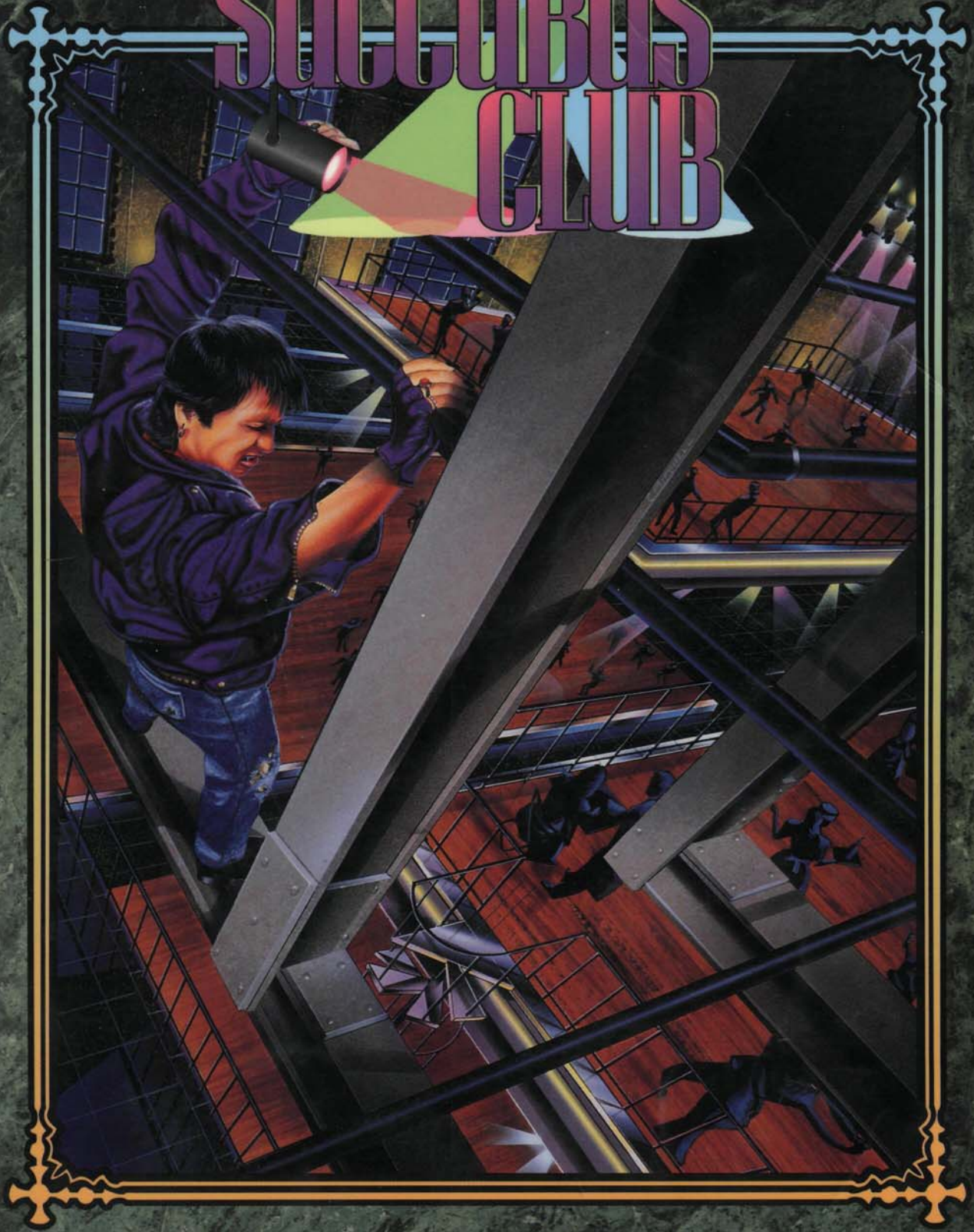
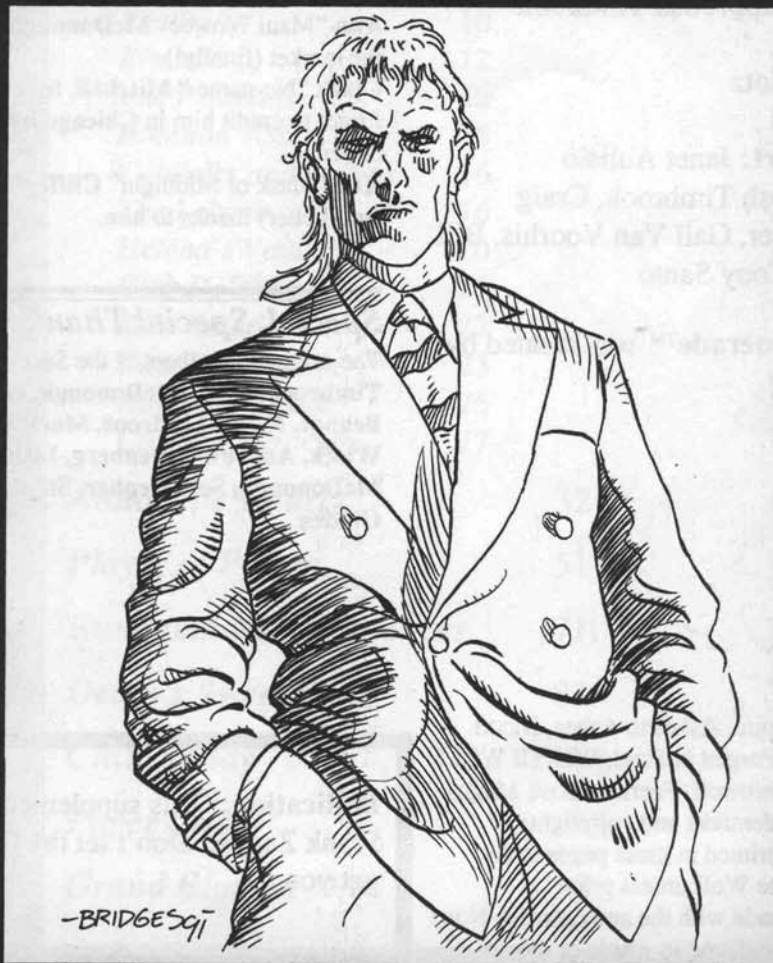


THE SUGGUBUS CLUB



Succubus Club Of Life Devoured



SUCCUBUS CLUB

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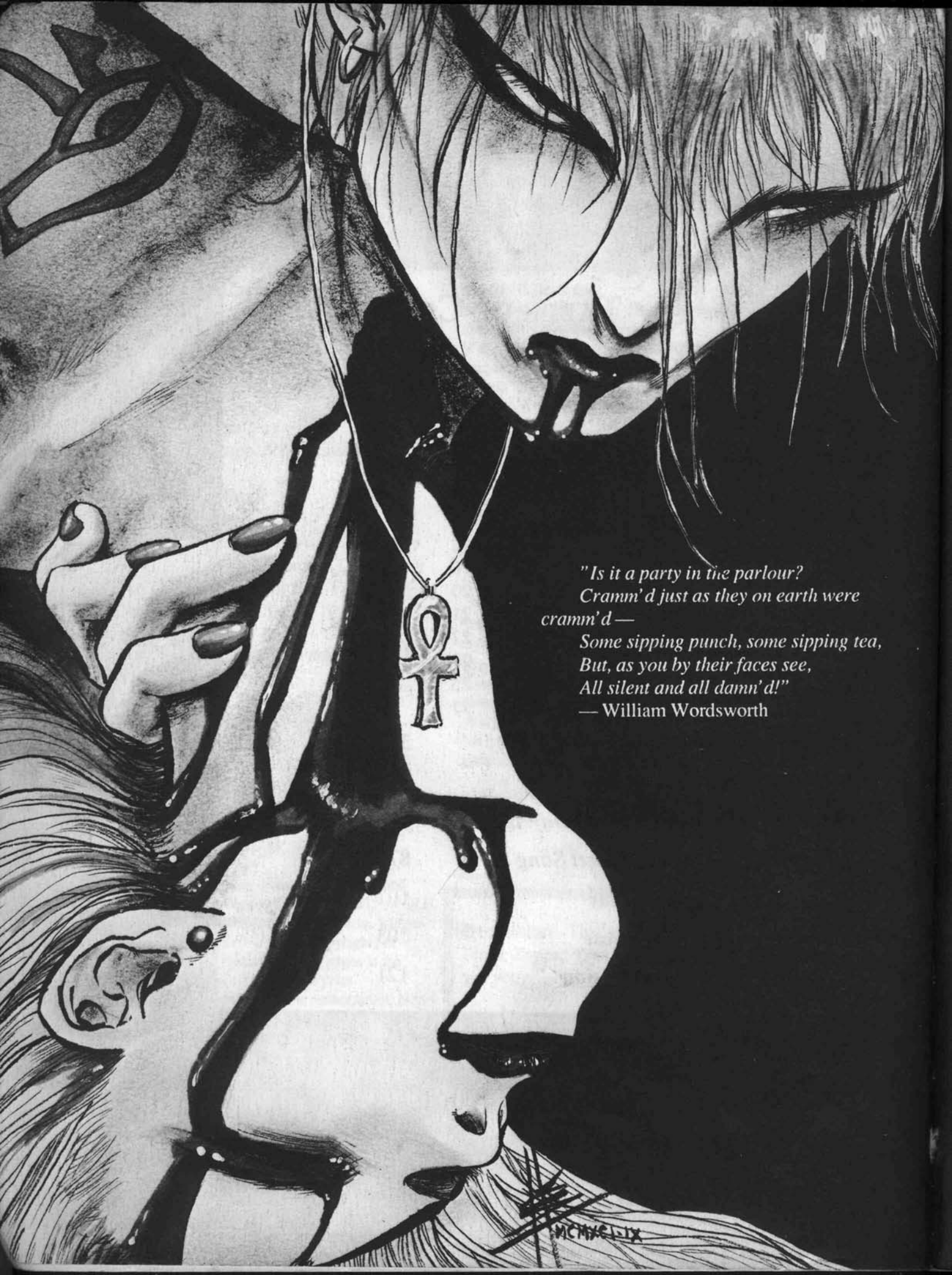
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Dedication: This supplement is dedicated to Frank Zappa. Don't let the Central Scrutinizer get you.



*"Is it a party in the parlour?
Cramm'd just as they on earth were
cramm'd —
Some sipping punch, some sipping tea,
But, as you by their faces see,
All silent and all damn'd!"*
— William Wordsworth

MCMXCVI-IX

The darkness covers every recess, never yielding

The music throbs, filling every silence.

The dancers move with wild abandon, orgasmic in their madness.

The caress of this passion is overpowering, and the smell of blood pervades every empty space, smothering those who thought themselves past life. The energy of these mortals brings an intensity to this place, for they are the source and outlet of its animating spirit. This vitality can be felt by all who venture here, and is given and taken freely.

This is a place of Life.

This is the Succubus Club, the fabled haven of dreams and the forgotten haunt of nightmares. The sinister desires of Kindred and kine alike are revealed here — desire consumed and lust consummated. Anything can be had in this place, the price but a formality.

This is a place of Death.

Succubus is not merely a place. She is a creature, a nightmare spirit who sucks in her victims, attracting them with her beauty and charm and spitting out only monsters like herself. She is beautiful and bewitching, hungry and deadly, the very incarnation of desire. She consumes all she touches.

Do not enter her song, do not join with her in the dark. For she takes those who accept her touch, departs with them and never shall they be mortal again.

But for those who have already departed that life, she can take nothing. The Succubus then becomes a place to feed, not only for the Vitae they so badly require, but for the source of life which they no longer possess. She becomes a vessel which can fill them full of the vitality which their own twisted existence cannot supply itself. She becomes a vessel for all their needs.

This is a place of life — of life devoured.



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Introduction

*"We're nightclubbing
We walk like a ghost
We learn dances
Brand new dances
Like the nuclear bomb"*

Iggy Pop, "Nightclubbing"

In a club cloaked by perpetual night, Kindred from every clan meet amidst the maddening frenzy of the most modern music, feeling their blood pulse with its rhythm, Here, mingling with hordes of the most sophisticated and deranged kine, surrounded by passions almost forgotten by the immortals, the Undead come to life.

As the stories included in this supplement show, the Succubus Club can play host to a wide variety of tales. First and primarily a social setting, characters can meet any kind of Kindred or kine within its confines. Since the club functions as a place where Vampires can let down their guard a little and live the sort of life they most dream of, characters also have the opportunity to meet their counterparts in a more relaxed setting. While the Elysium serves a similar purpose, its very nature forces Kindred to play the Masquerade even harder. In the nightclub, however, they can let their true selves be seen. Additionally, the Succubus Club holds more of an attraction for young Licks of the modern era than does the Elysium, a seeming relic of a bygone era.

Obviously, however, the club provides more than just social opportunities. It gives Kindred the opportunity to show off among the Canaille without fear of being labeled Vampires. They can dance with wild abandon, feed at will and enjoy themselves to the utmost, knowing they do nothing the mortals around them do not. After all, what Blood Doll, who has shared blood with dozens of her own kind, would think it odd a character wanted to drink hers.

Finally, the club itself has gained a deserved reputation for being a place of plots and schemes. The club had its origins in some of the earliest playtesting for *Vampire*. Originally part of a character's Resources, it served as nexus point from which different stories sprang, as well as the site for Vampiric debauches of legendary proportions. While

the club had little physical existence aside from a rough sketch on a cocktail napkin, it became one of the primary and most enjoyable settings for the first *Vampire Chronicle*. Plots and schemes of all kinds first saw light in the dark recess's of the nightclub, and Anarch characters found its confines an especially inviting locale.

For your own chronicle, the characters could come to the club for any of these reasons. They can meet there on a regular basis or be there at the same time purely out of coincidence. They can have come to feed, to scheme or plot, to meet allies or enemies, or just to dance. On top of these rationals for being at the club, Brennon would not object to having other Kindred in his hire, and may offer those characters on his good side the chance to work here.

We strongly suggest that this supplement be used with *Chicago by Night*, but there is no reason you could not move the club to any other city. If you do not have access to *Chicago by Night* or your stories revolve around a different city, just change the names and the characters' statistics to what you desire. None of the included scenarios must be run in Chicago and with just a little work they can be run anywhere from Albuquerque to Walla Walla. The only geographic constant is the Succubus Club itself.

The Succubus Club does not actually exist, of course. If you visited Chicago you would find no mention of it in the travel books and no taxi driver would know how to take you to it. There are clubs much like it in most of the major cities of the world, however. It's very nature makes it a very popular place to be seen at indeed.

If you are not going to be the Storyteller for your troupe, please stop reading now. To read further would severely lessen the challenge and enjoyment you and your fellow-players can derive from this supplement.

SUCCUBUS

Every city has one nightclub where the "in" people go. Usually it remains the place to be only for only a short time before the ever-fickle crowds move on to yet another establishment. For a number of years, however, the Succubus Club in Chicago has avoided this fate. As popular now as when it opened in 1982, the club attracts a wide variety of patrons to its mammoth dance floor and labyrinthine basement concert hall. These patrons in turn attract the ever-hungry Undead.

The ancient brick warehouse looms over State Street like a brooding titan, projecting an image of solidity and stability which belies the madness within. A sense of the Succubus Club's true nature begins with a look at the hordes of people outside, all struggling and battling to be let in. Two hulking bouncers stand guard at the double doors, more on the look out for the unstylish than the underage. Among the people cajoling, threatening and even begging for a chance to get inside are punks, gangstas, Yuppies, Blood Dolls, bikers, executives, college students and middle-aged music lovers. They mill around the front of the club, stand in lines which usually stretch down the block and tie up traffic all along the road. The bouncers maintain a strict yet unwritten entrance policy which stresses style more than anything else. A 17-year-old, properly dressed, has a better chance of getting in than does a successful 30-year-old yuppie in a leisure suit.

The parking lot sorely lacks enough spaces to meet the demand, so cars circling the block on the hunt for a space bog down with the taxis, buses and thru traffic. From 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. on weekends, average speeds rarely exceed 5 mph. While nowhere near as crowded on weeknights, the club still manages to draw on a large regular clientele. When open, the Succubus Club is never empty.

These regulars provide the club with the cash flow it requires to stay operating, while the weekend rush gives it its substantial operating profit. The regulars, primarily Blood Dolls and trendy Yuppies, remain primarily on the club's ground floor. They only venture into the infamous basement labyrinth on those rare occasions when they seek more dangerous thrills.

History

The building which houses the Succubus Club has an odd reputation among city historians. It is notable as the first four-story warehouse in Chicago, each floor serviced by a special pulley-and-crane system in the rear of the building. Constructed just prior to the Civil War, it provided storage for everything from ammunition to wool. Despite its prime downtown location, and its miraculous survival during the Great Fire (for some strange reason an entire company of Chicago's over-worked fire department concentrated its

efforts there), the brick building went through a string of owners. Some died mysteriously and others would sell without reason, taking far less than the property was worth. Workers in the warehouse reported innumerable unnerving experiences and exterminators never could get rid of all the bats.

In the early 1900s, in the era of prohibition, the building passed into the control of one of Chicago's many criminal families, to whom it provided a safe place to keep illicit merchandise and as a hideout from the police. Some historians believe it eventually came under the control of mob boss Al Capone, and rumors abound that this is the located of his fabled vault. Nevertheless, during this period police records show that they never raided the building, nor has any evidence surfaced to show that anyone connected with the building was ever arrested in connection with the illegal liquor trade.

Following the end of Prohibition the warehouse stood empty for a number of years and city records remain unclear as to just who owned it during this time. At one point federal agents were planning to seize it for unpaid taxes, but then a Chicago lawyer thought to be unconnected to it paid off the back taxes. This Ballard, Anderson & Baitman partner made substantial profits on the warehouse during World War II, but sold the building to his law firm in 1950. The law firm has leased out the location ever since.

In the early 1960s, as the surrounding area became filled with commercial enterprises, many industries and warehouses left the area. The owners of many of the old buildings transformed them for new uses, such as storefronts, office space and restaurants. When the owners tried to turn this building into a restaurant named Stonewalls, however, things just did not work out. Whether it was the constant presence of rats or the odd folk who showed up to just sit there, never taking a bite of food, most people found the place too disconcerting to enjoy the fine food.

After several years of declining business, a new businessman leased the space and turned the building into one of the city's first rock 'n' roll clubs. The Atomic Cafe thrived for the next 10 years, bringing to town some of the eras best acts, from the Four Tops to the Doors. It closed its doors in 1973 due to the death of the owner, and Stardust, a dance club, took its place.

Stardust must have been blessed because it took off with the rise of disco. For the latter part of the 70s, Chicago's dancers favored this nightclub over all others. Rumors of assaults, disappearances and even murders taking place on its premises did little to diminish its popularity, and only the final, blessed death of disco drove Stardust to its grave.

The building stayed closed for almost a year this time. During that period a new owner took over and renovated the building from top to bottom. Most of the upper floors were taken out, leaving only the wooden rafters and beams on

which they once rested. Indeed, the dance floor and the main bar remain the only parts of Stardust still recognizable. The new owner, a mysterious Colombian rumored to have connections to the underworld, had the dank basement dramatically refurbished and expanded, added a stage and maze to this lower level, installed an opulent top-floor club and smashed the giant disco ball. On May 23, 1982, amid controversy over the deaths of several basement construction workers, Brennon Thornhill opened the doors to the Succubus Club.

The new nightclub became an immediate hit. All of Chicago's club goers made the converted warehouse a regular part of their nightly agenda. Few expected this popularity to last for more than a year, but for some reason it continues to this day. Brennon has partially remodeled it twice already, not content to allow anyone to grow tired of it.

Part of the reason for the club's continued success, as well as the reason for much of the weird events which occur here, is the ongoing Jyhad between the ancient Methuselahs Helena (now masquerading as the neonate Portia) and Menele. The ground the Succubus Club now occupies has served as Helena's resting place for generations while she lay in torpor. When the city sprang up around it, she and her ghoul lover Prias ensured her continued solitude by manipulating both the builders and later owners of the building constructed over her.

Prias' continued interest in the site, though he tried to keep it inconspicuous, attracted Menele's attention. While the ancient Brujah has never been sure that this really is the haven of his archenemy, he has still repeatedly probed the area to see what reaction he can get. Menele even had one of his most valued minions, the Toreador clan leader Annabelle Triabell, work her way into Brennon's confidence and make the club one of her main feeding grounds.

Layout

The layout of Succubus Club is not terribly unique to nightclubs, which have become more and more exotic and extravagant in recent years. As large as the most famous of clubs in Los Angeles and New York, it has established a reputation as one of the most unique of the "mega clubs." In terms of size alone the Succubus Club rivals anything on the two coasts, but when it comes to atmosphere it has them beat. Extravagant amounts of money were spent in the design of the club and the procurement of the very best in sound equipment, lights and decoration. This is a night club only a drug dealer could afford. Teak wood tables (at least upstairs), marble floors and chandeliers are only some of the decorations.

The Succubus Club is divided into three different areas, which in some ways resemble three completely different nightclubs. There is the punk hangout in the basement,



known as the "Labyrinth" (and is notable for really having a labyrinth), a central club located on the main floor and known as "Reality," and a large balcony above and overlooking it known as "Elysium" (an inside joke, created by Brennon for other Kindred). The Labyrinth has its own outside entrance in the back of the club, and is clearly marked with its own neon sign. A number of signs at the top of the stairs indicate when one enters Elysium, but "Reality" is only an nickname, marked by no signs.

Other areas of note are the VIP Lounge and Brennon's private suite, as well as the Helena's secret haven located in the basement.

Reality

Once inside the club, most visitors immediately notice the state-of-the-art sound system and immense amplifiers. The bass amps remain constantly pointed at the floor, and no matter what the DJs play, the floor pulses with the rhythm. Usually the club features industrial dance music, and DJs have been known to play entire cds from Sisters of Mercy non-stop. Other prominent features include a huge dance floor and a huge rectangular bar featuring a wide variety of brand names.

For most club goers, the ground floor can handle all their needs. The mammoth 10,000 square foot dance floor dominates this level and occupies the entire center of the club. On weekends, despite its great size, it remains constantly packed with couples and occasional solo dancers. The dance floor itself stays remarkably free of trouble, though the bouncers keep a close eye out for punks, whose combat boots have been known to do severe damage to the floor when they begin stomping around (and are thus "encouraged" to patronize the less elegant basement club).

Three hanging dance floors also provide needed space for the large number of people crowding into the club. Accessible via spiral staircases from the ground floor, two of these 20 by 10 foot platforms hang suspended 18 and 21 feet above the earth, where they sway slightly to the dancers' gyrations. Thick, tarnished brass railings surround the platforms and keep most accidents from happening. If bouncers have the slightest suspicion someone jumped off, they will hustle him or her quickly out of the club with orders not to return. Rumors of dancers who fell and were never seen again abound, but no one takes these seriously.

The other "hanging" dance floor is 30 by 20 feet. It overlooks the main dance floor and sits only five feet away from the rear balcony, which it parallels. It is on this dance floor that some of the most popular alternative acts have performed since the Succubus Club opened. The Psychedelic Furs, R.E.M., The Smiths, The Cure, Living

Colour and others all performed here before getting too big for the nightclub scene (however, R.E.M. is known to have done an impromptu mini-concert when Robin Hitchcock was playing here). The "backstage" area consists of the DJ's station where soundmen work during shows and a storage area which serves as a lounge for bands when they play the club, situated next to the freight elevator. When bands play here, bouncers allow no one but band members, their entourage and club workers around the stage. At other times anyone can go up to the dance floor, and it is usually packed.

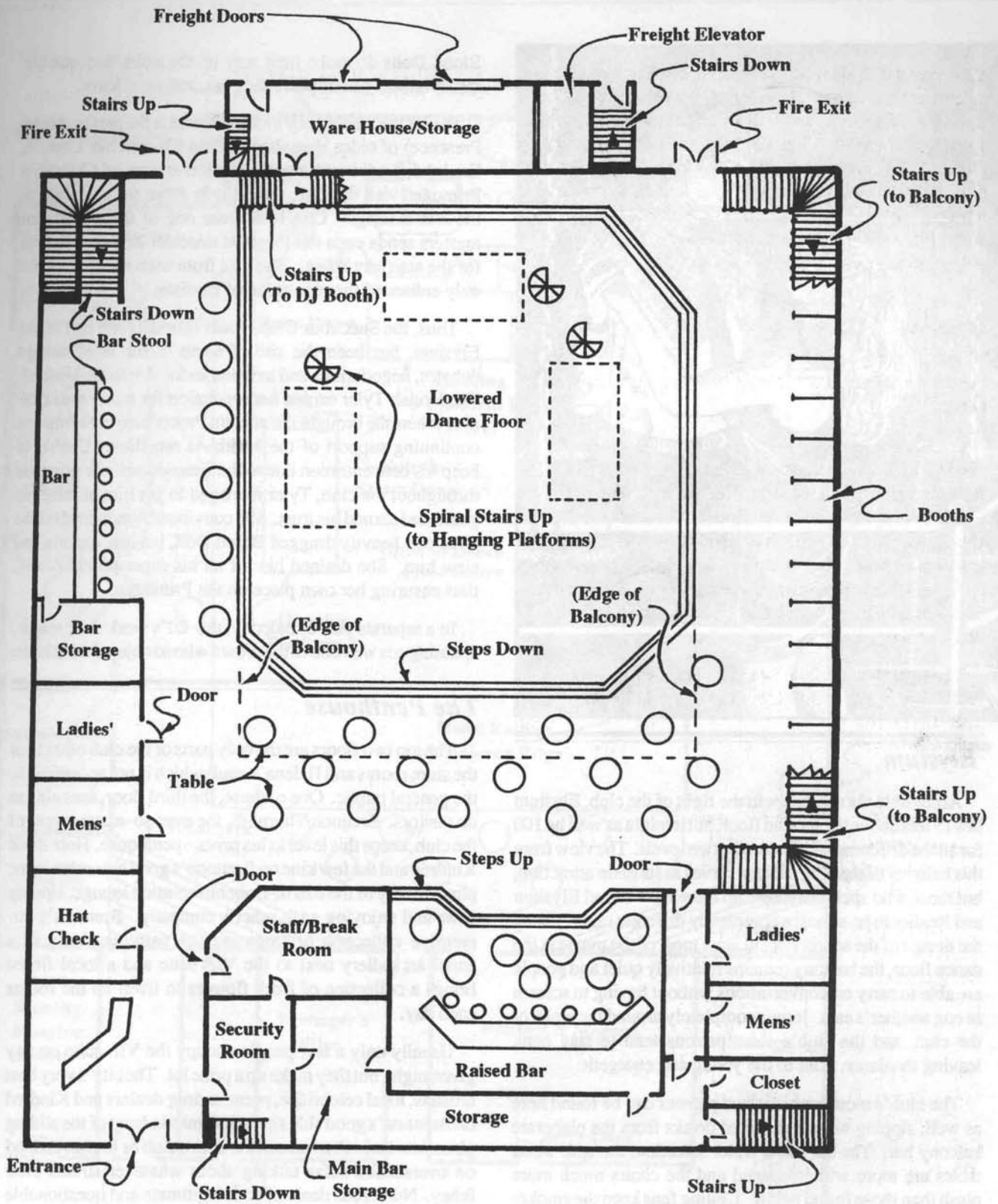
The hanging stage, situated 15 feet above the ground, is anchored not only to its stairwell like the two dance floors, but when the walkway is laid down from the balcony, it connects the stage to the second floor as well. Thus this area barely sways at all no matter how much the act onstage jumps around. The stairwell from the ground is blocked off at both the top and bottom during shows, and two bouncers stand guard by both the stairs and the walkway above.

The dance floors are the only well-lit areas on the ground floor. Arranged in the blackness surrounding it sit tables, chairs and two bars. Billowing cigarette smoke makes the room seem even darker than it is. Waitresses rely more on memory than sight to find the way from the bars to their customers. The bars have just enough light for the bartenders to see what they are doing, but little more.

The main bar, on a raised platform at the front of the club, sits away from the dance floor. Three bartenders work within its spacious confines, serving up mixed drinks as well as beers of all kinds. Yes, Bloody Marys are very popular, but no more so than other vodka drinks. A smaller bar lies to the left of the dance floor, and its two bartenders mainly serve beer and water to the dancers.

On the right side of the club are stairs going up to the balcony level and above. In the far left corner is a stairway going down to the Labyrinth. When a band plays either level, bouncers guard this stairwell to make sure no one sees the show for free. During these times bouncers have hand stamps for both levels, and those trying to go from one to the other have to pay the appropriate cover charges (which range from \$10-\$25 depending on the day of the week and who the band is).

In the very rear of the club is a storage area with freight doors and a loading dock on the outside. A stairway and a freight elevator allow bar workers to move items easily between floors. On each side of the storage area are fire exits which are locked from the outside but provide easy access to the parking lot in back of the club. Club goers occasionally try to sneak their friends in, but there is usually at least one bouncer in the immediate area who will be more than happy to throw both of them out.



Level One: The Dance Floor

Scale: 1 inch = 35 feet



•/lotz•



Elysium

Accessible via staircases in the right of the club, Elysium lies 15 feet above the ground floor, but it might as well be 100 for all the differences between the two levels. The view from this balcony of the dance floors serves as its main attraction, but those who spend any time up there have found Elysium and Reality to be almost a completely different clubs. Since the design of the sound system aims most of the music at the dance floor, the balcony remains relatively quiet and people are able to carry on conversations without having to scream in one another's ears. It runs completely around the walls of the club, and the club's older patrons tend to stay here, leaving the dance floor to the young and energetic.

The club's most sophisticated patrons can be found here as well, sipping wine and mixed drinks from the elaborate balcony bar. The bar has a wider selection, the teak wood tables are more widely spaced and the chairs much more plush than those found below. Ceiling fans keep the smoke-filled air circulating, and several well-clad waiters move agilely between the tables, delivering drinks and notes.

When live bands play, the balcony stays packed with fans, but bouncers make sure they do not get into the area behind the hanging stage. At other times, the bouncers assigned to this area have little to do as undesirables generally find the cloying, uppercrust atmosphere most inhospitable. When

Blood Dolls do make their way up the stairs they quickly discover how out of place they are, and soon leave.

Part of the reason they avoid this area is the presence (and Presence) of older Vampires. When Kindred like Capone, Erichtho, Lodin and even various members of Chicago's Primogen visit the club, they stay in either the balconies or the VIP Lounge. One look from one of these immortal masters sends even the toughest mischief-maker scurrying for the stairway down. The lore from such encounters has only enhanced the reputation of Elysium.

Thus, the Succubus Club, while officially not part of the Elysium, has been the site of some of the most intense debates, negotiations and treacheries known to the Undead. The Brujah Tyler earned her reputation for murderous cunning when she brought the ancient Procet here to discuss his continuing support of the Maldavis rebellion. Unable to keep his concentration due to the frenzied activity going on throughout the club, Tyler managed to get him to relax his guard and earned his trust. She convinced him to feed on the Vitæ of a heavily drugged Blood Doll, led him outside and slew him. She drained him of all his super-potent Blood, thus ensuring her own place on the Primogen.

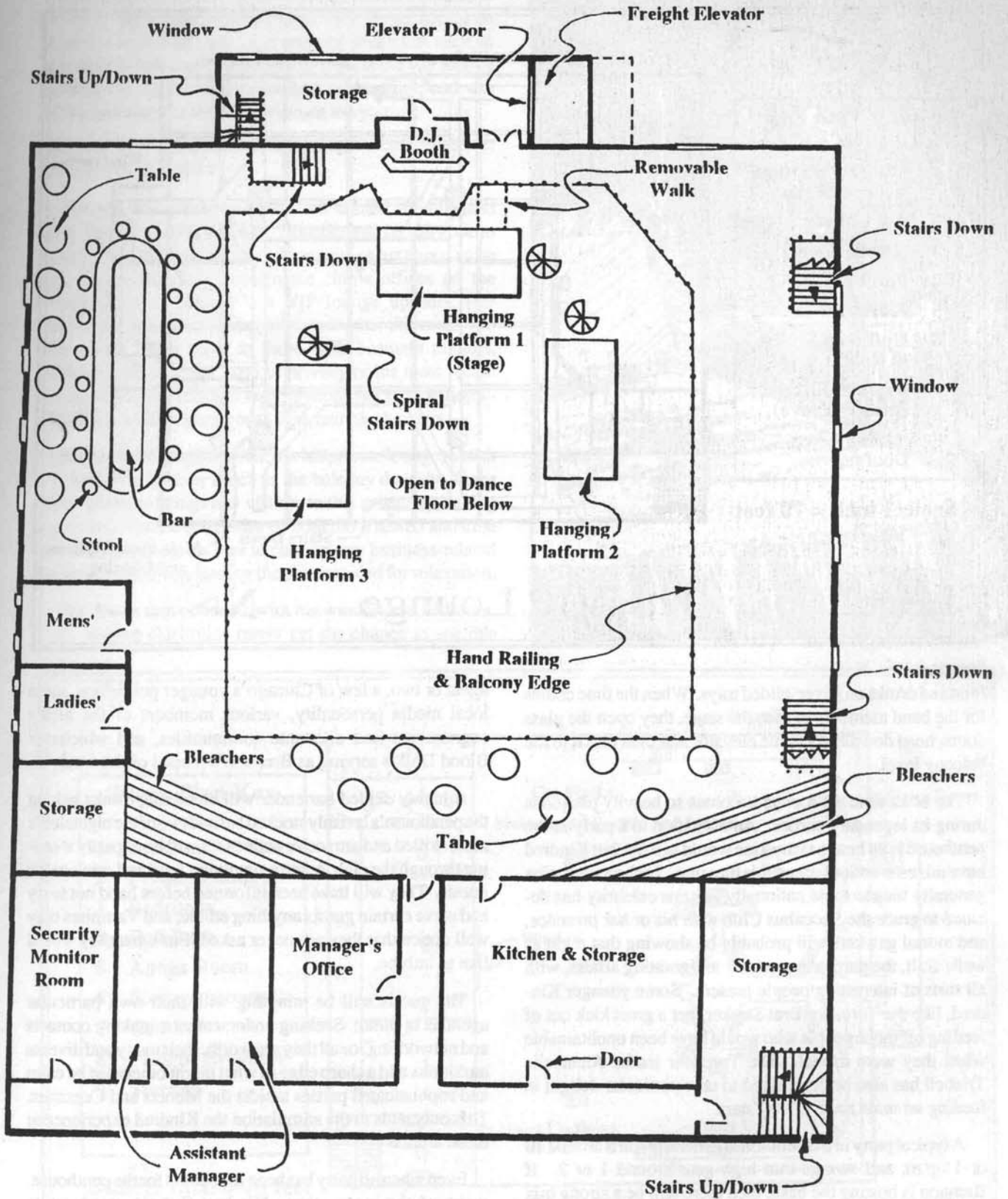
In a separate part of balcony, the DJ's work their magic, spinning cds well above the crowd who so enjoy their talents.

The Penthouse

The top two floors are the only parts of the club other than the store rooms and Helena's vault which is not accessible to the general public. One of these, the third floor, sees almost no visitors. Brennon Thornhill, the ever-so-suave owner of the club, keeps this level as his private penthouse. Here those Kindred and the few kine on Brennon's good side relax in the plush luxury of the fourth-floor observation lounge, sipping wine and enjoying each other's company. Brennon's impressive collection of Impressionist paintings hang in a small art gallery next to the VIP suite and a local florist brings a collection of fresh flowers to liven up the rooms each day.

Usually only a few people occupy the VIP suite on any given night, but they make up a prize lot. The city's very best artisans, local celebrities, premier drug dealers and Kindred on Brennon's good side sip their drinks in front of the sliding glass doors which overlook the entire club or lounge around on overstuffed sofas talking about whatever strikes their fancy. Numerous deals of both legitimate and questionable natures are struck here, and more than one murder planned next to the masterpieces of the Impressionists.

When bands play the club, however, the lounge takes on an entirely different character. The band members, their entourage and everyone else who can wrangle a backstage pass pack the upstairs. Two bartenders work the bar and at least one waitress moves in and out of the crowd, carrying



Level Two: The Balcony

Scale: 1 inch = 35 feet

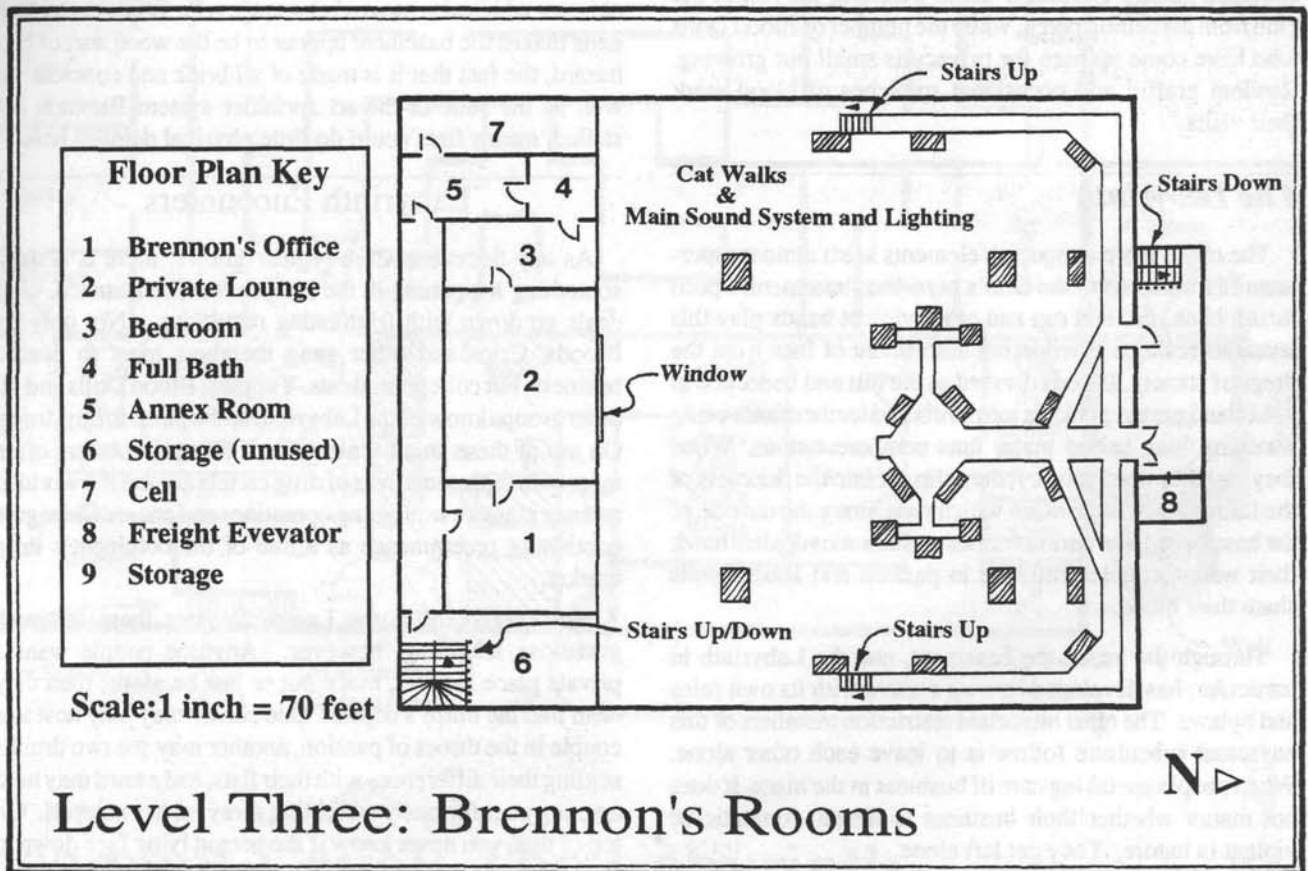
choosing his next victim. While Anarchs are rare visitors to the party, and would violently deny they would accept an invitation were it offered, most secretly desire just such an opportunity. Many privately think of those in the VIP lounge as being the cream of the Kindred community, and use insults and slanders to hide their own envy.

Brennon's Suite

Brennon has a number of havens around the city and rarely spends a day at his club. Nonetheless, he has gone to great lengths to make his third-floor suite as luxurious as he can. Accessible only through the club's offices on the balcony level or through the VIP lounge upstairs, few individuals, either Kindred or kine, ever enter this area. The club owner limits entry to those with business matters, celebrities in particular need of privacy or his most recent Vessel. Thus the first room visitors encounter is his windowless office with its large cedar desk and plush chairs.

Accessible through the office is his private lounge, which overlooks the balcony much as the balcony does the dance floor. Brennon brings few visitors to this sanctuary, saving it primarily for the celebrities of both the Kindred and kine worlds. He takes great care to conduct any business-related matters in his office, leaving the den reserved for relaxation.

The den in turn connects with his windowless bedroom. Even visiting celebrities rarely get the chance to see this



sanctum sanctorum, as Brennon uses this room to enjoy his latest conquests. A giant, canopied waterbed dominates the room, and the only other furnishings present are a luxurious armchair and a small coffee table. Only the closest of examinations will reveal the scattered bloodstains around the room, and such an investigation would require more light than the dimmed chandelier provides.

Behind the bedroom is a full bath, another small room filled with papers and records, and finally a small cell with two sets of arm and leg manacles bolted to the wall. Brennon has never actually used these chains to hold anyone involuntarily, but it is available should he need it. This is the only room on this level with a window, though a thick metal plate covers it and it is secured with a combination padlock. Characters may notice that if the window were opened, sunlight would shine light directly on to where one of the sets of manacles have been stationed.

Catwalks and Rafters

A series of catwalks run across the third story of the Succubus Club, supporting the club's sound and lighting systems. A lattice of wooden beams criss crosses the fourth floor, providing both support for the building as well as access to the roof and electrical system.

Both these setups have provided a great deal of amusement for gutsy Kindred and kine. More than one Anarch has chuckled quietly to himself while watching the rest of the club from his ceiling perch, while the number of Blood Dolls who have come up here for privacy is small but growing. Random graffiti and occasional splotches of blood mark their visits.

The Labyrinth

The city's more dangerous elements seem almost supernaturally attracted to the club's notorious basement. Speed metal, punk, militant rap and other violent bands play this level, attracting a bewildering assortment of fans from the dregs of society. Bloods dressed to the hilt and bedecked in gold stand next to punks in torn shirts and leather pants while watching long-haired metal fans compare tattoos. When they feel they need privacy, they slip off into the darkness of the Labyrinth, a huge maze which runs along the outside of the basement. In its various nooks and crannies dealers hawk their wares, couples embrace in passion and Blood Dolls share their blood.

Through the years, the basement, and the Labyrinth in particular, has developed its own culture with its own rules and bylaws. The most important restriction members of this basement subculture follow is to leave each other alone. When people are taking care of business in the maze, it does not matter whether their business is illegal, romantic or violent in nature. They get left alone.

On top of this, several people have staked out various parts of the Labyrinth itself as their own territory. For instance, two powerful Bloods have been selling cocaine out of the same dark corner for the past several years. Another area has cushions strewn around for the use of couples seeking an intimate encounter. Of course, a close look at these cushions under better lighting than is available here would reveal numerous blood stains on these pillows.

The basement has four entrances, though only two are available to the general public. The most commonly used entrance feeds in from the parking lot, and when prominent bands play down here, the line to get in weaves in and out between the stationary cars, sometimes setting off a car alarm when those who have waited the longest sit upon the hood of some Yuppie's BMW.

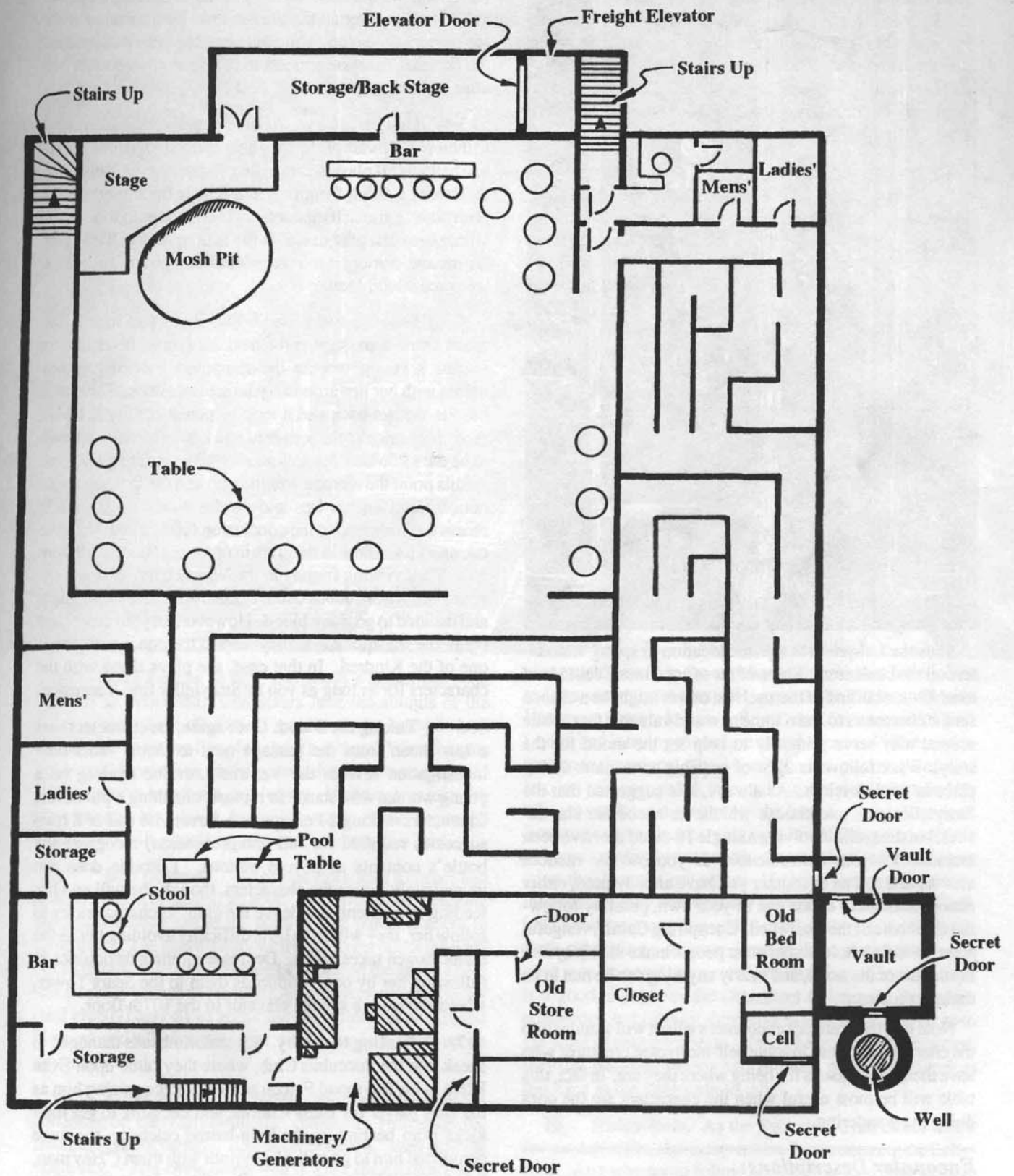
The less commonly used entrance comes from the heavily populated ground floor. A stairway in the left corner of the club leads down next to the stage area. Few people use it, however, since that would mean having to pass through the hordes of Blood Dolls, Yuppies and other contemptible sorts who inhabit that level. Thus most of the basement regulars only come through the parking lot entrance, and would prefer to be shot rather than associate with the upstairs types — except when mugging them.

The final entranceways are in the storage areas behind the stage and the bar. Both stairways go up to the next level, and the one behind the stage runs parallel to the freight elevator which also moves between levels. While the lack of exits makes the basement appear to be the worst sort of fire hazard, the fact that it is made of all brick and concrete, as well as the state-of-the-art sprinkler system Brennon installed, means fires could do little physical damage here.

Labyrinth Encounters

As any Succubus Club regular knows, there is always something happening in the Labyrinth. For instance, drug deals go down with frightening regularity. Not only do Bloods, Crips and other gang members meet to handle business, but college students, Yuppies, Blood Dolls and all other groups know of the Labyrinth as the place to buy drugs. On top of these small scale deals, Chicago mobsters often meet with representatives of drug cartels around the world to arrange massive smuggling operations and ensure Chicago's continuing preeminence as a hub of the continent's drug market.

Not everybody in the Labyrinth goes there for such grandiose scheming, however. Anytime people want a private place to meet, make out or just be alone, then they head into the maze's depths. One corner may play host to a couple in the throes of passion, another may see two drunks settling their differences with their fists, and a third may hold a young poet furiously scribbling away on her notepad. On top of that, you never know if the person lying face down in the corridor is a drunk sleeping it off or just another corpse.



Basement Level: The Labyrinth

Scale: 1 inch = 35 feet



Thus the Labyrinth is a prime location to spring encounters on the characters. Some of these encounters could lead to adventures in and of themselves, others might be a chance for the characters to learn some new and valuable fact, while several may serve primarily to help set the mood for the story. What follows is a list of possible encounters taking place in the Labyrinth. As always, it is suggested that the Storyteller pick and choose whichever encounter she desires, but dice rolls involving a single 10-sided die have been included for your convenience. If you use the random method and roll an encounter you have already used, either choose another or create one of your own, possibly following the theme of the one rolled. Conspiring Caitiff, vengeful Ventrue and a whole host of other people make their way into the depths of the maze, and nearly anything can be met in its darker recesses.

Note that these are not encounters which will wander into the characters. These involve self-motivated creatures who have their own reasons for being where they are. In fact, this table will be most useful when the characters are the ones doing the wandering.

Encounter Descriptions:

1-2 Lovers' Squabble. The characters hear raised voices engaged in heated debate as they move through the maze. At first the words are muffled by the walls, but as they move closer they can begin to make sense out of what is

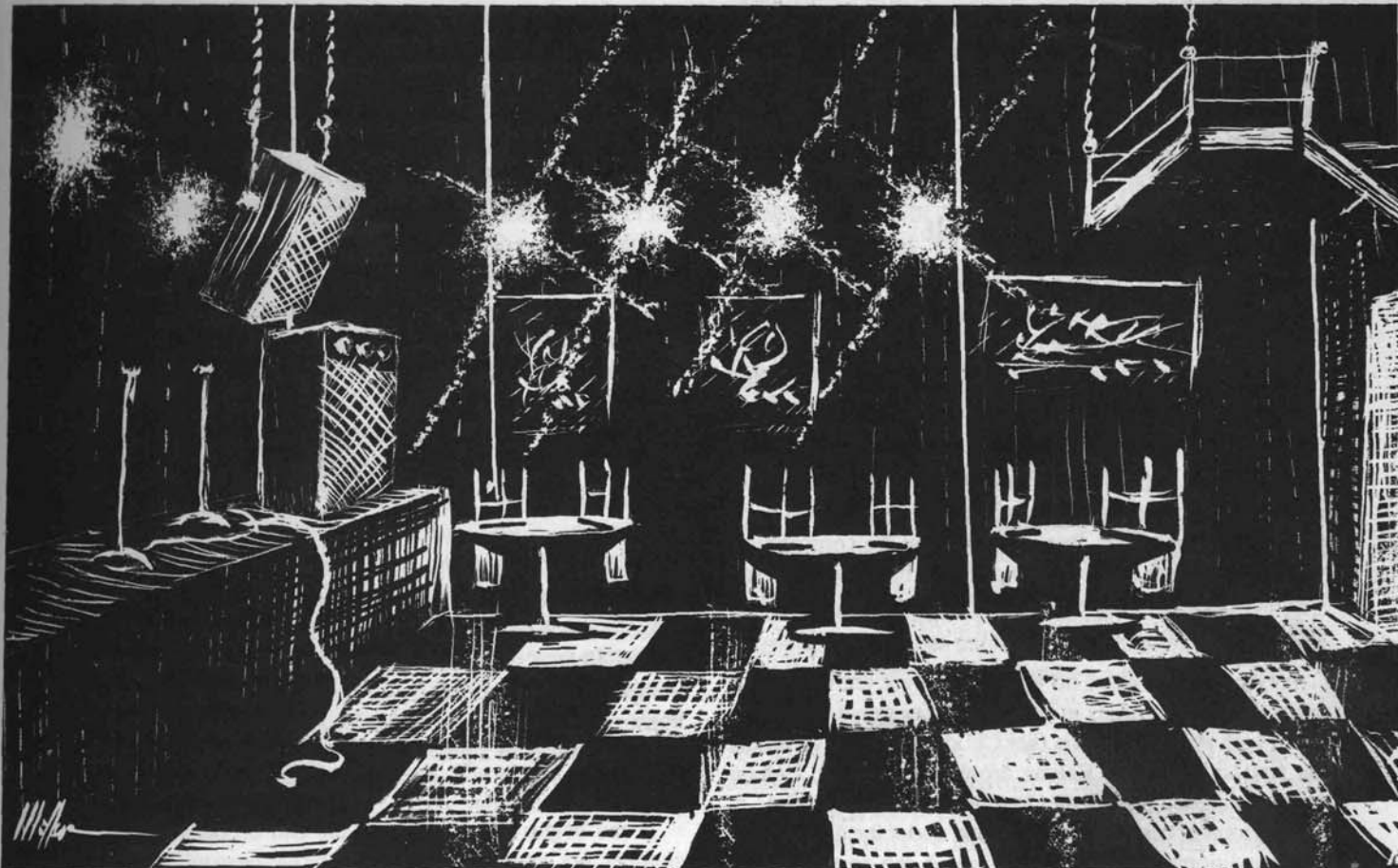
being said. Apparently a young man has become incensed at his girlfriend for all the time she has been spending with the owner of the club, while his lover has been shattered by the fact that Brennan appears to have lost all interest in her after just one week.

