an Augmenting Discipline, the user does not have to use the highest level of power he has. For example, if a vampire has Celerity at Power 3, he can spend 2 points of Fatigue instead of 6, and only gain the benefits of Power 1.

Since it is the *attempting* of Disciplines that drains energy, the user of a Power loses Fatigue whether the Power was successful or not. However, if a skill roll fails, the caster only loses 1 point of Fatigue per Power level, instead of 2. And if the skill roll is a critical failure, all the Fatigue required for the power is spent.

These Fatigue costs do not affect Thaumaturgy. Each magical spell under that Discipline has its own Fatigue cost. However, the initial five spells under Thaumaturgy have a similar Fatigue costs to the rest of the Disciplines.

Fatigue is based on Strength, but even when Strength runs out, a Cainite can use his Disciplines. At any time, a vampire can use hit points instead of Strength to use any Power. Also, Blood Points can be spent instead of Fatigue or hit points; each Blood Point replaces 2 points of Fatigue.

### Concentration

Before using any Discipline or Power, the vampire must concentrate for one second. However, a Blood Point may be spent to negate the need for this concentration, allowing the character to use the power instantly.

Otherwise, the vampire simply announces what power he is planning to use the next turn. If he is injured or disturbed while concentrating, he must make a Will-5 roll or lose 1 point of Fatigue and be unable to use the power until he concentrates again.

### Duration

All of the powers under normal Disciplines have varying durations, usually based on the skill roll. The better the success, the longer the power lasts. Any roll that is exactly what is needed for the skill is treated as beating the skill by 1. Since the vampire's power level in a Discipline can give him bonuses to skill, it also affects the duration indirectly. Augmenting disciplines and Thaumaturgy spells have standard durations specified under each power.

*Note: Treat any roll that beats a skill by more than 5 as beating it by 5.* This allows each power to have a maximum duration, regardless of the skill level of the caster. A critical success, however, should be treated as beating the roll by 8.

All powers can be *maintained* by further expenditure of Fatigue. This costs half the original Fatigue cost (which comes to 1 point  $\times$  Power Level), and this simply doubles the duration of the power. No further skill roll is needed.

### Disciplines with Magic and Psionics

Of the Disciplines, only Thaumaturgy is connected with the *GURPS* system of magic. The rest of the powers emerge from a kind of Blood Power that is neither truly magic or psionic.

If the GM wishes, he can include all the magical spells from the *Basic Set* and *GURPS Magic* as part of a vampire's available powers. Of course, the vampire PC should be required to purchase the Magical Aptitude advantage, just like any other magical character. The world of *Vampire* is considered to be a normal mana area, though the GM is welcome to include low- or no-mana areas in his campaign.

Vampires could also have a repertoire of psionic powers, but Mind Shield is the only psionic power that can resist the effects of a Discipline, and it only works against Dominate. It affects any Dominate power just as it would any psionic skill. The spell Hide Thoughts (p. M26) also affects any attempt to Dominate.

Magic Resistance is only effective against the magic spells in the Thaumaturgy Discipline; it is useless against the other Disciplines. Psionic Resistance has no effect on Disciplines, but on p. 71 is described a new advantage for mortal characters called Resistance to Disciplines. Vampires cannot have this advantage, but it is useful for NPCs or vampire hunter characters.

# DISCIPLINE DESCRIPTIONS

## Animalism

Animalism allows empathy with and power over the animal world, as well as the animal within, and embodies the Beast which lurks within the soul of every Cainite. The Powers under Animalism allow vampires to understand and soothe the passions of animals and control the actions of such creatures by touching the heart of the beast within them all. Vampires lacking this Discipline or Animal Empathy can seem offensive to animals, as beasts are distinctly uncomfortable around the undead and will do all they can to move away. This translates to a -5 Reaction penalty.

The GM should give each animal that is encountered a unique personality and manner of speech. Eventually the animal may befriend the user of this Discipline, and often long and rewarding relationships can develop.

These powers were named by the Gangrel clan, who are the undisputed masters of Animalism. The names reflect their feelings toward their animal brethren.

### *Sweet Whispers*

### *Power 1*

While most animals are hardly intelligent enough to carry on a lengthy discourse on any subject, this Discipline allows a limited form of empathic communication and can even allow the user to make specific requests of creatures. Such intercourse takes place mentally – there is no need to hiss or bark to communicate ideas to an animal. The caster need only look into the animal's eyes and make a successful skill roll to initiate the conversation. Eye contact must be maintained throughout. If it is broken, it must be reestablished. Another roll must be made and additional Fatigue points spent. Of course, there is no guarantee that an animal will either desire to talk at all or deal honestly if it does.

After establishing eye contact, the caster is able to issue commands to a single animal, which it will follow to the best of its ability. The command must be couched in terms of a request, and the "favor" cannot be too complex for the intellect of the animal to comprehend. For instance, a mouse is incapable of distinguishing between people, while a dog wouldn't know what a phone is. The GM decides whether the animal understands the command. If the caster makes an IQ roll (modified by Animal Empathy), he can determine whether the request was understood.

These commands can be deeply implanted, however, so that they will affect the animal for some time. For instance, someone could instruct a cat to come and get him when anyone enters the cellar, and the cat will continue to do so for days or even weeks. The amount the skill roll is made by will determine how deeply implanted the command is as well as how complex a command would be followed. A success by 5 or more would allow someone to command a wolf to guard a house for a month, while success by only 1 point would get him to guard it for a day or two before wandering off.





### *The Beckoning*

**Power 2**

The essence of the animal grows strong in Cainites with this power, and now animals respond when they are called. With a successful roll, the caster can summon nearly any species of animal, drawing them to him. The character must actually sing in the voice of the animals to be summoned: howling like a wolf or squawking like a bird.

The primary limitation is that the PC may not call animals of different species. Only one summons may be active at a time and there is no way to cancel a call after it has been made. However, once the specified animals have arrived at the summoner's location, the call ends, and another summons may be attempted.

Animals called in this way are under no immediate obligation to heed the caller's commands, though they are often friendly and inquisitive with regard to the call.

The user of this Power may define a specific sub-group of the type of animal he is calling. The GM should then assign a modifier based on the narrowness of the classification as well as the distance involved. For example, calling all rats within a mile would be at no modifier to skill, while calling all rats from the sewers might be at -2, and summoning all white-furred rats from the sewers would be at -7.

### *Song of Serenity*

**Power 3**

This power allows someone to expel the savagery from an animal or mortal, causing the target to become passive and listless. To use the power, the vampire must make a successful roll, touch the individual he wishes to affect and sing a song of comfort and solace to the beast within. The subject can resist with a successful Will Roll minus the amount the roll was made by. If the roll fails, the target simply ignores the power, but on a critical failure, the subject will become enraged and may attack the caster.

On a successful roll, though, the Beast has been removed from an individual, and he loses the will to fight or struggle for a number of hours equal to the amount the roll was made by (minimum of one). He cannot make any Will Rolls, nor can he resist any sort of attack upon him. This power has no effect on other Kindred.

Mortals and creatures who lack a Beast are prone to accept nearly anything which occurs to them in this state as completely normal and natural, evincing no reaction. Later they might wonder why they had no reaction, but often they avoid thinking about the situation at all.

### *Sharing of Spirits*

**Power 4**

When this Power is successful, by staring into the eyes of an animal, the vampire's spirit or conscious mind moves within the animal and possesses it. This allows him to control the actions of the animal as if he were that animal. The caster's body become unconscious and remains motionless during the duration, exactly as if he were in Torpor.

The amount the roll is made by determines the nature and duration of the possession. The possession lasts for one hour per point of success, with a minimum of one hour. Also see the chart below:

Made by 1 or less . . . Simple possession. Cannot perform any action that is not part of the animal's natural functioning. Cannot use non-animal skills or any Disciplines.

Made by 2 or 3 . . . Can control the animal and do simple human actions – open a door, press a button, etc. – but could not dial a phone or type a message. Can use the Auspex Discipline.

Made by 4 or 5 . . . Can perform complex human actions and use Auspex, Presence and Dominate Disciplines.

Critical Success . . . Can use any Discipline.

Even on high successes, the character will behave much like the animal – his spirit is clouded with the needs and impulses of the animal body. Sometimes he will begin to think and feel like that animal, even after the connection has been broken. The vampire must make two successful Will Rolls to avoid retaining the instincts and habits of the animal he possessed.

When employing this power, it is possible for a vampire to travel about during the day, albeit in the body of an animal. However, he must remain awake to do so, and therefore all perception and skill rolls will be limited by the character's Humanity score (see p. 75).

### *Drawing Out the Beast*

### *Power 5*

Someone who has developed this Power has attained a deep understanding of the mysteries of man's wild cousins. Armed with this knowledge, he is better able to deal with the Beast within. When the Beast becomes too powerful to control, he can transfer the feral urges to another creature.

Effectively, a successful roll allows the caster to induce frenzy in another animal, man or vampire as a means of

avoiding it himself. The recipient of this vast, savage energy may only be something that is fit for the burden; only beings with a Humanity score of 14 or less are wild enough to provide a home for the Beast.

This unfortunate creature actually receives the Beast of the caster, and thus his personality will be apparent in the nature of the frenzy the victim undergoes. The frenzy will progress just as if the PC were the creature in that state.

The user of this Power can attempt to transfer the Beast to a specific target, but that is a -2 penalty to skill. A roll that fails by less than 3 will still transfer the frenzy, but it will be to a random creature within 10 yards of the subject – possibly even a friend. A roll that fails by 3 or more will not allow the Beast to escape and in fact, induces immediate frenzy in the caster which lasts twice as long as it normally would have. A critical failure induces a very severe frenzy that lasts three times normal length and is completely uncontrollable, even with Will Rolls.

The caster must be in frenzy or very close to it to use this Power.

## Auspex

This Discipline is one of extrasensory awareness, empathy and perception. Those using this Discipline tend to be strongly affected by environmental phenomena, especially beauty. Loud noises can be very disturbing.

### *Heightened Senses*

### *Power 1*

The user of this Power can sharpen all five senses to an extraordinary degree. This requires a successful roll and lasts for 1 minute for each point the roll was made by. Each point of success adds +2 to all of the character's perception rolls – Vision, Hearing and Smell. This bonus also applies to Tracking and Shadowing skills.

There is a drawback, though, as loud noises or bright lights can disturb the caster while the Power lasts. He may even become "blind" in that particular sense for a short period of time (depending on the degree of noise or glare, it could be minutes, hours or even days). Thus, if someone were exposed to sunlight while employing Heightened Senses, he might be blinded for a week, even after the aggravated damage sustained is healed.

### *Aura Perception*

### *Power 2*

With a successful roll, the caster can see the auras of other beings, the colors of which indicate their moods, identities and levels of hostility. This power also allows him to recognize other vampires by their pale auras. Although they retain the auras they had in their lifetimes, they are noticeably less vibrant than mortals'.

Even the most shallow, transparent person usually has several different colors composing his aura. The aura may shift between the different colors in a predictable cycle, or it might shift completely at random. The colors change along with the current emotional state of the character, and

because people so often have mixed feelings, the aura is often mixed in color.

The GM should make the roll for the player attempting this power. On a failed roll, the GM gives random, misleading information. On a critical failure, he should relay the exact opposite of the subject's emotion. The amount of success determines the detail of aura information.

Success by 0 or 1 . . . Can only distinguish the shade (pale or bright)

Success by 2 . . . Can distinguish color as well

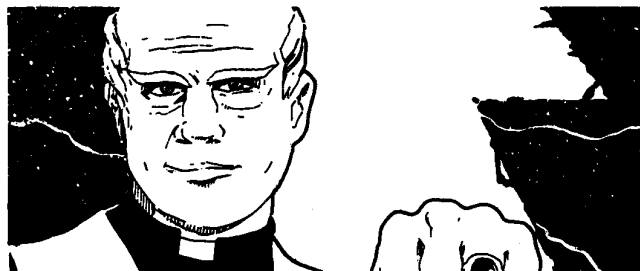
Success by 3 or 4 . . . Can distinguish patterns and subtle shifts

Success by 5 . . . Can identify mixtures of color and pattern

Critical Success . . . Can determine basic thoughts and intentions.

See the *Aura Colors Table* on the next page for examples of some of the predominant colors that can be found and what emotions they represent.

A particular subject's aura may be read clearly only once per 6 hours. Multiple attempts to read it by the same person within that time are at a cumulative -3.



## Aura Colors Table

Condition	Aura Colors
Afraid	Orange
Aggressive	Purple
Angry	Red
Bitter	Brown
Calm	Light Blue
Compassionate	Pink
Conservative	Lavender
Depressed	Gray
Desirous or Lustful	Deep Red
Distrustful	Light Green
Enraged	Crimson
Envious	Dark Green
Excited	Violet
Generous	Rose
Happy	Vermilion
Hateful	Black
Idealistic	Yellow
Innocent	White
Love	Blue
Obsessed	Green
Sad	Silver
Spiritual	Gold
Suspicious	Dark Blue

A vampire	Appropriate color is pale
Confused	Mottled, shifting colors
Daydreaming	Sharp flickering colors
Diabolist	Black veins in aura
Frenzied	Rapidly rippling colors
Psychotic	Hypnotic, swirling color



### *The Spirit's Touch*

**Power 3**

With this power a character may pick up an object and gain impressions of one of the individuals who last held it. This object reading is usually limited to a "snapshot" of the tableau, but sometimes such things as the race, sex, and even aura of the person in question can also be discerned. The Spirit's Touch can also reveal how the owner came to possess the item, or reveal what went on during the last moments the subject held the object.

When this power is attempted, the GM should roll vs. the vampire's skill. The amount of information gathered is relegated by the amount the roll is made by. On a failed roll, the GM should give the player misleading or only partially true information. A critical failure indicates totally false information.

### *Unveil the Shrouded Mind*

**Power 4**

This power allows a vampire to probe the surface thoughts of any nearby subject and listen to them as one would listen to a person speak. Given enough time, the caster can learn nearly anything about the subject. For instance, someone might be able to divine the sire of another vampire.

The amount the roll is made by determines the length of time that the veil is lifted. The caster can read thoughts for one minute per point of success, with a minimum of one minute. Each additional minute past the first allows the character to dig deeper into the thoughts of the subject. Mortal subjects are always unaware of the intrusion.

The vampire mind cannot normally be read, but if the caster wins a Contest of Wills, he can gain access to surface thoughts. After the Contest, the caster must still make his skill roll for the power. If he fails either roll, the subject becomes aware of the mind-reading attempt and may become enraged.

The thoughts of any creature are far from straightforward and coherent. The GM should describe the mind of the subject by using a series of nouns and modifiers akin to a stream of consciousness. This forces the player to deduce for herself what is going on in that mind. For example, the GM might say, "Sullen sorrow. Where is Damien? Worry. Can't wait until he hears this one! Anticipation." Obviously, it can be difficult to understand what is going on inside the psyche, especially in the minds of the deranged.

### *Abandon Earthly Form*

**Power 5**

This power enables a vampire to expand his consciousness to such a degree that he can separate his mind from his body. While in this state, the caster can travel without the use of his body, journeying nearly anywhere on Earth at up to 200 times his maximum Move. He cannot be seen by normal creatures nor can he affect the physical world at all, but can see and hear anything that is going on.

There is a limit to the distance someone can travel as the diaphanous thread connecting one's spirit to his body is stretched thin. The limit is 1,000 miles per point of HT. If the vampire exceeds this limit, the cord will break and he will become lost in the astral plane. Finding his body again will be an arduous and painstaking task, taking weeks or

even months. Other astral mishaps may cause the cord to break as well, at the GM's discretion.

The duration of the power is one hour per point of success on the skill roll, with a one-hour minimum. The spirit automatically returns to the body when the duration is over, provided the connecting cord has not been broken.

The physical body left behind lies as motionless as if it were in torpor. The caster's mind stays with the astral self, and he has no way of knowing what is going on around or in his body. Indeed, for all he may know, his body is in flames.

## Celerity (Augmenting Discipline)

This Discipline explains the legendary superior quickness of vampires. Using the Celerity Discipline allows a vampire to move extremely quickly and take multiple actions in a single turn.

When a vampire invokes Celerity, no skill roll is required. Its effects begin on the next turn (after the turn of concentration). The following chart shows the advantages gained by the individual power levels.

Power 1 (4 points)	Adds 1 to Move for 10 minutes
Power 2 (8 points)	Adds 2 to Move; 1 extra attack per turn; duration 30 minutes
Power 3 (16 points)	Adds 4 to Move; 1 extra attack per turn; duration 1 hour
Power 4 (24 points)	Adds 6 to Move; 2 extra attacks per turn; duration 2 hours
Power 5 (48 points)	Adds 10 to Move; 2 extra attacks per turn; duration 6 hours

Note that if a character wishes to save Fatigue points, he can use a lower power than his maximum in Celerity. If someone has Power 5, for example, he can use Power 3 and spend only 6 points of Fatigue instead of 10.

If the GM is using any abilities from *GURPS Supers*, Celerity cannot be combined for added effect with the Altered Time Rate advantage.

See also the optional rules for Augmenting Disciplines at the end of this chapter.

## Dominate

This Discipline reflects the mystical ability of vampires to influence the minds and actions of others. Dominate is an aspect of the power of the mind and the will. It affects the judgment and mental functioning of the target, not the emotions.

Dominate always requires eye contact with the subject in order for it to be employed, and is thus sometimes known as the Piercing Gaze. It can therefore be used on only one subject at a time. It is one of the most powerful Disciplines, but can be exacting and difficult to employ, balancing it with the others. Orders and suggestions must always be given verbally to those who have been Dominated. The

When two astral characters encounter one another, or if one encounters a being native to the astral world such as a ghost (who is often tied to one location), they may interact as if both were on the physical world. Speech, contact, and even combat are possible. Ghosts and Lupines traveling in the spirit world can sense astral vampires, and may attempt to harm them. It is said that those who know the way may journey to Arcadia, otherwise known as Faerieland, by traveling through astral space.



extent to which control over a subject is delineated by each power below.

Those vampires who take the Dominate Discipline tend to be people who like control. Over time, those who rely upon it may become overtly manipulative and controlling. At the GM's discretion, some may develop the Megalomania or Bully disadvantages, the more the Discipline is used.

Most mortals have no ability to resist this discipline, but there are some mortals who have the Resistance to Disciplines advantage. This advantage allows them to resist the powers with a Will roll, plus their level of Resistance to Disciplines.



It is impossible to Dominate another vampire who is of equal or stronger Blood – the user must be of an earlier generation than the subject for Dominate to be effective. Vampires may resist any attempt at Domination by winning a quick Contest of Wills. The subject is then immune to attempts at Domination by the same vampire for 24 hours. Failure of this Contest, however, renders the subject mentally exhausted and thus more susceptible to Domination. Apply the amount the subject missed his roll by as a bonus to the appropriate Dominate skill.

If a vampire attempts to Dominate someone who is under the Domination of another Cainite, there is no conflict unless the subject is ordered to perform mutually exclusive acts. If this is the case, the later Domination is obeyed and the initial one forgotten completely!

If a caster ever gets a critical failure on a Dominate roll, the target is rendered immune to future attempts by the same vampire for an entire year.

#### ***Command the Wearyed Mind***

#### ***Power 1***

Vampires who employ this power can give one-word commands to another; these commands must be obeyed instantly. This command must be a simple and concise word with only one meaning – jump, sit, stand, laugh, cry, run, hop, blink, smile, frown, cough. If the word is at all ambiguous, the subject will react with temporary confusion. The caster may include the word in a sentence, and only stress the command word slightly, thus concealing from others what he is doing.

If the skill roll fails, the subject will simply ignore the command (unless he is particularly gullible and the command is given forcefully). On a critical failure, the subject

will realize that he was the attempt of some type of supernatural manipulation, and will react with fear and loathing toward the vampire from then on.

#### ***Mesmerize***

#### ***Power 2***

With this power, a vampire can implant a suggestion into the unconscious mind of a subject. This requires intense concentration and the careful and precise use of instructions for the intent of the orders to be carried out properly. The caster may cause the mesmerization to take effect immediately, or he can designate the events which will trigger it.

The user of this power must maintain eye contact for as long as it takes to complete the command; however, very complicated suggestions can be made. Careful wording is essential, as the target will take things *very* literally, and even may unconsciously attempt to pervert the spirit of the suggestion.

The caster can give simple, exact commands to another person, like “climb up that ladder” or “pretend that you’re a dog.” Or the control can last longer and be much more subtle, like “howl like a wolf every time you hear the word ‘rutabaga.’ ” Maintaining eye contact is no longer necessary after the initial suggestion is given. The amount that the skill roll is made by determines the power and duration of the suggestion. The GM should use his best judgment, but very complex suggestions might require critical successes to be followed.

If the caster attempts to force the subject to do something that violates a strong internal ethic or would cause immediate harm, the subject can resist the suggestion with a Will Roll+3. Only one suggestion may be implanted in a subject at a time.

### *The Forgetful Mind*

**Power 3**

With this power, a vampire can steal, create and remove memories from a subject. This is an effective technique for causing people to forget that their blood has been drunk or that they even met the caster. A lot of mischief can be caused with this power, as it is possible to steal nearly any memory from a subject. The power is not always completely effective, though. Sometimes a memory will return years later, confounding and frightening the subject.

The strength of the memory and the length of time lost are determined by the skill roll. A success by 0 or 1 indicates a single incident, lasting less than two hours, may be removed. Beating the roll by 2 or 3 means that a whole day may be removed. A success of 4 or 5 means that not only can up to a week of memories be removed, new memories can be implanted to replace the lost time. And any critical success allows the subject's entire life to be restructured by the intruding vampire.

### *Conditioning*

**Power 4**

Over time, an individual can be Conditioned so that he is thereafter unable to resist Domination and is also more resistant to the Domination of others. Kindred often Condition their servants to ensure loyal retainers. Conditioning ensures that mortals who have been Dominated repeatedly have a harder time resisting future attempts.

Conditioning does not work at the drop of a hat. It takes time to carefully cultivate the subject's mind for the kind of control the vampire will exercise. Fully conditioning a subject can take weeks or even months.

Conditioned retainers have very little imagination, and tend to obey the orders given them quite literally. The conditioning actually destroys their free will, turning them into virtual zombies.

Each time a vampire successfully uses any other Dominate Discipline on a particular subject, he can roll vs. his Conditioning Power skill. Success wears down that subject by one point – meaning the vampire gets a +1 skill bonus each time he tries any Dominate Discipline on that subject, except Conditioning. Failure reduces the bonus by 1. The Conditioning power cannot be maintained; the skill roll

must be rolled each time the power is used. Once the Conditioning bonus reaches +10 with a particular subject, the Conditioning is finished, and the vampire never must make any roll to Dominate him.

The subject becomes so completely Dominated that the vampire's presence, let alone eye contact, is no longer required to maintain absolute control. He does exactly as he is told as long as he is within earshot of his master. No roll is necessary unless the subject cannot see the vampire at all. Additionally, others will find the subject more difficult to Dominate, as a Conditioned subject is -4 for anyone else to attempt any Dominate Power.

### *Possession*

**Power 5**

With this power, a Cainite can take complete control of another person's mind and body. By actually entering the other person's mind, the caster may control his actions in a very precise manner. The subject is an automaton, completely incapable of independent action, although the victim is completely aware of everything that is happening. If the caster performs reprehensible actions, the victim may have to make Fright Checks because of the experience. While controlling the subject's mind, the caster's body is motionless, as if it were in torpor. Unless he is observing, he has no idea what is happening to his body. The body can recover Fatigue, but only at the normal rate. No faster Fatigue recovery, either through Breath Control or magic, is possible.

The caster can use Disciplines while in the subject's body, but he cannot spend Blood Points to fuel them.

It is not possible to Possess other Kindred. Such control over other vampires is only possible through a Blood Bond (see p. 84).

Possession is not an easy task. First the caster must make his skill roll. He then has to win a Contest of Wills with the subject, modified by however much he made his skill roll by. Once possessed, the subject can attempt to "throw out" the possessor, one final time. This is a straight Will Roll -5, and costs the subject 6 points of Fatigue if it is successful.

All possessions have a standard duration of one hour, though this power can be maintained (see p. 96).

## **Fortitude (Augmenting Discipline)**

Fortitude describes a type of supernatural toughness and vigor which allows Kindred to resist harm. All vampires have a powerful constitution and are able to shrug off the injury inflicted by guns and other weapons. However, with the Fortitude power, they can resist damage even further by keeping the weapons from harming them at all. This translates to an increase in the vampire's Damage Resistance. To use Fortitude, a Cainite simply concentrates for one second and the bonuses appear on the next turn.

Fortitude also helps vampires resist damage that can kill them – fire and sunlight. Each power level in Fortitude adds a +2 to HT rolls to avoid damage from fire and sunlight (see p. 81). The chart below shows the DR bonus and duration given by each power level in Fortitude.

Power 1 (4 points)	+1 Damage Resistance; duration 10 minutes
Power 2 (8 points)	+2 Damage Resistance; duration 30 minutes
Power 3 (16 points)	+4 Damage Resistance; duration 1 hour
Power 4 (24 points)	+6 Damage Resistance; duration 2 hours
Power 5 (48 points)	+10 Damage Resistance; duration 6 hours

See also the optional rules for Augmenting Disciplines at the end of this chapter.



# Obfuscate

Kindred with this Discipline excel at hiding among and away from crowds. When they do not wish to be seen, others, especially mortals, rarely notice them even if they are standing in plain view. Though this Discipline affects others' minds and does not actually render the users invisible, the end result is much the same – Kindred employing Obfuscate simply can't be seen. However, cameras, motion detectors and surveillance devices still track them normally.

Auspex and Obfuscate are opposed to one another. When Obfuscate is used against a Kindred who possesses a higher Power Level in Auspex than the caster's Obfuscate level, the caster must win a Quick Contest of skills at a penalty equal to the difference in Power Levels. If he wins, he can use his Obfuscate power normally, but if he loses the opposing vampire is alerted to his attempt to hide and can see him, even without using the Auspex Discipline.

## *Cloak of Shadows*

### *Power 1*

This is the basic Obfuscate power. The caster's ability to conceal himself is not yet fully developed, so he needs some sort of cover in order to hide effectively (or he must be in a position that eyes easily pass over anyway – crouched or prone). Most often, such cover is the shadows of an alley or a recessed door frame, but this power also works if the user can interpose a tree or lamppost (no matter how narrow) between himself and the ones from whom he is hiding.

Once under cover, the caster must make a successful skill roll and remain completely motionless in order to remain obscured. If he moves, if a light is turned on which would illuminate him or if a viewer moves to an angle at which the caster is directly in his line of sight, the Cloak of Shadows fails.

The power remains in effect for 10 minutes per point the roll was made by (minimum of 10 minutes).

## *Unseen Presence*

### *Power 2*

With this power, the caster can effectively cause himself to disappear and remain hidden, even while walking around.

With a successful roll, the caster will be completely ignored unless someone specifically looks for him. In this case, roll a Quick Contest of Skills between the searcher's Vision and the vampire's Unseen Presence skill. If the vampire wins, he remains unseen.

People will move about in ways that cause them to avoid the caster and will even take actions to remove themselves from his vicinity. Their unconscious minds will do nearly anything to prevent their conscious minds from realizing that he is there.

This power only affects sight and the sounds of normal movement (walking and clothes moving, etc.). If the caster makes an intentional sound, falls down or speaks, he will be heard, but still not seen.

The caster can end the power at any time. Otherwise, it lasts for 10 minutes per point the roll was made by.

## *Mask of the Thousand Faces*

### *Power 3*

This potent ability does not hide the user from the gaze of others, but makes him appear to be someone other than who he truly is. His appearance does not actually change – the power simply makes people think they see someone else.

When someone tries to recognize the caster, roll a Quick Contest of the viewer's IQ vs. the caster's skill in Mask of the Thousand Faces. The viewer suffers a penalty to his roll



equal to the amount the caster originally made his roll by (when he first cast the power). This power also lasts 10 minutes per point that the roll succeeded.

#### *Vanish from Mind's Eye*

*Power 4*

With this power, a vampire can actually disappear from plain view. Even if he is standing face to face with a mortal, he may exercise this power and simply vanish. Those who witness such a disappearing act, especially mortals, may need to make a Fright Check. Moreover, mortals who fail an IQ roll will actually forget that they ever saw the caster at all.

On a successful skill roll, the vampire vanishes from sight. This is still a psychological effect, so cameras and other detectors will still record the whereabouts of the caster. Like the other Obfuscate powers, this ability lasts 10 minutes per point of success.

#### *Cloak the Gathering*

*Power 5*

This incredibly potent ability allows a caster to extend any of his Obfuscate powers to those around him. Not only is he concealed, but so is everyone else nearby whom he wishes to conceal.

If one person compromises the disguise or invisibility, then only that person is no longer under the protection of the power. However, if the caster compromises the position, the Cloak drops completely and everyone may be seen.

To use this power, the caster makes a skill roll against Cloak the Gathering. His success on this roll determines how many others he may protect with his next Obfuscate attempt. An additional 2 people may be hidden or disguised for each point the roll is made by, with a minimum of 1 person (if the roll barely succeeds). The caster will know this number and can choose whom he wants to hide with him, but he must be able to see the subjects that he wants to include.

Then the vampire rolls against his skill with any other Obfuscate power. If successful, it affects him and any others who were affected by Cloak the Gathering. The caster cannot perform any other action between casting Cloak the Gathering and the next Obfuscate power. Duration for everyone is as normal for that power. Those affected can act as if they were the ones who used the power; thus, they do not even have to remain near the caster.

*Example:* Jean-Claude wants his entire group to be completely invisible as they sneak into the Governor's mansion. He casts Cloak the Gathering. His skill is 16 and he rolls a 13, beating his score by 3. His party is only 4 others, so he can cloak them all. On his next turn he concentrates on Vanish from Mind's Eye (his skill is 15). He rolls a 14, so the entire group remains invisible for ten minutes . . . ample time to creep past the guard at the gate and into the mansion proper.

## Potence (Augmenting Discipline)

This Discipline defines the superior strength that vampires often possess. This physical might allows for great feats to be accomplished, far beyond what a normal mortal could perform. Potence allows vampires to jump and leap greater distances, lift greater weights, and inflict greater harm upon objects and individuals when they are punched or hit.

The power level of this Discipline defines the increase in Strength and the duration. To use this Discipline, the vampire simply concentrates for a turn, and his Strength is in-

creased starting on the next. The chart below shows the advantage gained for each power level.

Power 1 (4 points)	+1 Strength for 10 minutes
Power 2 (8 points)	+2 Strength for 30 minutes
Power 3 (16 points)	+4 Strength for 1 hour
Power 4 (24 points)	+6 Strength for 2 hours
Power 5 (48 points)	+10 Strength for 6 hours

See also the optional rules for Augmenting Disciplines at the end of this chapter.

## Presence

A vampire with the Presence Discipline can make himself exceptionally attractive and appealing to others. People will want to be around the vampire, to bask in the brilliant light he sheds. If the skill roll for the power is successful, he will not need to make any sort of overt or deliberate action, for Presence expresses itself as a natural aspect of one's personality. Presence is a powerful, if subtle, Discipline.

The powers under the Presence Discipline hold sway over the emotions of people, not their judgment or reason. Orders may not be given using Presence; the effect is completely nonverbal. Presence causes others to feel things or react in certain ways toward the vampire, but direct manip-

ulation of the mind is the domain of the Dominate Discipline.

Unlike Dominate, though, it can be used on many people at the same time, and eye contact is not required for it to be effective. The vampire needs to be clearly in sight of those he wishes to affect, however, as his face must be seen clearly.

Those affected by Presence can make a Will Roll-2 to resist the effects for a turn. During this time they are able to turn around, thereby escaping the effects more permanently. Kindred are usually savvy enough to do so, but mortals seldom are; thus mortals will need to make IQ rolls to realize that this should be done.



### *Awe*

### *Power 1*

When a vampire employs this power, everyone near him becomes intensely attracted to him. They will do nearly anything to be close to the caster, although their fascination is not so complete that they will endanger themselves.

The mechanic for this power is simple. The caster gains a +1 Charisma bonus for each point the roll is made by. The effect lasts for 10 minutes per point of success.

By carefully using this power, a vampire can have phenomenal powers of mass communication. Since Charisma affects everyone's Reaction to the vampire, he can more easily convince people of a certain course of action or the nobility of a purpose by trying to persuade them while this power is active.

### *Dread Gaze*

### *Power 2*

The exhibition of full vampiric powers can cause great fear and loathing in mortals. This is usually accomplished by baring teeth and fangs while hissing loudly. All vampires can do this, of course, but when it is combined with the use of this power, it is capable of driving mortals insane with fear, or frightening them into submission or flight with the merest snarl. The subjects are cowed by the vampire's appearance and will do anything to avoid incurring his wrath.

A successful roll requires a single mortal to make a Fright Check, at a penalty equal to the amount the roll was made by. Hideous Appearance adds a +1 to the skill roll. If the caster maintains this power, the modifier is multiplied by the total number of turns, and the Fright Check is not rolled until the vampire stops the power. The mortal is held by the gaze and cannot move or speak as long as it is maintained. Thus, a vampire could maintain the power for several turns and build up the Fright Check penalty to a very high number.

For example, Cagliari the Horrible uses Dread Gaze on an intruder to his haven. His skill is 12 and he rolls a 10, beating it by 2. If he did not want to maintain the Gaze, the intruder would roll a Fright Check at -2, but Cagliari maintains the Gaze for three more turns, so the modifier ends up at -8 (-2 times 4 turns). The intruder fails the Fright Check, and the table on p. B94 indicates that he faints for 1d minutes.

### *Entrancement*

### *Power 3*

A Cainite using the Entrancement power can convince another to serve him. The subject of Entrancement will be devoted to the caster and desire to serve his needs. However, unlike a person Possessed with Dominate powers, the subject of Entrancement retains his freedom of action and creativity. This can be both good and bad.

The subject is much more enjoyable to be around and tends to remind a vampire of the cruelty of control less often than if he were Dominated, but such a victim can be unpredictable in how he will attempt to please the Kindred.

When a successful roll is made, the vampire can choose any one person nearby to entrance. This can be another vampire, but the subject can then resist with a successful Will Roll. The Entrancement will last for 2 hours per point the roll is made by.

### Summon

### Power 4

With this power, a vampire may call a person from a distance, and that person will have no choice but to come as quickly as possible. The subject of the Summons may not know exactly why he is walking across the room toward the cloaked stranger, but the Kindred's powerful aura will completely entrance the subject.

Vampires have been known to Summon a person from halfway around the world; indeed, the subject will use the fastest and most direct means of travel to reach the caller's side. Such is indeed possible, but in order to Summon a person who is out of sight, the caster must have previously met the person. A person who is Summoned knows exactly where to find the caster and will home in on that location flawlessly. If the vampire Summons someone from New York to Chicago but subsequently departs for Seattle, the subject will arrange for travel to Seattle as well. The subject will not do anything that is against his personality – steal a car, for example. If stealing fits the subject's nature, though, he will do it if necessary.

The exact time it takes for a subject to fulfill the Summons can vary, but the subject will always use the fastest available method of travel. Concerns like money will limit the response time, but if the subject happens to be short of cash and can't afford a plane ticket, he will even hitchhike. The Summons must be maintained if it takes more than the duration for the subject to reach the Summoner – each Summons lasts 6 hours per point of success.

Of course, the subject of the Summons is under no obligation to do anything once he arrives in the caster's presence. Another Presence or Dominate roll must be made to control the victim of the calling.

### Majesty

### Power 5

With this power active, the caster will be almost universally respected and feared. Unless mortals or even Kindred stop to consider their feelings about him, they are likely to treat him respectfully without conscious thought. Indeed, the very sight of the user of this power causes jaws to drop in awe and even the most courageous to tremble with terror. The caster simply seems so formidable that no one would even consider crossing him, let alone making a physical challenge.



The caster will not be attacked or harmed in any way for as long as the effects of Majesty remain.

When a successful roll is made, this power grants an automatic +10 Charisma bonus, as well as conferring the Voice advantage. This bonus also applies to attempts to Intimidate. The vampire's appearance changes subtly to show him as a powerful, menacing individual. The power lasts 1 hour per point of success.