3-4 Couple in Love. As the characters make their way to their own private place, they hear odd sounds coming from one hallway. If players care to investigate, they will discover the noises coming from two individuals finding rapture in each other's arms. If characters are so rude as to look to see who it is or just plan to watch the action, they will discover an up-and-coming (and very married) politician with a teenaged Blood Doll.

5 Sharing the Blood. The characters hear a low moan from a passage right next to them. Investigation reveals a young woman the characters have never seen before with her lips around a young man's neck. The man's head is thrown back and a look of purest ecstasy is on his face. If characters think to ask, you can tell them it appears to be the same look mortals usually take on during the Kiss. At this point the woman will look up and the characters can notice blood on her lips and on the man's neck. While characters may leap to the conclusion this is a new Vampire taking a victim here in the club, in fact it is a Blood Doll from New York visiting friends in the Windy City. She and the young man (a Succubus Club regular) met at the club tonight and decided to go share blood. However, let your characters break the Masquerade if they leap to the conclusion she is one of the Kindred. In that case, she plays along with the characters for as long as you as Storyteller find it amusing.

6 Taking the Blood. Once again, the characters hear a low moan from the passage next to them. This time investigation reveals the Ventrue Lorraine feeding on a young woman who stands in rapture, clutching a pill bottle. Characters making a Perception + Streetwise roll of 8 (two successes required for full comprehension) recognize the bottle's contents as peyote buttons. Lorraine does not immediately notice the characters, though she will end her feeding in moments and leave the club. If characters try to follow her, they will have little difficulty avoiding her as the hallucinogen takes effect. Decrease all their difficulties in following her by one. She leads them to the Sears Tower, where she rides a special elevator to the 107th floor.

7 Beating the Baby. Several skinheads managed to sneak into the Succubus Club, where they came upon Evan Klein in his Raymond Falcon persona. Recognizing him as the bass player for Baby Chorus, and deciding to get their kicks from beating up the long-haired celebrity, the three convinced him to go to the Labyrinth with them ("Hey man, I got somethin' to show you"). Once down there they jumped him and began trashing him. Normally Klein would have had little problem bouncing them off the walls, but their attack brought back all the memories of his childhood and he went fetal, dropping to the floor in a ball. Now the three



skinheads are kicking at him, and Klein's health has been reduced to Wounded. Characters hear the sounds of the fight. If they drive off Klein's assailants, the Vampire will stay curled up on the floor for about a minute. When he gets up, he will have taken on the personality of a three-year-old girl — crying, confused and lonely. If characters take the time to calm him down, he will revert to being Raymond Falcon and will greatly appreciate the characters' aid.

8 Bad Business. The characters round a corner just in time to see a drug deal go sour. Two Bloods are reaching for their Berettas just as the pack of five punks is about to jump them. The players may well want to get out of the way, but a suitcase filled with money lies open on the ground next to a sizable package of cocaine. Any players who feel lucky (and greedy) may try to go for the valuables, but next round Uzis, sawed-off shotguns and magnums will open up on anyone around.

9 A Maze of Plots. While wandering through the corridors of the Labyrinth, the characters recognize the familiar voice of Gengis. "Come on Brennon," they hear the voice say. "You know damn well it's not the existence of a prince we object to. We just want someone who's not so repressive. With all due respect to your Sire, Lodin's an idiot and a pain in the ass." Brennon's responses will be too quiet for any character except those with heightened senses to pick up. Gengis will continue to expound on Anarch philosophy while Brennon will respond noncommittally. Characters

may quickly jump to the conclusion that the two have joined to form some new Anarch plot against the Elders of the city. However, Gengis knows full well that Brennon sides with Lodin, and is trying to use him as a channel to feed misinformation to the prince. The Anarch hopes Lodin may be lulled into lowering his guard, thus making it easier for him and his allies to carry out their plots in the future. At the same time, Brennon and Lodin are trying to cultivate Gengis as a source so he will wittingly or unwittingly give them information on what the Anarchs are up to. If characters try to use any information they overhear for blackmail (for instance, telling Lodin Brennon plots with Anarchs), they will not get far. Both sides play a delicate game in these negotiations, and none want to upset these carefully laid plans. However, this is a good chance for the characters to learn of Brennon's connection to Lodin (if they have not already) as well as to get wind of coming events. If the characters escape notice, they can discover Gengis and Brennon meet every week at this time in the Labyrinth to talk.

10 Hidey-Hole. As the Succubus Club closes down for another night, characters notice Portia entering the Labyrinth. Any who try to follow her (why is she going in there when the club is closing?), will have an easier time than they normally would since she is extremely tired and is beginning to run low on Blood. With successful Wits + Stealth rolls they can follow her through the maze. However, when they come to a cul-de-sac they could swear she went down, she

has disappeared. What they do not know is that the wall here hides her haven. If the characters search the area, you can give them any sort of obstacles you want, from Bloods and bouncers to Brennon and Prias. Still, this encounter should give them the first clue that Portia may be much more than the neonate she pretends to be.

Helena's Vault

Far more protected than any safe, more concealed than any knife and far more dangerous than any gun, Helena's resting place lies hidden behind the walls of the Labyrinth. Here she slept for more than 100 years, and she enters this vault each day to slip into the dry well which has served her for so long.

Originally no room stood here. When developers built a warehouse above the filled in well where Helena had been placed after her torpor, Prias ensured that the construction would not disturb her resting place, and builders made the basement small enough so that they did not reach her. Thus she continued to sleep undisturbed.

As she began to shrug off torpor, however, she decided to enlist the aid of mortals in rising from her grave. With the aid of both Prias and Maria (her Childe, who also served as her first victim when Helena arose from torpor), Helena convinced a rich drug dealer to renovate the warehouse. A select group of construction workers, under the domination and conditioning of Maria, excavated the earth directly above Helena and constructed a vault next to where she slept, concealing its door as part of the wall. Then Maria killed them.

New construction workers added the labyrinth to the nightclub's basement, placing one of its deadends next to the vault's antechamber. For the rest of the decade the vault remained undisturbed by anything more than Prias, Maria and occasional insects.

Then Helena awoke. She clawed her way through the earth, sucking what little Vitæ she could from the worms and maggots around her on her climb to the top. Finally she broke free from the confines of her burial grounds and was met at the top by Maria, who she promptly slew. She then collapsed into torpor again, and did not wake for another month. When she finally came to her senses Prias stood next to her and with his aid she entered the Succubus Club for the first time.

Helena has kept the club as her main haven, but the defenses surrounding it have become far stronger. She led Prince Lodin to Embrace the club owner in the mid-80s, and he has unconsciously served as her main protector (after Prias, of course). Brennon Thornhill added an extremely expensive sprinkler system to make her feel more at ease. He also ensures that none of the club employees disturb her resting place, and would come to her aid in a heart beat were she to summon him.

The deadend leading to her vault has become the main dealing area for a number of Bloods close to Kevin Jackson. Numbered among those who have been specially trained to deal with Vampires, these gang members carry automatic weapons and stay extremely suspicious of strangers, warning off those who would linger here. However, they allow Helena to stay here and never seem to remember her passing.

Helena's next line of defense comes from the secret door leading to the antechamber. In game terms, noticing the concealed door requires a Perception + Alertness roll of 9 (two successes). Entering the antechamber will cause any character with Auspex to receive constant premonitions of danger, though the character will be unable to separate any individual images out of the storm which will hit her. All she will be able to tell is that the whole area seems to radiate danger, as the bombardment overpowers any single warning.

The inner defenses begin with a scorpion Prias nicknamed Hecabe. While a scorpion would not normally be a cause of much concern for one of the Kindred, this one has fed on Helena's fourth-generation blood since she ruled Pompeii. This ghoul scorpion, now grown to the size of a house cat, actually follows Prias' orders, though it has served as the Methuselah's guardian during the time she spent in torpor.

It had begun to weaken near the end of Helena's long slumber, but since her waking Hecabe has been well fed and regained its former size and strength. Now it has the equivalent of Strength 3, Dexterity 6, Stamina 5, Brawl 4, Alertness 3, Dodge 6, Potence 3, Celerity 3, Fortitude 2. While a normal scorpion's poison would have little effect on a Vampire, Hecabe's will kill a mortal immediately and causes its own aggravated wounds to Kindred on top of the damage caused by its rock-hard stinger. Thus Hecabe will normally have 10 dice to hit (Dexterity + Brawl) and 10 dice of damage (Strength + Potence + Brawl) just from the strike itself. If the strike does even one level of damage to someone, then that person, be she Kindred or kine, will then take five additional dice of damage (which can be soaked if the victim has Fortitude) and cause aggravated wounds for Cainites.

The next line of defense is the vault door itself. Opening the six-inch-thick steel door would be a feat in and of itself, especially since the bolt lock was the best available at the time it was put in, and is still one of the finest. The multiple combinations and single keyhole are concealed behind a loose brick. The rest of the bricks have been mortared to the vault door, and swing with the door when it is opened. In game terms, noticing the concealed door requires a Perception + Alertness roll of 7 (two successes), finding the combinations and keyhole require Perception + Alertness of 6 (three successes), opening the locks without key or combinations Wits + Security with a target of 9 and 15 successes, and breaking the door would require Strength + Potency

with a difficulty of 10 (eight successes). The walls, ceiling and floor of the vault are lined with metal and exceptionally difficult to break through. Essentially the intruders would have to dig through the earth down the vault and then break through.

Once inside the vault, invaders immediately notice a vial containing a red liquid lying on the floor directly under the glaring lightbulb in the center of the ceiling. Getting to the vial trips hidden electronic sensors (noticeable on a Wits + Security roll of 10, disarmed on a Dexterity + Security roll of 8 with five successes) which notify Prias via a beeper he always carries on him and bring him running with sword in hand.

The vial contains exceptionally potent Vitæ which still swirls in its holder despite being nearly a year old. The blood comes from a fifth-generation Childe of Helena who the Methuselah has since slain. Before drawing this blood, however, Helena had forced her progeny to imbibe blood from a young man who had just swallowed an entire bottle of sleeping pills. Anyone who does so much as taste this blood must make a Stamina + Fortitude roll with a target of 9 (three successes needed) to stay conscious. Even if the roll is made, the character loses three dice on any action taken. If that leaves the character with no dice to work with, then she cannot take the planned action. The effects of the drug also cancel out any benefit the Vitæ might normally give its drinker.

Even if characters do not take the vial, there are detection devices (primarily infrared beams placed knee-high) located around the vault they are likely to trip. Noticing them requires the same roll as above, but then can be avoided as well as disarmed. Avoiding them requires a Dexterity + Alertness roll of 7 with eight successes necessary to get to Helena's current resting place.

Finding Helena's resting place is another problem. Relatively obvious tracks on the dusty floor lead to a spot in the back of the vault. Any who follow the tracks to their destination can make a Perception + Alertness roll (target of 9) to notice the vague outlines of a pressure plate where the footsteps end. Anyone standing there triggers a razor-sharp scythe which bursts from the wall. The six-foot-long blade swings out in a horizontal arc 5 ft 6 in above the floor. Any character in the area taller than that who fails a Wits + Dodge roll (target of 9) takes eight dice of damage, which can only be soaked if the character has Fortitude. Any character losing more than four health levels from this attack can be considered decapitated and completely, irrevocably deceased.

The vault itself is yet another red herring to throw off those seeking the Methuselah's hiding place. Access to the well in which Helena sleeps each day can be had through one of the double-layered metal plates which lines the back wall. However, the metal plate must be opened to reveal the crawlspace to the well. Helena does this by unscrewing the sole lightbulb to reveal a secret catch which causes the metal

plate to swing up and in on concealed hinges. Of course, unscrewing the bulb immediately plunges the room into darkness, meaning the invaders may well be unable to see what they are doing.

The false plate can be detected by a simple search of the room, knocking on each panel. This requires a Perception + Investigation roll of 6 or better, but the searcher must have heightened senses. Otherwise the difficulty is 10 and the searcher must make three successes.

Invaders can try to break through the metal plate, but a mass of wiring between the layers of metal plating have been hooked up directly to the club generator. Thus anyone who tries to bash through will puncture the well-insulated wiring. The blast of electricity will send spasms through the invader's muscles and cause 10 dice of damage.

If the invaders get through the metal plate, they will be able to follow Helena's tracks through a crawlspace to the bricked-up well in which she sleeps. There she merely enters the dried-up well Prias laid her to rest in many years ago, crawls down 30 feet to a small cranny where she has brought a small yet comfortable bed, and goes to sleep.

She makes this journey very carefully, however, because she recently had a new trap installed to protect her in her slumber. Even Prias is unaware of the ring of flamethrowers placed 10 feet above Helena's resting place. Pressure plates located both directly above and below the flamethrowers will set them off one second after the plate is touched. Helena normally avoids this trap by jumping down when she is directly above the pressure plates. For anyone else to even notice it would require they have some way of sensing it in the dark and then make a Wits + Security roll with a difficulty of 9. Only one success is necessary. The decayed body of the workman who installed the trap can still be found on the floor of the well.

Of course, by this time any intruders would probably have caused Helena's own Auspex to start sending her premonitions of dangers, and she would be rising from her coffin, which rests in a cubicle hollowed out of the side of the well, four feet above its bottom. While the invaders may think she would be groggy, the one Thaumaturgical ritual she knows is Wake with the Morning's Freshness, and she casts it before going to sleep. On top of this, Prias would be warned by now and either be on his way or there already.

Club Defenses

Despite the heavy concentration of firearms, drugs and the Undead, the Succubus Club actually remains a safe place to hang out. Too many individuals have too much invested in the nightclub to allow it to come to any harm, and they all work to the best of their ability to ensure its inviolability.

Brennon provides the most obvious security with both ghoulish and mortal bouncers, his own Vampiric abilities and

alarm and fire protection. Small disturbances can be handled either by the bouncers while larger ones stop with but a few calming words from the club owner (assisted by his Presence, of course).

Serious danger can usually be avoided by the simple fact that most of the people who could threaten the club would not. For instance, Chicago's gangs know the area is too profitable to mess up. In addition, the Bloods have let it be known that they consider the club sacrosanct and will avenge any damage done to it or its reputation. While some gangs would normally consider this more of a reason to hit the Succubus Club, the additional factors of its Mafia and police protection tend to discourage them.

Several of Brennon's fellow Ventrue have gone to great lengths to ensure his club's safety. Lodin has passed down orders through the higher levels of Chicago's police department that not only is the Succubus Club off limits as far as arrests are concerned, but it is actually to be protected as well. Brennon has buttressed these commands with his own bribes, of course.

In addition, Lodin ordered his lieutenant Capone to have his men in the Mafia also serve as the club's protectors. He in turn passed the orders to his lieutenants, Gaughan and Chuc Luc. Not only have they spread the word among the people they deal with not to mess with the nightclub, but the physical presence of Syndicate enforcers on the club's premises tends to discourage trouble.

While the protection of any one of these groups would probably not be enough to safeguard it completely, and might indeed attract unwanted attention, their combined might makes the locale safer than most military bases.

More dangerous events (like frenzied characters) are handled by the club's two ghoul bouncers or by the Kindred who value the club. While the Succubus Club is not considered part of the Elysium, far too many Kindred find it far too valuable to let the actions of a few destroy it. Thus were some Licks to get out of line and start bouncing the bouncers off the rafters, they might quickly find Gengis and several other Anarchs jumping on their backs, wrestling them to the grounds and holding them there while Brennon or Annabelle would calm them down with Presence or Domination. Then the characters would be taken out back and beaten till they had one Blood Point left.

Kine Relations

The Succubus Club conceals more fire and building code violations than any five other nightclubs in town, but for some reason few city inspectors come into the club and none ever comment on the numerous safety hazards. While this may be because of the state-of-the-art, \$100,000 sprinkler system Brennon had installed, those in the know whisper about the club owner's Domination and bribes of key offi-

cials. They also note the strong friendship Brennon has built up with the local fire station. His generous gifts to them (entertainment centers for the firehouses, free passes to the club) and donations to charities which help families of deceased firefighters has ensured not only a blind eye to many of his many violations but also their rapid arrival in the event of trouble.

Brennon's cozy arrangements with public servants extends to the Chicago police as well. Almost all the police assigned to the area directly around the Succubus Club are in Brennon's pay and under his subtle Domination. They regularly patrol the area on the lookout for troublemakers, and it is not too uncommon for a squad car to be stationed outside the club on an especially busy night. If a troublemaker has gotten too far out of hand, police will take him from the club to an isolated spot and give him a special message with their nightsticks. Since part of their pay comes from underplaying trouble at the club, it is rare that someone thrown out will be arrested, though that person will definitely be harassed. Also, the police never raid the club despite the ease they would have in catching several dozen (some nights, several hundred) under-age drinkers.

At one point the *Chicago Tribune* planned to do an article on the ease with which teenagers had buying drinks at the club, but for some reason no one ever completed it. Indeed, the only paper to ever comment on this odd situation is the *Chicago Reader*, which only mentions it in passing. Brennon has maintained a close friendship with the Ventrue Peterson despite the distaste he feels for this other Child of Lodin's. With Peterson's aid he has kept the city's major papers from covering his club in any section except for Entertainment, and there the only references are to the Succubus Club as a fun place to go or listings of upcoming concerts.

None of the city's publications have made mention of the Succubus Club's connections with drug dealers. Most of the club's patrons know drugs get bought and sold openly there, but few are aware of the true level. In fact, Brennon has maintained and extended his old contacts with the world's major suppliers of illegal drugs since opening the club, and now the Succubus Club has become not only a central point for drugs entering the city, but a hub for drug deals affecting the entire continent.

Chicago's vice police give the club a wide berth not only because of Brennon's bribes but because Prince Lodin gave several department heads strict orders via his Domination of them to leave the club alone. Word has filtered down to the average cop that people in high places would be highly upset should the nightclub be disturbed. While this has prevented any organized investigation of the club, there is no telling what individual police officers might be up to.

The DEA was a problem during Chicago's Council Wars, brought in to investigate thanks to some of the mayor's allies in Congress, but the conclusion of that battle ended their

investigation and bribes to the appropriate people ensured that the records from that time disappeared. Some old DEA members remember the investigation, but they have been afraid to push for a new one because of the insistence their higher ups made about shutting down the last one.

Brennon received aid in shutting down this probe from a number of politicians he had helped out during the years, and he has been careful to maintain friendships and alliances with key government officials. His penthouse parties have become key places for candidates to meet with local and national celebrities in hopes of picking up both contributions and endorsements. While the club owner has yet to garner much more influence than your typical Chicago ward boss, he has started to cast his eye at becoming more of a power on the state and even national level. Thus it is not to rare to meet members of city council or state government at the club.

Kine Patrons

There are variety of patrons of the clubs, most of them fall in a variety of different categories — at least when you speak of mortals.

Blood Dolls

The Succubus Club has become infamous as a meeting ground for Blood Dolls, those unhappy scion of upper and upper-middle class families who reject society's trends by obediently following the dictates of their own subculture. No one knows whether a Kindred or a kine first labeled them Blood Dolls, but the sobriquet stuck.

The average Blood Doll looks more like a Vampire than do most Cainites. They dress in the trendiest black clothing they can find — tuxedos, vests, leather jackets and mini-skirts, blouses, capes, ruffled shirts, etc. Often the only items they wear which are not black are the various pieces of silver jewelry they own. These often take some form of vaguely occult symbols like ankhs, moons, spiders and crosses. If the jewelry is not pure silver, then it is silver with some sort of stone like onyx or turquoise. Finally, they spend vast amounts of time ensuring that their makeup has been applied just right, with a light covering of white powder, dark eyeshadow and copious amounts of blood-red lipstick, and that their hair has just the right look.

While the best place to find Blood Dolls may be the clubs they frequent, they also hang out at late-night diners, theaters with midnight showings of the Rocky Horror Picture Show and dingy bookstores, organizing poetry readings or just comparing outfits. Neither sex makes up the majority of Blood Dolls, so all these meeting places also provide the opportunity for intimate rendezvous, especially since few Blood Dolls have passed the age of 25.

However, these bored, lonely and jaded youth do not stop their romantic encounters with sex. The Blood Doll practice which has raised the most controversy is their habit of sharing blood. Two (rarely more) Blood Dolls will find a



private spot, take out small knives and cut themselves. Then they drink each others blood. Needless to say, Kindred have found this practice to make a perfect cover for their own feedings.

The premier Blood Dolls, those all others look up to, engage in this practice the most. Indeed, at least one Blood Doll, William Killigrew, has earned a great deal of status among his peers based on the sheer number of people he has shared blood with. He is known to have been one of the first in Chicago to call himself a Blood Doll, back in 1987.

The Blood Doll movement has a new form, but parallels old types of Kindred imitation which has occurred through the centuries. Similar movements among youth have sprung up approximately every other generation, though few have taken their emulation as far as Blood Dolls do. Usually the copiers mainly follow Vampiric fashion and attitudes, effecting a dark indifference to the world around them. Only the Blood Dolls have taken their simulacrum to the point of actually drinking each others blood.

Urban Sophisticats

On the cutting edge of Chicago society, the Urban Sophisticats have been fixtures at the club since it first opened in 1982. The mainstays of the city's art culture, this loose grouping includes writers, painters, directors, actors and their may hangers-on. While the club has become better

known for its population of Blood Dolls, these generally wealthy patrons have been an even more important reason for its continued success. Their presence helped attract new people to the club, and their continued presence means the club need never worry about having to attract newcomers.

Their sub-culture is quite strange in some ways but still has a great deal in common with what goes on below them. The primary purpose of each individual is to be seen with the most popular of this crowd, gossip is the primary pastime and large quantities of drink and drugs are consumed. However, many in this group are genuinely interested in art and will spend long hours in debate and discussion of the latest exhibitions and productions.

Members of this elite rarely move on to the dance floor, leaving it to the control of the lesser people who crowd the club. Instead, they stay up in Elysium and ridicule the dancers, or else spend the entire evening in the top-floor penthouse. Their spoken reasons for having supported the club vary, and range from the art collection to a love for Brennon to the quality of drugs they can find there.

Still, no matter what other clubs might open to attract their business, they continue to return to the Succubus Club. In reality, there are a number of reasons they do so, including the spoken reasons given above. The most important reason, however, has more to do with the constant presence of

Toreadors from Chicago and across the country than it does with anything else.

Not only do the city's sophisticats find the conversation and very presence of these personifications of high culture stimulating, but the Toreadors enjoy establishing one place where they can meet the members of a city's artistic elite. Annabelle Triabell (under the inspiration of Menele) made the Succubus Club the primary hang-out in Chicago. Wheeling, persuading and even dominating major figures in the art community to go there, Triabell managed to etch the club into their minds as the place to be.

Gangstas

A number of Chicago's black gangs have found the Succubus Club to be a friendly environment to see shows, cut deals and pick up dates. Nattily attired in gold chains and rings, warm-up suits in gang colors and stylish suits with gang-colored bandanas, gangstas join the dancers on the ground floor and disappear into the darkness of the labyrinth to take care of business. While most come to the club by way of public transportation, they are the most likely patrons to arrive in limousines.

At first all gangs found the club to be hospitable, but recently some have been complaining that the Bloods get preferential treatment. Indeed, there have been several instances where intergang fights have ended up with all participants except the Bloods being expelled from the club. However, these battles are rare, since Bloods know starting a fight in the Succubus Club is a good way to bring down the wrath of the gang leadership. Other gangs have also found it in their best interests to avoid fights on the premises.

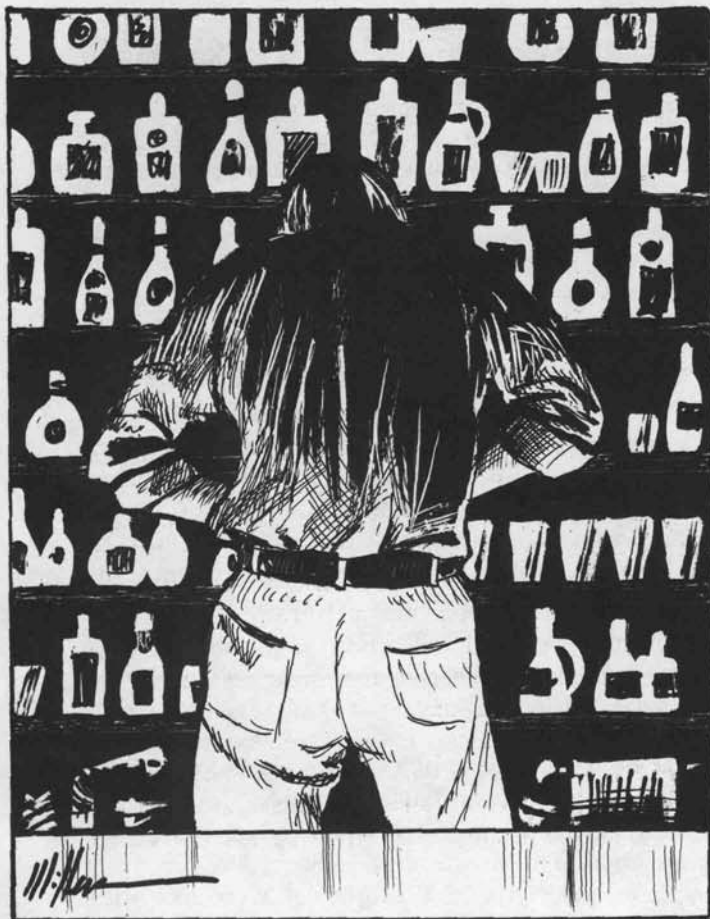
In any event, Chicago's gangstas have become an integral part of the club, especially since rap artists like Public Enemy, N.W.A. and Ice-T began to perform there. A great deal of anti-Vanilla Ice graffiti can be found in the maze itself.

Punks

While most punks bemoan the high cover price they must pay to get into the Succubus Club, few other places cater to them to the extent it does. The basement reeks violence, the music is loud and pounding, and slam dancing is not only permitted but encouraged. They avoid the upstairs as much as possible, however, and spend most of their time down in the Labyrinth. The taped music tends to reflect the bands who have played there over the years—Iggy Pop, Lard, Butthole Surfers, Black Flag and other punk and hardcore bands, with a smattering of militant rap and speed metal thrown in.

Others

Numerous Yuppies also come here to prove to themselves that they have yet to grow old. Dressed in their best Miami



Vice styles, they do their utmost to appear young and exciting, though this mostly serves to make them the focus of jokes by the club regulars. Nevertheless, numerous stories abound of attractive Blood Dolls being kept by rich Yuppie sugar daddies (and mommies). The Yuppies also know the club is a reliable place to find cocaine.

College students from Northwestern, the University of Chicago, DePaul and other local schools also show up here in large numbers. Many of these are Blood Dolls, but others are music fans or just kids out for a good time. While most do not spend as much money as the Blood Dolls do, they have become an accepted fixture within the club and give Elders like Critias an excuse to go there. However, they usually show up only when the big acts are playing on the main stage, and often frequent more tame clubs at other times.

A number of mobsters also hang out here, but usually not because of the music. In their circles the club has become known as the safest place to meet in order to take care of various illicit business dealings. There is little danger of being attacked in such a public (and protected) place, police are unlikely to raid and the loud sound system makes it unlikely their plans will be overheard. Rumors among the Kindred say even Capone shows up here at times, but in truth he usually does so only to meet with Brennan.

Finally, the club has become known as a hangout for national celebrities when they visit the Windy City, and gawkers tend to come here looking for them. Such gawkers rarely get past the bouncers, and those who do quickly find themselves ejected if they even approach the celebrity. Few of the regulars would be so uncouth as to ask for autographs or bother such a visitor. They generally consider it far classier to make a point of not approaching the celebrity just to show that such status means nothing to them. On any weekend it is not at all unusual to find a celebrity or two wandering around the club. It does not take long, however, before they are invited upstairs to the penthouse (as the Storyteller you can add a lot of charm to the setting by mentioning who the character might see in the Succubus).

Kindred Relations

For many of these mortals, dance clubs are a way of life. For many Kindred, they are the source of life. Rumors abound that a Cainite owns the club, and in fact a host of Vampires prefer to spend their nights here than anywhere else. While the Succubus Club has never been declared part of the Elysium, no Kindred would willingly start a fight there. Many visit the private lounge on the fourth floor, though numerous kine also fill its elegant space. Here Toreadors admire the private art collection and those Kindred favored by the club enjoy a respite from the mass of humanity which crowds the rest of the club. Anarchs of all kinds find the Labyrinth dwellers to be perfect for mingling

with, and make themselves right at home amidst its twists and turns.

Hunters find the club to be an excellent source of Vitæ, as few of the kine present would notice if their blood were drunk and fewer still would care. They have an unspoken agreement not to kill anyone in the club — in fact, they are not welcome unless it is apparent from the color and feel of their skin that they have fed recently. Even the most self-controlled Vampire would find it near-impossible to resist Frenzy if caught in the crush of Vitæ-rich mortals before feeding.

Kindred Patrons

A variety of Kindred patronize the Succubus Club, each of them for different reasons.

Anarchs

The Succubus Club has gained a reputation as an Anarch hangout despite the fact a scion of Lodin owns it. And, indeed, Anarchs make frequent use of the nightspot. Ask any of them why they come to the club, however, and their answers will have nothing to do with plots and schemes. Instead they praise the high quality of the music, the Vessels and the friends who show up there. Indeed, as befits a locale owned by Lodin's progeny, the club has played host to more Ventrué and Tremere plots than it has Anarch ones.

The Succubus Club has become the highest-profile place Anarchs feel safe enough to meet openly. Members of every Anarch coterie spend some time here, though Hinds' Socialists generally make only token appearances. On the other hand, most of the Nihilists show up here at some point or another, especially since Levesque took an interest in the Blood Dolls. Many Kindred Of Juggler's coterie show up here from time to time, though Hank Cave, Gengis, Uriah and Dooley are the most likely ones to be there on any given night.

Ventrués

A number of Ventrué come to the club on a fairly regular basis, though they are more likely to be there taking care of business rather than partying. Capone, Gaughan, Chuc Luc and Kevin Jackson often come here to personally oversee major drug deals, while Lodin and Neally Edwards show up to discuss matters of importance with Brennan and some of the other more powerful Kindred frequenting the club. Only Lorraine and Bobby Weatherbottom come here just for the fun of it, though Weatherbottom is usually dragged here by Amanda Cersey, his mortal lover. Sheriff, seen by many as a Ventrué despite being a Brujah, also comes to the club with some regularity. While he says he comes to spy on the enemy, in fact he makes his appearance in order to watch all

the Anarchs scurry out as fast as they can. Needless to say, this has not made him popular with Brennon.

Since half the city's Ventrue come here on some kind of a regular basis, Lodin has found the Succubus Club a convenient place to pass along messages, meet with his progeny and even make some plans. Unbeknownst to the general Kindred population of Chicago, the Succubus Club played a major role during the Council Wars of the 1980s. From here the Ventrues spied and plotted, hatched Operation Incubator and came to lick their wounds.

Now they come to the club and savor their victory, looking out at the defeated Anarchs from the safety of the fourth floor lounge. At the same time, some Ventrue use the club to make their own connections with their clan's long-time enemies. For instance, Kevin Jackson has begun to make friends among the rebels during his many business trips to the dark Labyrinth. Were other Ventrue to discover these friendships, the gang leader would claim they were made for the purpose of gathering information, but in fact they serve his own purposes.

Neutrals

Not every Vampire who comes to the club is part of the War of Ages. The club attracts Kindred from across the spectrum, and most of Chicago's Undead have come here at least once. The club has also built up a national reputation, bringing in Kindred from all over who happen to have any business in the Windy City. They know that if they come to Chicago and thirst, then the Succubus Club will take care of them.

Among the city's inhabitants, the Toreador make up the most common visitors aside from Anarchs and Ventrues. In fact, they prefer the Succubus Club to any other nightclub in town, enjoying the music, the art and the parties with more vigor than most humans. Indeed, Annabelle Triabell has long been known to use the club for many of her own purposes, including her schemes on the Primogen. The club also operates as one of her favorite places to throw parties for the Undead.

Two of Annabelle's Childer, Sophia and Bret, take great pleasure in the respect and envy the mortal patrons of the club feel for them. Bret especially enjoys using his stunning looks and overpowering Presence to make a young woman fall absolutely in love with him, feed on her once during a moment of passion, and then abandon her. If he can leave her for her best friend, so much the better.

Only two if the city's Malkavians come here at all, but they are both regulars. Son and Evan Klein both enjoy the club a great deal, though Son likes it for much the same reason as Bret does. Here he can find a host of mortals with whom to toy, and more than one Succubus Club patron has ended up far worse for having met the madman.

Few Gangrels or Nosferatus show up here, though you never know which Sewer Rats might be hiding in the

shadows. The only Gangrels who appear with anything resembling regularity are the members of the Wolf Pack, who storm into the club at least once on any non-business visit to Chicago. When they come to the city in the role of Archons, however, they avoid the club like the plague.

Elders

Elders show up at the club from time to time, voluntarily submitting themselves to the rumor and gossip mill which is Kindred society. The brief visit by a member of the Primogen is sure to be seen by at least one other Vampire, and is usually enough to send waves of speculation rippling through all in the area. For this reason, most of Chicago's Elders avoid the club, but for some there is no choice.

For instance, Annabelle Triabell maintains a constant presence here, so if another Elder wishes to deal with her, there is no better place. While the Brujah Tyler has not ventured into the club for a year, she used to be a regular, and others seeking her may well come here. The ancient Nosferatu Khalid has appeared out of the shadows of the Labyrinth in order to meet with someone, and the wise Brujah Critias has been known to take great pleasure in inviting other Kindred here when he needs to deal with them and then watch them become unsettled by the crush of humanity and the manic action always swirling through the club. Even the Tremere leader Nicolai, though he appears too young to enter the club, has been seen in the fourth floor lounge talking with Brennon.

The Competitors

The Blue Velvet, located on State Street, has been the Succubus Club's main competitor for the business of the Undead. While the Succubus Club has become known as a hang-out for the Anarchs and the Toreador, Kindred rumor has it that The Blue Velvet serves as a staging area for the schemes of the Elders. Certainly more of Lodin's broods go there for pleasure than visit Brennon's club. Still, this does not make that rumor true. Indeed, one is more likely to find members of the Primogen at the Succubus Club than they are at the Blue Velvet. Also, a number of Anarchs, including most of Juggler's coterie and some of the Nihilists, go to the Blue Velvet in hopes of finding out what the other side is up. Finally, the Blue Velvet is the best place for them to hear Baby Chorus now that the band refuses to play the Succubus Club.

Thus the Succubus Club has actually become as much a haven for the establishment as it was for the Rebels, a fact which pleases Brennon but means he risks losing both groups should they find out. After all, the Anarchs do not want to be seen regularly attending a place known as a place for Elders while an Elder would be devastated were he caught enjoying himself at an Anarch hangout. This remains true despite the fact that both events happen with frightening regularity.

Succubus Club

Thus Brennon has to carry on a delicate balancing act to keep every one coming to his club and not running off to the Blue Velvet. To help increase his chances of success, he has begun a quiet whispering campaign against his rival. For ammunition he uses the anonymity of the club's owner ("Just what do we know about this person, anyway?"), the mysterious nature of the doorman ("Do you really trust a member of the Canaille you cannot control?") and the club's age ("How could anyone attend a club which still lives in the '70s?").

One thing Brennon absolutely dreads is the chance that all his Undead clientele might leave his club for the competition, leaving him with far less opportunity to increase his influence among the Kindred. Thus he will do anything to ensure other Vampires come to his club instead of the Blue Velvet.

Cast of Characters:

Brennon Thornhill — The Ventrue owner of the Succubus Club, Brennon has discovered the club to be a perfect place for his purposes. Originally conceived of as a prime way to launder drug money, since his conversion the club has given him access to limitless numbers of Blood Dolls more than willing to serve as his Vessels. As far as they are concerned, sharing blood with him is the ultimate Blood Doll experience (though none ever seem to notice that they drink his blood). Secondly, the club quickly became a primary hangout for Vampires of all types. Anarchs, Ventrues, Toreadors and even Elders soon made the club a regular part of their nightcrawling around the city. Since it is only on exceptionally rare nights that no other Kindred are present, Brennon has milked his club's popularity for all it is worth.

He makes a point of introducing himself to any unfamiliar Kindred in the club with a smile and a handshake, offering them them hospitality, friendship and Blood Dolls, all with "no price and no obligation." Snake-oil salesman is a term which springs to the minds of high-Humanity Cainites when they first meet Brennon (he allows no Kindred to call him by his last name). And, of course, he does eventually want something in return. On first meeting him, however, it is unlikely the characters will know any of this. Instead, by dint of his high Charisma and Etiquette, he should immediately ingratiate himself with the characters, appearing as a benevolent ally whose primary interests are running the premier nightspot in Chicago and having a great time while doing so.

Newcomers who show a great deal of class may soon find themselves invited to the legendary penthouse parties, where mere fantasy can quickly turn into reality. Others (Gangrel, Nosferatu and Caitiff) will find Brennon witty, urbane and engaging, and may never notice that they are not being invited to those self-same parties. All Kindred will find the

club owner to be a veritable fount of information about what goes on in Cainite society (though he never tells all he knows). He also knows much of what goes on among the kine and is more than willing to provide his brothers and sisters with suitable Vessels for their feeding, as well as places to enjoy the club's delicacies. Some Kindred even feel indebted to him for keeping the Succubus Club open as a place where they can live as they want to live.

In truth, Brennon never does anything for free. He never forgets a favor he has done anyone, and the list of Kindred in his debt is long and still growing. He avoids calling these markers due unless he must, and for now primarily uses them to make himself seem generous and magnanimous among the Undead. Thus even Kindred as influential and powerful as Capone and Annabelle Triabell seem to look upon him as almost an equal.

Brennon might not hold this same status, however, if all the Kindred were aware of his two greatest secrets. First of all, it is an open secret that he is a Ventrue, scion of Lodin. Those Kindred who have been around Chicago for a while (Secrets Knowledge of B- or better) know this, but that means a number of Anarchs and club goers would be surprised to find out they have been supporting someone who may well be reporting all they tell him back to the prince. Most of these just naturally assume the nightclub owner is a Toreador.

Brennon's other secret, which only one Kindred knows and of which Brennon himself only suspects, is that his actions are controlled by a Methuselah. Helena (Portia) found him to be a vehicle almost crying out to be manipulated. His driving ambition, combined with an actual need for respect, brought him first to Prias' attention and then to Helena's. They found the rich and powerful drug dealer to be perfectly fit for their plans. Thanks to Prias' subtle domination, Brennon decided to open a nightclub over the spot where Helena would soon rise from Torpor. Prias also influenced the renovation of the old warehouse to ensure her protection.

Now Brennon serves as one of Helena's first lines of protection, helping to keep her safe and sound. He always confides what he learns in her, though few other Kindred have noticed the close relationship between the two. Brennon has only recently come to realize that many of his actions during the past decade may have been influenced by another and is beginning to suspect the hand of a Methuselah playing with his life and those of the other Chicago Kindred. He still has no idea who it might be, though he suspects Prias may somehow be connected to this unseen power.

Brennon's one disappointment regarding his beloved club comes from its name. Originally conceived of as the Succubus, an errant artist painted "Succubus Club" on the sign and clubworkers put it up before Brennon had a chance to see it. The name caught on so quickly that Brennon has since been unwilling to change the sign. Still, an easy way

to get on Brennon's good side is to call the club "Succubus" and not "The Succubus Club."

Portia — More than a century ago a mighty battle rent both heaven and earth on the sight of what is now Chicago. At the end of it, a lone ghoul took up his ancient lover and buried her deep in the sweet earth. For decades he kept watch over her grave, making sure none violated it and receiving vague telepathic commands from its occupant. And, slowly, the great city grew up around the tomb.

Now the mighty Helena has risen from the ground and into a world far more foreign than she thought possible. Wary of automobiles, shocked by television and bewildered by the mortals themselves, Helena has retreated into the safety of the Succubus Club. Here she has made her home since waking late last year. She loves the crowds, the music and especially the excitement, all of which remind her of the nights when she ruled in Pompeii.

Still, she has yet to adapt to this new age in which she lives. Adapting the alias Portia, she has become known as a club regular. Were you to ask anyone about her, however, they could tell you little except that she is beautiful. Most mortals attribute her distance to aloofness, while other Kindred assume her reticence to interact with them is nothing more than a typical neonate's fear of her betters.

Both views have the grain of truth in them, but neither is completely on the money. She is indeed aloof, as the mortals believe. She is also afraid, as the Kindred believe. Her feelings of superiority come from the fact that she is indeed smarter, stronger and more attractive than anyone around. She is also afraid because she knows there are many would like little more in life than to slay her.

Thus, from the moment she rises well after sunset till the second she closes her eyes in sleep an hour before sunrise, she spends almost all her time in the club. Her interaction with those who frequent the club has given her a unique perspective for viewing the world around her. While she herself remains a product of early Greek culture, her attitudes toward the modern world have been formed from conversations with Blood Dolls, punks and Gangstas. Thus, while she feels the world has become more enlightened and sophisticated, she also feels it to be far scarier. Airplanes, nuclear weapons, television — all of these are outside her frame of reference and all pose a threat.

As Portia, she is known as a recently arrived neonate, who allegedly came from the Greek isles. She still has a Greek accent, but learned enough English in the 1800s to get by. She is smart and skilled enough to avoid slipping up and using archaic jargon, and her conversations with the club goers has placed her on the cutting edge of modern slang.

Still, she avoids conversations with other Kindred as much as possible, and is careful to feign ignorance about historical events. Since she really knows little about the real world, however, she also tries to limit her conversation on this topic, leaving her with little to talk about. Thus other Kindred are correct in viewing her as timid and distant.

She does rule her minions from the club, though. Some, like Prias, get orders directly from her. Others, like the Brujah Tyler, receive their orders through telepathy. The rest get their commands via these Kindred, placing Helena at the top of the pyramid which is Chicago's Kindred.

Prias — After burying his lover deep in the dark earth at the bottom of a well, the ghoul Prias bricked up the well and then covered it with dirt. He then prepared himself to stand guard, waiting for her recovery. The wait took far longer than he had expected. During the years Helena lay in torpor, her lover, despite his great power, could not stop this growth, and instead decided to make the most of it.

Through his machinations, Prias managed to ensure that the building to be constructed over his love's resting place was built primarily of stone. Knowing that Helena's enemies would take any opportunity to discover her resting place, the ghoul decided the form of the building should take must allow him to keep watch over it without him drawing attention to it. Thus the warehouse, with its cavernous size, crates and infinite hiding places proved perfect for his plans.

Through the years he kept his eye on his beloved, making certain none could disturb her rest, and taking greatest care to remain undetected by her enemy. As the years slipped away, Prias noticed himself drawn less and less to this duty. He would still receive occasional telepathic commands from the sleeping Helena, but they came to mean less and less to him. Still, when he realized he had been Blood Bound to her it came as a shock. Unsure of what to do, feeling betrayed by his immortal lover, he may well have abandoned her then and there were it not for the fact that she contacted him that night.

Helena could feel herself starting to shake of the long years of torpor she had gone through, and wanted to ensure that the site of her awakening would be both safe and exciting, a place to learn as well as a place to sleep. She asked Prias to take care of the matter, and Prias, to his own surprise, agreed.

With schemes of revenge battling images of their past love in his brain, Prias came to the conclusion that building Helena's haven would give him the chance for revenge, if he ever desired to take it. This way he would know her haven better than she herself would.

He sought out someone who would have both the money and the inclination to bring his vision to life. He decided on Brennon Thornhill, a rich drug dealer whose acquaintance he had just made. With the aid of his powers of Domination, Prias soon convinced his friend that a nightclub in Downtown would be the perfect place from which to take care of business. Soon the Succubus Club made its appearance over Helena's resting place.

Now Prias spends most of his time in the club itself. There are many days when he will remove his long coat and go to sleep on a couch in Brennon's office. He has yet to come to a decision about killing Helena, but has been very careful not

to drink any of her Vitæ. Luckily, his lover has been so involved with the new world and her schemes of revenge against Menele that she has not noticed his change.

John Toynbee — Brennon Thornhill has begun to have less and less hands-on control of the Succubus Club as the years since his conversion have passed, and more and more of the work has fallen on the slim shoulders of John Toynbee, his friend and ally since his days as one of Chicago's drug lords. When Brennon first started dealing as a young teenager, his friend John provided the financial backing. As Brennon became more successful, however, John faded further and further from the picture. Indeed, it was John who had to come crawling to Brennon for help after spending several expensive months battling his cocaine addiction. Brennon saw immediate value in his down-and-out friend, and put him to work as the number two man in what was to be a major money laundering operation — the Succubus Club.

The success of the club has precluded its continued operation as means of converting dirty money for clean, but that has not given John Toynbee less to do. In fact, since 1985 he has found himself taking on more responsibility. He no longer sees Brennon during the daylight hours, and his old friend has asked him to take on more of the daytime duties like dealing with beer distributors, booking bands and handling the employees, making him *de facto* manager.

John has seen a lot of odd things at the Succubus Club and is still unsure of what has happened to his old friend Brennon. He has had to overcome all his old cultural prejudices to even make vampirism a suspicion, but it is fast becoming a suspicion he cannot avoid. Having seen the odd things Brennon's "friends" (other Kindred) can do, John has started to keep an eye on them for confirmation of his suspicions. Even if he were to learn Brennon is a Vampire, however, he feels he owes the club owner far too much to ever do anything to oppose him.

All John's attributes are two except for his Intelligence of three. Among his abilities are an Empathy and Streetwise of two and a Drive and Firearms of three. Feel free to give him any other abilities (especially Knowledges) you want to. He still has an Uzi submachine gun from his drug dealing days which he keeps hidden in his office. While it has not been fired in several years, John keeps it cleaned and oiled "for old times sake."

Rex Jameson — Rex and the Succubus Club have become synonymous in many people's minds. Among the first bouncers hired when Brennon Thornhill opened the club in 1982, he has stayed with it through thick and thin, and now heads the rest of the club's "Security Team" (bouncers). Despite his age (he was in his early 20s when he first started working at the club), Rex remains a huge and powerful looking man and ranks among the most fearsome kine opponents one of the Kindred could face. While he does not believe in the existence of the Undead, he does know that

Brennon allows some incredibly strange people a great deal of latitude in his club. The powers which some of these people have manifested Rex attributes to drugs, and he has learned to always keep an eye on Gengis. Still, once he discovers someone has become one of Brennon's special friends, he will allow them to get away with far more than he would any normal patron. On occasion, these special friends have proved especially useful in preventing fights, or stopping them in record time once they have started.

All Rex's non-physical Attributes are at two. His Strength is four and his Dexterity and Stamina are three. He has an Alertness of two, Athletics of three, Brawl four (with a specialty in grapple), Dodge two, Intimidation three and Security two. He prefers to intimidate troublemakers into submission — a Strength + Intimidation roll — but will resort to violence when necessary. He does his best to avoid damage to the club, grappling whenever possible, and will call for help from other bouncers as quickly as possible.

Kyle Ryper and Sandra Oshe — Brennon first met Kyle and Sandra when he began dealing and they came looking for steroids. Then teenagers, the two had already set their sights on becoming Olympic power lifters, and Brennon's connections proved invaluable. Both grew big and strong, soon becoming known figures in regional weightlifting competitions. As Brennon's operations grew and grew, he lost track of these old friends. Then, shortly before the Succubus Club opened, he saw them profiled on



television during competition. He immediately sought them out and offered them a substantial salary to work for his club both as bouncers and as publicity — and to provide muscle for his less legitimate enterprises.

For the next several years they worked alongside Brennon, rarely having to use their muscle as their very mass tended to intimidate foes into submission. Then came Brennon's transformation into one of the Undead. Realizing that in the future he would likely face foes more dangerous than those he had faced before, the drug lord decided to make his trusted bodyguards into immortal protectors — but not Vampires. Feeding them his immortal blood would not only make them mightier, but would also ensure their loyalty. He does not know they have been Blood Bound to someone else.

The night after Brennon first gave them a taste of his Vitæ, Helena paid the two colossi her first late-night visit. For three consecutive nights she fed them each a drop of her super-potent blood, bonding them to her and greatly enhancing their natural strength before wiping any memory of the event from their minds. Since those nights the two have fed on Brennon's blood, but remained tied to the Methuselah. Thus Brennon believes they continue to work at the club out of loyalty to him, while in fact their allegiance belongs to Helena.

In the club they provide muscle for when fights get out of hand as well as being the most active defense against out-of-control Kindred. Helena has quietly compelled them to seek combat training, and now the two are more effective fighters than the average weightlifter. Rex Jameson appreciates their help in keeping the club under control, but he does not trust them. Since they respond primarily to Brennon's orders and still help him on affairs outside of the club, Jameson has little control over them. Of course, only Helena has real control of them.

Both weightlifters have Strengths of four and Dexterities and Staminas of three. All their other Attributes are two. They both have Brawl and Intimidation of three, Streetwise of one and Security of one, as well as Potence two, Celerity one and Fortitude one. Both are huge individuals, extremely heavily muscled and rock hard.

Other Bouncers — The Succubus Club generally has five to 10 bouncers on duty, though Toynbee will hire more for special events. Half spend their time in the basement and the other half patrol the ground floor, with Rex Jameson generally taking the cover charge and manning the front door with the assistance of one other. Rarely do any bouncers make their way to the balcony. In event of trouble anywhere, one or two bouncers will try to take care of it. If the problem seems beyond their ability, then Rex will wade in. If things are beyond even his capabilities (a rare event) then Brennon Thornhill himself will appear to calm things down.

The average bouncer has Attributes of two except for a three Strength. The only exceptional Abilities they all have are Brawl and Alertness scores of two. They are unarmed and wear black T-shirts with black pants, though any work-

ing the door on a cold night will wear a black satin jacket with "Succubus Club" written across the back.

Bartenders — While Brennon made an early push to hire highly skilled bartenders, his interest in this angle of his business seems to have drained away since 1985. John Toynbee has ensured that the balcony bars are always served by well-trained mixologists, but the rest of the club's bars seem to be in a catch-as-catch-can situation. Whenever Brennon throws a party in the penthouse, however, one can be ensured only the city's best bartenders will do. On occasion Toynbee will hire someone of particular talents to work the large ground floor bar, but for the most part friends of bouncers and other employees staff the club's bars.

Unless you need the bartenders to be especially skilled, consider them to have all Attributes at two and a Knowledge of bartending at one. Their likelihood to know a particular drink requires them to roll Intelligence + Bartending against the drink's difficulty (four for martinis, 10 for a Screaming Viking).

Waitresses — While Brennon has not done much to ensure the skill of his bartenders, he has gone to great lengths to maintain the quality of his waitresses. He has no compunction against hiring them away from his competitors and looks as much for skill as he does appearance. When he first turned into one of the Undead, he swore to himself he would never feed on his workers, but as the years have faded away, so has that vow. He still limits using them as donors as much as possible, but on occasion (especially when an especially pretty one has been hired) he cannot help himself.

Waitresses have Attributes of two everywhere except in Dexterity and Appearance, both of which are rated at three. Aside from whatever skills you want an individual waitress to have, they all have the Talent of Waitressing at a minimum of two.

Kindred Regulars — Many of the Undead aside from those listed above have made the Succubus Club one of their regular haunts. They come to the Succubus not only for the easily obtained Vitæ but for the same reasons humans stop in at the neighborhood bar — to relax among those like themselves. Since there are so many Kindred at the club, Vampires gain a great deal of pleasure in relaxing their disguise here after a hard night of maintaining the Masquerade. In addition, the club's pleasures do not stop here. There are Blood Dolls to laugh at, schemes to uncover and dancing to be done. All in all, there are more reasons for the Kindred to go to the Succubus Club than there are to stay away.

Among the Undead from *Chicago by Night* who come here on a semi-regular basis are Hank Cave, Theodore Dooley, Balthazar (but only to scout out the Anarchs — never suggest to his face that he has fun here), Levesque, Damien, Gengis, Gordon Keaton, Malcolm, Son, Evan Klein (usually in his Raymond Falcon personality, though you might want to give him a Blood Doll personality — what will a character do when she starts to feed on a Vessel and then discovers she has drunk from a Kindred?), Annabelle,

Sophia Ayes, Bret Stryker, Garwood Marshall, Capone, Kevin Jackson, Lorraine and Prias. Lodin himself occasionally makes an appearance, while Elucid has begun to represent the Nosferatu thanks to his ability with One Thousand Faces. Still uncomfortable out in the open, however, he sticks to the Labyrinth and goes primarily to meet other Anarchs. Some notable absences from the club include the Toreador Maria, the Brujah Tyler and the band Baby Chorus.

Helena slew Maria upon first rising from Torpor, a fact which no Kindred in the city are aware of. Via their Blood Bond, Helena also ordered Tyler, who used to attend regularly, to stay away out of a fear the Brujah would recognize her. Finally, the members of Baby Chorus stopped playing here after being swamped by a wave of adoring Blood Dolls. Now completely fed up with the movement, they refuse to play here as long as it is a Blood Doll hangout. All the members of the band except Kathy Glens still go here, however, and there are always rumors floating about that Brennan has convinced them to play his club again.

Blood Doll — The average Blood Doll is between the ages of 16 and 25, with few on the outside of this range. From primarily middle and upper-class families, they look at everything around them with a bored indifference derived from a past of useless luxury and a future of empty goals. For these students, aspiring artists and dispassionate dilettantes, nights of dancing, alcohol, sex and blood give them at least a temporary purpose.

The average Blood Doll has Attributes of two, though it is not too uncommon to find one with Social or Mental Attributes of three. They have no special Abilities except for a Subterfuge of one (they have become exceptionally skilled at lying to their parents, teachers and even each other), a Drive of one or two and a Dance Skill of two. Those who share blood (the true Blood Dolls as far as they are concerned) usually carry small, sharp knives with a difficulty of 5 and a damage of Strength + 1. Most would never think of using these in a fight, however, as the blades have usually never been used for anything other than cutting themselves so they can drink from one another.

William Killigrew — One of the more well known Blood Dolls is William Killigrew, who has quietly shared blood with several hundred different people. A skinny youth of average height, no one can remember seeing him attired in anything other than the finest of tight black Z. Cavaricci jackets, scarlet silk shirts, ultra-tight black pants and high-heeled boots. His collection of silver jewelry leaves his fellow Blood Dolls to shame, and his make up has been applied well enough to have been done by a Broadway master.

Killigrew's fame does not rest purely upon the amount of people he has shared blood with. He flits from place to place in the club, spending little time in anyone area but talking to everyone. Despite Killigrew's perpetual look of elegant disdain, people find it easy to talk to him. Slowly he has amassed a wealth of knowledge about the club's regulars, though the chance of him sharing this knowledge freely is slim.

For this reason, no one in the club is aware that he knows about the existence of the Kindred. Annabelle Triabell, Brennan, Sophia and a number of the Anarchs have all fed off him at one point or another. From them he has begun to gain an understanding of what Vampires really are, something which may prove catastrophic for some.

Several weeks ago, the Holcombs, old family friends of the Killigrew's, were brutally slain. The Blood Doll now spends much of his time on the lookout for a young black man he suspects was the Vampire who slew the family. The next time he sees Damien, things will click in his brain. Killigrew as a hunter could be deadly to the Kindred community despite his lack of combat training. His knowledge and his position among those they see as the least threatening kine could well prove enough to make up for this lack. Were he to meet Neon (Jimmy Holcomb) things may change, but by then it might be too late.

Killigrew has Attributes of two except for a three Intelligence and Charisma and a four Appearance. Other than the typical Blood Doll abilities, he also has a Melee of one, an Occult and Streetwise of two and a Subterfuge and Chicago Knowledge of three.

Annabelle's Party

Written by Graeme Davis, Illustrated by Gail Van Voorhis

*"And now the torch
And shadows lead
Were it not so black and hard to see
How can it help you when you don't know what you need
How can anybody set you free?"*

Sisters of Mercy, "Torch"

There is little worse than underestimating a foe, especially one with as much potential as a Cainite Elder. Few Vampires (other than Malkavians) can get away with playing dumb, but those who can gain a decided advantage over their Kindred.

Thus, when a Vampire thought to be a dolt appears to have mortally embarrassed one of Chicago's leaders, the whole city flies into a frenzy. However, it is up to the characters to discover whether the dolt has become a puppeteer . . . or just a puppet.

HOW TO RUN THIS STORY

The story makes up a single chapter, and falls into five Scenes summarized below. It is designed to be played in a single game session, but can be developed to take longer if you wish.

After an opening crescendo in which several embarrassing practical jokes are played on a member of the Primogen, the story becomes one of investigation — with the added dimension of time pressure, as the players try to discover what is going on and find the person responsible before anyone else can. The majority of the story consists of pure roleplaying, with little or no combat and few dice rolls of other kinds. The story ends with a hiatus, which may be too much of an anticlimax for some players' tastes; you are encouraged to develop things from this point on if you wish, using the information presented here as a springboard.

THE PLOT

Scene One: Annabelle Triabell is hosting a party at the Succubus Club. Some characters will have been lucky enough to have been invited; others will be elsewhere in the club. A series of humiliating events turns the party into a shambles, leaving Annabelle looking extremely foolish before the prominent Kindred of Chicago and a number of distinguished Toreador visitors from elsewhere.

Scene Two: Having stepped in to prevent the party from degenerating into a brawl, the attending Elders examine the events closely and conclude that they are connected. Elsewhere in the club, gossip is spreading like wildfire and a number of Kindred are coming to the same conclusion. Various interested parties indulge themselves in a little scene-of-the-crime investigation.

Scene Three: Clues, gossip and guesswork all seem to point to the rail baron Edgar Drummond, who was not present at the party. Lodin summons Drummond to attend him to explain himself, but a number of interested parties are trying to reach Drummond before the Prince does. Some, convinced that his attack on Annabelle was a declaration of war, want to sound him out about possible alliances; others, similarly convinced, want to take vengeance of their own, or protect the *status quo*. Still others want to question him and find out precisely what is going on. Each group has anticipated the probable existence of most of the others, and each is trying to stop anyone else getting to Drummond first.

Scene Four: Having found Drummond and gained an audience, the problem is to determine what is going on. He himself is convinced that the events at the party were all his

own idea and that the whole business is a simple matter of revenge; however, he is merely a pawn used by the financier Horatio Ballard in a subtle bid for power. If the characters decide that someone is manipulating Drummond, they may have to convince Drummond himself of this before enquiries can progress any further. The rail baron's quirky personality will complicate any dealings with him enormously.

Coda: Any apparent progress in cracking the case draws the attention of Ballard, who responds by setting various traps and obstacles in the investigators' path. The Coda includes notes on the possible directions the story can take from this starting-point.

WHAT IS REALLY GOING ON

Annabelle's Party concerns an attempt by Horatio Ballard to embarrass and discredit Annabelle Triabell. This attempt is part of a larger plan to weaken her position in the Primogen, which in turn is one of several means by which Ballard hopes eventually to become a member of the Primogen himself.

Not wishing to act directly against Annabelle, Ballard found an ideal tool in Edgar Drummond, the reclusive and eccentric master of Chicago's rail system. Flattering him constantly about the importance of rail transport to the city's economy and the obvious stupidity of those who failed to

realize this, Ballard gave Drummond the idea of sponsoring a multi-media railroad festival. This event would surely convince Kindred and kine alike of the importance of Drummond's domain, giving him increased respect and prestige among the Kindred of Chicago.

Drummond was delighted with the idea, which he soon came to believe was entirely his own. Through various retainers, the festival began to take shape. Several prominent galleries showed special exhibitions of railroad art. The Philharmonic played a special concert featuring such rail-oriented pieces as *The Coronation Scot*.. Movie theaters showed special features ranging from *Casey Jones* and *Murder on the Orient Express* to European art films like *Subway* and *Closely Observed Trains*. TV stations joined in with documentaries, movies and feature programmes. For a full week, Chicago went train crazy.

There was even talk of building a massive National Museum of Rail Transportation in Chicago, extending the site of the Historic Pullman Foundation and moving collections in from the Illinois Railway Museum in Union City, the National Railroad Museum in Green Bay and the Smithsonian Institution.

Of course, such an event could scarcely happen without a visit from Annabelle and her Toreador cohorts. As Ballard had anticipated, the Toreadors treated the whole rail festival with amused contempt — after all, since none of them had had a hand in it, how *could* it have any merit? At the closing concert, Annabelle made some supercilious comments about “a childish diversion” as opposed to “true art”, with the predictable result that Drummond flew into a rage, and stalked out swearing revenge.

In the course of commiserating with his “friend”, Ballard subtly planted some ideas in Drummond's mind. He did not need to use Domination or any other Discipline; Drummond seized eagerly on the merest hint in Ballard's conversation, and convinced himself that the ideas were his own. Those ideas are now about to come to fruition at a party which Annabelle is holding in the private lounge of the Succubus Club to celebrate the anniversary of her Change.

Using Drummond, Ballard intends to have a number of embarrassing things happen to Annabelle at the party. He knows that her previous attempts to impress fellow-Toreadors (and indeed, Kindred in general) have been failures, and plans to capitalize on this weakness. The idea is to humiliate Annabelle, increasing widespread doubts about her suitability to sit on the Primogen.

Since Drummond has been convinced that the planned events are his own ideas rather than Ballard's, the financier is theoretically shielded from any recriminations or unpleasant consequences — the world at large will see only a feud between Drummond and Annabelle, in which the petty and childish rail baron is seen to score several palpable hits against the supposedly refined and sophisticated Toreador leader. Annabelle's standing will take a severe knock, paving the way for a number of other plans which Ballard is



concocting. Things could become very messy, but any unpleasantness will rebound on Drummond rather than Ballard; indeed, the financier will not even be present.

THEME

The theme of this story is a variation on the overall theme of Chicago as expounded in *Chicago by Night* — *Nothing Is As It Seems* — with the added dimension that *You Never See The Whole Picture*. Everything is part of a greater whole. The events of this story are themselves only a small part of Ballard's campaign to undermine Annabelle, which in turn is only a part of his strategy for elevating himself to the Primogen, which itself is simply a means to various ends of his own.

At all times, the players must feel that they only have part of the picture. They must always feel that the whole truth is eluding them, that there is more to discover and that at least some of what they think they know is false. Uncertainty is the order of the day.

A secondary theme, which may emerge during play, is that *Information Is Power*. This was not planned in the original design of this story, but has emerged in the process of writing. Access to information (or to people who can obtain it) is the single most valuable asset the characters can have in completing this story successfully. Characters who take the trouble to befriend Bobby Weatherbottom in the early stages can have a much easier ride through this story, and an invaluable resource for later.

MOOD

The Mood of this story is a mixture of comedy and tension; ideally, the two should throw each other into sharp relief. The events of the party are comical, unless you happen to be Annabelle, but their implications are more sinister. Someone is attacking the leader of a major clan — why? Is it a childish revenge, as it seems, or part of a greater plan? What is the goal of this plan — to discredit an individual, to destabilize a clan, or to throw the Kindred of Chicago into civil war, weakening them before a more direct attack by an outside foe?

Being such compulsive plotters themselves, Vampires, and especially members of the more "respectable" clans, are easy prey to conspiracy-theory panic. Imaginations will quickly run riot, and give rise to hysteria and conflict. It is this rising hysteria, and the increasing threat of some violent outburst leading to general anarchy, which provides this story with its tension. As the players uncover a new connection, they must feel time pressure on their characters to follow it up before anyone else can do so, for only they have sufficient objectivity: they must find the criminal before the lynch-mob does.



SCENE ONE:

WHAT A SWELL PARTY

The story opens with Annabelle's party in full swing in the private third-floor lounge of the Succubus Club. As usual, everyone who is anyone (at least in Annabelle's eyes) is here. Annabelle is surrounded by her normal clique of partygoers.

The entire scene takes place in the third-floor lounge of the Succubus Club. For the party, the lounge has been cleared of furniture, apart from a number of chairs arranged around the walls, a grand piano in one corner, a small stage with a curtain and a cd player filling most of one end, and a black marble plinth holding the veiled "sculpture" (see *But is it Art?* below) somewhere towards the center of the room.

Getting In

Admission is by invitation only, and for once no mortals are present. The celebration of Annabelle's Change is a Kindred affair, and she intends that, after she has presented various artworks and entertainments and received the applause and admiration of all present, some serious politicking will take place.

Toreador characters will automatically receive a tastefully-printed invitation to the party; though others may do if they have shown an interest in the arts. The Storyteller can decide which characters are invited, or have players make a roll for those characters who are trying to wangle an invitation. A suitable roll is Manipulation + Art, against a difficulty of 8 (9 for Nosferatu) — Annabelle wants this to be a select gathering. A single success is enough to be invited.

Characters who are not invited can take no part in this scene, but no matter — there are ample chances to become involved later on. A great many Kindred are at the Succubus



Club tonight; Prince Lodin and several of the Elders will be attending the party, and their presence attracts several Kindred who want to request boons, ask advice, or just bask in their reflected glory. Newly-created characters might be brought here by their Sires, who wish to present them to the Prince; newcomers from out of town will be here to announce their arrival.

This scene lends itself to live roleplaying particularly well; although the key events (particularly Bret and Sophia's dance) should only be attempted by those with a strong taste for such things, the scene as a whole contains a great deal of unscripted interaction and very little rolling of dice.

Key Events

There are four plot elements to this scene; essentially they break the scene itself down into four subsections or events. In addition to these scripted events, you should encourage players to get to know the other guests, and promote unscripted interaction between characters. Most of this will probably be inconsequential party talk, but there are also valuable opportunities to make contacts and gather information. If this story is used as part of a greater whole — such as the “Forged in Steel” Chronicle, for instance — then many characters will have their own agendas to pursue, and attending the party will be a means to an end for them. The party should take at least an hour or two of game time before it falls apart; the four events presented here are scarcely enough to fill twenty minutes.

The one thing you should avoid at all costs is having characters just standing around waiting for something to happen, with the players aware that their characters are at the party only because this is where the story begins.

Event One: Happy Families

The ongoing feud between Sharon and Michael Payne is well-known to most of the city's Kindred; so a few eyebrows are raised when they both arrive, within minutes of each other. Annabelle normally takes great care to avoid scenes at her parties by inviting only one Payne, or neither. This time, though, she seems to have slipped up.

For a while, the two avoid each other, but eventually they fall into a heated argument about who should have declined the invitation in order to prevent a scene. This develops into a loud debate about whether or not a scene is currently in progress, and if so who is to blame. Annabelle, looking extremely embarrassed, takes the two of them to one side and tries to smooth things over. Eventually, both Paynes stalk out. Comments are made behind her back about Annabelle's apparent inability to keep her own progeny in line.

Event Two: Unspeakable Acts

Having dealt with the fight between the Paynes, Annabelle regains her composure and makes a short speech welcoming everyone to the party. She promises that there are fine entertainments ahead, along with the unveiling of a most exciting piece of sculpture by one of her mortal protégés. First, she announces a short dance by Sophia Ayes: characters may be able to detect a slight nervousness about her voice, and some may remember that Sophia has disappointed her in the past.

Sophia takes to an improvised stage which has been set up at one end of the lounge. Before her performance starts, she too makes a brief announcement:

“Um, before I get started, folks, I'd just like to say - well, most of you know me, and I'm sure a lot of you think you know what you're gonna see. Well, this is different - very different.”

Far as I know, it's never been done before. An' it's just for Annabelle. So - oh yeah, an' Bret's gonna help me out. Bret?"

Bret Stryker, who has been acting as doorman, comes up to the stage and Sophia punches the "play" button on a cd deck set up at one side of the stage. Suitable music for the performance would be *We Are The Dead* by David Bowie (from *Diamond Dogs*), or almost anything by Dead Can Dance: *Host of the Seraphim* from *The Serpent's Egg*, *De Profundis* from *Spleen and Ideal* or *Saltarello* from *Aion* are especially recommended, depending on the precise tone the Storyteller wishes to set for the performance.

Sophia is trying to achieve two things with this performance — firstly, to rekindle Annabelle's interest in her by doing something with real artistic merit; and secondly, to shock and startle the Vampire community, who treat her with amused tolerance rather than the lust and awe she used to inspire in mortals.

The piece she and Bret perform in honor of Annabelle's Change certainly shocks the assembled Kindred. It begins as a fairly standard classically-inspired *pas de deux*, performed moderately well but not brilliantly. There are a couple of suppressed chuckles as the dancers begin to shed their clothes. Then Sophia pulls Bret savagely towards her, and sinks her teeth deep into his neck. He responds by grasping her wrist and doing the same. The performance becomes what might almost be called Vampiric pornography — two Kindred feeding continuously off each other, clothed only in streams of each other's Blood.

Annabelle is horrified. Most of the audience are shocked and embarrassed, and many, despite having fed before coming to the club, are disturbed by the sight of so much Blood, presented in such a fashion. Sophia was right about what turns a Vampire on, but the audience's reaction is not at all what she had hoped.

For the second time, Annabelle has been shown up by her own progeny. Her expression and tone of voice are enough to send Sophia and Bret scuttling from the room clutching their discarded clothing, and a curtain is hastily drawn across the blood-spattered stage.

Event Three: But is it Art?

Now visibly shaken, Annabelle proceeds to the unveiling of the sculpture. It is an interesting piece with an industrial-art feel, and it does not fall apart, become abusive, ooze blood or do anything else unexpected. Annabelle's out-of-town visitors gather round the piece with mild interest, and she quickly warms to her subject, waxing eloquent about the exciting talent of the young mortal sculptor she has discovered.

In fact, the piece is a governor mechanism from a steam locomotive - a joke which Drummond simply could not resist, especially after Annabelle's acid comments about trains and their lack of artistic merit. Sooner or later, some-

one will recognize this fact and point out to Annabelle that she has been deceived.

The actual staging of this is up to the Storyteller. Player characters have had little direct involvement in events so far, and might have a chance to spot the sculpture's true nature (Perception + Science or Engineering, difficulty 7). Or one of Annabelle's guests might ask about the artistic significance of a die-stamp reading "*Excelsior Locomotive Works, Union City, IL*".

To vary the pace of this scene, this event might be placed first, with the two preceding events taking place before the truth about the "sculpture" is discovered.

Event Four: Nevohteeb?

This event should be kept for last; it is the climax to which the other disasters have been building.

Annabelle is now thoroughly rattled, and desperate for some way to make up for these embarrassments. She heads for the grand piano which is in one corner of the lounge. Her comment about doing things yourself if you want them done properly tries to be light and witty, but comes out as strained and brittle. Opening a sheaf of sheet-music, she begins to play — a quirky but interesting piece, whose first few bars gain nods of guarded approval from the visiting Toreadors. The crowd begins to gravitate towards the piano.



Tamoszius, who has taken no part in the proceedings up to now, seems transfixed by the music. He listens intently, his head cocked on one side and his brow furrowed. Annabelle notices his reaction from the corner of her eye, and swells visibly. After she has finished the piece, there is tentative applause from the guests. Now radiant, the past embarrassments forgotten, Annabelle excitedly answers questions about a young musical protégé of hers — “*DESPERATELY in love with me, the poor lamb; he sends me the sweetest notes calling me his Muse*” — who composed the piece especially for her.

Annabelle’s moment of triumph is shattered by Tamoszius. Still deep in thought, but with a purposeful light in his eye, he strides over to the piano violin in hand, turns the sheet-music upside-down, and begins to play — a sickeningly familiar piece of classical music, such as Beethoven’s Fifth, Sixth or Ninth Symphony. Annabelle’s gift was nothing more than an inverted popular classic.

For a moment there is stunned silence, broken only by the sound of Tamoszius’ violin. Annabelle stands as if staked, her eyes and mouth wide open in shock. Then, a barely-suppressed chuckle comes from the back of the crowd. And another. And another. Even Lodin cannot hide a smile, and soon some guests are howling with laughter, tears of Blood rolling down their cheeks.

Something snaps inside Annabelle. This humiliation is the final straw, and she goes into Frenzy. With a bestial cry she hurls herself at Tamoszius, and will kill or maim him unless she is restrained.

Characters

Apart from Annabelle, the following characters will be at the party:

Sophia Ayes, until her dance;

Bret Stryker, who acts as doorman until Sophia’s dance;

Tamoszius, who sits to one side looking bored until Annabelle begins to play;

Kathy Glens, Garwood Marshall and Raymond Falcon, who keep pretty much to themselves;

Bobby Weatherbottom, who sits to one side ignored by all, reading the latest copy of MacUser;

Lodin, accompanied by **Lorraine**;

Capone, who comes and leaves early;

Brennon Thornhill, who manages to attend only about half the party, spending the other half attending to matters in the club;

Critias, Nicolai and DuSable, who spend a while discussing philosophy among themselves;

Helena, in her guise as the Toreador Neonate Portia, spends a while on the receiving end of pointed comments by Sophia, who believes Portia has replaced her in Annabelle’s affections;

Optionally, a couple of prominent Toreadors from out of town, to increase Annabelle’s humiliation (if stats are needed, use Annabelle’s, varying scores by a point here or there as you like);

...and such player characters as have been invited.

Details of all attending NPCs can be found in **Chicago by Night**.

SCENE TWO: ANOTHER FINE MESS

Annabelle’s attack on Tamoszius marks the start of another scene. The party is emphatically at an end, and people start trying to make sense of the things that have happened.

This is the point at which characters who were not invited to the party can enter the action; as word of the disaster spreads through the club and beyond, characters can be prompted by curiosity, concern or instructions from clan Elders to investigate.

Annabelle is pried away from Tamoszius and calmed down; order of a sort is restored. Annabelle is led away to one of the club’s private rooms by Lodin, Critias and Nicolai; word is sent to the other members of the Primogen that an emergency session is called for. The lounge is cleared, and word begins to spread through the Kindred in the club (and, in due course, the city) of what is going on. It may be possible to do a little scene-of-the-crime detective work, and discover or deduce the link with Drummond.

This scene starts with Annabelle being pulled off Tamoszius, and ends when one or more player characters decide there is a link with Drummond.

Getting Involved

Most characters will need little encouragement to investigate this bizarre sequence of events. Aside from idle curiosity, many characters will be motivated by the incipient paranoia which characterizes so many of the Kindred’s dealings with each other — they will need to know what is going on, in order to assure themselves that they are not next on the list.

And then again, there could be a significant political advantage to be gained by solving the mystery; the characters could place a clan leader and Primogen member in their debt, as well as gaining the notice and gratitude of the Prince for helping avert a potentially very unstable situation.

Even so, it is possible that some characters may decide to leave the situation alone, or may need some more direct

encouragement to participate in the story. Here are a few ideas, for use if need be.

Clan leaders may actually instruct some characters to become involved. No NPC Nosferatu are present at the party, and Khalid will be burning to know what is going on. Player character Nosferatu will be more or less ordered to find out, and will have the opportunity to liaise with NPC Nosferatu in later scenes. Ventrue might well be ordered by Lodin to begin an investigation of their own while he and the Primogen try to thrash things out in their emergency session. Tremere, likewise, may be instructed by Nicolai to establish the truth, with the added caution that they disguise their activity until things become clearer.

Anarch characters, as well as Brujah of all affiliations and Caitiffs who are widely regarded as potential Anarchs, may have an even more pressing reason to investigate. Accusations will be flying, and most of them will be directed at the Anarch movement. It is obvious that the situation could very easily flare up into a witch-hunt, with Anarchs and suspected Anarchs on the receiving end. The characters may need to clear the Anarchs (or themselves personally) in order to survive.

This incentive can be communicated to players by staging a few run-ins with furious Ventrue and Toreadors both inside and outside the club; these NPCs will hold the characters personally responsible for the attempted destabilization of Chicago — no matter how unreasonable that may seem — and may even attack the characters outright. “Sheriff” Balthazar is an ideal character to run into just outside the club: *“Weeellll, now, what have we here? Looks to me like a bunch of goddam Anarchs fleein’ the scene of their crime. What do you say, Kyle?”*

The Rail Link

Firstly, a character with a Secrets rating of B or better (see *Chicago by Night*, p. 54) will be aware of the recent falling-out between Annabelle and Drummond. If you wish to make a dice roll of it, roll Perception + Secrets against a difficulty of 6. The number of successes indicates the amount of detail known: 1 success lets a character know that Annabelle insulted Drummond in some way, and 5 or more successes lets a character know the whole story, apart from Ballard’s involvement.

Obviously, once this is known it is reasonable to deduce that Drummond somehow introduced the steam locomotive governor “sculpture” into proceedings, but evidence for other involvement is more tenuous.

Documentary Evidence

Quick-thinking characters may be able to examine both the Paynes’ invitations and the sheet-music containing the upside-down Beethoven before the lounge is cleared.

Bret Stryker was taking guests’ invitations as they arrived, and they now lie in a small pile on a chair beside the door. A successful roll of Perception + Alertness or Perception + Investigation (difficulty 8) reveals that one invitation — addressed to Sharon Payne — is an excellent copy, but is printed on a slightly different grade of paper to all the others. The difficulty drops to 6 if a character has any prior experience of the printing or publishing industries.

There is no printer’s address or other identifying mark on any of the invitations; a roll of Intelligence + Investigation will inform a character that, given a few months of detective work, it might be possible to track down the printer of Sharon’s invitation through examining the watermark, going back to the manufacturer, and painstakingly questioning every printer to whom that manufacturer has sold paper in the last year or so.

The upside-down Beethoven — which lies forgotten on the piano — is a computer printout. A successful roll against Perception + Computer may enable a character to narrow down its possible source. Characters who have the presence of mind to enlist Bobby Weatherbottom’s help here will get the full information for free, and probably make a friend of him for showing interest and treating him like a worthwhile person.

1 success tells the character that the output is from a fairly sophisticated personal computer.





2 successes narrows the probable range down to the IBM PC and compatible machines, or the Apple Macintosh. With a machine of this calibre, a sophisticated music processor can easily turn the notation of a piece of music upside-down. The notation itself can be entered by keyboard (QWERTY or piano), or even transferred from a performance or recording of the piece, via a MIDI interface. The whole process would only take an hour or two, including printing time.

3 successes indicate the Mac.

4 or more successes allow the character to identify the software used: a music processor and MIDI interface program called *Encore*, which costs around \$400 and can be obtained from any good mail order software dealer and some of the larger stores.

Mortal Pawns

Some characters might try to track down the mortal sculptor and musician whose alleged works have caused so much trouble. This will be a first step for a lot of interested Kindred, so the characters will have to work fast, or decide to dispense with the pawns and head straight for the player.

It might be possible to discover the name and address of Annabelle's musical protégé. Tamoszius and Kathy have both met him, and might be persuaded to reveal his name to a fellow-Toreador whom they are convinced will act in the best interests of all concerned. Although Annabelle does not

publicize his existence widely (before tonight), a successful roll against Perception + Secrets (difficulty 6 for Toreadors, 8 for others) might give a character some information:

1 success gives the name Jack Weiss.

2 successes reveal that he lives somewhere on the North Side.

3 successes narrows this down to the Lincoln Park area.

4 successes give the full address near DePaul University.

Visiting this individual will elicit little information — he remembers nothing of Drummond's visit and Domination, although a stronger Domination or deep hypnosis might reveal something.

A similar procedure might be used to find the sculptor, one Janet Majors of Old Town. No one has met this mortal, but characters who have been close to Annabelle might be able to remember some details. The roll is the same, but the difficulty is 8 for Toreadors and 10 for others. Again, she has been Dominated by Drummond into believing that the work was original and done especially for Annabelle, but a stronger Domination or deep hypnosis might reveal something of the truth.

Dancers in Disgrace

Characters might also track down Sophia and Bret before they leave the club, and attempt to question them. Both are embarrassed and angry at their failure, and will not be willing to cooperate with an investigation unless characters can show them some form of authority, or compel them in some other way.

And in fact, they have nothing to add to the investigation. Neither Drummond nor Ballard has any connection with their performance, which was entirely Sophia's own idea. She was genuinely trying to develop an erotic art dance form which would appeal to Vampires; her only fault lies in bad judgement. The dance is a red herring.

Meanwhile...

Out in the main body of the club, rumors are beginning to spread with amazing speed. It is already known that the absent members of the Primogen have been sent for, and that an emergency meeting is in progress. Characters emerging from the lounge are likely to be seized upon and pumped for information by the first Cainite who sees them; some will already be receiving orders from their leaders, or starting investigations on their own account. Here is a brief summary of the interested parties:

Toreadors will be trying to find out who is behind this sequence of events. Some will want to avenge this slight to their leader, while others will want to size up both parties before taking sides.

Tremers will want to know whether this is simply a feud between Drummond and Annabelle, or a strike at the clan

Toreador, or an attempt to destabilize the Primogen and Chicago as a whole.

Nosferatu will be asking much the same questions as the Tremere.

Ventruue will suspect immediately that this is some kind of Anarch plot, and refuse to believe that Drummond was actually involved; to them, this is the work of Anarchs taking advantage of the dispute between Annabelle and Drummond in order to frame the rail baron and attract attention away from themselves.

Anarchs will probably believe much the same as the Ventruue; while they do not know who is responsible, they are convinced that whoever it is might belong to another Anarch group, or be secretly in sympathy with the Anarchs. As well as wanting to shake this individual by the hand, they may well be interested in negotiating terms for an alliance.

Malkavians will probably not be present, apart from Falcon. They will view the events with some amusement, but will have no desire to become more involved.

Gangrels will be disinterested at first, but may feel moved to investigate if they decide that there is a risk to the Kindred at large. For now, most of them will wait for some word from Inyanga before taking any action.

These attitudes will color any dialogue that takes place between player characters and NPCs at this stage; they may also provide individual player characters with some motivation for investigating further.

As Storyteller, be aware that just as player characters may want to question NPCs, so NPCs will want to pump player characters for information. This will become important later on in the story, as various factions race to contact Drummond first. Obviously a group of characters from a variety of clans will have the best chance for success, if they do not end up blaming each other first.

Characters

The characters for this scene are much the same as for Scene One: Lodin and the attending members of the Primogen are closeted in emergency session, and other Kindred may be encountered in the club at the Storyteller's discretion. No specific new characters are needed—select from Chapter Four of *Chicago by Night*, or add new Cainites as desired.

SCENE THREE: THE CHASE

This scene begins when one or more characters have made the connection with Drummond, and ends when they arrive at his Haven to question him. The scene is one of tension rather than comedy; the characters must find the location of Drummond's Haven and race to contact him before anyone else can.

Even now others are coming to the same conclusions that the characters have reached; some may even be ahead of

them. The longer the characters take over this scene, the harder it will be for them. More interested parties will have entered the race, each group will have anticipated the existence of some or all of the others, and each group will be trying to make sure that it gets to Drummond first, sowing delays and distractions in the path of others.

The action of this scene falls into two categories: firstly, the characters' efforts to find out where they can reach Drummond; and secondly, the obstacles they encounter *en route* to question the rail baron.

Advance to Drummond

It is possible that one or more characters may actually *know* where Drummond's Haven is located; this would give the characters an undeniable edge in the ensuing chase. Let each character roll Intelligence + Secrets against a difficulty of 8.

1 success tells the character that the rail baron's Haven is somewhere close by a hub of the rail system.

2 successes add the information that it is in a warehouse.

3 successes place the warehouse in a marshalling-yard (although characters could come to that conclusion independently, by common sense combined with a knowledge of how railroads work).

4 successes place the marshalling-yards near Union Station.

5 or more successes give a fairly precise location for the warehouse, plus a rough description of the outside of the building, from which it can easily be identified.

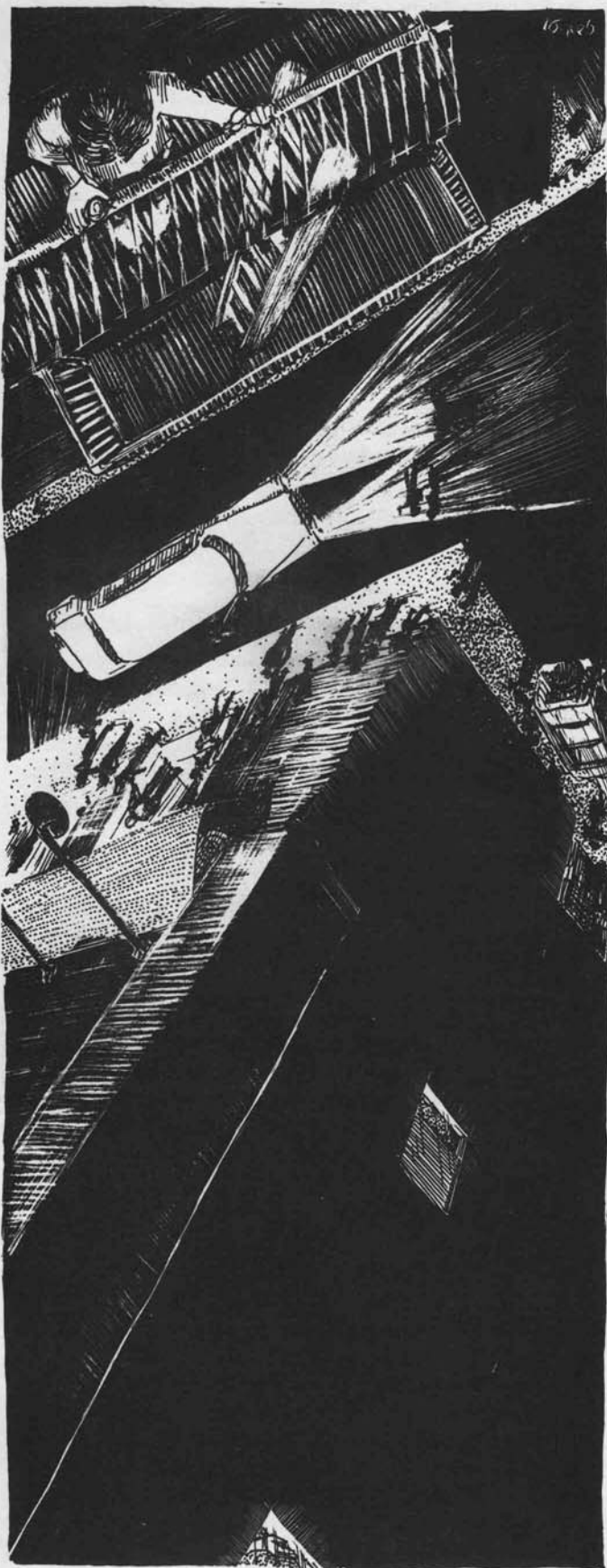
No Forwarding Address

Finding out the location of Drummond's Haven is going to be a difficult task, especially now that so many people want to get there before anyone else. Very few of Chicago's Kindred know the Haven's precise location, and few of those will be inclined to reveal this information to just anyone. Some will simply refuse to answer questions, and some will lie to send the characters off in the wrong direction—the first in a series of professional fouls they will encounter in this scene.

The first problem is to find someone who knows the location of Drummond's Haven. Very few of Chicago's Kindred are privy to that information.

Lodin, Drummond's Sire, knows, but he is busy in an emergency meeting of the Primogen and cannot be disturbed. Only if the characters are Lodin's progeny and he has chosen them to investigate these events will he reveal the location of Drummond's Haven to them.

Ballard knows, but will not reveal this information to anyone; obviously, he has the most to lose from close investigation into the events at the party.



Helena knows — she knows the whereabouts of many Havens in the city — but her assumed character of Portia would have no reason for knowing such information; she will say nothing.

Menele knows, but like Helena he has no incentive to reveal the information to the characters — which he would have to do indirectly, through agents, in any case.

Bobby Weatherbottom knows the address, which turned up in one of his computer searches for Lodin. He knows nothing about the building itself (that it is a warehouse, situated in marshalling yards, what it looks like, etc), but enterprising characters will be able to find it using the street address and a decent map. Persuading Bobby to reveal this information may take some work. Lodin has repeatedly stressed to the young hacker that information is for the Prince's eyes only and threatened dire punishments for leaks; the characters must convince Bobby that Lodin will never find out (very difficult, since Lodin can simply Dominate Bobby and force him to confess) or that the absent Prince has ordered him to co-operate with the characters, or will be happy that he has done so.

Edward Nealy could find out, but needs a strong reason to do so, like direct orders from Lodin or which appear to come from Lodin.

Tyler knows — she has been considering getting rid of Drummond for almost a decade now. But she holds the information purely for her own protection and future aims, and will not even reveal that she knows it. Certain of her armed guards have orders to destroy a certain warehouse in the marshalling-yards south of union Station if anything untoward should happen to her.

Joshua Tarnopolski knows, through union connections, that there is something unusual about a certain warehouse in the marshalling-yards south of Union Station, but does not know that it is Drummond's Haven. However, he suspects that it is something to do with Drummond.

Sheriff knows the whereabouts of Drummond's Haven, among others; he has made a point, with the help of the pro-Lodin establishment, of getting as much information as he can on any and all Kindred in the city. He will never willingly reveal the information, though — it is for his own use only.

Khalid knows, and may reveal the whereabouts of the Haven to the characters if he has chosen them to investigate the matter for him. This will be unlikely unless most or all of the characters are Nosferatu.

Jurgis Rudkus knows — indeed, it was he who told Khalid — but he would need a good reason for revealing the information to anyone else: orders from Khalid (and he will check these orders unless they come via another Nosferatu), or a convincing appeal from someone whom he knows and trusts as an Anarch or Anarch sympathizer.

Nathaniel Bordruff knows, but it is almost inconceivable that he would trust any character enough to disclose the information — unless he hoped to use that character for his own ends, that is.

Erichtho might be able to find out, although her price may be a little strange.

In order to persuade an NPC to reveal the location of Drummond's Haven, a roll of Manipulation + Subterfuge is resisted by the NPC's Intelligence + Alertness. The number of successes required is directly proportional to the NPC's willingness to disclose the information in the first place. For instance, Bobby Weatherbottom's fear of Lodin's wrath means that 3 successes would normally be needed to wrinkle the information out of him. However, if the characters have already taken the trouble to befriend him (in the matter of the sheet-music, for example), this requirement might be lowered to 2 or even 1 success.

Other NPCs might have some idea of the whereabouts of Drummond's Haven; if the characters ask an NPC who is not listed above, the Storyteller should either decide for herself or roll Chicago + Secrets for that character — just as the players did for their characters — to find out how much is known. Then, determine normally whether the NPC will reveal anything to the characters.

Elementary...

If the characters do not know the whereabouts of Drummond's Haven and either do not know who to ask or do not trust anyone to tell them the truth, then they can try to discover it for themselves using a mixture of reasoning and research.

Given that Drummond is in charge of Chicago's railroads and is seldom seen in Kindred society, it is not unreasonable to assume that he is engrossed in his realm — in short, that he is a railroad enthusiast: a train nut. Hence, it may be supposed that his Haven is not far from a nerve center of the railroad system. At the same time, though, it would have to be in a secure position, and one where the presence of extra guards and/or security systems would arouse no suspicions.

This leaves two main possibilities: a secret room, suite or floor in a major railroad administrative building, or a warehouse. The latter is a little more probable, since an administrative building would contain large numbers of kine during the day, with a high risk of accidental discovery if there should be any slip-up in security.

Having narrowed the field of inquiry with reasoning, the characters can then use a little research to reduce the possibilities to a manageable shortlist. The first clue will be the amount of security at a railroad premises; an influential Elder will have heavy security surrounding his Haven, and will not be able to conceal or disguise all of it; therefore, a list of the ten most secure offices and warehouses will be a good starting-point. The next logical move is to search for anomalies: warehouses with no record of goods in or out, office buildings with floors that are off-limits to janitorial staff (who are normally allowed in more places than chief executive officers!), and so on. The process is slow, but eventually the characters will be left with Drummond's warehouse in the

marshalling-yards; he has taken no special steps to conceal the warehouse.

Research can be done on the ground — a time-consuming process which will almost certainly result in the characters losing the race to contact Drummond — or it can be done by computer, given the right equipment and skills. Characters with a reasonable computer and a modem can roll Intelligence + Computer against a difficulty of 8; each success gets them one stage nearer their goal. The first success gets the character into the right system to start asking questions; the second draws up a shortlist of possible Havens; the third lists anomalies and narrows the list to two or three places; four or more successes turn up the name Drummond in connection with the warehouse.

This is another task in which a friendship with Bobby Weatherbottom can pay dividends. He will not enquire what the information is for, and provided the characters make no mention of Drummond or Kindred involvement he will not become worried. As soon as he discovers or suspects that he is looking for the Haven of an Elder, though, he will become very nervous indeed, and may need some coaxing and reassurance before he will go further.

Follow That Cab

Enterprising characters may decide to save themselves the trouble of finding Drummond's Haven for themselves, preferring to follow someone who knows the way and then dispose of them once they arrive. This is a smart idea, and might work, provided:

- the characters pick the right people to follow — no one is going to announce that they are just off to visit Drummond;
- those whom the characters follow get to Drummond's Haven ahead of the other interested parties;
- the characters are strong enough or resourceful enough to put their unwitting leaders out of the way once they arrive at Drummond's Haven. This will have to be done very carefully to avoid sparking off a feud or a blood hunt — tensions are high enough after the events of the party, and the slightest upset could lead to hysteria and civil war.

Security Alert

Lodin was not slow to appreciate the possible link with Drummond, and sent messengers to summon the rail baron before him at the same time as sending word to the absent members of the Primogen to attend the emergency meeting. He also placed the city's police on alert — they believe they are responding to a reported terrorist threat against the city's railroad system.

This simple step serves the Prince in two ways. Firstly, it puts armed and trained officers where Lodin will need them if Drummond tries to make a showdown of it, and serves as a warning to the rail baron that the Prince means business.

Secondly, it helps prevent anyone from interfering with the rail system or trying to reach Drummond before the Prince's own messengers do so.

Characters trying to find Drummond's Haven will have to be very careful to avoid confrontation with the police. Every major railroad installation has at least a couple of cops placed there; more important locations, and locations closer to Drummond's Haven, have a larger presence including K9 units and unmarked vans containing SWAT teams. Lodin is taking no chances until he knows exactly what is going on.

Lodin will also have had a wiretap put on Drummond's telephone, and any calls lasting longer than four minutes will be traced to their source, which will be investigated.

In addition to the police, Lodin will put Sheriff on the street, along with Nathaniel Bordruff. Although they act separately (and are unaware of each other's involvement) both have orders to watch for Kindred trying to reach Drummond's Haven, and to use appropriate force to keep them from interfering in the Prince's business. Both Cainites have an idea of "appropriate force" which starts at maiming and extends to destruction. Nathaniel also has orders from Khalid to monitor who is showing an interest in Drummond, and will probably try to question characters before destroying them.

The Methuselahs

Both Helena and Menele believe they control Annabelle; therefore, they both see the other behind the events of the party.

Helena/Portia will leave the club very soon after the party is over. She made the link to Drummond almost instantly, and knows where to find him. Characters may try to follow her, but the Methuselah will be very difficult to shadow without her knowledge. If she senses that someone is following her, she will try to lead them into some mundane hazard (i.e. a tunnel into which a train is just entering) or into a confrontation with the police.

Unless something remarkable happens, Helena will get to Drummond before anyone else. However, she will do nothing to alter the course of the story. She simply Dominates Drummond into revealing the link with Ballard, and then sets off to visit Ballard. At this point, she leaves the story, but characters may encounter her — or evidence of her activities — if the story extends beyond what is written here.

Characters

The range of characters who can become involved in this scene is extremely wide. Full descriptions of all characters mentioned by name will be found in *Chicago by Night*;



generic stats for encountered mortals, such as police and SWAT officers, security guards and the like, can be found in the Vampire rulebook, pp 186-191.

SCENE FOUR: VENGEANCE IS MINE

This scene begins when the player characters come within sight of Drummond's Haven, having dealt with (or failed to deal with) any competition or obstacles along the way. The characters must enter Drummond's Haven, convince him to grant them an interview, and try to find out whether there is more to the events of the party than simply a feud between two Elders.

Details of the Haven and its security measures will be found in the Appendix. All guards will be on alert, as Drummond reacts to the increased tension of Lodin's police crackdown. They are aware of the alleged terrorist threat, and will treat intruders accordingly.

Finding Drummond should be a simple matter of reaching the room where he keeps his model train layout. However, if the characters are clumsy, Drummond will try to escape, assuming that they are a hit team sent by Annabelle or "police" sent by Lodin. Like a super-powered naughty child, Drummond does not want to face the music any sooner than he has to. If Drummond escapes, of course, the chase starts all over again, as interested parties try to discover his secondary Havens, and various groups try to get there before anyone else. These interested parties will not be at all pleased with the characters for bolting their quarry.

Too Late

It could be that the characters arrive at Drummond's Haven too late. Someone else has got there before them, and their chances of speaking with the rail baron are slim to none.

It is up to the Storyteller to decide how late is too late. A lot will depend on your estimation of how well the characters have handled the challenges of the previous scene. If they hit on the Drummond connection right away, found or deduced the location of his Haven within minutes, set out immediately and overcame or side-stepped every problem *en route*, then they should be able to reach Drummond before anyone else — except Helena, as mentioned above.

On the other hand, if the characters missed most of the important clues, spent ages blundering around with no clear idea of what to do and how to go about it, and generally wasted time, then it is reasonable to expect that one or other of the competing groups would have got there first. The events of a real game are likely to be somewhere between these two extremes, and it is a judgement call for the Storyteller.

The story need not fail if someone has reached Drummond before the player characters — although the players should never know this.

The first thing to consider is exactly *who* has beaten the player characters to the Haven. Here are a few possibilities:

Messengers from Lodin will simply pass on the Prince's summons, draw Drummond's attention to the increased level of police activity around railroad installations, and leave. Drummond will be rattled and more hostile toward subsequent visitors, but otherwise everything will be much the same. Alternatively, Lodin might simply have called Drummond on the phone to pass on the summons.

Nosferatu Observers will be lurking in the shadows around the Haven, but taking no action. The characters may discover them, or they may never be aware of their presence. They make no difference to Drummond at all.

Tremere Investigators will not be any of the characters named in *Chicago by Night*, but may have been sent by Nicolai to establish the facts. Like the Nosferatu, they will not act directly, for the Tremere want to know exactly what is going on before they show their hand. They will be observing, perhaps by using spirit watchers rather than visiting Drummond themselves, and he will be unaware of them.

Anarch Negotiators will want to establish much the same things as the player characters: whether Drummond's attack on Annabelle was prompted by any Anarch sympathies, and whether this feud can be exploited to their political advantage. They will want to talk to Drummond directly (if subtly), sounding him out without giving away any information on the Anarch movement which Lodin could use if Drummond proves loyal. They will regard all other groups as a threat, and react accordingly. If they get to Drummond first, they will leave him somewhat confused by their questions, and unsure of what he has started. He may be even more reluctant than usual to speak with others.

Outraged Toreadors bent on avenging their leader are likely to be lesser Kindred rather than any of the Toreador characters described in *Chicago by Night*. These "celebrity" Toreadors have no real incentive to avenge Annabelle — and most of them are lying low, having been used as pawns in the events themselves. Like the Anarchs, they will regard all other groups as a threat — even as confederates of Drummond's — and will be hostile in most cases. If they have reached Drummond first, his Haven will look like a battleground and he will be injured or escaped. In either case, he will be frightened and angry, torn between a paranoid distrust of all other Kindred and the desire to recruit friends who can help defend him against the Toreadors. If you wish, Sophia may have taken this opportunity to try and bring herself back into Annabelle's good graces by slaying Drummond and has managed to make her way to the haven.

The Rail Baron

The interview with Drummond should be one of the key events in this story. The Storyteller should re-read Drummond's entry in *Chicago by Night* very carefully be-

fore presenting this scene to the players. Give detailed descriptions of the man and his environment, and play the role to the hilt. Helpful images to call to mind are Peter Ustinov as Nero in *Quo Vadis*, the face of Oliver Hardy and the attitude of your youngest, sulkiest sibling or nephew. British readers might include a dose of the Spoilt Bastard character from *Viz* comic. Drummond is the mind of a spoiled six-year-old boy in the body of a fat middle-aged man, and he has the biggest train set in the world.

Complications

Just as some interested parties might have arrived at Drummond's Haven before the player characters, so others might arrive *after* them. This makes a good device for the Storyteller to use if the players become careless or if the scene drags out too long to maintain tension. As well as providing the characters with an immediate problem to solve, this can overshadow their lives for some time after. For instance, Ventrue who see strangers talking to Drummond under these circumstances might leap to the conclusion that this is an Anarch plot, and the characters might find themselves labelled as Anarchs whether they really are or not.

The characters' greatest challenge will be to get Drummond to open up to them. Depending on the style of game your group prefers, this might be done with a simple dice roll — say Manipulation + Subterfuge, resisted by Drummond's Wits + Alertness with a modifier for how worried he is by the events he has set off — or it might be done purely in live-action negotiations, with the players speaking for their characters and the Storyteller speaking for Drummond.

The Audience

To complete this scene successfully, the characters must find out that Drummond was prompted by Ballard in his attack on Annabelle. This is going to be difficult to establish even if the characters somehow win Drummond's complete and unquestioning trust, for the rail baron is convinced that everything is his own idea. The best approach — as astute characters will quickly realize — is to flatter Drummond shamelessly on his brilliant and stylish revenge, and hope that overconfidence and self-congratulation will lead him to let something slip.

The characters may be able to piece together scattered references to Drummond's "good friend" Ballard, and a successful roll against Perception + Secrets will remind them that Ballard has hitherto held Drummond in contempt, at least in so far as he has mentioned the rail baron to others. Like most of Lodin's progeny — and most Kindred — Ballard regards Drummond as a harmless eccentric with an over-inflated idea of his own importance.

This first clue will be strengthened if the characters enquire (in suitably flattering terms, of course) how Drummond was able to make such a brilliant copy of an

invitation, or place the locomotive piece in the sculptor's studio, or induce the composer to give Annabelle the inverted Beethoven. If he is at ease and assured of the characters' admiration, Drummond will let slip that an invitation was obtained for him "by a friend with connections." He may even admit, with glutinous false modesty, that he "had help" in arranging the events of the party.

This will be the most challenging scene for the Storyteller. You have to walk a tight-rope between spoon-feeding the characters with the facts and leaving them so completely in the dark that they need not have bothered visiting Drummond. If in doubt, err on the side of caution. There is no rule that says the characters have to resolve every story successfully, and if you continue the story beyond what is given here, they will have ample opportunity to find things out later. Misinformation and confusion are entirely in keeping with the theme of this story.

Characters

The main character in this scene is, of course, Drummond himself. Lesser characters include his guards (use generic police officer stats) and any mortal or Cainite interference which the characters may encounter along the way. These are covered in previous scenes.

CODA: TANGLED WEBS

"Annabelle's Party" does not end with everything neatly tied up — such a conclusion would be contrary to the stated theme of the story.

Ballard's intention is that this story should end with Annabelle's credibility as a member of the Primogen severely undermined, and with the blame for the events of the party laid squarely on Drummond. If it seems anyone has discovered a possible link between Drummond and Ballard, the financier will take certain steps to ensure that investigations are not pursued.

Discovering the link with Ballard opens up a whole new level of the story, which is not covered in any detail here. It is up to the Storyteller to decide where things go from this point, if anywhere.

Investigating Ballard will not be easy. He has been keeping a close eye on events following the party, and will be aware of the characters' investigations — and he will do everything in his considerable power to ensure that they are rendered harmless. Here are a few ideas, which the Storyteller can develop and use if desired; feel free to amend or ignore any of them and add ideas of your own. From here on in, it is your story entirely, and it can head off in a number of directions.

Misinformation

Ballard's first instinct will be to arrange for another patsy to stand between himself and any investigations. Drummond will not have given Ballard's first name to the characters, as the two know each other only by their surnames; in the informal tradition of the 19th century, they drop the "Mister" to express the closeness of their friendship. And, of course, there are two Ballards among the city's Kindred.

Ballard will try to shift the blame onto his great-nephew Lawrence. The bookish lawyer is completely unaware of what is going on, and knows nothing of the older Ballard's involvement — thus, he can take the investigation no further. This move may sacrifice Lawrence to Lodin's wrath, but it will give Ballard some time to plan a next move.

A Few Problems

Once he has established who the investigators are, Ballard will move against them secretly, using his control of the financial system.

First, any bank deposits or other savings will be completely wiped out. All records of their existence will vanish, leaving the characters completely without funds. Every check they write will bounce, any credit cards they hold will be cancelled due to bad debt, and their names will appear on every credit blacklist there is. Any mortgages they hold (on Havens, for instance) will instantly be foreclosed for persistent non-payment. Repossession men will swarm out of the woodwork, with orders to take everything of value. Some of these individuals may be Dominated minions of Ballard's; mortal vampire hunters who believe they have a mission to save the world from the characters.

This attack shows Ballard's hand clearly, and should be used with care. Ballard must be sure that no proof of the attack can reach Lodin or any of the Elders, or he must have a patsy set up to take the blame. He will only act openly if things have come to a head and he has no other choice — in which case every influential Cainite in the city will receive the same treatment, and this will be the opening shot in an attempted coup.

Suspicious Minds

Certain parties, especially among the Ventrue, will have convinced themselves that this is an Anarch plot. Ballard will be more than happy to encourage this opinion, and to cast any investigators in the role of Anarch conspirators. He should be able to manufacture evidence very simply, and in most cases even this will be unnecessary; as in any witch-hunt, mere accusation is often enough to condemn the accused. Ballard's activity in the witch-hunt will be low-key and indirect, and may never be visible to the participants.

Once they are cast as malicious Anarchs, the characters will find their problems multiplying at a dizzying rate. Few

Kindred in the city will trust them or listen to what they say, and fewer still will dare to offer any assistance. Lodin may smell another Maldavis uprising, and declare a blood hunt against the characters; this could very easily blow up into a full-scale war of extermination against the Anarchs. In such an event, the only sure way to survive is to flee the city. Modius of Gary might grant the characters sanctuary, but he fears an attack from Lodin — and this incident may give Lodin just the reason he needs to wipe out Gary once and for all.

And once a civil war is under way among the Camarilla clans of the city, the Sabbat have the perfect opportunity to strike. They can make Neonates under cover of the confusion, and attack with impunity; victims will blame their enemies within the city, and few may ever think of looking for the Black Hand. This will take events out of Ballard's control, but the two Methuselahs might just step in to unite the city against this threat.

APPENDIX:

DRUMMOND'S HAVEN

Drummond's Haven is an ordinary-looking warehouse standing a little apart from a group of others in the marshalling yards south of Chicago's Union Station. Like many of the other warehouses, it is surrounded by a high chainlink fence topped with coils of barbed wire; like some of them, it has security cameras and halogen floodlights mounted at roof level on each corner, giving a clear view of all four sides.

External Security

A private security guard with a Doberman patrols the warehouses constantly at night. Characters who take the time to watch his routine will realize on a successful roll of Perception + Security (difficulty 5) that his route takes him past this warehouse far more often than any of the others; two or more successes will reveal that he is almost never out of sight of this one warehouse. Treat the guard as a cop (p. 187 of the rulebook), with a light revolver, billy club and radio. The dog has Strength three, Stamina four, and Perception four. It has Brawl four with its bite attack; no grapple is necessary, and damage is four dice. Other attributes and abilities probably will not be needed, but can be improvised if necessary.