## Protean

This Discipline allows a vampire to transform either his entire body or a part of his body into something inhuman. The vampire can thus grow claws, turn into a bat, melt into the earth or transform into mist.

A vampire can use most other Disciplines while shapeshifted. Thus, a Kindred in animal form may still read auras and communicate with animals. Only when a vampire is in mist form should additional restrictions be applied. For example, eye contact cannot be made, so Dominate powers cannot function. Additionally, only personal objects, like clothes, up to light encumbrance can transform with the character.

No transformations are possible when a vampire is staked through the heart, although legends insist that some of the eldest Kindred can do it . . .

### Gleam of Red Eyes

### Power 1

With a successful roll, this power allows the caster to see perfectly in normal darkness. Limited vision is even possible in absolute darkness (-5 to Vision rolls and combat), a fact that perplexes the scientific-minded among the Kindred. While this power is activated, the caster's eyes glow an eerie red.

This power lasts one hour per point of success.

### *Wolf Claws*

**Power 2**

This power enables the user to grow inch-long claws on each finger. These claws make excellent weapons in combat and add +2 damage to any hand attacks, including Brawling, Karate and other martial arts. Wounds caused by the claws are aggravated – so if the opponent is a vampire, they cannot be healed normally through the use of Blood Points (see *Aggravated Wounds*, p. 82). A vampire cannot cause aggravated wounds on himself with his own claws.

Once a successful roll is made, the claws will last one hour per point of success. They can, however, be retracted at any time the caster wishes.

### *Earth Meld*

**Power 3**

One of the most prized powers that a vampire can possess, Earth Meld has saved the lives of countless vampires through the ages. This power enables the caster to make the earth part of himself and thus merge with it. Others viewing the use of Earth Meld will simply see the vampire sink into the ground.

The caster can only sink into earth. It is absolutely impossible to meld into earth through another substance. For example, while there may be earth underneath it, a linoleum floor, asphalt or concrete would completely prohibit the use of this power.

Earth Meld is a great way to find cover when outdoors. Once the vampire has sunk into the ground, he can remain there indefinitely, though he will lose blood as normal. He does not have to make another skill roll to emerge from the ground, but must expend 3 points of Fatigue. Remember that when underground, a vampire has no way of telling what is going on above, and if he remains melded long enough, he may even misjudge whether it is day or night.

### *Shadow of the Beast*

**Power 4**

The user of this ability may transform into either a wolf or a bat. When in the form of either creature, he benefits

from all of the obvious advantages, such as the increased senses of the wolf or the bat's ability to fly.

A wolf has ST 10 and DX 14. HT and IQ remain normal for the caster. If the DX of the wolf is higher than the caster's, his Move might increase. The wolf form has Alertness +2 and Combat Reflexes, in addition to any sense bonuses the caster may have. The wolf attacks with a bite doing 1d-2 cutting damage.

The bat form has ST 3 and DX 12, plus the ability to fly at Move 10. The bat can bite for 1d-4 cutting damage.

The change to either form is complete and true – not even a Lupine can tell if a wolf is a Cainite in disguise . . . unless the vampire does something that requires human intelligence.

The duration of the change is one hour per point of success on the skill roll, and the transformation takes 3 seconds to complete. The caster can revert to human form at any time, which also takes 3 seconds.

### *Form of Mist*

**Power 5**

This power confers the legendary vampiric ability to transform into mist. The caster's very essence seems to slowly float apart when this power is employed.

Many advantages are gained in mist form. The mist-form can float in any direction at normal Move, is not affected by physical attacks, and can slip through the tiniest of openings with ease. Additionally, the caster takes only half damage from sunlight in this form.

Contrary to popular belief, vampires in mist form are not particularly vulnerable to powerful winds. Wind, even of hurricane strength, cannot tear a mist form apart. However, strong winds can blow the vapor cloud about just as any other object can be pushed. If the wind is blowing faster than the vampire's Move, he will be pushed by it.

As with the Shadow of the Beast, the form lasts one hour for each point the skill roll is made by, and the transformation takes 3 seconds to complete. The caster can revert to human form at any time; this takes an additional 3 seconds.



# Thaumaturgy

Few Kindred are able to practice the rigorous discipline of Thaumaturgy. This is the practice of blood magic, and is largely the province of the Tremere Clan, who created it and guards its secrets jealously. A few rogue Tremere have let some secrets slip, which explains its availability to vampires of other clans. Even so, such Cainites must possess the Magery advantage, and the GM should require any non-Tremere characters to have some explanation as to how they acquired the Discipline.

This magic is directly descended from the theories and practices of the Order of Hermes, a medieval order of magi. While few humans know a little of blood magic, this art has been developed for centuries by the Tremere to take advantage of their vampiric strengths. Tremere Thaumaturgy is despised and feared by most mortal wizards.

Thaumaturgy is the only Discipline that uses magic spells in the form listed in the *Basic Set*, starting on p. B146. These spells make up the Blood College of magic, defined as those spells that either only affect vampires, or can only be cast by vampires. In addition to the spells listed below, practitioners of Thaumaturgy might know any number of other spells. It is up to the GM to decide which ones to allow his players to choose from. He can simply say that the ones in this book are the only ones available, or he can choose others from the *Basic Set* or *GURPS Magic*.

Prerequisites listed with a dagger (†) are spells found in the *Basic Set*. If the GM is not using any of those spells, he can ignore these prerequisites.

## *A Taste for Blood*

### *Information*

This spell provides a variety of simple Perception-based information that relate to blood. The caster may determine how much blood is left in a Kindred or mortal, how recently a vampire has fed and his approximate generation. The vampire must touch the subject in order to be able to tell anything about him.

The success of the roll determines the accuracy of the information received, and thus the GM should roll in secret. If the roll fails, the PC cannot tell anything, but on a critical failure, the GM should feed him false information.

*Cost:* 2.

*Prerequisite:* Magery.

## *Blood Rage*

### *Regular*

The user of this spell can force another Kindred to use his blood whether he wants to or not. Thus a vampire may find his Strength suddenly increasing and have no idea why. Additionally, since the vampire becomes more hungry as his blood is used up, he may have more trouble resisting frenzy.

The subject must be touched for the spell to take effect. The caster determines how many Blood Points are spent. The points can't be wasted, though, and the Thaumaturgist determines how they are spent. Five is the maximum number of points that can be spent per casting of the spell.

*Cost:* 2 per Blood Point spent.

*Prerequisite:* A Taste for Blood.



### **Blood of Potency**

**Regular**

This spell allows a Cainite to make the blood within his body more potent for a short time, thereby lowering his effective generation. Upon a successful skill roll, his generation is lowered by half the number of Fatigue points spent on the spell, with a maximum of 6 Fatigue points (3 generations). No vampire can reduce his generation beyond the Third.

If a Cainite is killed by another vampire while the spell is in effect, the blood retains the potency of the lower generation, so a Diabolist *can* lower his generation in this way. Of course, finding and killing a Thaumaturgist at the exact moment that this spell is in effect is not an easy task.

*Duration:* 2 hours.

*Cost:* 2 per generation.

*Prerequisites:* Magery 2, Blood Rage.

### **Theft of Vitæ (VH)**

**Regular; Resisted by Will-5**

This spell allows a vampire to mystically transfer blood into his system from a distance, draining the Blood Pools of other creatures to add to his own.

The caster must be able to see the creature or blood he wants to transfer and must be within 20 yards. The number of Blood Points stolen is equal to one point per 2 points of energy put into the spell.

The caster must remain completely still while the blood is being transferred, and each Blood Point takes 5 seconds to transfer. If the transfer is interrupted (the caster is at-

tacked, for example), the transfer is broken. The vampire still keeps any Blood Points already received, but must use the power again if he wants more.

Although the victim can resist, he may not know what is happening to him, so if the caster is inconspicuous, he is not necessarily in any danger. Kindred can make an IQ-2 roll to figure out that they are being drained by a Thaumaturgist. Mortals will simply begin to feel very weak as their blood is stolen.

*Duration:* 5 seconds/point of blood stolen.

*Cost:* 2 per point of blood stolen.

*Prerequisite:* Blood of Potency.

### **Cauldron of Blood (VH)**

**Regular**

This spell allows a Thaumaturgist to manipulate others' blood. By touching another, he is able to boil his blood, not only causing incredible physical harm but destroying much of the blood as well. To humans, this causes 4 points of damage per Blood Point boiled, virtually ensuring the death of any mortal. When used on a vampire, it simply boils Blood Points away. This causes no damage, but it is very painful, and the victim must make a Will-2 roll to do anything but cringe in agony. The spell boils 1 Blood Point per 3 points of energy put into it. The subject cannot resist.

*Duration:* 1 second.

*Cost:* 3 per Blood Point boiled; 2/Blood Point to maintain.

*Prerequisites:* Magery 3, Theft of Vitæ.



## Ritual Spells

The following spells are all performed as rituals; they are also considered part of the Blood College, though not all of them require blood. Each requires a certain amount of time, energy and material components for the spell to take effect. The energy cost for the spell is spent at the *end* of the ritual. If a ritual spell is interrupted for more than 30 seconds, the caster loses 1 point of Fatigue and must start over.

There are rumored to be dozens or even hundreds of ritual spells, but the four presented below are the most commonly known.

### *Defense of the Sacred Haven*

*Area*

This spell is used to defend a vampire's haven from the intrusion of deadly sunlight. It takes one hour to cast and ensures that no sunlight may pass through any window, doorway or other opening within the area of effect. Sunlight is simply reflected by the windows and does not seep through cracks or other small openings. This spell functions only as long as the Kindred who casts it stays within the area of effect. A drop of the caster's blood must be placed on each opening in the area of effect. At least one Blood Point must thus be used.

*Duration:* As long as the caster remains in the area.

*Base Cost:* 1.

*Time to Cast:* 1 hour.

*Prerequisite:* Magery.

### *Wake with Morning's (Evening's) Freshness* *Regular*

This spell must be performed immediately before a vampire prepares to sleep through the coming day. A half-hour period of complete meditation is required. Any interruption or performance of other activities after the spell, but before sleep, will render the magic ineffective. The spell allows the protected Kindred to immediately awaken at any sign of danger during the next day. The rule regarding how the character's Humanity level restricts the maximum rolls against skills during the day is waived for the first minute (see p. 76). Thereafter, it is once again effective, but no matter what the character's Humanity or condition, he will awaken in time to attempt to alleviate the danger. Feathers are required to perform this spell, and they must be burned and the ashes spread over the sleeping area. The spell must be re-cast if the vampire returns to sleep that day.

*Duration:* Until the vampire awakens.

*Cost:* 3.

*Prerequisites:* Defense of the Sacred Haven; Awaken†.

### *Communicate with Kindred Sire*

*Regular*

This spell is very practical, but takes five minutes to cast. Upon completion, the spell allows a vampire to speak telepathically at any distance with his sire. The spell has been modified throughout the years to also allow the vampire to speak with any Kindred who has been Blood Bound to the caster, or even anyone who has partaken of the caster's blood since the most recent sunset. The communication is two-way, but unlike the Auspex power of Unveil the Shrouded Mind, the vampire may not probe the target's mind. The caster must possess an item which once belonged to whomever he wishes to contact.

*Duration:* 10 minutes.

*Cost:* 6; 3 to maintain.

*Time to Cast:* 5 minutes.

*Prerequisites:* Magery 3; Mind-Reading†.

### *Deflection of Wooden Doom*

*Regular*

This spell protects a vampire from being staked through the heart while he is sleeping. The caster of this spell must be completely surrounded by a circle of wood. Anything wooden, even furniture or wood shavings, will work, but the circle must be unbroken. Thereafter, the caster need not fear being staked until the sun next sets. Though only the first attempt is deflected, any wooden stake that is about to plunge through the vampire's heart will instead instantly disintegrate. In order to activate the power of the spell, a stake must actually be ready to penetrate the vampire. A stake merely held near the Kindred's heart will not be affected. A wooden splinter must be placed in the caster's mouth at the end of the spell's casting (if the splinter is removed during the sleep, the spell is nullified).

*Duration:* One day, or until the splinter is removed from the caster's mouth, whichever comes first.

*Cost:* 3.

*Time to cast:* 10 minutes.

*Prerequisites:* Wake with Morning's (Evening's) Freshness, Sense Foest†.

## Other Spells



here are several other spells gained by continuing study in the arts of Thaumaturgy. Unlike the spells listed above, these must be learned from a tutor or text during the campaign, and may not be taken during character creation. They are not part of the Blood College, and thus can be learned by mortal mages. A campaign involving the discovery of an ancient magical book or tracking down a reclusive Tremere elder can provide many exciting adventures.

### *Ignite Fire*

*Regular*

This is the basic Fire spell. It produces a single spot of heat, and is used to set fire to a *readily* flammable object. It works best on paper and cloth, and will not affect any item that would not burn in an ordinary fire. In particular, it will *not* set fire to a living being! Once ignited, the fire burns normally.

*Duration:* 1 second.





*Cost:* Depends on the amount of heat desired. Cost to maintain is the same as the original cost.

1 – for an effect as though a match had been held to the subject: will light a candle, pipe or tinder in one second.

2 – for an effect as though a torch had been held to the subject: will ignite paper or loose cloth in one second, ordinary clothes being worn in four seconds.

3 – for an effect as though a blowtorch had been held to the subject: will ignite dry firewood or clothes being worn in one second, leather two seconds, heavy wood in six.

4 – for an effect as though burning magnesium or phosphorous had been held to the subject: will ignite coal in one second, heavy wood in two seconds.

*Prerequisite:* Magery.

#### *Create Fire*

*Area*

As for Ignite Fire, except that it lets you create fire without fuel. Produces up to a hex of flame (or, in midair, a sphere of flame which falls). This is real fire, which will eventually ignite any flammable object it touches. Cannot be cast within rock, foes, etc.

*Duration:* 1 minute.

*Base Cost:* 2. Cost to maintain: Half the cost to create. No maintenance required if there is fuel for the fire to ignite.

*Prerequisite:* Ignite Fire.

#### *Shape Fire*

*Area*

Lets the caster control the shape of any flame. A natural fire will not move to a place that it can't burn, but flame made with the Create Fire spell needs no fuel and can be moved about. The flame keeps its same volume. Each shape-change requires a second of concentration on the part of the caster, and *moving* a flame requires constant concentration while it moves – but once shaped, the flame will keep that shape until the spell expires, without concentration by the caster. Maximum speed is 5 yards per second, moving on the caster's turn. However, if the fire in one hex is "shaped" to spread across two hexes, it will only do half damage to those who enter the hex. Once hex spread into three hexes does only 1/3 damage, and so on.

*Duration:* 1 minute.

*Base Cost:* 2. Cost to maintain: Half the cost to cast.

*Prerequisite:* Ignite Fire.

#### *Apportation*

*Regular: Resisted by IQ*

Lets the caster move physical objects without touching them. This is not an instantaneous Teleport, but visible motion. If the caster cannot see the object, normal distance penalties apply (see p. B151) – but the caster must be familiar with an unseen object and its location to move it at all. This spell moves its subject at 1 yard per second, not fast enough to do any damage with it.

*Duration:* 1 minute.

*Cost:* 1 for an object up to a pound in weight; 2 for an object up to 10 pounds; 3 for an object up to 50 pounds; 4 for an object up to 200 pounds; and 4 for each additional 100 pounds. Cost to maintain is the same.

*Prerequisite:* Magery.

### Rain

### Area

Creates (or prevents) 1 inch of rain, in a normal outdoor setting.

*Duration:* 1 hour.

*Base Cost:* 1/10. Cost to maintain is the same per hour. Cost to make rain doubles in a desert or other area (GM's determination) where rain is unnatural. Cost to prevent rain doubles in a naturally rainy or swampy area.

*Time to cast:* 1 minute.

*Prerequisite:* Magery 2.

### Snow

### Area

Creates (or prevents) 1 inch of snow, in a normal outdoor setting. To work properly, this spell must be cast when the temperature is 32° or lower. Cast under warmer conditions, this spell simply summons a thin drizzle, dampening the ground but not leaving any significant puddles.

*Duration:* 1 hour.

*Base Cost:* 1/15. Each additional 1/15 Fatigue increases the amount of snow by 1 inch per hour. Cost to maintain is the same per hour.

*Prerequisite:* Rain.

### Hail

### Area

Makes hail fall. The temperature must be *above* freezing. The main effect is to provide intense distraction to whoever is being pelted with hail: spellcasters must make a Will roll each turn to keep their concentration. For 5 times the cost, the GM may allow *really big* hailstones, doing 1d-2 crushing damage per turn.

*Duration:* 1 minute.

*Base Cost:* 1/5; same to maintain. For damaging hailstones, base cost is 1.

*Prerequisite:* Snow.



## Optional Rules for Augmenting Disciplines

This section provides an optional method for computing the benefit, duration and Fatigue costs for Celerity, Fortitude and Potence. As described under each Discipline's description, Augmenting Disciplines enhance a certain ability or provide a benefit to a vampire's statistics – Celerity boosts Move, Fortitude enhances Damage Resistance and Potence improves Strength. These rules increase the power of these Disciplines, so GMs should be careful when deciding whether to use them. In addition, the rules are less true to the original source material. *Vampire* purists may want to use the basic rules.

With these optional rules, the PC with an Augmenting Discipline can choose the level of the augmentation separately from the duration of the power. For example, normally, if a vampire wants to increase his DR+4, he would spend 6 points of Fatigue and the power would last for 1 hour (see p. 103).

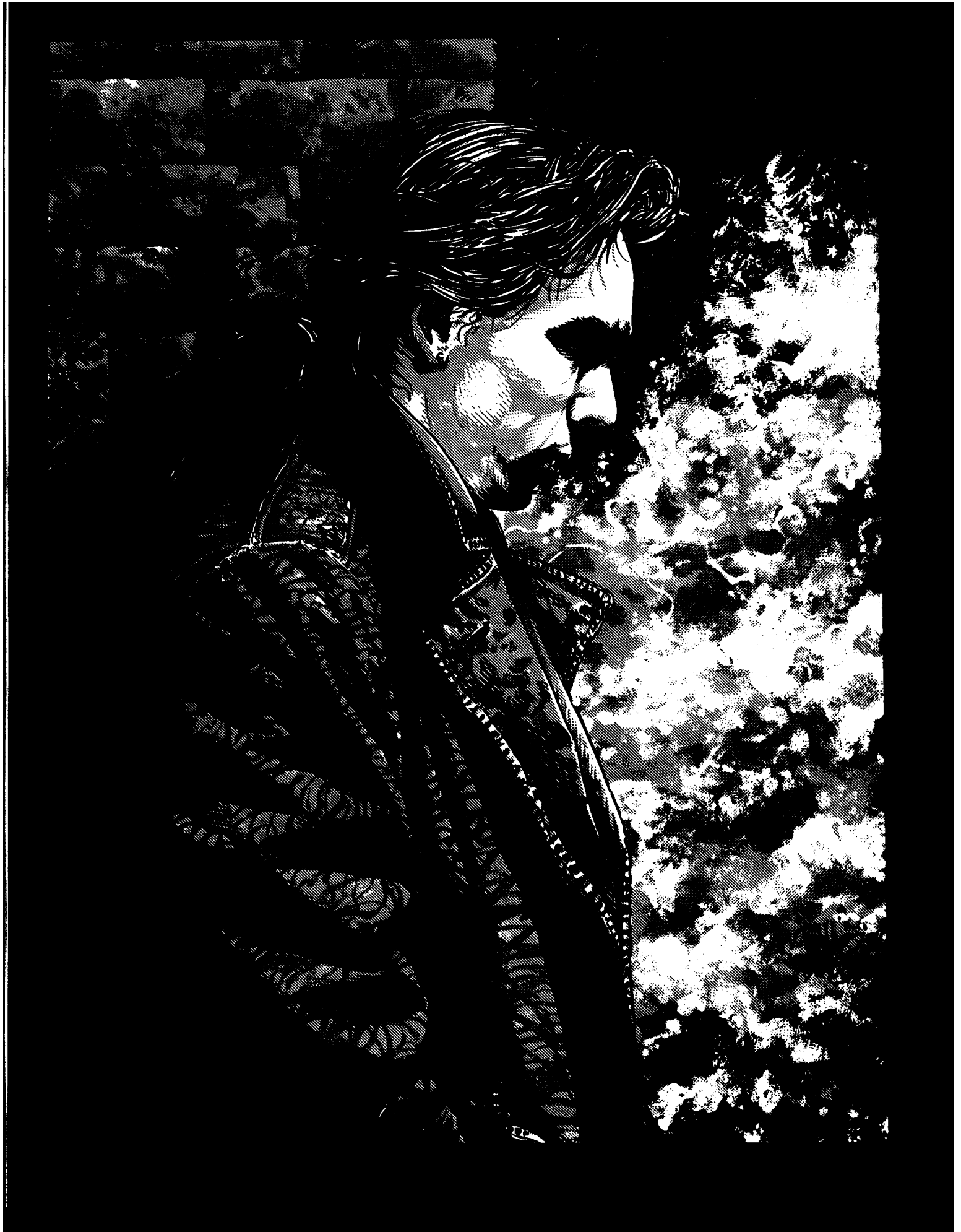
With these rules, he could customize the benefit and the duration, so for the same 6 points of Fatigue, he would have the option of DR+1 for 6 hours, DR+2 for 2 hours, DR+4 for 1 hour, DR+6 for 30 minutes or DR+10 for 1 minute.

The Fatigue for the benefit and for the duration are spent separately, and then added together to get the final cost. See the table below for the Fatigue costs.

Fatigue	Augmentation	Fatigue	Duration
1	.....+1	1	..... 10 minutes
2	.....+2	2	..... 30 minutes
3	.....+4	3	..... 1 hour
4	.....+6	4	..... 2 hours
5	.....+10	5	..... 6 hours

The character-point cost for these powers is based on the amount of Fatigue a vampire can spend on them. The chart below illustrates these costs.

Power Level	Maximum Fatigue Allowed	CP cost
1	2	4
2	4	8
3	6	16
4	8	24
5	10	48



*I push open the wrought-iron gate as I have done ten thousand times. My haven fades away into the fog behind me as I enter the damp streets. Each night I pray will be my last, yet each night I return with blood upon my lips and a bitter emptiness in my soul. Though I am a monster, I am not untouched by remorse.*

*A church bell tolls in the distance as I again beg whatever powers that be to release me from this endless death. As always, there is no answer.*

*I approach an intersection where the painted women sell themselves. They do not recognize me, and I search for one who has the look of emptiness in her gaze – one who abhors her existence as much as I do mine. Only such pitiful creatures can I bring myself to harm. But they are all so vibrant . . . so alive. Everything that I am not. I turn away and ignore their entreaties.*

*The night drags on, and I fear that I must return home hungry, but as I pass over an ancient bridge, I glimpse a lone figure in rags. He raises his head wearily as I walk by and holds out his hand in supplication.*

*“Some coins for a hot drink?” he asks, but his eyes are pleading for something else. Freedom from this misery. Release.*


*I smile and offer him my hand. “Come with me,” I say. “I’ll give you what you truly want.”*

*He takes my hand, and I lead him to a destination that still – after five hundred years – I cannot muster the courage to visit myself.*

# *Chapter 5:*

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# CLANS


he existence of a vampire is ultimately a solitary one. True, they can frequent crowded places and have many friends and acquaintances among mortals, but ultimately their Kindred curse separates them from all others. All others except their own.

This is one reason that blood ties are so important to the Kindred, and why the Camarilla is such a pervasive influence within vampire society. The clan is the closest thing any Cainite has to family, and clan ties are strong.

Clan differences are nearly as strong. Much of the tension in any vampire's existence comes from the tensions between clans. Much like a college fraternity or an exclusive social club, clan members protect their own and tend to distrust – or outright revile – the members of other clans. The Caitiff (clanless) are universally disliked, and thus find a certain solidarity in their outsider status.



## Choosing a Clan

 Clans play a very important part in character creation. A PC cannot change his clan once it is chosen, and even playing a clanless character is a significant choice since they have a low Status in vampire society.

A player should look carefully at each clan's strengths and weaknesses, and at the attributes that the members of each clan favor. Generally, Brujah will have a high Strength and Dexterity, while Tremere are more intellectual. These are not hard-and-fast rules, but the player must come up with a good reason that the art-loving waif with a low ST and a high IQ is a Brujah and not a Toreador.

### Clan Strengths

Each clan has a selection of three Disciplines which their bloodline allows them to learn easily. Other Disciplines can be learned, but they do not come as easily, and the character must go outside of his clan structure to learn them. The Caitiff also can learn three Disciplines easily, but the character gets to choose which ones they are. Any more than three must be bought with double character points, as discussed on p. 68.


### Clan Weaknesses

Each clan also has a disadvantage or two that must be part of that character's creation. The Brujah, for example, must take Weak Will: Self-Control at a -4, while the Toreador must take the Absent-Mindedness disadvantage.

The weakness that is integral to the Caitiff is their inherent Kindred Status at -2.

*Note:* Unless specified in the clan description, the disadvantages associated with clan weaknesses cannot be bought off. A Malkavian will always have a mental disadvantage, and a Ventrue's Vow will always be in effect.

## Clan Descriptions

 The following seven clans are the body and soul of the Camarilla. They are by no means the only vampire clans in existence; however, these seven are the only clans that actively support the Camarilla and are thus part of the normal life and society of the Kindred. A player may choose his character's lineage from one of these seven, or he may choose to be Caitiff – a vampire with no clan.

# Brujah

**T**he Brujah clan is almost completely composed of rebels of one kind or another, forever searching for the ultimate expression of their individuality. The Brujah are punks, skinheads, bikers, death-rockers, freaks, socialists and anarchists. They tend to be stubborn, highly aggressive, ruthless, sensitive to slights, and extremely vengeful. They are the most uncontrollable of all the Kindred.

These malcontents tend to be fanatical in their disparate beliefs – the only thing that unites them is their desire to overthrow the social system, be it vampiric or mortal, and replace it with one of their own making (or with nothing at all). Many are bullheaded crusaders of the worst sort, devoted to their cause until they become blind to any other shades of the truth.

Though the Brujah are incredibly fractious, they aid each other in times of need, regardless of past disputes and antagonisms. If the Brujah call is made, others will respond, but the gathered host will be enraged if they think the call was unwarranted.

The clan is poorly organized and only occasionally holds informal meetings. Indeed, Brujah rely on their chaotic behavior to gain the results they desire. Other Kindred allow them their eccentricities; indeed, certain activities that would get other Kindred extinguished earn them only the remark: “Oh, a Brujah.” Insolent outbursts and fevered ravings are to be expected from the Brujah. The other Kindred have simply learned to provide the Brujah an amount of leeway which would be given to no other vampire.

## Nickname

Rabble.

## Appearance

Brujah tend to dress in whatever style is the most outrageous of the period, though some dress in a way that conflicts with the rest of the clan so as to be the “most” rebellious. Leather coats, spiked hair, chains and black boots are common today, as are the various garbs of antiquity, especially those of the Renaissance. They may also dress and assume the attitudes of street hoods, neo-Nazis, or even Deadheads.

## Haven

Brujah live wherever they choose, frequently kicking out whatever unlucky individual lived there before them. By habit they move about quite a bit, never staying in one place for longer than a month. They typically possess many different “safe houses” where they can hide in times of turmoil. A new tactic of some Brujah is to suddenly move in with suburban families, using violence and intimidation to force them into submission. The Brujah “hang out” with the family for a few weeks, and then move on when they get bored. Certain Brujah “recruit” the rebellious teenagers in the households just before they move on.



## Background

Brujah naturally prefer rebels when they choose their progeny. Only rarely is a neonate guided through the process. Typically, new Brujah are left to their own devices, summoned and aided only at the whim of the sire. Often the sire remains anonymous, so as to avoid the wrath of a strict prince.

Often a sire will create more than one childe at a time, forming a brood. Brujah don't always seek the permission of the prince when they create progeny, so the chances of the childer's survival are greater if there is a group of them. It is a strategy of numbers – the more progeny created, the more likely some will survive.

## Character Creation

Brujah are commonly criminals, though drifters are also often encountered. They are uniformly aggressive and stubborn. They usually have high Strength and Dexterity, and nearly all will have some combat skills. There is the rare intellectual within the clan – else they would have *no* direction – but they are few and far between.

Common advantages include Combat Reflexes, Allies and Herd (see p. 58). Disadvantages include Bloodlust, Bully, Fanaticism and Stubbornness.

## Clan Disciplines

Celerity, Potence, Presence.

## Weaknesses

The members of this clan fall into frenzies far more readily than other vampires. However, the Brujah flatly deny this; indeed, they become exceedingly hostile (even to the point of frenzy) if the subject is raised.

Thus the Brujah must start out with Weak Will: Self-Control -4. This is a -8-point disadvantage. A Brujah can buy this off after character creation, but Self-Control can never be raised above +1.

## Organization

This clan is poorly organized and rarely meets formally. However, its membership supports the anarchs more than any other clan. Indeed, it lies at the movement's core.

## Quote

*"All creatures of sentience deserve to be free – it is our born right. When we overthrow this decadent system that attempts to rule us, we can overthrow the system that rules the mortals as well. We shall be the saviors of the Earth."*

## Stereotypes

◆ Nosferatu – They are rejected unjustly because of how they look. We are the only ones who respect them despite their bestiality.

◆ Tremere – Our archrivals. None are worse than these manipulators.

◆ Ventrue – These contemptible, conniving politicians are hypocrites of the highest degree.

◆ Gangrel – They know how to fight, that's for sure.

◆ Toreador – Effete bastards. They would make decent allies save for their addiction to the human vices.

◆ Malkavian – Some make fine compatriots, though they're all cursed with madness.





# GANGREL



The Gangrel are wanderers, rarely staying in one place for any length of time. In this, they differ greatly from most Kindred, who tend to find a haven and cling to it. There are no established leaders of the clan; on the whole, Gangrel are unconcerned with such things. Withdrawn, quiet and solemn, they keep their cards close to their chests.

This is a clan of survivors – vampires capable of making it on their own. They do not despise civilization or the society of other Kindred – they simply do not require it. They are known for their lack of concern when crossing the lands of the Lupines (werewolves), for it is said they have friends among the shapechangers.

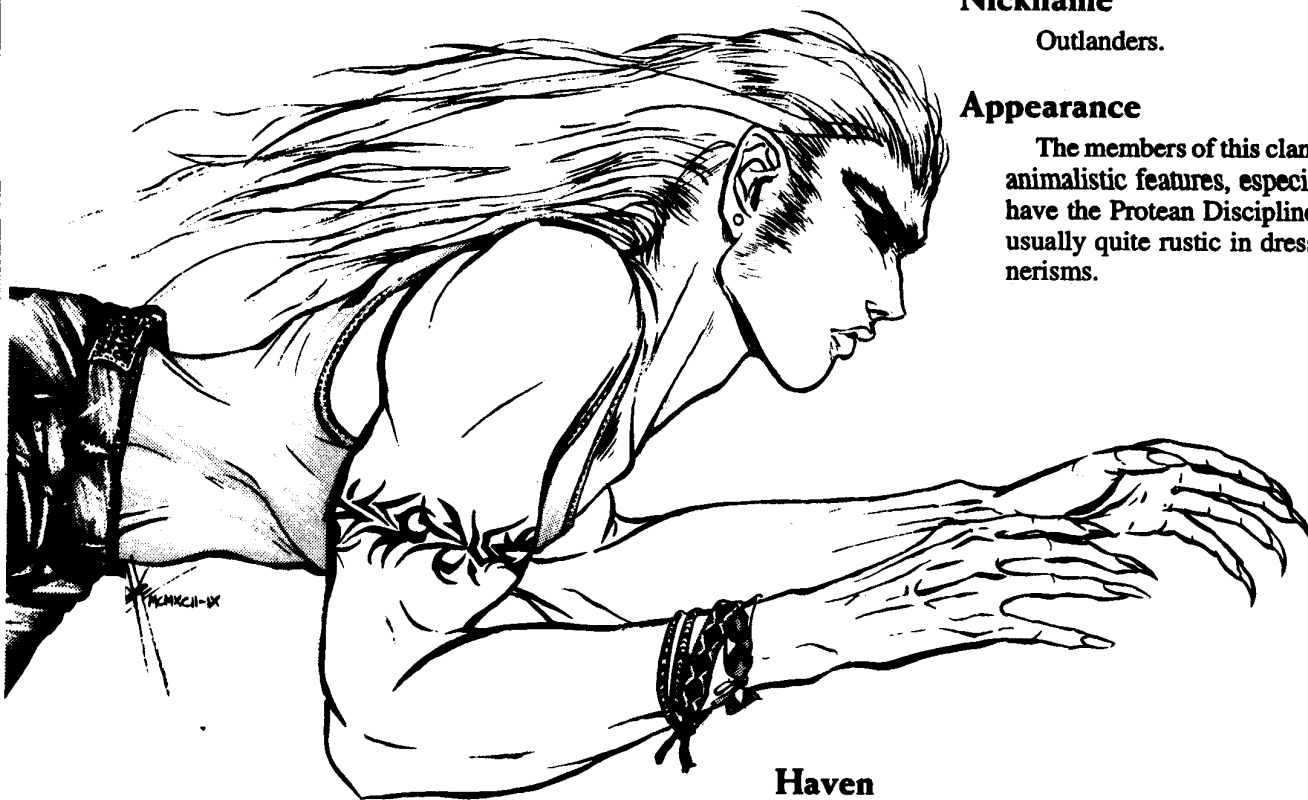
The Gangrel are closely affiliated with the Gypsies; in fact, if the stories are to be believed, the Gypsies are the mortal descendants of the Antediluvian who founded the Gangrel line. They are under his protection, and any Kindred who harms or Embraces one of them will answer to him. Regardless of whether this is true or not, Kindred do not harm Gypsies. Members of the Gangrel clan are expected, through long-standing tradition, to aid the Gypsies whenever necessary. Gangrel are sometimes aided by Gypsies as well. Certain Gangrel have adopted much from the Gypsy culture, including mannerisms, linguistic elements and even dress.

## Nickname

Outlanders.

## Appearance

The members of this clan often have animalistic features, especially if they have the Protean Discipline. They are usually quite rustic in dress and mannerisms.



The Gangrel are themselves very capable shapeshifters, which may explain their ability to cross the wild areas unmolested. Gangrel most commonly change into wolves and bats, but powerful Gangrels can achieve a mist form through the Protean Discipline. Perhaps because of these powers, their features often resemble those of animals; indeed, some of the oldest Gangrel barely resemble human beings anymore.

## Haven

Gangrel are nomadic by nature and almost never create permanent dwellings. Though they may live within a single city, they will usually not create havens for themselves, but will instead sleep in a different place each day. They are often found in parks, zoos or semi-wooded areas in the city. Many can meld with the earth and use this power to bury themselves and hide from the sun each dawn. See *Earth Meld*, p. 108.

## Background

Gangrel always pick their progeny very carefully, seeking those who are survivors. However, once they Embrace these mortals, they abandon them, leaving the childer to make their own way in the world. Though sires may watch from a distance, they almost never interfere. When the time is right, they present themselves to their fledglings and teach them the ways of the clan.

## Character Creation

Gangrel are often drifters or outsiders. Like the Brujah, they will have a high Strength and Dexterity, and many outdoor skills, especially Survival and Tracking. Strong HT scores are also usual.

Common advantages include Animal Empathy, Alertness and Combat Reflexes. Disadvantages include Compulsive Behavior: Wandering and Sense of Duty (Gypsies).

## Clan Disciplines

Animalism, Fortitude, Protean.

## Weaknesses

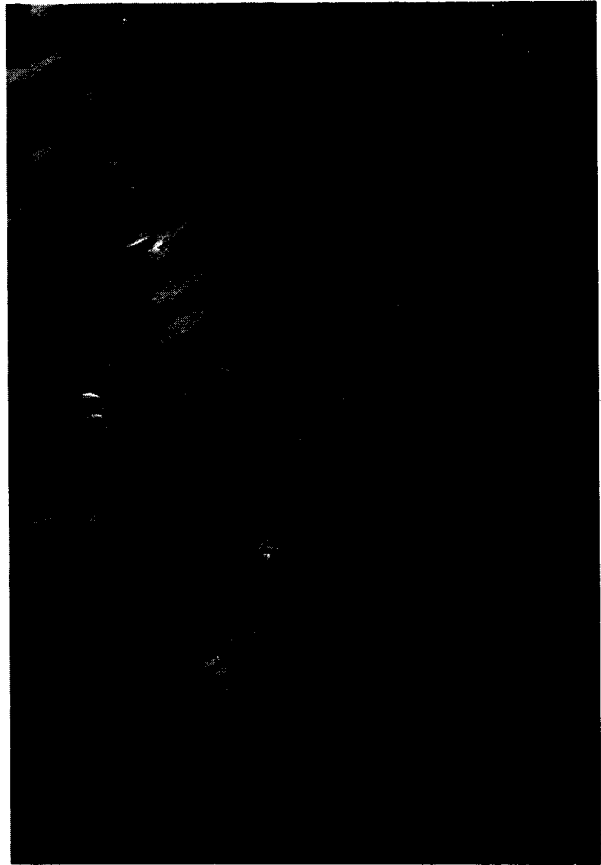
Gangrel become increasingly animal-like each time they frenzy – the player of a Gangrel character must pick a new animal feature each and every time the character does so. As Gangrel age, they increasingly resemble that which they truly are – the Beast.

At first these features are subtle and not noticeable, but eventually, they will start to affect the character's Appearance. For every five frenzies, the Gangrel PC loses one level of Appearance (from Handsome to Attractive, or from Normal to Unattractive, etc.). Once a character reaches Hideous, he cannot lose any more levels of Appearance.

The chart below shows some general changes that may affect Gangrel PCs. After the first frenzy, the GM can pick one of these features to start appearing. On the next four frenzies, that feature will gain in intensity (hair will become coarser, skin will turn rougher, etc.) until after the fifth frenzy, the feature is fully animalistic and in place. At that point the character's Appearance goes down by one. On the next frenzy, the GM picks a new feature to begin developing. This loss of Appearance can be bought off, but only if the PC has a good reason for it (electrolysis or plastic surgery are two examples).

### Animal Features

Coarse hair covering the body.  
Rough skin.  
Slitted, animal eyes.  
Pointed ears.  
Stooping animal walk.  
Vestigial claws.  
Hoarse, growling voice.  
Appeal to animal parasites (ticks, fleas, etc.)  
Sharper teeth.  
Tail.



## Organization

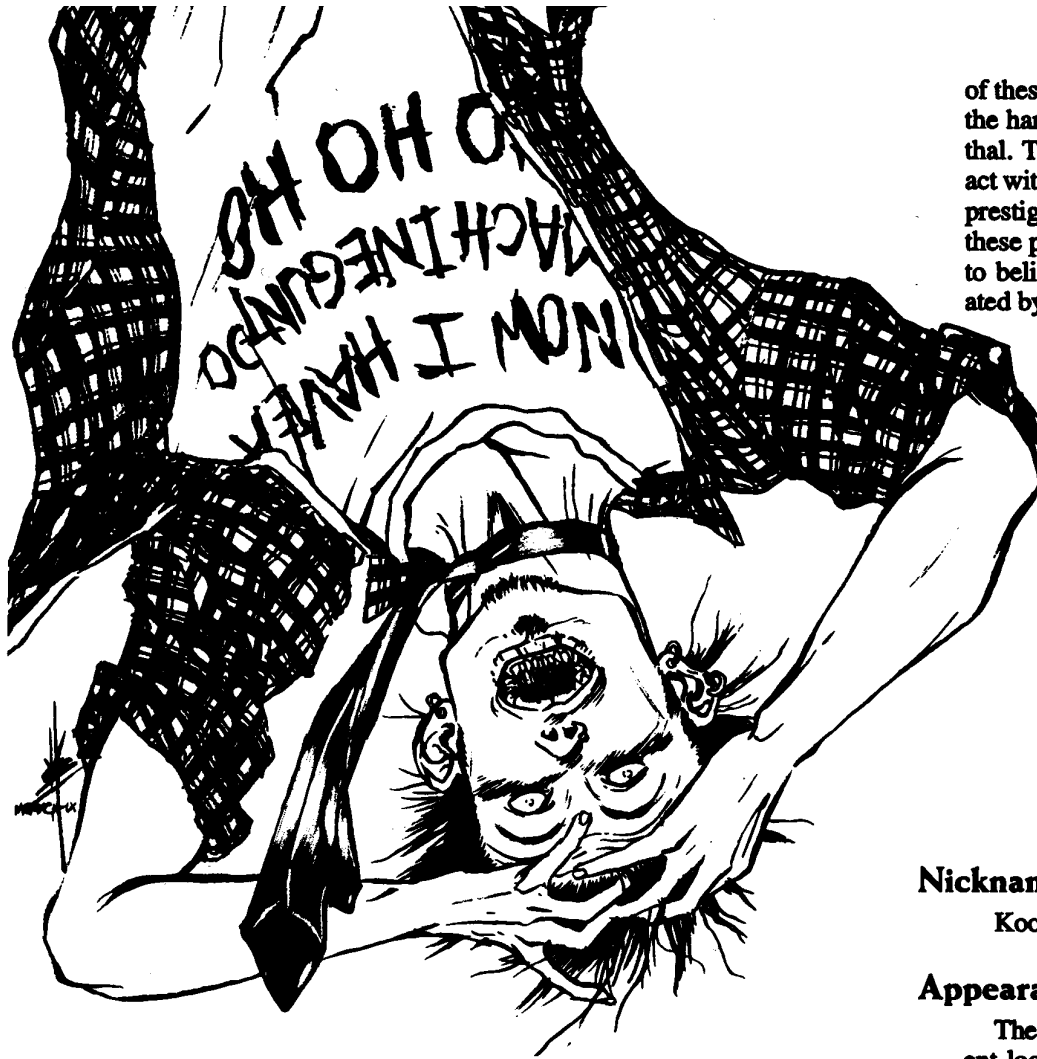
The Gangrel do not really consider themselves a clan. They almost never have clan meetings and rarely attend Camarilla councils. However, they do tend to enjoy each other's company more than that of other Kindred and can often be found together.

## Quote

*"The city is not our home. It is simply the only place where we are allowed to exist for some time – and that time is ending. Our people have become ill and deranged because we have lived in this purgatory so long and have grown dependent on the tainted blood of the mortals."*

## Stereotypes

- ❖ Nosferatu – Kindred of strong spirit; we have much in common with them.
- ❖ Tremere – Though they do not realize it, we are enemies. They follow the wrong path and seek to destroy us all.
- ❖ Ventrue – Every sect must have leaders; every leader must serve the sect. Our leaders are no worse or better than most.
- ❖ Toreador – We hold them in contempt because they have earned nothing better. They must learn to serve instead of take.
- ❖ Brujah – Their virtue is pure, but their vision is cloudy.
- ❖ Malkavian – They are reservoirs of immense power, but even they do not know how to tap it.



of these “pranks” can vary wildly, from the harmlessly fun to the potentially lethal. The Malkavians, when they interact with one another at all, tend to award prestige within the clan on the basis of these pranks. Many Malkavians profess to believe that the Jyhad is a joke created by the founder of their line.

The Malkavians are very picky about whom they Embrace. Typically, only those on the verge of insanity are chosen. The members of this clan search long and hard for those who have seen so much truth that they have descended into the pits of chaos, and thus have unique perspectives on reality. Indeed, if the progeny-to-be is sane, the sire will often make the Embrace and Becoming as difficult as possible, seeking to drive the mortal mad in the process.

### Nickname

Kooks.

### Appearance


The members of this clan have different looks and live vastly differing lifestyles. However, both dress and demeanor tend to be far from the norm, or so stringently “normal” that it seems bizarre.

### Haven

Malkavians live anywhere they feel comfortable. Many of them seek out hospitals and asylums to reside in. Some are even assumed to be inmates by the staff.

### Background

The members of this clan mostly select those who are close to death as neonates, or those who are so twisted that becoming a vampire is of little consequence. They believe that all mortals should have a chance to live out their natural lives.

 The Malkavians are insane, one and all. From madness, however, comes wisdom, and from wisdom comes power. The Malkavians are true creatures of chaos. However, the Malkavians are also known to be clowns and pranksters. As with all things connected with them, not everything makes sense.

This clan is infamous for its destructive and nihilistic members. Malkavians have a reputation for sadistic behavior and for holding little grasp of the humanity they still retain. In truth, such Malkavians are a minority. The members of this clan regularly surprise the Kindred; often they do not seem insane. Some Kindred believe the Malkavians have an undeserved reputation, and have been sullied by a few truly psychotic members. Even so, sometimes the most normal-seeming people have the loosest grasp on reality.

The Malkavians have a time-honored tradition of playing practical jokes upon Kindred and kine alike. The nature

# MALKAVIAN

## Character Creation

Malkavians can be any sort of character – the weirder the better. They tend to favor IQ over ST, but some are truly powerful.

Common advantages include Common Sense and Intuition. Likely disadvantages are Phobias, Split Personality or any other crippling mental disadvantage. Many have Compulsive Behavior (practical joking).

## Clan Disciplines

Auspex, Dominate, Obfuscate.

## Weaknesses

All members of this Clan must begin the game with a Delusion or other crippling Mental disadvantage. If a Delusion is chosen, it must be worth at least -10 points. It could be anything, from "I am the greatest poet who ever lived," to "Squirrels affect the world's stock markets." Otherwise, the PC can choose Paranoia, Kleptomania, Fanaticism or any other Mental Disadvantage worth at least -10 points. The touch of madness is always upon the members of this line.

## Organization

The common belief is that many Malkavians probably do not understand that they are part of a clan, and the rest are busy denying that they are Malkavians.

This is not entirely accurate, however. The Malkavians have a respectable presence in the Inner Circle, and they participate as much as the Brujah in Camarilla functions.

## Quote

*"Madness, you say! Do you fear me? Are you afraid of what I might do, of what I might say, of the thoughts that rattle around in my brain? What a fascinating reaction. Don't you find it somewhat encumbering?"*

## Stereotypes

◆ Nosferatu – They are the most amusing of all the clans and perhaps the most honest, for they so obviously are what the others try so hard to avoid.

◆ Tremere – They perceive what we perceive, but hide from it. They still strive to avoid that which is inevitable. Nature is full of cycles.

◆ Ventrue – They are the most fun to play games with, for they take it all so very seriously.

◆ Gangrel – They are different from the rest, as are we, but they are even more lonely.

◆ Toreador – Such gleeful hedonists – it is not a life they live, but an everlasting death. But if they should ever comprehend that, their party would end.

◆ Brujah – They have a vision, but in their fanaticism they are as blind as the rest.



# Nosferatu

**N**osferatu are the least human-appearing of all the clans. They look something like feral animals. Their smell and appearance are revolting – one could even say monstrous. Long, bulbous ears, coarse-skinned skulls covered with tufts of hair, and elongated faces splotted with disgusting warts and lumps are among their less-nauseating features.

After Nosferatu have been Embraced, they undergo an exceptionally painful period of transformation. Over a period of weeks, they slowly shift from their mortal countenances to their Nosferatu visages. In the beginning, the childer may revel in their newfound powers, but soon the pain and the changes will begin. The psychological trauma of becoming such a loathsome monstrosity is often more painful than the physical symptoms.

Nosferatu usually Embrace those mortals who are twisted in one way or another: emotionally, physically, spiritually or intellectually. They consider the Embrace too horrific to bestow on any worthwhile human beings. With the change into a vampire, the Nosferatu hopes to somehow redeem the mortals, to give them a second chance. It is surprising how often it works. Underneath the grim exterior, the Nosferatu are practical and surprisingly sane, with a sense of grace and acceptance about them.

It is said they revel in being dirty and disgusting and do little to make themselves look better (not that there is very much they could do). Indeed, they are often cheerful amid their squalor, especially when others are forced to enter their realm. They are, however, also

known for being grumpy and lewd, and cannot be trusted to conform to the standards of civilized society.

Though their Obfuscate Discipline enables the Nosferatu to travel through mortal society, they are unable to interact with it. Therefore they must live apart. The habits that develop from such an existence extend even to their interactions with other vampires. They avoid all contact, preferring their own solitary existence to the chaos of interacting with others.

Though Nosferatu may not fraternize with other vampires, they do remain surprisingly cognizant about the affairs of the city. They listen to the conversations of other vampires from hiding, and Nosferatu have even been known to sneak into the prince's haven to discover the deepest secrets of this elder. Anyone wishing to know any information about the city or its immortal inhabitants need only speak with a Nosferatu.

The Nosferatu stay in close contact with one another, and have developed a unique subculture among the Kindred. They play host to one another with the most elaborate politeness and gentility. They share the information they garner among themselves, and as a result are probably the best-informed of the Kindred.

## Nickname

Sewer Rats.

## Appearance

The changes that the Curse has wrought upon the members of this clan are the most dominant of any bloodline. They sport huge fangs, their skin is coarse and wrinkled, and they typically have no hair (except in all the wrong places).





## Haven

The Nosferatu most often live underground, either in dank cellars or within the city sewer system. When they do live above ground, they frequent abandoned houses or graveyards.

## Background

They tend to choose their fledglings from the castoffs and failures of society: the homeless, the mentally ill and the hopelessly antisocial.

## Character Creation

Nosferatu are sometimes drifters and often outsiders. They tend to come from the lower class, and may retain some low Mortal Status. They have high Strengths and Dexterity, and many have astounding intellects as well. Some Nosferatu will ironically possess several social skills, which they use to set visitors to their havens at ease.

Advantages common to Nosferatu are Acute Hearing, Common Sense and Animal Empathy. Disadvantages include Odious Personal Habits, any sort of disgusting ones, and Poverty.

## Clan Disciplines

Animalism, Obfuscate, Potence

## Weaknesses

Nosferatu are unbelievably ugly. They start the game with Appearance (Ugly), and many will actually be Hideous. This can never be improved.

## Organization

They tend to look out for themselves and mingle little with others. They are united in spirit, with an established network, but almost never have formal clan meetings of any sort.


## Quote

*"I don't look for trouble, but if it comes, I hide from it. Damn right, pretty boy. You may call me chicken, but I've known a lot of Kindred over the years who got smart just a few seconds too late. It's not like we can't die, it's just that it don't come natural any more."*

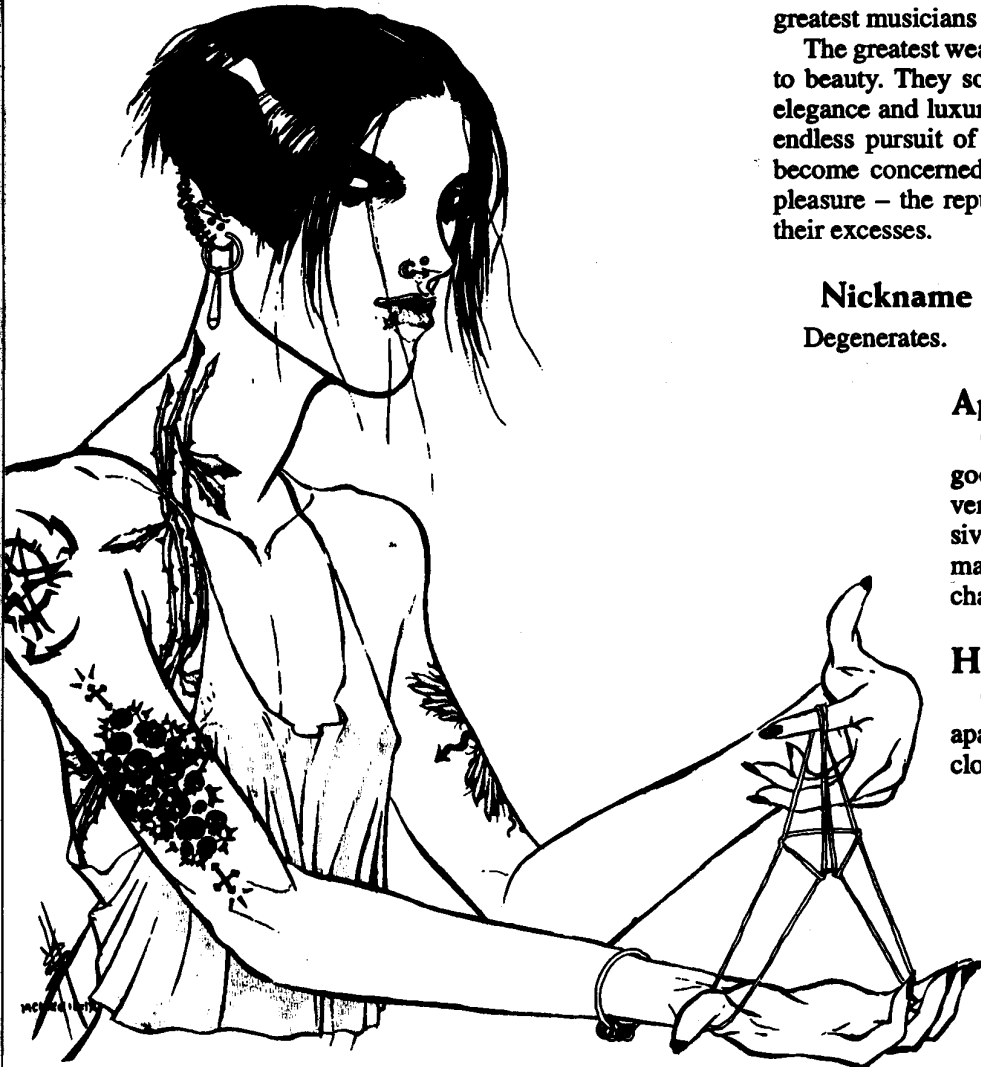
## Stereotypes

- ♣ Tremere – Shady characters; they're up to something.
- ♣ Ventrue – Too damn proper; got something up their . . .
- ♣ Gangrel – Good fellows; they know who they are.
- ♣ Toreador – Empty-headed whelps who should be spanked.
- ♣ Brujah – Nice enough, once you get past the crap.
- ♣ Malkavian – Creepy, aren't they? Don't ever trust 'em.

# TOREADOR

 The members of this clan are known for their hedonism, though that is a misinterpretation of what they truly are. They are proud and regal Kindred, highly excitable, and they cultivate expensive tastes – but “hedonism” is going a bit too far. Artists are always so misunderstood.

The Toreador are the most sophisticated of the clans. They are concerned with beauty in a way no mortal can fathom. They use the rarefied senses and tastes given to them by the Embrace to become as consumed and impassioned as possible. Ideally, to a Toreador, nothing matters as much as beauty, though in many cases the search for beauty is overwhelmed by the search for pleasure, and the Toreador becomes little more than a sensualist.



Like all true artists, they search for a truth beyond an existence they fear to be meaningless. It is that struggle for truth, and ultimately salvation, that has inspired them with what they consider to be their mission – protectors of the genius of the human race. They are truly in love with the vigor and passion of the mortals, and never tire of marveling at their creations.

The clan as a whole considers its members conservationists; their protectorate consists of the world's greatest artists. They specifically seek out those whom they consider to be the most talented and grant them the boon of immortality, thus preserving their genius against the ravages of aging and death. They constantly search for new talent and spend a great deal of time deciding whom to preserve and whom to leave to their fate. Among the Toreador are some of the greatest musicians and artists who ever lived.

The greatest weakness of the Toreador is their sensitivity to beauty. They so obsessively surround themselves with elegance and luxury that they often lose themselves in the endless pursuit of vice after vice. Some among this clan become concerned with nothing but their own continued pleasure – the reputation of the entire clan is affected by their excesses.

## Nickname

Degenerates.

## Appearance

The members of this clan are usually good-looking. They always dress in the very latest fashions from the most expensive stores. Of all the Kindred, the Toreador manage best to keep up with the ever-changing panoply of human fashion.

## Haven

They often live in luxury condos or apartments near the center of the city, as close to the action as possible.

## Background

They pride themselves on only selecting the most exemplary members of human society for initiation into their clan. Most members were artists or musicians, and many continue their artistic pursuits in undeath.

## Character Creation

Toreador are most often entertainers or dilettantes. They are flamboyant and unique. They tend to have higher IQs than anything else, though some are very dextrous. Nearly all with have Artistic and Craft skills.

Typical advantages include Charisma, Musical Ability and Wealth. Usual disadvantages are Delusions, Combat Paralysis and Low Pain Threshold.

## Clan Disciplines

Auspex, Celerity, Presence.

## Weaknesses

The members of this clan are as much prisoners of their artistic vision and sensitivity as they are its beneficiaries. They are often overcome by the beauty they see around them, and become immobilized with fascination.

Thus, all Toreador have a special form of the Absent-Mindedness disadvantage, which is worth -10 points. It nearly always manifests itself as an artistic distraction. Either the vampire gets caught up in his own artistic endeavor or is consumed by a particularly beautiful painting, sunset, thunderstorm, or whatever.

## Organization

The members of this clan meet frequently, though these gatherings are more social occasions than councils. In times of great urgency, they become united and ferociously active, but typically they are too apathetic to be much of a force.

## Quote

*"I remember my first love, a beautiful woman with a silver laugh. For nine years we were constant companions, but in the end I had to let her go. She begged me to take her but I could not. You may call me cruel, but in the end I realized that she was not a true artist, but an imitator. She was unworthy. I don't think I have ever recovered."*

## Stereotypes

◆ Nosferatu – These loathsome beasts ought to have been expelled from the Camarilla long ago. They hate all beauty and despise us for ours.

◆ Tremere – Honesty is not a word we associate with this clan, but we respect them for their dedication.

◆ Ventrue – The patricians of our kind, the Ventrue are the only ones with the refinement to appreciate art, though not as we do.

◆ Gangrel – We don't claim to understand them. Are they Kindred at all?

◆ Brujah – They have little respect for the accomplishments of civilization, but they do understand the virtue of change.

◆ Malkavian – Though chaos can be beautiful, it would be a difficult life.





# TREMERE



The members of this clan are dedicated and extremely well-organized. Others, however, think of them as arcane and untrustworthy. They are aggressive, highly intellectual and manipulative, and respect only those who struggle and persevere despite all odds. The Tremere believe they must use the other clans in order to prosper. "Be friendly with them, let them think that we are one with them, but never forget that we serve our clan first and foremost," the Tremere Elders whisper to their progeny. "If you must use your friends in service to the clan, then you know that your time was not wasted."

The Tremere are an odd lot indeed. They claim to have once been wizards who voluntarily gave up their "art" for the powers and eternal life of the vampire. They have never named a Founder, and some claim they have none, having instead harnessed mystical powers to achieve their state. Most Elders discount this claim as wishful thinking, however.

Their link to the substance of blood apparently runs deep, and they are rumored to be able to use blood in special ways to gain extraordinary powers. Many also believe that the knowledge of those practices has been passed down from generation to generation, and that it is now viewed by the younger Tremere as natural and commonplace – certainly not magic.

The leaders of this clan are based in Vienna, though they have chantries ("guild houses" for the practice of magic) on every continent of the world. A council of seven elders is said to control the entire clan from the Vienna chantry. From that locus, they maintain a tightly ordered, highly hierarchical group, one that allows no outsider to view their inner workings.

Tremere typically have immense love for and loyalty to their clan, and the younger members of Clan Tremere are expected to obey their elders without question. This is not as true in practice as it once was, however. Though there are some rebels and anarchists from the Tremere line, many suspect that they are posing as such on the orders of the clan, as part of its long-term plots.

All members of the Tremere are blessed with at least the lowest level of Magical Aptitude. Tremere sires often Embrace mortals who are already magically gifted, but even if this is not the case, Tremere blood grants this advantage – a new childe automatically gains this 15-point advantage. If a mortal is Embraced who already possesses Magery, his level will increase by one, though he cannot advance beyond level 3.

## Nickname

Warlocks.

## Appearance

Tremere traditionally wear black coats or even cloaks with high, upturned collars and arcane symbols sewn on the lining. Though this is no longer universal, they still prefer black, impressive-looking clothing (such as the pinstripe power suit). Many Tremere also carry props such as canes; some of these "ornaments" are rumored to be potent mystical talismans.

## Haven

The Tremere clan operates a chantry in almost every city where it has members. All those of the Tremere clan are welcome in any chantry. Those who live on their own have a wide variety of accommodations.

## Background

They choose the most aggressive and ambitious people as their neonates, preferring males. They carefully train and nurture them for years, calling them "apprentices." They Embrace these pupils only when they are ready to give everything to serve their sire and their clan.

## Character Creation

Tremere are usually professionals – lawyers or politicians – and most are highly educated. Obviously a very high IQ is common, but many Tremere are robust individuals, with high HTs and ST to fuel their spells. All Tremere characters must take at least one level of Magical Aptitude (Magery).

Other common advantages include Eidetic Memory, Intuition and Charisma. Likely disadvantages are Greed, Fanaticism and Overconfidence.

## Clan Disciplines

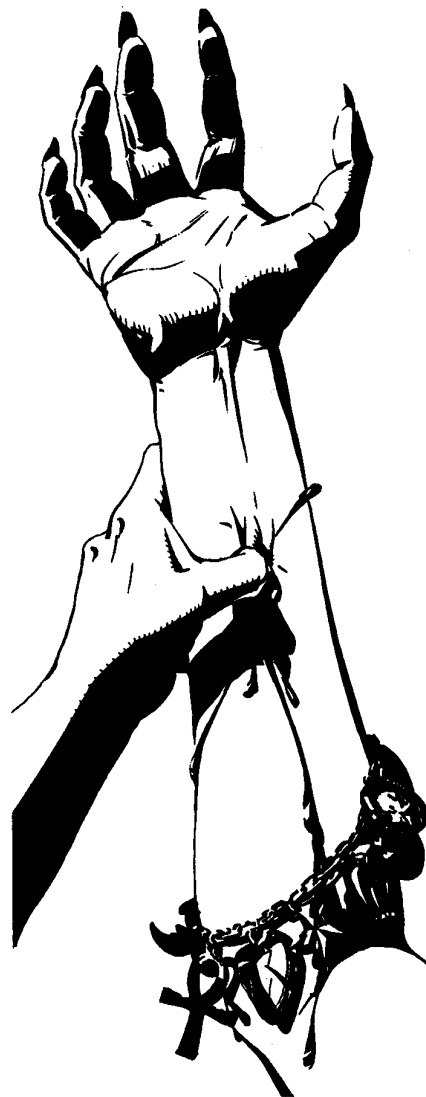
Auspex, Dominate, Thaumaturgy.

## Weaknesses

Tremere neonates must all drink from the blood of the seven elders of the clan when they are created. This means that all Tremere are at least one step toward being Blood Bonded to their leaders (see p. 84), and therefore must watch their step very carefully when around these Kindred. It is not uncommon for elders of the Tremere clan to attempt to become Regnants of many Tremere neonates.

## Organization

The Tremere are tightly organized and very hierarchical. The younger members are expected to obey the older ones without question, but this is not as strong a doctrine as it once was.



## Quote

*"We must survive Gehenna and establish the tenets of the new world order once the horror is overcome. If we are to succeed, we must control the other clans. No more time can be wasted. If they cannot be convinced to aid us, they must be forced."*

## Stereotypes

❖ Nosferatu – These knowledgeable creatures may make useful servants, but they are too noxious to tolerate for long.

❖ Ventrue – Too fractious to be truly effective; nonetheless, they are our chief rivals for control of the Camarilla.

❖ Gangrel – Noble Kindred, in their own way.

❖ Toreador – Idle hedonists. They do not understand that Gehenna will end their way of life forever.

❖ Brujah – Ignorant revolutionaries who don't even comprehend what it is that they oppose. They respect only power.

❖ Malkavian – So often they seem normal, but all their lineage carry their strange curse. They are often useful.

# Ventruue



Old-fashioned and tradition-bound, the Ventruue are sophisticated and genteel. They believe in good taste above all else and work hard to make their lives comfortable. They are most frequently the leaders in the Camarilla, and are honorable, social and elegant Kindred.

The Ventruue fancy themselves a clan of the modern world, and deny that they live in the past. This may be true of the most powerful members of the clan, but many are unable to give up the habits and dress of the time when they were Embraced – their sense of nostalgia is indeed strong. The attitudes and beliefs of their mortal days are never forgotten by any Ventruue.

They are most often found among the upper crust of the mortal world. Their sophistication serves them in good stead among the elite of mortal society, and it allows them to control many of the more powerful members of the city. Because of the relative ease in which they fit in among such company, the Ventruue often have a monopoly on political and social control of the city. If something goes wrong, it is often the Ventruue that the other Kindred turn to for aid, either material or social.

There is a strong Ventruue tradition that any member of the line may find safe refuge with any other member of the line, and cannot be refused. Thus many Ventruue aid their fellow clan members before the need arises for this tradition to be invoked. Harboring a fugitive in one's haven can be detrimental to one's welfare.

They are very proud of their leadership of vampire society, and will always insist that they were the founders of the Camarilla. They will do nearly anything to retain their grip on the politics of the cities and the Camarilla, and are exceedingly protective of their reputations.

## Nickname

Blue Bloods.

## Appearance

The Ventruue do not change their ways easily, so they often dress in very old-fashioned styles – lace and ruffles, top hats and evening coats. However, no matter how outdated the look, they never dress poorly. Younger members may dress in a modern style, but still remain about five years out of date.

## Haven

They tend to make their homes in mansions, often their mortal dwellings.

## Clans

## Background

Typically they select older and more experienced people as neonates, usually members of the upper class. Sometimes they will only Embrace their own mortal descendants.

## Character Creation

Ventruue may be dilettantes or professionals, but they will always be upper class. They favor high IQ scores, and often have lots of Social and Scientific skills.

Usual advantages are Wealth, Status and Reputation. Disadvantages include Greed, Overconfidence and Intolerance (lower classes).

## Clan Disciplines

Dominate, Fortitude, Presence.

## Weaknesses

Ventruue have exacting and rarefied tastes, even when it comes to blood. The player must pick a restriction on the type of blood his character can feed upon, e.g. only young men, no animals, only virgins, etc. The character will feed on no other type of blood, even if he is starving or under duress. This should be listed as a -10-point Vow.

## Organization

Though the Ventruue clan meets often, their councils are sarcastically called "debating societies" because of the ~~amount of talk and lack of action~~. The Ventruue consider this the only civilized way to get anything done.

## Quote

*"The best way to get even with one's enemies is to outlive them. Because we are reasonable and above such petty concerns as vengeance, we are the leaders among our kind. Our colleagues do little to support the Camarilla, so we must bear the burden alone."*

## Stereotypes

- ◆ Nosferatu – Frightful creatures, but they can't help being what they are.
- ◆ Tremere – Good chaps, support the Camarilla 100%, but they have questionable motivations.
- ◆ Gangrel – They are a bit uncouth, but can be trusted.
- ◆ Toreador – Tasteful and creative, if a bit unrestrained.
- ◆ Brujah – Bullies and rebels all. They are uncontrollable and untamable.
- ◆ Malkavian – They are not half as crazy as they pretend to be.

# Caitiff



he Caitiff are the clanless. They have no organization, no society and no pool of resources. Caitiff are by definition outcasts, and are generally disliked by members of the Camarilla, sheerly for their clanless status.

Caitiff can be found anywhere that Camarilla vampires are found. They tend to keep low profiles because many of the Camarilla Kindred will drive them out of town when they are discovered. They feed off whomever they can, whenever they can. They are unfettered and untamed, and the only connection they have to the vampire society is their sharing of a common curse. The Council would rather they were all dead.

Why would anyone play a Caitiff, then? For these very reasons. Clans can be as restrictive as they are nurturing – when a vampire is a Ventrue, he is *always* a Ventrue and owes a certain loyalty to his heritage. A Caitiff, however, has no such loyalties. He is a bastard and bestowed with a limitless freedom. He has no concern for the traditions of vampire society. He can be a heartless murderer or a gentle guardian; either way, he has to answer to no one.

Many Caitiff will be completely unaware of the Camarilla's existence. Most will have been abandoned by their sires and left to discover the secrets of their vampire existence on their own. The first they hear of the Camarilla is when they are accosted by a group of Caitiff-hating clan members. Learning of a whole society of vampires can come as a great shock, and could even be the basis of a campaign centered around a party of Caitiff.

## Joining the Camarilla

Caitiff are not required to remain clanless. It is assumed that clanless are that way due to some accident of chance, not because of their actual lineage. For a Caitiff to join a clan, he must do several things.

First, he must discover his true lineage. This requires a month's research and the aid of a Camarilla vampire. Five successful Research rolls are required, and after that time, he will know his clan. The GM should choose the clan – one that matches the character's personality and sense of style.

Second, the Caitiff must present himself to an Elder of his newly discovered clan and request admission. If he does so with appropriate respect, he will be accepted. If he is overbearing or rude, he will often be attacked and killed.

Finally, the Caitiff must spend the time and effort to learn any clan Disciplines that he does not already know. The player must spend character points on one power from each clan Discipline that is not in his repertoire. If they are not

Disciplines that he originally chose as part of his three at character creation, he must pay double points for them. Once he has purchased the requisite powers, he is truly a member of the Camarilla and is entitled to all the privileges given to them. He is also bound by his new clan's customs and obligations, or he may find himself Caitiff again . . . or worse.

## Caitiff Characters

Caitiff will often be drifters or criminals. They are outcasts because they are unable to socialize within vampire culture – that, or they are completely ignorant of it. Combine this with their lack of complete knowledge about their curse, and it is understandable why many Caitiff end up as street thieves or killers.

They can have any selection of attributes, but a high IQ and DX are common; Caitiff are often sly, quick and crafty.

All Caitiff are required to take Kindred Status -2, a -10-point disadvantage. They may also have Social Stigma and negative Mortal Status as well. Other common disadvantages include Odious Personal Habits, Kleptomania, Delusions and negative Reputations.

Common advantages are Common Sense, Danger Sense, Alertness and Toughness.





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*Tonight I run the streets like an animal. The hunt has been called, and no one can refuse the pull of the horn. The excitement is palpable. The night bristles with the coming of the storm. There is blood to be drunk tonight, and it is the blood of a Brother.*

*Yet, I must be calm.*

*The prey is crafty and swift. He will kill me as easily as he killed his master. His lover. His sire. Gods, how can someone abuse the gifts of Caine? I pray I am the one who finds him and drowns him in the dark oblivion of death.*

*I vault across the rooftops toward the building that was once his haven. He would be a fool to return, but inexplicably, I sense that he is there. I slow to approach, as I am suddenly gripped by a wash of dread. I cannot face him alone, I realize. He is too strong. He swells with the blood of the elders.*

*But the champion within me pushes me onward. Quietly through the skylight, down the spiral staircase, into the dark library where massive bookshelves sit empty, but bowed with the weight of ancient knowledge.*

*And he is there.*

*He is crouched by a doorway, with a sable cloak draped about him. He seems bent with age, sobbing softly. I approach him warily, hoping to take him in one swift embrace. But he rises with a motion that is too fast for vision. He is upon me before I can comprehend the action.*

*My last thoughts are of my arrogance, and I die like the foolish beast that I have become.*

# Chapter 6: CAMPAIGNS



Campaigns in *GURPS Vampire* will differ from those in most worlds. Instead of revolving around a straightforward story line with lots of action and combat, adventures will contain volumes of intrigue, plot twists and power plays. There will be action and violence, but it will usually not be the core of the adventures; rather it will be subtle, remaining in the background. Violence is an integral part of every vampire's existence, but it is not his *entire* existence.

Many campaigns will focus on the power struggles in the Kindred hierarchy. The PCs might be part of the prince's brood, or simply called by an elder to perform a certain task. Or they might be on the other side – anarchs who oppose the status quo. As the PCs dig deeper into the many levels of power, they will find bizarre connections and be the victims of double- and triple-crosses.

Other campaigns will ignore the Machiavellian intrigue associated with elders and princes. Instead they will focus on a group of Kindred and their nightly existence. Perhaps the PCs are a group of Caitiff who always have a good time and party away their endless lives. But when they are discovered by the Camarilla, the party's over and they have to move on or face the wrath of the prince. Or the characters might be a group of Camarilla vampires sent to chase Caitiff out of the city. What happens when they find out the clanless are more organized than they thought?

## Campaign Types

*GURPS Vampire* campaigns generally fall into three basic frameworks: In the City, On the Road, and In Between. The following pages list several campaign ideas that work well in the dark world of *Vampire*.