As mentioned above, Drummond's Haven is in a compound of its own, protected by barbed wire, chainlink and security cameras. The guard with the dog has a key to the compound gate, as do the two inside guards (see below). Otherwise, the lock can be picked on a successful roll of Dexterity + Security (or Dexterity + Lockpicking if you have such a skill in your Chronicle), or it can be forced on a successful Strength roll against a difficulty of seven. Using a crowbar or other lever reduces the difficulty to five. The

gate is out of sight of the security cameras, but characters who linger too long there may be seen by the patrolling guard.

The security cameras on the outside of the building are monitored by the inside guards, and cover the whole outside of the building, to a distance of about 10 feet back from each wall. Each wall is covered by two cameras — one from each end — to eliminate blind spots. The cameras can be reached from the roof of the warehouse, and disabled by cutting their cables, but this will immediately be noticed by the inside guards, who will radio the patrolling guard to investigate.

The main roller doors at the front of the warehouse have been fixed in the down position, although this is imperceptible from outside. Only the man-sized access door still functions, and this has been fitted with a high-security lock and an intercom. Each guard has a key; attempts to pick the high-security lock have a difficulty of 9 (8 if the character attempting to pick the lock has Security skill). Another, simpler way in is to knock on the door and bluff one's way through via the intercom.

There was originally a small door towards the back of the warehouse, but this has been bricked over. Characters who like making spectacular entrances may try to burst in through the brickwork (Strength roll + Potence, difficulty 8, 3 successes required to break through), but this is unlikely to endear them to Drummond.

Secure Lobby

This small room is manned constantly by two armed guards. From their desk, they monitor the external security cameras, and they are in constant radio contact with the patrolling guard. They have a foot-operated silent alarm which sounds on Drummond's desk.

The two guards are identical to the patrolling guard, except that Drummond has convinced them, using a mixture of Domination and old-fashioned con artistry, that they are actually undercover Federal agents protecting something top-secret and highly valuable which is stored in the warehouse. In moments of stress, they may shout that they are Federal agents before opening fire; this may cause some confusion if the characters believe them or care about their status.

The door to the Station Corridor is of vault-quality steel, sealed by a smart-card lock. Strength can be used to batter the door down, but this requires a total of 10 successes against a difficulty of nine.

The smart-card lock can be negated in the following more subtle ways:

- *Using an appropriate card.* Drummond has the only card, although given time to study the system, Bobby could probably rig up something that would work.

- *Using specialized hacking equipment.* A character with Computer knowledge could operate a custom-designed unit

programmed to find the security code and open the lock; this requires a successful roll of Intelligence + Computer. Bobby already has such a unit, and another character could build one in a couple of days given the right parts and a roll of Intelligence + Computer (difficulty 9).

- *Isolating the card unit from the lock system, which is then opened manually.* This involves wire cutters and a roll of Dexterity + Security against a difficulty of 8. Failure, or any botch at all, trips an alarm system.

- *Being admitted by Drummond.* The rail baron is in touch with the security desk by closed-circuit camera and intercom, and can open the door remotely to allow visitors in.

Station Corridor

Going through the security door, characters find themselves in a small, totally dark passage, with a pair of heavy rubberized swing doors at the far end. Going through the swing doors, they find themselves in a brightly lit passage which has been made into a replica of a small whistle-stop railroad platform of around the turn of the century, complete with a mural Prairie landscape. A Perception roll will reveal a hidden camera with a clear view of the whole passage.

Parked at the platform is an amusement-park style miniature steam-train, built in exquisite detail to 1/10th scale, with seats on the roofs of the wagons. If the characters have been cleared through by Drummond, they will be invited over the intercom to be seated, and the train will conduct them into his presence. All internal doors are operated by trip-switches in the track, opening to allow the train through and closing a second or so after it has passed. This switch may be found on a successful Perception roll by a character who inspects the track closely.

The train is powered by an electric motor, and characters who inspect or tamper with the track run the risk of a severe electric shock. A Dexterity + Science roll is necessary to avoid touching anything live, and a shock causes loss of one Health Level unless a successful roll of Stamina + Fortitude is made, with a difficulty of 7. Each botch means an additional Health Level is lost.

Drawing Room

Drummond planned this room and the Office (see below) for his own use, but rarely even enters them these days.

The drawing room is a replica of a turn-of-the-century gentleman's lounge-library, with several deep-button leather wing armchairs, mahogany side-tables and Persian rugs.

One wall is a floor-to-ceiling bookcase, packed with volumes of all shapes, sizes and ages on Drummond's favorite subject — trains. It is probably the most complete and authoritative library on rail transportation anywhere in the world. The walls are hung with prints and original paintings of railroad art. Characters who visited any of the city's major galleries during the rail festival will recognize

some of the pieces they saw there; Annabelle's reaction stung Drummond all the more because much of his own collection was on display. Other tables and cases display superbly-made models of famous and interesting locomotives, in a variety of scales from 1/48th to 1/76th.

The rail line forks in this room, and the junction is controlled by a set of points switched from Drummond's control desk. If Drummond does not switch them one way or the other as the train enters the room, it comes to a halt awaiting instructions. The doors to the office and the inner sanctum are identical to the one between this room and the Station Corridor (see above). They can be opened by finding and tripping the switch in the track, or they can be forced by a total of five successes on a Strength roll with a difficulty of six.

Office

This room is a faithful replica of a station manager's office of the late 19th century, complete with painted backlit landscape outside the fake window, oil lamps (cunningly converted to run on electricity) and an antique roll-top desk.

The desk is cluttered with various papers, but nothing which has a bearing on this Story (unless the Storyteller particularly wants to leave a clue of some kind here — a friendly note from Ballard inviting Drummond to "dinner," for instance). The bulk of the papers are newscuttings about the rail festival and communications from groups of rail enthusiasts all over the world.

Inner Sanctum

As the train enters this vast room, the track tilts abruptly through 30 degrees. A cog system helps pull the train up the sharp incline, and the track rises on pillars ten feet above a

huge and detailed model train layout. Characters who can make three successes on an Intelligence + Chicago roll with a difficulty of nine will be shocked to realize the model appears to be a perfectly detailed map of the city's rail system. Indeed, miniature trains seem to be running almost exactly on schedule with their larger brethren out in the city.

The back wall of this huge space is an almost solid bank of large-screen TV monitors — around 40 in all — showing scenes from various parts of Chicago's rail and subway systems, and views of the inside and outside of this building. Almost hanging in the air over the center of the model layout is a large circular platform holding a wraparound control desk which seems to belong in a 60s science fiction movie. The platform is supported on a series of cables from the roof, and a broad suspended walkway leads down to a platform by the "guest" rail line on the right-hand side of the room.

Seated on a leather swivel chair at the console, twirling dials and punching buttons happily, is Drummond himself. One side of the console controls the monitors, which can be patched into any security camera anywhere in the city's rail and subway systems, with a microphone which can give access to any announcement speaker on the network. The other side controls the train set and the "guest" train, as well as communications with other parts of the Haven.

Bolt-Holes

If events so far have left Drummond feeling insecure (and most especially if the characters have forced their way into his Haven against his wishes), Drummond will not be here when the characters arrive. He has a bolt-hole beneath the model landscape of his train set, leading down to the city sewers and finally to the subway tunnels. There, various accessways and "disused" tunnels lead to secondary Havens. Finding these would be another Story in its own right.



Player of Pawns

Written by William Bridges and Illustrated by John Bridges

*"He's a lover of life,
but a player of pawns—
Yes, the King on His Sunset lies waiting for dawn
to light up His Jungles
as play is resumed.
The monkeys seem willing to strike up the tune."*

Jethro Tull, Bungle In The Jungle

"Player of Pawns" is a Vampire story intended for a group of 4-6 Kindred. It takes place in Chicago and can serve as a stand-alone story or, preferably, part of a longer running Chronicle. The characters become enmeshed in a careless and deadly power game between two Elders. They discover that they are being used as pawns by these ancient Cainites and, one by one, the characters are seized by mysterious assailants. As the attacks become obvious, the remaining characters must work to free their captured friends and take their destinies into their own hands.

In the beginning of the game, the characters are unaware of the machinations going on around them. Over the next few nights, as the game progresses, they become aware that a plot, an onerous and callous attempt to use them to an Elder's own personal ends, is going on. The Storyteller needs be subtle at first, ensuring that none of the characters is aware of the trap that is slowly closing around them. While the story involves combat, it should not become a simple slugfest. The drama is in the tension arising when the characters realize that their actions are not their own and that they are but pawns in a game which ridicules their free will.

HOW TO RUN THIS STORY

The events in this story take place over a number of nights, and should take two to three game sessions to complete, though only in the last session will the characters become aware how the early sessions were connected. At first the events should be run at the pace of the character's normal nightly activities, but as the characters become aware of their parts in the game, events begin to proceed much faster, culminating in a final battle between the two Elders.

The Elders are Critias and Dimitri. It is Critias, one of the Primogen of Chicago, who has chosen the characters to be his pieces in a bizarre chess game against Dimitri, a Cainite from Russia with eccentric and mad tastes.

In the first two Scenes the characters go about their normal nightly activities. One of the characters is captured, but the other characters will not know he is missing until the

next night. They will not realize the nature of the strange Elders they meet or the reasons behind the disappearance of their friends. The Storyteller should be subtle, making the characters believe they are in control of their actions and the course of the story.

As the characters become aware of what is really going on (Scenes Three and Four), they must become active and make their own decisions quickly before they can again become pawns. The Storyteller should add an atmosphere of doubt and paranoia to everything around the characters. They should realize that no one around them is necessarily what they were believed to be. In the midst of this confusion, they must nonetheless make decision about their own lives.

By the culmination (Scene Five), the outcomes of their actions, such as the rescue attempt, should give them courage to assert their own will onto events and stand up to the raging Dimitri. The Storyteller should emphasize the dangers, risks and responsibilities of their actions against the background of paranoia and confusion from the previous Scenes.

THE PLOT

Scene One: A simple night out at the Succubus Club. It is assumed that the characters already know each other, but if not, now is a good time for them to meet as they take in the Club's night life. They meet a pair of strange Elders (Dimitri and Critias) playing a game of chess, but otherwise, the night is uneventful for all of them except one. This character will be abducted by Dimitri's brood and made aware of the Game, but be unable to act upon this knowledge. The frustration of this should be highlighted by the Storyteller.

Scene Two: The characters notice that one of them is missing, but nothing else unusual happens to alert them. Their nightly activities should continue as usual, with a stop at the Succubus Club where they will see the Elders again playing their game. At the end of the night, another character is abducted, with the same fate as the previous night's capture.

Scene Three: The Game is made obvious to the other Characters by the overconfidence of their assailant. They are attacked all at once, rather than individually. With the aid of Damien, another Kindred, they discover the capture of their friends and the place they are being held. However, the coming dawn will prevent them from acting until the next night. The other characters face another night of dreary imprisonment and the rantings of Dimitri.

Scene Four: This is where the characters can begin to assert the own choices onto the Game by freeing their friends and throwing the game out of balance. They must first get through the defenses Dimitri has set: a horrible Hag spirit.

They risk becoming her mental slaves, losing their wills ever further to the Game.

Scene Five: Their actions will enrage Dimitri, and cause him to take rash actions. He will bluntly attack the characters with no more need for subtlety. This will cause Critias to finally take personal action, leading to a combat between the two Ancients. The characters must choose which side to aid. Their decision will tip the scales.

WHAT IS REALLY GOING ON

The characters are playing the parts of pawns in a game of live chess. The game is being played between Critias, one of the Primogen of Chicago, and Dimitri, a Cainite the characters will not recognize.

Dimitri is an old Vampire from Russia who has come up with a new and exciting game which he travels around with, challenging Elders to play. It is a game of live chess, with unwitting mortals playing the part of pawns. As an example, in the game Dimitri is playing with Critias, Dimitri has just captured one of Critias' pawns, a prosecuting attorney (one of Critias' retainers), by running him over with a truck (Dimitri's rook). He then moves the pieces on the board, to represent his "move."

The deadly catch, though, and what makes the game exciting, is that the court pieces are represented by unwitting Kindred. The Elder declares what of his Brood, or any Cainite in his Domain, is representing his pieces.

Dimitri brings his coterie with him, a pack of ghouls and Vampires Dominated into loving the game. Since they are aware of their roles, many Elders declared that this is an unfair advantage for Dimitri. To balance this out, Dimitri declared that his blood belongs to the winner, to be Blood Bound or drunk whole. As he is Fourth Generation, many Elders have risked their brood upon this game. All have lost.

Dimitri has brought some mortals with him also, a group of college students he has slowly Dominated and uses as his pawns. They are all deeply loyal to Dimitri and unaware of the Game. They believe that he is an art patron who is allowing them to travel with him and see the world. There are eight of them, but already two have been taken out by Critias' pawns (they have been framed for burglary and are in jail).

Critias has declared the characters to represent his court. He has chosen them because he feels they are capable of working together to defeat Dimitri's coterie, and also because they mean relatively little to him in case he loses the Game. It is a crass and inhumane thing which he is doing

(which will cause him to lose some Humanity by the time the Game is through). The Storyteller should decide which pieces Critias has declared the characters to be. The tradition is that someone of mystical or thaumaturgical ability represents a Bishop, a strong, unyielding person is usually a Rook, and anyone else is a Knight. In this game, Damien is Critias' Queen, his wild card. He is carefully maneuvering his Childe into performing actions for him. He will use many different methods to get Damien and the characters to act according to his wishes, all the while trying to keep them unaware of their involvement.

If there are not enough characters to represent all of Critias' court pieces (two bishops, two Rooks, and two Knights), assume that Critias had Ghouls fulfilling those roles, and that they have already been taken out by Dimitri.

The King is Critias himself, while Dimitri likewise is his own King. Critias plays white, the first move, while Dimitri plays black.

Dimitri's tactics are simple: abduct Critias' court pieces and try to distill a hatred of Critias in them. Dimitri is unaware of, nor can he understand, the rage this modern generation will feel when their freedom is taken from them. He will not realize that his kidnapping them can make him as culpable in their eyes as Critias. He is playing offensively and non-tactically. He is capable of a more subtle Game, but has figured that unreasonable behavior is the best tactic to use against his philosopher opponent. He believes Critias will be unable to guess his maneuvers if he follows a seemingly unreasoning course.

Critias has already guessed this. He was not simply a philosopher of ancient Greece, but a Sophist. He is expert in looking at things from all different angles. He is half expecting Dimitri's maneuvers each night, but not that they will be so successful. He knows that Dimitri must eventually make a mistake. He will try to distract Dimitri from knowing this by seeming to play his pawns rather than attending to his court pieces (the characters). Critias figures that the characters will eventually discover the nature of the Game (it is against the rules for him to intentionally inform them in any way). He is counting on their anger to in turn unleash Dimitri's reputed frenzies, thus giving Critias an excuse to attack him outright.

Danov

If at any time the characters come across Danov and describe Dimitri, he will immediately warn them. He was once an unwitting Bishop in a game against Dimitri back in Russia, long ago. He will give the characters advice, but not interfere himself. He has learned the lesson of the Game, and will let the characters choose their own fates in dealing with it.

The Elders

The Game is a secret of a few Elders. They fear that if the Anarchs were to hear of it, new rebellions might take flame over these manipulations and risk their power hold. In fact, many Elders try to stop the Game, seeing it as a risk to the Masquerade. The Justiciars will not look well on any character involved if they are ever in a situation to judge them.

The Greater Game

Nobody knows it, but Critias is himself a pawn in a greater game, as is Dimitri. Menele, an ancient Methuselah lying in Torpor in Chicago, is pulling the strings behind Critias' desire to play the game. He wants Critias' blood to be strong for the inevitable battle he expects against Helena. To this end, he had Critias invite Dimitri to play. He himself will maneuver his retainers into ensuring victory against Dimitri. But Dimitri has some allies Menele has not detected, such as his Hag. The ancient Methuselah is also behind Critias' decision to use the characters, figuring their loss will have little effect on his Jihad.

THEME

Free will is the concern of this adventure. The characters' free choice is brought into relief against a backdrop of manipulation. The two Elders are trying to toy with them by using them like puppets while keeping them ignorant of this. The characters' actions are mockeries of freedom: they are unaware that they do not have choices. It is knowledge of what is going on which allows them to finally act on their own.

Dimitri is ultimately incapable of free choice: he is a slave to his passions and frenzies. The members of his coterie are slaves to their senses of duty or fear of Dimitri, while the ghouls that follow them are slaves to the idea of eternal life. Critias' ignorance of Menele's continued existence allows him to be freely manipulated by Menele, while Menele's torpor and rivalry with Helena trap him into a narrow existence, a shadow of the illuminated life on the astral Plane he had sought centuries ago.

Only the characters, still young and unattached to ancient vendettas or rivalries, have a chance for true free will.

THE MOOD

The mood is important for revealing the nature of the theme in this scenario. It ranges from an initial mood of normalcy to one of paranoia to a feeling of freedom ac-



companying the characters taking matters into their own hands. When they become aware of the Game, everyone they talk to should suddenly seem enigmatic. The characters will perceive behavior and their environment differently. Was that just a shadow, or a cloaked figure behind that car? Make them edgy.

Only by taking action and making their own decisions will this paranoid mood change into one of decisiveness. Make the results of their roles more definite, answers more exact and forthright. At this point, even the Elders should be stripped of any awe-filled descriptions. Their behavior should become obvious to the characters.

SCENE ONE: THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

Night has fallen, and the world of mortals is dark, but the world of the Kindred is just coming to life. The Night calls.

The characters all cruise into the Succubus Club, looking for action, entertainment or just company from the loneliness of their existence. If it is usual for the characters to hunt

before taking in night's entertainment, let them do so. Play it in the manner you normally run it. Remember, nothing unusual or out of the ordinary yet.

The club is crowded tonight. There is a new band playing in the basement, a group from out of town called "Sleep Of Reason". They are as fascinating to watch as they are to listen to. Dressed in leathers and make-up, they prance the stage, with what little skin that is showing profusely tattooed with phantasmagoric images. The lead singer's voice is a delicious mix between Sinatra and Howlin' Wolf. The songs are all about madness and the pocket of unassailable sanity that hides within it, much to the approval of the punks slamming around the stage.

As usual, the ground floor of the club is filled with that new fashion among mortals: the Blood Doll. Mostly they come in, listen to a few numbers, and then head onto the dance floor.

The characters notice an odd pair in the balcony above the dance floor. Two men appear to be playing chess. They are unmistakably Kindred. One of them is Critias, an Elder of the city. The other is a stranger, "not from around here." He appears to be in his late 50s, but his vigor and energy prove him to be a powerful Cainite.

From below, the characters can see them stare at the board long and contemplatively, neither making a move. They

seem oblivious to the harsh screaming of the amplifiers. If watched for long, the stranger, as if sensing their gaze, will turn and stare down at the characters. He will smile a grin which reaches from ear to ear, revealing bright, sharp teeth, and beckon the characters up.

As they arrive at the table, Critias never looks away from the board, deep in concentration. The stranger will motion them to sit.

"Are you connoisseurs of the game?" he asks. Regardless of the answer, he will point to the board. "A most fascinating game. It appears simple, but is in fact quite engaging. By the way, I am Dimitri." He waits for the characters to introduce themselves.

Critias then looks up. "I must have concentration."

"Oh, I'm so sorry," Dimitri says, "but my opponent is at a critical juncture in the game, so I must ask that you depart to your own business. It was a pleasure meeting you. Perhaps in the future, we will speak again." He motions off towards the stairs. He is very polite but insists that the characters depart.

The Night Assailant

BLACK KNIGHT TAKES WHITE BISHOP

Soon after, one of the characters will be approached by a luscious young Blood Doll who practically drags the character out to the rear alley to "share some liquor." Here the character will be attacked by Paulov. The Blood Doll is one of Dimitri's mortal pawns. If the character is male, the mortal will be a stunning female, and vice-versa (Paulov is old fashioned and will not guess that the character's sexual preference for kills may not depend on standard gender roles).

Dimitri has ordered that Critias' court be captured if at all possible, for he has nothing to gain (yet) by killing them, but can obtain much pleasure if they are alive. If they were captured he could then gloat over them, instilling hatred in them for Critias and for what he has done to them. He prefers to sow dissent in the Domains he plays in as part of his plan to destroy the Camarilla (see Secrets, in Dimitri's write-up).

When Paulov has successfully rendered the character incapacitated or gotten her to surrender, he will whistle. From out of hiding in the dark alley come Barb and two of Dimitri's mortal pawns. They will remove the character to Dimitri's Haven. Paulov fights to subdue the character, not kill her. Should the character somehow gain the upperhand, Paulov will launch an all-out assault.

It is a building in an industrial park just outside of the city. The building usually houses a film production house,



Prometheus Productions, but is temporarily closed while the company is in Europe shooting a project. It has been taken over by Dimitri for his uses.

The company has a vault which they use to keep filmstock in, and this is where Dimitri will have the "pieces" he has captured locked up.

As the character is thrown in, Dimitri will come to the door and chuckle. "I thought you might like to know that my game is going quite well so far. First I capture you, a Bishop, and now... a pawn!" As he says this, he throws a mortal into the vault and shuts the door, locking it with a loud clang, leaving them in utter darkness.

The mortal is a young man, a beautiful philosophy student of Critias'. He was at a bank machine, taking out most of his money (why? "I don't seem to recall...") when he was kidnapped by a gorgeous woman (Darva) and brought here. He will ask the character, whom he cannot see in the pitch blackness, what is going on. Why are they here? Who is he? What are they going to do with us?

There is no air vent to the vault. It is sealed so tight that not even mist can escape. The boy, whose name is Randy, will be dead by the next night of oxygen deprivation. Yet, he does not seem to realize it. He just keeps talking and talking.

VAMPIRE™

Dimitri

Attributes

Physical Strength Dexterity Stamina	Social Charisma Manipulation Appearance	Mental Perception Intelligence Wits
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Abilities

Talents Acting Alertness Athletics Brawl Dodge Empathy Intimidation Leadership Streetwise Subterfuge	Skills Animal Ken Drive Etiquette Firearms Melee Musk Repair Security Stealth Survival	Knowledge Bureaucracy Computer Finance Investigation Law Linguistics Medicine Occult Politics Science
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Advantages

Disciplines Animalesim Auspex Dominate Obscure Protean	Backgrounds Allies Contacts Resources Retainers Status	Virtues Conscience Self-Control Courage
--	--	---

Other Traits: Chess	Humanity	Health Bruised <input type="checkbox"/> Hurt -1 <input type="checkbox"/> Injured -2 <input type="checkbox"/> Wounded -3 <input type="checkbox"/> Maimed -4 <input type="checkbox"/> Crippled -5 <input type="checkbox"/> Incapacitated <input type="checkbox"/>															
Combat <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 30%;">Weapon</th> <th style="width: 30%;">Difficulty</th> <th style="width: 40%;">Damage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Weapon	Difficulty	Damage													Willpower	Experience
Weapon	Difficulty	Damage															
Blood Pool																	

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (1/5/2/1)

Outside, dawn approaches and the character begins to feel his limbs slacken as the sleep comes upon him and this mortal whines away in the darkness. The character knows the boy will be dead by the time he wakes up the next night.

What does he do? Console him as he slowly dies, unable eventually to breath? Does he drink from him? Or does he break the Traditions and ensure that this boy will survive by Embracing him into the curse?

Characters

Dimitri – It was was the year A.D. 828 when Dimitri first discovered the game of chess. He had been travelling the dark jungles of India when the invitation came to him inside his head, a voice speaking, coming from out of the vine-covered temple. The temple was old, buried so long in the jungle detritus that he had not even seen it at first. But he recognized the call from one like himself.

He was wary at first, for who knew how other blood-suckers would react to another, a stranger, in their territory. But this was an invitation of welcome, a gentle offer of hospitality in a cold and lonely world. He entered the moldy interior and there met Rama against whom he played his first game of what the Western world later came to know of as chess.

Dimitri would return over and over again as the centuries passed to play with Rama. The game was continually changing as it travelled through many mortal hands: first to the Arabs, and with them to Spain, and thus to the Crusaders. He would bring these new rules with him, continually challenging Rama, but ever losing to the greater wisdom and strategy of the ancient Hindu.

Dimitri asked him once how old he was, and Rama smiled and told Dimitri that he had gained the state of Karmic stability and balance before Guatama had ever first left his palace. And that was how he thought of the Curse, as the very peak of Karmic harmony. To never again die and be reborn continually, forever revolving on the mad, chaotic wheel of Illusion.

Dimitri realized that here was one who had attained Golconda, that exalted state of bliss. Dimitri knew that he must have it as well.

He asked Rama to teach him, but Rama smiled, shook his head, and told Dimitri that the Russian had far to go before he could accept the Debt he still had to repay.

And Dimitri had never been so angry before. Never before would he have considered the deed he then enacted. Fear and awe kept it from his mind. But anger peeled all that away, and the next Dimitri knew, he was flinging his arms in powerful blows against the ancient and regal Rama. He tore a branch away from one of the thick-limbed trees surrounding the temple, and drove it deep into Rama's breast. He then lunged over the revered ancient one and tore his neck open. The gushing blood drove him even madder as he lapped it up. Power tore through is body, infusing every part of him with strength beyond words. The incredible change was beyond description.

All the while Rama just stared at him, until his eyes glazed over and became empty, and his body became limp. Dimitri was now as powerful as a Vampire of the Fourth Generation and it was 1388 A.D. Dimitri has never completely understood his change, since he had heard feeding on the Vitæ of an elder would strengthen one, but not like this.

Confused, he returned to Russia, his Mother Land. Soon, giving up on understanding this mystery, he began to refine his skills at his only true love in unlife, the game of chess. Over the decades he would begin to travel to relieve his boredom, extending to wherever he went the offer of a game. His invitations to the best players of Europe attracted the attention of the Camarilla because of their odd stipulations (the game could only be played at night, the room must not be too lit, etc.). Fearing a breach of the Masquerade, several Vampiric leaders began harassing the old Russian. After more than a century of this torment he returned to Russia in 1623 A.D. and there fell into deep torpor.

He arose again briefly during Napoleon's era, and challenged the great conqueror to a game. It was the first game

Dimitri had ever lost since playing Rama. He was furious, and baffled. Had the long years of sleep dulled his sense of strategy? No matter, he would ensure that this Napoleon lived to see a strategic defeat yet.

Napoleon failed to take Russia.

Soon after, Dimitri again fell into Torpor. It was the tread of German tanks that woke him this time as they rolled over the ancient battlefield where he slept, buried with the bones of many of the soldiers he had spurred on to stay and resist Napoleon.

How dare these tanks try to raze his Mother Land. They owners would regret it, he swore. Hitler's armies failed to take Russia during world War II, and this time Dimitri was awake for good.

And so glad he was of this modern era. Why, chess was almost the national sport of the Mother Land! But he soon realized that the rules had not changed enough. He needed new innovations.

And thus he created the Game of live chess, wherein Kindred and kine were both pawns in the hands of the characters.

Sire: Unknown, but he now has the Blood of Rama in his veins.

Nature: Fanatic

Demeanor: Plotter

Generation: 4th

Embrace: Unknown, but probably the seventh century A.D.

Apparent Age: late 50s

Clan: Malkavian

Image: Five foot one, 130 lbs., old and thin, with stiff white hair that looks solid and continually hangs over his eyes. His smile stretches across his wrinkled face from ear to ear, and his teeth are all sharp.

Roleplaying Hints: They are all so fascinating, these pawns in the master game. How can this new one here be used? Oh, what fun! You find it hard to conceal your gleeful, plotting smile from others, but your mannerisms and body language are unrecognizable to most anyone. Try to find a new way to gesture when you speak, such as picking up imaginary things and moving them. These are totally natural to you, but odd and unnerving to others.

Haven: Varies.

Notes: He has made many alliances with the Sabbat since awakening. He hates the Camarilla and their lordly ways. His Game is partly an attempt on his part to inspire conflict and to decimate them.



Influence: Only what he brings with him with his Brood, retainers and Ghouls, and his Allies in the Sabbat.

Paulov (Dimitri's Knight) — Paulov had always been a loyal soldier to Russia and his army. But even he had to step up and say something to the General before he could commit that act upon the poor peasant girl.

His next duty was the cold wastes of Siberia. Walking useless patrols against nonexistent enemies. How he longed to be back again with his own unit, in the center of human society. Here there was only waste and loneliness. Surely nothing could live here for long.

But what he found on that patrol was not really alive, anyway. It had been watching him for long, had seen his vigor and manliness and again envied companionship after many years of solitude in the snow.

When it bit Paulov Rasporavitch, all Paulov could think, trapped in its grip of steel, was how red his blood looked on the snow. Would it freeze there, to lay unmelting for years? Was this to be his only mark for eternity? No glory, no medals, no parades. Instead, only blood on the ice.

But he long outlasted the bloodstain on the ice. It disappeared many years ago, buried under falling snow, and Paulov still walked the earth, searching for a mark for eternity, something he would be remembered by. The

VAMPIRE™

Paulov

Attributes

Physical	Social	Mental
Strength.....●●●●●	Charisma.....●●●●●	Perception.....●●●●●
Dexterity.....●●●●●	Manipulation.....●●●●●	Intelligence.....●●●●●
Stamina.....●●●●●	Appearance.....●●●●●	Wits.....●●●●●

Abilities

Talents	Skills	Knowledge
Acting.....●●●●●	Animal Ken.....●●●●●	Bureaucracy.....●●●●●
Alertness.....●●●●●	Drive.....●●●●●	Computer.....●●●●●
Athletics.....●●●●●	Etiquette.....●●●●●	Finance.....●●●●●
Draw.....●●●●●	Firearms.....●●●●●	Investigation.....●●●●●
Dodge.....●●●●●	Melee.....●●●●●	Law.....●●●●●
Empathy.....●●●●●	Music.....●●●●●	Linguistics.....●●●●●
Intimidation.....●●●●●	Repair.....●●●●●	Medicine.....●●●●●
Leadership.....●●●●●	Security.....●●●●●	Occult.....●●●●●
Streetwise.....●●●●●	Stealth.....●●●●●	Politics.....●●●●●
Subterfuge.....●●●●●	Survival.....●●●●●	Science.....●●●●●

Advantages

Disciplines	Backgrounds	Virtues
Celerity.....●●●●●	Status.....●●●●●	Conscience.....●●●●●
Fortitude.....●●●●●	_____●●●●●	Self-Control.....●●●●●
Obscure.....●●●●●	_____●●●●●	Courage.....●●●●●
Presence.....●●●●●	_____●●●●●	
Protean.....●●●●●	_____●●●●●	

Other Traits	Humanity	Health
Strategy.....●●●●●	●●●●●●●●●●	Bruised <input type="checkbox"/>
_____●●●●●	_____●●●●●	Hurt -1 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____●●●●●	_____●●●●●	Injured -2 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____●●●●●	_____●●●●●	Wounded -3 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____●●●●●	_____●●●●●	Mauled -4 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____●●●●●	_____●●●●●	Crippled -5 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____●●●●●	_____●●●●●	Incapacitated <input type="checkbox"/>

Combat	Blood Pool	Experience
Weapon Difficulty Damage	●●●●●●●●●●	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 13 (7/5/21)

creature had turned him into an immortal, and taught him, on the wind beaten wastes, what it meant to be one of the undying.

Paulov could not stay in Siberia long though, and he bid his Sire farewell, feeling deep sorrow for the old vampire's lonely existence. His sire feared the world of men. But Paulov had to have it. It was during Dimitri's rise during World War II that Paulov joined him, looking for duty. He has followed Dimitri since.

Sire: Name unknown, but he was a Caitiff.

Nature: Cavalier

Demeanor: Director

Generation: 10th

Embrace: 1905

Apparent Age: early 30s

Clan: Caitiff

Image: Five foot nine, 160 lbs. He has the same weather-beaten and haggard face as when he was Embraced, but he carries himself with a relaxed and easy-going manner, always ready to spring into action.

Roleplaying Hints: You are quiet unless something needs to be said. You have learned in the past what it means to

speak your mind, so you keep your opinions to yourself, unless asked for. Many have mistaken this for aloofness, but you truly enjoy company, either mortal or Kindred. If it looks like your silence has insulted someone, you will come out and frankly speak of it, asking the person to stay and not be angry.

Haven: Varies, wherever Dimitri's is.

Notes: He does not like the Sabbat, but if his "General", Dimitri, wishes to deal with them, so be it. He will not act against Dimitri. Most of the others of Dimitri's Brood look to Paulov for guidance at times, but they rarely wind up heeding his advice.

Barbara (Barb) (Ghoul Rook) – Barb had never played the kind of games men wanted her too. She was too damned independent for that. She despised housewives. If she never saw a bottle of lemony fresh table polish again she would be so happy. God, how Larry hated it when she became a trucker. That's what she did. She hauled stuff around, but her life was her own.

It was in that greasy truck stop in Jersey that she found her true life's calling — her true desire. He came through the door at about five after 2 a.m. and sat down at the booth next to hers. He was so pale, so thin, but so lively.

Barb knew what he was first time she laid eyes on him. She had read the tabloids and devoured the books. Her semi

VAMPIRE™

Barbara

Attributes

Physical	Social	Mental
Strength.....●●●●●	Charisma.....●●●●●	Perception.....●●●●●
Dexterity.....●●●●●	Manipulation.....●●●●●	Intelligence.....●●●●●
Stamina.....●●●●●	Appearance.....●●●●●	Wits.....●●●●●

Abilities

Talents	Skills	Knowledge
Acting.....●●●●●	Animal Ken.....●●●●●	Bureaucracy.....●●●●●
Alertness.....●●●●●	Drive.....●●●●●	Computer.....●●●●●
Athletics.....●●●●●	Etiquette.....●●●●●	Finance.....●●●●●
Draw.....●●●●●	Firearms.....●●●●●	Investigation.....●●●●●
Dodge.....●●●●●	Melee.....●●●●●	Law.....●●●●●
Empathy.....●●●●●	Music.....●●●●●	Linguistics.....●●●●●
Intimidation.....●●●●●	Repair.....●●●●●	Medicine.....●●●●●
Leadership.....●●●●●	Security.....●●●●●	Occult.....●●●●●
Streetwise.....●●●●●	Stealth.....●●●●●	Politics.....●●●●●
Subterfuge.....●●●●●	Survival.....●●●●●	Science.....●●●●●

Advantages

Disciplines	Backgrounds	Virtues
Potency.....●●●●●	Allies.....●●●●●	Conscience.....●●●●●
_____●●●●●	Resources.....●●●●●	Self-Control.....●●●●●
_____●●●●●	_____●●●●●	Courage.....●●●●●
_____●●●●●	_____●●●●●	

Other Traits	Humanity	Health
_____●●●●●	●●●●●●●●●●	Bruised <input type="checkbox"/>
_____●●●●●	_____●●●●●	Hurt -1 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____●●●●●	_____●●●●●	Injured -2 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____●●●●●	_____●●●●●	Wounded -3 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____●●●●●	_____●●●●●	Mauled -4 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____●●●●●	_____●●●●●	Crippled -5 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____●●●●●	_____●●●●●	Incappeditated <input type="checkbox"/>

Combat	Blood Pool	Experience
Weapon Difficulty Damage	●●●●●●●●●●	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/21)

was full of cheap paperbacks, their spines broken and corners tattered, which she had read over and over again. Stories about Vampires. She had always envied those with the powers of the night, as well as the freedom and self-sufficiency that went with it. In her heart, she knew, just knew, that they were real. Somewhere in the world was a bloodsucker hungry for her blood. And she and her neck would be waiting should one finally come.

And here he was, sitting across from her in a truck stop, ordering only a glass of water which sat, untouched. As soon as the waitress left, Barb got up and sat down at his booth, across from him. She just sat there and stared at him, meeting his gaze, thinking "I know you."

He seemed startled and looked around, as if he were surrounded by enemies. But then he calmed down and stared at her. He asked her how she knew. She smiled and told him everything, of her dreary marriage to Larry, that redneck jerk, and her divorce when she started driving trucks. And she told him about the books on Vampires, and the movies she'd seen, and her greatest desire: for him to take her and make her one of his kind.

He seemed very amused by this, but invited her out to see the night. He told that he found it odd that a mortal actually believed the stories, and even recognized him for what he was. She told him that he would have to take her now, for it would be to dangerous to let her go, knowing what she did. This would surely convince him to drink from her.

He laughed at that long and hard. She begged him, pleading to at least be allowed to come with him, to protect him during the day while he slept.

He stared at her long and hard and then bit his wrist, holding it out to her as the blood welled up and spilled forth. And she drank.

Ever since, she has served Paulov faithfully, waiting for the day when his dread lord, Dimitri, would give him permission to finish the job, to drink her blood and make her a full member of the night.

Nature: Conformist

Demeanor: Rebel

First Drink: 1984

Apparent Age: 33

Image: Five foot seven, 200 lbs. A large woman, she looks somewhat intimidating at first, but this quickly goes away. Her hair is short and greasy, and she is pretty dirty all the time.

Roleplaying Hints: Nobody tells you what to do with your life anymore, except Paulov. And of course, Dimitri. And then there's Rolf, better listen to him. Also, Darva, she's pretty tough ... Basically, she believes she is a rebel,



but continually follows others. Be cocky at first when meeting others, but quickly start believing what they tell you. Every statement usually begins with "Paulov says..."

Haven: With Paulov.

Notes: It is not the Sabbat that surprises her, it is the Camarilla. She has always believed all vampires to be like the Sabbat. The refined Camarilla still surprise her, and she wonders why Dimitri hates it so. She can usually gain the aid of truckers simply with the use of a C.B. radio and her call name "Dracula's Daughter."

SCENE TWO: ANOTHER MOVE BLACK ROOK TAKES WHITE KNIGHT

The next evening, when the characters return to the Succubus Club (minus one) they will see the chess game still going on. Dimitri is in a fine mood, and will come down from the balcony and approach the characters, making much small talk about American cities. Critias is stone-faced, but

characters with Auspex may detect his aura of inner rage. Eventually, Dimitri dismisses himself to return to the board.

They may wonder where their comrade is. If any of them has a telepathic union, they will find it is being blocked (by the Hag). If they go to the character's Haven, they will find it empty, and unused the day before.

Otherwise, nothing is out of the ordinary. Their feeding is as usual, per their own preferences. But, on their way home, Dimitri strikes again. One of the characters (a Knight this time) will be attacked. This time it is Rolf (a Rook). His goals are the same as Paulov's were the night before. He will be aided by two mortals and Jordan.

If the characters do not split up, Darva will try to lead some of them away by attempting to seduce them, playing the part of an gorgeous victim in a red convertible. She will try to lure the characters into climbing in with her to go to her place. When she is far enough away from Rolf, she will aim the car at a tree and leap out, disappearing into the night (the car is only going about 35 at that time, so the characters should be disoriented but not suffer much health loss from the crash). Characters will have one turn to react before the car crashes, and they can try to steer the car, jump out (Darva used the automatic locks to lock their door) or hit the breaks. Still, characters will probably hit the tree and take four dice

of damage. If necessary, Darva will also use Dimitri's remaining pawns to distract the characters while Rolf grabs his target. Once Rolf has gotten the character, Darva will flee, using Obfuscate to hide herself.

Characters

Rolf (Rook)—It was horrifying at the Front. He and his unit had spent long hours fighting Hitler's oncoming tanks, trying to stop them. He was dirty cold, tired, and one of the few men in his unit left alive.

If only he could sit down and rest for while. Yes, that would be all he needed. Just a few moments.

When he awoke, it was night. He reached over to shake Koufax awake. But Koufax slid over at his touch, and lay sprawled on the ground dead, a bullet through his head. When had this happened? How had he slept through this?

He then noticed the footprints and tank treads all around. They had been there, the Germans, and had left him for dead, frozen.

He then heard sounds, German voices approaching. He would have his revenge, yes, from beyond the grave they would think. As they past, he leapt up and ran one of them through with his bayonet. He yanked it out to stab the other one. Except it would not come out. It was stuck in the dead German. The other one had now pulled up his rifle and aimed it at Rolf's head.

"You can't kill that which is already dead, fool!" Rolf yelled at him.

Either the German understood Russian or he was just stunned by Rolf's courage, as he hesitated for a moment.

Rolf lunged and the rifle went off, its bullet knocking him back in the air and into the snowy embankment behind him.

But as he lay there bleeding, dying for real, he looked up to where the soldier was and saw that the soldier had no head. No, that's not right. He had one a moment ago.

Then Rolf noticed the other man, behind the soldier, greedily lapping up the blood pouring from the soldier's severed head, which was clutched in the hand—no, claw—of the strange man.

He watched as this creature seemed to grow fuller and fuller with every drop of blood devoured, until he dropped the soldier's body to the ground.

The man then came up to Rolf as he lay in the snow, slowly bleeding to death.

"I witnessed your valor," he said, blood running out of the corners of his mouth. "My lord has great need of men such as you. Men of iron. Would you be one who truly cannot die?"

VAMPIRE™		
Rolf		
Attributes		
Physical	Social	Mental
Strength ●●●●●	Charisma ●●●●●	Perception ●●●●●
Dexterity ●●●●●	Manipulation ●●●●●	Intelligence ●●●●●
Stamina ●●●●●	Appearance ●●●●●	Wits ●●●●●
Abilities		
Talents	Skills	Knowledge
Acting ●●●●●	Animal Ken ●●●●●	Bureaucracy ●●●●●
Alertness ●●●●●	Drive ●●●●●	Computer ●●●●●
Athletics ●●●●●	Etiquette ●●●●●	Finance ●●●●●
Brawl ●●●●●	Forgery ●●●●●	Investigation ●●●●●
Dodge ●●●●●	Melee ●●●●●	Law ●●●●●
Empathy ●●●●●	Music ●●●●●	Linguistics ●●●●●
Intimidation ●●●●●	Repair ●●●●●	Medicine ●●●●●
Leadership ●●●●●	Security ●●●●●	Occult ●●●●●
Streetwise ●●●●●	Stealth ●●●●●	Politics ●●●●●
Subterfuge ●●●●●	Survival ●●●●●	Science ●●●●●
Advantages		
Disciplines	Backgrounds	Virtues
Fortitude ●●●●●	●●●●●	Conscience ●●●●●
Patience ●●●●●	●●●●●	Self-Control ●●●●●
Protean ●●●●●	●●●●●	Courage ●●●●●
●●●●●	●●●●●	
●●●●●	●●●●●	
Other Traits		
●●●●●	●●●●●●●●●●	Health
●●●●●		Bruised <input type="checkbox"/>
●●●●●		Hurt -1 <input type="checkbox"/>
●●●●●		Injured -2 <input type="checkbox"/>
●●●●●		Wounded -3 <input type="checkbox"/>
●●●●●		Maimed -4 <input type="checkbox"/>
●●●●●		Crippled -5 <input type="checkbox"/>
●●●●●		Incapacitated <input type="checkbox"/>
Combat		
Weapon	Difficulty	Damage
Other Traits		
●●●●●	●●●●●●●●●●	Willpower
●●●●●		●●●●●●●●●●
●●●●●		●●●●●●●●●●
●●●●●		●●●●●●●●●●
●●●●●		●●●●●●●●●●
●●●●●		●●●●●●●●●●
Other Traits		
●●●●●	●●●●●●●●●●	Blood Pool
●●●●●		●●●●●●●●●●
●●●●●		●●●●●●●●●●
●●●●●		●●●●●●●●●●
●●●●●		●●●●●●●●●●
●●●●●		●●●●●●●●●●
Other Traits		
●●●●●	●●●●●●●●●●	Experience
●●●●●		●●●●●●●●●●
●●●●●		●●●●●●●●●●
●●●●●		●●●●●●●●●●
●●●●●		●●●●●●●●●●
●●●●●		●●●●●●●●●●

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/21)

"Please, I do not want to die," was all that Rolf could utter.

The man bent over him and began sucking at the wound in his chest. Rolf felt himself becoming more distant from the aching numbness the cold had wreaked on his body. Then, the man cut open his wrist, and lay it before Rolf. Rolf drank, and the warmth suffused him, taking away the cold forever.

He has since been a loyal servant to Paulov, his Sire, being willfully Blood Bound to him.

Sire: Paulov

Nature: Martyr

Demeanor: Conformist

Generation: 11th

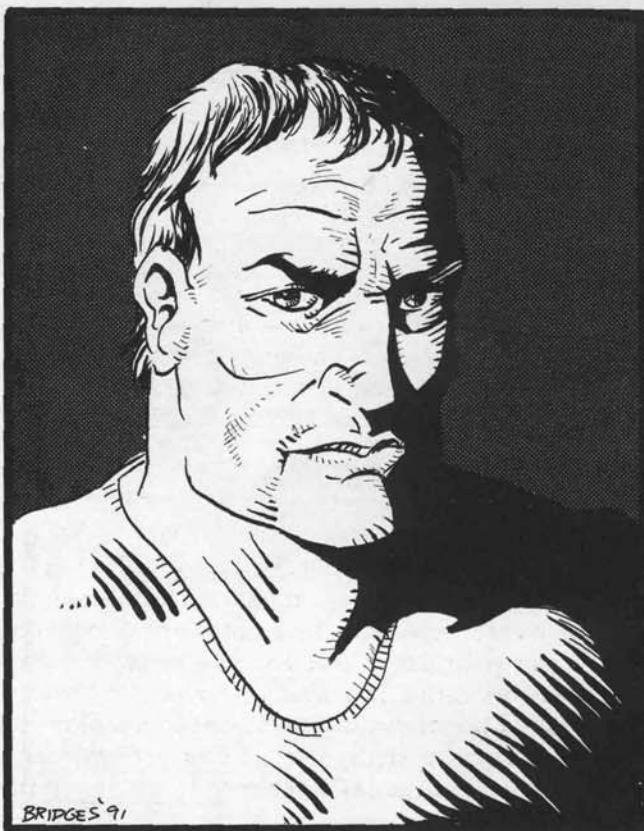
Embrace: 1944

Apparent Age: 27

Clan: Caitiff

Image: 6 ft 2, 210 lbs., broad-shouldered Russian. He has a continual look of stern resoluteness on his face (the look of a martyr).

Roleplaying Hints: He is very direct in his talk, sometimes getting rather passionate and disdainful subtlety.



"And where was subtlety when I was fighting off tanks? Hiding in her warm and cozy mansion, that's where!"

Haven: With Paulov.

Darva Felispa (Knight)—She had watched the house for a long time now, coming here for many months to spy on those who came and went from the fine country manor. It was the mysterious owner who fascinated her so much.

Not just her, but her superiors in the K.G.B. They too wondered about this one, the old man living off inherited family wealth. But it was so hard to trace just where this wealth had come from. And all those guests, the chess champions of the U.S.S.R., visiting whenever they passed through the region. They said nothing of the games they played in there.

They had tried planting an agent there once, after long months of grooming him with chess champions. Like most of the other chess players, he tried to invite himself to the mansion for a game with the mysterious master. Yet, he was refused, as were all the other agents who attempted, as if the old man knew their secret.

So they just watched, waiting for the inevitable link they needed to prove that this Dimitri was a western spy. How else could he know of their agents?



VAMPIRE™

Darva

Attributes

Physical	Social	Mental
Strength.....●●●●●	Charisma.....●●●●●	Perception.....●●●●●
Dexterity.....●●●●●	Manipulation.....●●●●●	Intelligence.....●●●●●
Stamina.....●●●●●	Appearance.....●●●●●	Wits.....●●●●●

Abilities

Talents	Skills	Knowledge
Acting.....●●●●●	Animal Ken.....●●●●●	Bureaucracy.....●●●●●
Alertness.....●●●●●	Drive.....●●●●●	Computer.....●●●●●
Athletics.....●●●●●	Etiquette.....●●●●●	Finance.....●●●●●
Brawl.....●●●●●	Firearms.....●●●●●	Investigation.....●●●●●
Dodge.....●●●●●	Melee.....●●●●●	Law.....●●●●●
Empathy.....●●●●●	Misc.....●●●●●	Linguistics.....●●●●●
Intimidation.....●●●●●	Repair.....●●●●●	Medicine.....●●●●●
Leadership.....●●●●●	Security.....●●●●●	Occult.....●●●●●
Streetwise.....●●●●●	Stealth.....●●●●●	Politics.....●●●●●
Subterfuge.....●●●●●	Survival.....●●●●●	Science.....●●●●●

Advantages

Disciplines	Backgrounds	Virtues
Dominance.....●●●●●	Contacts.....●●●●●	Conscience.....●●●●●
Elegant.....●●●●●	Resources.....●●●●●	Self-Control.....●●●●●
Science.....●●●●●		Courage.....●●●●●
Presence.....●●●●●		

Other Traits

_____ ●●●●● _____ ●●●●● _____ ●●●●● _____ ●●●●●	Humanity ●●●●●○○○○○	Health Bruised <input type="checkbox"/> Hurt -1 <input type="checkbox"/> Injured -2 <input type="checkbox"/> Wounded -3 <input type="checkbox"/> Mauled -4 <input type="checkbox"/> Crippled -5 <input type="checkbox"/> Incapacitated <input type="checkbox"/>															
Combat <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Weapon</th> <th>Difficulty</th> <th>Damage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Weapon	Difficulty	Damage													Willpower ●●●●●○○○○○ □□□□□□□□□□	Experience _____
Weapon	Difficulty	Damage															
	Blood Pool ●●●●●○○○○○																

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2)

Darva waited and waited, in the bushes where her car was hidden, and looked through the binoculars. Tonight, after two weeks of silence, a car arrived at the gate. She looked closely, trying to catch a glimpse in the dimming light of the man in the car. Kelvin Smythe! British chess champion. So, here it was at last, the proof of the spy network in which Dimitri worked. She must move closer. She had to get pictures that she could show her superiors.

Darva waited until dark, then climbed out of her car and began to make her way through the brush and down the hill to the manor. She knew the room in which Dimitri had always played, with its huge windows looking out over the forested hills. As she approached, she thought she heard something, off aways in the bushes, to her left. An animal? Or guards, perhaps. Maybe Dimitri had guards placed tonight to keep any one such as her from discovering his secrets. She moved stealthfully over towards where she had heard the noise. She would remove any the guards before they could remove her.

Then, the snap of a branch above, and something was falling onto her. Something big. She deftly pivoted her hip and threw the weight off her.

The man hit the ground hard, but was instantly up again and lunging at her throat with his hands. She moved to the side, but he caught her hair and yanked her towards him.

Such strength! She couldn't resist and fell into his chest. Before she could lift her knee into his groin, he had her head tilted back and bit into it.

Darva screamed in pain. She screamed but there was no one to hear her. She knew she was dying, but had never thought it would be like this, helplessly gripped by a monster who sucked all her blood away.

But when he lay her back and offered his throat to her, with the gash he had made in it and the blood running out, the beautiful red, full blood, she drank hungrily, greedily, as if her life depended on it. She knew somehow that it did. That this blood was her sacrament to a new life. And she fainted away.

When she awoke, Rolf was there, the one who had Embraced her. Her Sire. She was introduced finally to Dimitri and knew him for what he really was. A spy? Really, what madness she had fallen for in her mortal existence, to think that anything she feared was covertly working for your country's enemy. No, she now knew there were far worse things to fear.

Sire: Rolf

Nature: Bravo

Demeanor: Caretaker

Generation: 12th

Embrace: 1964

Apparent Age: 26

Clan: Caitiff

Image: 5 ft 11, 130 lbs. Graceful and lovely, Darva has jet black hair and deep brown (almost golden) eyes. She walks with a swagger, and she just wants someone to give her trouble so she can show them a thing or two.

Roleplaying Hints: You exult in your vampiric powers and want to use them whenever possible, although you know when not to. Emotionally, you play the teenager your parents never allowed you to be when growing up in Russia. You get absorbed in things around you, but can easily detach yourself from them thanks to K.G.B. training. You do not have a Russian accent.

Haven: With Rolf.

Notes: Dimitri is using her to spy on both the Camarilla and Sabbat. Rolf is very protective of her, and will aid her when she asks.

Jordan McConnell (Ghoul Bishop)—Jordan was fresh out of college and full of idealistic thoughts on how people's lives on Earth could be made better: all through socialist or communist philosophy. He had to see for himself

the countries of Europe and its people, so he bought a ticket to Russia.

He trod the cobbled streets smiling and talking with anyone he could about their way of life. This soon attracted the attention of the K.G.B. Jordan was pulled into a black car, gagged, and driven to a house on the outskirts of town. There he was tied to a chair and questioned for hours on why he had come, who had sent him, what was his mission. But they did not understand, could not understand, an American who truly believed communism could work.

Disgusted with his denials, they shot him in the belly and rolled him down the hill behind the house. He lay there for hours, refusing to die, but slowly bleeding his life away. That was how Darva found him.

She sat down next to him and they talked of communism and what it could do for mankind. Jordan occasionally coughed up blood, and soon his eyes became cloudy.

Darva was unsure of what to do. She was really enjoying their talk, but now he was dying. She had been forbidden by Dimitri to make any Progeny.

She bent over him, slit her wrist and let him suck at the powerful vitae. He slowly came to, alive. But for how long?

She took him to Dimitri. He was very angry and refused to let Jordan become one of them. But, he did allow Killikillarven to heal his wound, and he let Darva feed him

from her veins. He has not thought of Jordan since, but Darva awaits the day when he will allow her to Embrace Jordan fully.

Nature: Visionary

Demeanor: Fanatic

First Drink: 1976

Apparent Age: 18

Image: Five foot four, 145 lbs., young, boyish face, of good Ivy League stock.

Roleplaying Hints: You like talking to people about politics. If they really thought about it more often, I mean really thought about it, then they'd see that socialism or communism is a neat idea.

Haven: With Darva

Dimitri's Rant

The captured character will be taken to the vault, and locked up with the previous night's captives. Dimitri will come again, just before dawn.