### In the City

#### *Gang*

The PCs are a group of anarchs (or even elder-sponsored "counterterrorists") in a major city, who have formed a brood molded in the pattern of a street gang. They experience their undeath as exuberantly as they can, getting much pleasure and enjoyment out of their existences as possible. Proud and often haughty, they hold in scorn all those not of their brood. To the mortals, they may seem little more than a gang of hoodlums, but their image belies their power.

The gang members must constantly protect their hunting ground from other gangs, as well as from Kindred who might encroach upon it. Elders are loath to acknowledge that it is the characters' domain, for it was not awarded to them by the prince. But since the "turf" is all they have, the anarchs protect it fiercely.

Like all anarchs, they scorn the power of the prince and pretend that he has no power – but they understand the Traditions and fear the power of the Justicars. Much like mortal gangs, they rebel against the establishment – only in their case, the establishment is less restricted by the law.

Typically, such Kindred are affiliated with mortal gangs, and may control them (treat mortal gangs as an Ally Group, or even a Herd; see p. 58). In fact, each member of the vampire gang may be the leader of a mortal gang.



### *Vampire Settings*

In *GURPS Vampire*, it is not necessary to create an entire world from scratch, for the world is so much like our own, and the differences are detailed in Chapter 1. However, much thought should go into creating the city. The city is the locus of each campaign. It is where vampires live and feed, and it is where they are often trapped.

The GM needs to present the campaign city in a realistic and consistent manner, or the players won't believe in it. The setting must live and breathe for the players. The setting is where the plot of each adventure unfolds – the more interesting and exotic it seems the more everything will come to life. With each adventure, the GM should define the city a bit better, without giving away everything at once. As the campaign progresses, new details will surface – geography, customs, plot, and so on.

The mortal structure of the city is fairly easy to determine. Though the setting is Gothic-Punk, much of it is identical to our world. A travel book for that city, or information from the Chamber of Commerce will help greatly. If the GM lives in the city where the campaign is set, details shouldn't be a problem at all – though changing a few details to suit the mood of the game is a good idea.

Creating the vampiric aspect of the city is a little more difficult. It involves deciding how the power structure functions and who controls it. The prince is likely to be the most important individual in a city, but that is not always the case. The prince might be the actual ruler, or he could simply be a figurehead, with some elder manipulating things from the shadows.

The intrigues among the Kindred of a city are often ferocious, so the GM must decide how they work in his city. How many different "sides" are there? Why are they opposed to one another? Members of various clans could be antagonistic, or the classic elder-versus-anarch conflict could be the major source of division. Are there Methuselahs behind the scenes manipulating the various sides, or are most of the Kindred slaves only to their own passions?

How do the Kindred of the city interact with the mortal rulers? Are the authorities beginning to suspect that there is something wrong, or is the media spreading bizarre stories that threaten the very fabric of the Masquerade?

Last, but not least, the design of the city must mesh well with the basic theme behind the campaign. If the campaign is centered around corruption, then the city ought to be corrupt as well, in both the mortal and Kindred elements.





### *Primogen*

The characters are the primary Kindred of a medium-sized city (less than 1 million) – about the size of Charlotte, North Carolina, or Madison, Wisconsin. In some sense, they “own” it; they certainly rule it. Because of the size of the city, the Kindred might even be the only vampires living there.

When danger or peril arrives, it is up to them to protect their domain. Any elders who do exist are likely to be patrons and/or sires of the characters, capable of providing much assistance but demanding aid in return.

The GM will need to create some sort of crisis for the characters to deal with. It could be anything from a powerful coterie of elders seeking a new city to control after being exiled from the one they once ruled, to a Methuselah who simply wants peace. The problems this responsibility creates will make for hours of inter-character roleplaying.

The vampires might even be anarchists who have taken the city from the elders who once ruled it. Now they must maintain control, as well as survive the arrival of a Justicar and Archons. Other elders may come in order to punish the interlopers, or simply to take over the city for themselves.

Player intrigue will be high, and the GM should encourage it. Limit the money and resources available to the council, and make them fight among themselves for it.

### *Brood of a Prince*

In this campaign, the PCs are the brood of the city’s prince. Their sire is either a vampire of great nobility or a total bastard. The characters can support the elders of the city and work to control and restrain the wilder impulses of the anarchists, or they could be secretly scheming against their sire, plotting to bring about his downfall. Making sure that the mortal authorities of the city don’t discover the Kindred is a full-time job – one has to suppress evidence, intimidate officials and cover up deaths.

The GM might want to make the brood members a little more powerful than normal, starting them out at 300 or even 400 points. Most of the adventures will be centered around the haven of the prince, but the city needs to be detailed as well. There should be many different areas of potential conflict and aggravation – who is out there to give the characters trouble? Remember that their sire is a prince as well, and thus has many demands made upon him as well as innumerable constraints. Does he take things out on the characters? Can the characters trust the prince, or are they only pawns in a very complex game?

### *High Society*

The vampire PCs in this scenario mingle in the high society of the mortal upper class, and become embroiled in its politics and affairs. Though it is only a game for them, it is a most intriguing one and it may be a means for the characters to compete with one another (e.g., who can seduce the Italian sculptor first?). However, by being involved with the elite of a city, the characters may be able to manipulate events and decisions in times of crisis. If the police are about to launch a major investigation, such contacts can be essential. Mingling with the high

society could be the “duty” assigned them by the prince or another elder. The elegance and beauty of their surrounding should contrast nicely with the evil and violence that will inevitably enter the scene.

The PCs in this type of campaign will obviously need Wealth and Mortal Status, just to be accepted into the inner circles of the social elite. The GM will need to develop detailed NPCs as well, as the characters will be meeting and conversing with a wide variety of movers and shakers within the mortal upper crust.

## On the Road

### *Wanderers*

These vampires travel around the country on motorcycles (or perhaps in an RV or stolen car), finding a safe place to sleep every night. They are focused on survival, and are bound to run into the Lupines at one point or another (see p. 44). There is much that they will discover on their journey.

The GM and the players will need to decide why they are wanderers. Are they hunted, continuing their headlong flight out of terror and a strong sense of self-preservation? Or do they simply have nowhere to go? The PCs must rely upon one another to survive in a hostile and constantly changing world.

Each adventure in this type of campaign could begin with the wanderers arriving in a new city, attempting to adjust and make themselves at home, and end as their efforts result only in their flight once again.

Whatever type of wanderers the characters are, the focus needs to be on survival. Accentuate the side effects of life as a fugitive. Because the characters are wanderers, they will not have Contacts or Patrons. Ultimately, this type of campaign may lead to the wanderers discovering some great truth or eventually finding peace and being allowed to settle down – that is, if they want to.

### *Refugees*

In this campaign frame, the PCs are castoffs from another city; perhaps they are even from a clan which does not belong to the Camarilla. They have run away from their prince, sire or clan. The city in which the campaign is based is the place where they have fled for refuge. They must spend much of their energy and time hiding both from mortals and other Kindred. Unlike the Wanderers above, these PCs are not free spirits. They are wanted criminals within the community of Cainites.

## *Involving the Characters*

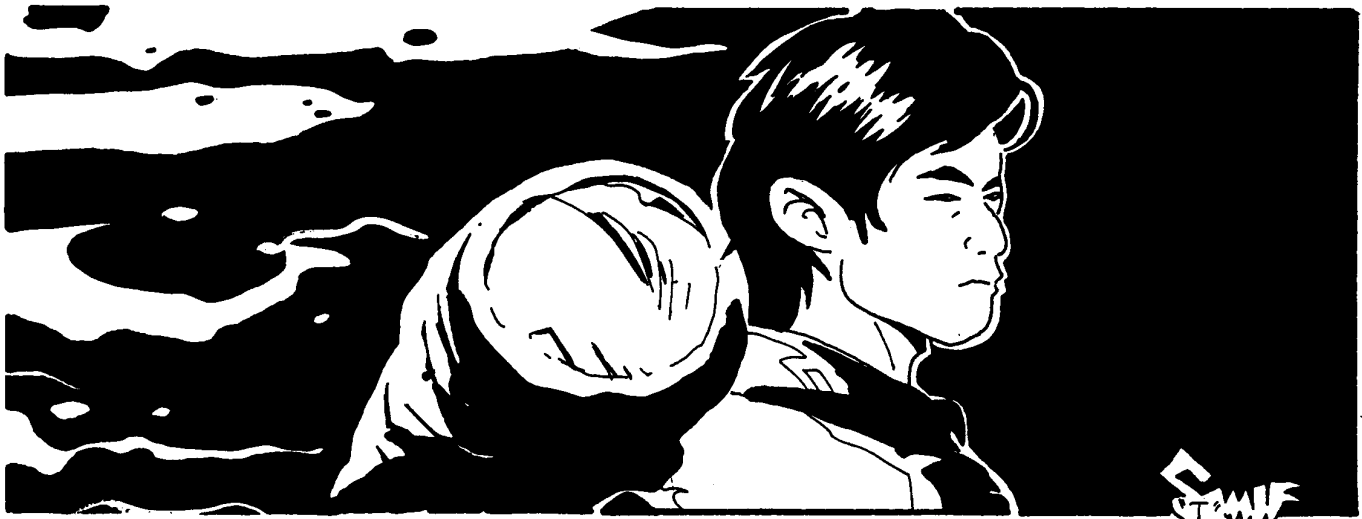
The characters are the basis of any campaign, as it is for their sake that the campaign exists in the first place. The characters are always the focus of events, and the decisions of the players determine the course of the plot. A great campaign requires equally great participants.

One thing the GM must determine as the campaign begins is why the PCs are together – why they form a brood. Of course, the players will have a lot to say about this, perhaps even the primary say, but it is up to the GM to make sure they fit together. Does each person in the group have a reason for being a part of the group? What kind of relationship do they all have with one another? Why are they friends? Why do they work together? In short, will the protagonists make sense in terms of the campaign?

All too often, players will create their characters in isolation from one another and worry about meshing into a group once the game starts. Often what results is a group of anarchists, with no system for working together or getting anything done. A lot of time is wasted with endless, meandering debates on what to do next.

If nothing else works, the GM may dictate that all the PCs have a common history, presuming that they have been friends for some time, perhaps even before they became Kindred. At the extreme, they could all be from the same clan, or even share the same sire.

The motivations for keeping the group together and on the right track once the campaign starts are many and varied. Doling out Humanity and Character Points for cooperation is one good method to keep players in line, as is involving each one in the plot in a unique way, giving everyone a chance to contribute to the overall direction of the campaign.





### *Antagonists and NPCs*

The adventurers will need someone or something to struggle with, a "monster" to fight. For the characters to have something to do, they must face obstacles. One of the best types of obstacles is a well-developed antagonist. An antagonist can be nearly any sort of adversary – Kindred or kine, animate or inanimate, cunning or brutal.

Most often, antagonists are villains, individuals who oppose the characters and are nasty enough to hate. But for them to work at their sinister best, the GM needs to make them malevolent. Over time, the PCs' hate for the villains will build, making the antagonist's eventual defeat much more real and satisfying. This buildup of dislike for the villain must begin early and progress from adventure to adventure, climaxing in a desperate and thrilling finale.

An entire campaign can be based around a single archenemy who has the influence and status to command many minions. The object might be to defeat this enemy, or merely survive his attacks. The PCs may even need to discover his identity. This enemy could be anyone from the prince of the city to the Methuselah who secretly controls the city, from a mundane witch-hunter to a powerful mage. The single arch-enemy concept is the simplest form of creating antagonists. Multiple enemies can complicate matters immensely (perhaps the enemies are even enemies of each other).

It is often fun to make antagonists many times more powerful than the characters so they will not be able to successfully act against their foe directly – at least, not at first. Certainly they will be able to combat the lesser minions of the enemy, but the attackers would not survive if faced with a direct confrontation. The adventurers must move against powerful enemies indirectly by gathering clues and allies, engaging in guerrilla warfare and probing the defenses of their antagonists. Only after great effort will they be able to act against their enemy.

On the other hand, a team of evil NPCs who are individually roughly equal to the party members provides wonderful opportunities for various personal rivalries and grudges to spring up, and allows you to present frightening "funhouse mirror" images of the characters – for example, a Sabbat pack where each member is a twisted reflection of one of the player characters, and which serves as a reminder of what the characters could become if they step too far over the line.

The campaign begins as the refugees arrive in a strange new town, without a clue as to the power structure. Any Reputation, Contacts, Patrons and Allies will be of little use here. Because they are new to the city, they will notice more of the mundane aspects than normal, things only a newcomer might notice. Thus the GM will need to have the city carefully designed, to be able to answer probing questions from the players.

The newcomers will probably not reveal themselves to the prince at first, so later they may get in big trouble for violating the Fifth Tradition (see p. 32). The GM should try to convince the PCs that the other Kindred will kill them if they are found, even if this is not true (though it very well may be).

### *Archons*

As archons, the vampires are among the most feared and respected Kindred in the Camarilla. They are the enforcers who travel from city to city, assisting the Justicars (and sometimes the princes) in maintaining the status quo. The characters will become heavily involved in Camarilla politics. They are united by ambition or by shared views on political affairs.

The PCs will either be selected and trained by a Justicar or created as his brood. The GM needs to encourage the players to spend more points on Disciplines, and the GM can raise the point cap to 100 or more points to spend on their powers. Given the resistance of anarchs, Caitiff and Sabbat, the group will need lots of power.

The team will have their Justicar as a Patron and have a level of Status one below him. They will travel, but will likely be based from a single city. The troubles of the road, by themselves, will provide many adventures in this type of campaign, as the PCs run up against wanderers, Lupines and others.

The archons may be faced with ethical dilemmas, as well. Do they search for truth or do they continue to mindlessly serve their masters? With a high level of intrigue, the characters will not know all of what is going on, and should be able to trust no one.

### *In Between*

Any of the campaigns that follow could be played with a main focus on city adventures, or they could involve lots of journeys and road adventures. Another option is to let them vary from one to the other during the course of the campaign.

### *Rock Band*

One possibility is to let the vampires form the nucleus of a rock band (or any other type of band: classical, folk, jazz or country). They are trying to become successful as musicians. Perhaps they were a band in their mortal existence and were all taken by the same sire, or perhaps they have decided to do this after being vampires for some time. Whatever the case, they are bound to get in considerable trouble as the Camarilla and most of the elders vigorously suppress any activities that threaten the Masquerade.

Each member will need to have skill in some Musical Instrument or Singing. As a local band, they develop a following, but what happens when their manager notices something strange about the band . . . and their deadly nocturnal habits? Does he report them, or simply use it as a marketing gimmick? Success could bring a record deal and a concert tour, exposing them to more fame and unwanted publicity.

### *Mortal Politics*

For some reason, the PCs wish to manipulate politics, either in their city or on a national level – probably because other vampires are attempting to manipulate it

in an opposing way. Vampires control many of the institutions in the mortal world, especially those which are centrally located and controlled by one city. Those institutions might be employed by vampires who control them as pieces in the Jyhad. This means the characters might get involved in campaigning, political espionage, and even electoral cheating (or preventing the other group from doing the same). Such intrigue-oriented activities are rare but not unheard of among the Kindred, and frequently can be traced to a maneuver of the Jyhad.

The PCs in this type of campaign will need to be very wealthy and will inevitably have lots of Contacts and Allies. The GM will need to detail the participants in the political race and their importance to the Kindred. This can make for a very intrigue-ridden and bloody chronicle, with intense double-crosses and plot twists.

### *Fanatics*

The characters can play IRA partisans, Moslem fundamentalists or eco-anarchists. They are members of some sort of extremist group who will go to nearly any lengths to carry out their cause. They are dogmatic, idealistic and totally committed to their group. Though they have become vampires, they have not given up their mortal beliefs (not yet at least) and they use their powers to do whatever they can for the cause. Can these extremists gain the wisdom of restraint in time to preserve their own Humanity?

The campaign can start with the fanatics carrying out their missions, but gradually other issues and themes will creep in. Eventually, they must leave the cause in order to preserve their Humanity or to have any hope of Rebirth or Golconda (see p. 87).

The characters should all be from the same fanatic group. They probably volunteered as a unit for some sort of hazardous duty which brought them into contact with their eventual sire, who himself was an extremist and realized the benefits of having an army of undead working for a common cause.

The GM must define the nature and resources of the fanatics' group, as well as detail the PCs' eventual opponents, be they government agents or Camarilla enforcers who want the Masquerade maintained.

### *The Cult*

This campaign begins as the PCs have created a cult around themselves, which offers them security and easy access to vitae. They could be the objects of devotion for the cult, or simply the figures who manipulate it from behind the scenes. It could even be a mixture of the two, with one PC serving as the charismatic leader, while the others are manipulators and organizers. The characters are cheating these people, and they are using them for evil purposes. This could certainly lead to a loss of Humanity, and will definitely draw the wrath of the prince or elders if it is discovered. Something will eventually happen to threaten their easy life.



J. Cobb

## Creating Adventures

An adventure for *GURPS Vampire* is more complex than many others because it involves not only the characters' solving problems and defeating enemies, but also delving within their own twisted psyches. In most cases, the players take a very active role in the direction of the adventures, and any pre-developed plot will fall by the wayside as the personalities of the PCs mature and develop.

A typical adventure will be built around a series of conflicts or problems that the participants must overcome to achieve their aims. Each step presents the characters with a problem, and once this conundrum is solved, they can move on to the next one. But the GM should not attempt to predict what the party will do; each problem should be set up so that there are many solutions.

There are many ways to develop the seeds for a good adventure. The ideas in the maintext are just a few. Adventure ideas can be found anywhere. Look in the newspaper or watch the national news to find the germ for a good adventure.

Remember, vampires are behind many major disruptions in the world, so the repercussions of their conflicts are sure to end up in the news. Add some background plot twists and create some memorable adversaries, and an adventure is born.

Adventures do not even have to be designed ahead of time. If the GM's campaign is rich enough in detail, the group will be able to find something interesting to do without any prior planning on the GM's part. They will guide themselves through their adventures. But even if they do direct themselves, the GM should try to get an idea of what they plan to do in the next session so he can plan for it.

Each character will likely have some members of the cult as a Herd, and perhaps Wealth as well. Unless the players wish to establish the cult on their own, starting from nothing, the GM will have to detail what it is and how it works – more than likely with the participation of the players.

## Adventures

The next few pages contain several ideas to spark short scenarios. Each is easily adaptable to one of the previous campaign types, or could itself be expanded to campaign length. There are no hard plots described here. Instead, these adventure seeds give settings and circumstances in which the adventurers have a variety of options to pursue.

### Mean Streets

These adventure backgrounds revolve around “life” on the streets. They deal with violence, fear, anger and madness. They are the most basic of all stories – emotive and intense. But don't be fooled by their simplicity; within each one lies a complex web of possibilities.

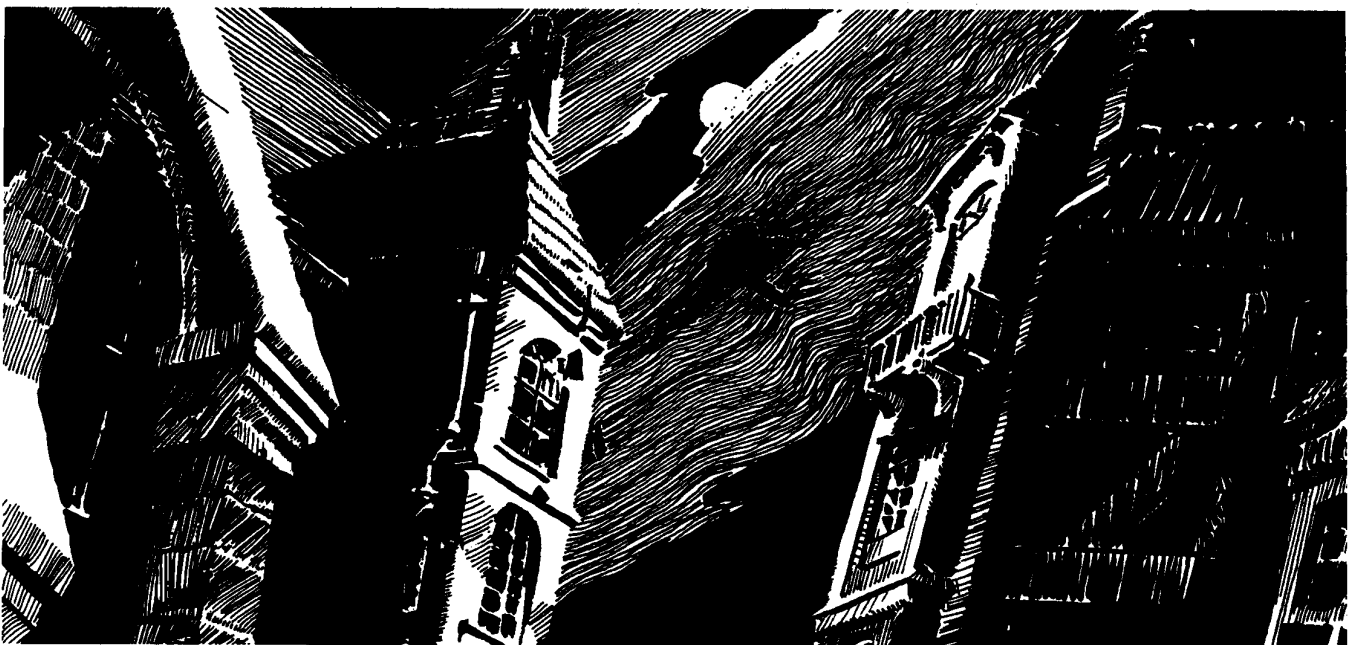
#### *Urban Nightmare*

Vampires not only feed on the bleak underbelly of the city, they are an intrinsic part of it. As the PCs attempt to deal with their less-than-perfect surroundings, they begin to uncover worse and worse atrocities. How do they deal with homeless vagrants who are unlikely to survive more than a few years on the streets, malnourished and ill residents whose blood is so tainted as to be poison to a vampire, and people whose desperation has led them to kill over tennis shoes?

When the GM gives the vampires something to care about, will they ignore the opportunities to increase their Humanity, becoming nothing more than an additional tragedy in these people's hopeless lives? Or will they become angels of mercy, helping the residents of the slums rise above their unwilling stations?

#### *Gratuitous Violence*

This scenario gives the PCs a chance to cut loose. A conspiracy of events leads the adventurers to become wanted criminals. The police are after them, as are agents of the prince and one or more Justicar. Pushed into a corner, the PCs have





little choice but to run or fight. At every turn the urge to fight becomes greater and greater until there seems no other course of action. And what a fight it becomes. Street shootouts with the police, deadly brawls with powerful Kindred and stealthy assassinations are examples of some of the incidents to punctuate this scenario.

Don't let the PCs think they can treat their enemies as if they were punching bags, and make sure that no matter how outrageous things get, the vampires realize that unnecessary violence only leads to a loss of Humanity.

#### *Wilderness Trek*

There are many reasons why a Kindred would leave the city; unfortunately, none of them are good. The countryside is populated with werewolves, spirits, faeries, and farmers carrying 12-gauge shotguns in their pickup trucks. Is that old barn where the characters want to spend the day haunted by ghosts, home to a pack of young lycanthropes, or simply deserted?

As far as vampires are concerned, any area outside the city is considered wilderness, and it is even more dangerous for Kindred than it is for kine. The city offers security, as so many of the mortal institutions in a city are controlled by the undead, and there are places to hide no matter where one goes. There are so many people in the city that it is easy to fade into the crowds and find food. In the wilderness, strangers are easily noticed – especially by the Lupines.

However, vampires might want to travel in the wilderness to speak with one of the Inconnu (necessary if Golconda is sought; see p. 87). Alternately, the characters may have to track down someone who is hiding in the wilderness, or punish a group of Lupines who have made a foray into the city. This adventure type could be combined with the Escape for a very deadly adventure.

#### *Diablerie*

Whatever the unique motivations and goals of the vampires, they are likely united by their desire for power. This concept only works if the characters are engaged in the dangerous and destructive struggle to locate, exterminate and drink the blood of their elders (see *Diablerie*, p. 86). As a group, they are able to take on these extremely powerful beings. However, the possibility for Humanity loss should be extremely high, especially if the elder had any redeeming qualities.

#### *Drama and Mood*

Drama and mood are the keystones to a successful campaign. The mood of the Gothic-Punk world is already dark and menacing, but that in itself is not enough. Each individual campaign will have a distinct flavor: sometimes light-hearted and free, other times dank and oppressive.

Mood is the background feeling of the campaign, and it is developed throughout the adventures. The mood can be paranoid, with the characters always looking behind them and being faced with back-stabbing double agents and diabolical arch-enemies. Or the mood can be hopeful, with a chance for Rebirth or Golconda waiting just past the next task. Each adventure builds on this mood, allowing the PCs to absorb it and feel it as if it were part of their lives.

Drama is the second element to an exciting campaign. Drama is what moves the plot along in an interesting way. Plot twists and surprises make up one element of drama, while the villains' sense of style and dialog is another. Throughout the adventure, the GM should pepper his descriptions with dramatic elements – forbidding weather, a mysterious communication or a derelict with a glass eye (why does he seem to know so much?).

With the correct application of both drama and mood, the GM will captivate his players and develop a world that seems ultimately real and inviting to them. Each game session will be eagerly anticipated.

*Continued on next page . . .*



This is a simple hunt-and-kill concept. Each adventure of this type presents a new target, quite likely an evil and oppressive elder. There are some basic moral issues involved, though, making it more than a series of hack-and-slash adventures. Force the characters to pick and choose their targets, investigate them before they go in for the kill, and do the deed with finesse and cunning. At some point, the killers will face their own vigilantism and ask themselves if they are any better than the ones whom they hunt. A further complication arises as the PCs must decide who will drink each time to lower his generation; infighting and power struggles among the vigilantes will be common.

### **Illuminatus**

One of the best types of stories to tell in vampire is the tale of intrigue and misdirection. It fits the vampire psyche very well, and is very easy to do – simply involve the characters in the twisted politics of vampire society. They may be blamed for something, witness something, or get involved of their own accord. Regardless, as the PCs peel away the onion-skin of Kindred intrigue, they will undoubtedly encounter much more than they expected.

### **Jyhad**

The Antediluvians see no reason to end their everlasting existences, especially not at the claws of those fourth-generation whelps. For millennia they have battled one another through pawns of lesser generations who they have manipulated, dominated and subjugated. The adventurers may become involved in anything from helping such an Ancient eliminate the pawns of another Ancient to preventing an all-out assault on a haven. However, no matter how many others they must battle, their true enemy will always be the one behind the scenes who is using them as pawns.

The Jyhad also exists on other levels as well, for all Kindred are in competition with one another to some extent. The characters must watch their steps carefully, lest those with power choose to use it on them. For instance, a PC's sire enlists the group in her scheme to become prince by promising them great power. However, if the current prince ever discovered their role in destroying his reputation, he would stop at nothing to extinguish them.

### **Vendetta**

This story starts out with something really nasty happening to the adventurers (something embarrassing usually works the best). There is an obvious antagonist attached to the "evil deed," with a spiteful and hateful personality. The PCs will do nearly anything to wreak revenge on their nemesis. This is one of the easiest adventures to run, because the players do all the work. The hardest part is making sure the PCs *really* hate their enemy, without making him seem unbelievable or two-dimensional. The more "real" the villain is, the more satisfying it will be for the players when their characters bring him down.



The players might try to plan out their vengeance, or they may rush headlong into the fray, without any forethought. Either way, when the final confrontation arrives, the GM can rattle the avengers with a plot twist. Perhaps it was all a misunderstanding, or even worse, the enemy is protected in such a way that destroying him would cause the PCs worse embarrassment than they experienced before. Of course, the GM can always simply let the vampires have their revenge in the most satisfying way possible.

### *The Masquerade*

Neonates' temptations to make the world their oyster through their newfound powers must be tempered by a realization of what the world, even a world of mere insects, can do to them. Often the adventurers will have to deal with witch hunters without killing, injuring or even threatening them, lest their disappearance alert a whole nest of danger.

They must prevent mortals from discovering the truth about the existence of vampires. Violence is not often an option – for instance, killing the newspaper reporter hot on their trail will only draw the attention of even more journalists, so the party must figure out a way to misdirect him.

Alternately, some other vampires may become too obvious for the players to allow their activities to continue unhindered. How do they deal with a rock star who can back up his claims to immortality?

### *Escape*

This adventure fits well withing the Refugees campaign (see p. 137). No matter how powerful the PCs are, there is always something more powerful. Imagine a group of vampires having to escape from New York with the mob, their sires, the Sabbat and the police all after them for one reason or another. This can be a thrilling story, and a great way to flip everything in a campaign upside down. There is something very primal about having to live by the seat of one's pants in hostile territory, simply surviving from night to night.

Of course, this kind of adventure gets tiring if it goes on too long. There should be a climax that makes it seem that all is hopeless, and it is . . . unless the PCs can discover the one maneuver that will end their lives as fugitives forever. Maybe a prince can be swayed by a passionate speech or a promise, or a Justicar intervenes on the PCs' behalf, citing a long-forgotten tradition. Anything can happen, and the more breathtaking the finale, the more pleasure the players will get from it.

## **Drama and Mood (Continued)**

### *Types of Mood*

**Brooding.** There is an oppressive weight in the air and a sense of great evil hangs over all that the characters do.

**Romantic.** There is a beauty and airiness to the story and things seem particularly special and bright. This is probably the most difficult mood to evoke.

**Mysterious.** Fog and shadows shroud the landscape. This is the mood of *Casablanca* and *The Maltese Falcon*. The imagination is aroused by the things that remain nebulous and hidden. Characters should not understand all that goes on.

**Excitement.** Nonstop action, full of intensity. Include lots of dramatic moments and suspense – anything to keep the players' blood pumping.

**Dank.** The atmosphere is rancid and unbearably foul. Portray the degenerate aspects of the world and the fetid underbelly of the city. Play up the bizarre and the grotesque.

**Surreal.** Everything has a strange, unreal quality to it. Nothing seems like it is occurring until the effects are actually felt.

**Madness.** This is the feeling that things are out of control, and that there is neither rhyme nor reason to anything that occurs. Throw things at the players randomly, and never give them a moment's peace. Evoke an atmosphere of delirium and dementia throughout the setting.

**Idyllic.** This is the mood of peace, tranquility and pastoral bliss. Of course, this is only a set-up, in order to dash the PCs' expectations.

**Humorous.** Fun and lightheartedness can cast a unique light on a Gothic-Punk campaign. Humor does have a place in *Vampire*, as long as it is properly employed.



## Using Vampire in Other Genres

The rules and ideas in this book do not have to remain restricted to the Gothic-Punk world. Many other *GURPS* worldbooks are suited for vampires as characters. The listings that follow are just a few examples. And see the section on using *Psionics* and *Magic* with *GURPS Vampire*, on p. 96.

### *GURPS Fantasy*

Of course, vampires are fantastic creatures. If the GM wishes to use the vampires described in this setting instead of the type described in *GURPS Fantasy*, he is welcome to. He should realize, however, that they are different in many respects, though they are similar in terms of overall power. Certainly, in any fantasy world, an organized society of vampires would be a significant aspect of that land's social and political structure.

In *Fantasy II: The Mad Lands*, the Kindred would be another monster or race that threatens the Madlanders' harrowing existence. They would be less suited for player characters in this setting, however, and more likely would be antagonists for a party of hardy hunters.

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### *Mission*

This is one of the most common scenarios. The adventurers must undergo some sort of quest or mission, given to them by a greater power. They may be rewarded for doing so, or may be forced into action through Domination, threats or blackmail. The characters may even undertake the mission as a favor to a friend. While on the mission, they not only have to deal with the enemies of the person they are serving and the dangerous trials of the mission, but they must also explore their feelings about servitude to the one who now has control over their existence.

The Mission idea gives the GM a great deal of latitude to create many different adventures, since it can be played in almost any type of campaign. However, if every adventure is some type of mission, the PCs will begin to feel like simple pawns, with no control over their own actions. This can get very boring and frustrating.

### *Bourbon Street*

Many of the best vampire stories incorporate very human values and issues which the party must face. They are trapped in very alien situations, yet still deal with very familiar problems. Bourbon Street describes a type of adventure full of pathos, often exceedingly complex and difficult to employ . . . but worth the effort.

### *Tragedy*

While a vampire's existence as a whole is marked by constant tragedy, it is possible to weave individual stories around that idea. The basic idea of tragedy is that no matter what the protagonist does, there is no way to avoid the tragic ending – the hero is doomed. Whether it is Oedipus destined to slay his father and marry his mother, or King Lear killed by his own pride, the main character is what he is and cannot change his fate. This idea makes a great occasional solo adventure, but can easily extend to a group.



In most scenarios, the protagonists have more free will than these figures of literature; however, the very fact of vampiric existence leaves them open to the destructive rampages of frenzy. They may sometimes be able to control that frenzy, but not always.

The secret of using tragedy in an adventure is finding a way to make the characters' intrinsic nature work against them. If someone frenzies at an inopportune moment, such as when visiting the prince or while surrounded by police, he will have to spend the rest of the adventure atoning for these mistakes and living with the consequences.

Situations where someone must feed off loved ones to survive or have their enemies strike at them through those same allies are full of tragic possibilities. However, even though the world of *Vampire* is rife with such horror, the GM should always give the players at least a modicum of free will in deciding their characters' fates.

In fact, one of the most satisfying endings to a tragic adventure is at the most hopeless moment, when the PC is racked with despair, for the GM to show the player that even in tragedy is hope, if only for the fact the character is not alone in his pain. Everyone has to suffer to achieve change. And true acceptance of one's curse must always accompany a trial by fire.

### *The Becoming*

A very unique adventure idea, and a good way to begin any campaign, is to start the participants out as humans and take them through the whole process of being created. It is a very traumatic, intense and emotional experience. The GM has to decide why the victims were chosen and why they were selected as a group. Are they the brood of a single sire, or perhaps the progeny of the elders of a single city who created many neonates at a single time?

The goal of the adventurers could be to find a way to become human again. They have left behind people whom they love and who need them. The focus of the chronicle is their increasingly desperate desire to escape the curse. What lengths will they go to in order to attain their goal, and will they, tragically, destroy their Humanity in the process?

Characters start with no Disciplines, but they will gain points to spend on them over the course of the adventure – as they are trained by their sire. The haven of the sire must be detailed, as well as his immediate enemies and friends. The sire must be an exquisitely complete character. Because the PCs will know only their sire's abode for a length of time, when they finally move on, they will truly feel a sense of wonder and anticipation.

### *Romance*

Vampires of both myth and cinema are often deeply sensual beings, both sexually and romantically. As creatures of untamed passions, they forge much more intense bonds than most mortals will ever know. The conflict between a vampire's hunger and love, and the attempt to keep the Beast from destroying that which is most treasured, can be the seeds for innumerable adventures. For instance, how does a neonate cushion the shock for his mortal lover after he is Embraced? Does he tell her immediately? Or does he hide it from her, hoping his desperate charade is never revealed?

Besides their attachments to mortals, vampires have to deal with the deep emotions they sometimes feel for one another. The relationship between a sire and his progeny is not only that of a parent and a child, but can also be that of an experienced lover with a virgin. This makes it even harder, and perhaps even more important, for a child to become independent.

There are also the deep attachments Kindred form through Blood Bonds (see p. 84). While it is easy to play this out through the guidelines provided, it is more

## *Using Vampire in Other Genres (Continued)*

### *GURPS Space*

As mortals journey into the expanse of space, the Kindred go with them. As the dilution of blood continues, however, there would be a sharp decline in the power of vampires, and many would be powerless night creatures, barely existing on the meager blood they can steal. However, there's no reason to think that the Ancients would not travel into space to escape the travails of the Earth-bound Jyhad. And even the Jyhad could span galaxies.

In space, also, are whole volumes of new hazards that may prove fatal to Kindred, from decompression to irradiation.

### *GURPS Cyberpunk*

One of the most compelling images is that of the near-future vampire, chromed to the teeth and using his body-mods to enhance his bloodsucking abilities. Vampires as they are currently described would fit seamlessly into a *GURPS Cyberpunk* world, especially the one described in *GURPS Cyberworld*.