If the character who spent the night there last night had Embraced Randy, the young student, then Dimitri will laugh upon seeing him, but otherwise do nothing. If Randy died, Dimitri will do nothing to remove the body.

"I'll wager you are curious as to my motives. Well, I'll tell you. But it is Critias you should blame for your troubles. He is the cause of your incarceration.

"I like you both and would not see you harmed.

"But I see you are confused. Let me explain. I have invented a wonderful variation on the game of chess: live chess! Mortals take the place of pawns and I and my opponent move them to our desires, placing them in conflict with one another, trying to gain victory on the board through their victories in life.

"Critias invited me to come to Chicago for a Game. But he had a variation which I did not expect: to use Kindred as pieces! I was astonished, but he offered me his blood if I won. I could not very well refuse that. Tell me honestly, if in my place, would not you have done the same?

"Critias declared that you were to be his court pieces. I am but fulfilling my role in the game. I mean you no ill.

"But Critias! He plays like a devil. I have but captured you, but he — he kills my men! I sicken of this game already. Were it not for the promise of blood, I would end it now and release you. Please understand my position."

VAMPIRE™

Jordan McConnell

Physical

Strength 0000
Dexterity 0000
Stamina 0000

Social

Charisma 0000
Manipulation 0000
Appearance 0000

Mental

Perception 0000
Intelligence 0000
Wits 0000

Talents

Acting 0000
Alertness 0000
Athletics 0000
Brawl 0000
Dodge 0000
Empathy 0000
Intimidation 0000
Leadership 0000
Streetwise 0000
Subterfuge 0000

Skills

Animal Ken 0000
Drive 0000
Etiquette 0000
Firearms 0000
Melee 0000
Music 0000
Repair 0000
Security 0000
Stealth 0000
Survival 0000

Knowledge

Bureaucracy 0000
Computer 0000
Finance 0000
Investigation 0000
Law 0000
Linguistics 0000
Medicine 0000
Oxult 0000
Politics 0000
Science 0000

Disciplines

Potence 0000
0000
0000
0000
0000

Backgrounds

Resources 0000
0000
0000
0000
0000

Virtues

Conscience 0000
Self Control 0000
Courage 0000

Other Traits

0000
0000
0000
0000
0000

Humanity

●●●●●●●●

Health

Brained
Hurt -1
Injured 2
Wounded 3
Mauled 4
Crippled 5
Incarnated

Combat

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage

Willpower

●●●●●●●●

Experience

0000000000

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (75/21)

Of course, he is attempting to fool the characters and is lying. Use the Fast Talk rules to see if any of the characters falls for it.

"I do not wish for you to starve. Please do not think me cruel." As he says this, he motions to Rolf, who steps up and throws a mortal woman into the vault. He then places an oxygen bottle and mask inside the door. Dimitri exits and the door closes and locks.

It is completely black. Only Red Eyes will pierce the darkness.

The woman wakes up. She has been induced into fainting by Domination. She screams, thinking she is alone at first. If the characters speak, she will be immediately fearful. However she reacts next will depend on the characters. She is unaware of the oxygen, so it is up to the characters to help her with the mask. Without it, she will die before the next night.

Her name is Deborah Stanford. She is a lawyer. She was working late in her office on a legal documents (she cannot remember what they were now) when a man (Paulov) broke in and kidnapped her.

If Randy is now a Vampire, he must feed soon. She is the only blood, other than the characters', in the vault. Alternatively, Randy is at the character's mercy concerning Vampire lore, and is unaware of Blood Bonding. They can have him drink from them as much as they like.

SCENE FOUR:

THE VAMPIRE SHAMAN

BLACK BISHOP TAKES

WHITE ROOK

The characters may wonder why their comrades keep disappearing. If they ran into Darva last night, they should be figuring that something very weird is going on.

Dimitri's brood, sloppy with their successes, get a little cocky this night. With a Perception + Alertness role, target of eight, characters will notice they are being followed by a cloaked figure. This is Killikillarven (a Bishop).

If they try to grab him, he will flee, using his Obfuscate and call a fog if need be.

Otherwise, nothing unusual occurs. Yet.

When the characters go to the Succubus Club, they will find Dimitri there again, with Critias. (If they do not go, the Storyteller should remind them that this is where their first friend disappeared, and maybe someone saw it happen.)

Tonight anyone can notice Critias' anger. He appears deep in concentration, but is in fact sending his senses out, moving pawns, to foil Dimitri, attempting to outguess his next maneuver.

Dimitri wanders the Club, gazing at art in the gallery and even going into the maze to hear an open mike reading of Punk-nik poetry. This consists of people coming up from the audience to read their dreary, apocalyptic "poetry" while trying to dodge whatever is thrown at them.

On the way home that night, one of the characters, a rook, will be attacked by Killikillarven. If the characters did not split up, then Killikillarven will use mortal pawns to aid him, distracting the other characters while he goes after his target. While he is attacking the character, Critias will engage his Queen. In other words, he has had his police chase Damien into this neighborhood, and hopes that Damien will help eradicate the stranger.

Killikillarven will attempt to flee when Damien arrives, but Damien will stop him with a thrown rock, unless the characters can do it first.

Killikillarven will not explain what he is doing or why, but threat of exposure to sunlight will make him talk. All he will be able to get out before preternaturally fainting is the location of the Haven where the other characters are being held, but not Dimitri's name. Any attempts to awaken him will not work. Dimitri has had all his Blood Bound servants hypnotized to fall into a torpor-like state before revealing anything about him.

Characters

Killikillarven (Bishop) – It used to be that when a shaman spoke, his words were heeded with great respect and fear. But when those Christians came, the Scandinavians with their crosses and swords and great riches, the Finnish people of his village learned not to listen to Killikillarven. This Christ was a greater shaman. And the wealth he provides simply for swearing an allegiance to him!

Disgusted, Killikillarven sought to show them what real power was. Had he not before flown on a drum to the misty and dark land of Pohjola and brought back for Jorjellin, the blacksmith, a wondrous hammer? A hammer which never breaks or dents, as it once belonged to the Great Smith Ilmarinen?

He filled his sled with provisions and departed to the east, where there was said to be a dark chief who would grant anything if one could best him in a game. He arrived at the stone tower of this chief and was admitted by the pale maidens who served there. He entered the chief's chambers and sat down to the game, which Killikillarven knew to be called chess. He lost miserably.

• **Evil Eye.** This is just like the first level ritual Curse, but this does not require a ritual. It only lasts for a Scene, but can be cast again and again on the same subject. The Storyteller should decide if cumulative bad luck can become permanent after enough castings: the character just has bad spirits following him around. The spirits have become used to it.

•• **Spirit Eyes ("The Sight").** This is very similar to Aura perception, but the character perceives spirits instead of auras. He sees them in the form they take: i.e. Fox spirits, Faerie plant spirits, etc. This includes Ghosts. He can also speak with them.

••• **Spirit Slave.** The character can demand a task of a spirit. The spirit has to be there already. The spirit will perform the task, but not if it is beyond its powers. Recently dead can be forced into being Ghosts and haunt a location with this spell. However, in this case, it wears off after a while (Storyteller's discretion). For permanent hauntings, see Fetishes.

•••• **Fetishes.** The character can force spirits to inhabit objects, or fetishes, he carries around with him. He can then use their powers anytime he wants, without casting this spell again and again. He can create Ghosts by first using Spirit Slave and then forcing the Ghost into an object which he buries or hides at the location. This will cost the caster an automatic Humanity Point.

••••• **Journey.** This spirit projection is similar to astral projection, but the spirit remains within the physical realm. The character's body remains in one place, generally guarded by a fetish, and her spirit travels about. The character can also be trapped into fetishes when in this state, and controlled by any spirit spell. Physical attacks have no effect on her. While the character cannot use any physical disciplines (Celerity, Fortitude, Potence and Protean) while in this form, all the rest act normally. The spirit form is generally visible unless the character uses Obfuscate.

This is a very rare form among Kindred. Perhaps only in the most primitive regions of the world are there any Kindred who practice it. One must have learned the beginnings of this Form while they were mortal, for contact with spirits is very hard for Kindred. There are also some Sabbat who know this Path.

The Vault

At the vault, where the captured characters are being kept, Dimitri will come in, obviously angry. He will scowl at the characters and demand to know all the secret havens of their friends. He is trying to find out where they may have taken Killikillarven. He will scream at them, telling them it is all Critias' fault. He says he wants to know the havens so that he can warn the others of Critias' madness. This time, though, it is obvious he is lying. He is too angry to attempt to really fool the characters. He will storm out, slamming the door on the characters, leaving them no new "guests."

The Storyteller should run the interaction in the vault between the characters and Randy and Deborah. If Randy is dead, this will freak out Deborah to no end. She will only know about his body when Dimitri comes in and turns on the lights unless the characters tell her before. She will think that she has wound up in a psycho killer's den. Play this out with gusto.

What do the players do? Try to calm her? Or scare her even more? (This may cost humanity: it is extremely cruel.)

If Randy is now a Cainite, he constantly begs the characters for lore concerning his new state of existence. Deborah will be freaked at this too. She will think she is among psycho ward escapees. Get the characters to come to a better understanding of their Curse through trying to explain it to Randy, with the constant exasperated whining of Deborah punctuating their tales.

If Deborah has been Embraced, she will probably go a bit bonkers. She will constantly try to deny what the characters are telling her she has become. She will go so far as thinking that she has drunk wine rather than blood. She may be so far gone as to imagine that she is at a cocktail party, and proceed to initiate small talk with the characters.

No matter what else has occurred by this time, two things should have happened. One: Two characters should be held at Dimitri's Haven listening to his nightly rants. Two: The other characters should have met up with Damien and found out that something is afoot. But, dawn fast approaches, and the characters must wait another night before acting.

The characters must figure out what to do with Killikillarven. Whatever their decision, Critias will have his mortal retainers watch him to make sure he does not escape. If he is left in a position where the Storyteller believes it easy for him to escape, let him. Assume then that Critias will recapture him personally before he can return to Dimitri.

SCENE FIVE: THE HAVEN & THE HAG

The characters now know the location of the Haven and should be planning to assault it. Dimitri will be at the Succubus Club, angry because his bishop has not returned. He ups the guard before he leaves, and sends out Darva and Paulov to search for any more of Critias' court.

If the characters go to the Succubus Club for any reason before going to the Haven, Dimitri will be glad to see them. His plan is to worm out of them what happened the night before, but Critias distracts him. One of Critias' mortals (a bouncer) will ask the characters to come with him. Once outside he explains that they should not disturb the other customers and not to come back that night.

The Haven is guarded by the ace Dimitri has kept up his sleeve: his Queen, a hideous Hag. If anyone steps foot into the Haven, they will be attacked by the Hag.

She will first try to use her Glamour, and appear as a mortal, frail old lady. To see if this is successful, roll the Hag's Magic Discipline + Subterfuge, opposed against the characters' roll Wits + Occult. The one with more successes wins.

If successful, she will pretend to have fallen, and not be able to get up. If the characters help her, she will grab them (she has no physical body, it is an illusion) and attack their souls. Roll her Hag Magic + Occult, against a difficulty of the character's Humanity. The number of successes are damage against the character's Willpower. The character should roll his Self-Control to resist the damage. When a character has no Willpower left, he is a slave to the Hag. She will use him to attack his friends.

The lost Willpower returns at the end of the scene. The characters must be away from the Hag for this to happen, however.

No physical attacks will harm the Hag, but she is susceptible to Domination. She can be physically attacked in the astral plane. If a character can grab the rock in which she is bound, he will receive an automatic Domination over her. The rock is hidden in the top drawer of a desk in an office in the next room. It looks like a paperweight, but *Auspex* can detect it for a magical object. If the character has *Auspex*, she may be able to detect it glowing in the desk. The character must make a Perception + Alertness roll with a target of seven.

Characters

"The body is meant to be seen, not covered up."

Marilyn Monroe

The Hag (Dimitri's Queen) – The Journey lasted for days, but at last Killikillarven found what he had sought. Nestled deep in a old cave, in Scotland, was a powerful spirit of darkness strong enough for Dimitri's purposes. He returned to his body, and informed Dimitri of the spirit and her location.

They were soon in Scotland, outside the cave. Killikillarven peered inside, his right eye bulging with the effort of his magic. Yes, there she was, creeping behind the rocks, hiding from them. Oh, but she was ugly, and so old.

"Seize her, Killi. Seize her for me and put her into this." Dimitri said as he held forth an ebon stone. Killikillarven took the rock and went to work on his magic. She was powerful, and had been ensconced in this cave for centuries, but still unready to leave it. But Killikillarven won the battle of souls and bound her into the rock.

He wiped the sweat from his brow and handed the foul, steaming thing to Dimitri. "Here she is, Sire. The Hag."



VAMPIRE™

The Hag

Attributes		
Physical	Social	Mental
Strength 00000	Charisma 00000	Perception 00000
Dexterity 00000	Manipulation 00000	Intelligence 00000
Stamina 00000	Appearance 00000	Wits 00000

Abilities		
Talents	Skills	Knowledge
Acting 00000	Animal Ken 00000	Bureaucracy 00000
Alertness 00000	Drive 00000	Computer 00000
Athletics 00000	Etiquette 00000	Finance 00000
Brawl 00000	Pirouette 00000	Investigation 00000
Dodge 00000	Melee 00000	Law 00000
Empathy 00000	Musik 00000	Linguistics 00000
Intimidation 00000	Repair 00000	Medicine 00000
Leadership 00000	Security 00000	Occult 00000
Streetwise 00000	Sleuth 00000	Politics 00000
Subterfuge 00000	Survival 00000	Science 00000

Advantages		
Disciplines	Backgrounds	Virtues
Awaken 00000	00000	Conscience 00000
Dominance 00000	00000	Self-Control 00000
Hag Magic 00000	00000	Courage 00000
Obscure 00000	00000	

Other Traits	Humanity	Health
00000	0000000000	Braced <input type="checkbox"/>
00000		Hurt -1 <input type="checkbox"/>
00000		Injured -3 <input type="checkbox"/>
00000		Wounded -3 <input type="checkbox"/>
00000		Mauled -4 <input type="checkbox"/>
		Crippled -5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		Incapacitated <input type="checkbox"/>

Combat			Blood Pool	Experience
Weapon	Difficulty	Damage	0000000000	

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 10 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

old lady. Other aspects of her Hag Magic can include Hexes which cause the characters automatic botches, weather manipulation and other types of vile sorcery.

Roleplaying Hints: Cackle a lot, unless you've cast your Glamour. Then you're a meek church lady. If you have lured someone in and they see through your guise, then scream and tear at their souls. You have been an old lady for centuries, and your lumbago is killing you.

Haven: The rock.

Notes: If, God forbid, another Hag were to meet with her, they will form an immediate coven. The other Hag will work to free her.

Rolf and Barb are also guarding the vault. They will try to attack the characters also. If they are near to losing, they will flee, catching up with Dimitri at the Succubus Club.

To open the vault that the characters are being kept in requires a Security + Intelligence roll to figure out the combination. The difficulty is nine. Eight successes are needed. It takes 10 minutes per set of rolls. This may take a while. If a character has Potence, he may roll his factor plus Strength to rip the door open. Due to the vault's construction, she can only do this if on the outside. The difficulty is 9, and it requires 5 successes to get it open enough for characters to squeeze out of the vault. Several characters on the outside can combine their efforts, but any botches mean they have to start all over again and may have injured themselves as well.

Dimitri held the smoking, scalding rock in his hand. It still burned with the hatred of the Hag, but Dimitri ignored the searing of his pale flesh. He reared back his head and laughed. "You shall serve my Game well, oh Queen."

Since then Dimitri has used the Hag to protect his captured pieces and his Haven while playing his Game. He places the rock in the Haven, and the Hag attacks any who enters not of Dimitri's brood.

Nature: Curmudgeon

Demeanor: Curmudgeon, but sometimes fakes being a Caretaker ("Oh, you poor child. Come inside and I'll give you some sweet candy...").

Creation: She has been a Hag since 316 A.D. (she was an evil witch in life)

Apparent Age: 133

Notes: She can attack someone's soul with her magic. See the previous section for details.

Image: When she manifests, she is one of the most loathsome things imaginable. Open sores, dripping pus, cover her face. Scraggly, limp hair resembling swamp grass hangs from her head. One of her eyes (varies between manifestations) is so bugged out from using the Evil Eye that it is actually hanging from the socket. She is hunched over and her hands are twisted in an arthritic nightmare. Her voice sounds like fingernails on a blackboard. But, when she uses her Glamour, with her Subterfuge, she appears as a kindly

SCENE SIX:

THE WRATH OF DIMITRI

Dimitri will be enraged at the characters' actions. He will spend the night with his brood in an alternate Haven. When the next night comes, he will then attempt to kill any of them. If the characters stay in their havens, Dimitri will scour the streets for them. They should realize by this point that they should be making their own moves now, before someone can again manipulate them. The Succubus Club is where they know they can find Critias or Dimitri, and take the game to them. It is also (usually) the safest place in town, especially now that they will be watching their backs.

Dimitri will catch up with them there. He is close to Frenzy. If anyone mentions to him that he is losing the Game, he will snap and fully Frenzy.

He attacks the characters personally, trying to throw them around brutally, or claw them using his Protean discipline. The rest of the club will panic. Mortals will flee out of the way. The bouncers will wisely pull the fire alarm and help usher mortals outside. Any other Kindred in the club will stand back and watch, amazed at the audacity of Dimitri. Even Helena, who has carefully been following the game from the safety of the VIP lounge, will stay out of the fight.

Suddenly, Critias will appear and attack Dimitri, King vs. King. Dimitri's brood will try to stop the characters from helping Critias. Unless the characters can aid Critias in some way though, he may lose. With their help, he can overcome Dimitri, declare "Checkmate" and sink his teeth into Dimitri's incapacitated body. Dimitri will scream horribly and expire.

Dimitri's brood will be shattered. Paulov will hang his head in shame. Rolf will cry. Darva will touch Dimitri's body, as if she cannot believe what has happened. The two Ghouls will be silent, but both look expectantly at their Kindred masters. Killikillarven will weep tears of joy, exclaiming "Oh, my spirit is free! Come spirits, we can again be friends! My demon is dead!" The mortal pawns will run away and try to call the police, but Critias will make sure that his retainers on the force treat them as deranged.

Critias will be immensely thankful, and heady from the rush of Fourth Generation blood. He declares that the characters may have any favor of him. If they are angry with him, he will attempt to make them see his point of view. It is up to the Storyteller how to run the results of this. If they are Anarchs, Critias will have a hard time. But if they wish for power in the Camarilla, he can help them get it.

Critias tells Dimitri's brood to leave and never return. He will usher the characters to the private section of the club to try to gain their favor. Below, the crowd will be let back in. The incident is explained away as a false alarm.

If Dimitri Wins:

If Dimitri wins the fight with Critias, by incapacitating him, his Frenzy will depart. He will step back and laugh, his rage gone. He will bow to the characters.

"I thank you for a wonderful Game. It was truly the most exciting I've had in years. You are welcome in my Domain, in Russia, anytime." He then laughs manically, gathers his brood and departs.

The characters are left there, with the incapacitated Critias, who will already have been summoning aid telepathically. If it looks like the characters are angry enough to attempt to destroy him, he will explain to Damien (if Damien is there, he will summon him otherwise) that he is his Sire. This will cause Damien to stop the others from doing anything to Critias. He has many questions of him.

AFTERMATH

It is up to the Storyteller to take it from this point. How do the characters react to Critias' using them for a game? If they are not Anarchs, does this drive them over the edge? Do they tell others in the Camarilla of the Game? If so, they will be approached by Prias, who will attempt to gain them as allies to Helena, against Critias and Menele.

The Prince (Lodin, unless a previous adventure changed his status) of the city will not look upon this affair well at all, and the Storyteller can use this as he chooses, with the Prince either blaming Critias or the characters, or both. If Critias won, the Prince will take out his anger on the characters (since Critias is too tough), but Critias will aid them (whether they want him to or not). If he lost, the Prince may ignore the characters to concentrate his wrath on the weakened Critias (in this case, Menele will aid Critias, and may even rise from Torpor).



Fundamental Differences

Written By Andrew Greenberg, Illustrated by John Cobb

*"Two roads diverged in a wood, and I —
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference."*

Robert Frost, "*The Road Not Taken*"

The popular misconceptions of Vampires often portray them as gods both physically and mentally superior to humans, living lives of dramatic sophistication far above the mortal realm. Their drives, passions, and even games hold them so apart from the mass of humanity that it becomes easy to think of them as something special, superior to the diminutive *Homo sapien*. While it is easy to understand why mortals, so immersed in their legends and stories would think so, it is less clear why some among the Kindred would believe the same fables.

When Vampires begin to believe they are above the mortal plane it means they risk thinking of all those "lesser" beings as something so far less unique, that they pose no danger, no threat to the Vampire — a mistake which can prove supremely dangerous. Arrogance is a weakness, and it has been the fault which has brought down many a potent Elder.

The kine have reversed the tables in this story and at first the Kindred must run from them and cower in awe of their powers. The characters must also deal with threats to the Masquerade, the prying of influential mortals, the schemes of an incompetent Cainite and their own naive preconceptions. For once the players should have the feeling they

might actually know what is going on — but of course in the end their theories will all prove to be wrong. In this story they will certainly have plenty of opportunities to fail, but success will bring its own sweet rewards.

In this story the characters must learn to deal with mortals who do not fit the neat categories Kindred have become used to placing kine in. It differs from many other Vampire stories in that it provides characters with an opportunity to take care of problems through non-violent conflict resolution, though they also have ample opportunity to mix it up if they so desire. Designed to be played by two to five players, it can serve as an episode in the *Forged in Steel Chronicle* described in *Vampire* or can even be used as a stand-alone story.

HOW TO RUN THIS STORY

This story works best when run at a fairly rapid or even breakneck pace. The three scenes which make up the story all occur on a single night and should take no more than a

single game session to complete. The first scene sets up the plot and the prepares the players for the night's excitement, scene two builds up the fear and hate both Kindred and kine feel for those who differ from them, while the final scene gives the characters the opportunity to resolve everything (though the solution to their problems can take any of a multitude of routes). While this works best if run at a frenzied speed, characters should not be finding themselves in nonstop combat. Indeed, most of the action and drama should come in the form of characters negotiating with the sundry participants while working feverishly to decide on a course of action.

LIVE ACTION

Fundamental Differences works very well as a live-action adventure. You simply need to be able to break up the action a little bit with prompt and appropriate narration and the occasional dice roll. Props can be kept to a minimum, though scenes within the club itself should be accompanied by loud, preferably industrial music (prepare a compilation tape or use anything from the *Just Say Yes* series from Sire) and most of the non-Vampires the characters meet should have drinks in their hands. Wave around cigarettes (lit or unlit) to emphasize your points and, if you feel brave and your players are not that well dressed, feel free to spill whatever you are drinking on them. For scenes outside the club, you may want to prepare a protest placard ("Blood Dolls wear combat boots" or something similar) and wear a baseball cap.

A First Mate can prove invaluable during this adventure, allowing you as storyteller to remain the scene's primary character while the First Mate plays protestors, Blood Dolls, other Vampires or whatever. Just make sure the First Mate reads the entire scenario and knows what direction you want to take it in.

THE PLOT

Scene One: During a regular visit to the Succubus Club, the characters notice a horde of protestors out front. The protestors, predominantly fundamentalist Christians, object to the evil doings at the Succubus Club, and take particular offense at the subculture of the Blood Dolls, whom they consider "death cultists." A number of Blood Dolls are getting riled up at the protestor, who they consider "self-righteous bigots." The two groups seem bent on a violent clash until Brennon Thornhill himself comes out and convinces both groups to act peacefully. Just as everyone begins to relax, a priest steps up to talk with the club owner. Brennon flies backwards in obvious pain and runs full-tilt into the safety of the club howling with anger.

Players now have the opportunity to investigate the protestors and discover they are from Gary. They should also learn the priest is not connected to the fundamentalists, and find that coming close to him proves especially painful.

Scene Two: Brennon summons all nearby Kindred to his penthouse in the Succubus Club.irate and steaming with rage, he insists they join him in slaying the minister, since the continued existence of someone like him is a threat to Cainites everywhere. The club owner calls on the characters to find out what they can about this individual, and hints at rewards for slaying him.

While the penthouse meeting carries on, the protestors enter the club itself and cause assorted problems inside. The club's patrons find the situation intolerable, and tensions rise to new heights. Both sides appear gearing up for a fight. The characters must intervene in order to prevent an open confrontation and the severing of the Masquerade (which they may be blamed for).

Scene Three: This scene essentially depends on what the characters choose to do. If they try to kill the priest off, this scene consists of their efforts along these lines. If, on the other hand, they make an effort to get to know their "foe," they will find him to be a concerned individual more interested in the plight of Vampires (and the state of their souls) than revolted by them. Indeed, allying with him can prove very valuable to the characters' futures. However, this can be one sure way to earn Brennon's wrath.

WHAT IS REALLY GOING ON

Modius, Prince of Gary, generally does not act against Chicago unless forced to. At this point he has given up on trying to seize control of the great metropolis, and seems intent on maintaining a low profile (at least until one of the Methuselahs decide to play him again). During one of his "planning" sessions with Chicago's Cainite Socialists, however, their jokes about his lack of influence began to grate on his nerves. Determined to prove he remained a threat to Lodin, Modius concocted a scheme sure to bring the wrath of the Camarilla down on Chicago's Prince. Subtle domination of several Northern Indiana evangelists led to regular denunciations of Blood Dolls on radio and television. Since Gary and the immediate area lacks any Blood Dolls, most of the criticism has been directed at the clubs in Chicago they frequent. Sermons on the "evil city" are an old standby, and never fail to bring across a reaction in the congregation.

Now Modius has arranged for a large number of church folk to visit the ultimate den of iniquity — the Succubus Club — and take the battle to the Devil's front door. The First Unity Baptist Church of Gary plans to charter several buses to travel from Gary to Chicago, and then disgorge its

contents on the very steps of the Succubus Club. Once there, they could set about protesting the Blood Dolls, get television coverage and subtly threaten the city's Masquerade as they went about railing against "Blood Drinkers." On top of this, they would cause a direct threat to one of Lodin's own progeny — Brennon Thornhill, owner of the Succubus Club, a Lick Modius despises because he was once snubbed by the "young arrogant Ventruie who does not grant his elders proper respect."

Unfortunately, Modius has once again overlooked certain details which could threaten his carefully developed plot. In his certainty that the mortals would act as he predicted they would, Modius took little action after getting the ball rolling. He recruited a number of derelicts to join the protest in order to make it look larger, but other than that maintained no presence in the new plans. If he had, then he would have become aware of the presence of an Episcopal minister with a powerful holy aura who could make this "threat to the Masquerade" all too real.

THEME

The questions of individuality and conformity confront people everyday, and most people choose which course they will follow (rebel, follower or something in between) before they become conscious of having made a choice. Thus an entire course through life can be chosen unconsciously, without our conscious determination. In "Fundamental Differences," the question of conformity or rebellion becomes even more important because the characters' choice will determine the result of the adventure. If they choose to join the pack — the Vampires wanting to kill the minister — they may well succeed, but only after creating such a threat to the Masquerade that they must be killed in turn. If the characters take their own route by making friends of the minister, they can gain an invaluable ally as well as garner a number of implacable enemies.

Independence of thought is an issue which involves everyone in this story. The protestors have been told Blood Dolls are evil, and are acting on this information without ever trying to determine its validity. At the same time, the club goers react to the protestors with typical mob mentality, letting loose at the slightest spark, and Kindred handle the immediate threat with all the individuality of a bee hive hit by a baseball bat.

Death Cultists Threaten today's Youth!

**Do you Know Who your Child's friends are?
Do They wear Occult Symbols on their clothes?
Have they been "Hanging Out" in Rock and Roll
clubs?**

If so, Beware!!!

**Death-Worshipper's have Been making their Way
Among Them**

**They have Been Drinking Blood in Elaborate
Rituals**

Pretending its the Latest Rage.

First Unity Baptist Church, 599 Niebuhr Lane, Gary Indiana

THE MOOD

Throughout this adventure, the characters should always feel they are almost at the point of understanding what is going on — and always be wrong. Every time they come up with a pat answer (Modius is behind everything, the minister must be slain, etc.), new evidence will appear to show them they have only solved half the puzzle. After enough of this, they should reach the point where they will look deeper into the problems facing them rather than accepting the first solution they come across. Thus trepidation, indecision and unease should rule the night.

SCENE ONE: NIGHT FURY

For any Succubus Club regular, it seems as though masses of people always crowd the entrance to the infamous nightclub. Tonight, however, the milling throngs outside appear worse than ever and an aura of anger and anticipation fills the street. As the characters approach the club, they notice a large number of handbills lying on the sidewalk, and see large numbers of kine involved in fierce debates with one another. If they pick up one of the handbills, they can read the boxed figure above.



Characters who take any time to survey the crowd see more than stereotypical Succubus Club patrons. A large number of middle-aged men and women have gathered together on the sidewalk and yell and scream at all who pass by. Unlike the stylishly attired club goers, they dress in old work clothes and faded dresses. Some carry signs denouncing Blood Dolls, others wave bibles in the air and some actively engage Blood Dolls in heated debate.

Blood Dolls and other club patrons have gathered out front of the club and seem highly upset with the protestors. The club appears to be doing good business despite all the outside excitement, but things seem to be heating up. Several police officers are doing their best to keep the two groups apart, but the situation seems to be deteriorating quickly.

If the characters dress at all like Vampires or Blood Dolls are supposed to (a good idea if they hope to gain rapid entry to the club), then Pervis Ramsley, a short dark-haired man wearing jeans, a flannel shirt and a baseball cap, will approach them with fire in his eyes. He forces one of the handbills into their hands and demands they take it.

"You fools! It's not too late to find salvation! Stop drinking blood! Turn your backs on the Devil!" he shrieks.

The characters may well feel Ramsley knows about their Vampirism. However, Pervis merely acts on the false assumption that anyone who visits the Succubus Club is a Blood Doll. He practically begs the characters to "turn your backs on sin," and will not stop talking to them until they enter the club or leave the area.

Characters who engage Ramsley in conversation have an opportunity to learn some valuable facts about the protestors, though they will have to sift the information of value from Pervis' ravings about music, damnation and the evils of alcohol. If they do take the time, the characters can discover not only that the protestors come from Gary, but that many of them (like Ramsley) were paid to make the journey. While Ramsley has since become caught up in the religious fervor of the protestors, he admits an elegant gentleman approached him outside the homeless shelter he stays at in Gary and paid him \$20 to join the protestors for the trip to the Succubus Club. He then stresses that this was the best thing that could have happened to him and that the good people he is with have shown him the true path.

Other than being a potentially humorous (or sad) encounter, Ramsley gives the characters a chance to find out what the protestors are up to as well as drop an obvious hint that a Vampire is behind all this. If given a description of Modius, he says it sounds like the man who paid him to show up, but he cannot be sure. He can also shed some light on the demonstrators' mentality.

Characters who overreact to Ramsley and bring their Vampiric disciplines into play will draw an extreme reaction



from the crowd. Screams that Satan is among us and the apocalypse is dawning will ring out. Actually harming him will send the crowd into a berserk rage, and they will try to rend the characters limb from limb. Convincing Ramsley Blood Dolls are not controlled by Satan requires either 20 successes on an extended Charisma + Oratory roll (target of 7, and if the character ever botches she has to start over again) or extremely good roleplaying. He has been homeless since losing his job two years ago and is a rather pitiful fellow, though he is doing his best to drag himself up from the bottom, earning money when and where he can.

After having listened to Ramsley's spiel for as long as they care to, characters can finally try to make their way into the club. As they approach the entrance, however, they will notice the two groups have come close to blows. The police officers are straining to keep them apart, and one has run to his squad car to call for backup. The characters can take this opportunity to try and prevent violence or they may try to incite even more. In any case, before a general melee can break out, Brennon himself comes out. Aided by his strong presence and calming voice, he addresses the crowd.

"Excuse me. I am the proprietor of this establishment. I could not help but notice this gathering from my office window. I must say I was unaware of the danger you address. I'm sure that my customers are as interested as I am in finding out more."

As usual with Brennon, it is not as much what he says as how he says it which relaxes the crowd. The tensions begin to ease and those most involved in the turmoil turn their backs on each other. Several of the crowd's leaders come forward to talk to the club owner. A middle-aged man in the garb of a priest (Intelligence + Religion, target of 6, to recognize him as an Episcopal) also breaks apart from the crowd of on lookers, approaches Brennon and taps him on the shoulder.

Suddenly the air is rent by an earth-shaking shriek and windows along the entire block rattle (some even break) as Brennon leaps nearly five feet in the air. With a look of horror and pain on his face he races into the club so fast he bowls over three Blood Dolls waiting to get in. Everyone looks around in bewilderment, but no explanation is forthcoming.

A number of club goers who were on the front steps taunting the crowd, suddenly become enraged (everyone knows Brennon) and wade into the fundamentalists with fists raised. A short fight ensues, but is quickly broken up by bouncers who leap out from the club (perhaps aided by the characters). However, a number of the protesters and Blood Dolls are bloodied, and the anger has definitely built on both sides.

Among the characters' options at this point are entering the club or continuing to scope out the situation outside. If



they take the opportunity, they can try to approach the minister and find out what happened. Few of the protestors have any idea who he is, though some know of him as an Episcopal priest who has attracted a growing following in the Gary area. If the characters think to seek out Ramsley, he will tell them the priest is Terrence Coleman, and that the two met through several of the shelters the priest runs for Gary's homeless. He will have nothing but praise for the priest, though he will disparage those who follow the religion as "fake Protestants" and "wanna-be Papists," terms he once heard on a radio call-in show.

The characters will find approaching the priest to be an exceptional task. Just thinking about it sends shivers up their spine, and coming within five feet of him requires a Humanity roll against a target of 7. Three successes allows the Vampire to approach closer. A failure means characters cannot approach closer. If the characters try to, then they must make a Courage roll against a target of 6 to keep from running away in a frenzy just as Brennon did. A botch on the Humanity roll makes the target to keep from frenzying an 8 and causes them to suffer a derangement if they do. Botching the Courage roll leaves the character standing in one place, shaking like a leaf in a tornado for as many turns as there were botches, and suffering from some new derangement.

Kindred who make the first Humanity roll can try to approach closer or converse with the priest. Coming within two feet of the priest requires a new Humanity roll with a

target of 8, though only one success is needed. Failure has the same effect as above, though the target numbers all increase by one. Talking to him means the characters must make Self-control rolls against a target of 6. Failure means the Vampire stands there tongue-tied and stuttering.

The Rev. Terrence Coleman has no idea why he had the effect on Brennon he did. He has never met a Cainite before and will not believe in their existence without exceptional proof. He does know that when he touched the club owner, however, he felt a sudden surge of warmth flow through his hand. Thus he guesses he gave the club owner a shock with static electricity he had somehow picked up.

In fact, Coleman is a truly compassionate man whose love and concern for everyone else in the world has led him to possess what Kindred call "True Faith," though others would say he was an exceptionally gifted psychic. Attempts to harm him will face the consequences detailed below, his aura always shines with a bright, rippling golden color and very perceptive people (Perception + Botany, target of 10) notice he smells slightly of roses even after he has completed strenuous exercise.

Those who do manage to converse with the priest will discover he has not come to the Succubus Club to protest. In fact, he has little in common with the demonstrators and really came to see what all the fuss was about. He sees the Blood Dolls to be little different from the beatniks, hippies or any of the innumerable youth movements which have come and gone during his lifetime. Obviously he would prefer they spent their time in church or school instead of at the club, but as he says, "Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath."

Still, stories about Blood Dolls have stirred things up tremendously down in Gary, and Coleman has come north to see just what all the commotion is about. He has been talking to a number of the club goers and has found them all to be highly intelligent, "if a little self-centered." Still, "judge not, that ye be not judged." If the characters give him reason to believe they are Blood Dolls, he will try to talk to them about these stories of infant sacrifices and blood drinking which have been bandied about in Gary. He has no idea where the rumors come from, but notes much of the criticism has been aimed at Chicago as well as the Blood Dolls.

In this encounter the characters should have an opportunity to at least gauge Coleman's abilities even if they find themselves incapable of talking to him. Their conversation may not last too long, however, since merely being around the priest brings a queasy feeling to the Vampires' long-unused stomachs. In any event, when the conversation has dragged on long enough, the manager of the Succubus Club will approach the characters and tell them Brennon would like to see them in the penthouse.

When the characters enter the club, they discover the mood pervading everything is very ugly. Everyone is

complaining about the protestors outside, and are shouting at the ones who have actually come in. A number of punks from downstairs have come up to the main floor, and a number of them are talking about going outside to "bash some heads." Even the bouncers are in a fury, and are being very rough with anyone looking even a little bit conventional — this is the one night ruffians will not get thrown out unless they do something very wrong. All in all, try to create a mood of excitement and anticipation as the entire club is ready for a fight, and indeed it even seems to look forward to it.

The characters will have no luck finding out what happened to Brennon unless they go to the penthouse. On their way up they will find some punks breaking up a chair, so as to fashion themselves clubs. One of them yells to the characters, "If they try to come in here they won't get very far!" When the characters reach the penthouse, begin Scene Two.

At any point in this scene, the characters can decide their favorite night spot has attracted too much attention and decide to leave. If this happens before Brennon has made his appearance and quicker disappearance, speed up events so it happens immediately. If they have seen what happened to Brennon and decide it is too hot here for their tastes, have the club manager come out and say Brennon has requested their presence within. If the characters still decide to leave, go to **Failed Attempt** in Scene Three.

SCENE TWO: DEVILS WITHIN

However the players end up in the penthouse, they find Brennon wearing a track in his carpet, pacing around the room so quickly they could swear he was using Celerity. Also gathered in the penthouse are Portia, Gengis and Sir. No mortals are present, and the manager leaves after seeing the characters in. As they enter the penthouse, they hear Brennon railing against the priest.

"... must be done. Just one mortal like that is a threat to all of us. Never, never before have I suffered the kind of pain he put me through. If we don't do it now, we may never get the chance again."

At this point he notices the characters and waves them to seats. If they spent any time talking to the priest, Brennon will grill them as to what happened, demanding to know what they and the priest had to say to each other. Once they have filled him in to his satisfaction (he probably saw their encounter through his window), Brennon will resume his pacing at an even more furious clip.

"So you too have experienced the pain I did. That . . . creature . . . is a menace and must be destroyed. Oh, the agony of his touch. To think one such as he could cause the pain he did. I thought such men were gone. He must be the

one behind this accursed spectacle taking place outside my doors. He must die and die tonight."

If the characters make any sort of challenge to Brennon's claims, he will turn on them with incredible ferocity, calling them "wretched childer" and yelling that the only thing worse than a "rogue headhunter is a Cainite who sides with the Canaille." He then goes into another tirade against that "damnable, sanctified wight and his army of the great unwashed." After a few minutes of this ranting and raving, during which time he will lambaste the protestors as much as the priest, he turns to the other Kindred present and demands to know where they stand on this greatest of all threats. He screams at them: "Who will rid me of this man?"

Gengis will be the first to jump into the debate. Inside the club when Brennon was touched, the Anarch got a great deal of pleasure out of seeing the high and mighty Ventrue tear through the club as though Satan was on his heels. During Brennon's monologue, however, he began to become worried about the threat the priest might pose to himself and other Vampires. Thus he will join with Brennon in denouncing Coleman and calling for his immediate execution.

"Who does that jerk think he is, coming here like that? We oughtta take 'em all out, starting with him and moving right through the rest of those dumb grits. Serve 'em right for tryin' to ruin our fun. I'm witcha on this one Brennon."

Sir originally feared the threat to the Masquerade Brennon's plan would entail, but Gengis' brief harangue has kicked him into their camp. "One who can both command a legion of kine and protect himself from our special talents is a factor we do not need in this town. This worthless cur is a threat to us and all we hold dear. Indeed, our damnable lives may be in danger from them. If we do not deal with his threat now, it might be too late."

Portia will not speak up, and none of the other three will address her throughout this Scene. Uncertain about exactly what this priest can do, she has opted to remain silent and none of the other three will attempt to drag out her position. So, following Sir's calm exposition, Brennon will turn to the characters and demand to know where they stand.

If the characters did not talk with Coleman already, or if they made no argument with Brennon's assertion that the priest must die, then the above dialogues will still occur, but the Kindred will be less concerned about the characters' position. They accept it as a forgone conclusion that the characters will side with them, and any sign of disagreement will come as a shock.

Should this happen, all three Kindred will turn on the characters at once, calling them "unholy traitors" (Brennon's term), "snot-nosed stalker lovers" (Gengis) and "base villains" (Sir). Then Brennon will demand that the characters slay the priest themselves, "or else face the wrath of all right-thinking Kindred." Continuing refusal to do so will



bring about threats of Lodin's wrath, though none of those present will try to physically force the characters to do anything. Still, the characters will soon find themselves in trouble with both the Ventrues and the Anarchs, since Brennon and Gengis will carry the story of what happened back to their respective allies.

Since the theme of the story is individuality and conformity, most Kindred will react to the characters as their group does, though some can be convinced to do otherwise if spoken too in private. Still, characters may well find Chicago to be rather inhospitable for some time and they certainly will not be welcome in the Succubus Club. You must make this peer pressure palpable. Use your skills as a storyteller to get the players to conform, and to feel the pressure that their characters are feeling. Who among us has not done something horrible because of peer pressure?

So what happens if the characters side with the other Vampires? The group will immediately start planning Coleman's demise, devising and rejecting a variety of highly violent ends for the priest. Brennon remains so livid that nothing short of a gory and highly visible death will satisfy him. He wants to make an example of the priest so he will never be threatened by mortals again (or so his flawed logic works). Gengis wants the priest abducted and subjected to slow and painful torture. Sir wants the murder to be quick and silent, avoiding any risk to the Masque.ade.

Finally the three will give up and ask the characters to take care of the situation. They will note that the characters make up a strong coterie (whether they do or not), and then will start discussing their own visibility ("I have a club to run." "I can't do it. Everyone knows me"). Brennon and Sir will offer no reward but will give a great deal of moral support. If the characters make any sign that they will go ahead with the assassination, then Gengis will offer to help them and will join them for the rest of the scenario, though he will offer little in the way of constructive suggestions. Also, though he will never admit it, the idea of confronting this priest scares him like little else ever has.

If the characters try to involve Portia in any of the planning, the other three Kindred will laugh at the idea of a neophyte being of any use in this situation — a comment which will bring a smile to her luscious lips. Indeed, all three retain a good bit of sexism from their mortal lives, and this unconsciously colors their view of the powerful Methuselah. Portia herself will not offer any aid, and will beg off if the characters ask her help or her stand, saying she really has not been around long enough to be able to be of any use.

When the characters head out of the penthouse and through the club, they will be surprised to see the crowd inside has come to mirror the one outside. Without Brennon to order them kept out, a number of the protestors have paid the club's cover charge and made their way on to the dance floor. Now they stand there, disapprovingly watching all that goes on around them.

In response, Blood Dolls and punks have jammed the dance floor, and their dancing has become wilder and more out-of-control than usual. They slam and shake around the fuming protestors, taking no care to keep from bumping into them and often going out of their way to do so. Several couples have begun what must surely be their most lewd and lascivious dance ever, and the protestors make a point of not looking at them.

Other groups also seem to be taking offense at the presence of the protestors. Drug dealers have gathered in small clumps and talk quietly, casting looks of death at the intruders. Several drunk college students have gotten into a fierce debate with one of the pastors from Gary, and two equally drunk punk women are trying to put the moves on another pastor.

To make matters worse, Terrence Coleman has entered the club as well, and now wanders around within. Strangely, no one seems to confront him. The Blood Dolls leave him alone, though everyone watches him when he walks by. Rev. Coleman stops here and there to talk to people, and finds his earlier view of the Blood Dolls being no different from earlier youth movements to hold true (though most of them would object strenuously to being compared to hippies). If the players seek him out, they will find him deep in conversation with two Blood Dolls, one male and one female, who sit holding hands and complaining about their

parents. They may overhear the story circulating through the club about how one of the punks brandished a chair leg in front of the priest's face, but then suddenly broke down in tears and walked away.

SCENE THREE: CHOICE FRIENDS

The action in this scene essentially depends on the characters' choice of actions. While there are theoretically an infinite number of choices they can take, most will revolve around whether or not they try to kill Coleman. While it may appear that the easier course would be to just kill the priest and be done with it, characters will find it easier to plan his death than to carry it out.

First of all, Coleman will almost always be found talking to other mortals. He is extremely sociable by nature, and people, even Blood Dolls, tend to be attracted to him. He offers them a patient, caring audience, and they take advantage of the opportunity. Though they may fear and hate him in concept (especially when they hear about how he "stabbed Brennon"), when they meet him in person they are won over by his kindness and gentleness. In contrast to the hate in the rest of the club, those who are speaking or have spoken to him are calm and passive. (Something which completely enrages Gengis if he notices it or has it brought to his attention.)

The second difficulty in killing Coleman comes from the fact that characters find it difficult to approach him and those most able to (having high Humanity) are the least likely ones to agree to his execution. Those with low Humanity may be more willing to take action against the priest, but they will have a harder time doing it.

Finally, Coleman has protection. While this protection is explained more deeply in his description (below), it manifests itself in unconscious warnings of danger and actual interference when troubles break out. Thus characters may find their first attempts stymied and, if they are not careful, may send the priest scurrying for police help.

Some methods characters might attempt for removing Coleman include:

•**Mugging.** An actual physical assault on Coleman may be the first route to spring to the characters' minds, but it will probably also be just as quickly discarded. Aside from the great revulsion Vampires feel when they try to draw close to the priest, there is the added obstacle of his sociability. People seem to be drawn to Coleman, and the characters will find it particularly difficult to get him alone and even more difficult to get him to leave. This problem does not come from any suspicion on the part of the priest as it does from the fact that people are always trying to talk to him. Still, if



characters can overcome their revulsion and convince him to go to a quiet place, they may try to kill him. Of course, it is up to you if the quiet place they choose just happens to be being used by an off-duty police officer to make out with her boyfriend.

•**Sniper.** Another plan which may come up and be quickly discarded is to just blow the priest away. Pulling firearms in the Succubus Club is a good way to get Brennon, Gengis, Sir and Portia in a very bad mood. Characters may survive the first three Kindred on that list, but Portia will go to great lengths to keep her haven safe. Also, remember the police outside of the club trying to keep order (maybe the riot squad is there by now). If the characters somehow manage to shoot at the priest without people in the club noticing (use a flash suppressor and silencer, lure him outside, create a diversion, etc.), the difficulty to hit may well be exceptionally high (dark club +1, target in a crowd +1, extreme range). If the shots hit, then remember his soak roll. If shot and not immediately Incapacitated, he will scream, call out for help and start heading for cover.

•**Hired Gun.** If the characters try to get a mortal to do their dirty work, either through the powers of Domination or cold cash, the kine will be able to avoid the revulsion which so hampers the Kindred. However, mortal attempts on Coleman's life face the same obstacles Vampiric ones did. In addition, if the assassin actually meets the priest, Coleman



may well have an intense effect on him. Mesmerization which previously required only three successes now needs five, or the assassin comes back and throws the money in the characters' faces before running off to join a convent. In other words, it requires a rare mortal to kill Coleman. This may be a good way for a character to lose that valued retainer. Such is the price of conformity.

•**Poison.** Since almost everyone in the club is drinking something, the characters might think to order him a martini with a twist of mouse poison. If the characters do give him an alcoholic beverage, he will accept it politely but abandon it at his earliest opportunity (he does have to drive back to Gary tonight, after all). If the characters try to give him a soft drink, he will quietly demur, saying he does not drink sodas. If the characters offer him tea or water he will accept. At this point it is up to you as Storyteller as to whether someone jostles his hand, making him spill the piping-hot or ice-cold drink on a character.

•**Everything Else.** One cannot even hope to plan for all the crazy schemes the characters may use to try and off the priest. Digging spiked pits for him to fall in, aiming an 18-wheeler at him, trying to drop a one-ton weight on him, unleashing ghoulish pigeons to peck him to death — there is no practical limit to their ingenuity (stupidity?). Still, there are some things to keep in mind for all attempts on Coleman's life. First of all, he is protected. Any attempts on his life face the complete hex of Murphy's Law, and whatever can go

wrong will go wrong. Secondly, the club is packed with hostile regulars and protestors, all looking for trouble. If the characters start something, they are sure to join in (remember the theme), causing even more problems for everyone as their violence trashes the club. Finally, the police are at the club and they may well be there in force. If the characters did nothing to calm the crowd after Brennan fled the scene, or were unable to, then more police have been called in. If things have really gotten out of hand, there may be several dozen members of the riot squad in full battle dress standing nearby, angered at having been called to duty on this beautiful night.

There is one final point the characters need to take into account when developing plans to kill Coleman. Preventing Humanity loss just from attempting such a murder requires a Conscience roll with a target of 8. If the characters actually spent any time talking to the priest and then kill him, the Humanity loss is automatic, and they have to make Conscience rolls against a target of 6 to keep from losing a second point!

If the characters do not try to kill Coleman, then they have a number of other options. They can abandon the mission (and the club) as a lost cause, in which case go to Failed Attempt, below. If they decide to try to strike up a dialogue with the priest, they will find him to be most obliging. Of course, he will not believe they are Vampires without the most extreme of proof. Still, characters can find him invaluable to their future. For instance, Coleman has a wealth of valuable information about Gary and its most important residents. He knows everyone who is a major player in the city, and they know and respect him as well, allowing him to wield a great deal of power. He provides the best means of averting large scale combat between club goers and protestors, since Brennan remains in a funk upstairs.

While he knows nothing about the Kindred of Gary, he knows enough of their major mortal pawns to be able to help the characters out of any incidents which may occur regarding Modius and the others. Through judicious questioning of the protestors leaders, he can determine Modius planted the seed of the protestor in their minds (if the characters describe Modius to him, that is).

Also, Vampires can eventually become used to Coleman's presence and, after a long enough time, come to enjoy it. The first time a character makes five successes on one of the two Humanity rolls to come close to the priest, the difficulty for all future rolls is cut in half, to 3 and 4, respectively. After the second time the character rolls five successes, she need never again make a roll to approach him unless at some point she suffers an extreme Humanity loss. Then it is up to you as Storyteller to decide if the old fears crop up yet again.

In addition, Coleman exerts a very calming force over those around him. After a character becomes used to him, future frenzy rolls made in the priest's presence have their

difficulty reduced by one. If the character botches a Frenzy roll while Coleman is around, then they can make a second roll to see if they suffer a Derangement. The roll is made exactly the same as the original Frenzy roll and with the same difficulty, but any failure (not only a botch) will cause a Derangement.

Since Coleman so frequently involves himself in humanitarian endeavors, associating with him can provide the characters with a ready-made course to Humanity gain, as well as serving as the hook for future adventures with that as the goal. With him around, rolls to increase Humanity have their difficulty decreased by one.

Finally, if the characters reveal their Vampirism to him, Coleman will prove to be an exceptionally valuable asset in the quest for Golconda. He has great experience in aiding those who feel they have committed horrid acts, and can serve as an outstanding catalyst to helping the characters through the stage of remorse. Essentially, he can allow you as Storyteller to interact with the characters, talking about their past sins and helping the characters feel the pain of what they have done in the past.

He can also try to help guide them through other stages, though almost the entire journey must be handled individually. Still, he can provide an anchor for characters preparing to brave the most treacherous parts of their own minds, increasing the chance of success and lessening the severity of



failure. If nothing else, it always helps to know you have someone else on your side.

Characters should not know the benefits the Rev. Terrence Coleman can provide when they make their decision to kill him or not. They also should not become aware of his potential to aid them until the third scene, if at all.

What they should remain aware of is the other Cainites' hatred of the holy man. If Gengis came along with them, then he will continually try and get the characters to kill him. Otherwise, while characters converse with Coleman, allow them easy Perception + Alertness rolls to occasionally notice Brennon looking on with displeasure from some dark area. If they have made no move to kill the priest by 2 a.m. (or whenever you feel appropriate), then Brennon will imperiously summon them to the penthouse and demand to know what the delay is.

Brennon remains deranged from his contact with the holy man, but has finally begun to notice that the immediate threat to his club the protestors represent outweighs the threat of the minister. He will rant and rave about the minister, but will especially rail about his leadership of the protestors. If players offer him anything resembling proof that Modius was behind the entire affair, his anger at the priest will lessen (as will his ire with characters who opted not to slay Coleman). This being the case, he will do nothing against the priest tonight, and will begin planning his revenge against Modius.





If the characters fail to kill the priest and do nothing to assuage Brennon's anger, then the club owner and Sir will make their own attempt on Coleman's life. Sir arms himself with a heavy revolver and waits outside the club for Coleman to leave. When he does, Sir will take a few shots at him from an alley and then spend a Blood point to flee up the side of a building. Characters may try to pursue him if they want, but he does have a substantial head start and an excellent knowledge of the nearby area. Thus a character will need two successes on a Wits + Alertness roll of 8 to even see who shot the priest, then a Dexterity + Athletics roll with a difficulty of 8 (five successes) to climb up the same building and finally a Perception + Alertness roll with a difficulty of 8 to see where he went. Then the chase proceeds normally, though Sir will still have his head start.

This assassination attempt will draw the attention of the police. They will start questioning everyone in the area and take the priest to the hospital, though his own defenses should have protected him from any serious damage. For the rest of the evening, however, the Succubus Club will not be a happy place to be around. A number of fights break out between the Blood Dolls and the protesters, and the police inevitably get in the middle. Soon it is a full-fledged riot and a huge number of police officers are called in, and of course the media follows close behind. The Succubus Club has come out of the shadows, and is no longer protected from the prying eyes of society. The Masquerade has been threatened and Lodin is not pleased.

Bar Brawl

On top of all these problems, remember the protesters inside the club itself. Due to his derangement regarding the priest, Brennon has done nothing to deal with their incursion into his club and has left the problem to his overworked manager. The manager, afraid to keep them out or kick them out unless they do anything wrong, has been on the verge of a nervous breakdown for most of the night. He will gladly accept any offer of help in dealing with the protesters, and without the characters' aid, confrontations between regulars and demonstrators will inevitably turn violent.

Still, it is unlikely the characters will do anything to help out, despite the fact that whenever they enter the club area, they will notice angry disputes going on, violent confrontations and bouncers running to-and-fro trying to keep order. The protest does not need to turn into a near riot if you do not want it to, but it is certainly probable. If this happens, then at some time of your choosing, a well-known Punk and one of the most vocal pastors get into a shouting and shoving match which soon degenerates into an all-out brawl. Immediately their friends become involved and soon the fight has spread through the entire bar. The bouncers will be helpless to take care of the problem, and in this scenario as well the riot squad is called in to take care of the incident, with the media on their heels. The least of the damage to the Succubus Club will be the lingering smell of tear gas.

If the characters do help prevent trouble or somehow stop the riot, then the manager will be extremely thankful and will let Brennon know about their aid. When Brennon calms down (the next night) he will thank the characters deeply, if insincerely. They will have picked up the manager's gratitude, however, and in the future he will go out of his way to help them. Give each character who contributed to stemming the tide of violence a point in Contacts.

On the other hand, characters could leave the scene or spend their time cowering in the Labyrinth. In this case, not only do they not gain a Contact, the manager comes to have an intense dislike for anyone who was there that night and will especially remember the characters since they were constantly going in and out of Brennon's penthouse.

Failed Attempt

If someone other than the characters tries to kill the priest, the attempt will fail and the priest will contact the police. Here he will come into contact with Detective Stephens, and the two will combine forces as Vampire Hunters. Since Coleman will never have had the opportunity to see Vampires as anything other than the stereotypical dark murderers, he will devote himself to the new task with unstinting energy. This is also the result if the players fail to kill him or they give up on the adventure entirely. Needless to say, the

characters should end up as some of his next victims for their unwillingness to deal with him now. They must learn that even inaction has consequences.

Cast of Characters ***(in order of appearance)***

Typical Protestor — Most of the protestors come from fundamental, evangelical churches around North Indiana. Their concern about Blood Dolls began two months ago, when the subject first became a hot topic in sermons, religious broadcasts and local talk shows. Since none of the protestors have actually met any Blood Dolls, they allowed their imaginations to run roughshod over reality until they came to believe Blood Dolls represented all that is evil in the world.

Recently, several pastors began planning this protest after hearing (from Modius) that the Succubus Club served as a nexus for Blood Doll activity. Together they put together their meager resources, rented several old school buses, and whipped up their congregations into a furor of indignation over the activities of these "murderous death culties." On the day for the trip, more than 100 people gathered at the First Unity Baptist Church. Since the Blood Doll debate had just sprung on the scene, no one in Chicago had any indication a protest like this was in the offing. Modius, who had been afraid there would not be enough people, paid 20 homeless men to also go on the trip to Chicago. Most of these have been converted on the trip up, though their faith will be tested on their return to Gary when they discover they still have no home, no money and no hope.

All the protestors' Attributes are at two, unless you need a stronger or weaker one for some reason. Most have Abilities including Drive 1, Theology 1 and (Knowledge) 1 where the knowledge refers to their primary occupation (i.e., cleaning, farming, real estate). At your discretion, some might have weapons or brawling knowledge, and a few may even have a ranking in Occult. Humanity is an eight and Willpower is six. Roleplaying Hints: Loud, rude and obnoxious. You know the truth and you are going to speak it. The fact that you are surrounded by dozens of other people reinforcing your beliefs does not hurt your ardor.

Pervis Ramsley — Pervis managed to hold on to his job at the steel mill longer than most steel workers did, but finally the bosses had to lay off even him. Sure that his skills would land him a job at another plant at any moment, Pervis refused to leave Gary, and lived off his unemployment benefits while he hunted a new job. When three months had passed without him having any luck, Pervis decided the steel industry had hit a temporary slump and decided to look for other work. After another six months, his compensation run dry, Pervis began to realize this might be more than a temporary downturn for Gary. Unfortunately, this realization came at the same time his landlord evicted him for non-

payment of rent and a collection agency repossessed his car. Suddenly homeless in Gary, with no family to turn to and all his friends in similar straits, Pervis found himself out in the cold. He swallowed his pride and "temporarily" moved into a homeless shelter. That was almost a year ago. Now he takes money when and where he can, so the \$20 from Modius was a godsend.

All Pervis' Attributes are at two except for his Intelligence (one) and his Dexterity (three). His Abilities are Brawl 1, Streetwise 1, Drive 2, Repair 2 and Welding 3. His Humanity is eight and his Willpower is five. Roleplaying Hints: Currently filled with religious zeal, the other protestors have convinced you of the rightness of their cause. However, you have never been a particularly fervent Christian, and can be talked out of this current obsession.

Brennon Thornhill — This began as such a pleasant night for Brennon Thornhill. He had a pretty new Blood Doll ready and willing to serve as his vessel for the week, it looked like he would be drawing a good-sized crowd for the night and negotiations to have Baby Chorus play the Labyrinth again looked promising. Then a bouncer brought word of a disturbance outside. Opening his window to get a better indication of what was going on, Thornhill got his first sense that tonight might not be as wonderful as he would like.

The encounter with the priest drove this point home. Brennon had no self-control when the priest tapped him on the shoulder (the one die he could roll for Self-Control was a botch). Now Brennon has developed an intense hatred for the priest which will carry over into the rest of his life. Whenever around a priest who reminds him in any way of Coleman, Brennon becomes edgy and snappish, and begins looking for the quickest way out of the situation. Roleplaying Hints: For now, your derangement focuses itself as an intense desire to see Coleman dead.

Terrence Coleman — Terrence's parents knew the boy was different from a very early age. He claimed to see faeries in the woods around their Vermont home, and talked about speaking with angels. His parents were sure this was merely a stage the boy would grow out of, and sure enough, he eventually stopped discussing his "imaginary" friends. The reason he stopped talking about it, however, was because he got tired of not being believed, not because it stopped happening.

His childhood conversations with angels remained an important focus of his life as he grew up. The angels had told him helping others would be his calling in life, and he found helping people made him feel complete as nothing else would. At first he wanted to be a doctor and spent his spare time between the ages of eight and 22 working in the local hospital. After seeing people come in hurt in varying ways, he came to the conclusion that many of these injuries were self-inflicted, either consciously or unconsciously. Figuring he could better serve others by helping them prevent these

VAMPIRE™

Coleman

Attributes

Physical	Social	Mental
Strength ●●●●	Charisma ●●●●	Perception ●●●●
Dexterity ●●●●	Manipulation ●●●●	Intelligence ●●●●
Stamina ●●●●	Appearance ●●●●	Wits ●●●●

Abilities

Talents	Skills	Knowledge
Acting ●●●●	Animal Key ●●●●	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

Disciplines	Backgrounds	Virtues
_____ ●●●●	Ally ●●●●	Conscience ●●●●
_____ ●●●●	Contacts ●●●●	Self-Control ●●●●
_____ ●●●●	Influence ●●●●	Courage ●●●●
_____ ●●●●	Fame ●●●●	

Other Traits Gary Theology ●●●● _____ ●●●● _____ ●●●● _____ ●●●●	Humanity ●●●●●●●●●●	Health Bruised <input type="checkbox"/> Thirst -1 <input type="checkbox"/> Injured -2 <input type="checkbox"/> Wounded -3 <input type="checkbox"/> Mauled -4 <input type="checkbox"/> Crippled -5 <input type="checkbox"/> Incapacitated <input type="checkbox"/>												
Combat <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Weapon</th> <th>Difficulty</th> <th>Damage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Weapon	Difficulty	Damage										Willpower ●●●●●●●●●● □□□□□□□□□□	Experience _____
Weapon	Difficulty	Damage												
	Blood Pool ○○○○○○○○○○○○													

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

injuries rather than healing them afterwards, Terrence began casting about for a new profession.

After graduating from college, he took a year-long trip through Europe on his bicycle. Among the places he visited on this trip were the religious sites of the continent, where he began to feel as though someone was guiding him. As he went through the journey, this feeling became stronger and stronger at each stop, whether it be Lourdes, the Vatican, Canterbury or a host of others. The conversation with his family priest after he finally returned to the United States merely solidified his plans and soon he was on his way to becoming a priest.

As the Rev. Terrence Coleman, he has been able to both go out in the community and help people as well as having them come to him. Now he feels as though he deals with the core problems affecting others and not just the symptoms. He runs several homeless shelters (very necessary in Gary), helps out at others and runs a host of other community services. On top of that, he ministers to a rapidly growing congregation and has recently become a factor in civic affairs, playing the role of compromiser and unifier for disparate groups. Some people in-the-know have begun to say he is the city's best hope for escaping the depression which has become synonymous with Gary.

Now in his early 50s, though he looks younger, Terrence maintains a fairly athletic build and is still an avid biker and

swimmer. He is beginning to bald and his remaining hair has gone salt-and-pepper.

True Faith: Terrence actually is protected by some force, though whether it is spiritual, mystical, psychic, unholy or even Vampiric is up to you. It manifests first as a subconscious warning that something is about to happen and then as actual "physical" protection. In game terms, all attempts to hit the priest, whether in ranged or unranged combat, are resolved at a difficulty one higher than normal. Secondly, Terrence can make a soak roll using his Stamina of three against any attack, including guns, knives or whatever, since he subconsciously moves away from a dangerous attack, thus avoiding serious injury.

Finally, supernatural beings (Vampires, werewolves, fairies and spirits, for instance) find it very difficult to approach the priest. If they fail a Humanity roll in trying to approach him (three successes against a target of 7 to get within five feet, one success against a target of 8 to get closer), then a wave of intense heat washes over them. Effects from this heat either keep them from approaching closer, cause them to run away or to stand there frozen in agony. For a supernatural being to communicate with him requires a Self-Control roll of 6.

Terrence also has the ability to detect creatures of the supernatural, though he does not know it. When the protective nature of his aura is activated (those Humanity rolls), he gives off a faint scent of roses. He may notice the smell, as will the characters, but as yet has not had the experience to put one and one together.

Roleplaying Hints: First of all, you have long felt external forces help guide your actions and tend to act impulsively, believing these external forces will always be there for you. To date your instincts have always been right. These instincts are rarely selfish, however. In fact, they generally lead you to someone else in trouble. Secondly, you are the consummate listener. You can usually get to the heart of someone's difficulties merely by letting them talk to you, so let them speak as they please. Occasionally you use soft spoken questions to guide them along. ("So how did that make you feel?" "What did you do then?")

Gengis—Gengis did not like priests when he was alive and he certainly does not like them now that he is a Vampire. He reacts to Coleman instinctively, but the fact that Brennon provides him with a lead to follow does not hurt any.

For this adventure he serves as the representative of all Vampires, reacting to events with their most bestial side. If the characters do not immediately try to kill the priest, he will try to convince them to do the dirty deed. If they try to talk with Coleman, he will stand around uncomfortably, making comments like "Let's do it now" and "If I had a rocket launcher...". On the other hand, if the characters do attempt to kill Coleman, he will offer them all his help and suggest

new and more dreadful ways to deal with the priest ("If we got a jar of honey and 1,000 fire ants. . .").

If you are running this story live action, Gengis makes a perfect character for the First Mate to take on through it all. Just try to mix both his comic elements (the rebel conformist) with his tragic ones.

Sir — Sir usually gives little thought to matters other than his own pleasures, but Brennon and Gengis have inflamed him against Coleman. Still, he will not take action by himself. He requires the presence of another Kindred (Brennon) in order to take action. Once he does decide to take action, he is rather effective, though we all know he cannot succeed. Still, he should come close enough to get the priest worried.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDING MORE ACTION

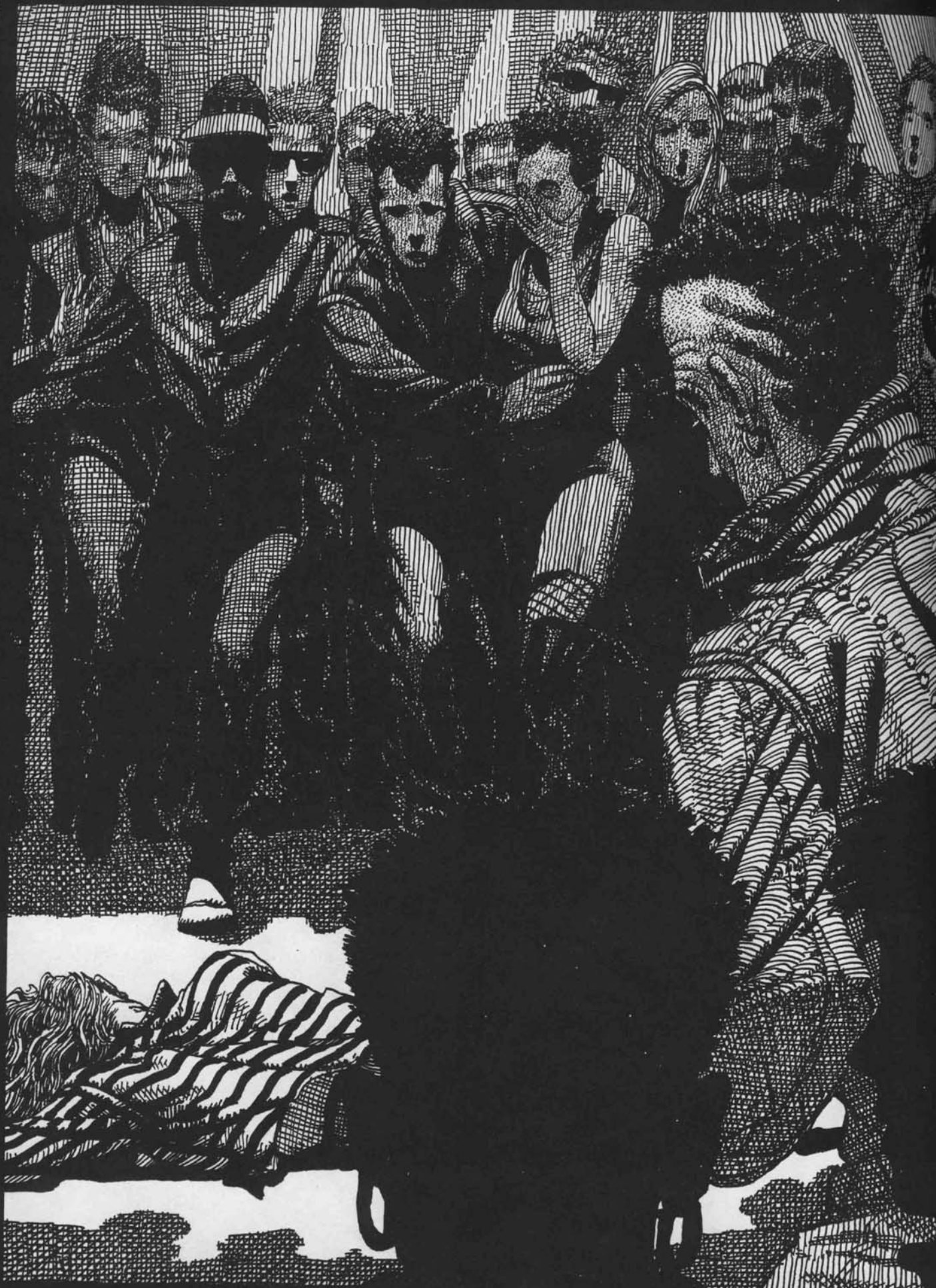
If your players are the type more interested in action than non-violent conflict resolution, you can spice up this adventure in a number of ways. However, always keep in mind both the theme and the mood. Thus, if a bomb is set to go off, people will act like a crazed herd trying to escape. Also, the players should never be completely sure they have gotten the only one.

•Normally a non-violent man, Lamar Travis reached his breaking point when he heard the Blood Dolls had drunk the blood from a baby, and he decided to destroy the center of the scourge once and for all. He has planted a substantial quantity of plastique explosives under the stage near the labyrinth. Now the players overhear two protestors talking

about the rumor that a bomb has been planted. The players can either track down the bomb themselves or go to Brennon. Brennon, however, remains in a lather over the presence of the minister and even the threat to his precious club fails to distract him. He merely asks the characters to take care of the problem and then returns to his pacing.

•The protestors have picked the night of a major drug deal to make their stand. A group of Kevin Jackson's Bloods have arranged to buy a van filled with 100 kilos of cocaine in the club's parking lot. They have decided the presence of the protestors is intolerable and have decided to clear them from the front of the club. They begin by buzzing the demonstrators at high speeds in their Mercedes. When this does not work, they take to firing Roman Candles and bottle rockets at little pockets of protestors. While this would normally bring down Brennon's wrath in seconds, tonight there is no one to do anything about it. When even this does not work, the Bloods will forget that the whole idea of their actions was to make the club attract less attention and will fire into the crowd from the roof of another building.

•Jason Kendrick, an honest cop (yes, even Chicago has one), has long suspected the police who patrol near the Succubus club are on the take. Their long delay in requesting backup to deal with the mob has given him the opportunity he has long wanted to sweep out the place from top to bottom. Acting on his own authority, he will mobilize officers in riot gear and sweep through the club. This dragnet does more than just catch dozens of underage drinkers; within minutes drug dealers have begun armed opposition to this threat. Patrons flee from all exits, police go wild arresting everyone they can and the Succubus Club becomes a war zone. Note that this event will probably lead to the permanent closing of the club as well as make both Brennon and Helena spitting mad at anyone there that night.



Death's Sweet Sting

Written by Lisa Stevens, Illustrated by Josh Timbrook

"So when this corruption shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

— Bible, I Corinthians 15: 54-55

The spectre of death hangs over most mortals from the time they first form cognizant thoughts. They are confronted by their own mortality on a daily basis. For the Kindred, this has changed in a drastic way. Many view themselves as being immortal, with nothing to fear in life but other Kindred. The death that casts such a pall on the life of mortals is but a whimsical memory for most Vampires. Therefore, it is not surprising that anything which poses a real threat to the "life" of a Kindred is met with a good deal of genuine and irrational fear. The spectre of death has decided to pay a visit to the Succubus Club, but this time, his aim is set on the Kindred....

HOW TO RUN THIS STORY

The key to running this story successfully lies in the continuous building of the tension throughout the scenes. When the dead bodies start showing up at the Succubus Club, the characters will start to feel the tension, wondering

who is committing the murders, and when and where they will strike next. The uneasy alliance with the Vampire hunter Saul will add to this tension too. The chase over the Chicago rooftops amplifies the tension by combining physical risk, adrenaline surge and the promise of a satisfying climax when the murderer is finally apprehended. The death of the rogue Vampire will only heighten the tension even more — what drove him to commit these grisly acts and why did he die? Just when the characters think it is all over, the apprehension starts again when they exhibit the same irrational behavior as the rogue Vampire and display the symptoms of the deadly disease. Their search to find the cause and a cure for their malady before it kills them will be the ultimate climax in this tension-filled story.

Keep the characters guessing. Just when they think that they have reached the climax, they find out that there is more — and the stakes themselves have just been raised. Much of the terror we feel when watching horror movies lies in the tension the director creates. Using these techniques on your players will prove just as useful.



THE PLOT

Scene One: The characters are in the Succubus Club when a dead man is found in the bathroom, his throat torn open and blood everywhere. Since a mortal found him, the characters have to deal with the police, especially Detective Gregory Stephens of homicide, and assuage their fears. Closer inspection discovers that the victim was killed by a Kindred, most likely one with the Protean Discipline. A search of the dead man's personal possessions also reveal that he was tracking another Vampire and was perhaps a Vampire hunter himself. Any investigation into the death leads to dead ends. A few days later, the Kindred are approached by Vampire hunter Saul Osiecki. He informs them that he knows the Vampire responsible for the death and that this Kindred could prove to be very dangerous. The characters must strike up an uneasy alliance with Saul in order to track the murderer.

Scene Two: Three days later, again while the characters are in the Succubus Club, another killing happens. This time it takes place in their presence. On one of the hanging dance floors, Arthur Gonzales takes his partner, drains her, and shoves her body over the rail. The screams of the other dancers alert the characters to the killing. In order to protect the Masquerade, the characters have to cover things up.

Scene Three: The murderer will make his escape from the Succubus Club by diving from a hanging dance floor to

a nearby balcony, crashing through a window and onto the roof. A chase across the rooftops of Chicago leads to a final confrontation in an abandoned tenement. Here, the characters become infected with some sort of disease, while the rogue Vampire himself dies from the illness.

Interlude: Now the real fun begins. The disease forces the characters to become more and more affected by the Beast within. They begin to commit atrocities which cause them to lose more and more Humanity. Also, the disease is running its course and the characters will die if a cure is not found. Meanwhile, other Chicago Kindred, especially those who hang around the Succubus Club, start to exhibit the same strange behavior and symptoms of the disease.

Scene Four: Their search for a cure leads them to the University of Chicago, where a leading microbiologist diagnoses a new strain of mononucleosis which seems to only have a deadly affect on Vampires. By working with this doctor, the characters are able to receive a vaccine and save many of the Kindred of Chicago.

THEME

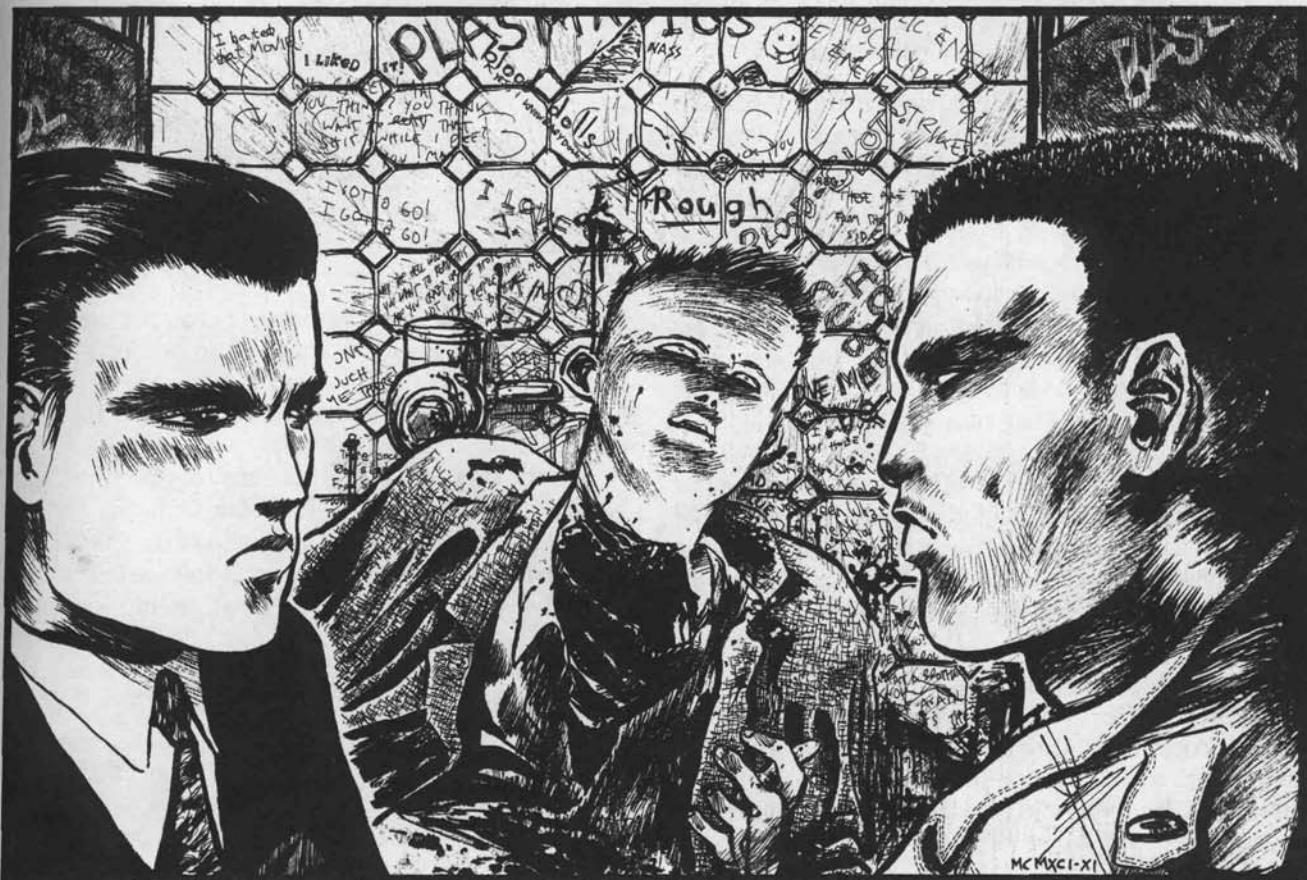
The theme of this story is the fear of death. Most Kindred have forgotten this fear, reveling in their immortality. Thus when death does raise its ugly head, the fear is much more poignant to creatures who view themselves as immortal.

This is played up in the story when the characters start to lose control of themselves and they realize that, once the disease has run its course, they will die. As long as Vampires retain control of themselves, there is little that can threaten their lives. However, the loss of control which the Beast within creates brings death that much closer to their existence.

Make death a real factor in this story. Let the characters realize the part the Masquerade plays in preserving their immortal existences. Show them how random violence and uncontrolled behavior can bring the spectre of death back into their lives. But most of all, let them feel a total helplessness in the face of death — death bows to no man and no Kindred. It just takes more time with Vampires, but death will find each and every person, regardless of who and what they are. Hammer this point home. It will help to increase the tension and give the characters a new feel for the "mortality" of their immortality.

GETTING THE CHARACTERS HOOKED

As the Storyteller, it will be incumbent upon you to get the characters emotionally involved in this story. The continued existence of the Succubus Club, and indeed the Vampires in Chicago and perhaps elsewhere, relies on the success of the characters in this story. When dead bodies start popping up in the Club, the characters should have a strong desire to find



the culprit and cover things up, so that the Club is not shut down and the Masquerade broken.

The introduction of Saul into the plot should also give the characters the incentive to get involved. Anything dangerous enough to make a fiercely dedicated Vampire hunter cooperate with other Kindred is something that the characters should take an interest in.

If your characters seem apathetic towards the whole situation, you can bet that when they catch the disease and notice the same symptoms (only more advanced) in the killer, and then track him down only to have him die before their eyes, that they will become interested in a hurry. The story works best if the characters do not notice that they have the disease until they have tracked down the killer and watched him die, but you can use the "catching the disease" approach if the characters seem intractable.

SCENE ONE:

SMOKIN' IN THE BOY'S ROOM

All of the characters have used the Succubus Club for their entertainment at one time or another. Tonight, like any

other night, they are here to enjoy themselves and revel in the society of the kind. This story works best when it is inserted into another ongoing story. When the characters have their full concentration on some other story (perhaps another of the ones in this supplement), have the killings start to happen. This will probably confuse the players and will at least pique their interest.

The normal course of your Chronicle will give the characters many reasons for being in the Succubus Club on this particular evening. It does not matter why they are there, for the events that are about to unfold do so regardless of the characters' purposes.

Establish the characters' motivations and the positions of their characters in the Succubus Club this evening. Roleplay through the first few hours of the evening to get the characters settled into their routine. Create some small roleplaying scenes for them to have fun with, nothing serious, but try to make them interesting and fun. Perhaps you could have a waitress drop an entire strawberry daiquiri on the shirt of the best-dressed character, having mistaken him for a patron who was very rude to her the night before (after all, it's very dark in the club). The characters may notice that her apologies do not have a ring of truth to them, and may decide to investigate further. They will find out that she is a heroin addict, and is being forced to turn tricks for her pusher (based out of the Maze downstairs) in order to pay off her "bills."

Character who decide to aid her will certainly have the opportunity to recover Willpower or Humanity.

Around 1 a.m., a commotion from a men's bathroom brings a bouncer to investigate. Shortly thereafter, Brennon Thornhill will be fetched. Any character who mingles with the crowd outside the bathroom will easily learn about the dead body inside. Four or more successes will allow the characters to notice a mortal in the crowd who looks especially disturbed about whatever is going on in the bathroom (this is Saul and it is his son who lies dead within). If the characters approach Saul, go to *Saul's Tale* below. The Club's bouncers will keep everybody out. Only known Kindred or those whom Brennon designates will be allowed into the scene of the crime. The only reason Brennon will allow them on the scene is to try and determine if they took part in this debacle. Initially he will do little to hide his suspicion of them. In fact, if the characters evidence no interest in what has happened, Brennon may very well summon them to the scene of the crime to watch their reaction.

Anybody allowed access to the bathroom will see the following. The body of a man is sitting in the middle stall in the bathroom. The victim is a male, Caucasian, 5 ft 10, and weighs about 195 lbs. He is dressed rather trendy, with khaki pants, a maroon shirt and a thin, black leather tie (factors which lead one bouncer to joke that this may be the reason he was killed). The manner of his demise is readily apparent — the man's entire throat has been ripped open. Anyone

making a Perception + Investigate roll with a difficulty of 6 will notice that the wound is very ragged, leading them to believe that the throat has been ripped open by brute force. On a difficulty of 8, the investigator will also notice a lack of blood on the floor, even though the carotid artery is exposed. An Intelligence + Occult roll with a difficulty of 6 will lead the viewer to believe that it was probably a Kindred with the Protean Discipline or a Lupine (though the latter is very unlikely since Lupines rarely come this far into Chicago).

The characters and Brennon have about six minutes to examine the corpse with impunity before the Chicago police show up. The man's identification shows him to be Isaac Osiecki from Des Moines. In his wallet he has about \$60 along with the usual assortment of credits cards from VISA to Amoco. However he also has a business card from a Mr. Kenneth Goldberg of the "Kabbalah Denudata Society" located in New York City and an unused theater ticket for a performance held two months ago at a theater in Des Moines. Two crumpled black and white photographs of a young man (Arthur Gonzales) will be found in an interior coat pocket, along with a more disturbing pair of items — a mallet, a wooden stake and a clove of pungent garlic.

After six minutes are up, the Chicago police show up. Leading the investigation is Detective Gregory Stephens of Homicide (see Vampire p. 224). Detective Stephens has been watching the Succubus Club for a few months now and knows that people he believes are Vampires hang out here regularly. At first Stephens has no idea whether this death is Kindred related, but he will be anxious to find out. Club goers will give the police varying descriptions of whom they believe the murderer to be. If you like, some of the descriptions can match one of the characters. Of course, if one of the characters happened to feed in the bathroom earlier, then he will definitely be described to the police. Still, Brennon will eventually convince the police the murder had nothing to do with the club except for its location, and Stephens is smart enough not to mention his Vampire theory to the Chief. He will, however, become more attentive to the goings on at the Succubus Club and this will disturb Brennon to no end.

After a report is filed and the body hauled away, the police will leave and the Club will be closed for the rest of the night. Brennon will pull some strings downtown and the Club will be open the next evening, advertising a "Death-Dance Special — No Cover Charge!!" However, Brennon is extremely aggravated by the trouble caused by this death on his property, especially if he is aware of the possibility that it is Kindred related. Brennon will ask all Kindred who frequent the Club to be on the lookout for the murderer and to apprehend him if possible. He promises a sizeable reward (\$5,000) to anybody who brings the criminal to justice.

No New Tale to Tell

The next evening, if the characters failed to ferret out Saul Osiecki from the crowd around the bathroom, the Vampire



Arthur had spotted their tail. He followed Isaac into the bathroom where he ripped his throat open and drained the man's blood. Arthur then made his escape.

Saul realizes he requires the help of the Kindred to have any hope of stopping Arthur before the disease is spread. Saul's nightmares are filled with visions of armies of rabid Vampires thoughtlessly killing millions of innocent people — a second Holocaust. Thus he is willing to put aside his feelings toward the Vampires in order to prevent a grave injustice from occurring. He needs them and the Kindred certainly need him. However, Saul does not trust the Kindred at all. He will only tell them enough of the true story above to get their help. If he can possibly avoid it, Saul will not tell the Kindred about the disease, but rather will mention that he had been stalking this particular Vampire when the Kindred went rabid and now he needs help to bring him to justice. He will tell of the carnage that Arthur has left from Des Moines to Madison to Milwaukee and now in Chicago. He will offer his help in identifying Arthur and will tell the Kindred what he knows Arthur's habits.

Saul will also hint that there may be more to Arthur's actions than he is telling, but will only say that the Kindred better keep him alive or they will never learn the full truth about what happened to Arthur. If seriously threatened, Saul will also let the fact slip that the characters themselves are in danger and, in fact, the entire society of Kindred could well be destroyed. If the characters somehow learn of the virus, Saul will use his knowledge of the disease as a bargaining piece and will, as a last resort, mention that there are vials of the disease in the hands of certain confederates who will release the disease into the population of various major population centers if Saul does not report back to them within a certain time frame. This last threat is a lie Saul had invented on the spur of the moment, hoping to diminish the danger to his own life.

This alliance with Saul is sure to be an uneasy one. Saul does not trust the characters and it is doubtful they will trust the Witch-hunter. But desperate times can make for some strange bedfellows and this alliance of Vampire and Vampire hunter is pretty strange. Play up on the suspicions of Saul and the characters, but keep hammering in how much the characters need Saul. It will make his presence even more unnerving and frustrating. Saul is a smart man, and he will most often be one step ahead of the Kindred. Saul will suggest that he and the Kindred stake out the Succubus Club for Arthur's probable return. It is the best lead they have and Saul thinks they should act upon it.

Saul Osiecki — Saul Osiecki is an old man with a bitter grudge. He has much in common with the Nazi hunters who will go to any length to bring justice on the killers of World War II, only Saul's grudge is with Vampires. This makes him extremely dangerous to any Kindred that cross him. Luckily for most Kindred, Saul does not know as much as he thinks he does about Vampires and stills believes a lot of the

old myths, such as those dealing with crosses, garlic and wooden stakes, mostly because his first subject believed in such. For Saul's motivations, see *Saul's Story* above.

Nature: Survivor

Demeanor: Fanatic

Born: 1920

Image: Saul is an old man who looks younger than his age may suggest, though his face looks tired and old whenever he is not energized by his quest to destroy the Kindred. Saul keeps himself in good shape for a man of his years and has the look of sharp reason in his eyes. He usually wears cardigan sweaters in earthy tones with corduroy trousers and brown wing-tip shoes. He also wears bifocal glasses and is mostly bald on the top of his head.

Roleplaying Hints: You don't trust or believe anyone, especially Vampires, so always look furtive, glancing from one player to the next as if seeking some flaw or weakness in what they are saying. Make sure that a fire appears in your eyes at all times — you are on a quest for vengeance and that fire will not be quelled until vengeance has been served. Keep your body tense and ready to react to any double-cross the players might dream up.

SCENE TWO: FREE FALLIN'

Nothing more will happen at the Succubus Club for two more evenings. Security will be tight, but the patrons will seem to have forgotten the entire incident. If the characters are trying to help Brennon out or wish to procure the reward, have them explain any precautions or other activities they wish to perform while staking out the killer. Saul will try to organize the stake-out if the players will let him, but will go along with any well-thought-out plan, though not without complaining first.

Two nights after the first death, the killer will strike again. But first, the wild goose chase. The characters notice a shady looking character, furtively glancing about the dance floor before heading into the Labyrinth (the waitress's pusher, in fact). He is dressed in black leather, and his hairy chest is covered in gold and silver medallions. If one or more of the characters follow the man down, they will find he enters the maze. If they follow him further, he will ambush them with a knife from the shadows of the maze. He has a Strength, Dexterity and Melee of three, but is merely used as a diversion while the real quarry does his work upstairs. The man is searching for a Blood Doll who bought some crack on credit. When he sees the characters following him, he freaks and attacks. He has nothing to do with the murders.

Meanwhile, on one of the hanging dance floors, Arthur Gonzales (see stats below) is in the process of draining his dancing partner. The disease has almost run its course and Arthur is hard to recognize from the small black-and-white picture Saul has. His face is much more sallow, sunken and his eyes have a wild look, while his hair is more unkempt. When Arthur is through, he spins his partner's body over the railing and onto the ground below. Then, while the patrons are looking at the fallen woman, Arthur uses his Potence to leap to one of the balconies, climb to the top floor, smash one of the warehouse windows and escape over the rooftops.

The character will first be alerted to the crime being committed by the screams of the crowd. Saul will spot Arthur immediately and shout, "That's him!" to any Kindred nearby. There will be two problems confronting the characters immediately. First, even a cursory glance at the body will show the characters that there are two small puncture wounds in the neck oozing blood. If Detective Stephens or any of the Chicago PD were to see that, the Masquerade would be in deep jeopardy. Secondly, the murderer is escaping over the rooftops. He needs to be caught before the murder spree continues and, again, the Masquerade is threatened. The characters will probably need to break up. Chasing Arthur over the rooftops is covered below (see *Cat On a Hot Tin Roof*).

Covering up the Vampiric nature of the murder is something that will need to be done immediately. The police will have stationed a police car outside the Club in case the murderer returned. It will not take long until they get word of the latest killing — perhaps two or three minutes. Bouncers are keeping the crowd from seeing the body, and Brennon has been sent for, though he will not arrive for 15 minutes. A proper diversion or maybe just impeding the arrival of the police may give another Kindred enough time to cover things up. How they handle the cover up is left to their imaginations, though they might want to just rip the throat open completely to make it look like a slasher. This will take about a minute. It will also put them in contact with the deadly virus currently ravaging the murderer. Any character who touches the body should make a self-control roll with a difficulty of seven. Failure indicates that at some point while taking care of the body they got blood on their hands and, as a natural reaction, licked it off. Naturally, do not tell them what this roll was for.

After the police make it to the scene of the crime, all chances to cover things up will be over. They will move anyone around away from the body and send for Detective Stephens and the forensics team. No one will be let near the body.

Stephens will arrive in about six minutes. He will shoot anyone nearby an appraising look before turning to search the body. If the characters do a good enough job of covering up the fang marks, Stephens will only have his hunches to go upon. He will take Brennon to the side again and inform him that the killings will have to stop and the murderer brought

to justice before he can allow the Succubus Club to reopen again.

There is no chance that Stephens might know of Saul and his being a Vampire hunter — Saul has not done anything to date and has kept his activities to himself. Stephens has had the Succubus Club under surveillance for a while now as a suspected Vampire hang-out, though he has found nothing to back up these suspicions. If the characters play their cards right, he will find nothing more to support his theories tonight either.

At 3 a.m., the investigation will be wrapped up, the police will shuttle everybody out of the club, and it will be sealed as police evidence. It will take Brennon a week to reopen the club. In the meantime, there are much more serious things afoot...

SCENE THREE: CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF

While some of the characters are trying to take care of the cops at the club, the others should be chasing Arthur Gonzales across the rooftops of Chicago. This scene is designed to be





ad-libbed. There is no particular path for Arthur to flee down or any particular way to run the chase. It can be as simple or as complicated as you like. The only thing that really matters is that eventually the chase leads the characters to Arthur's lair.

The characters will most likely see Arthur leap from the dance floor to the balcony. They will probably want to block off his escape down the stairs that lead up to the balconies on that side of the Club. Whether or not they race up the stairs after him or wait for him to come down the stairs, they will hear the crashing of the window on the balcony level of the Club. When they get to the broken window, they will just be in time to see Arthur scrambling up the building next door to the Club.

Now the chase begins. Arthur will notice the characters following him at a point of your own choosing to maximize the effectiveness of the discovery. At this point, he will try to shake the characters and the fun begins.

Chasing Arthur requires that a lot of different rolls be made. For Climbing, use the rules on page 143 of *Vampire*. For Jumping, see p. 144 of *Vampire*. The tricky part will be determining the difficulty of each jump. Since you are making the terrain up as you go, it will not be too hard for you to do this. However, you will probably want to pace the jumps so that there are a number of easier jumps before the characters face a really hard one. You can also add some interesting things, such as jumps that are not straight across, but up or down; jumps requiring the characters to land on a narrow ledge; jumps that finish off by going through a window, etc. Arthur will do what he can to shake the characters. By this time, the disease has run its course to such a point that he does not fear death anymore. Arthur will perform many feats of daring that any sane person would not even consider — but Arthur is not sane anymore. Besides, he has just fed and his Blood Pool is full, so he will use that to heal any wounds he sustains as well as to boost his Attributes.

If you like, you can use the chart in the box below to decide what kind of building the characters encounter next in their chase over the rooftops. In each case, roll once for the kind of building and once for the distance to the next building.

You do not have to use the Chase rules from *Vampire* though. The chase itself is rigged since the characters cannot catch Arthur, but they cannot lose him either. In some way or another, they will chase him to his Haven.

The chase is also a chance to get in some rather humorous roleplaying. The residents of the various buildings the characters will traipse over can interact with the Kindred, much like in the old *Batman* TV series when the Dynamic Duo used to scale the buildings and talk with the people of Gotham. This could get especially interesting if Arthur decides to take a detour through somebody's apartment. Whether the inhabitants help the characters, hinder them, or

just harass them will ultimately be up to you, but use this opportunity to make the chase scene memorable. Some possible encounters include — an overbearing wino, a couple making love, a woman bringing in her wash, a burglar trying to break into a building, a security guard, a flock of pigeons or even something more exotic such as another Vampire or maybe even a Lupine.

Two important things to keep in mind are 1) that the characters cannot catch Arthur before he makes it back to his Haven — if they look like they are going to catch him, have something show up to hinder the characters, such as police officers attracted by the commotion; and 2) the character(s) cannot lose Arthur — if they do, have him appear a little ways off or somewhere else as the characters make their way home or spread out to look for him. If the characters start shooting at the poor lunatic, he will either take minor nicks or make some incredible dodges.

Finally, when you feel that you have gotten the most out of the chase scene, Arthur will think that he has shaken the characters and he will head to his Haven. It is paramount that the characters follow him there. If they think of giving up, remind them that the Masquerade is in real jeopardy if Arthur stays at large, since one more murder like the last two will bring every government agency down on the Succubus Club. Also, you can have him taunt the characters every time it looks like they might be giving up.

Arthur's Haven is an old abandoned three-story tenement building in the Southside of Chicago. He has chased off or killed any other squatters who have lived in the place before and now has the run of the place. He has blackened out the windows with paint and boards.

After the chase, Arthur will enter through the rooftop entrance and head down to his living quarters on the second floor. When the characters follow him, they will notice a stench of corpses permeating the air in the tenement. Arthur has been bringing his victims to the tenement and leaving their bodies throughout the three stories. As the characters explore the building, looking for Arthur, they will stumble across many corpses, mostly of the poor and homeless, scattered throughout the rooms, all in various stages of



decay. The stench itself is unbearable and the characters will have to make a Stamina + Fortitude roll of 7 or spend a point of Willpower for each 15 minutes that they remain in the building. Any who attempt to use Heightened Senses to search for the diseased Kindred must make the roll with a difficulty of 9 to avoid spending the Willpower.

Arthur lairs on the second story of the building. His "pad" consists of a pile of clothing for a bed and various pieces of furniture, most of it broken and scattered about the room like a bizarre rummage sale. If the characters have not been sufficiently stealthy in their search, Arthur will have hidden himself above the door by using his claws to grab hold of the wall above the door frame. He will wait for the first character to enter the room before he jumps on her back, raking with his claws and forcing her to the ground. He will jump about the room like an animal, using the furniture for cover and attacking any characters coming within his reach. The room is pitch dark (Arthur is using his Gleam of Red Eyes to see in the dark) and Arthur makes the best use of this ability to see in the dark to trap the characters and rake him with his claws before taking off back into the darkness. Build up the paranoia and tension in this scene for its maximum effect.

Rooftop Chase Chart			
<u>roll</u>	<u>The next rooftop is</u>	<u>roll</u>	<u>Distance to next rooftop</u>
1	empty lot	1-2	10 feet
2-4	10 or more feet below current one	3-4	20 feet
5-7	on the same level as current one	5-6	30 feet
8-9	10-20 feet higher than current one	7-8	40 feet
10	30 or more feet higher	9-10	50 or more feet



Just when it seems Arthur has the upper hand, he screams loudly, and starts thrashing about, throwing himself violently about the room. Before the characters have a chance to do much of anything, Arthur will grab one of the characters, stare them in the eyes, and die. He enters the final death, at last. The look on his face will be one of shock and immense pain. If this does not spook the characters, nothing will. An examination of the corpse will reveal the following — Arthur is very pale in certain areas of his body, including his head, while other areas seem flushed. His skin on his face and hands is very dry and flaky, there is a crust of white gunk around the edges of his eyes, and Arthur does not seem to have been grooming himself very much lately. A search of the building will only reveal corpses and nothing else of value. Arthur's corpse will decay rapidly once he is dead and it will take all the miracles of modern day science to keep it from totally decomposing within a day. If revealed to sunlight, it will go up like dry kindling.

Arthur Gonzales: Arthur is a Kindred to be pitied. By the time the characters finally encounter this Vampire, the disease inside of him will have advanced to such a stage that the Beast will have taken over many of his actions. Arthur was a college political science student on an athletic scholarship, travelling around the United States during summer vacation, when he was taken in Yellowstone National Park by a very old and powerful Gangrel. Abandoned like most of his Clan, Arthur learned to use his powers quickly enough to survive the Becoming. For the last five years, he has

travelled throughout the U.S., never staying in one place long enough to settle down. Recently, while coming through Des Moines, Arthur came into contact with this new strain of mononucleosis through one of his victims. The disease has progressed rapidly through his system and Arthur has left a trail of murdered victims through upper Illinois and lower Wisconsin on his way to Chicago. Now, he has come to the end of his rope and the Beast inside has consumed what is left of Arthur Gonzales.

Sire: Unknown Gangrel

Nature: Architect

Demeanor: Survivor

Clan: Gangrel

Generation: 7th

Apparent Age: 22 (Born: 1964)

Embrace: 1986

Image: Arthur's Mexican ancestry is readily apparent. He is normally well-groomed, though many of his personal habits have fallen to the wayside as the Beast has taken over. Nonetheless, Arthur is still a handsome-looking man. He will be wearing clothing appropriate to dancing in the Succubus Club when encountered — enough of his mind remains that he tries to fit in.

Roleplaying Hints: Hunch your back and dart your eyes around, glancing at everyone and everything like a caged

VAMPIRE™

Arthur Gonzales

Attributes		
Physical	Social	Mental
Strength ●●●●●	Charisma ●●●●●	Perception ●●●●●
Dexterity ●●●●●	Manipulation ●●●●●	Intelligence ●●●●●
Stamina ●●●●●	Appearance ●●●●●	Wits ●●●●●

Abilities		
Talents	Skills	Knowledge
Acting ●●●●●	Animal Ken ●●●●●	Bureaucracy ●●●●●
Alertness ●●●●●	Drive ●●●●●	Computer ●●●●●
Athletics ●●●●●	Etiquette ●●●●●	Finance ●●●●●
Brawl ●●●●●	Firearms ●●●●●	Investigation ●●●●●
Dodge ●●●●●	Melee ●●●●●	Law ●●●●●
Empathy ●●●●●	Muscle ●●●●●	Linguistics ●●●●●
Intimidation ●●●●●	Repair ●●●●●	Medicine ●●●●●
Leadership ●●●●●	Security ●●●●●	Occult ●●●●●
Streetwise ●●●●●	Stealth ●●●●●	Politics ●●●●●
Subterfuge ●●●●●	Survival ●●●●●	Science ●●●●●

Advantages		
Disciplines	Backgrounds	Virtues
Dominance ●●●●●	_____	Conscience ●●●●●
Fortitude ●●●●●	_____	Self-Control ●●●●●
Potency ●●●●●	_____	Courage ●●●●●
Protean ●●●●●	_____	

Other Traits	Humanity	Health
_____	●○○○○○○○○	Bruised <input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	Hurt -1 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	Injured -2 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	Wounded -3 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	Mauled -4 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	Crippled -5 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____	_____	Incapacitated <input type="checkbox"/>

Combat			Willpower	Blood Pool	Experience
Weapon	Difficulty	Damage	_____	○○○○○○○○○○	_____

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/3)

animal. Tense your muscles like you are ready to react to the slightest stimulus.

Notes: Arthur's Demeanor has taken over his actions and everything he does now is ultimately caused by his need to survive. The Beast has taken over and all his actions are instinctual.

Interlude

The characters will probably have more questions than answers at this stage of the game, and their number one suspect is dead. Why did the Kindred die? Who was he? Where did he come from? Why did he kill those people in the Succubus Club? All these questions will probably be plaguing the characters. Of course, they will probably confront Saul for their answers. Unfortunately, they will find the answer to many of these questions first hand.

You see, during the past few days, the characters have come into contact with and become infected by the strain of mononucleosis that caused Arthur to act so irrationally. The virus is making its way into the Chicago blood supply, but the characters will be the first to display the symptoms (they got it from touching the body, battling Gonzales or from one of the infected in the Succubus Club, currently one of the places most affected by the illness. Eventually, almost every Kindred in the city will be infected, but right now the characters have a chance to save themselves and the others by finding a cure for the virus. First, however, they have to figure out that they are sick.

This should be pretty easy to do. Saul will be overjoyed at the death of Arthur, but his joy will be short lived when he notices the symptoms appearing in the characters. You see, the characters will start to behave irrationally. They will also display fatigue more readily, waking up later and later each evening and making all Stamina rolls at a -1 penalty. The Beast will also take over their actions more and more (see the *Mononucleosis — Vampirilla strain* insert for more details on how to run this). If the virus causes the characters to kill a victim in the Succubus Club, there is going to be hell to pay. Saul will put two and two together and figure out that the characters are now infected with the mononucleosis virus and that it may be too late to stop the spread of the fatal disease.

It is at this point that Saul will tell the characters the whole story, including his lie about having vials of the virus elsewhere. He will point out that the characters will die in a few weeks if a cure is not found. Saul knows that the normal cure for mononucleosis (lots of bedrest) will not work in the Vampire's case due to the changes he made in the virus and the complete lack of an immune system in Vampire (normally they have no need of one). Beyond that, though, Saul has little idea of how to stop this monster he has created. He can, of course, being the inventor of the virus, be of considerable help to any trained virologist.

Whenever humans get sick, they go to a doctor. But where does a sick Vampire go for medical help? This poses a great



dilemma. Do they risk breaking the Masquerade in order to get professional help? Or do they sacrifice themselves to save the Masquerade? Fortunately for the Kindred, if they keep an ear open to the news around the city, they will find out that other Kindred are beginning to display the same symptoms within three days of the first display of symptoms by the characters. This leaves them only one option, one which Saul will suggest if the characters do not think of it themselves — finding some professional virologist who is up on the latest techniques and would have an open enough mind to help out a group of sick Vampires. The obvious choice is a liberal arts institution — a university. And the University of Chicago is right downtown.

SCENE FOUR: SEE ME, FEEL ME, TOUCH ME, HEAL ME

With a little investigative work, the characters can find out about world-renowned virologist John Phillips, Ph.d, at the University of Chicago. They can get this information from the police, from Scottie Cartwright at the "Tell It All" or any other newspaper or news magazine, or from any other virologist in the nation. There may be other sources of this information at your discretion.

This part of the story calls for the characters to completely avoid violence and arrange purely peaceful dealings with Dr. Phillips. Any carnage or other acts of violence caused by a frenzied Vampire will almost certainly destroy the characters' chances to find a cure. Therefore, they must control themselves very rigidly, spending Willpower freely and perhaps only letting those with the highest Willpower and/or Humanity deal with the good doctor. While they might threaten him to force his cooperation, this will cause the doctor to create a serum which will mask the symptoms, but still leave the Kindred susceptible to the final death stage of the disease.

Doctor Phillips, like many good researchers in the university system, can be found working late nights in his lab at the University most of the time. His lab is on the third floor of the Wilkes Research Center. The security is relatively light, consisting of regular patrols by guards and locks on all of the doors (even the stairwell). The characters will have to figure out a way to get to Doctor Phillips. Use your discretion to adjudicate the success of their plans. Saul will be willing to set up an appointment with Dr. Phillips during the daytime if the characters will let him.

Phillips has been working on viruses such as the one causing AIDS for the past seven years. His research on the AIDS virus keeps him working overtime on many occasions. If the characters approach him, obviously he will not believe that they are Vampires at first. It will not take much, however, to convince him of their authenticity! After he recovers from the shock, he will be fascinated, especially when he hears about their theory that they are sick. If Saul is with the characters, his credentials and biochemical skills will not only impress the doctor, but will be of immense help in the isolation of a vaccination. Of course, if the good doctor is going to find a cure (or even what is wrong with the characters) they are going to have to put themselves into his capable hands. This requires a certain degree of trust. Just hope that the Beast does not make an unwanted appearance at this point.

If the Kindred agree to let him help them, he will put them through a battery of tests, exclaiming all the while how fascinating the Vampires are. He will attempt to figure out how the Vampire's remain alive even though most of their tissue is obviously dead. This will elude him, though the cause of the Kindreds' problems will not. When Dr. Phillips isolates the mononucleosis viral strain, he will use it as leverage. He will tell the characters he has found the answer to their problems and that he can fix a vaccination. However, he has some conditions. He wants to study the Kindred to find out how they tick — he wants to find the source of their immortality. At first he will want to publish papers and go public with his knowledge, but he can be persuaded, through various means both intellectual and threatening, to keep the Kindred out of any findings he makes and publishes. However, he will want the Kindred to become his guinea pigs in exchange for the vaccine. On that count, he is inflexible. His intellectual curiosity will not allow him to pass up on this

opportunity, even if he is the only one to ever see the data. He will try to finagle and barter for anything he can get, though, so allow him to get all he can.