### *GURPS Horror*

There's not much conversion necessary for a modern-day *Horror* campaign. The Gothic-Punk world of *Vampire* is a horrific place in and of itself. However, if the GM wishes to add to the dark flavor of the world, he can include dark creatures from beneath the sea, other forms of living dead (zombies, ghosts and ghouls) or even demonically possessed killers.

London horror works well with this book, too, as the dank, foggy streets of London in the 19th century evoke the mood of *GURPS Vampire* perfectly. Perhaps Jack the Ripper himself was a vampire, and there's always the chance the PCs could run into the most famous vampire of all, busy trying to seduce another innocent virgin.

### *GURPS Illuminati*

The existence of a secret society of undead creatures fits well into an *Illuminati* campaign. The intensity of the power struggles would be greatly increased as the Kindred not only have to deal with the government and the witch hunters, but with various secret societies – some of which may have conclusive knowledge of their existence.

Imagine the PCs' surprise when they uncover that the Kindred society is merely a facade covering up a much more sinister group . . . a group that is merely using the vampires as puppets to further its nefarious plans.

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## Using Vampire in Other Genres (Continued)

### *GURPS Supers*

The I.S.T. background presented in *GURPS Supers* and *GURPS International Super Teams* pretty much mirrors our own, except that superheroes exist and work for the government. Add in the existence of the Kindred society, and you have a perfect setting for supers battling vampires. The PCs could be on either side of this.

Of course, the supers would either need to be toned down, or the Kindred boosted in point cost, to make the adversaries balance.

### *GURPS Time Travel*

Perhaps the world described in this book is merely an Alternate Earth, as detailed in the Infinity Unlimited background in *GURPS Time Travel*. If this is true, the vampire PCs will face an additional threat as they deal with meddling dimension-hoppers who want to study the strange beasts that populate the underbelly of human cities.

Or the PCs could be Time Agents from Timepiece, sent back to any portion of history. Then they discover that vampires are real. Can they avoid changing history when one of them is taken by a sire? And what about the effects when that agent returns to the future a vampire?

### *Historical*

Players can play vampires in many other periods besides the present day. Any era, from the ancient Roman Empire to the French Revolution, can be fascinating when the vampire myth is added. There are several books available that will allow the GM to set his campaign in many different times.

*GURPS Aztecs* details the life of the ancient Mexican indians, from their Mayan roots to their defeat by Spanish invaders. Were there Kindred among the Indians?

*GURPS Imperial Rome* tracks the Roman Empire from its inception to its inevitable fall. Surely in all the noble decadence, a few undead were present.

*GURPS Japan* and *GURPS China* set the stage for Oriental adventure throughout the Far East's turbulent history. Each of these cultures had dark vampire myths.

*GURPS Middle Ages 1* and *GURPS Camelot*. Imagine roleplaying *Vampire* in the age from which many of the legends stem – the Middle Ages of historical Europe. It is a time of decadence and romance, of cruelty and honor.

*GURPS Scarlet Pimpernel*. The age of the French Revolution comes alive in this book. With the presence of vampires, the background of bravery and deceit becomes especially resonant.

*GURPS Old West* brings you closer to the present with a detailed account of life and lawlessness on the American frontier. Perhaps the Indian legends of blood-sucking demons are true.



interesting to force the players to test the boundaries of their love and devotion to the other vampire. They will sacrifice their friends, their plans and even their lives to make their master happy. Of course, this becomes even more interesting when the master is Blood Bonded in turn to a third vampire.

### *Redemption*

Some vampires want nothing to do with the hunts and riddles which make up other Kindred's lives. For them, the goal is to regain their Humanity. Simply present the characters with an opportunity to set something right, to do something good. This could be anything from assisting an old man in combating the Brujah who is living in his home to helping a Malkavian see past her delusions and accept the fact that she is a vampire. Often stories about redemption can involve the gaining of Humanity, and indeed this is the only way to regain one's mortality. See *Rebirth*, p. 85, for more on this subject.

### *A Quiet, Normal Life*

In this type of adventure, the participants are attempting to continue their mortal lives even after the Embrace. They must somehow balance their two lives, keeping each a secret from the other. The characters must learn to rely upon one another to succeed. If they are well-known for any reason, it can make things all the more difficult. Since the transition period following the vampires' creation is the core of this adventure, it should start immediately after the Embrace.


The PCs will need to have detailed descriptions of their lives prior to the Becoming. The conflict of the adventure becomes the juxtaposition of the desire for a normal life with the compelling lure of the powers and intrigue of the Kindred world. Friends and family will tug at the PCs' souls, while their sire will try to persuade them to abandon their mortal existence and join the dark world of everlasting life.

# Mortal Desires

## A Vampire Adventure



By Chris McCubbin and Jeff Koke

oute 46 runs southeast out of New Orleans. Between Arabi and the St. Bernard State Park it winds through a section of dark woods, punctuated only by a few dingy convenience stores. Somewhere in this area, Farmington Road splits off and heads east, toward Lake Borgne, ending in a gravel road only two miles down. The gravel road is blocked by a massive iron gate, with a simple sign reading "FORBIDDEN."

Beyond the gravel drive is a house – a mansion, really . . . and practically a castle. Within this fortress lives Samantha Drake. She has lived there as long as anyone can remember, and as far as anyone knows, she hasn't emerged in the last 20 years. In truth, she leaves nearly every night, but if anyone saw her, in her 32-year-old body, they wouldn't believe it was her. She must be close to 100 by now. She has all her groceries delivered to the gate and picked up by servants, and she never receives visitors.

Her friends in the various downtown night clubs know her as "Sammy," but they would never associate her with the mysterious old woman who lives at 2000 Farmington Road. She is an intriguing young woman, full of wit and occasional sarcasm, and she is drop-dead beautiful – the kind of beauty that poems are written about. The kind of beauty that supermodels are cheap imitations of.

Sammy is working on a plan. In fact, the plan is nearly finished and she's been at it for the last 50 years. Sammy, you see, is a vampire, and she wants desperately to regain her mortality.


In 1944, she crept into her sire's haven – after not seeing her for 15 years – and killed her, sucking out all her precious blood. Then she continued drawing out the older vampire's force of existence, her very soul.

In 1951, on a houseboat in Boston Harbor, she caught her sire's sire in a moment of weakness and killed him as well. The diablerie was getting easier and Samantha could feel her power growing immensely.

It took her 40 years to track down her great-grandsire, hidden away in a secluded villa in France. The poor elder knew nothing of the mysterious Cainite who knocked on his door – except that she was beautiful and seemed interested in a poor old Malkavian fool. He died shamefully, and Sammy felt a rush of sadistic pleasure as his tired body fell empty to the floor.

Now, she is days away from meeting her final victim. The powers of the Blood are strong within her, and she feels sure the Justicar she has summoned to the city suspects nothing. Soon, she thinks constantly to herself. Soon I will be free.

## Introduction

his adventure pits three to five 300-point vampires against a cunning adversary who will use all the power available to her to regain her mortality. Although she thinks that no one suspects her diablerie, the Malkavian Justicar is investigating the mysterious deaths of a Malkavian elder and his child. He suspects that the mysterious Samantha Drake may be behind it, but he has no proof. He will use his retainers to find some.

## Arcadian Walsh

### 9th-Generation Malkavian

Age 325; 5'5", 140 lbs.; graying hair and brown eyes.

ST 11, DX 14, IQ 15, HT 14.

Basic Speed 7, Move 7.

Blood Pool 20, Humanity 14.

Dodge 8, Parry 10 (Broadsword), 12 (Judo or Karate).

No armor or encumbrance.

**Advantages:** Generation (9th), Kindred Status 4, Vampire Package, Wealth (Wealthy)

**Disadvantages:** Delusion (Most other Kindred want to destroy me), Weak Will: Courage -2.

**Quirks:** Likes to listen to others' stories; Acts the British gentleman.

**Skills:** Administration-16; Area Knowledge (Dallas)-16; Boating-15; Broadsword-18; Cooking-14; Detect Lies-16; Diplomacy-18; Driving (Car)-16; Fencing-16; Guns (Pistol)-15; Guns (Rifle)-15; History-20; Judo-18; Karate-18; Literature-15; Occultism-16; Politics-17; Psychology-18; Savoir-Faire-19; Strategy-15; Writing-17

**Languages:** English-15; Latin-15.

**Disciplines:** Auspex (Power 4), Heightened Senses-16, Aura Perception-15, The Spirit's Touch-14, Unveil the Shrouded Mind-14; Dominate (Power 1), Command the Wounded Mind-15; Obfuscate (Power 3), Cloak of Shadows-16, Unseen Presence-14, Mask of a Thousand Faces-14.

**Weapons:** Glock 17 pistol.

Arcadian Walsh has been a vampire for almost three centuries. Born an Englishman, he's made his home in America since before the civil war.

He looks about 50 – a wiry, jolly little man with bushy side-whiskers and a twinkle in his eye. Most folk who meet him – Kindred or mortal – find him instantly likable. In casual conversation his speech patterns are fanciful, elliptical and a bit confusing – in short, very Malkavian. But his whimsy is deceptive – many an unsuspecting victim finds himself, to his horror, somehow revealing his deepest personal secrets in a conversation that he *thought* was about swan-boat racing or silhouette cutting. In affairs relating to his office as Justicar, however, Arcadian is all business.

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## Arcadian Walsh (Continued)

As a vampire, Walsh is methodical and cautious, leaving nothing to chance. He hunts only to live, never taking more than needed, never taking any risks. His attention to the principles of the Masquerade is flawless, and it is this, as much as his seniority, that have allowed him to obtain the rank of Justicar. He has had the opportunity several times to become a prince, but has never accepted. He has created several vampires, but none in the last century. The hapless Delbert Villón was his first childe. He makes no particular effort to keep track of his progeny, though some of them have become prominent in the Camarilla.

The fundamental truth about Arcadian Walsh is that he is a coward, who'll do almost anything to preserve his own unlife. His greatest fear, that other Kindred are out to destroy him, is amplified by his Malkavian nature. Hence his conservatism, and his habit of sending intermediaries (like the PCs) to attend to any potentially dangerous duties. He is, however, considered an excellent Justicar, with a fine record.

Despite his cowardice, or perhaps because of it, when he's forced to fight, he does so with the viciousness of the proverbial cornered rat. It is only when threatened that any hint of the stereotypical Malkavian "insanity" manifests itself. He is trained in the art of *savate*, and is equally dangerous with hands, feet and cane.

As a patron he's regarded as generally fair and tolerant, despite his preference for commanding from the rear.

## Council

Arcadian Walsh is the 9th-generation Justicar from Clan Malkavian. The PCs are his retainers, vampires in his close inner circle. They may be his progeny or not, depending on the players' preferences – some may even begin the game blood bound to him.

One dark, cloudy evening, he summons his charges to his sitting room, deep within the Dallas mansion he calls home.

After all are seated, Arcadian begins to speak in a low, careful voice.

*"There are troubles within my clan. As Justicar I am charged to deal with them. I have only suspicions at the moment, so what I need is information.*

*"As you know, Delbert Villón, a Malkavian elder, was killed by another vampire two years ago in France. We take all occasions of diablerie seriously, but we discovered that his childe and his childe's childe had both been murdered in the same way. This implies one thing clearly. Someone is working her way up her lineage.*

*"We know it is a woman, because of the 'state' Villón was discovered in. The problem is we don't know which woman. As far as Camarilla records go, none of that line ever sired a woman – so she has either disguised her lineage or was never presented to the prince.*

*"As you may suspect, the easiest way to catch such a murderess is to carefully observe the next victim. Well, I am the sire of Delbert, so that implies strongly that the next victim would be . . . me.*

As the characters absorb this information, Arcadian rises and begins to pace.

*"I do have one suspect. A woman named Samantha Drake has summoned me to New Orleans to investigate her claims of being attacked by a broodmember of the prince. She is Ancilla, and thus I am bound by tradition to respond in person. The prince denies all knowledge of the event, but that is to be expected, and this prince's brood is renowned for its size – it is said he meets no mortal without considering the Embrace. Gluttonous Toreador!*



*"Normally I would have no fears of such a routine meeting, but her lineage is suspect. She is Malkavian, but according to the prince, she claims to have been abandoned by her sire. She says she roamed Caitiff for several years before she was befriended by a Ventrue – she was then presented to a Malkavian elder in New Orleans, and once she was accepted into the clan, she was presented to the prince. She has lived there, without incident, for more than half a century now. However, she could very well be the one I have been searching for.*

*"I want you to go to New Orleans and find Miss Drake. Observe her and see if you can deduce anything unusual or criminal about her actions and demeanor. I will arrive three days after you, and I expect for you to have some useful information. You leave tomorrow at sunset. That is all."*

## The Road to New Orleans

**A**rcadian has always been pragmatic, and something of a miser. Why should he spend \$1,000 on airplane tickets, when the group can drive to New Orleans for \$200? Besides, he does not trust airplanes, and he will not risk any problems with this mission. None of the PCs should be foolish enough to argue with him.

The night before the trip, the adventurers are advised by Arcadian to feed. They will drive the first night to Houston, a five-hour trip, where they will be put up by the prince in his haven. The following night, they will go on to New Orleans, check in with the prince and begin their mission.

### First Stop, Houston

The trip to Houston is uneventful. The travelers are given a large red van with tinted windows and a full tank of gas. The directions advise the PCs to proceed downtown to one of the many tall slim skyscrapers. The parking garage is nearly empty, and no one gives them a second look as they walk to the elevators.

In the lobby, the guard glances at them, remarks that they must be the guests from Dallas and that Mr. Escovedra is expecting them. He touches a button behind the desk and one of the elevator doors lights up. "Floor 150," he remarks casually. If anyone checks, they can tell that the guard is not Kindred. He doesn't seem to notice or care that the PCs are.

The elevator is locked out of any of the other floors, if the PCs decide to be adventurous. The copper-colored doors open at floor 150 and expose a luxurious apartment completely surrounded by windows. The view of Houston below is truly spectacular. Sitting in a tall-backed leather chair directly across the room from the visitors is a man who would look 21 if his hair weren't completely white; his skin is deathly pale. He is obviously Kindred. Flanking him on either side are two more vampires – a haughty, frail-looking girl wearing a thin white dress and smoking a cigarette, and a powerful black man with no shirt and a huge owl tattooed on his chest. Three boys who appear to be about 13 are lounging in a sunken living room, reading or playing chess.

The white-haired man introduces himself as Don Enrique Escovedra. "Welcome to Houston. This is Jeanette and Kafka. Are you hungry?" He asks this last question while making a sweeping motion toward the boys with his arm. If any of the PCs take him up on his offer, he will take an instant dislike to that person. This confers a -1 reaction from the prince of Houston, permanent unless the offending party does something extraordinarily generous for him.

Jeanette and Kafka will ignore the visitors, or give short civil replies when spoken to, unless someone hits on a subject they are interested in. For Jeanette, this is jazz, and she is well-versed on all the major artists. Kafka will talk for hours about weaponry, and he has a room full of exotic knives, handguns and bows. He



### Texas Politics

The Camarilla of Texas is divided by a unique and precarious political situation.

Basically, there are only three princes in the entire state of Texas, one in Dallas, one in Houston and one in El Paso. Between them, they control the entire state. The prince of Dallas controls eastern and central Texas from Austin to the Oklahoma line, Houston controls central and eastern Texas from San Antonio down to the Mexican border. El Paso controls the vast but underpopulated western half of the state.

Most of the political tension is between Dallas and Houston – the Brujah prince of El Paso is mostly concerned with keeping the other two princes out of his affairs. The eastern princes are feuding over the city of Austin, which was controlled by Houston until the early '70s, when an aggressive Tremere prince took power in Dallas and seized control of Austin in a bloodless coup, earning the enmity of the established and conservative Ventrue prince of Houston. The situation is made still more precarious by the senior vampire of San Antonio – the prince of Houston's nominal regent – who's known but not proven to have ambitions of setting himself up as a fourth prince, reigning over San Antonio, Austin and as far north as Waco.

So far the conflict has remained non-violent. The princes are constrained from direct action by their fear of repercussions from Texas elders, out-of-state princes, or even the Inconnu. The situation remains tense, however.

For all the above reasons, there's much more going on than meets the eye when a delegation of Kindred from Dallas spends the night in Houston on official Camarilla business. The GM can make as much or as little of these tensions as he likes, but the PCs should be aware of them. If nothing else, they explain the attitudes of the Houston hosts.



is also into Ukrainian literature; Dostoevsky, Chekhov, Tolstoy and of course Kafka are his favorites. If anyone asks, Jeanette is Toreador and Kafka is Brujah.

Escovedra has nothing to say to the agents, and if asked about the mission, he will sigh and say that he has no interest in the internal strugglings of Malkavians. It is well-known that he is Ventrue, and he says the word "Malkavian" as if he were trying to loose some phlegm from his throat.

The PCs can either wait out the night here, chatting with Don Enrique's retainers, or Jeanette will grudgingly take the group out on the town, to late-night clubs, coffee shops, even to the nearest Elysium, if the PCs have a need to meet the local Kindred. They are provided with two separate rooms in the tower to sleep through the day. The next evening, they are expected to leave for New Orleans.

### Anarchs of the Swamp

Interstate 10 runs east from Houston straight to New Orleans. About an hour into Louisiana, the road dives into thick swampland that seems to threaten to encroach upon the road at any time.

About half an hour into the swamp, the travelers will hear a loud bang, and the van will start to swerve. The driver needs to make a Driving roll at -1 to avoid flipping the van on its side and sliding off the road into the trees. If the van turns over, everyone inside will take 1d crushing damage. Otherwise, the van rattles to a stop on the shoulder. No other cars are in danger since the road is deserted at this time of night.

The right front tire is blown out. If someone examines the tire and makes a Mechanic-3 or Criminology roll, he will be able to tell that it's been shot. If not, it will simply appear to have blown out by accident.

Regardless, one minute later a group of figures will appear out of the swamp and surround the van. There are 15 of them, and except for Nosferatu, they are some of the ugliest humans the PCs have ever seen. They are grimy from swamp mud, and most of them have long, stringy hair. Anyone who can read auras can determine that about 10 of them are vampires, and the rest are mortal. Each of them carries a shotgun.

When questioned, one of the Kindred will grunt that Lucian wants to talk to them. They will get no more useful information from the leader, except that the way he says "Lucian" conveys a great deal of respect – nearly awe.

If the group decides to fight, the anarchs will open fire and should easily outgun the PCs. If they knock anyone unconscious, they will stake him through the heart to immobilize him and then concentrate on the others. They are careful not to kill anyone, though. Once all the PCs have been immobilized, they will cart them through the swamp to Lucian's.

The easiest course of action is just to follow their new friends. If the PCs do this, they are led about a mile back through the swamp to a clearing where a 15-foot-square shack sits. Inside is Lucian.



### **Dealing With Lucian**

The small shack holds a thin cot, a beat-up couch and a desk. Behind the desk sits a smallish man with a thick face and weathered but pale skin. He is writing something with a fountain pen in a thick book that resembles a journal. The only light is a burning oil lamp sitting on the desk. In the small room, the fire is disturbing to Kindred; not enough for a Fright Check, but enough to give all Mental skills a -2 penalty. Four of the vampire escorts enter with the PCs, and the rest remain outside.

Lucian welcomes the visitors with a thick French accent, apologizing for the manner that they were brought here. He needed to speak with them, and he knew they might not have come if he had just asked. Also, he needed to convey the seriousness of the situation.

*"I have been promised a great reward to detain you. Normally, I would have my servants shoot you, burn you and scatter your ashes on the bayou. That is my line of work and I am good at it. However, the individual who offered me this reward was Camarilla, and I detest Camarilla. The only thing I like less than leaving one alive is killing for one.*

*"But again, the reward is sweet. I can hardly pass it up. Yet this city woman reeks of deception. I don't trust her, and in all bluntness, I fear her. So I will not kill you. Instead, I will offer you a prize if you do what I ask.*

*"I have no idea whether the woman you seek is guilty of what your patron accuses her of. She may or may not be – it is no concern of mine. However, the fact that she has asked me to detain you weighs heavily against her. If you determine she is guilty, and the Camarilla sees fit to destroy her, I will share with you the reward she promised me, which I will be able to get if she is no longer a threat.*

*"Be careful, however, for this woman is very powerful. Even your combined strength may not be enough to defeat her. I doubt the Justicar will face her, though, for despite his years and power, he fears for his own life.*

*"Again I apologize for the manner of your invitation. Your van has been repaired and you are free to go. My servants will escort you back. Think carefully on what I have told you.*

### **Swamp Anarchs**

This is the template for the vampires among the anarchists. For the ghouls, use the same stats, but remove the Vampire Package and the Disciplines.

ST 10, DX 12, IQ 10, HT 12.

Basic Speed 6, Move 6.

Blood Pool 12, Humanity 9.

Dodge 6, Parry 6 (Brawling).

No armor or encumbrance.

**Advantages:** Vampire Package, Patron (Lucian).

**Disadvantages:** Duty (to Lucian), Blood-Bonded.

**Skills:** Stealth-13; Guns (pistol)-12; Guns (shotgun)-13; Guns (rifle)-12; Shadowing-11; Tracking-13; Survival (swamp)-10; Survival (forest)-10.

**Disciplines:** Any three at Power 1.

**Weapons:** Remington 12-gauge shotgun, or M16 .223.

The swamp anarchists are a mercenary band of vampires and ghouls (and perhaps even a Lupine or two, if the GM wishes) under the control of Lucian (see below). The name "swamp anarchists" is misleading – although at the time of this adventure the group made its headquarters in a swamp, the band is highly mobile and is liable to be found in virtually any wild and lawless area, from the great north woods to the slums of East St. Louis.

The swamp anarchists are essentially a guerrilla band, well-armed, well-trained and highly mobile, with the added advantage of their supernatural abilities. There will normally be 2d+6 swamp anarchists at any given time, with at least 2/3 of the band being Kindred of the 11th to 14th generation.

Although they can only be described as "mercenary assassins," Lucian's services cannot be purchased for mere money – after all, the vampires in the organization could easily steal as much as they want from mortals, any time they need it. Lucian hires his force to anyone who can offer him something he considers unique and valuable. In Samantha's case, she promised Lucian his pick from her illicit brood once she regained her mortality. Sometimes Lucian will agree to support a plan just because it's likely to cause grievous harm or embarrassment to the Camarilla, which organization he hates above all else.

*Continued on next page . . .*



### *Swamp Anarchs (Continued)*

Although he holds the Sabbat in contempt, he will not hesitate to work for them, if the price is right. He seems to have somewhat more respect for the Assamites and the Children of Set, both of whom he has worked with on occasion. He claims to be absolutely unwilling to work for the Camarilla in any form, but as the adventure shows, he can sometimes be tempted to involve himself in Camarilla affairs if he sees an opportunity to turn one element of that organization against itself. In the case of Samantha Drake, he found himself unable to resist the opportunity to watch two Camarilla elders fight to the death, then make off with an assortment of low-generation neonates that the Camarilla didn't even know existed.

If all or most of Samantha's brood was destroyed in the ambush at the mansion, the PCs might think to ask themselves what price Samantha paid instead for Lucian's services. The question is one the Camarilla would dearly love to answer . . . and that answer is left to the GM.

If Lucian is asked what the reward is, he will say that he cannot tell them. Not yet, anyway. Suffice it to say that it's very sweet. If they ask what happens if they find the woman innocent, Lucian will reply that perhaps they should find her guilty of *something*. After all, she did try to have them killed, though Lucian will deny ever having met the PCs if they try to get his testimony. If the PCs ask too many questions, Lucian will get bored and tell them it is up to them. He has told everything they need to know and he wishes to be left in peace.

The trek back to the highway takes about 15 minutes. As Lucian said, the van's tire has been changed (if the van flipped on its side, it has been righted), and the gas tank has been filled. As soon as the PCs enter the van, the swamp anarchists disappear back into the mire.

## New Orleans



The rest of the trip to New Orleans is quiet. The travelers will probably spend the time discussing what to do when they arrive. I-10 takes them into the heart of southern Louisiana, through the suburb of Metairie and into New Orleans proper. The directions say to take the second exit and head toward the French Quarter.

The PCs have been instructed to park the van behind an antique shop that faces Jackson Park and walk three blocks to the banks of the Mississippi. The river flows right by concrete piers, and the lights of fishing boats and off-shore rigs can be seen in the distance, creating thin constellations in the Gulf of Mexico.



The agents are met at the river by what first appears to be an early fisherman, an elderly man in denim overalls and a gimme cap. He greets the group, "Welcome, my Brethren. You are not timely. We must hurry if you are to reach the haven before sunrise."

He leads them to a sleek powerboat and soon they are racing south across the water. Thirty minutes later they reach a massive yacht rolling with the gentle waves, anchor down. A ladder is thrown down, and after the PCs have climbed to the deck, the boat driver speeds off in a tremendous hurry. It is about an hour before dawn. Two female crew members lead the party into the bowels of the huge boat.

## Meeting the Prince

The first thing the visitors notice as they approach the quarters of the prince is the sound of an electric guitar. As the sound becomes clearer, anyone with any musical experience whatsoever will realize that the player is someone of extraordinary skill. Not only are the arpeggios technically perfect, the artistic voice of the improvisation is profound. Even through the heavy distortion, classical influences mixed with basic southern blues can be heard. As the party approaches the closed door, they realize that the noise must be tremendous inside. Their escorts dutifully wait until the riff is finished, and then knock politely.

"Yeah, man," replies a languid voice from inside. "It's open."

The door opens to a posh room that would resemble a library if the walls were covered with books instead of guitars. Lounging around the room on cushions and chairs are young women of various races and ages. Some are Kindred; some are not. The prince is sitting on the edge of a large chair wearing a customized Fender Strat that's running through a Marshall stack. He's a wiry black man with short-cut hair, wearing a tank-top T-shirt and blue jeans.

Any character with the Musical Instrument: Guitar skill or an interest in the blues may make an IQ roll. If the roll succeeds, they'll recognize the Prince as a legendary blues guitarist who supposedly died young in the 1930s.


"I'm in a *fine* mood this evening. Anyone want to jam?"

If someone has skill in guitar and takes the prince up on the offer, he will play a basic 12-bar blues riff, allowing the visitor to play the lead. If given the chance after the visitor finishes, the prince will slip a slide over his finger and launch into a scathing and brilliant blues lead.

At the end of his solo, the prince will shrug out of his guitar strap, grin and say, "God bless Muddy Waters, the man who invented electricity."

After the jam, if it occurs, the prince will take introductions. (The prince himself is addressed as "Mr. Johnson" by everybody.) He will want to wait to discuss anything about the mission until tomorrow evening, and the escorts will lead the party to sleeping chambers.

## Making Plans: The First Night

 After the guests awake, they are told that the prince will receive them at 11 p.m. In the meantime, they're encouraged to feed from members of the prince's herd (of course, any permanent damage to any of the prince's thralls will be considered a grave insult).

At the appointed time, they are escorted to a conference room where the prince is waiting. He has changed into a stylish double-breasted suit and greets them formally.

The prince speaks in the carefully neutral, round tones unique to American black men who have studied carefully to discard a thick childhood dialect. Occasionally, when he's very relaxed (like the previous evening) or irritated, a small glimpse of his original Mississippi backwoods accent will emerge. Today, however, his tones are all business.



*Lucian*

### *10th-Generation Anarch*

Age 235; 5'4", 140 lbs.; balding with gray eyes.

ST 12, DX 14, IQ 12, HT 13.

Basic Speed 6.75, Move 6.

Blood Pool 17, Humanity 9.

Dodge 7, Parry 12 (Karate).

No armor or encumbrance.

*Advantages:* Generation (10th); Kindred Status 1 (Anarch); Vampire Package; Strong Will: Self-Control +3, Courage +2; Wealth (Wealthy).

*Disadvantages:* Intolerance (Camarilla vampires); Bully.

*Quirks:* Refuses to stay in one place very long; Has to be in control.

*Skills:* Acting-16; Administration-14; Detect Lies-16; Diplomacy-12; Driving (Car)-14; Guns (Pistol)-17; Guns (Rifle)-17; Karate-18; Leadership-16; Politics-13; Savoir-Faire-15; Strategy-13; Tactics-15; Writing-14.

*Languages:* English-12; French-12; Spanish-13.

*Disciplines:* Auspex (Power 2), Heightened Senses-12, Aura Perception-10; Dominate (Power 3), Command the Wary Mind-13, Mesmerize-11, The Forgetful Mind-12; Thaumaturgy (Power 1), A Taste for Blood-11.

*Weapons:* Colt .44 pistol.

Lucian, the leader of the Swamp Anarchs, is a small, balding man with a large head and a 40-ish body. He looks like an accountant.

In fact, he is a ruthless elder vampire and a brilliant guerrilla leader. He is one of the most dangerous and unpredictable vampires the PCs will ever meet.

If the PCs do any sort of investigation on Lucian's history with the Camarilla, they will find that he is a renegade 10th-generation Tremere, that he is well over 200 years old, and that the Camarilla elders do *not* wish to discuss his history. If the PCs are very persistent, and very persuasive, they might also discover that he was cast out of the Camarilla in Vienna sometime before 1850. Any further questions about the nature of Lucian's crime will be met with a flat-out refusal to answer, and the explicit threat that continued inquiry along those lines will rapidly prove unhealthy for the questioner. Other Tremere elders will be particularly distraught when the subject of Lucian is raised.



*"I only talked to Arcadian briefly, so I didn't get much about why you all are here, except that it's got something to do with Sammy's accusation."*

At this point the PCs face a choice. They may share their suspicions about Sammy immediately, setting the Prince's mind at rest regarding the accusations against his brood, or they may remain noncommittal and allow the Prince to have his say regarding the charge.

If they remain noncommittal the Prince will scowl and say, "First of all, I'd like to know why the Justicar himself is not here. I trust you won't take it personally when I say that I'm not used to defending myself before subordinates."

The prince will fall silent for a few seconds, but then he'll burst out, in repressed irritation:

*"It's all just ridiculous, that's all it is! My 'family' just isn't violent – not a one of them. OK, maybe, maybe if I'd been spending a lot of time with Sammy one of the others might have gotten jealous and done something stupid or threatening, but not an attack. Anyway, I hardly ever saw Sammy. None of us did."*

*"It's just so senseless. I can't even imagine why Sammy is doing this to us. Not after everything I've let her get away with for all these years."*

If they ask the prince what he's "let Sammy get away with," he'll explain.

*"Well, you see my 'family' doesn't kill – that's one of my rules. There's no need for it, and these days it's just too hard to cover up a killing, especially when there's so many of us. Now, I knew that Sammy was hunting runaways down at the Port Authority, and that once she took a kid home, that kid wasn't coming back. Well, I let it slide. I figured that she had her own ways, and she probably knew what she was doing. Hell, she's been Kindred as long as I have."*

If the investigators share any of Arcadian's suspicions with the prince, he'll be instantly convinced of their truth (it's preferable to believing Samantha's accusations). He'll whistle softly and say, "That sneaky little . . . that's it, all right. She cooked up the whole story just to get old Walsh down here." However, he can add no substantial evidence of Samantha's guilt.

If asked what he knows about Samantha, he'll tell the following story.

*"I remember when Sammy joined the local Camarilla, because it was just a year or two after I did. This was '39, '40 . . . towards the end of the Depression. Those were good years for us. Lots of people displaced, ripe for the hunt. Lots of Kindred moving around too."*

*"There had been rumors for a couple of years that somebody was hunting on the east side without permission, and the prince – that is, the old prince – put agents out to look for whoever it was."*

*"Sammy must have felt the heat, because she came forward. She first revealed herself to old Felicia Desmoulins. Now"*

*Felicia was an old-school blue-blood and a snob both ways – that is, a snob about the local mortal gentry, and a snob about being a Ventrue in the Camarilla. She was a sentimental old thing, though, and Sammy was smart to surrender to her.*

*“Sammy told a sad, sad story. Seems she’d been visiting up north somewhere, she got lost one night and ended up in a bad neighborhood. She was attacked by somebody mysterious, and woke up in an abandoned warehouse, Kindred. She stayed in that city for a few years, learning about her new condition, but eventually she made it back here, to her family home. Her only living relative was a great-aunt or something, too old and confused to even notice that her only surviving heir was a vampire. She died soon enough, and Sammy got the house.*

*“Eventually, Sammy began to suspect folks were on her trail. She got scared, and went looking for others like herself. She found Felicia. That was her story, anyway.*

*“Felicia ate it up. All that ‘damsel in distress’ stuff was just like a romance novel. After the usual research, Felicia grudgingly pronounced Sammy a Malkavian. Etienne Braque was a good friend of Felicia’s, despite him being a Malkavian and a Cajun, and she got Etienne to sponsor Sammy for his clan. After that, Sammy went back to her house and her old hunting grounds, and none of us saw her much except Felicia and Etienne.*

*“When I became Prince in ’61, Sammy came by to pay her respects. I thought she looked good – more confident, less lost. After that, she started coming around a little more – not often, but sometimes. She was popular with some of my ‘family.’ They envied her elegance, and her independence.*

*“And that’s it. Other than an infrequent social call, I had absolutely no contact with Sammy until she came to me with this story about being attacked.”*

If they inquire, the investigators will discover that Felicia Desmoulin was destroyed by hunters during World War II. Etienne Braque disappeared into the counterculture of the late ’60s, and neither Johnson nor Walsh (if contacted) has any clue as to his present whereabouts.

Samantha’s accused assailant is a boy named Michael, originally from one of New Orleans’ working-class Irish American families. He’s being held under house arrest at Johnson’s haven. He’s the Prince’s childe and has been a vampire for less than three years. If the investigators want to talk to him, they’ll find him defensive, scared and unhelpful. He’ll admit that he was hunting alone on the east side of town on the night in question, but will claim he never even saw Samantha. He says he only met Samantha once before, at a party several months earlier. Johnson will add that this affair was also the last time he saw Samantha, until she came to make her complaint against Michael.



## Mr. Johnson, Prince of New Orleans

### 8th-Generation Toreador

Age 80, 5' 10", 150 lbs., black skin, black hair and brown eyes.

ST 10, DX 14, IQ 15, HT 12.

Basic Speed 7, Move 7.

Blood Pool 22, Humanity 15.

Dodge 7.

No armor or encumbrance.

**Advantages:** Appearance (Attractive), Generation (8th), Kindred Status 2, Musical Talent +10, Vampire Package, Wealth (Filthy Rich).

**Disadvantages:** Absent-Mindedness, Sense of Duty (to his Brood).

**Quirks:** Wants all the vampires in New Orleans to be his brood; Likes to stay up late and play guitar.

**Skills:** Administration-16; Area Knowledge (New Orleans)-16; Boating-17; Carousing-13; Diplomacy-14; Driving (Car)-15; Guns (Pistol)-15; Musical Instrument (Guitar)-29; Occultism-14; Politics-16; Savoir-Faire-14; Sex Appeal-17; Singing-20; Strategy-15; Writing-17.

**Disciplines:** Auspex (Power 2), Heightened Senses-14, Aura Perception-15; Celerity (Power 1); Presence (Power 3), Awe-17, Dread Gaze-14, Entrancement-16.

**Weapons:** Colt .44 pistol.

Born out of wedlock a few years before World War I, the boy who would become the vampire prince of New Orleans had, from earliest childhood, a fascination for the blues. By his early teens, he was already playing in the roadhouses, and astounding the men he played with – legendary names like Charlie Patton, Son House and Willie Brown. By his mid-'20s he had forever defined the art of the Mississippi Delta slide guitar.

It was in the early '30s, during the first bloom of his mature creative genius, that Johnson was noticed by a Toreador elder. As Toreadors are wont to do, the vampire became fascinated – almost obsessed – with the brilliant young artist.

The vampire decided he could not take this remarkable protege by force. Instead, he called Johnson to a meeting one night at an isolated rural crossroads, revealed his true nature, and offered the musician the gift of eternal life. Johnson replied that he needed to think about it.

And think about it he did, for several years. During that time the weight of his choice produced some of the most anguished and soul-shattering songs ever to glory in the name “blues.”

*Continued on next page . . .*



### Mr. Johnson (Continued)

At last, towards the end of the 1930s, his life an increasingly insane round of shows, fights and destructive romance, Johnson returned to the crossroads and accepted the elder's offer.

A few nights later, at a roadhouse before a performance, he drank poisoned whiskey and was pronounced dead.