With a deal struck, Dr. Phillips will take an infected Kindred's blood, isolate the virus and concoct a vaccine. It will take him a week unless he has the help of Saul, in which case he can finish his work in three days — this might be important if the characters wasted time after they found out that they were sick. Dr. Phillips will then want to inject the vaccination into all of the Kindred (even those who may not yet be infected, as a precaution). The vaccination will take full effect in about half an hour, after which time the characters will be fine. However, there is a problem which the Kindred and the good doctor did not foresee. Vampires do not have an immune system to speak of, so the vaccination will only stay in their bodies as long as the blood that is vaccinated stays in the bodies. Once the Kindred use up the Blood that has been vaccinated, they will again be susceptible to the virus. Thus, they will need constant vaccinations — another piece of clout Dr. Phillips can use against the Kindred and to ensure his continued safety.

Once this is figured out, the Vampirilla strain of the virus should pretty much be under control. Of course, the rest of the city's Kindred will have to be vaccinated immediately. This will make the characters heroes and Lodin will grant them turf and status befitting their heroics.

VAMPIRE™

Dr. John Phillips

Attributes		
Physical	Social	Mental
Strength.....●○○○○	Charisma.....●○○○○	Perception.....●○○○○
Dexterity.....●○○○○	Manipulation.....●○○○○	Intelligence.....●○○○○
Stamina.....●○○○○	Appearance.....●○○○○	Wits.....●○○○○

Abilities		
Talents	Skills	Knowledge
Acting.....○○○○○	Animal Ken.....○○○○○	Bureaucracy.....○○○○○
Alertness.....●○○○○	Drive.....●○○○○	Computer.....●○○○○
Athletics.....●○○○○	Empathy.....●○○○○	Finance.....●○○○○
Brawl.....○○○○○	Firearms.....○○○○○	Investigation.....●○○○○
Dodge.....○○○○○	Melee.....○○○○○	Law.....○○○○○
Empathy.....●○○○○	Music.....○○○○○	Linguistics.....○○○○○
Intimidation.....○○○○○	Repair.....○○○○○	Medicine.....●○○○○
Leadership.....●○○○○	Security.....○○○○○	Occult.....○○○○○
Streetwise.....○○○○○	Stealth.....○○○○○	Politics.....○○○○○
Subterfuge.....○○○○○	Survival.....○○○○○	Science.....●○○○○

Advantages		
Disciplines	Backgrounds	Virtues
_____○○○○○	_____○○○○○	Conscience.....●○○○○
_____○○○○○	_____○○○○○	Self-Control.....●○○○○
_____○○○○○	_____○○○○○	Courage.....●○○○○
_____○○○○○	_____○○○○○	

Other Traits	Humanity	Health
_____○○○○○	●●●●●●●●●●	Devised..... <input type="checkbox"/>
_____○○○○○		Hurt.....-1 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____○○○○○		Injured.....-2 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____○○○○○		Wounded.....-3 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____○○○○○		Mauled.....-4 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____○○○○○		Crippled.....-5 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____○○○○○		Incapacitated..... <input type="checkbox"/>

Combat	Willpower	Blood Pool	Experience
Weapon: _____	○○○○○○○○○○	○○○○○○○○○○	_____
Difficulty: _____			
Damage: _____			

Attributes: 7/53 Abilities: 13/95 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

Dr. John Phillips — John Phillips, Ph.d, is a world-renowned virologist. He is most well known for his research into the AIDS virus. Dr. Phillips did his undergraduate work at Duke University, with his graduate training being completed at UCLA. He has been a researcher at the University of Chicago for the past eight years. During that time, he has written numerous papers and become one of the University's most famous resident.

Nature: Visionary

Demeanor: Director

Age: 35 (Born: 1956)

Image: Dr. Phillips is a young man, wearing conservative glasses and carrying an air of confidence. Dressed in a white lab coat, with a tie visible, he is the typical good-looking doctor that Mom always wants you to bring home. His boyish good looks and good-natured grin make him instantly likeable.

Roleplaying Hints: Rub your chin when you are thinking and squint your eyes slightly to appear serious. When you speak, talk slowly, but with great confidence — you are used to being listened to and you know that your opinion is worth quite a lot.

TIDYING THINGS UP

There are many loose ends to this story that may need to be tied up at some point in your Chronicle.

1. **The Succubus Club** will still be under careful scrutiny by the Chicago PD. Any killing in the next few years at the Club will be linked with the two killings from the last few weeks. Detective Stephens may be a help or a hindrance to the Kindred, depending on how he was treated by them during the investigation. He will show up at the most inopportune of times and make cryptic statements that seem to indicate that he knows all. Nothing will come of it, though, unless some Kindred or another slips up in the Club.

2. **The Vampirilla** strain will have spread to other cities sooner or later. The Chicago Kindred will have been the first to have experienced the disease and the first to come up with the cure. Lodin will want to use this for his political advantage. Other Kindred may wish to steal the vaccine, kidnap Dr. Phillips or hold some Kindred or another hostage for the vaccine. How the Chicago Kindred decide to handle this situation can lead to many more stories.

3. **Dr. Phillips** will start his studies on the Kindred. What he comes up with may change the course of your Chronicle forever. Though it is unlikely that he will ever uncover all there is to know about Vampires, some of the things he might uncover could be very valuable to the right people. Other Kindred, especially the Black Hand, might try to kill Dr. Phillips to prevent his work from continuing. Others might try to kidnap him for their own use. Still other people might try to steal the notes on his findings. The characters might be assigned by Lodin to ensure that Dr. Phillips remains

healthy and in the Chicago Kindred's hands. Of course, there is the problem if some of Dr. Phillip's findings leak into an obscure journal or something. What if Scottie Cartwright stumbles onto the whole mess? The story possibilities here are endless.

4. **Depending on how Saul** and the characters interacted during the adventure, the old Jew may or may not continue his quest for retribution. If the characters showed human compassion and feelings to Saul, he will have doubts as to his original idea that all Vampires are evil. He may actually become an ally of the Kindred, and dedicate himself to destroying those evil Vampires who break the Traditions and thus the Masquerade. However, if the characters' actions only reinforced Saul's opinions of the underlying evil nature of the Kindred, he will renew his quest with vigor and the characters will have one persistent enemy to dog their undying days.

5. **A vindictive relative** of one of the victims of the virus' rampaging Kindred, enraged by the lack of progress of the police, may stumble onto the Kindred on their own and start a campaign of retribution against every Vampire they can find — thus is another Vampire Hunter born.

6. **It is always possible** the characters may decide to kill both Saul and Dr. Phillips to ensure the sanctity of the Masquerade. Saul will have no defense other than his natural abilities, and will not be willing to release the vaccine again, even at the cost of his own life. This will not keep him from threatening its use, however. Dr. Phillips, on the other hand, will be far more willing to use whatever is at his disposal. He will deny the characters vaccinations and his threat that all his notes are in a safety deposit box to be opened in the event of his death is no lie. If he feels physically threatened, he will be more than happy to hurl a vial of isolated *Vampirilla* strain cultures in a Vampire's face.

7. **The characters may well decide** to keep the virus for themselves and not share it with any other Kindred. If this happens you as Storyteller have two options — parallel research or apocalypse. Either other Kindred in other places manage to discover the vaccine or else hundreds of Vampires start rampaging through cities around the world. Entire nations will be up in arms and warned about the scourge. Hunting parties armed with automatic weaponry and flamethrowers will roam the streets, scorching Vampires (and occasional mortals as well). Finally the only Kindred left alive will be the ones in torpor who have not fed in ages. Of course, when they arise, the whole game starts all over again.

SPICING THINGS UP

"Death's Sweet Sting" was originally designed as a simpler, less elaborate story than it could have been. Here are some suggestions if you want to liven up the proceedings somewhat.

1. **Old Saul** has not given up on wiping out the Vampire scourge. While he feels genuine horror over the virus he has unleashed, this setback has not stopped him from continuing his experiments. In fact, the deal he strikes with the characters to help track down Arthur is merely an excuse to allow him to experiment on them! He has developed yet another strain and will ensure the characters drink from a Vessel infected by the new version. All the while they track down Arthur, Saul is watching them closely and taking notes. You have several options as to how this affects the characters. They may only be affected by the one new version, which means they do not notice the symptoms until much later; they may be affected by both strains, meaning they get sicker

twice as fast and also see the Beast let loose; or anything else your devious mind can come up with.

2. **Saul is a pawn** in the battle between Menele and Helena. The old biologist's work came to Menele's attention through correspondence between Saul and Dr. Phillips, a close ally of Critias, who is one of Menele's progeny. The ancient Brujah knows he will be safe as long as he remains in torpor, but that his ancient enemy may have arisen from her grave and may be hanging out at the Succubus Club (both suspicions garnered through his enhanced *Auspex*). Thus he has risked the survival of all the Kindred in the city on this one maneuver to kill his foe while she still recovers from her long sleep. Needless to say, he will not appreciate the characters saving Helena's life.

MONONUCLEOSIS — VAMPIRILLA STRAIN

This special mutation of the mononucleosis virus seems to be one of the few diseases to actually have an effect on Vampires. Since the biological aspects of Vampirism are still largely unknown, the exact reason for this difference is yet to be discovered. Theory seems to indicate that the virus attaches itself to the hemoglobin molecule in the blood, causing it to swell and block the osmosis of blood through the body. The slowing of the flow of blood to a Kindred's brain causes them to lose many of their higher cerebral activities. This has the effect of freeing the Beast without the tether of the Vampire's Humanity. In human beings, the virus is inhibited from attaching to the hemoglobin by molecules that a living body produces but the Vampire's dead body does not. However, humans will still show the symptoms of mononucleosis when infected with this strain — it just does not kill them or disrupt the blood flow so completely as it does in the Vampire.

The symptoms are radical and easy to identify. Initially, the Vampire will exhibit sudden animalistic tendencies and will Frenzy more often. This is accompanied by a sluggishness between periods of Frenzy. As the course of the disease is run, the victim's eyes will grow wild looking, with a white crust developing in the corners. A very pale hue to the skin accompanies an increased hunger in the Vampire. As the disease progresses even further, the Kindred retains less and less control over his actions, tending to react on an instinctual, survival level. After a month, the Vampire will expe-

rience the final death when the flow of blood to the brain is completely cut off.

The effect in the game is as follows. For every week, starting with the first, that the Vampire has the disease, add one to the difficulty of the Virtue roll to avoid Frenzy. Also, have the Vampire with the disease roll for Frenzy under the least of provocations. The more common state of Frenzy will cause even the most amoral of Vampires to lose more Humanity and perhaps gain a number of Derangements.

Kindred will also lose the ability to use blood freely. Increasing physical attributes or healing wounds by use of a blood point will require a Willpower roll with a difficulty depending on how long the disease has been ravaging his system. During the first week the difficulty is four and increases by two each week. Thus week two requires a six, week three an eight and in the final week the difficulty is a ten. A botch indicates the blood point is expended with no benefits gained.

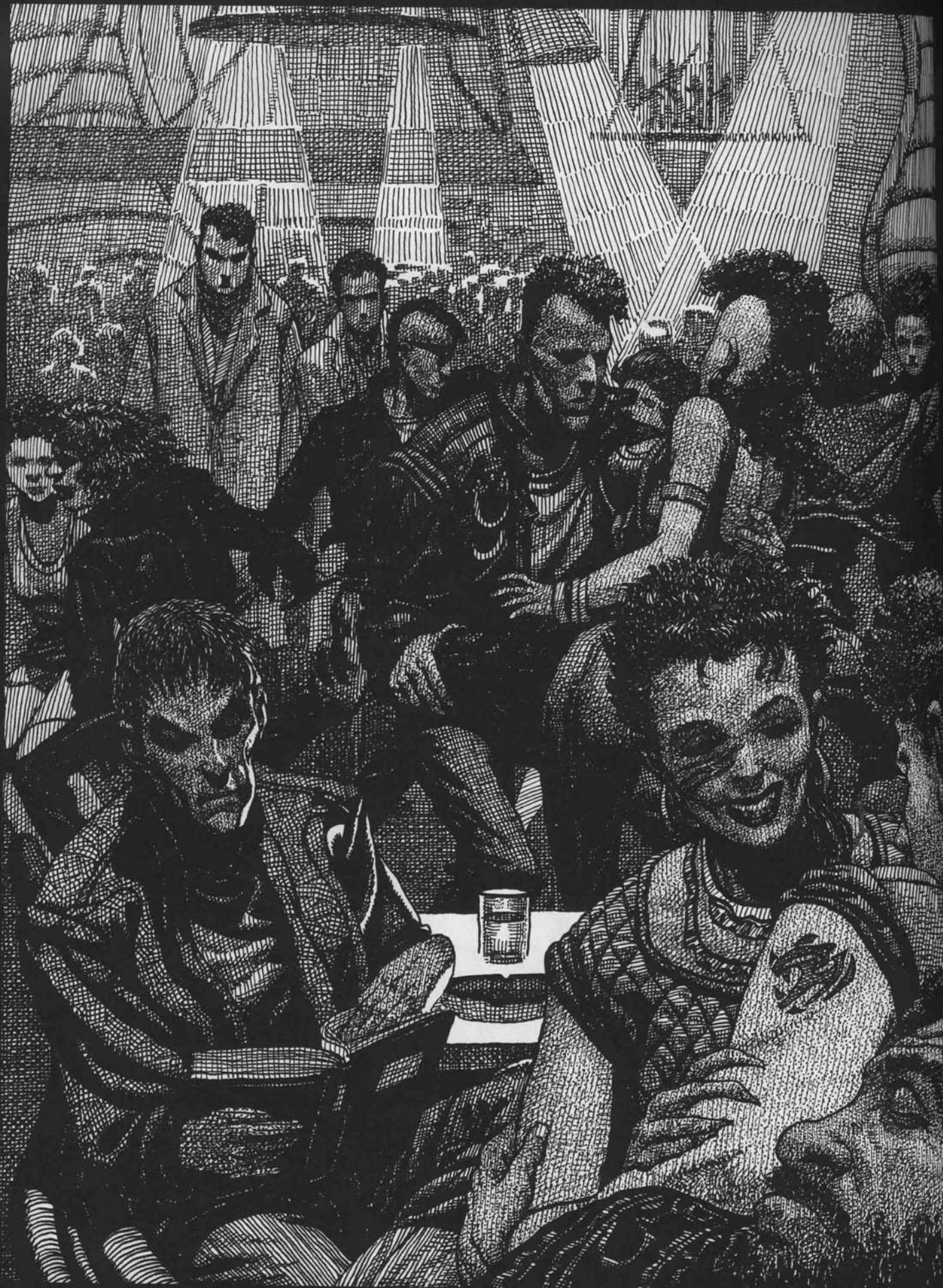
One month after the Vampire first catches this new strain of mononucleosis, he will die. However, an extended Torpor can be entered, and if several centuries go by the virus may die off as a result of a lack of nutrient (i.e. lack of blood), but there is a possibility it could "kill" the Vampire first. The character must make a stamina roll every 50 years (difficulty 9). Three successes indicate the virus has been killed, while a botch indicates final death.

Child's Play

"Child's Play" is a two-part story for newcomers to the Windy City. In it, the characters find themselves being tested by a childish Elder and get the chance to gain their first insights into the intricacies of Chicago's Kindred community. The first part, "Paper Chase," details the characters' first encounter with the nameless, scheming Cainite who will so affect their unlives. In the second part, "Grand Elusions," they finally meet their mysterious manipulator and get to decide if they will join with him as pawns or side with his enemies as free people.

While these stories are for Vampires new to the area, they were not designed for a group starting from Day One. We assume that the characters have already met and are at least loosely affiliated with each other. We do not recommend this as a beginning adventure. If the Storyteller is using this as the players' first meeting, he or she may wish to run a short starting adventure such as "Baptism by Fire" first. This will both give the characters a reason to be together and provide them with some experience.

Finally, these two parts have been designed to be just as effective run separately as together. They also do not need to be run one after another. Feel free to insert any other story from this book between them or make up one of your own.



Paper Chase

"And all our Knowledge is, ourselves to know."

Alexander Pope, *Essay on Man*

"Paper Chase" is a one chapter story for **Vampire** intended for a group of 2-5 Kindred. If you decide not to run both parts of "Child's Play," it can serve as either a stand-alone adventure or as an element of the "Forged in Steel" Chronicle (as described in **Vampire**). Storytellers can place it after the *Ashes to Ashes* series, or play it out any time after the Neonates have travelled to Chicago.

"Paper Chase" is a story of conflicting motivations and interlocking conspiracies — in other words, a classic example of intrigue. There are several "factions" involved in the story, both Kindred and kine, each with its own purpose. No faction is fully aware of the purpose of any other faction, and in one case, it is possible that one faction is even unaware of its own true motivation. The characters are caught in the middle and, depending on their actions, can come into direct conflict with one, two or all of the factions.

Unlike some stories, however, the conflict that rears its head in "Paper Chase" will not always be physical. There are foes that the characters will probably fight, that is true. But the majority of conflicts can be resolved in ways other than *mano a mano* combat.

Most of the Kindred directly involved in "Paper Chase" are outside the cast of characters described in the **Chicago by Night**. However, the odds are that the characters will

interact with these familiar individuals. They represent the best source of the information the neonates must learn, both that concerning Vampiric history and philosophy, and that related to other issues as well. As Storyteller, you can use these characters to make the Neonates' job as difficult or as easy as you see fit by providing information willingly or withholding it ... or, in some cases, even warping it beyond recognition. You should keep in mind the relationships the Neonates have with whatever older Kindred they decide to talk to. Vampires with whom they have friendly and close relationships will be much more willing to help out than will new acquaintances, or enemies (whether covert or overt foes). In general, however, no other Kindred should be willing to help out directly (for reasons that will be discussed later).

HOW TO RUN THIS STORY

All the events in "Paper Chase" compose a single Chapter, allowing you and your characters to run it in only one (or perhaps two) sessions. There are four Scenes to this Chapter. The first Scene gives the Neonates an incentive to do some research, talk to what contacts they may have and learn a

little more about Vampiric history. The second Scene forces them to decide how to deal with a human who seems to know their true nature: strike a bargain with him, or destroy him out-of-hand. The nature of the third Scene will depend on what information they extracted from the human in the previous Scene. It can lead to direct conflict with some mortal hunters, or to a scrap with several Kindred who have their own agenda to follow. The fourth Scene encompasses the final confrontation between the Kindred and the hunters.

THE PLOT

Scene One: The Neonates receive a letter, delivered by a Dominated human courier. It informs them that a copy of an ancient manuscript will soon be coming on the market, a manuscript that the characters should find very interesting, as the letter says, "considering your background." This manuscript is described as an Apocrypha, "an associated text, of uncertain authorship" to the Book of Nod. The writer of the letter identifies himself by name only as Dennis Herdon and promises to contact the characters again in a few days, when the manuscript is officially on the market.

The Neonates now have a chance to find out what they can about the Book of Nod, and track down this Dennis Herdon who seems to know of their Vampiric nature.

Scene Two: Presumably, the Kindred should be able to find out something about Dennis Herdon, a dealer in antiquities of rather shady provenance (read "a fence for items stolen from museums"), including his address. They must now decide how to deal with him.

If they choose to talk with Herdon rather than kill him, they will learn that he does not know they are Vampires, and in fact does not believe in such "scare stories" in the slightest (unless the Kindred convince him otherwise, of course). He was given their names by a frequent client of his, a gentleman whom Herdon knows only as "Dix," who described the characters as perfect potential clients for the Apocrypha. From Herdon, the Neonates can perhaps learn something about this mysterious Dix, and also about the person (or persons) who will be putting the Apocrypha up for sale.

Scene Three: Herdon knows little about the person selling the Apocrypha, forcing the Neonates to work their contacts again. The Neonates might discover Herdon is being watched by other Kindred, and also by some mortals. How they deal with these watchers is up to them. They may also notice that the watchers, Kindred and kine alike, have now switched their attentions to them.

Scene Four: In this scene, the Neonates come into direct conflict with two well-trained and very dedicated vampire hunters, ex-Jesuits named Sayles and Tomba. Whether this conflict takes place on the Neonates' terms or on the hunters' depends on how much the Kindred have learned so far.

At the conclusion, they can learn that the Apocrypha to the Book of Nod is worthless, a lure constructed by the

hunters to attract Vampires. It is doubtful that the Neonates will ever learn the true identity of Dix, or of his true interest in events.

WHAT IS REALLY GOING ON

When the Neonates first came to Chicago, they were noticed by the Tremere Elder Nicolai. Always on the lookout for new pawns in the many games the Elders always play, he decided to find out what these newcomers were made of. Just how powerful and competent were they? Could they be depended upon to act in a predictable manner? Or were they true wild cards? Nicolai determined that he would test these Neonates at the first suitable opportunity.

The opportunity was not long in coming. For several years now, two men have been disturbingly successful at hunting and slaying Kindred in various cities across Europe, and most recently in North America. These two, Sayles and Tomba, are ex-Jesuits, and Tomba served as personal secretary to a member of the Society of Leopold (the new name for the Inquisition).

Through his many sources, Nicolai learned that Sayles and Tomba had arrived in Chicago. This represented a significant advantage for the Tremere of the city; as far as Nicolai could tell, no other group of Kindred had any warning before the two hunters had struck and, as they say, forewarned is forearmed. The day after Nicolai learned of the hunters' arrival, as he was settling himself down in his Haven for the sunlit hours, several thoughts struck him. First and foremost was a realization of the personal value of knowing about the hunters while none of his Kindred shared that knowledge. And second was the notion that this situation represented an excellent test for the Neonates in whom he had become interested.

In fact, although Nicolai does not realize it, there is a strong possibility that these thoughts are not his own, but inserted into his brain by the Methuselah Helena via her power of Extended Domination. It is up to you, as Storyteller, to decide for yourself whether or not Nicolai's mind is truly his own in this matter. (It does not make any practical difference within the bounds of this story; however, your decision might well change the atmosphere of your chronicle further down the line.)

Sayles and Tomba followed what has become their standard procedure: lure one or more Vampires out of hiding by offering something of great value. In this case, this item is the (actually worthless) Apocrypha to the Book of Nod. They have mentioned its existence to various middlemen their research has uncovered, including the unscrupulous Dennis Herdon.

As it turns out, Nicolai is a frequent customer of Herdon's, and so the fence immediately mentioned the Apocrypha to

the Elder. Nicolai recognized the offer of the Apocrypha for what it was — a machination of the hunters — and his plan finally fell into place. He told Herdon where to find the Neonates, describing them as potential customers, and suggested he contact them. Nicolai now intends to watch the Neonates and see how they react. The best possible outcome is that the Neonates show significant creativity and initiative in uncovering and defeating the hunters. Nicolai will then know them for what they are: potentially valuable pawns in his ongoing plans. On the other side of the equation, the worst that can reasonably happen is that the hunters will destroy the Neonates, which will represent no significant loss to Nicolai or to Chicago's Kindred as a whole.

Unbeknownst to Nicolai, however, Herdon has mentioned the Apocrypha to another of his regular clients, a Toreador who calls himself Edge. Edge and his Childe, Stephanie, are very interested in acquiring the Apocrypha for themselves, since such a possession will greatly raise their status in Toreador society.

THEME

The major theme of this story is trust and betrayal, and how both can have immense effects on the life (or unlife) of an individual. Virtually every character in this story is betraying someone, to some degree or another: be it clan, associates, or innocent pawns caught up in the game. Keep this in mind when roleplaying these characters. Every one of them will gladly lie to anyone to further his or her own interests.

MOOD

The pervasive mood here should be paranoia. The characters should quickly realize that they know next to nothing about the motivations of any of the factions involved in this matter, and in fact, that they cannot even identify those factions. They should have serious doubts about the *bona fides* of virtually everyone they meet, and constantly be aware that powerful undercurrents run below everything that they do. By the end of the story, the characters should have the answers to most, but by no means all, of the questions that have bedeviled them. Some things should definitely remain as mysteries. In reality, you never get the answers to everything...

SCENE ONE: FOR SALE

Involving the Neonates

For this story to run smoothly, it is best that the characters have already met and are working together. This will almost

definitely be the case if you run this story after the events in *Ashes to Ashes*. If they have been in Chicago for more than a couple of days, odds are they have established one or more Havens, and have settled into some form of routine, such as going to the Succubus Club, whether as a prelude to Feeding or as a way of gathering information. It is a safe assumption that Nicolai, the head of Clan Tremere in Chicago, will have learned of this routine; after all, he has reason to be interested in any new players in the grand game and can take advantage of this knowledge.

At any time that you find convenient, preferably when the characters are feeling particularly complacent and safe, a young man walks up to them as though he knows them. The young man, named Russ, is tall and almost cadaverously thin, with bad skin and long, greasy black hair. In his late teens, he wears jeans, boots, and a black T-shirt emblazoned with the logo of the punk band Baby Chorus. Russ's eyes are slightly glazed, and his manner is such that he seems more concerned with whatever is going on inside his own head than with the real world. Russ is definitely mortal, but Kindred with the ability to read auras might be able to tell that he has been Dominated by a Vampire, and thus his will is not truly his own. In order to notice the rigid light-blue aura fixed on his head (an indication of Domination), the character needs three successes on the aura reading.

Russ will slouch up to the characters, stick out a small package wrapped in brown paper, and mumble, "Guy told



me to give you this." Depending on the setting, he will then either shamble off, or sit down and lose himself in his own thoughts. He could not care less what is in the package, or what the Kindred do with it.

The Package

The package is about seven inches wide, nine long, and one thick — about the size of a small notebook. It is carefully wrapped in brown paper, and tied with string. Inside is ... a small notebook. Its binding is rich dark leather, delicately tooled into complex scrollwork. The leather is obviously old, but it has been impeccably cared for. The blank pages within are finest vellum. In its entirety, the book is probably worth a couple of hundred dollars.

As soon as the Kindred handle the book, a loose sheet of vellum slips from between the pages and falls to the floor — a note. The note is hand-written, in a very neat, almost calligraphic style, using an old-fashioned nib pen. The note reads:

*"Dear Friends,
I will soon have an item in my possession that, considering your " shall we say " interesting background, you may well find of great value. This item is, in fact, a manuscript of great antiquity. I am as yet unable to confirm its provenance, but its creation would seem to date back to the 14th Century. Its actual contents would seem to date back even further, perhaps to the pre-Biblical period. (I apologize for being so circumspect, but you will understand my need for caution.) This manuscript is described as the Apocrypha to a work with which I understand you are familiar: the Book of Nod. It has been expressed to me that this manuscript will be of inestimable value to you in your search for Golconda. The Apocrypha will soon be available for purchase. When this transpires, I will once again make contact with you to inform you of the details. In the meantime, please accept as a gift that which carried this note. Although a mere bagatelle, I hope you will accept it as a token of the respect in which I hold you.
Yours, etc.
Dennis Herdon*

Although the Kindred may almost certainly assume Herdon, whoever he may be, is offering them Russ as a Vessel, in fact the gift referred to in the note is the leather-bound notebook.

Research

It is almost certain the characters will immediately assume that this "Dennis Herdon" knows they are Vampires. After all, didn't he allude to their "interesting background," to their familiarity with the Book of Nod, and to their search for Golconda? (In fact, as will become apparent in the next scene, Herdon knows nothing whatsoever about the Kindred

or about Vampires in general. The note is more disinformation from Nicolai.) Before they can do anything about it, however, the Neonates will have to find out more about Dennis Herdon — who he is, where he can be found, etc. They will also probably be somewhat curious about the Apocrypha to the Book of Nod.

Researching Herdon

There are various ways in which the Neonates can attempt to track down Dennis Herdon. The first is by interrogating the hapless messenger, Russ. Unfortunately for the Kindred, Russ knows nothing about any Herdon. He does not know where the package came from or what it contains. All he knows is that he had the package in his possession, and it seemed like a very good idea to take it to a particular location and give it to particular people matching the Neonates' descriptions. (This should give the Kindred some clue that the boy was Dominated.) The last thing Russ remembers before having the package in his hand and setting off across the city was visiting a music store in New Town, a cd specialty shop called Zulu which specializes in cutting-edge music. One minute he was digging through the miscellaneous bin; the next he was making his way to the place where he met the Neonates. So powerful was the Domination, and so fried is Russ's brain, that he does not consider such a discontinuity disturbing, or even unusual. The characters should quickly learn Russ is an innocent messenger.

Kindred with sufficient levels in Auspex might try to "read" the note, the book and the package using Psychometry. Each of these three will require a separate use of the Discipline. The book and the note provide the same information; the wrapping (since it was last touched by Russ) provides different data. (Although "reading" the packaging may seem irrelevant, since it was last touched by the messenger, the Neonates can still learn significant information from it.) The amount of information gained depends, of course, on the number of successes. The difficulty against which the character must roll is 5 for the note and the wrapping, and 6 for the book.

The Note and the Book:

1 success Subject's aura is lavender, shot through with dark red. (The aura does not show the characteristics of a vampire...)

2 successes The subject's name is Dennis Herdon. He is male and in his mid-40s.

3 successes At the time the subject wrote the note, he was concentrating on being as circumspect as he could while still conveying the information he sought to communicate, but was also contemplating the potential for significant financial gain.

4 successes The character sees an image, apparently from the point of view of the subject. The subject is sitting at an antique roll-top desk, in a well-appointed, almost Edwardian, study. The subject has just finished writing the note, using an antique fountain pen, and is folding it and inserting it into the notebook.

5 successes The sheet of vellum on which the note was written comes from a stack of the material which the subject uses as personal stationary. The notebook has been in the subject's personal collection for years. He originally acquired it from a seller of antiquities in London.

The Wrapping Paper:

1 success The subject's aura is mixed grey and silver, mottled with other shifting colors.

2 successes The subject is Russ Smellings. He is male, age 19.

3 successes The subject was feeling a welter of confused emotions, none of them overly strong. At the forefront was concern, not quite strong enough to be described as fear. There is also a hint of another color in the subject's aura: a touch of pale purple.

4 successes The character receives an image, through Russ's eyes, of when the messenger handed over the package to the Kindred. The character also senses that the additional tinge of pale purple in the subject's aura was enforced from without.

5 successes Again through Russ's eyes, the character visualizes the young man being greeted by a short man in a record store. The man's figure and features are vague, totally lacking in detail, but his sense of presence is incredibly strong. (Characters with the Discipline of Dominate will recognize that this "man" is probably a Vampire using the Discipline to make Smellings forget meeting him.) The shady figure hands the package to Russ, and suddenly Russ knows where he has to take it and to whom he has to give it.

Another way to track Herdon is through the Neonates' contacts throughout Chicago, both Kindred and kine. Depending on who they talk to, they can gain different pictures of Herdon.

Dennis Herdon's name is known to many members of the art world. Art dealers, collectors, museum curators, historians and such people have heard the name mentioned. He has a somewhat shady reputation as a dealer in *objets d'art*. There have been hints that his practices are something less than legal, and he has even been charged with dealing in stolen goods. The charges were dismissed, however, and no hard evidence has ever emerged to support any other rumor of his illegal activities. Despite his shady reputation, most people in the art world know someone who has dealt with him at one time or another. Unlike many other similar "traders", there

has never been even the slightest hint that he deals with forgeries, or with anything other than the best works in any given category. He is said to have *pieds à terre* around the world, including an apartment somewhere in New Town. Nobody knows exactly how to contact Herdon; it's always he who makes contact with potential buyers whenever he has something to sell.

Other "spheres" that know of Dennis Herdon are those of law enforcement and the underworld. To these people, Herdon's name has a different connotation. He is known as an international fence who deals exclusively with *objets d'art* and antiquities, often those that have been stolen from museums and eventually find their way into private collections. Although everyone familiar with Herdon knows he is guilty, nobody has ever been able to prove it to a jury's satisfaction. What makes it particularly difficult is that sometimes his buyers have enough influence to interfere with the process of justice. When in Chicago, Herdon makes his home in an apartment on North Clark in New Town. His number is known to both the police and those members of the underworld who deal in antiquities. Whenever anyone calls this number, an answering machine picks up on the first ring. The machine has no outgoing message; after five seconds of silence, it beeps and switches over to record the incoming message.

Anyone who knows of Herdon will be able to tell the Neonates some simple background: that he has a faint Welsh accent, that he always wears the best clothes (but that they never seem to really fit) and that he loves the finer things in life.

In case anyone tries to look him up in the phone book or in any other similar public directory, they have no luck. Herdon has an unlisted number. Should your characters come up with creative ways of tracking Herdon, adjudicate them on an individual basis. If you prefer, you could simply allow the characters to use their Investigate skills, but this would cheat both you and them of a great opportunity for roleplaying.

Researching the Apocrypha

Virtually every Vampire has heard of the Book of Nod, reputed to have been written by one of the great Antediluvians. Some have read the fragments that have survived to the present day. Even those Anarchs who deny belief in its authenticity have at least heard about it. Nobody has ever heard of an Apocrypha to the Book of Nod, although that is not evidence on either side of the question. If the Book of Nod is thought of as the "Vampiric Bible," then historically there is no reason that an Apocrypha could not exist; after all, the "Books of the Apocrypha," those books that were left out of the Bible, are a solid precedent.

The Neonates should quickly realize or discover that this Apocrypha represents great value to most Kindred. If it truly provides guidance for attaining Golconda, many Vampires

will consider it quite literally the most valuable manuscript on earth. Even if it does not contain this information, it is still of inestimable value as a major part of the history of the Kindred ... presuming it is genuine. But even if it is a forgery, it represents value, only of a different nature. What does it matter if the actual owner of the manuscript knows it to be a forgery, if nobody else knows that? It would still represent an incredible bargaining chip, or even a weapon, in the infighting between the Kindred.

For these reasons, the Neonates should quickly learn that spreading around word of the Apocrypha's existence is not an overly smart idea. It is quite possible that they will find themselves on the bad side of a powerful Kindred who wants the Apocrypha for herself, to the characters' possibly terminal detriment. The Apocrypha, genuine or not, is reason enough to send any number of Kindred to their Final Death, particularly "worthless" Neonates. At the absolute worst, they could prompt a "feeding frenzy," where multiple powerful Vampires vie with each other for possession of the Apocrypha. The characters should swiftly realize that causing such a situation is not a prescription for long-term existence.

If the Neonates mention the existence of the Apocrypha, the response they receive will depend on just who they are talking to and how much information they let slip. You as Storyteller can partially manage the situation by making it more or less difficult to arrange meetings with individual Kindred. (For example, the first Vampire with whom the Neonates can arrange a meeting is their Mentor, or some other Kindred who is sympathetic to them and will explain the advantages of keeping the existence of the Apocrypha secret.)

A Vampire more or less sympathetic to the Neonates will explain the importance of the manuscript and the risks involved in bandying word of its existence about. Depending on the personality of this Vampire and his relationship to the Neonates, he might ask for the opportunity to read and perhaps copy the document before the characters do whatever else they want with it. Alternatively, he might urge the Neonates to silence, all the while planning to acquire the Apocrypha from them, either through manipulation or main force.

One of the Damned who is on the path to Golconda would probably urge them not to put their faith in written tradition; the road to Golconda is different for everyone who assays to travel it. She would explain how disruptive wide-spread knowledge of the Apocrypha could be, and suggest that the Neonates keep its existence inviolably secret.

If the Neonates have a friend among the Anarchs, that friend would probably denounce the Apocrypha, and the whole Book of Nod, as some kind of fraud. Nevertheless, he would explain that others among the Damned would probably believe in its *bona fides*, and would do anything to possess it.

Should the Neonates broach the subject with someone not sympathetic to them, they would hear much the same thing in terms of warnings: keep this between us. The motive

would be something totally other than concern for the Neonates, of course. The other Kindred will almost certainly covet the Apocrypha, and want to keep the secret so that his or her only rival for its possession would be the Neonates. In essence, then, any Vampire that the Neonates talk to would urge the characters to keep knowledge of the Apocrypha to themselves, for his or her own reasons.

Note that no Vampire, whether sympathetic or hostile to the Neonates, will willingly take an active part in retrieving the Apocrypha from Herdon. Their motive is simple: why risk their own unlife when the Neonates are going to do it anyway? Friends of the Neonates will let them take the risk, then help them protect their prize once they have acquired it. Enemies will let them expose themselves to whatever danger Herdon might represent, then swoop in and snatch the prize from the Neonates afterward.

If the characters insist on discussing the Apocrypha with too many Kindred, let them, and on their own heads be it. Other Vampires will react to the news depending on their individual personalities. If the characters spread the news widely enough to cause a "feeding frenzy," so be it. Just let them try to survive the aftermath of what they have wrought.

Scene three of this Story includes two non-player characters — Toreadors named Edge and Stephanie. In the Story as written, they have learned of the existence of the Apocrypha through their own channels. If the characters are indiscreet, you can replace these two with other Vampires: Kindred who have learned of the Apocrypha from the characters' own loose lips, and whose identities and natures will depend on the characters' actions. If the characters have been exceedingly indiscreet, there can be many more than two Vampires involved in these Scenes, belonging to different clans and factions within the society of the Damned. If necessary, and if the characters have complicated things too much, you could simplify things down again by having several of these factions take each other out of the running through rumbles and internecine squabbling. The characters would learn about this only indirectly, if, for example, if they hear police cars responding to what seems to be a gang war in a nearby alley.

Characters

Russ Smellings — Russ is very much into sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll. Actually, only the latter two, since his social skills are abysmal, and no girl he has yet approached would sleep with him for any amount of money. He is almost always stoned on something (usually only alcohol, though he would never admit that), but not so far gone so as to impair his day-to-day functioning. He knows nothing whatsoever about Vampires other than what he hears in songs, although if pressed, he might decide that sleeping all day, partying all night, and never growing old would be fun.

He is currently Dominated by Nicolai. The Elder needed a pawn, and Russ happened to be wandering by at the time. Russ does not remember the person who Dominated him, where he got the package, or why he should hand it over to

the Kindred — it just seemed like the thing to do at the time. He has no greater connection to the events of the Story than that of unwitting messenger.

Master: Nicolai
Nature: Conformist
Demeanor: Loner
Willpower: 4
Age: 19

Image: A tall, gangly youth with matted black hair. He always wears jeans and boots, and his T-shirt usually bears the name of a band (the more extreme the better).

Roleplaying Hints: Answer any questions a couple of seconds after you're asked them. Mumble a lot, and never look anybody in the eyes. Only become animated if the topic of conversation turns to music or an invitation to party.

SCENE TWO: MIDNIGHT MEETING Locating Herdon

In the preceding scene, the characters should have learned at least something about Herdon, including the fact that he lives on North Clark in New Town, north of the city center. They should not yet have learned his actual address (this datum is known to very few).

From here they have several options. They can work the streets, talking to locals and trying to find out exactly where Herdon lives. This will be quite difficult, because very few residents of Herdon's neighborhood know his name, but it does represent a great chance for role-playing. The best chance they have is to ask around about the "European gentleman." If your characters choose this route, make them work for it, but eventually give them Herdon's address.

Another approach is to contact Herdon, using the phone number they acquired in the preceding scene. The only way to talk to Herdon is to phone his answering machine, and leave a number to which he can call back. Should the Neonates choose this option, Herdon will call them back, but will hasten to explain to them that the "item in question" is not yet officially for sale, and hence is not yet in his possession. He urges them to wait.

If the characters refuse to wait, and try to press for a meeting, Herdon will only agree if he can be persuaded there is something in it for him. When roleplaying Herdon, remain quite adamant about this. He never does anything that does not benefit him, whether directly or indirectly. Whenever the characters start heading toward a "sensitive" topic, Herdon will immediately warn them that "discretion is important, and phone lines are rarely secure." This, of course, is an opening that the characters can exploit in setting up a meeting with the fence. Over the phone he will not discuss who has the Apocrypha, how he learned of it, who gave him the Neonates' names, etc. If the characters try to steer the conversation around to what Herdon knows about them, he will quickly warn them not to discuss such matters on a non-secure phone line. "One of your background should understand this, hm?" Of course, Herdon still thinks the Neonates are collectors of "hot" *objets d'art*, and hence leery of police entanglements, although the characters will almost certainly interpret this as a reference to their Vampiric nature. Herdon will not discuss sensitive topics over the phone. If the characters press him, rather than saying anything indelicate, he will simply hang up.

If the characters handle it right, they might be able to arrange a meeting with Herdon. He will definitely arrange such a meeting somewhere other than his apartment. His preference will be at a cozy (and private) Italian restaurant on North Clark called Settebello, where Herdon knows the management and can depend on them for privacy (and for two burly waiters to help him out should things turn uncivilized).

This is the only opportunity the characters will have to meet with Herdon. If they wait for him to arrange the meeting at his own convenience, the Witch-hunters will make their move. Even if the characters somehow survive, there will be no more Apocrypha available, and Herdon will not contact them again.

VAMPIRE™						
Russ Smellings						
Attributes						
Physical	Social	Mental				
Strength ●●●●●	Charisma ●●●●●	Perception ●●●●●				
Dexterity ●●●●●	Manipulation ●●●●●	Intelligence ●●●●●				
Stamina ●●●●●	Appearance ●●●●●	Wits ●●●●●				
Abilities						
Talents	Skills	Knowledge				
Acting ●●●●●	Animal Ken ●●●●●	Bureaucracy ●●●●●				
Alertness ●●●●●	Drive ●●●●●	Computer ●●●●●				
Athletics ●●●●●	Etiquette ●●●●●	Finance ●●●●●				
Brawl ●●●●●	Firearms ●●●●●	Investigation ●●●●●				
Deceit ●●●●●	Melee ●●●●●	Law ●●●●●				
Empathy ●●●●●	Music ●●●●●	Languages ●●●●●				
Intimidation ●●●●●	Repair ●●●●●	Medicine ●●●●●				
Leadership ●●●●●	Security ●●●●●	Occult ●●●●●				
Streetwise ●●●●●	Stealth ●●●●●	Politics ●●●●●				
Subterfuge ●●●●●	Survival ●●●●●	Science ●●●●●				
Advantages						
Disciplines	Backgrounds	Virtues				
●●●●●	●●●●●	Conscience ●●●●●				
●●●●●	●●●●●	Self-Control ●●●●●				
●●●●●	●●●●●	Courage ●●●●●				
●●●●●	●●●●●					
Other Traits						
Music	Humanity	Health				
●●●●●	●●●●●●●●●●	Bruised <input type="checkbox"/>				
●●●●●		Hurt -1 <input type="checkbox"/>				
●●●●●		Injured -2 <input type="checkbox"/>				
●●●●●		Wounded -3 <input type="checkbox"/>				
		Mauled -4 <input type="checkbox"/>				
		Crippled -5 <input type="checkbox"/>				
		Incapacitated <input type="checkbox"/>				
Combat	Willpower	Experience				
Weapon: <table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>				●●●●●●●●●●	<table border="1"><tr><td></td></tr></table>	
Difficulty: <table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>				□□□□□□□□□□		
Damage: <table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>						
	Blood Pool					
	○○○○○○○○○○					

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

Location

Depending on how the characters decide to handle it, the actual meeting with Herdon can occur in several places. They might decide to "beard the lion in his den" (in other words, penetrate his apartment). For information on Herdon's Chicago home, refer to the following section. Alternatively, they might stake out his apartment and wait for him to leave the building. Herdon rarely leaves home after dark, but it can happen. Or, finally, they might have arranged a meeting with him at Settebello or elsewhere.

Herdon's Apartment

Herdon's apartment takes up the entire upper floor of a two-story brick building on North Clark. The ground floor is devoted to stores, a used-book store and an antique store. In fact, Herdon owns most of both businesses. Between the two stores is a locked door giving access to Herdon's private staircase.

At the top of the stairs is another door, locked and barred. The locks are the finest quality. This second door opens onto an entrance hall. Straight ahead is the large living room, while to the right is the apartment's second bedroom, which Herdon has converted into an office. Down the hall and to the left is the kitchen, while directly to the left is the large master bedroom. All the windows are barred, and the entire apartment is protected by a very sophisticated perimeter alarm system that automatically dials the police if anyone triggers it. Herdon personally loves this little bit of irony; since the police have not been able to jail him, they have to provide him with the same level of security as anyone else or face a lawsuit.

The apartment is high-ceilinged, and has perfectly cared-for hardwood floors. All the furniture and artwork is from the Edwardian era, and is all authentic; Herdon would not have a copy in his house. (The bedroom/office sports an antique roll-top desk, and is the scene that a character who "read" the note using Auspex might have glimpsed.) Even though he is a man of peace, and prefers talking to conflict, Herdon recognizes Chicago is a tough town. As a concession to this fact, he has a sawed-off semi-automatic shotgun concealed in a cabinet in his office. (To simulate the effects of the sawed-off barrel, decrease the weapon's range to 10 yards, but also decrease Herdon's difficulty to hit by 1.) When he leaves his apartment, he always carries a knife, with which he is proficient.

Settebello

This is a cozy, intimate little Italian restaurant. Its food is worthy of a write-up in Chicago's gastronomic press, but its owner, a 65-year-old Italian known only as Giuseppe, does not want any publicity. It is a family-run business, and everyone there knows Herdon. When he comes here, he

always eats in the private room in the back. Sometimes he meets with other people; sometimes he comes alone simply to enjoy the food. This private back room has two doors, one leading to the kitchen, the other leading to the main dining room. The door that leads from the kitchen to the back alley is latched from within.

On the Street

Herdon usually travels by taxi, and he always waits until the cab has arrived before emerging from his apartment. The only exception is when he walks the two blocks to Settebello. If the Neonates try to snatch him on the street, he will try to talk his way out of trouble, only using his knife if he thinks his life is truly being threatened.

The Meeting

There are a number of important topics that the characters will probably want to discuss with Dennis Herdon. Each of the major areas of conversation is dealt with below.

The Characters

To stress again, Herdon does not know that the characters are Vampires, and certainly does not believe in the Undead. He was given the Neonates' names by an old customer of his, a man Herdon knows only as Dix, and was told that they are collectors of stolen antiquities (hence Herdon's cautious language in the note, and his veiled references to their "background"). Dix also told Herdon that the characters are interested in determining the historicity of a mythical country called "Golconda." Herdon imagines this to be something like the mythographic search for Atlantis.

From Dix's description, Herdon has come to assume that the characters are rich "otherwise how could you afford items such as the Apocrypha" and somewhat eccentric. If the characters do not fit this mental picture, Herdon will become suspicious that they are not who they claim to be.

Following Dix's instructions, Herdon sent the original note to the characters via a courier supplied by Dix. This courier was actually a young teen-aged boy, perhaps 13 or so. Herdon paid little attention to the boy's appearance and so cannot give a good description. Obviously, this courier was not Russ. In fact, the "courier" was Nicolai himself. After taking the note and book, he Dominated Russ to make the delivery.

Dix — One of Herdon's regular customers is someone the fence knows only as Dix. He has never met Dix. All their dealings have been over the telephone or through intermediaries. Herdon knows virtually nothing about Dix other than that his taste is impeccable, and that he always pays a gratuity of one or two percent on top of everything he buys from the fence. Herdon certainly has the resources and

contacts to find out more about Dix should he want to, but he is simply not interested, and anyway would consider such curiosity as intrusive and unprofessional. Dix has proven his *bona fides* as a customer in the past, and that is quite good enough for Herdon. The one thing that Herdon knows about Dix is that he has a fairly high-pitched voice and speaks with a pronounced Eastern European accent. In fact, of course, "Dix" is the Vampire Nicolai. The Elder has actually met with the fence on several occasions, but Herdon always thought the Tremere leader was a messenger boy.

The Apocrypha

Although the Apocrypha is not officially on the market yet, Herdon has seen it and satisfied himself as to its authenticity. The piece's authenticity was confirmed by a "Certificate of Provenance" issued by the central library of the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits). Herdon has seen such certificates before, and accepts this one as authentic. The final price for the Apocrypha has not yet been set, but Herdon suspects it will be in the region of \$750,000. His standard broker's fee is 15 percent. In fact, both the Apocrypha and the Certificate of Provenance are forgeries, although Herdon does not know this.

The Sellers

Predictably, Herdon will be unwilling to tell anyone about the people selling the Apocrypha or how to contact them. If he did, an interested party could contact the sellers directly, cutting Herdon out of the loop and eliminating his brokerage fee.

The sellers are two men named Sayles and Tomba. Sayles is North American; Herdon suspects that Tomba is European, but is not sure since he has never heard the man say a single word. For physical descriptions of the two, refer to Scene Four. Herdon has met the men just once, at Settebello. He knows nothing about their background, other than that Sayles seems incredibly well-educated and erudite. He does not know where they are staying in Chicago. He contacts them by phoning a local number they gave him and leaving a message.

As with Dix, Herdon probably could have found out more about the two, but could not care less. All that matters to him is that the item for sale is authentic (to the best of his knowledge, of course).

The true details about Sayles and Tomba are given in Scene Four.

Loose Ends

It is quite likely that the Neonates will say something to clue Herdon in to the fact that they are Vampires. (After all, they probably think he already knows...) They will have to



decide how to deal with Herdon afterward. Leaving him alive is a significant risk, but killing him carries with it the danger of Humanity loss since Herdon is a (relatively) innocent bystander in all of this.

Characters

Dennis Herdon — Herdon is the consummate professional when dealing with matters with which he is familiar. He has an expert's knowledge about antiques, art objects, and antiquities. He is well-connected with the underworld throughout North America and around the world, and has a reputation as one who can be depended upon to follow through on what he promises.

His personal manner and appearance belie this professionalism, however. He always looks rumpled, as though he has just woken after a night of sleeping in his clothes. His stringy grey hair is impossible to control, and his expensive suits never seem to fit right. He has a faint Welsh accent, which he plays up when he is dealing with people who do not know him. He can act the dolt perfectly, concealing his true intelligence and his calculating mind behind the facade of a true dunderhead.

Herdon likes the best things in life, and is quite glad to pay for them. He will never engage in anything that does not promise a very good return on his time and effort.

Master: None

Nature: Director

Demeanor: Conservative

Image: A short, rumped-looking man, resembling a kindly university professor wearing someone else's Brooks Brothers suit.

Roleplaying Hints: While you are still trying to evaluate a new person or situation, put on a thick Welsh accent, blink in surprise a lot, and act like a bit of a buffoon. Once you understand the situation and things get down to business, drop all but the faintest hint of the accent, and talk like the cool, experienced professional you are.

SCENE THREE: OTHER PLAYERS IN THE GAME

Locating Sayles and Tomba

The next order of business for the characters will probably be locating Sayles and Tomba. Considering that they know nothing other than names, descriptions and a phone number,

this might be difficult. Odds are, your characters will devise cunning ways of tracking the two. This should not be too easy for them, and should make them stretch. Remember that the only Kindred who knows who Sayles and Tomba are is Nicolai, and he certainly will not tell the Neonates.

Here is one potential way in which the characters can locate the hunters' residence. The Neonates can acquire the phone number from Herdon at which Sayles and Tomba can be reached. The Neonates can bribe or Dominate someone who works for the phone company to tell them the physical address of this number. It is, in fact, a small, old house in New Town.

The house is empty, and seems never to have been occupied. Hooked up to the telephone is a sophisticated answering machine, the kind that allows messages to be picked up remotely from any touch-tone phone. Obviously, Sayles and Tomba use this set-up to receive messages while having a "cut-out" to prevent people from tracking them.

In the house's mailbox is a hand-written note from a Marsha Loudette, on the letterhead of a rental agency. The note reads, "Hope you like the house, if you need anything give me a call."

The characters can quickly determine Marsha Loudette is the rental agent for the house. If they approach her in the right way, they can learn that the house was rented by a Mr. Smith for a two-month period for his friend from Europe. If the characters question Marsha Loudette closely enough, they can confirm that her description of "Mr. Smith" matches Herdon's description of Sayles. Ms. Loudette has in her files an address for Mr. Smith, a small condominium also in New Town. Obviously, she will not willingly give out this information, but the Neonates should be able to overcome this problem without much difficulty. The address is where the hunters Sayles and Tomba are actually staying.

VAMPIRE™
Dennis Herdon

Attributes		
Physical	Social	Mental
Strength ●●●●	Charisma ●●●●	Perception ●●●●
Dexterity ●●●●	Manipulation ●●●●	Intelligence ●●●●
Stamina ●●●●	Appearance ●●●●	Wits ●●●●

Abilities		
Talents	Skills	Knowledge
Acting ●●●●	Animal Ken ●●●●	Bureaucracy ●●●●
Alertness ●●●●	Drive ●●●●	Computer ●●●●
Athletics ●●●●	Etiquette ●●●●	Finance ●●●●
Brawl ●●●●	Firearms ●●●●	Investigation ●●●●
Dodge ●●●●	Melee ●●●●	Law ●●●●
Empathy ●●●●	Music ●●●●	Linguistics ●●●●
Intimidation ●●●●	Repair ●●●●	Medicine ●●●●
Leadership ●●●●	Security ●●●●	Oxell ●●●●
Streetwise ●●●●	Stealth ●●●●	Politics ●●●●
Subterfuge ●●●●	Survival ●●●●	Science ●●●●

Advantages		
Disciplines	Backgrounds	Virtues
_____ ●●●●	Contacts ●●●●	Conscience ●●●●
_____ ●●●●	Resources ●●●●	Self-Control ●●●●
_____ ●●●●	_____ ●●●●	Courage ●●●●
_____ ●●●●	_____ ●●●●	

Other Traits		Humanity		Health	
Antiques ●●●●	●●●●●●○○○○	Bruised <input type="checkbox"/>		Hurt -1 <input type="checkbox"/>	
Art ●●●●		Injured -2 <input type="checkbox"/>		Wounded -3 <input type="checkbox"/>	
History ●●●●		Mauled <input type="checkbox"/>		Crippled -4 <input type="checkbox"/>	
Underworld ●●●●		Incapacitated <input type="checkbox"/>			

Combat			Willpower			Blood Pool			Experience		
Weapon	Difficulty	Damage	○○○○○○○○○○			○○○○○○○○○○					

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

Watchers...