The new vampire and his sire took up residence in New Orleans. The Toreador provided his new ward with a top-flight education, as well as a thorough introduction to the ways of the Camarilla. Johnson found he was good at being a vampire, and for a poor black boy from the Delta, the very real respect he received from his generational standing was a gift beyond price.

After a decade or two Johnson's patron found a new obsession, and the two parted amiably. A few years later, the reigning prince of New Orleans retired to Europe to pursue Golconda. Johnson resolved to make the position his. After a brief and civilized, but intense power struggle, he succeeded.

Johnson has one dramatic failing as a leader of vampires – he really does want every vampire in New Orleans to be part of his brood. There are less than a dozen Camarilla vampires in the city (not counting Samantha's illicit brood), and Johnson is sire to seven and grandsire to two more. He has get in other cities as well.

Johnson is not overtly unfair to local vampires not of his brood, but he encourages them when they think of leaving, and does nothing to encourage them to stay. Once they're gone, he creates another Childe before a replacement can move in from out of town.

Still, as a leader Johnson is cautious and always upholds the Masquerade, and he has no apparent aspirations to expand his domain beyond the city, so the Camarilla leaves him alone. In addition, the very low generation of Johnson and his brood make the New Orleans vampiric community potentially one of the most powerful anywhere outside of Vienna.

The prince has prepared a list of night spots Samantha was known to frequent, which he'll offer to the PCs. He'll also mention that none of his people have seen Samantha since she made her complaint a week ago.

### Investigations

By the time they're done with the prince, it's well after 1:00 a.m. – a bit late to start club-hopping, but the visitors still have plenty of time to visit 2000 Farmington Road that night. The prince has Samantha's phone number, but if they attempt to call to announce their visit, the phone will not be answered.

The group's van has been parked at a parking garage near the marina. A permit has been neatly taped to the inside of their windshield, reserving that spot for them for the duration of their stay. The parking spot is on an underground level of the garage, and in an emergency a vampire could rest in the back of the van parked in the garage without any fear of the daylight.

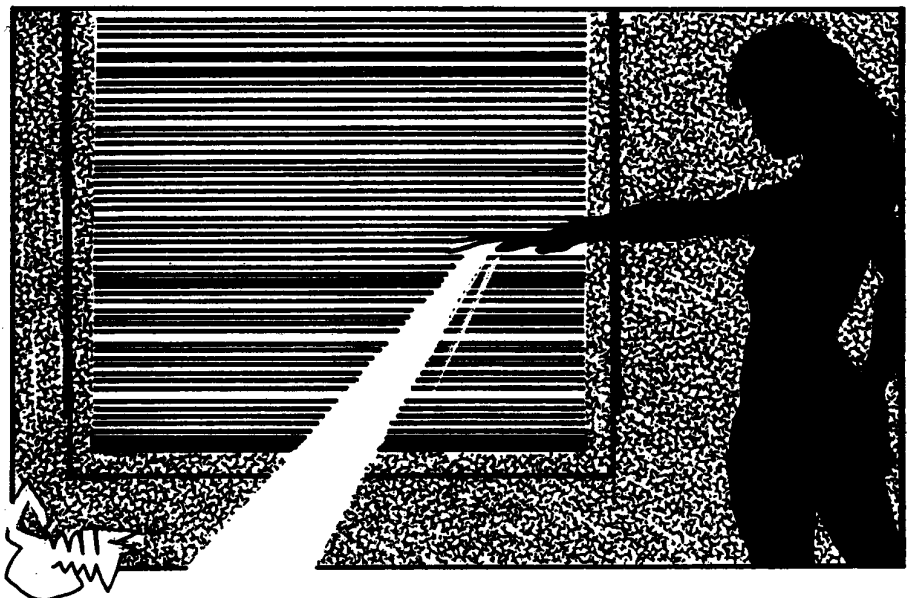
If they drive out to the mansion, they'll find the gate to the driveway securely fastened with a heavy lock and chain. The investigators will have to park their vehicle on Farmington Road and walk the last half-mile to the house (the lock on the gate can also be picked on a successful roll vs. Lockpicking skill).

As they come into sight of the mansion, they'll find it dark and apparently deserted. Approaching still closer, they'll find their suspicions confirmed. There's no sound or light within. The doors are locked (-4 to Lockpicking skill), and all the windows are barred, locked and tightly shuttered.

If the PCs make any attempt to force entry, the GM should remind them that such an invasion of another's haven represents a serious breach of Camarilla etiquette, particularly given the investigators' rather low status, and the fact that they're visiting on official clan business.

If they break in anyway, they'll find the house completely deserted. The electricity and the phone are still connected and in good working order, the house is spotlessly clean, and perishable food items left in the refrigerator (lunch fixings for the day help) are fresh.

The master bedroom is on the second floor. It has heavy shutters of solid wood, and a large canopied bed with heavy black curtains. A vampire could rest here in safety, provided nobody came in and opened the windows and the curtains. Both the door and windows can be both locked and barred from the inside (the windows are, the door is not).



The only oddity is in the cellar. It contains a large 3-room fallout shelter. Most houses in New Orleans don't have basements – too much ground water – but enough money can buy one that won't sink or float. Any character who's been a vampire for more than 25 years will know that these shelters were popular among affluent kindred in the '50s and '60s as havens. This shelter appears fully stocked, with a quantity of survival equipment and emergency rations. The food is all mortal food – there's no store of blood.

Another room in the cellar is completely empty, with a sturdy door that's barred from the outside. The floor is slightly concave, and there's a drain at the lowest point. The walls and ceiling are bare concrete. It won't be difficult for the vampires to deduce that this room is a larder, used for storing live victims until they are needed. The room is clean and smells strongly of bleach.

One room of the shelter contains pull-out bunk beds for 12. If any investigator specifically states that he's checking the bunks, give him a Vision roll. If he makes the roll, he'll notice that the mattress in the bunk appears well used. The padding has been compressed as though by a body sleeping on it nightly. Inspecting the other bunks will reveal that they're also well-used.


The investigators can leave the mansion at any time. They'll be completely unmolested. If they decide to stay in the mansion during the day, they'll be undisturbed until Samantha returns on the evening of the third night.

If they decide to investigate the environs of the mansion, they'll discover that the house's broad lawns are completely surrounded by an iron fence topped with barbed wire. The fence is concealed in a line of trees.

Beyond the fence is nothing but marshy woods for at least a mile in any direction. There are no natural dangers in the woods that are any threat to a vampire, but characters venturing into the woods must make an IQ roll or become lost. Once lost, their fellow PCs must make a roll vs. Tracking or default to find them. In the event that someone is lost until dawn, he'll be able to find a sheltered spot and cover himself with leaves and moss during the day. The next night, he'll be able to make his way back to the mansion or to Farmington road. Once on Farmington road, it's a two-mile walk to the first all-night convenience store, from which he can call the other PCs or the prince for a ride back to the city. Such an undignified adventure should represent a considerable loss of face.

The bored clerk at the convenience store will be happy to tell the PCs about the crazy old hermit lady who lives at the end of Farmington Road, if they ask.

## Samantha's Trail: Second Night

 ny attempts to visit Samantha's mansion on the second night will yield results identical to the first. The visitors may choose to stay in the Prince's haven. If they do, the prince will not invite them to feed from his herd, but he will send one of his broodmembers to guide any peckish guests on a hunt in one of the city's poorer neighborhoods.

The second night is an ideal time to investigate Sammy's hunting grounds. If the PCs don't think of this themselves, the GM can suggest it, by way of Arcadian, making an early-evening call before beginning his drive down from Dallas.

## Shadows on Bourbon Street

The eight clubs listed as Sammy's rack are a varied lot, from high-tech discos to funky little hole-in-the-wall jazz clubs, to meat-market singles bars.

Nobody at these bars has ever heard of Samantha Drake, but on a successful Carousing roll the PCs will find it easy to track down acquaintances of the gorgeous brunette socialite known as Sammy.

Most club-goers will have no idea of Sammy's last name. Those who do will report it variously as des Barres, Macleroy and Seton. Her profession will be

## Bourbon Street

The largest tourist lure in the southern United States, except for Disney World in Florida, is Bourbon Street in New Orleans. Barely a half-mile long, this street is home to close to 100 bars and night clubs. Thousands of club-goers and tourists walk up and down the street every night, paying high prices for drinks and listening to live bands whose styles range from southern jazz to zydeco to hard rock. The street is also the traditional location of the yearly Mardi Gras celebration – a three-day party with no holds barred.

The influence of Bourbon Street extends to about four parallel streets in both directions, and the area is collectively known as the French Quarter. Visitors can buy Hurricanes on the street, enter one of the many clubs (two-drink minimum, and prices go up when the band is playing), or be conned by a local with a shell game or three-card monte. Typical drink prices *inside* a club are \$5.00 for a beer, and \$8.00 for a mixed drink – add \$1 to these prices when a band is playing, which is usually anytime after 8:00 p.m. There are rarely cover charges to get in. On the street, 32-ounce Hurricanes can be purchased from drink stands for \$3.00.

The locals have their own bars in the area and tend to avoid the tourist traps. Many of the locals' hang-outs have no signs, or look so uninviting as to keep tourists out. Some are merely "back rooms" within the tourist bars, and only a native would know to enter. Many New Orleans natives work in the French Quarter. They and their guests are likely to be exempt from the drink minimums, even in the tourist bars.



### Where's Sammy?

So now that the investigators have arrived to hear Samantha Drake's complaint, where is she?

Samantha has been using her power of Abandon Earthly Form to monitor the PCs' progress from the time they leave Dallas. She does not want to deal with Arcadian's servitors until the Justicar's arrival is closer.

Consequently she rented (through an agent) a large but unremarkable furnished house in the suburbs. Samantha and her brood then cleaned out all traces of the brood, shut up the house and relocated, along with their current stock of vessels. They will not, under any circumstances, leave their temporary haven until the end of the Second Night, and their location is effectively untraceable in the time allowed.

It may happen that when the PCs discover Sammy's haven abandoned, they'll chose to set up headquarters there, rather than return to the prince's haven each night.

However, Sammy is astrally monitoring her home every night, and if the PCs are living there or have it under any sort of continuous observation, she will know. If this is so, she will go ahead and send her invitation to the prince's residence late on the second night. On the third night, she and Heather will arrive by taxi about 11 P.M. If the PCs are there when she arrives, she'll greet them with an innocent, "Oh goodness me, you're early!" She and Heather will bustle about for a few minutes, opening the house and fetching the refreshments, then she'll preceded with the evening as described in the maintext. Once the PCs are seated in the parlor, the rest of her brood will come creeping out of the surrounding wilderness, and prepare themselves for the ambush.

variously reported as conceptual artist, rich divorcée, oil company or ad agency executive, high-price call girl, international art smuggler and the mistress of an important Louisiana politician. One of the more intelligent club-hoppers might even know about Sammy's habit of inventing multiple names and exotic professions, and consider it an amusing eccentricity.

Opinions of Sammy will range from near awe to "stuck-up *poseur*." The general consensus is that Sammy is well-liked, despite her rather ostentatiously mysterious habits. There is no suggestion whatsoever that her friends or acquaintances tend to disappear or suffer from poor health.

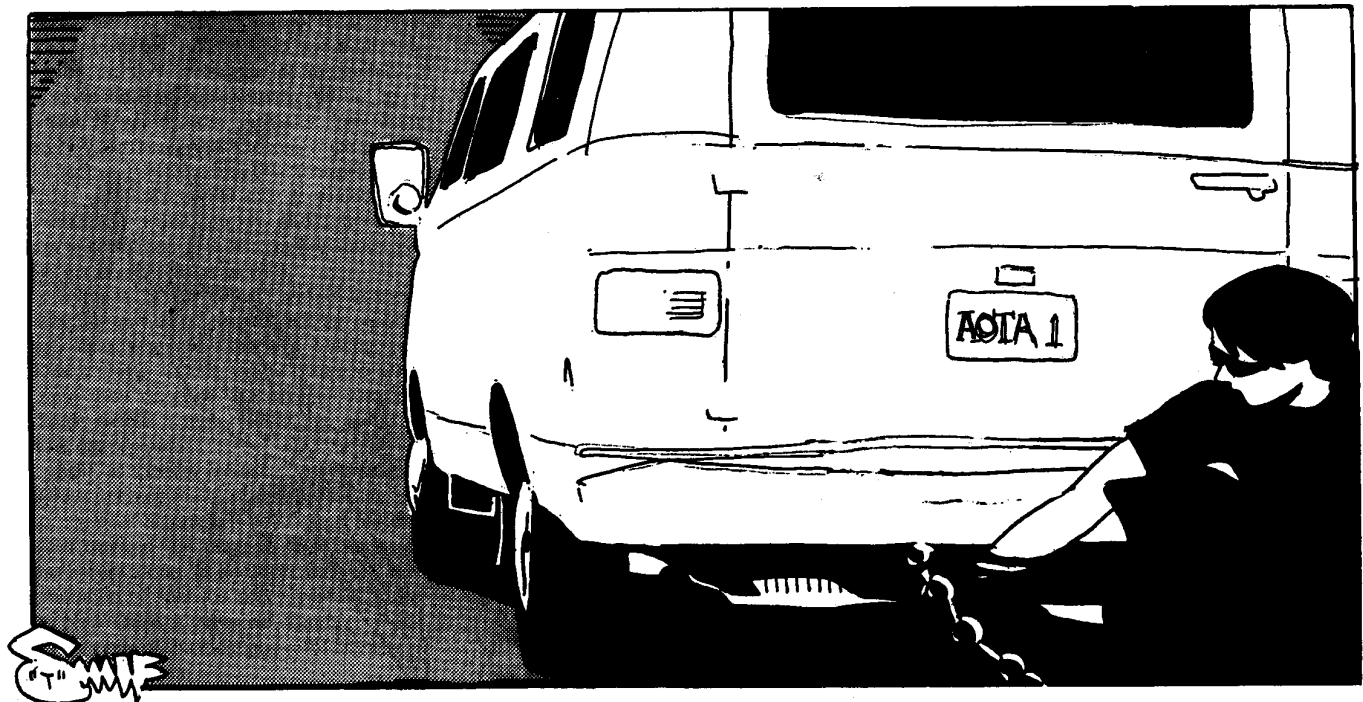
By about 2 a.m., the PCs should have had time to visit several of the clubs on the list. The stories about Sammy will have started to repeat themselves, and the investigators should start to feel like they've pursued this line of inquiry as far as possible.

Just when they're ready to give up on the clubs, they'll be approached by an attractive young man with long hair and stylish clothing. He'll ask if they're the folks looking for Sammy. If the PCs say they are, he'll ask after their business - he says he wants to be sure they're not lawyers or police.

Once he's reassured that the group doesn't represent the authorities, he'll say, "Well, if you're interested in meeting Sammy, I'm going to a party at her place right now. You can give me a ride there, if you want."

Further questioning will reveal that what the man thinks of as "Sammy's place" is an expensive penthouse apartment downtown. He claims not to remember the street address ("I'm really rotten with numbers"), but that he can take the group straight there. He gives his name as Don. All in all, he seems to be a likable, friendly young man.

If asked about his relationship with Sammy he'll say only that, "Oh, I've known Sammy for years," and that he goes to parties at her apartment "all the time." He says he's lived in New Orleans all his life, and a Detect Lies roll confirms that this is true. He knows Samantha as Sammy Seton, and believes she's an account executive for a major advertising firm. All tests that the PCs can devise confirm that the young man is *not* a vampire.



### *Ambush*

Once he's in the PCs' van, Don asks them to stop at a banking machine so he can get cash. If the PCs are reluctant to stop, he becomes quite insistent about it. If asked why he needs to get cash for a private party, he'll explain that Sammy loaned him \$200 a few weeks ago, and that he promised to pay her back tonight.

Don will direct the driver to a small all-night grocery near downtown. The lone clerk, a dumpy, middle-aged white woman, can be seen through the store's windows. A card advertising an all-night teller machine is prominently displayed on the window.

The parking lot is completely empty, and Don will direct the van to the spot nearest the store's entrance. He'll then jump out of the van, saying, "I'll just be a second, you guys can just hang here." If any of the vampires leave the van or follow him into the store, he'll shrug and proceed inside, to the cash machine in a back corner of the small market.

The frumpy clerk is a vampire, but there's no reason for the PCs to notice this unless they specifically state that they're checking.

At this point a manhole in the parking lot will lift, and a slender male vampire will emerge dragging a sturdy iron hook attached to a strong metal cable. He'll crawl quickly over to the van and attach the hook to its rear axle. He does this quickly and silently. The vampires in the van have no chance of detecting his action. A vampire inside the store will see it if he *explicitly* stated he was keeping an eye on the van or parking lot, and if he makes a vision roll at -4. Anyone who's out of the van and not inside the store will automatically notice the person emerging from the manhole, but the saboteur will also notice him, and will vanish back under ground like a gopher darting into its hole.

The cable is securely bolted to an underground concrete wall. On any attempt to drive the van more than 20' with the cable attached, the cable will pull tight and snap the van's axle, rendering it permanently undrivable. Once the axle is broken, the van will skid 3d yards and come to a halt.

Once the cable is attached (or the attempt is detected), the ambush will begin in earnest. There are three ambushers, not counting Don. At the first shot Don will abandon the cash machine, and dive through the swinging doors leading to the back of the store. He'll sprint through the store's warehouse, through a back door to an alley, where he'll escape on a waiting motorcycle. Unless a PC is literally at his elbow when he makes his break, the GM should allow him to escape.

How the ambush is conducted depends on how the team has deployed itself. If they're all in the van, Don will head straight for his getaway vehicle, and a vampire dressed like a homeless man in a long ratty overcoat will come around the corner of the store, pull a shotgun out from under his coat and open fire on the van's windshield. Targets in the two front seats may make a Vision roll - if they succeed, they can duck under the dashboard and not risk taking damage from the first shot. The "clerk" will pull a small submachine gun from behind the counter, and run out the front door, also firing on the van. Once outside she'll





## Samantha Drake

### 10th-Generation Malkavian

Age 83; 5'7", 135 lbs.; brunette with green eyes.

ST 12, DX 15, IQ 13, HT 12.

Basic Speed 6.75, Move 6.

Blood Pool 16, Humanity 8.

Dodge 7, Parry 11 (Broadsword), 13 (Karate).

No armor or encumbrance.

**Advantages:** Ally Group (her brood), Appearance (Very Beautiful), Charisma +4, Generation (10th), Vampire Package, Wealth (Wealthy).

**Disadvantages:** Delusion (No one will ever figure out what I'm doing), Fanaticism, Weak Will: Conscience -3.

**Quirks:** Likes to play the Southern Belle; Contemptuous of Camarilla Kindred.

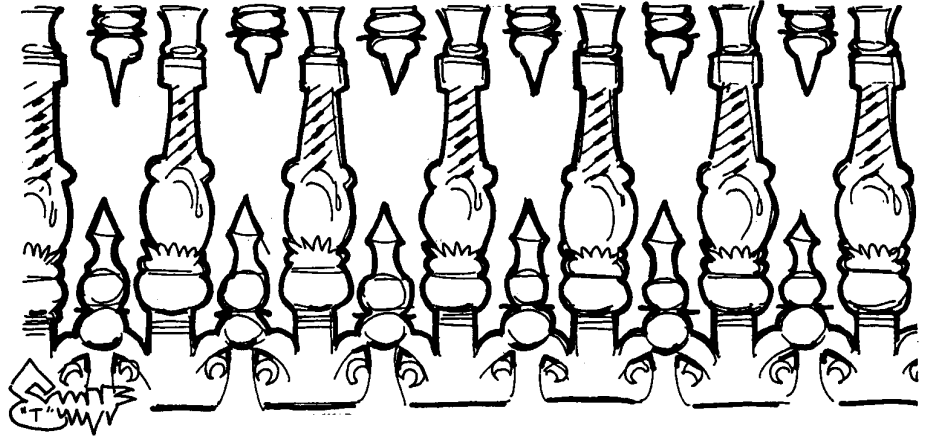
**Skills:** Acting-20; Area Knowledge (New Orleans)-17; Broadsword-20; Carousing-16; Detect Lies-17; Diplomacy-14; Driving (Car)-15; Fast-Talk-16; Guns (Pistol)-15; History-13; Interrogation-16; Intimidation-15; Karate-20; Occultism-15; Psychology-19; Savoir-Faire-18; Sex Appeal-20; Stealth-16.

**Languages:** English-13; French-13.

**Disciplines:** Auspex (Power 5), Heightened Senses-13, Aura Perception-13, The Spirit's Touch-14, Unveil the Shrouded Mind-15, Abandon Earthly Form-15; Dominate (Power 2), Command the Wearied Mind-12, Mesmerize-11; Potence (Power 2).

Much of the story Samantha told when she returned as a vampire to New Orleans (see p. 154) is true. The main difference between her tale and reality is that her sire did not assault her and abandon her. Instead her sire (at the time a hard-nosed flapper from Chicago, still rather green in the ways of vampirism) took Samantha under her wing, and taught her the fundamentals of vampiric life. The sire had a naïve plan to present the beautiful and brilliant Samantha to her patron (who was neither her sire nor the local prince), once Samantha was acclimated to her undead existence. Samantha, however, hated her new estate with an irrational intensity possible only in a Malkavian, and after a few weeks of unrelenting hostility, the sire abandoned her ill-conceived child in anger and moved on. Shortly thereafter, Sammy returned to New Orleans, where she discovered *Mademoiselle Desmoulins* and got herself admitted to the local Camarilla.

*Continued on next page . . .*



break for the corner of the store opposite the "bum." Meanwhile, the vampire who attached the hook will re-emerge from his hiding place holding a firebomb, which he'll light and roll deftly under the van (if the driver tries to start the van when the shooting stops, the ambusher will wait until the hook and cable bring the van to a halt before throwing the bomb). It will explode in 4 to 6 seconds. The GM should be generous about allowing PCs to notice the bomb – anyone emerging from the van or the store should automatically see "something burning" under the van, and have a chance to deal with it, either by grasping it and pitching it away from the van (in which case he must make a Will roll to bring himself to grasp the flaming bomb), or simply by scrambling several yards away by the time the Van blows. The vampire in the manhole also has a large-caliber handgun, and he will remain in his "foxhole," firing at any target of opportunity.

If all the investigators are in the store, the "bum" will come through the front door, and he and the shop clerk will produce their weapons and open fire simultaneously. The vampire in the manhole will throw his bomb, then cover the front of the store, firing at anybody who attempts to leave through the door or window. The store offers plenty of cover and concealment for both the PCs and their ambushers. The windows are made out of sturdy plastic, and require 10 points of damage to shatter. If anyone is near the back of the store, they can follow Don out through the storeroom and out to the alley. If they do, the fight will probably be over by the time they work their way back to the front of the store.

If some of the PCs are inside, and some are out, the "bum" will open fire on the van, the "clerk" will try to pin down the targets in the store, and the third attacker will try to blow up the van and then cover the front of the store, as above.

The attackers may be considered to be armed with the following weapons from pp. B208-209: the "bum" has a Remington M870 shotgun, the "clerk" has a IMI Uzi, and the vampire in the manhole has his homemade bomb and an IMI Eagle.

Since all the attackers are Malkavians, they'll play up the chaos of the situation, cackling madly as they fire, and screaming incoherent curses at their targets between volleys.

When the firebomb goes off, it will do 3d fire damage to anyone within 3 yards. If it's still under the van when it explodes, the van's gas tank will ignite one second after the bomb goes off, doing 10d damage to anyone inside the van. Anyone standing within 1 yard of the van will take 6d damage. This damage will reduce by 1d for each additional yard of distance from the van. This is all fire damage; see the rules for fire on p. 81 and p. B129.

Once the bomb goes off, whether it destroys the van or not, the ambushers will vanish, each in a different direction. Unless the defenders come up with some truly brilliant tactic, the GM should assume that the attackers can elude any pursuit. After all, they know the city, and the PCs don't.

Samantha has arranged this ambush to shake the investigators up and test their mettle. If the PCs are reasonably alert and defend themselves actively they should come through the attack largely unscathed. See the sidebar on p. 166 for advice on keeping the group from being overcome by the ambush. If, however, through their own fault or negligence the whole party is somehow rendered dormant by the attack, they'll be gathered up and taken to Samantha's mansion. Go to *Finale*, p. 167.

### Aftermath

After the explosion, the group will probably want to return to the Prince's haven and lick their wounds. If the van is destroyed, the party can find a pay phone and call the prince for help – a vehicle will arrive in 2d+10 minutes.

If the PCs linger in the vicinity of the store, the police will arrive in 1d minutes. The real proprietor of the store will be found in a corner of the storeroom, shot dead. The news media will report the incident the next day as "an apparent gangland gun battle" involving parties unknown.

When they return to the prince's haven, any injuries will be tended. Severely injured characters will be given enough blood from members of the Prince's brood to allow them to regain consciousness. Less severely wounded characters will be given access to the Prince's emergency supply of stored blood to help them renew their strength.



### Samantha Drake (Continued)

In addition to her stunning beauty, Samantha is charming and intelligent in person (when she's not putting on an act, like the "batty southern belle" routine she used on the PCs), with no outward sign of Malkavian eccentricity. There is, however, a fundamental core of madness to her existence . . . specifically, her continued repulsion with her vampire existence, despite the fact that she is *amazingly* good at being a vampire. In addition to her masterful diablerie, her feat of hunting for a large illicit brood, in a city already overcrowded with Kindred, for several years without ever raising a single serious suspicion in the mind of either a watchful and competent prince or a notably superstitious and religious local populace is an almost unequalled tour de force of vampiric technique.

Samantha created her first half-dozen broodlings after destroying her grandsire in 1951. She trained them well, but seldom let them hunt for themselves, and *never* let them leave her estate except under her direct supervision. She largely kept them fed with runaways and the homeless. During her several-month hunt for her great-great-grandsire in Europe she kept them all staked and dormant in the mansion's fallout shelter, forcing them to accept this painful indignity through sheer force of will. Upon returning from Europe with her new 10th-generation status, she created her final and most gifted childe, Heather.

In addition to her broodlings, she has two mortal ghouls who serve her and guard her haven during the day. Her housekeeper is an elderly and morose woman, a practitioner of Voodoo. Her groundskeeper is a vigorous young man who the PCs will come to know as "Don" (see p. 158). Don is hopelessly in love with the beautiful vampire, and cherishes the fantasy that after she regains her mortality, they'll run off together and live happily ever after.



*Mortal Desires*

Once medical emergencies are attended to, they will be given a small cream-colored envelope. The message was delivered by messenger service that evening. The envelope is addressed, in careful, neat calligraphy, to the investigators from Dallas. Each is listed by name.

Inside is a greeting card embossed with the word "Welcome." When they open the card, they'll find the following message written in a very neat, old-fashioned script.

"Thank you so much for coming! I'm terribly sorry I couldn't greet you earlier - I've been out of town. If you're free, perhaps you can visit my home at midnight, tomorrow, and we can get acquainted and discuss the business at hand?"

"Very truly yours,  
"Samantha Drake"

The note ends with an "RSVP" and the phone number of the Drake residence.

If the investigators call the number before 5 a.m. they'll get no answer, but if they call between 5 and dawn, or any time the next evening, the phone will be answered by a crisp female voice, "Drake residence. Who's calling, please?"

Once the investigators identify themselves ("the visitors from Texas" is sufficient) they'll be told, "Of course. How nice of you to call. This is Miss Drake; will you be there for my little *soiree* tomorrow?"

If they accept, Samantha will say, "How delightful. I'll see you there," and hang up. If they decline she'll simply say, "I'm so terribly sorry. Perhaps I'll see you when Mr. Walsh arrives," and hang up. If they make any attempt to question her she'll say, "I'm so sorry, but we really mustn't discuss these matters over the phone. I'll be most happy to answer all your questions tomorrow. I'll see you there?"

## An Invitation: Third Night



If asked, the prince will regretfully refuse to provide the PCs with any help or backup for the evening. Without absolute proof of Samantha's guilt, any direct action on the prince's part could be interpreted as an attempt to cover up his own guilt - a risk he's not willing to take. He will, however, provide the group with transportation to the mansion.

About 45 minutes after sundown, Arcadian will call. He's just leaving Houston. He'll instruct his retainers to accept Samantha's invitation, if they haven't already. He'll tell them to take Samantha's statement and ask any *reasonable questions*, but caution them against provoking her or making any overt accusations. He expects to arrive in New Orleans at about 4:30 a.m., shortly before dawn, and says he expects the team to be at the prince's haven to meet him.

## Dinner Party

The PCs will be driven out to Farmington Road in Mr. Johnson's stretch limousine. The chauffeur is human - a ghoul in the service of one of the prince's senior broodmembers. He is to drop the group off, then check into a roadside motel about 10 miles down route 46 from Farmington Road and wait until he's



called to pick them up and return them to the city. Once he gets the call, he can be at the mansion in 15 minutes.

The drive to the mansion is uneventful. The gate at the end of Farmington road is open, and the "FORBIDDEN" sign has been taken down and stowed in the underbrush.

When the house comes into view, it's a breathtaking sight. The interior lights are all blazing. The windows have been unshuttered and the curtains thrown back. The mansion shines in the moonlight, looking like it must have looked a century earlier, when the Drakes were a numerous and vigorous clan at the center of New Orleans' high society, and Samantha Drake was a tiny child up past her bedtime, peeking out between the curtains at the swirling, elegant crowds below.

There are no crowds now, but as the PCs approach the wide-open front door, they do hear a whisper of music within. Once they're at the door, they can pull the antique bell pull, use the huge brass knocker or simply walk into the front hall. No matter which they choose, Samantha herself, radiant in a gold lamé gown, will sweep into the hall as soon as they arrive at the door, the warm, welcoming smile of the perfect southern hostess on her lips. With Samantha is a very young-looking blonde vampire – also very beautiful in a formal black mini-dress, though she's no competition for Samantha.

Samantha will introduce the blonde as "My dear friend, Heather." She'll lead the group into an ornate parlor decorated in turn-of-the-century style. Chamber music plays softly from the concealed speakers of what even the most casual audiophile can tell is a tremendously expensive stereo system.

In the parlor, the PCs are offered their choice of fine wines, and Samantha apologizes for not being able to offer "more substantial refreshment." She'll also apologize again for having missed the investigators' arrival. She'll explain that she feared retaliation after making her complaint against the prince, and so took a flight "up north" to stay with Heather. If questioned, Heather will give her clan as Tremere (a lie, but not one that's detectable with the Detect Lies skill), but politely refuse to give any other information about herself, including her last name or city of origin. Her accent is midwestern. Samantha will also mention that she and Heather are the only ones in the house, the servants having been sent home hours ago.

Samantha will keep the conversation to small talk while the party enjoys a

## Heather

### 11th-Generation Malkavian

Age 16; 5'4", 115 lbs.; blonde with blue eyes.

ST 9, DX 13, IQ 11, HT 10.

Basic Speed 5.75, Move 5.

Blood Pool 12, Humanity 9.

Dodge 5, Parry 7 (Broadsword).

No armor or encumbrance.

*Advantages:* Patron (Samantha), Appearance (Beautiful), Generation (11th), Vampire Package.

*Disadvantages:* Blood Bonded, Delusion (Samantha will protect me from any danger), Vow (kill Samantha once she regains her mortality), Youth (age 16).

*Quirk:* Secretly hates Samantha.

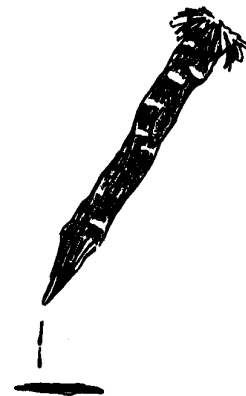
*Skills:* Acting-11; Area Knowledge (New Orleans)-12; Broadsword-15; Carousing-11; Driving (Car)-12; Fast-Talk-12; Guns (Pistol)-15; Savoir-Faire-11; Sex Appeal-12; Stealth-16.

*Disciplines:* Auspex (Power 2), Heightened Senses-10, Aura Perception-10; Dominate (Power 1), Command the Worn Mind-12; Obfuscate (Power 2), Cloak of Shadows-10, Unseen Presence-11.

Heather is Samantha's only 11th-Generation child. She's the last and most competent of Sammy's broodlings. Physically, she's a pretty blonde teenager.

Heather was 15 and a runaway when Sammy found her at the Port Authority bus depot in 1992. Originally Sammy only planned to use Heather to stock her larder, but the girl put up such a vigorous and intelligent fight that Sammy decided to recruit her instead.

Like her sire, and unlike her broodmates, Heather displays no outward sign of Malkavian insanity. Like Samantha, her demons lie deeper. Heather thoroughly enjoys being a vampire, but her undying hatred is reserved for her sire. She wants nothing on earth more than to rip Samantha's still-beating heart from her body. Nonetheless, she serves Sammy faithfully, both because of the blood-bond, and because she's decided, with true Malkavian logic, that it will be more satisfying to murder Samantha after she regains her mortality.



### Typical Cellar Brood

ST 10, DX 13, IQ 9, HT 10.  
Basic Speed 5.75, Move 5.  
Blood Pool 10, Humanity 7.  
Dodge 5, Parry 6 (Broadsword).  
No armor or encumbrance.

**Advantages:** Patron (Samantha), Vampire Package.

**Disadvantages:** Appearance (Unattractive), Blood Bonded, Various Delusions.

**Skills:** Area Knowledge (New Orleans)-10; Broadsword-12; Guns (Pistol)-14; Guns (Rifle)-14; Shadowing-15; Stealth-14.

**Disciplines:** Auspex (Power 1), Heightened Senses-10; Obfuscate (Power 2), Cloak of Shadows-9, Unseen Presence-10.

Samantha's six 12th-generation broodlings are all obviously, indeed exaggeratedly, Malkavian. Their natural eccentricity has been amplified by their years of enforced isolation and submission. They have few social skills, dress in rags, and tend to mutter and laugh to themselves. They look and act for all the world like mentally ill street people.

Nonetheless, they are well-trained and completely loyal to their blood-bound mistress, and are a very real threat to her enemies.

glass of wine. Once that's over, she'll invite the party to accompany her on a tour of the house. If they accept, she'll take them through the first and second floors, pointing out various curios, antiques and family heirlooms. She won't take them to the kitchen (which is rather primitive and shoddy by the standards of the rest of the house, Samantha having no need for more than minimal kitchen facilities for the last 50 years), or even mention the cellar. If the PCs ask about it, she'll say, "Oh yes, there's a cellar, but it's terribly dank down there - we're built over a swamp, you know. I couldn't possibly take guests down there. Anyway, the only thing remotely interesting in it is the wine cellar, and you've already seen my best." If the PCs ask if she has a haven in the cellar (a very rude question, according to Camarilla etiquette), she'll just laugh and say, "Well, we all have our little secret places, don't we?"

Once the tour is over (or declined), she'll invite the party into a sitting room where a wood fire is burning (the fireplace is quite deep, and the blaze is not large enough to be seriously disturbing). While Heather adds fuel to the fire and pokes it up (using a remarkably long poker), Samantha gets her guests seated on overstuffed antique sofas pulled up around a long oriental rug. She'll then settle into a high back armchair and begin her story. A moment later Heather will pull up a small wooden chair near Samantha and sit down.

She'll describe her attack by Michael, claiming that she met him that night after hunting, and he invited her to come with him to see a touring blues band from Chicago. She agreed, but instead of taking her to a blues club, Michael drove them into a dark alley and attacked her. She'll paint the attack as a deliberate attempt to feed on a fellow vampire's blood. She claims she managed to get the car door open and escape, evading her assailant only after a long and exhausting chase. The next night, she says, she first mailed an express letter to Arcadian, then took her charge



WMT  
WMT

to the prince. On the following night she says she chartered a plane to carry her to Heather's place.

Samantha then continues, "Now I know you're asking yourself, 'why would young Michael do such a thing?' Well, I asked myself the same thing, and do you know what I think? I think that that Mr. Johnson put him up to it! I do indeed! Why, *everybody* knows that he wants to be the sire of every vampire in this city. He's been 'encouraging' others to leave for years, so he could add to that fawning brood of his. I wouldn't leave – well why should I, this is my home? – and so he told that beastly boy he could have his way with me! Michael's much more powerful than I am, you know – being the childe of a prince and all – it's only purest good fortune that I got away at all."

At this point Heather will stand up, walk over to Samantha and begin stroking her hair, soothingly. She'll smile calmly at the PCs and say, "Poor Samantha is overwrought, and that's hard on Malkavians. But you must admit, there's a certain twisted logic to her theory."

If the investigators question Samantha about the ambush the night before, or about the swamp anarchists, she'll paint it as an attempt by Johnson to implicate her. If the PCs ask why Johnson would try to kill them the night before, then go to great lengths to save them, she'll reply, "Obviously, he's more interested in discrediting me than in harming you. And that's very lucky for you, I'd say."

If confronted with Arcadian's suspicion of diablerie, she'll convincingly feign total shock. "Why that's just the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard! I don't even know who my sire was! And I've never even *met* Mr. Walsh." If it's mentioned that a vampire who destroys his sires back several generations is believed to regain mortality, Samantha will profess to have never heard that legend. She'll sniff and say, "seems like an awful lot of effort just to become old and ugly."

If someone makes a Detect Lies check, allow him to roll a quick contest of skill vs. Samantha's acting skill. If he wins, the GM may tell him, "Some of her answers seem rather well rehearsed – of course Malkavians are notoriously histrionic." On a critical success, the GM can forego the caution about the Malkavian character.

Samantha will patiently endure all the investigators' questions, sticking skillfully to her story, and making up only the bare minimum details to keep her story consistent. The GM should enjoy roleplaying this battle of wits.

On a successful Interrogation roll on the questioner's part, the GM can allow a slight inconsistency to slip into Samantha's account, but even on a critical success, the slip-up should be minor, and Heather will be quick to point out that under stress, Malkavians often slip into fantasy or lose their train of thought.

When the PCs are ready to leave, Samantha will become distraught. "Oh no, please, *please* don't leave us alone here. I just *know* that horrible Mr. Johnson has something awful planned for Heather and me. Can't you please stay with us until Mr. Walsh gets here?"

When the PCs refuse (to accept would be to disobey a direct command from their patron), Samantha will look down as though in deep regret, then look up with a faint smile on her lips and say, very softly, "Oh no, I'm afraid I *must* insist."

At that moment Samantha's brood will enter the room.



### Reinforcements

The three vampires that the prince sends along with Arcadian for the final encounter with Samantha are three of his eldest offspring. They're all competent and experienced 9th-generation Toreadors.

Although not cowardly, they are pragmatic. Rather than attack against the hopeless odds of the swamp anarchists, they'll agree to stand by while the matter is resolved through a fair fight between Arcadian and Samantha. Their sire will back them up completely on this decision.

For the expedition to Farmington Road, they're armed with heavy handguns. Use the IMI Eagle pistol from p. B208.

### Debugging the Scenario

The ambush at the grocery store (p. 159) assumes that the PCs are all or mostly armed with reasonably powerful sidearms. If the party has few or no weapons, the violence needs to be toned down a little. Replace the shotgun and Uzi with Glock 17 pistols.

The worst thing that can happen during that firefight is for the PCs to simply hunker down in the van and wait to get blown to bits. If they try this tactic, the GM should announce a brief lull in the shooting. During this lull everyone should make a Hearing roll – if they succeed, they hear a hissing, spitting sound under the van. The GM can also tell them that the floor of the van suddenly feels warm. If they take this hint, they can be given *just enough* time to roll out of the van's side door and either scramble a few yards away before the explosion or (with successful rolls vs. Will and DX) grab the bomb and pitch it away from the van.

One of the advantages of playing a vampire is that it's very difficult to destroy one accidentally. It's recommended that once a character is out of a given fight, the GM not be too picky about exactly how much damage that character took overall – better to assume that any dormant characters are at precisely that stage where a little bit of extra nourishment will be enough to return them to consciousness.

If the GM strongly prefers to actually roll the climactic battle between Arcadian and Samantha, he may, of course, do so, but this is not recommended. Better to allow the whole adventure to hinge on the actions (or inaction) of the PCs.

### The Brood in the Cellar

Sammy's brood consists of Heather (who's not a Tremere at all, but an 11th-generation Malkavian), and six 12th-generation broodlings, all blood-bonded to their sire. Heather is the only childe which Samantha has created since she tracked down her great-grandsire and obtained 10th-generation powers, hence Heather is both the newest and the most powerful member of the brood.

At Sammy's signal the entire brood will enter the room. Two come through the hallway door, two through the open bay window, and two more through a hidden panel in the wall behind the investigators' chairs. They'll quickly move to surround the PCs. The PCs will instantly recognize some or all of their ambushers from the night before (if any of the ambushers were destroyed or captured in the previous evening's battle, they will not, of course, be present, and the attacking force will be that much smaller).

Three of the attackers are armed with small but powerful crossbows (ST 12), and all of them are carrying bludgeoning weapons – axe handles, baseball bats, lengths of pipe – treat as a light club as described under Broadsword on p. B206.

Once the attackers have entered and deployed themselves, Samantha and Heather will rise. Samantha will move to the door. If her visitors are waiting for something to happen, she'll pause at the door with a sweet smile and a soft, "Good night, all," but if the PCs have opened fire or taken any other offensive action, she'll simply bolt for the hallway, locking the door behind her.

Heather will stay where she is, and draw an automatic pistol (a Glock 17 from p. B208) from a holster strapped to her upper thigh. As soon as Samantha has left the room, or the team takes some offensive action, Heather will fire at one of the visitors. This will signal the other attackers to open fire with their crossbows. The crossbowmen will aim for the heart – a -7 modifier for hit location, but +5 for close range – they're about 10 feet from the PCs – for a cumulative -2 to hit. Any crossbow bolt that strikes the heart and does more than 1 point of damage is considered to be a stake through the heart, and the vampire so wounded is immobilized until the bolt is removed (a bolt which does only a single point of damage is considered to have been stopped before reaching the heart).



After they've fired once, the crossbowmen will drop their crossbows, and all six broodmembers will attack at once. Their tactics are rudimentary – they intend to rush the PCs and bludgeon them into submission. They attack with suicidal determination and will never give up the attack short of dormancy. Heather will stay back from the main attack, with her pistol ready, prepared to fire on any defender who seems about to break out of the melee.

The GM should make normal checks for Frenzy on all the vampires in this battle, PC and NPC. Since all the attackers are Malkavian, the GM should play up the screams, war whoops, cackling and general insanity of the attack.

*If the PCs win the fight.* They'll find the house once again deserted, except for the defeated broodlings and three insane mortals in the "larder" in the basement (see below). There's no sign of where Samantha might have gotten to.

*If the PCs lose the fight.* They'll be bludgeoned into dormancy, and dumped unceremoniously on the floor of the fallout shelter until the next night.

*If the PCs escape the house* without defeating all their foes, they'll have to make a run for the nearest convenience store (two miles away) to summon their ride back to town. The attackers will give chase, on foot, but they know all the shortcuts. The GM may roll 1d+1. That's the number of times the PCs will be attacked during their escape (or until all the attackers have been eliminated). The Malkavians will attack the fleeing investigators from hiding, in groups of two or three, fleeing into the underbrush as soon as they lose the element of surprise. They'll give up the chase when the fugitives reach the store, *unless* one or more of the attackers has become Frenzied, in which case a screaming Malkavian will hurl himself through the plate-glass front of the store as the PCs are hanging up the phone.

## Finale: Fourth Night



*If the PCs escaped the mansion:* They return to Mr. Johnson's haven a couple of hours before dawn. Any severely wounded vampire is offered nourishment to speed his healing. An hour or so later, Arcadian arrives. In the presence of the prince, he listens to his subordinates' report. He then formally asks the prince for aid in the apprehension of the Malkavian diabolist Samantha Drake and her unsanctioned get. Johnson agrees to order three of his senior offspring to Samantha's place with Arcadian and his team the following night. The prince's household and guests then prepare for their repose.

The next night the group (including three experienced 9th-generation Toreador from the Prince's household) arrives at the Drake mansion about 10 p.m. It's exactly as the PCs left it the night before – lights are still burning, and no attempt has been made to clean up after the fight. Under Arcadian's direction, the team searches the house swiftly but thoroughly. In the cellar "larder" they find three insane mortals cowering in their chains. Arcadian views the scene for a few moments with an expression of mingled anger and pity, then decrees that the pathetic cattle be put out of their misery. Anyone who feels they need to replenish their strength may feed, after which Arcadian matter-of-factly slits the mortals' throats with a large clasp knife.

A few moments after this unpleasant chore is over, the group in the cellar is startled by the faint sound of an automobile horn, honking incessantly in front of the mansion above. When they investigate the sound, they'll find a 10-wheel van parked in the mansion's driveway. Standing on the lawn in front of the van is Samantha, her hair pulled back into a ponytail, and dressed in a shapely but practical black jumpsuit. Also present are any of her broodlings that weren't destroyed or taken captive the night before, and Lucian and his swamp anarchists. Lucian's troops are heavily armed with shotguns and assault rifles.



### *If the PCs Lost on the Third Night*

If the investigators were overcome by Samantha's brood, read them the following.

*Your first sensation of returning consciousness is of nourishment pouring down your throat like raw energy through a wire. Eagerly, you suck more nourishment, but too soon the source is drawn away from your greedy lips. Your rage at this insult allows you to muster the superhuman strength necessary to open your eyelids.*

*The swirling blur before you slowly resolves itself into the face of Arcadian, your patron, licking shut the wound on his wrist from which you've just fed.*

It's the fourth night, and Arcadian and the prince's three men have just found the investigators in Samantha's fallout shelter. Once all the team members have regained consciousness, Arcadian leads them across the cellar to the "larder." First he feeds, to regain the energy lost in reviving his subordinates, then he orders the party to feed and regain their strength. In the unlikely event that anything is left of the cattle after this repast, Arcadian dispatches the survivors with his clasp knife.

The group then hears the honking on the front lawn, and the duel between Arcadian and Samantha proceeds as above.



## Character Points

For surviving the ambush at the grocery store, 1 point, plus an additional point if any of the ambushers are captured or destroyed.

For the fight at the mansion, 1 point, plus an additional point if the PCs win the fight or escape.

If they make no effort to aid Arcadian in his duel against Samantha, no points.

If they try to help, to no avail, 1 point.

If they try to help, and Arcadian wins, 2 points.

If they somehow defeat Samantha themselves, 3 points.

If they somehow defeat or capture Lucian, 2 points.

Plus any additional bonus points the GM cares to distribute.

## Other Rewards

Any PC whose aid contributed to Arcadian's victory will gain the profound gratitude of his patron. If somehow bound to Arcadian, by debt or blood bond, that bond will be erased (the vampire may elect to continue to serve Arcadian of his own free will). The vampire will find that Arcadian's good will materially enhances his status within the Camarilla.

If the PCs choose not to interfere with the duel and Arcadian is destroyed, the Camarilla will pragmatically agree that their choice was justified under the circumstances. However, they will probably be charged with finding and killing Samantha Drake (see sidebar). Arcadian might also have a friend or a child with thoughts of revenge against the faithless servitors.



Lucian speaks first. With a casual wave to the PCs, he calls across the lawn, "Miss Drake and I have renegotiated our arrangement. My function here is merely to insure that her challenge to Mr. Walsh is not interrupted by third parties. If you do not interfere in the upcoming duel, there will be no need to take unpleasant measures against you." Alert individuals will notice that all trace of Lucian's former Cajun accent has vanished.

Then Samantha will issue her challenge. "All right, Walsh. No tricks, just you and me, here and now, any weapons you want."

Seeing the number of Lucian's force, the prince's men will agree not to interfere in a fair fight between Samantha and Arcadian (earning a furious glance from Arcadian). If the PCs make any sort of threat or attack, the swamp anarchs will attack in force, using whatever force is necessary to neutralize the threat. If possible, they'll leave their victims conscious, but bound by light but unbreakable wire bonds.

Once all of Arcadian's group has either agreed to Samantha's terms or been subdued, Arcadian will bow to the inevitable and agree to combat with bare hands and blunt instruments. Two matched axe handles left over from the night before will be produced, and the opponents will face off on the front lawn.

The GM can describe the duel in as much detail as he likes. Both opponents are alert, powerful and skilled with their weapons. However, if the combat is allowed to proceed without interference, Arcadian will lose. End the description with, "Arcadian falls at Samantha's feet, and you watch with horror as she throws herself on his undefended throat. At first, there are a few pathetic twitches from the vanquished, but they soon subside. Still Samantha feeds, long after the last spasm of her victim's lifeless body. After what seems an eternity, Samantha at last drops Arcadian's husk, and throws her head back in a howling scream of unholy triumph."

If, however, the PCs manage to intervene in the combat in any substantive way (GM's option), it will tip the balance in Arcadian's favor. End with, "Your patron knocks the weapon from Samantha's flaccid grasp, then, with a final mighty blow, smashes his cudgel into the side of her skull with a sickening crack. Samantha sprawls across the lawn, her once-beautiful face now twisted into a subtly unnatural shape. There is no light of consciousness in her open, staring eyes. Arcadian stands astride his fallen foe, his cudgel held at ready in his hands, turns a blazing gaze on Lucian and declares, "It's over - this one is *mine*."

Lucian's troops will do whatever is necessary to keep spectators from interfering with the battle (and if any of Samantha's brood is present, the PCs might notice that the anarchs are watching them just as closely as they're watching Arcadian's team) *until* one of the two combatants is defeated, at which time the anarchs will attempt to call off any other ongoing hostilities. Lucian will shout at any remaining combatants, "It's all over, you fools! There's nothing more to fight about!"

*If Samantha won*, the anarchs will order the PCs and the prince's men into the back of the panel truck. Leaving Samantha behind, the truck will drive aimlessly, with the hostages under the constant watchful gaze of their captors in the dark, sealed back of the truck. About 5 a.m. the truck will stop, and the captives will be released, only a few blocks from the waterfront and the prince's haven. Lucian will roll down the passenger-side window of truck's cabin, and call out, "One final word, my friends - I'm relocating my operation, so you needn't trouble yourselves to look for me in that odious swamp." Then the truck will drive off into the night, taking any surviving members of Samantha's brood with it.

*If Arcadian won*, Lucian will congratulate him on his victory, then demand that any surviving members of Samantha's brood be allowed to leave with him. Arcadian will promise Lucian dire vengeance from the Camarilla some day, but will not attempt to stop him from leaving. As soon as Lucian is gone, Arcadian will phone the prince from inside the mansion, and demand that he find and follow

Lucian's truck (Johnson will make an effort to do so, but somehow the clumsy truck will elude pursuit). Arcadian will also demand that Samantha's body be burned and her ashes dispersed that very night. This Johnson will arrange, and by the crack of dawn, the case of Samantha Drake will be permanently closed.

## Further Adventures

### *A Hunter Born*

If Samantha survives the adventure, she's obviously a loose end that will need to be tied up eventually.

A triumphant Samantha will fly out of New Orleans with her minion Don a few hours after killing Arcadian. She will retain all the powers of a Ninth-Generation elder until sunrise comes and burns away her vampiric nature, leaving her once again mortal. This will occur while she and Don are on a commercial airliner, well on their way to the beginning of a new life in Southern California.

The newly mortal Samantha becomes a hunter, creating an organization to track down and destroy vampires. She is the Camarilla's worst nightmare – a wealthy, brilliant and imaginative enemy with an intimate personal knowledge of vampire society, using the Camarilla's own tactics against it. Obviously, the Camarilla will stop at nothing to destroy her and her organization.

Alternately, once relieved of her obsessive Malkavian hatred of vampirism, she begins to pine for her former powers. Killing or abandoning the hapless Don, she travels to the East Coast and seeks out the Sabbat, offering them a deal. If they'll re-create her as a high-powered vampire in their organization, she will personally drive the Camarilla forever out of the city of New Orleans, with only a dozen followers. Once she sets her plan in motion, the beleaguered Johnson calls in the PCs to come and augment his rapidly declining forces.

### *Heather's Revenge*

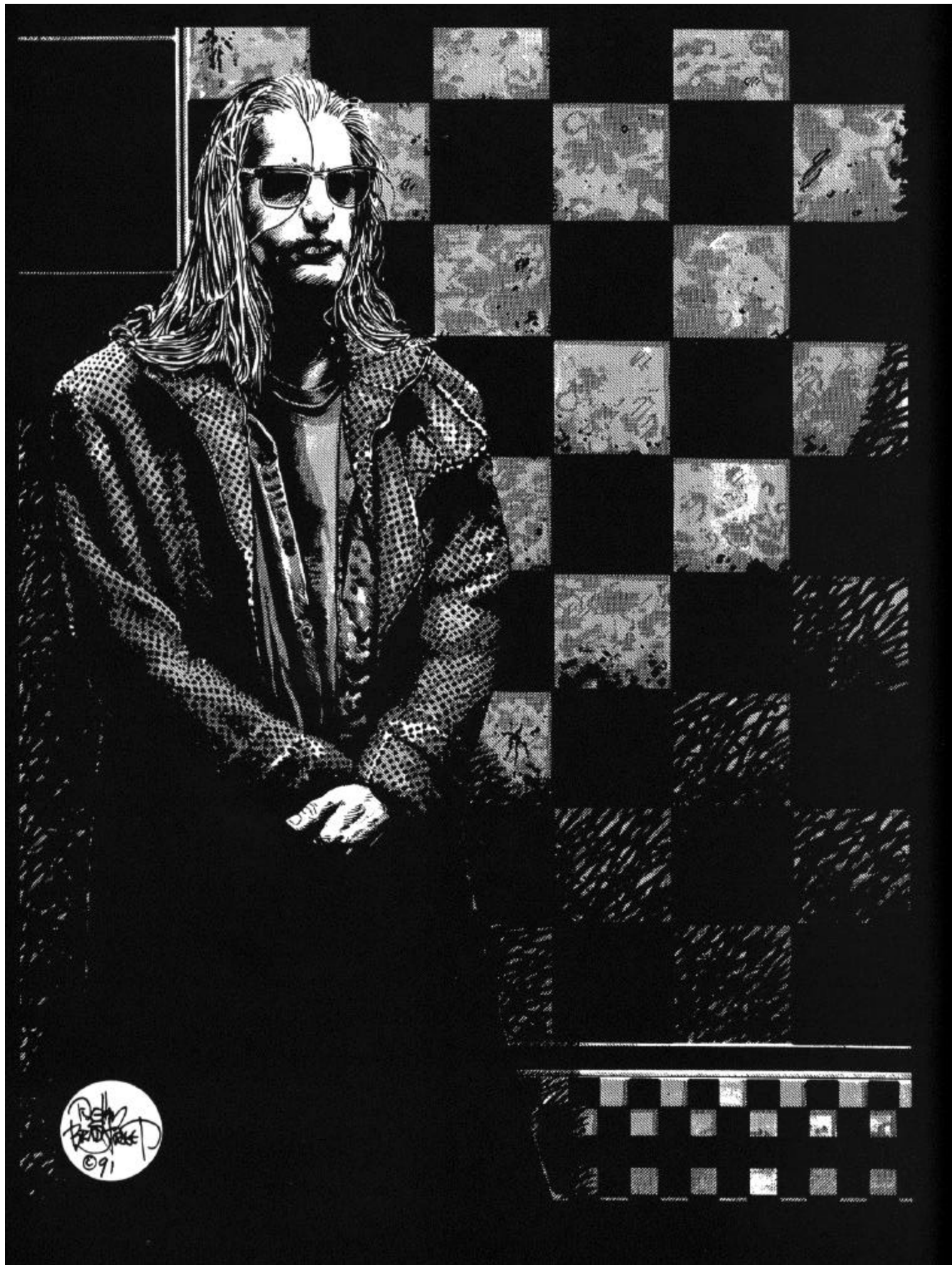
Of course, Samantha's duped assistant will want to exact vengeance on her former vampire lord. Heather may contact the PCs to help her track Samantha down. Consumed by an ever-deepening need to see Drake killed, Heather will fall heavily into a Malkavian psychosis. Soon she may prove to be more dangerous than their supposed prey.

### *The Mysterious Anarch*

If Samantha is destroyed, the next obvious target for further attention is Lucian. The PCs are the logical team to spearhead a Camarilla effort to destroy Lucian and his anarchs. They might be simply assigned to track the anarchs by any means necessary, then lead a force of Camarilla vampires and ghouls against Lucian's current camp.

However, for a more difficult challenge, the Camarilla elders might propose a more subtle plan. The elders arrange a plausible but dramatic falling out between the Camarilla and the PCs, ending in their being formally cast out of the Camarilla, nominally forever. The PCs are then expected to seek out Lucian and petition him to join his band. Once they've infiltrated the anarchs, they're expected to spy on Lucian's activities for several months or years, returning to the Camarilla only when the time is right to strike. Of course, they're assured that once Lucian is destroyed, they'll be readmitted to the fellowship of the Camarilla with much honor and reward.





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*The blood is nearly dry on my lips when the frenzy fades.*

*The wall of redness washes past me and leaves me standing, naked in my crime, guilty in my fullness. As my vision returns, I see that I am in an old room. Wooden floors, flaking paint. The smell of a hundred years. A window shutter rattles like a skeleton outside in the wind.*

*There is a figure lying at my feet, bent in unnatural sleep. A hand clutches a blackened rose.*

*"Caroline?" I whisper, praying for a miracle that I know will never happen. No answer. No breath from her dead lips nor sight in her empty eyes. "Caroline."*

*I descend to the floor and place her frail head in my lap, caressing her hair slowly. My mind cannot yet comprehend that she is gone. After the blindness of the frenzy, my soul feels empty and bewildered.*

*I stand and take her limp form in my arms. I will take her to the council; I will search among the mages of the world; I will not stop until I have brought life back to my precious Caroline.*

*Then my sire is at the door, with that unending grin upon his lips. I look at him with all the despair that my black heart can muster.*

*He is not moved.*

*"Leave her," he says. "Leave her to rot like a mortal."*

*Black petals dance across the worn floor.*

# Chapter 7: CONVERSIONS

*Speak not: whisper not:  
I know all that ye would tell,  
But to speak might break the spell  
Which must bend the Invincible,  
The stern of thought;  
He yet defies the deepest power of Hell.*

*– Percy Bysshe Shelley,  
Prometheus Unbound*



any players will come to *GURPS* with characters already designed for the Storyteller system. To make things easier, this chapter contains notes for converting characters from one system to the other. Characters converted with these rules will have the same abilities, and more important, they will “feel” and play like their *Vampire* counterparts.

Fortunately, most of the abilities, attributes and skills for *Vampire* characters are direct analogues to those found in the *Basic Set*. For example, the Social Attribute *Charisma* converts almost directly to the *GURPS* advantage *Charisma* (see p. 174). Others, however, are more complex. The Social Attribute *Manipulation* converts as a combination of the *Fast-Talk* and *Diplomacy* skills.

*Note:* The GM should *not* allow *GURPS* players to create vampires using the Storyteller system, and then convert them to *GURPS* using these rules. There are too many ways this could be abused. These rules are designed only to convert existing vampires to *GURPS*.

## Ratings

The Storyteller system uses a system of ratings from 1 to 5 to show relative skill or aptitude in an ability. These ratings are shown with dots or filled circles on character sheets. In the conversion notes that follow, these dots are referred to simply as a "rating." For example, a rating of 4 in the Acting talent is equal to an Acting skill of 16.

Please note that this conversion system does not allow as much variation among characters as the normal *GURPS* rules. Players are encouraged to customize characters to their liking upon conversion, using the rules in Chapter 2.

## Required Advantages and Disadvantages



As noted in Chapter 2, all vampires have certain intrinsic advantages and disadvantages. These should be noted on the character sheet first, before any other conversion is done. For simplicity, the notation can be made as "Vampire Package - 55 points."

Otherwise, the breakdown is as follows:

*Advantages:* Unaging (15 points); Blood Healing (25 points); Doesn't Breathe (30 points); and Vampiric Invulnerability (vs. everything but fire, sunlight and the claws and teeth of the undead, causes damage but not death; 100 points)

*Disadvantages:* Secret (Vampire, -20 points); Sundeath (see p. 64, -40 points); Röttschreck: Fear of Sunlight (-10 points); Berserk (-15 points), The Draining (1 Blood Point per day, -10 points); Unhealing (-20 points).

Complete descriptions and game statistics for these advantages and disadvantages are found in Chapter 2.

## Attributes



Attributes are a vampire's basic building blocks. In *GURPS* terms, however, they cover a wide variety of traits, including attributes, skills and advantages.

### Physical Attributes

#### Strength

Strength converts directly to *GURPS* ST. Convert ratings on the following table:

Rating	<i>GURPS</i> ST
•	8
••	10
•••	13
••••	16
•••••	18

#### Dexterity

This Attribute converts directly to *GURPS* DX. Conversion is the same as for Strength.





### **Stamina**

Stamina converts directly to *GURPS* Health. Conversion is the same as for Strength.

## **Social Attributes**

### **Charisma**

This converts to the Charisma advantage. A rating of 2 is equal to a +1 Charisma, with each additional rating equal to an additional +2. A rating of 1 indicates a lack of Charisma, so gives no bonus and no advantage.

### **Manipulation**

In *GURPS* terms, Manipulation is a combination of the Fast-Talk and Diplomacy skills. All converted Kindred will have some level in these skills. Use the *Ratings to Skills Conversion* table below to convert, but if the initial rating is 1 or 2, subtract 2 from the indicated skill level. Otherwise, use the indicated level. The result is the vampire's skill in both Fast-Talk and Diplomacy.

### **Appearance**

This Attribute converts to the appropriate Appearance advantage or disadvantage. A rating of 1 is equal to the Appearance (Unattractive) disadvantage, 2 gives no advantage or disadvantage, 3 is equivalent to Appearance (Attractive), 4 equals Appearance (Handsome or Beautiful) and 5 converts to Appearance (Very Handsome or Very Beautiful).

## **Mental Attributes**

### **Perception**

At first glance Perception appears to be the equivalent of the Alertness advantage, but there is a vampire *talent* called Alertness that more closely matches that advantage. The easiest way to convert Perception into *GURPS* terms is to consider it simply a bonus to the vampire's IQ.

To figure the bonus, subtract 2 from the character's Perception rating and add it to his IQ (or subtract if the result is negative). For example, a Kindred with a rating of 3 in Perception would add +1 to his final IQ score. And a Cainite with a 1 rating in Perception would subtract 1 from his final IQ score.

### **Intelligence**

Intelligence translates directly to *GURPS* IQ. Convert in the same way as Strength.

### **Wits**

This Attribute is difficult to define in *GURPS* terms. The best conversion uses the following stipulations: a rating of 1 means the character has the Gullibility disadvantage. A 2 rating gives no advantage or disadvantage. A rating of 3 gives the Common Sense advantage, while a 4 gives both Common Sense and Intuition. Finally, a rating of 5 gives Common Sense, Intuition, Lightning Calculator *and* a +1 to IQ.



## Abilities



Abilities include all of the vampire's collected experiences, be they untrained Talents, developed Skills or learned Knowledges.

### Rating to Skill Conversion

Most of the Talents, Skills and Knowledges that follow convert straight to *GURPS* skills. To make conversion easier, use the table below to translate to the appropriate skill level for any entry that indicates a direct conversion.

Rating	Skill Level
•	10
••	12
•••	14
••••	16
•••••	18



#### Important Conversion Note

Occasionally, the converted character will end up with a skill level that is lower than he would normally get for ½ point, but higher than his default level for that skill.

This is normally impossible in *GURPS*, but occurs in the Storyteller system because the skill and talents are not based on the attributes, but separate from them. To correct this, simply raise the skill to the value that the character would get for ½ point. Or, if it turns out that the skill level was lower than the *default* for that skill, use the default level instead.

Also note that this may seem very un-*GURPS*-like. However, this system produces more accurate reflections of the original *Vampire* characters than would assigning CP values to ratings, or having ratings based on attributes.

### Talents

#### Acting

This talent translates directly to the Acting skill. Use the *Rating to Skill Conversion* chart above to find the appropriate skill level.

#### Alertness

Alertness converts to the Alertness advantage. Each rating is equal to a +1 Alertness bonus. A vampire with an Alertness rating of 4 would have Alertness at +4.

#### Athletics

The Athletics talent comprises three *GURPS* Skills: Acrobatics, Jumping and Climbing. In addition, Kindred with a high rating in Athletics will have some level of skill in Sports of various types.

Use the Table above to convert the ratings to the appropriate skill level. The vampire will have this level in all three of the skills mentioned above. Plus, for each rating above 1, the character will know a separate Sports skill at DX+1 level. To illustrate, Blackie has an Athletics rating of 3. He thus has a skill level of 14 in Acrobatics, Jumping and Climbing. He also knows two Sports skills at DX+1 skill level.



### **Brawl**

The Brawl talent translates directly to the Brawling skill.

### **Dodge**

In *GURPS*, Dodge is not a separate ability, but is a function of a character's Move minus Encumbrance. However, a vampire with a Dodge rating of 3 or more gains the Combat Reflexes advantage. No other bonus is gained by a high Dodge rating.

### **Empathy**

Despite its title, the Empathy talent does *not* convert directly to the Empathy advantage. A rating of 1 in Empathy gives the vampire a Psychology skill of 12. A rating of 2 gives the Psychology skill and the Detect Lies skill, both at 12. A rating of 3 gives the Empathy advantage, Psychology at 15 and Detect Lies at 16. Ratings of 4 and 5 merely add +2 per rating to the Psychology and Detect Lies skills.

*Example:* A vampire with a rating of 4 in Empathy would have the Empathy advantage, a Psychology skill of 17 and a Detect Lies skill of 18. Note that these skill levels already include the bonuses for the Empathy advantage.

### **Intimidation**

Intimidation converts directly to the *GURPS* skill Intimidation, detailed on p. 65 of this book.

### **Leadership**

Leadership converts to the Leadership skill.

### **Streetwise**

Streetwise translates directly to the Streetwise skill.



### **Subterfuge**

This talent does not convert directly to any specific skill. However, each level adds +1 to the vampire's Acting and Psychology skills. If the character possesses neither of these skills, this talent will give them both skills at the level indicated on the conversion table.

### **Other Talents**

If the Kindred character has listed other talents, they should be converted to the nearest appropriate *GURPS* skill.

## **Skills**

### **Animal Ken**

This skill gives the character the Animal Handling skill, at a level indicated on the table on p. 175. However, at a rating of 3 or more, the character will also have the Animal Empathy advantage. Note that Animal Empathy gives a bonus to all Animal skills, *including* Animal Handling. This bonus should be added after the skill level is found on the table.

### **Drive**

Drive converts to the Driving (Car) skill, unless the character has specified a different vehicle. Use the table on p. 175. Note that most other vehicles will default to Driving (Car) at -4. See p. B68 for more on Driving skill.

### **Etiquette**

Etiquette converts directly to Savoir-Faire. In addition, each level of Etiquette above 1 gives a +1 bonus to Diplomacy skill.

### **Firearms**

This skill translates to any one Guns skill, usually Guns (Pistol). Use the table on p. 175. Note that all Guns skills default to each other at -4, so a vampire with Firearms rating of 4 would have a Guns (Pistol) skill of 16 and all other Guns skills at 12.

### **Melee**

Since *GURPS* uses a separate skill for each melee weapon, this conversion forces a character to specialize. The character can pick one melee weapon skill (often Knife) and will have a skill level based on the *Rating to Skill* table on p. 175. In addition, the vampire gains a bonus to his default for other weapons equal to his rating in the Melee skill. For example, Gorwin has a Melee rating of 4. He translates that to a Knife skill of 16. He also can use a broadsword skill at default+4, which is DX-1 (since Broadsword skill defaults to DX-5). Or he could use a flail at DX-2, and so on.

### **Music**

This skill translates to any Musical Instrument skill or Singing. Each level of rating *adds* an additional skill, up to 5. And each skill will have a level indicated by the conver-

sion chart. In addition, every level after rating 2 gives a +1 to the Musical Ability advantage. For example, a rating of 1 would give either Singing skill, or any one Musical Instrument, at level 10. A 2 rating would give two instruments (or one instrument and Singing) at skill level 12. A rating of 3 gives three instruments or two instruments and Singing at skill level 14, *plus* Musical Ability +1 and the skill bonus it confers. And so on.

### **Repair**

This skill converts to the Mechanic skill. The character must choose a specialization, but most Mechanic specializations default to each other at -4, so someone with a rating of 2 could have a Mechanic (Automobiles) skill of 12 and a default skill in Mechanic (Ships) of 8.

### **Security**

This skill translates to both Lockpicking and Electronic Operations (Security Systems) skills per the Conversion chart. Convert to Lockpicking normally; however, subtract 2 from the *rating* when converting to the Electronics Operations skill level (i.e., any rating under 3 gives no skill level in Electronics Operations (Security Systems), 3 gives skill level 10, 4 level 12, etc.).

### **Stealth**

Stealth converts directly to *GURPS* Stealth.

### **Survival**

Survival consists of both the Survival skill and the Tracking skill. Use the table on p. 175 to find the level in *both* skills.

### **Other Skills**

Most other skills will convert directly to their *GURPS* equivalents.

## **Knowledges**

### **Bureaucracy**

This knowledge converts directly to the Administration skill.

### **Computer**

Computer knowledge converts to both Computer Operation and Computer Programming, per the table on p. 175. Figure the Computer Operation skill normally; however, subtract 2 from the character's Computer rating before figuring the skill level in Computer Programming.

### **Finance**

Finance knowledge converts to *both* Economics and Merchant skills. Figure Economics skill normally; however, subtract 1 from the character's rating before figuring Merchant skill. For example, a vampire with a 2 rating in Finance would end up with an Economics skill of 12 and a Merchant skill of 10, and someone with a rating of 1 would only have the Economics skill at 10.





### **Investigation**

Investigation translates directly to both Criminology and Research skills at normal levels per the table on p. 175.

### **Law**

This knowledge converts directly to the Law skill.

### **Linguistics**

Linguistics does not translate directly to the *GURPS* skill Linguistics. Instead, the character takes one language at IQ level for each rating in Linguistics. However, vampires with a Linguistics rating of 3 or more gain the Linguistics skill as indicated by the conversion table, figured at the vampire's rating-2. For example, someone with a Linguistics rating of 5 would know 5 languages at IQ level and have the Linguistics skill at level 14.

### **Medicine**

The knowledge of Medicine includes the four skills First Aid, Diagnosis, Physician and Surgery. A character with a Medicine rating of 1 would have First Aid and Diagnosis skills of 10. A rating of 2 gives First Aid at 12, Diagnosis at 12 and Physician at 10. A 3 gives First Aid and Diagnosis at 14, Physician at 12 and Surgery at 10. A rating of 4 converts to First Aid and Diagnosis at 16, Physician at 14 and Surgery at 12. Finally, a Medicine rating of 5 converts to First Aid and Diagnosis at 18, Physician at 16 and Surgery at 14.

### **Occult**

The Occult knowledge translates to the Occultism skill.

### **Politics**

This knowledge converts directly to the Politics skill.

### **Science**

Science knowledge converts directly to the following skills: Astronomy, Botany, Chemistry, Ecology, Geology, Physics, Physiology or Zoology. The character can choose one skill per level of rating in Science and convert to the appropriate skill level using the table on p. 175. After the conversion, the player can alter his skill levels in each skill by up to +/- 4, but each alteration must have an opposite effect on another skill (i.e., if you ended up with Botany and Chemistry at level 12 each, you could change Botany to 14, and Chemistry would go down to 10).

### **Other Knowledges**

Additional knowledges should be converted to the nearest appropriate skill.

## **Disciplines**



The disciplines are described fully in *GURPS* terms in Chapter 4. For the most part, each discipline has a power level, indicating how many powers under that discipline are known, or in the cases of Celerity, Fortitude and Potence, the level of advantage gained by that power.

Therefore, to convert a *Vampire* character, simply assign a power level in that discipline based on his rating in that discipline. Then assign powers under each discipline, based on that rating. All skills should be at IQ level. Two of the disciplines' names have been changed from the original to avoid conflict with existing *GURPS* psionic powers. Telep-

athy becomes Unveil the Shrouded Mind, and Psychic Projection is now called Abandon Earthly Form.

**Example:** A vampire with IQ 13 and a rating of 4 in the Auspex discipline would have Auspex (Power 4), and the powers Heightened Senses, Aura Perception, The Spirit's Touch and Unveil the Shrouded Mind, all at skill 13. Of course, the player may use points to raise these levels after conversion, provided they adhere to the rules in Chapter 4.

### *Thaumaturgy*

To convert a character with Thaumaturgy, give him spells at IQ level for each of his powers. The spells are listed in Chapter 4. For example, a *Vampire* character with a rating of 3 in Thaumaturgy, would have A Taste for Blood, Blood Rage and Blood of Potency, all at IQ level. If the PC also had paths and rituals, they convert to spells as well. See pp. 109-113 for more about Thaumaturgy.

## Backgrounds

**B**ackgrounds generally describe a vampire's position in the world. In *GURPS* terms, this is defined mostly by the social advantages Status, Allies, Reputation, Wealth, Contacts, etc. All converted Kindred will have at least one of these background traits.

### *Allies*

Each rating in Allies give the vampire one *GURPS* Ally, described on p. B23. A rating of 1 or 2 gives one or two Allies created with between 76 and 100 points. A rating of 3 gives two Allies between 76 and 100 points and one between 101 and 150. A rating of 4 gives three Allies between 76 and 100 points and one between 151 and 200, and a 5 rating gives four Allies between 76 and 100 points and one over 200 points. All the Allies appear Fairly Often (on a roll of 9 or less).

### *Contacts*

The Contacts background converts to the *GURPS* advantage *Contacts*, described on p. 58 of this book. Each rating level gives the character one Major Contact. A Major Contact in *GURPS* terms has a base cost of 10 points (effective skill 15), is available quite often (12 or less), and is usually reliable. Note that each rating level then costs 40 points in *GURPS* terms.

### *Fame*

Fame converts to the Reputation advantage, described on p. B17. A rating of 1 is equal to a Reputation giving a +2 reaction among a small class of people, recognized sometimes (10 or less). This is worth 1 point. A rating of 2 gives a +2 reaction among a large class of people, recognized sometimes (10 or less), worth 2 points. A rating of 3 gives a +3 reaction among a large class of people, recognized all the time, worth 7 points. A rating of 4 gives a +3 reaction among everybody, all the time, worth 15 points. Finally, a 5 rating gives a +4 among everybody, all the time, worth 20 points.





### Generation

Generation is described fully in the *Characters* chapter, starting on p. 59. A vampire's generation determines his Blood Pool and how many Blood Points can be spent at one time.

The Kindred's rating determines his Generation. A rating of 1 is 12th generation; 2 is 11th; 3 is 10th; 4 is 9th, and 5 is 8th. In general, PCs cannot start the game higher than 8th generation (though they can kill older vampires to increase their power).

### Herd

Herd is a special form of the Ally Group advantage, described on p. 58 of this book. A rating of 1 indicates 2-5 individuals on which the vampire can feed without fear (5-point Ally Group advantage). A Herd rating of 2 or 3 converts to 6-20 people (10 points), and a 4 or 5 indicates 20-100 vessels (worth 15 points).

### Influence

Influence is connected to *GURPS* Social Status advantage. This is his *mortal* Status, i.e., his standing among non-Kindred. Vampires have a separate Status for their standing within their community (see below).

Each rating of influence is equal to a level of Social Status, starting at level 1. For example, a vampire with a rating of 3 in Influence would be Social Status 3, and would be equivalent to the Mayor of a large city or a corporate executive.

### Mentor

A Mentor is a Patron, usually one person, but not always. The rating of the Mentor determines how powerful a Patron he is. A rating of 1 indicates an individual vampire created with between 350 and 450 points. A rating of 2 indicates a fairly powerful Kindred, worth about 500 points. A rating of 3 indicates a quite powerful and influential Kindred, created with between 550 and 650 points. A 4 rating indicates a very powerful vampire, probably the Prince of a city, between 650 and 750 points. And a 5 rating means the Patron vampire is a Justicar and may be worth 800 or 1,000 points, or more. All Mentors appear fairly often (a roll of 9 or less).

### Resources

Resources is comparable to the Wealth advantage. A rating of 1 indicates no advantage – average starting wealth for the campaign. A rating of 2 is equal to the Wealth (Comfortable) advantage, while 3 indicates Wealth (Wealthy). A 4 rating converts to Wealth (Very Wealthy), and a rating of 5 means the vampire is Filthy Rich.

### Retainers

The Retainers resource is a special case. Their conversion depends on the nature of the Retainer. Most will simply be employees or Blood Bonded NPCs. They are not worth any points, nor do they cost any. They are simply aspects of the vampire's character.

Some Retainers may be Allies, depending on how powerful they are and if they are loyal or not. If they are worth more than 75 points and are mostly or completely loyal, they probably fall under this category. Convert them as for Allies above.

### Status

Not to be confused with *Influence* above, Status indicates a vampire's standing within the community of Kindred. The conversion is the same, but applies to Kindred Status, rather than Mortal Status. See the *Characters* chapter for more information about Kindred and Mortal Status.

### Virtues

A vampire's virtuousness is his safeguard against actions that come naturally to vampires, but are inimical to the character at the time, like Frenzy and Rötschreck. All Virtues are facets of the Strong Will advantage, as detailed on p. 56.

Each rating in a Virtue gives a +1 to that particular area of Strong Will. Normal Strong Will is determined by the vampire's Willpower rating, discussed below. For example, suppose Carlena has Conscience 3, Self-Control 1 and Courage 4. In *GURPS Vampire*, she'd list her Strong Will as follows:

Strong Will:  
 Normal: +0  
 Conscience: +3  
 Self-Control: +1  
 Courage: +4



## Humanity

Using Humanity in *GURPS* is described in detail on p. 75. The conversion is as follows. A rating of 1 is equal to a *GURPS* Humanity level of 3. Each additional rating adds 2 to the Humanity level – a rating of 2 equals 5, 3 equals 7, 4 is 9, and so on. The maximum rating of 10 is equal to a Humanity level of 20, which means that vampire can make any Will Roll to avoid Frenzy at up to level 20 (provided his Will is that high).

## Willpower

Willpower translates to basic Strong Will or Weak Will in *GURPS*. This book provides special rules for Will Rolls, on p. 75, but for the sake of conversion, Willpower relates directly to the Normal Strong or Weak Will advantage and disadvantage – it has no effect on the other aspects of Strong Will described on p. 56. Use the following table for conversion:

Rating	Converts To
•	Weak Will -4
••	Weak Will -3
•••	Weak Will -2
••••	Weak Will -1
•••••	No advantage or disadvantage
••••••	Strong Will +1
•••••••	Strong Will +2
••••••••	Strong Will +3
•••••••••	Strong Will +4
••••••••••	Strong Will +5

## Blood Pool

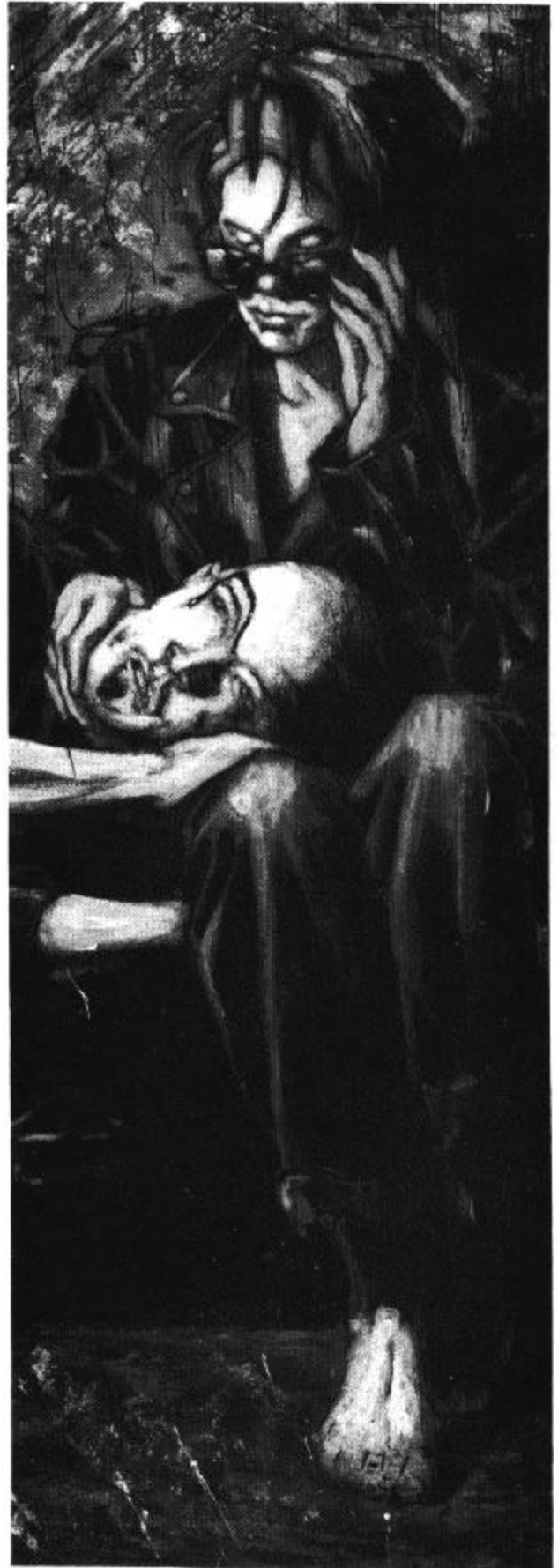
As specified on p. 77, a vampire's Blood Pool is directly related to his Generation. Kindred without the Generation advantage start out as 13th generation, and will have Blood Points equal to their HT. Earlier Generations will have more (see p. 59).

The Blood Points of a vampire translate directly across to the Blood Points described in the *Permutations* chapter. There is no conversion necessary. Note that this is for the amount of Blood Points in the Blood Pool only. The various ways that Blood Points can be spent, and the mechanics of such, are slightly different in *GURPS Vampire*, and are discussed on p. 77.

## Health

Most converted Kindred will be completely healthy, so Health Levels will not play a part in the conversion process. However, for completeness, conversion notes are given here.

Bruised vampires are at HT-2. Injured are at HT-6, and Wounded are at -8. Mauled Kindred are at HT-12, while Crippled are at -16. Incapacitated vampires are at always at -1×HT, and must make HT rolls to remain conscious. See *Injury and Death*, p. 80, for more.



# Personality Archetypes



**T**he easiest way to convert these to *GURPS* is to assign each one some recommended advantages and disadvantages. Remember that these are simply recommendations. Players converting their characters may ignore any or all of these suggestions.

## **Architect**

*Advantages:* Reputation, Kindred Status.

*Disadvantages:* Sense of Duty (any), Code of Honor.

## **Bon Vivant**

*Advantages:* Reputation (among the party crowd).

*Disadvantages:* Compulsive Carousing, Lecherousness, Weak Will.

## **Bravo**

*Advantages:* High ST and DX, Charisma.

*Disadvantages:* Bully, Sadism, Intolerance.

## **Caregiver**

*Advantages:* Empathy, Reputation.

*Disadvantages:* Sense of Duty.

## **Child**

*Advantages:* Charisma.

*Disadvantages:* Gullibility, Impulsive, Weak Will.

## **Conformist**

*Advantages:* None.

*Disadvantages:* Weak Will, Gullibility.

## **Conniver**

*Advantages:* Charisma.

*Disadvantages:* Greed, Compulsive Behavior (Swindling).

## **Curmudgeon**

*Advantages:* Unfazeable.

*Disadvantages:* Odious Personal Habit (Sarcasm), Bad Temper.

## **Deviant**

*Advantages:* None.

*Disadvantages:* Reputation, Secret, Odious Personal Habit.

## **Director**

*Advantages:* Charisma, Status (both Mortal and Kindred).

*Disadvantages:* Overconfidence, Stubbornness, Megalomania.

## **Fanatic**

*Advantages:* Strong Will, Charisma.

*Disadvantages:* Fanaticism, Stubbornness.

### **Gallant**

*Advantages:* Charisma, Reputation.

*Disadvantages:* Lecherousness, Compulsive Carousing.

### **Jester**

*Advantages:* Charisma.

*Disadvantages:* Compulsive Behavior (telling jokes).

### **Judge**

*Advantages:* Common Sense, Intuition.

*Disadvantages:* Overconfidence.

### **Loner**

*Advantages:* None.

*Disadvantages:* Shyness.

### **Martyr**

*Advantages:* Reputation (possibly).

*Disadvantages:* Odious Personal Habit (attention seeker), Sense of Duty.

### **Rebel**

*Advantages:* None.

*Disadvantages:* Stubbornness.

### **Survivalist**

*Advantages:* Strong Will (all types).

*Disadvantages:* Stubbornness, Intolerance.

### **Traditionalist**

*Advantages:* Common Sense.

*Disadvantages:* Stubbornness.

### **Visionary**

*Advantages:* Reputation, Charisma.

*Disadvantages:* Absent-Mindedness, Reputation.

## **Converting Clans**

The only conversion required is to make sure that the clan weaknesses are added as disadvantages to the *GURPS* character sheet. Use the following list to make the conversion. Any entry that does not list a specific disadvantage does not need to be noted on the character sheet.

*Brujah:* Frenzy easily. Must start the game with Weak Will: Self-Control -4 and can never raise it beyond +1.

*Gangrel:* Become more animal-like after each frenzy. Every frenzy causes an animal feature to appear. Every five features acquired lower the PC's Appearance by one level.

*Malkavian:* Must take at least a -10-point Delusion.

*Nosferatu:* Must take the Appearance (Ugly) disadvantage.

*Toreador:* Must take a special -10-point form of the Absent-Mindedness disadvantage.

*Tremere:* Must drink the blood of the seven elders of the clan. This means they are close to being Blood Bonded to seven Kindred.

*Ventrue:* Must take a -10-point Vow to only drink blood from a certain class of vessel: animals, young men, virgins, etc.





# Sample Conversions

Following are two characters built with the Storyteller system and then converted to *GURPS*.

## Vampire Character: Vax

Name: Vax	Nature: Bon Vivant	Generation: 13th	Dodge: **	Melee: -	Law: -
Player:	Demeanor:	Haven:	Empathy: **	Music: 1	Linguistics: -
Chronicle:	Clan: Gangrel	Concept:	Intimidation: •	Repair: -	Medicine: •
<b>Attributes</b>			Leadership: -	Security: -	Occult: •
<i>Physical</i>			Streetwise: -	Stealth: **	Politics: •
Strength: ***	<i>Social</i>	<i>Mental</i>	Subterfuge: -	Survival: ***	Science: **
Dexterity: ****	Charisma: ***	Perception: ***	<b>Advantages</b>		
Stamina: ***	Manipulation: •	Intelligence: **	<i>Disciplines</i>	<i>Backgrounds</i>	<i>Virtues</i>
<b>Abilities</b>			Animalism: •	Allies: ***	Conscience: ***
<i>Talents</i>			Fortitude: •	Herd: **	Self-Control: ****
Acting: -	<i>Skills</i>	<i>Knowledges</i>	Protean: **	Mentor: **	Courage: ***
Alertness: ***	Animal Ken: ***	Bureaucracy: -	<b>Humanity: *****</b>		
Athletics: ***	Drive: •	Computer: -	<b>Willpower: *****</b>		
Brawl: **	Etiquette: -	Finance: -	<b>Blood Pool: *****</b>		
	Firearms: -	Investigation: -			

## Vax: Converted to GURPS

13th-generation Gangrel  
**ST:** 13 [30]    **IQ:** 11 [10]    **Speed:** 7.25  
**DX:** 16 [80]    **HT:** 13 [30]    **Move:** 7  
**Dodge:** 7    **Parry:** 7 (Brawling)  
**Damage:** Thrust 1d, Swing 2d-1  
**Blood Pool:** 13    **Humanity:** 13  
 No armor or encumbrance

**Point Total:** 383

### Advantages

Alertness +4 [20]  
 Allies (two at 76-100 points, 9 or less; one at 101-150 points, 9 or less) [20]  
 Herd (4 members) [5]  
 Animal Empathy [5]  
 Common Sense [10]  
 Charisma +3 [15]  
 Patron (500-point vampire, 9 or less) [15]  
 Strong Will:  
   Normal: +2 [2]  
   Conscience: +3 [3]  
   Self-Control: +4 [4]  
   Courage: +3 [3]  
 Vampire Package [55]

### Disciplines

Animalism (Power 1) [2]  
   Sweet Whispers-11 [4]  
 Fortitude (Power 1) [4]  
 Protean (Power 2) [4]  
   Gleam of Red Eyes-11 [4]  
   Wolf Claws-11 [4]

### Skills

Acrobatics-14 [1]; Animal Handling-19 [12]; Brawling-15 [½]; Climbing-14 [½]; Detect Lies-12 [6]; Diagnosis-10 [2]; Diplomacy-8 [½]; Driving (Car)-14 [½]; Fast-Talk-9 [½]; First Aid-10 [½]; Geology-12 [6]; Intimidation-10 [1]; Jumping-15 [½]; Musical Instrument (Guitar)-10 [2]; Occultism-10 [1]; Physics-12 [6]; Politics-10 [1]; Psychology-12 [6]; Stealth-14 [½]; Survival (Urban)-14 [8]; Tracking-14 [8]



## Vampire Character: Carlena

Name: Carlena    Nature: Architect    Generation: 13th  
 Player:            Demeanor:            Haven:  
 Chronicle:        Clan: Toreador        Concept:

### Attributes

<i>Physical</i>	<i>Social</i>	<i>Mental</i>
Strength: **	Charisma: ***	Perception: ***
Dexterity: **	Manipulation: ****	Intelligence: ***
Stamina: **	Appearance: ***	Wits: **

### Abilities

<i>Talents</i>	<i>Skills</i>	<i>Knowledges</i>
Acting: ***	Animal Ken: -	Bureaucracy: -
Alertness: **	Drive: •	Computer: -
Athletics: -	Etiquette: **	Finance: •
Brawl: -	Firearms: **	Investigation: -
Dodge: •	Melee: -	Law: -
Empathy: -	Music: ***	Linguistics: **
Intimidation: -	Repair: -	Medicine: -
Leadership: •	Security: -	Occult: •
Streetwise: -	Stealth: •	Politics: **
Subterfuge: ***	Survival: -	Science: -

### Advantages

<i>Disciplines</i>	<i>Backgrounds</i>	<i>Virtues</i>
Auspex: **	Resources: ***	Conscience: ****
Celerity: •	Retainers: **	Self-Control: ***
Presence: •		Courage: ***

Humanity: \*\*\*\*\*  
 Willpower: \*\*\*\*\*  
 Blood Pool: \*\*\*\*\*



## Carlena: Converted to GURPS

13th-generation Toreador

ST: 10 [0]    IQ: 14 [45]    Speed: 5  
 DX: 10 [0]    HT: 10 [0]    Move: 5

Dodge: 5

Damage: Thrust 1d-2, Swing 1d

Blood Pool: 10    Humanity: 13

No armor or encumbrance

Point Total: 261

### Advantages

Alertness +2 [10]  
 Appearance (Attractive) [5]  
 Charisma +3 [15]  
 Musical Ability +1 [1]  
 Strong Will:  
 Normal: -  
 Conscience: +4 [4]  
 Self-Control: +3 [3]  
 Courage: +3 [3]  
 Vampire Package [55]  
 Wealth (Wealthy) [20]



### Disadvantages

Absentmindedness (Artistic Distraction) [-10]

### Disciplines

Auspex (Power 2) [4]  
 Heightened Senses-14 [4]  
 Aura Perception-14 [4]  
 Celerity (Power 1) [4]  
 Presence (Power 1) [4]  
 Awe-14 [4]

### Skills

Acting-17 [8]; Diplomacy-18 [12]; Driving (Car)-10 [2];  
 Economics-11 [½]; Fast-Talk-16 [6]; Guns (Pistol)-12 [1];  
 Leadership-15 [1/2]; Musical Instrument (Flute)-15 [4];  
 Musical Instrument (Violin)-15 [4]; Occultism-12 [½]; Pol-  
 itics-12 [½]; Psychology-14 [4]; Savoir-Faire-14 [1]; Sing-  
 ing-15 [16]; Stealth-10 [2]

### Languages

English-14 [native tongue]; Japanese-14 [2]; Spanish-14 [2].

## Controlling Point Differences

As can be easily seen, the two sample characters vary greatly in point totals. But both of them are starting *Vampire* characters. Such is the nature of rules conversions. This system tries to reproduce the vampire in *GURPS* terms as closely as possible to the original. Since certain things cost more in *GURPS* than in the Storyteller system (and some things cost less), there will always be some fluctuation in point levels.

The GM can do a number of things to control this. First, a point cap can be applied to the campaign – for example 300 points. Vampires are converted normally, but then must be reduced to a maximum of 300 points before play begins.

## Campaign Conversions

Other than converting the characters, little conversion is necessary to change a Storyteller chronicle to a *GURPS* campaign. There is no set formula for *GURPS* campaigns, so the dramatic feel of most Storyteller chronicles works fine with this system. However, converting an existing campaign in *GURPS* that is not set in the world of *Vampire* is a little harder.

There are a couple of ways to bring this about. The most important step is for the GM to decide how vampires fit into his campaign. Are they as prominent and powerful as shown in this book? Or is their influence quiet and subdued? Do some mortals know of the Cainites' existence? Or is the Masquerade unblemished? Following are two ideas for easy campaign conversion.

### The Prelude

One way to convert a campaign is to make the whole thing, prior to the conversion, the Prelude (see p. 89). This way, certain mysterious events can resolve themselves as the PCs are taken one-by-one into the Kindred world.

Perhaps the arch-rival that the characters have been battling for years is actually a vampire. Or the kindly patron who makes sure the party is well-equipped turns out to be an elder who wants the PCs as part of his illicit brood. Any number of plot elements can "change" to become part of the *Vampire* world.

Ideally, the GM will allow each player to experience the foreboding as his character is stalked or courted by his

Any converted characters that come out under 300 are allowed to bring themselves up to the point cap.

Alternately, GMs could simply allow all characters to raise themselves to the level of the highest-point vampire. This evens out all the PCs, and it creates no hard feelings among the players, as no one is being asked to reduce his character's statistics.

Finally, the GM can simply allow the players to play their Kindred as they were converted, regardless of point disparity. Point balance can be underemphasized in the campaign, while roleplaying and problem-solving are featured. This takes a dedicated Game Master and mature roleplayers.

eventual sire. Then the dramatic rush as the PC experiences the Embrace, and the neonate's life is changed forever.

As the party re-forms – now as Kindred – new goals and challenges will face them. They are pulled in a myriad of directions, from their unquenchable hunger for blood to the whims of the prince. Nothing for them will ever be the same.

### Hunters and Hunted

This conversion works well with campaigns that are already dark and mysterious. The GM allows the PCs to become vampire hunters, picking up rumors and legends of undead lords and their secret society. The investigators' pursuit leads them down darker and more sinister paths, peeling back the layers of the Masquerade. Soon they will know too much.

At this point the GM has two choices. He can have the Kindred NPCs in the campaign discover the party's prying and attempt to put an end to it. The investigators will have to use every means available to keep from being killed.

Otherwise, the party can find a sympathetic ear among the Cainites – someone who will help them and keep them from being slain by other Kindred. Perhaps the only way to protect the characters is to bring them into the vampire's world permanently – to make them that which they are pursuing. They still may be hunted, but at least they have supernatural powers with which to protect themselves. And thus, they have penetrated this secret society in the most effective way possible . . . by joining it.



# LEXICON



here exists among the Kindred a distinct patois, drawing on many tongues and giving new shades of meaning to certain mortal words. One can often tell what generation a vampire is by listening to the

parlance that he employs. There is a sharp distinction between the words used by the anarchs and those employed by elders. Using the wrong word in the wrong circumstances is often considered a serious breach of etiquette.

## Common Parlance



These are the terms that are most commonly used among the Kindred.

**Anarch:** A rebel among the Kindred, one with no respect for the Elders. Most fledglings are automatically assumed to be anarchs by the Elders, and are despised as products of the 20th century.

**Barrens, The:** The areas of a city that are devoid of life – graveyards, abandoned buildings and parks.

**Becoming, The:** The moment one becomes a vampire; the metamorphosis from mortal to Kindred. Also called The Change.

**Book of Nod, The:** The “sacred” book of the Kindred, tracing the race’s origins and early history. It has never been published in its entirety, although fragments are known to exist in various languages. Some scholarly Kindred fear it was destroyed in the Roman razing of Carthage.



**Beast, The:** The drives and urges which prompt a vampire to become entirely a monster, forsaking all Humanity.

**Blood:** The vampire’s heritage. That which makes a vampire a vampire, or simply the actual blood of the vampire.

**Blood Kindred:** The relationship between vampires of the same lineage and clan. The idea is much the same among mortals; only the means of transmission are different.

**Blood Oath:** The most potent bond which can exist between vampires; the receiving of blood in an acknowledgement of mastery. This grants a mystical power over the one who is bound.

**Brood:** A group of vampires gathered around a leader (usually their sire). A brood may in time become a clan.

**Caitiff:** A vampire with no clan; frequently used in a derogatory fashion. To be clanless is not a virtue among the Kindred.

**Camarilla, The:** A global sect of vampires in which all Kindred may hold membership. Its rule is far from absolute, and it serves as a debating chamber more than a government.

**Childe:** A derogatory term for a young, inexperienced, or foolish vampire. The plural form is Childer.

**Clan:** A group of vampires who share certain mystic and physical characteristics.

**Diablerie:** The cannibalistic behavior common among Kindred, involving the consumption of the blood of another vampire.

**Domain:** The fiefdom claimed by a vampire, most often a prince. Invariably a city.

**Elder:** A vampire who is 300 years of age or older. Elders consider themselves the most powerful Kindred, and usually engage in their own Jihad.

**Elysium:** The name given for the places where the elders meet and gather, commonly operas, theaters or other public places of high culture.

**Embrace, The:** The act of transforming a mortal into a vampire by draining the mortal’s blood and replacing it with a small amount of the vampire’s own blood.


**Fledgling:** A young, newly created vampire.

**Generation:** The number of steps between a vampire and the mythical Caine. Caine’s Get were the second generation, their brood the third, and so on.



- Gehenna:** The end of the Third Cycle; the impending Armageddon when the Antediluvians shall awaken and devour all vampires.
- Ghoul:** A servant created by allowing a mortal to drink Kindred blood without the draining that would give rise to a progeny.
- Haven:** The home of a vampire or the place where it sleeps during the day.
- Hunger, The:** As with mortals and other animals, the drive to feed. For vampires, though, it is much more intense, and takes the place of every other drive, urge and pleasure.
- Inconnu:** A sect of vampires, mostly Methuselahs, who have removed themselves from both mortal and Kindred affairs. They state that they have nothing to do with the Jyhad.
- Jyhad, The:** The secret war being waged between the few surviving vampires of the third generation, using younger vampires as pawns. Also used to describe any sort of conflict or warfare between vampires.
- Kindred:** A vampire. Many Elders consider even this term to be vulgar, and prefer to use a more poetic word such as Cainite.
- Kiss:** To take the blood of a mortal, or the act of taking blood in general.
- Lupine:** A werewolf, the mortal enemy of the vampires.
- Lush:** A vampire who habitually feeds upon prey who are under the influence of drink or drugs, in order to experience the sensations thereof.
- Life, The:** A euphemistic term for mortal blood taken as sustenance. Many Kindred regard the term as affected and prissy.
- Man, The:** The element of Humanity which remains in a vampire, and which strives against the base urgings of the Beast.
- Masquerade, The:** The effort begun after the end of the great wars to hide Kindred society from the mortal world. A policy reaffirmed after the time of the Inquisition.
- Prince:** A vampire who has established a claim to rulership over a city, and is able to support that claim nil disputandum. A prince often has a brood to aid him. The feminine form is still prince.
- Riddle, The:** The essential dilemma of a vampire's existence – to prevent the occurrence of greater atrocities, one must commit evil deeds of a lesser nature. The proverb is: monsters we are lest monsters we become.
- Rogue:** A vampire who feeds upon other vampires, either out of need or perversion.
- Sabbat, The:** A sect of vampires controlling much of eastern North America. They are violent and bestial, reveling in needless cruelty.
- Sect:** General name for one of the three primary groups among the Kindred – the Camarilla, Sabbat or Inconnu.
- Sire:** The parent-creator of a vampire, used both as the female and male form.
- Vessel:** A potential or past source of blood, typically a human.

## Old Form

hese are the words used by the Elders and other vampires of antiquity. Though these terms are rarely used by the newly created, they are still the fashionable vernacular among the more sophisticated Kindred. Elders may often be identified simply by the words they use.

- Amaranth:** The act of drinking the Blood of other Kindred.
- Ancilla:** An "adolescent" vampire; one who is no longer a neonate, but is not an elder either.
- Antediluvian:** One of the eldest Kindred, a member of the third generation. A warlord of the Jyhad.
- Archon:** A powerful vampire who wanders from city to city, usually serving a Justicar. Archons are frequently sent to track down Kindred who have fled a city.
- Autarkis:** A vampire who refuses to be a part of Kindred society, and does not recognize the domain of a prince.
- Cainite:** A vampire.
- Canaille:** The mortal masses, especially that element of it which is the most unsavory and lacking in culture (whom the Kindred largely feed upon).
- Cauchemar:** A vampire who feeds only on sleeping victims and prevents their awakening.
- Cunctator:** A vampire who avoids killing by drinking shallowly and taking too little blood to kill the prey.
- Coterie:** A group of Kindred who protect and support one another against all outsiders.
- Consanguineus:** One of the same lineage (usually a younger member).
- Footpad:** One who feeds off the derelicts and the homeless, and who frequently does not have a haven of his own.
- Gentry:** A Kindred who hunts the nightclubs, districts of ill repute, and other places of entertainment where mortals seek to pair off.
- Golconda:** The state of being to which many vampires aspire, in which a balance is found between opposing urges and scruples. The slide into bestiality is halted, and the individual reaches a kind of stasis. Like the mortals' Nirvana, it is often spoken of, but seldom achieved.
- Humanitas:** The degree to which a Kindred still retains some Humanity.
- Kine:** A contemptuous term for mortals, often used in opposition to Kindred. The expression Kindred and Kine means "all the world."
- Leech:** A human who drinks a vampire's blood, yet retains free will. Often he keeps the vampire as a prisoner, or offers great rewards for the blood.
- Lextalionis:** The code of the Kindred, allegedly created by Caine. It suggests biblical justice – an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.
- Lineage:** The bloodline of a vampire, traced by Embrace.
- Methuselah:** An elder who no longer lives among the other Kindred. Many Methuselahs belong to the Inconnu.
- Neonate:** A young, newly created Kindred.
- Osiris:** A vampire who surrounds himself with mortal or



- Ghoul followers in a cult or coven to better obtain sustenance. The practice is less common than it once was.
- Papillon:** The red-light district; the area of the city made up of nightclubs, gambling houses and brothels. The prime hunting ground of the city.
- Progeny:** A collective term for all the vampires created by one sire. Less formal, and less flattering, is Get.
- Praxis:** The right of princes to rule, as well as the rules, laws and customs enforced by a particular prince.
- Primogen:** The leaders in a city or the ruling council of elders. Those who support the prince and make her rule possible.
- Regnant:** One who has a Blood Bond over another Kindred, through giving said Kindred blood three times.
- Retainers:** Humans who serve a vampire master. They are generally either ghouls or mentally dominated by their vampire master. This control is sometimes so complete that the mortals are unable to take any action of their own volition.

**Siren:** A vampire who seduces mortals, but does not kill them and takes only a little blood after putting the mortal into a deep sleep.

**Suspire:** The dream dance during the final stage of the quest for Golconda.

**Third Mortal:** Caine, the progenitor of all vampires, according to the Book of Nod.

**Thrall:** A vampire who is held under a Blood Bond, and thus under the control of another Kindred.

**Vitæ:** Blood.

**Wassail:** The final release and the last frenzy. Wassail occurs when the last vestiges of Humanity are lost and a vampire plunges into madness.


**Whelp:** A contemptuous term for any young vampire; originally used only in reference to one's own progeny.

**Wight:** Human, mortal.

**Witch-hunter:** A human who searches for vampires in order to kill them.

**Whig:** Name for a Cainite who possesses an obsessive interest in mortal fashion and current events.

## Vulgar Argot

 These are the words used most frequently by the anarchs, the younger vampires who disdain and/or ignore the traditions of the elders. They seek to establish their own culture, and inventing their own slang is part of the process. Of course, they will use Old Form when they do not have another word for the same thing, and some elders have even begun to use the vulgar form of a word so as to create a greater effect when they speak.

**Alleycat:** A vampire who does not have a haven of any kind, but instead resides in a different place each night. Also used to refer to those Kindred who feed off the homeless and other street people.

**Banking:** The practice, most widespread among younger Kindred, of taking blood from blood banks. Chilled blood so long removed from the body is less satisfying, but some neonates delight in entering a blood bank and drinking to excess. This is seen by many princes as a breach of the Masquerade.

**Banker:** A Kindred who engages in the practice of Banking.

**Black Hand:** A Sect that involves itself in diabolism.

**Blister:** A vampire who contracts an infectious disease, and subsequently spreads it to each donor from whom he feeds.

**Bloodline:** The vampire's heritage.

**Blood Bond:** A mystic servitude to another vampire as a result of taking the Blood Oath.

**Blood Doll:** A Kindred who is held in Regnant by another. The doll is Blood Bound and no longer free.

**Butterfly:** One who mingles among the high society of mortals, and only feeds upon the wealthy and famous.

**Casanova:** A vampire who delights in seducing mortals but not killing them, and who takes only a little blood, erasing the victim's memory of the event when she is finished. There are rumors that the original Casanova was or is a vampire, but this is not generally believed.

**Change, The:** The moment and the process of becoming a vampire.

**Damned, The:** The immortal, undead race. All the vampires as a whole.

**Donor:** A potential or past source of blood, typically a human.

**Farmer:** A derogatory term for a vampire who keeps animals for the purpose of feeding the Hunger.

**Fief:** A sarcastic term for the domain of a clan or prince.

**Head:** A vampire who feeds upon those under the influence of a drug, so as to feel the effect. The term Head is used with a suitable prefix if the vampire prefers a particular drug.

**Headhunter:** An elder who hunts other Kindred for their blood.

**Lick:** A vampire.

**Rack, The:** The hunting ground represented by nightclubs, bars, and other places of entertainment where mortals seek to dance, drink and pair off.

**Rake:** One who habitually uses the Rack is a Rake in Vulgar argot; Papillon and Gentry are progressively older terms for the same.

**Sandman:** A vampire who feeds only upon sleeping victims.

**Slumming:** The act of feeding from the homeless and derelicts. A vampire who does so exclusively is a Slummer.

**Stalker:** A mortal who hunts the Kindred.

**Tease:** A term sometimes used for a female Casanova.

**Turf:** The city or section of a city that a vampire might try to claim for themselves.

**Vegetary:** A sarcastic term for a vampire who refuses to take the blood of humans, but relies instead on that of animals.



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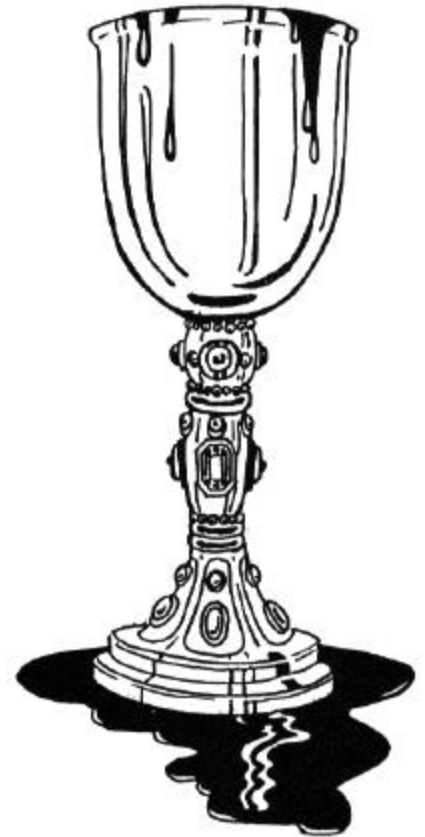
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