If the Neonates were indiscreet in Scene One when they were researching the Apocrypha, then it is likely that other Vampires will have become interested in their movements. From soon after the time of their indiscretion, other Kindred will have started following them, hoping that the Neonates will lead them to the Apocrypha. The clan, number and identities of these "watchers" will depend on just who the characters talked to in Vampire society.

The watchers will be using all their Vampiric skills to shadow the Neonates without being spotted themselves. Each time the Neonates leave their Haven(s), there is a chance that they will spot one or more of the watchers. The resolution of this sub-plot will depend totally on how the characters react to this surveillance.

This can give you, as storyteller, some very interesting options. If the characters have been very indiscreet, then there can be several factions watching their movements. One group of watchers could spot another faction, leading to conflict not directly affecting the Neonates. Alternately, several groups could even join forces. Feel free to use these kinds of intrigues to maximize the sense of paranoia the characters should be feeling.

Even if the Neonates have kept their own counsel, there are two Kindred who know about the Apocrypha. These are two Toreadors, Edge and Stephanie. Edge is a regular customer of Herdon's, and so the fence mentioned the Apocrypha to Edge shortly after contacting the characters. Edge and Stephanie entered into the same sort of investigation as the characters, and quickly discovered the Neonates. Unsure of just who the Neonates are and how powerful they are, Edge and Stephanie decided to follow them and learn more about them.

If at any time you feel the momentum of the story diminishing, tell one of your characters that he or she has spotted Edge and Stephanie shadowing them. As with the situation described above, the resolution will depend on the characters' actions.

...And More Watchers

There are also some mortals very interested in the Neonates' actions: the hunters, Sayles and Tomba, and the "assistants" they have hired. Starting on the night after they first told Herdon about the Apocrypha, the hunters have kept the fence's home and his usual haunts under surveillance. To aid them in this, they have hired members of Chicago's underworld. These are simple street thugs who know nothing about Vampires or about the hunters' plans.

The hunters learned about the characters' existence shortly after Herdon contacted them. They will concentrate their attentions on the Neonates and have them followed. At all times, the characters will have one or more thugs shadowing them (or trying to do so).

As will be explained later, the two ex-Jesuit hunters are seeking proof that the characters are actually the Undead. Proof in this case means some manifestation of Vampiric powers. Any such manifestation will reassure the hunters that the characters are of the Damned, and free them to follow through with the rest of their plan.

As with the Kindred who are shadowing the Neonates, there is a chance the characters will spot one or more of the street thugs following them. The thugs have been hired to do a simple job, and have no loyalty to the hunters. Unfortunately for the Neonates, the thugs know next to nothing about the people who hired them. Apart from physical descriptions, all they can say is that they were told to follow the characters, and phone a certain number if they saw



anything unusual happen. They were also supposed to find the characters' "base of operation" (i.e., their Haven). The number the thugs were given is to the answering machine in the rented house.

Characters

Street Thug — These are typical street operators — small-time thieves, maybe dabbling in the drug trade. They know the city, and they know how to survive on the streets. They are tough, and difficult to intimidate. Their only loyalty is to themselves. In general, they are not too bright ... but then they do not really have to be.

Sayles and Tomba have hired eight of these guys. They usually operate alone, or in pairs. Most are armed with knives, but are capable of using guns should they somehow acquire one. A particularly militant individual might pack a light pistol (probably more for intimidation value than from an honest intention to use it).

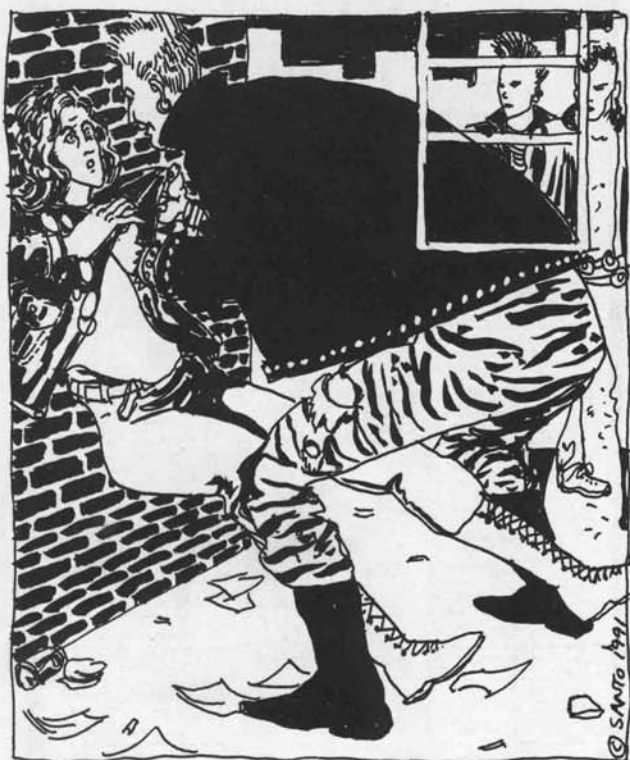
Master: None

Nature: Bravo

Demeanor: Bravo

Age: 18-30

Image: A standard street tough: young, hard and dangerous. Can be black, white, Hispanic, Oriental, etc.



Roleplaying Hints: You know that lots of people automatically tag cute blondes as airheads. When it might benefit you, you can play the ditzzy role to the hilt. Giggle a lot, and fail to get jokes. Occasionally slip up, and show that you're a hell of a lot brighter than you seem.

Haven: With Edge.

SCENE FOUR: HUNTERS AND HUNTED

The way this last Scene plays out will depend in great part on how the characters have handled the preceding Scenes. Either the hunters will come after the Neonates, or the Neonates will go after the hunters. One way or the other, there will almost certainly be a final confrontation.

The Hunters' Plans

As mentioned earlier, Sayles and Tomba intend to use word of the Apocrypha to draw out Vampires. Once they and their hirelings have identified prospective prey (in this case, the Neonates), the hunters will follow them, looking for some manifestation of Vampiric ability. If the Neonates do display any kind of superhuman abilities, the hunters will move on to the next step.

Sayles and Tomba are very knowledgeable about Vampiric strengths and weaknesses. Unlike many would-be hunters, they know the techniques that actually do destroy Vampires. As soon as they know that the characters really are Vampires, the hunters will plan and execute a day-time raid on the Neonates' Haven(s), and do their best to destroy them.

The nature of this raid will, of course, depend on the Haven(s) the characters have chosen. Remember that Sayles and Tomba are very intelligent and very determined opponents. If the characters have made any mistakes, or been sloppy in protecting their Haven(s), then the hunters will take advantage of every weakness. When the hunters make their raid, they will take along as many of their eight street thugs as survive as bodyguards. On the raid, the hunters will be armed with stakes, mallets and heavy revolvers. Each ex-Jesuit will also carry a Bible, a silver crucifix, and his medal of St. Ignatius.

Hunting the Hunters

If the characters have not tracked down the two hunters, and are not very careful in protecting themselves, there is a very real chance that the two ex-Jesuits might be able to destroy several of them ... or maybe all. The characters' best chance of survival is to take the battle to the hunters and to confront them on the characters' terms.

Most of the time, the two hunters stay in a condo they have rented in New Town. The Neonates might have acquired the address from the rental agent, Marsha Loudette, in Scene Three. They rarely go out at night, leaving all surveillance duties to their hirelings since there is always a chance their prey will come after them. They sleep during the day; after dark they are always watchful. The condominium is locked up tight after sunset. The doors are secured with deadbolts and bars; the windows are barred. In addition, the condo is protected by a sophisticated perimeter alarm system.

If the two hunters have some reason to suspect that the Neonates have learned of their existence, they will hire four more armed street thugs to stay in the house and guard them while they make preparations to leave. The next morning, the two hunters leave town, having decided that discretion is the better part of valor.

Characters

Warren Sayles — Born in Boston, Sayles came from a very devout family, and it was always expected that he would enter the priesthood. As things turned out, his teachers at the seminary quickly recognized his considerable mental gifts, and subtly steered him toward the Society of Jesus. The Jesuits in turn saw his strengths when he approached them as an applicant, and expected great things of him.

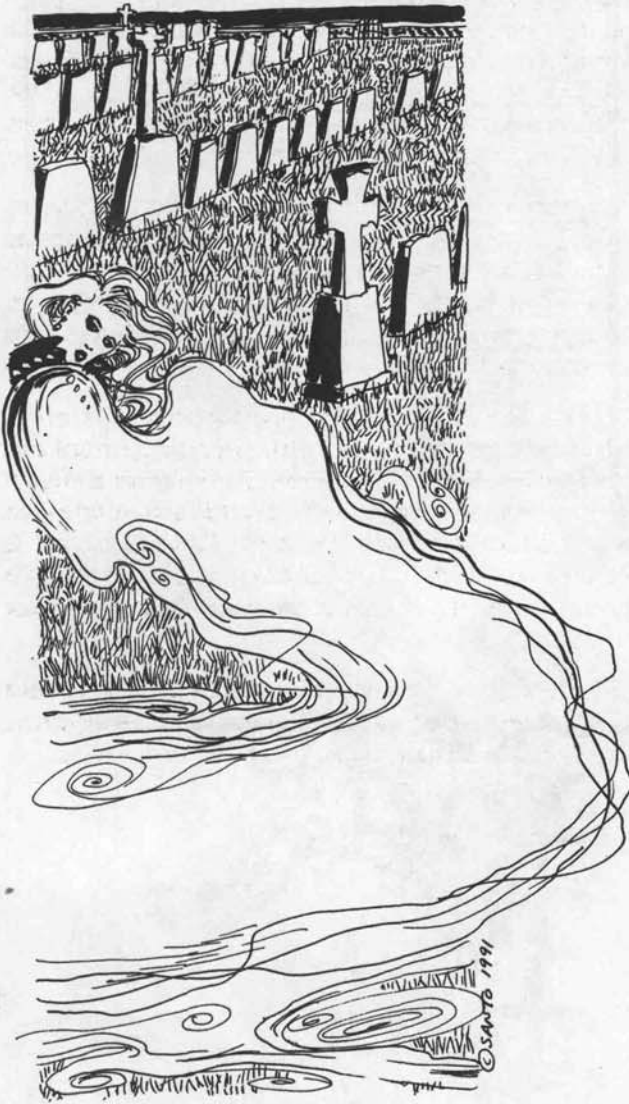
Roleplaying Hints: Take a moment to think before saying anything. Be extremely serious, unless it is in your best interest to feign some other emotion.

Alberto Tomba — Tomba's background was remarkably similar to Sayles', except that he was born in Palermo, and became an applicant to the Society of Jesus in Rome. In terms of personality, however, the men are very different. While Sayles is cold and controlled, Tomba is a man of strong emotions, impatience and temper. Although his Jesuit training helped him suppress these tendencies, they are still with him and come out when he is under pressure.

The young Tomba was incredibly intelligent, as was Sayles, but his talents and interests lay in other areas. He became a specialist in the history of art, and worked closely several Jesuit historians, eventually becoming personal assistant to a Portuguese brother named Alvito. Alvito's main interest was seeking out forgeries in the Society's extensive art collection. During this period, Tomba learned much about how to recognize (and to create) forgeries.

This life pleased the young Tomba. Unfortunately, his years of peace were ended in 1981, when he was attacked in his chambers by a Malkavian. So great was the young man's faith, however, that he was able to drive the monster away.

At that time, the Society of Leopold, once known as the Inquisition, was recruiting from other Christian orders,



VAMPIRE™		
Tomba		
Attributes		
Physical	Social	Mental
Strength.....●●●●●	Charisma.....●●●●●	Perception.....●●●●●
Dexterity.....●●●●●	Manipulation.....●●●●●	Intelligence.....●●●●●
Stamina.....●●●●●	Appearance.....●●●●●	Wits.....●●●●●
Abilities		
Talents	Skills	Knowledge
Acting.....●●●●●	Animal Ken.....●●●●●	Bureaucracy.....●●●●●
Alertness.....●●●●●	Drive.....●●●●●	Computer.....●●●●●
Athletics.....●●●●●	Etiquette.....●●●●●	Finance.....●●●●●
Brawl.....●●●●●	Firearms.....●●●●●	Investigation.....●●●●●
Dodge.....●●●●●	Melee.....●●●●●	Law.....●●●●●
Empathy.....●●●●●	Music.....●●●●●	Logistics.....●●●●●
Intimidation.....●●●●●	Repair.....●●●●●	Medicine.....●●●●●
Leadership.....●●●●●	Security.....●●●●●	Occult.....●●●●●
Streetwise.....●●●●●	Stealth.....●●●●●	Politics.....●●●●●
Subterfuge.....●●●●●	Survival.....●●●●●	Science.....●●●●●
Advantages		
Disciplines	Backgrounds	Virtues
.....●●●●●	Contacts.....●●●●●	Conscience.....●●●●●
.....●●●●●	Resources.....●●●●●	Self-Control.....●●●●●
.....●●●●●●●●●●	Courage.....●●●●●
.....●●●●●●●●●●	
.....●●●●●●●●●●	
Other Traits		
Art	Humanity	Health
.....●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●	Bruised..... <input type="checkbox"/>
.....●●●●●		Hurt.....-1 <input type="checkbox"/>
.....●●●●●		Injured.....-2 <input type="checkbox"/>
.....●●●●●		Wounded.....-3 <input type="checkbox"/>
.....●●●●●		Mauled.....-4 <input type="checkbox"/>
Combat	Willpower	Crippled.....-5 <input type="checkbox"/>
.....●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●	Incapped..... <input type="checkbox"/>
Weapon	Difficulty	Damage
Blood Pool		
.....●●●●●●●●●●		
Experience		
.....		
Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)		

selecting only those who had survived an encounter with Vampires. (This controversial policy was short-lived, for many bureaucratic reasons.) An invitation was issued to join the Society, and a shaken Tomba accepted. For several years he served the Society well, although like Sayles he was angered by the group's unwillingness to take decisive action.

He came to the United States in 1983, and here he met Warren Sayles. Even though he left the Society of Leopold immediately thereafter, he has many contacts within the organization — mostly younger members like himself — some of whom can occasionally funnel him money and provide logistical support.

While most of the pair's plans and procedures were devised by Sayles, it was Tomba who thought up the Apocrypha, created it, and forged the Certificate of Provenance. Tomba is still a man of fiery emotions and short patience, although Sayles is a moderating influence. Like Sayles, he is a determined foe, and will gladly give his life if he thinks it is

Master: None

Nature: Survivor

Demeanor: Cavalier

Age: 42

Image: A big, bull-necked man with a shock of curly black hair. He usually dresses in such a way as to conceal his true size and robustness.

Roleplaying Hints: Don't say much. You're a man of action rather than words, even though you are very intelligent. When you do speak, you have a hint of an Italian

accent. Let your impatience and anger come out in your voice, then struggle (unsuccessfully) to suppress it.

Aftermath

The forged Apocrypha, along with the false Certificate of Provenance, is in Tomba's suitcase. If the characters succeed in defeating the hunters, they might well end up possessing it. What they do with it is up to them.

If they still believe its authenticity, they might want to read it for its comments on Golconda. Although the language of the Apocrypha feels right, and although it uses the appropriate terminology, there is nothing of any value whatsoever to be gleaned from the manuscript. (In fact, if the characters decide to depend on what they have learned from it, you might rule they move further from Golconda.)

Instead, they may try to sell it, or use it as a bargaining chip. Within a day or two, however, word will spread through Kindred society that the Apocrypha is a worthless forgery. It is Nicolai who is spreading the word, in an attempt to minimize the upheaval that the Neonates could possibly cause.

If the Neonates succeeded in vanquishing the hunters, Nicolai will take notice. They have passed his test, and thus have proven themselves to be worthy of further attention. The nature and consequences of this attention are up to you or can follow the pattern set up in "Grand Elusions," to follow. Conversely, if the Neonates leave one or both of the hunters alive, the ex-Jesuits can return later as ongoing nemeses.

Depending on their actions, the Neonates might have alienated any number of other Kindred. Such consequences should continue to haunt them for some time to come.



Grand Elusion

Written by Steve Crow, Illustrated by Dave Miller

*"It's night,
They might not see us,
Cause if they catch us out there,
They'll bleed us,
Shoot us, kill us,
Dump us in a dark ditch."*

Ice-T, "Escape from the Killing Field"

"Grand Elusion" serves as the second part of the Child's Play story. In it, the characters finally meet the sinister force which has been setting them up and discover it to be a seemingly young boy. He sends them on a mission to put an end to a constant thorn in the side of the Tremere, a thorn which is none too easy to find.

This thorn is special, however. Characters may well decide they would be better off joining with it than trying to kill it. Of course, doing so will bring them into combat with at least two groups of Kindred, their mortal retainers and a mortal Magus.

HOW TO RUN THIS STORY

The story of "Grand Elusion" is roughly linear. The players begin at point A, progress to point B, and so on to the final Scene. To some degree it is a "guided" story. However, if the players decide to do something else, let them. You will simply have to improvise.

"Grand Elusion" revolves around the exploits of the showman/magician/escape artist known as Harry Houdini.

During a single evening the players must follow his trail through Chicago.

THE PLOT

Scene One: the players have a chance to get into character. They meet at the Succubus Club and can feed, interact with the mortals socially or just get in a few steps on the dance floor. Two human agents of Nicolai, one of Chicago's Primogen, will interrupt their activities. The kine request their attendance for an important meeting.

Scene Two: the characters meet Nicolai. Ehrich's elimination will give Nicolai prestige with his Clan Elders. As the characters are relatively new to the Kindred scene, Nicolai intends to get them under his control. He will offer the players several rewards in return for their eliminating Ehrich. Unfortunately, most of the compensation will involve their eventually being Blood Bound to him.

It will be clear that Nicolai means to have their services. The best the players can do is at least pretend to accept the assignment. Nicolai will inform them that Ehrich frequents The Cave, a working-class bar.

Scene Three: the characters check out the bar. Ehrich is absent, but no one will be willing to tell them that. They will have to deal with the owner Horace Turnbull, a Malkavian, and his patrons, including cycle gangs and steelworkers. With any luck they can find out where Ehrich went.

The trail leads them to Ye Olde Magic Shoppe. The characters will have to deal with the owner, a friend of Ehrich's. They also may have to cope with a reporter, hot on the trail of an occult story.

Ehrich's trail leads back to the Succubus Club. The characters finally come face-to-face with Ehrich. He is the company of his friend, a slightly senile Magus named Gibson. Before the characters can act one way or another, a pupil of the Magi arrives with a score to settle. The characters will find themselves in the midst of a mystical battle. The pupil has discovered a magical means of binding Blood Dolls to him, and has turned them into a psychotic assassination squad.

Ehrich will try to flee with Gibson. However, enemy forces have blocked off the club exits. Nicolai has assigned one of his lackeys to track down Ehrich independently of the characters. Ehrich's enemies among Chicago's Anarchs have also caught up to him. With nowhere else to go, Ehrich and Gibson flee into the basement labyrinth of the nightclub.

In the last scene, the characters will either have to flee with Ehrich and Gibson (if they have joined forces with Ehrich), or pursue them into the labyrinth with the others. In either case, they will be caught in a crossfire between Nicolai's lackey and Hinds' agents. Orloff and his Blood Dolls are also willing to kill anyone who gets in their way.

With luck the characters can escape the forces opposing them. If they teamed with Ehrich, they will have him and Erichtho as future allies in the struggle to unite Chicago's Kindred factions.

EHRICH'S STORY

As much of "Grand Elusion" revolves around Ehrich, the storyteller should be aware of his background. Although the escape artist chooses to remain uninvolved in Kindred affairs, his activities involve him with several factions.

The mysteries of the afterlife had always fascinated Houdini. His interest became even stronger after his mother died and he tried to contact her spirit. Despite his own intense desire to bridge the void to the spirit world, Houdini took a skeptical view of those who claimed they could contact ghosts.

A common practice of "mediums" in the 1920s and 30s was to use fake seances to bilk patrons of thousands of dollars. Houdini went to many of these seances and proved that the mediums used trickery to perform their "spiritual experiments." He also corresponded with people who shared his interest in the occult. One of the persons he

corresponded with was a Tracy Graves. Unknown to Houdini, Tracy was actually one of the Kindred, a Tremere calling herself Erichtho.

The human world (and much of the Kindred) are unaware that an unidentified Tremere (not Graves) approached Harry Houdini at the height of the latter's career, in 1926. Houdini's apparently mystic ability intrigued the Vampire. The Tremere's offer of a true glimpse of life-after-death fascinated Houdini. Bored with the ease of his success, the magician gladly accepted the Vampire's offer, and the Tremere Embraced him. During a European tour, Houdini was brought before the Council in Vienna and Blood Bound. They were not particularly happy with the situation, as Houdini had been Embraced without their permission. However, they resolved that Houdini would serve them. They commanded him to continue his career as best he could in his new state.

Refusing to be bound by anyone or anything, Houdini threw himself into occult research. It is unclear exactly how, but he managed to break the Blood Bond. Those few who know him well have speculated that, since he was active in New York City, he obtained help from the Sabbat. As with all of his escapes, Houdini never revealed the secret. It apparently cannot be repeated, as he has not been able to break Erichtho's own Blood Bond to Nicolai (see below).

It took four years for Houdini to find a "cure." During this time he limited his few performances to evenings, and claimed he was devoting most of his time to "spiritual research." He then faked his own death in 1930. He informed no one, even his brother and wife, of his situation. Hunted by the Tremere, he decided to wander the world, investigating what he could of the afterlife that was now part of his existence.

Unfortunately, Ehrich (Harry's real name, and the one he used when necessary) found that the afterlife was not all it was cracked up to be. Rules bound his existence as strict as if he were a mortal. After death, only a relative few became Vampires. Ghosts were thought to exist, but Ehrich was no closer to contacting them as a Vampire than he had been as a human.

Ehrich travelled the world, never staying long in one place. Using different aliases, he continued to correspond with those who shared his occult interests. While in Chicago, he discovered that Tracy Graves, or Erichtho, was both a Vampire and a Tremere. Unlike him, however, she had been Blood Bound to Nicolai, not the Clan Elders.

Erichtho informed him of the power struggles in Chicago, but Ehrich believed he was above such matters. Still, he kept returning to Chicago. The city was as much his home and Haven as anywhere in the world. At least, it was a home until Maldavis tried to become Prince.

At Erichtho's bequest, Ehrich involved himself for the first time. He acted as Erichtho's contact with the Anarchs, never revealing that Erichtho was their unseen patron. However, when push came to shove, he chose to remain above it

all. This earned him the enmity of the Ventrue Tommy Hinds and his Anarchs, who saw him as a traitor to their kind.

Disillusioned, Ehrich took to travelling once more. Unfortunately, his activities during the Maldavis uprising had brought him to the attention of the Tremere clan. The city's primary Tremere, Nicolai, realized Houdini was active in the Chicago area. The boy Kindred knew that if he dealt with the renegade, he could gain much power in the Clan. He informed his Elders, who told him to take whatever steps were necessary to eliminate the renegade.

Nicolai, always desperate to prove his worth to his Elders, laid traps at several occult shops he believed Ehrich frequents. However, he has never been able to capture the renegade. Nicolai now views Ehrich's existence as a personal challenge.

Ehrich visits Chicago approximately twice a year. He still corresponds and occasionally meets with Erichtho. Nicolai is suspicious of her, but she carries a small amulet forged for her by a Magus friend of Ehrich's. The amulet blocks her memories of Ehrich when Nicolai asks about him.

In his years of travelling Ehrich has met a number of Magi. Most of them are aware of his nature, but respect him for staying out of the petty bickering of the Kindred. They also find his collected knowledge of the occult impressive. While Ehrich is loath to involve them in his own situation, he will occasionally come to their aid.

Ehrich is essentially happy with his life as a Vampire. He has used his increased lifespan to further his research into the occult. A Visionary at heart, he believes that if the various factions of Kindred, Magus, and Lycanthrope put aside their differences, they can explore all the possibilities of the afterlife.

As "Grand Elusion" begins, Ehrich has returned to Chicago. If Lodin died in Ashes to Ashes, he has just received word of the prince's death. He believes that, with the Prince dead, the Anarchs might finally triumph this time. And perhaps somewhere in the struggle he might find the chance to eliminate Nicolai and free Erichtho once and for all ...

If Prince Lodin did not die in Ashes to Ashes, or you have no run that story, then Ehrich has come to the Windy City on one of his semi-annual visits. On these visits he stops at old haunts, meets with old friends and talks to Erichtho about what progress he has made in breaking her bond.

THEME

The theme is a fairly basic one—that of good vs. evil, and how evil can be appealing. The easiest option is for the characters to shrug their shoulders, accept Nicolai's deal, and hunt Ehrich down. This may seem easier, but in the long run they will pay for having taken the simple route. Anything they gain will become ashes in their hands.

MOOD

"Grand Elusion" is a "pursuit" plot. The characters are after someone for the first few scenes, then someone is after them! The mood should be less investigation than chase. The characters have a limited time and will have to move through several different locales while pursuing Ehrich. The chase focuses more on the odd characters and locales they travel to then painstaking detective work to track down their quarry.

Ideally, the characters should take a good, hard look at the situation, finding out everything they can about Ehrich. If they go ahead and try to kill him anyway, hack-n-slash style, they may exist to regret it. Although teaming up with Ehrich is, in the short term, dangerous, in the long run they will come out ahead. They will have made an enemy among the Elders of Chicago, but gained several invaluable allies.

SCENE ONE:

A NIGHT ON THE TOWN

The adventure, and this episode, begin with the characters at the Succubus Club. It is about 9 p.m. on a busy night (Friday or Saturday). Patrons have packed the Club, and the characters have decided to check out the night life.

When you are ready to involve the characters in the adventure proper, read the following:

After an hour of music blaring away, the band finally comes to the end of the set. They finish on a loud flourish, take a bow, and come off the stage to take a break.

(Direct specifically at one character) Suddenly, out of the crowd, two figures step towards you. They look you over, then the tall one moves directly to you and says, "*You. Come with us. You're to bring your friends. All of them.*" He pauses for about three seconds, then snaps, "*Now, if you don't mind!*" The weaselly one sneers and adds, "*Yeah, right now!*"

The two men are Dave and Doug. Nicolai has sent them to pick up the characters and deliver them to him. A Perception + Alertness Check (vs. a Difficulty of 6) will spot the pistols they are wearing in shoulder holsters.

The two thugs are not particularly subtle, but their orders are to avoid violence in the Club at all costs. If asked for more information, the tall one (Dave) will shrug and say, "*I wouldn't argue if I were you. The kid wants to see you, my orders are to take you to him. He said you'd realize it was a matter of extreme importance. Got a problem, take it up with him.*"

If anyone asks where they're going, he'll reply, "Just a few blocks over. We're walking, not driving. If you've got cars, leave 'em. A little exercise won't hurt you."

This should probably pique the characters' curiosity. If necessary, Dave and Doug will get on either side of the character and, under the concealment of their jackets, thrust their guns into his/her ribs. Dave will add, "You want to do this the hard way, we'll do it the hard way. Our orders were to make sure you get there unharmed. If you want it different, we'll play it that way."

In the interests of maintaining the Masquerade, the characters should move outside and a few hundred feet away before dispatching these poor fools. The best bet is for the characters to play along. The two thugs are not much of a threat, and obviously their boss has something important in mind.

If the characters choose to start a brawl inside the Club, resolve it normally. There will be several Kindred in the night club as well. None of them will be happy with having one of their favorite feedings spots disrupted. If the characters win, have the club management kick them out. At least one Kindred will drop a hint as they leave about "Childer cretins violating the Masquerade." Nicolai will meet them down the street.

The characters can choose to attack Dave and Doug outside the Succubus Club. They will probably win. How-

ever, interrogation will only reveal that their orders were to take the characters to a playground several blocks west. They will be more than glad to provide directions. If the characters ignore the directions and go their own way, Nicolai will meet them down the street. If interrogated or Dominated about their employer, they will tell what they can, which is not much. They know Nicolai as "Nicky Anton."

Characters

Dave and Doug — have basically identical statistics and abilities.

Equipment: Heavy Pistol, Switchblade, \$150 ea.

Image: Doug is medium-height, kind of weaselly looking, with greasy black hair and a long stringy mustache. He either wears leather jacket and jeans, or tie-dyed hippy-type shirts and pants when "off-duty." Dave is tall, skinny, with wavy brown hair, brown almost black eyes, and a large Roman nose. He wears either leather jacket and jeans, or solid black "Miami Vice" style clothing.

Both thugs work for Nicolai. They believe that he is some rich eccentric's son, and that the boy's father is paying them to fulfill the boy's every wish. In fact, their orders come straight from Nicolai, a fact which they are unaware of. They are cheap hired help, but paid for their loyalty. They know almost nothing of any interest.

Dave is arrogant beyond belief. He sneers constantly down his nose at anyone and anything he believes is weaker than he is. Doug is as weaselly as he looks, sneering constantly and making overblown threats at the drop of his hat. If they survive this adventure, you can use them as comic relief in future Chapters.

SCENE TWO: AN OFFER YOU SHOULDN'T REFUSE

This Scene takes place in a deserted playground just east of Cabrini Green. The park is a barren place where mothers are reluctant to send their children any time of the day, much less after sunset. The winds whistles through the monkey bars and moves the swings, making them appear as if invisible children are still playing on them.

This is where Nicolai makes his offer, involving the characters in the Ehrich situation. If the characters do not come to the playground (see previous Scene), Nicolai tracks them down after they leave The Succubus Club. At that time

VAMPIRE™		
Dave/Doug		
Attributes		
Physical	Social	Mental
Strength ●●●●	Charisma ●●●●	Perception ●●●●
Dexterity ●●●●	Manipulation ●●●●	Intelligence ●●●●
Stamina ●●●●	Appearance ●●●●	Wits ●●●●
Abilities		
Talents	Skills	Knowledge
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		
Disciplines	Backgrounds	Virtues
●●●●	Contact ●●●●	Conscience ●●●●
●●●●	Resources ●●●●	Self-Control ●●●●
●●●●	●●●●	Courage ●●●●
●●●●	●●●●	
Other Traits		
●●●●	Humanity	Health
●●●●	●●●●●●●●●●	Bruised <input type="checkbox"/>
●●●●		Injured -1 <input type="checkbox"/>
●●●●	Willpower	Injured -2 <input type="checkbox"/>
●●●●	●●●●●●●●●●	Wounded -3 <input type="checkbox"/>
	□□□□□□□□	Mauled -4 <input type="checkbox"/>
		Crippled -5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		Incapacitated <input type="checkbox"/>
Combat		
Weapon	Difficulty	Damage
Blood Pool		
○○○○○○○○○○		
Experience		
□		
Attributes: 7/50 Abilities: 13/95 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/1)		

give the characters the pertinent dialogue from the following:

You step over the gate that leads into the playground. The area is deserted. Swings sway in the wind, while the moon glints dully off a slide. You suddenly blink as you realize a boy is sitting on one of the previously empty swings. For a moment you think the child might be a ghost, but realize he is wearing a rather inappropriate blue business suit. There is a sense of power about him that you have rarely, if ever, felt. This is obvious a Power among the Kindred.

If Dave and/or Doug are still here, add: Somehow, the two dimwits with you appear unaware of the power before you. The tall one, looking subservient, says, "*Here they are, Nicky. We'll be right outside. Call us if you need us.*" He and his partner back out through the gate. If anyone in the group is of Tremere clan, inform her secretly if possible: You realize that this can only be the Chicago leader of your clan, the one known as Nicolai. Despite his appearance of youth, he is a Thaumaturgist of vast power, and an Elder with centuries of experience.

Then continue for the rest of the group: The boy brings the swing to a halt. He looks your group over rather disdainfully, then says, "*You will have to do. You are here by command, and it is wise you chose to come. Perhaps we may all benefit from this. You are relative newcomers to the Kindred of this city. As such, you can be of use to me. I am Nicolai. I lead the clan known as Tremere in this metropolis. Also, I am one of the true rulers of Chicago. Look upon me, for it is not often you will see my ilk.*"

These words sound rather disingenuous coming from the mouth of a 9-year-old boy. However, you do not doubt them for a minute. Nicolai straightens up a bit on the swing, tugs at his suit and then continues. "*To business. Believe it or not, there is a traitor to the Camarilla in Chicago. Once a member of my very own clan, he has fallen under the influence of the Sabbat and is now a danger to us all. He is aware of many of the Kindred in Chicago, and they are incapable of stopping him. But you are unknown to him.*"

"*It is my hope that you can take him unawares. Surprise him and kill him. If you do this for me, you will have my personal gratitude. More importantly, you will have the gratitude of one of the Primogen of this city, and the thanks of the leader of Clan Tremere.*"

Nicolai will let it go at that for the time being. If the characters choose to accept his offer, he will continue with directions (see below). He will not tell them who the target is until they have agreed. If the characters press for information as to the identity or the crimes of this traitor, the Tremere Elder will speak in vague generalities about the Sabbat and their evil nature.

If Nicolai's gratitude does not impress the characters, they may haggle for more of a reward. At first, Nicolai will



be reluctant to offer anything substantial. He will rather vaguely add, "*For those of you who seek training in the arts of magic, I can arrange something. We are always looking for those of other clans that are willing to learn our ways.*" Of course, such training usually involves the consumption of Nicolai's blood on three separate occasions. The Tremere clan leader will neglect to mention that.

If pushed, Nicolai will make his final offer: "*You speak as if you have a choice. Very well, then. Within the treasures of our clan are several vials of Elder blood. I believe I could be convinced to yield a dose worth...five swallows. Of course, this will be after your successful completion of my request.*" Nicolai will neglect to mention that the Vitæ is his own, and will bring the characters closer to being Blood Bound to him.

If the characters simply refuse to accept anything, Nicolai will shrug and say, "*Again, you speak as if you have a choice. Consider this, then. If you choose not to accept my gratitude, or the other items of which I have spoken, do you wish my hostility instead?*" As a Storyteller, you might want to suggest to the characters that having one of the Primogen angry at them is a very bad idea.

When the characters and Nicolai come to a suitable arrangement, the latter will say:

"Your target is a Kindred known as Ehrich. He is only in Chicago for a brief period, so you will have to kill him

tonight. I know that he commonly visits a bar in The Rack, a place known as 'The Cave'. You should seek him there. If you arrive early, an ambush might be in order. As to how you will know him..."

Nicolai will produce an old, bent photo from his breast pocket and toss it to the nearest character. It is in fact an old publicity photo from Ehrich/Houdini's last tour before his Embrace. Nicolai has cropped the photo so only the head and shoulders are visible.

Then Nicolai will settle back in the swing and add, "To those of the Tremere, know that you will have done us a great service. You will have the gratitude of the Clan Elders as well." He will say this even if there are not any Tremere Kindred in the party. If any character asks him who he is talking to, he will only smile sinisterly.

It is possible the characters may have met Ehrich in *Ashes to Ashes*. Although it is unlikely they became friendly with him, they may object to the assignment. If they do so, Nicolai will shrug and say, "We are not kine, to have kine friendships. But you may choose whose friendship you value more: his or mine."

Nicolai will then pause briefly. He will use his Telepathy ability to send the following messages:

To any Tremere in the group: "I speak truly when I speak of the gratitude of the Clan Elders. However beware. This Ehrich has been trained in our clan's secrets, and has powers of his own as well. Use these other fools to the best advantage, but do not endanger yourself unnecessarily."

To any one other character (preferably a Caitiff if one is available, otherwise a Ventrue or Toreador): "Return alone, and you may have power beyond your dreams. We will make you one of our own, and teach you all the secrets of the magic of the Vitæ, and more."

We suggest you distribute these messages as notes. You might also pass out blank notes to the other characters. Let them look the notes over, then take them back without the players showing them to each other.

If the characters feel like practicing some diablerie, they can try to take out Nicolai. If they ask you what their characters think the chances of their success are, you will want to dissuade them gently. Point out their relative neophyte status and Nicolai's centuries of experience. A Tremere character will normally not be able to attack Nicolai regardless of the player's wishes. The only exception to this is if circumstances in your campaign have led to that character not being Blood Bound to the Tremere Elders

If the characters choose to attack Nicolai anyway, he will simply laugh and use his Obfuscate to fade away. If somehow the characters can circumvent this, Nicolai has a full Bloodpool (30 points!). He will do what he can to knock them unconscious without killing them. He might end one

character's life as an example to the others. He will then inform them, "Now you realize the cost of refusing my offer," reiterate his instructions and leave.

If a fight begins, Dave and Doug, if they are still alive, will stay out of it. Nicolai has given them strict orders to stay out of the playground.

If the characters try to attack Nicolai, start and end the battle quickly. Tell them, "Within seconds, the Elder overwhelms your entire group." If you wish to play out the battle, Nicolai's statistics are in *Chicago by Night*.

SCENE THREE: PAWNS TO QUEEN FOUR

This episode takes place in The Cave, a working-class bar in The Rack, Chicago's night club district. For more details on this bar, see *Ashes to Ashes* or *Chicago by Night*.

The Cave is owned by Horace Turnbull, a Malkavian who sides with the Anarchs, who often use the bar as a meeting place. Among the kine, the club is popular with macho male types. Motorcycle gangs often frequent the bar, but blue collar workers come in after a hard day's work.

The interior of the club does resemble a cave. It is in the basement of an old building and can only be reached by a walk-down stairway leading into a corridor decorated with antique door knockers. The main room of the bar (which is as far as the characters will get in this adventure) is roughly circular, brick-lined, and rather damp. There are a few booths, but seating is mostly at tables. The place is quiet as the patrons resent any noisy interruptions.

If the characters were in the story *Ashes to Ashes*, then they will have been to The Cave on at least one previous occasion. Their knowledge of the bar will depend on what happened in that adventure. Depending on what they did in *Ashes to Ashes*, the characters may be welcome, or *persona non grata*. However, this adventure assumes that they have never been here before.

As the Scene begins, it is about 10:00 p.m. Read the following:

The Cave is easy enough to find. You have heard of the place, and know that Anarchs frequent the bar. You find the walkdown entrance, which has nine choppers parked in front of it. They are state-of-the-art street machines, all in black. (If the characters search the bikes they find nothing of value.)

You walk down the street-level stairway to a basement corridor. You pass through a corridor lined with door knockers in the shape of mermaids and lion heads. Coming to a swinging door, you enter the main room of The Cave.

There are at least a dozen men seated in the room. Eight of them are wearing the road colors of the Outlaws, a biker gang you have heard about. The others look to be working class-types. None look like the photograph of Ehrich that Nicolai gave you.

The cycle gang looks up as you come in, giving your group the once over. Then they go back to watching the match. There are two other men hunched over a chessboard at one end of the bar. One is a hulking figure, at least 6 ft 5 and 250 lbs., and wearing Outlaw colors. The other is a tall man with a narrow, pinched face. He is wearing casual clothing: a sport shirt and jeans.

As you enter, the thin man moves a piece on the chessboard. The biker growls ominously, but then shrugs, reaches forward, and topples his king. "You win again, Horace," he growls. More reluctantly, he adds, "Good game." He gets up, turns around, glares briefly at you, and snaps, "So what do you want, road kills?"

This Scene is primarily dialogue-oriented. Ehrich is not here. The characters will have to get Horace or Big Jim (the head biker) to tell them when he was here, and where he was going.

In general, the men in The Cave will treat physically imposing characters with what passes for respect, physically unprepossessing types with contempt, and women with overblown courtesy. Very few females come into The Cave, and these gentlemen want to make sure they stay.

The characters should probably respond to "Big Jim" Slade. Although he likes Horace, he is in a bad mood after losing the chess game. They should try to get on his good side. This will require a Manipulation + Etiquette roll against a Difficulty of 6. Depending on the specialty that the character(s) have chosen, modify the number of dice rolled. Someone with "Aristocratic" or "Foreign" will probably lose a die or two. "Lowlife," "Slang," or even "Motorcycle Gangs" could gain two or three extra dice.

If the character dealing with Big Jim has Skill/Repair, let them make a Perception + Repair roll (vs. Difficulty 6) if they choose to "talk shop" about the bikes mentioned above. Each success after the first one will give them an extra die on the Etiquette roll above.

If the characters end up with two or more successes, Big Jim (and the other Outlaws) will be civil regardless of the characters' appearance. If the characters get one or no successes, Big Jim and the boys will have nothing to do with the group. The characters will have to deal with Horace. If a botch happens, a fight breaks out (see below).

If two or more successes occurred, read the following: Big Jim looks you over once more, then frowns furiously and thrusts both fists towards you. Then he grins and says, "You're all right. Care for a game?" He opens his fists to reveal two pawns, one white and one black.



Big Jim will be glad to talk shop, but will not answer any questions about Ehrich until they play a game against him. If pressed, he will simply shrug and say, "The man's an associate. Him, I know. You, I don't. And there's nothing like a game of chess to learn about a guy."

Playing a game of chess involves the use of Intelligence plus a new Knowledge: Chess. It is an Extended & Resisted action. Both sides accumulate points versus a Difficulty of the other's Intelligence plus three. A botch negates one accumulated success. The first person who gets to 12 wins the game. Players alternate die rolls. If both players reach 12 (or higher) at the end of a turn (after both players have rolled), the game ends in a stalemate.

The character who plays against Big Jim will have to get at least six successes to impress him. If she does less than that, Big Jim will shrug and offer another character a chance. If the second character does not get at least six, he will ignore the entire group for the rest of the night.

The loser buys drinks on the house, a custom Big Jim will inform his opponent of. If Big Jim actually loses (unlikely, as he has the Chess skill and the characters probably do not), there will be a boisterous round of backslapping and cheering. Big Jim will gladly stand everyone for a drink. Unfortunately, this means he will be watching his new-found buddy closely. That character only will have to spend a

Willpower point to keep his beer down. During the drinking, Big Jim will tell what he knows about Ehrich.

Big Jim will have absolutely no desire to go anywhere private with one or more characters so that they can Dominate him. If the characters attempt to Dominate Big Jim in public, Horace will make every effort to prevent this blatant disregard for the Masquerade by distracting Big Jim and keeping the characters from making direct eye contact.

If the characters end up dealing with Horace, they will have to play him. Rules are the same as above, but they will need to get at least eight successes to impress Horace. If they win, they will not have to worry about spending a Willpower point to spend a beer. They may choose to do so if they are trying to keep their true natures a secret from Horace.

If the characters have met Horace before, either from Ashes to Ashes or any story you used involving The Cave, role-play the situation out accordingly. Ehrich is an old friend of Horace's, so the barkeep will be unwilling to pass out information on him even if he knows the characters well.

Modify the situation further if Horace is aware that at least one character is Tremere. He knows enough about Ehrich that he realizes that the Tremere hunt his friend, although he does not know why.

In short, you will have to improvise the situation based on what has occurred in your own campaign. If the characters are on good terms with Horace, they probably will not have much difficulty finding out where Ehrich went. If they are not, Horace will prove a veritable clam, and they will have to deal with Big Jim.

If a character or characters have impressed Horace or Big Jim, they will say the following:

"Yeah, Ehrich was in here earlier this evening. Sprang for a few drinks, did a few tricks, shot the wind for a while." Then he took off. Said he had to meet an old friend of his down in the Loop (Horace will call it "The Hive") around 11:30."

Big Jim will add:

"Then he did that 'Regurgitating Razors' trick. Damn, the guy is good. I never have figured out how he gets all those razors on that barbed wire! How about another drink?"

Horace will add:

"If you've really got to find him tonight, try Ye Olde Magic Shoppe, on the 300 block of South Michigan."

If the characters get the information from Big Jim, they will not know the location of the magic shop. Have them make a Wits + Investigation/Occult/Chicago (the latter a new skill from Chicago by Night), whichever is the higher of the three, to realize Ehrich is interested in magic. They will also know that Ye Olde Magic Shoppe is in The Hive.

If they get three or more successes, inform the character that they have heard stories of strange occult activities in the area. The owner, one Walter Dent, may be affiliated with the mysterious "Magi."

If the characters lose the chess game without getting even six successes, or refuse to play, they can choose to duke it out if they so want. If they really want to impress Big Jim, one of them can challenge him to a fight *mano a mano*. This will keep the rest of the Outlaws out of it. Big Jim has no interest in killing the character, or having them kill him, so he will fight hand-to-hand.

At an opportune moment, if Horace is aware the character is Kindred, he will whisper to the challenging character, "Let's remember the Masquerade." If he is unaware of the characters' nature, he will interrupt the battle momentarily at the first signs of Kindred ability and tell the character the same thing.

This means that the use of any Discipline is out. This includes using Strength or Dexterity of 4 or higher. If, in the Storyteller's opinion, the character looks particularly strong or fast, he might allow the use of an attribute with a value of four. If the character uses Kindred ability anyway, the rest of the Outlaws will notice something strange is going on and leap into the battle.

VAMPIRE™

Big Jim

Attributes		
Physical	Social	Mental
Strength ●●●●	Charisma ●●●●	Perception ●●●●
Dexterity ●●●●	Manipulation ●●●●	Intelligence ●●●●
Stamina ●●●●	Appearance ●●●●	Wits ●●●●

Abilities		
Talents	Skills	Knowledge
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		
Disciplines	Backgrounds	Virtues
_____ ●●●●	Contacts ●●●●	Conscience ●●●●
_____ ●●●●	Fame ●●●●	Self-Control ●●●●
_____ ●●●●	Influence ●●●●	Courage ●●●●
_____ ●●●●	Resources ●●●●	

Other Traits	Humanity	Health
Chess ●●●●	●●●●●●●●●●	Bruised <input type="checkbox"/>
_____ ●●●●		Hurt -1 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____ ●●●●		Injured -2 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____ ●●●●		Wounded -3 <input type="checkbox"/>
_____ ●●●●		Mauled -4 <input type="checkbox"/>
		Crippled -5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		Incapacitated <input type="checkbox"/>

Combat	Blood Pool	Experience
Weapon Difficulty Damage	○○○○○○○○○○	

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

The characters could always attack all the cyclists. This will make them persona non grata at The Cave in the future.

The cyclists will attack the characters if the characters botch the initial Etiquette roll, or if they pull a knife or gun on Big Jim during a personal duel. If an all-out melee breaks out, run the battle like a typical barroom brawl. No map of The Cave appears here. If you feel it necessary, map out a roughly circular room with booths, tables, and a bar on one side.

Characters

James "Big Jim" Slade — leader of the local Outlaws chapter, likes the open road and has no desire to be anything other than what he is. His expertise has made him a leader among men. The Outlaws are a national motorcycle gang with a great deal of strength in the Midwest.

When in Chicago, Big Jim stops off at The Cave. He and Horace are old friends. The Cave is also the only place where he can indulge in his one vice: a good game of chess. His followers tolerate this eccentricity: mostly because he beats them to a pulp if they make fun of it.

Age: 36

Description: Big Jim stands 6'2", weighs 240 lbs., and has a slight paunch. He always wears Outlaw leathers.

Looks a little like Meat Loaf in Rocky Horror, only handsomer.

Demeanor: Director

Nature: Loner

Equipment: Motorcycle, switchblade in pocket, Light Pistol, \$800 dollars, toolkit (on bike), pocket chess set

Typical Outlaw — Loyal followers of Big Jim, the typical Outlaw likes nothing better than to roar into town, shoot the place up, and leave. They do not make a fuss at The Cave because their boss likes it and they can unwind on those rare occasions when they want some quiet.

Description: Typical biker gang. Wears black leather and chains.

Equipment: Sawed-off pool cues (treat as club), knives, light pistols

SCENE FOUR: LITTLE SHOP OF MAGIC

Ye Olde Magic Shoppe is located in The Loop, or The Hive as the Kindred call it. It is in the 300 block of South Michigan, across the river from The Cave. It is a battered old storefront building, with antique woodwork decorating the outside. Looking upon it, the characters might think it was a shop out of the late 1800s, or an "antique" building such as one sees on the Main Streets of amusement parks like Disney World.

Oddly, for this time of night (it is now about 11:30 p.m.) the shop is open. There are dim lights on inside, and the characters can see someone moving around.

In this Scene, the characters miss Ehrich again. They do get the information they need to track him back to the Succubus Club. The reason Ehrich left early is because a reporter, Lowell Carlson, is checking out the shop. The characters may have to deal with Carlson as well.

As the characters enter the shop, read the following:

The inside of Ye Olde Magic Shoppe is a dust-filled relic of a bygone age. All kinds of magical props sit on shelves, their colorful paint just penetrating the hue of time. The interior is a maze of head-high shelves and bins, filled with close-up tricks and old books of magic. There is a counter towards the back, with an antique cash register on it. There is a curtained doorway behind it.

As you enter, a man looks up from where he has apparently been browsing through a book bin. He is wearing a rumpled white suit, blue shirt, and, oddly enough, a battered pair of tennis shoes. He has a straw fedora perched on his

VAMPIRE™			
Outlaw			
Attributes			
Physical		Social	
Strength	●●●●	Charisma	●●●●
Dexterity	●●●●	Manipulation	●●●●
Stamina	●●●●	Appearance	●●●●
		Mental	
		Perception	●●●●
		Intelligence	●●●●
		Wits	●●●●
Abilities			
Talents		Skills	
Acting	○○○○○	Animal Ken	○○○○○
Alertness	○○○○○	Drive	●●●●
Athletics	○○○○○	Etiquette	●●●●
Brawl	●●●●	Firearms	●●●●
Dodge	●●●●	Melee	●●●●
Empathy	○○○○○	Musk	○○○○○
Intimidation	●●●●	Repair	●●●●
Leadership	○○○○○	Security	○○○○○
Streetwise	●●●●	Sleight	●●●●
Subterfuge	○○○○○	Survival	○○○○○
		Knowledge	
		Bureaucracy	○○○○○
		Computer	○○○○○
		Finance	○○○○○
		Investigation	○○○○○
		Law	○○○○○
		Linguistics	○○○○○
		Medicine	○○○○○
		Occult	○○○○○
		Politics	○○○○○
		Science	○○○○○
Advantages			
Disciplines		Backgrounds	
_____	○○○○○	Resources	●●●●
_____	○○○○○	_____	○○○○○
_____	○○○○○	_____	○○○○○
_____	○○○○○	_____	○○○○○
_____	○○○○○	_____	○○○○○
		Virtues	
		Conscience	●●●●
		Self-Control	●●●●
		Courage	●●●●
Other Traits			
_____		○○○○○	
_____		○○○○○	
_____		○○○○○	
_____		○○○○○	
_____		○○○○○	
Combat			
Weapon	Difficulty	Damage	
Humanity			
●●●●●●○○○○			
Willpower			
●●●●●○○○○○			
Blood Pool			
○○○○○○○○○○○			
Health			
Bruised <input type="checkbox"/>			
Hurt -1 <input type="checkbox"/>			
Injured -2 <input type="checkbox"/>			
Wounded -3 <input type="checkbox"/>			
Mauled -4 <input type="checkbox"/>			
Crippled -5 <input type="checkbox"/>			
Incapacitated <input type="checkbox"/>			
Experience			

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (15/2/1)



head, and a camera and a tape recorder slung around his neck.

The man begins to give you the once over. Before either you or he can do anything, there is a muffled "Whump!" from behind the curtain. A thick billow of smoke pours out, then you hear coughing and wheezing. A withered old man staggers out, thumping his chest. He looks up, sees you and smiles sheepishly.

"Sorry for the noise and smoke, folks," he wheezes. "At my age you tend to forget things. I'll have to remember to use a little less flash powder. But I'm the proprietor, Walter Dent, Esquire. What can I do for you folks?"

The guy in the white suit mumbles something and goes back to pawing through the book bin. The old man, Dent, looks at you inquiringly. The best bet for the characters is to ask about Ehrich and be on their way. The first problem is that the man in the white suit is Lowell Carlson, a reporter for a local wire service. Investigating rumors of the occult, and on the advice of his friend and fellow reporter, Scottie Cartwright (see *Ashes to Ashes*), Carlson has come here.

While trying to look inconspicuous, Carlson will attempt to hear the conversation between the characters and Dent. Their best bet is to move into the back room. Dent will be initially reluctant to do so. He will eventually look at Carlson (the reporter's been in the shop for three hours now, "browsing for books") and agree.

As the characters pass through the curtain, read the following:

You pass through the curtain and find yourself in a small hallway with two doors. A low haze of smoke still fills the corridor. The old man, Dent, takes out a key, unlocks the door on the left, and ushers you in.

You are in a large back room. It is empty except for two items: a circle inscribed on the floor, and a brazier in the middle of it.

"So, in any case, gentlemen (and/or) ladies. To business," the old man, Dent, says. "Let's be honest with each other. I'm no novice, and I know you for what you are. You're creatures of the night, and I'm an expert in magic. Doesn't matter what's the nature of my clientele. Maybe you've heard of me and want some research done, maybe you're curious gawkers. What's the story?"

At this point, Carlson has sneaked up to the curtained doorway and is trying to tape the entire conversation. The characters hear a squealing noise (Carlson hit "Rewind" on his machine by mistake). The reporter will duck back. However, any characters looking out within about ten seconds will see him fumbling with his tape recorder, trying to shut it off.

Let the characters do what they want for a few minutes. Carlson will make up some ludicrous explanation for who he actually is (a private detective investigating the occult, or a rich millionaire looking for a rare illusion). Unfortunately for him, even a casual search will discover his business card,

which identifies him as a wire service reporter. He will scurry out the moment he gets a chance. Dent will be keeping an eye on the proceedings and disapprove of any violence (especially murder).

We suggest that the Storyteller keep Carlson alive and use him as a continuing character (see below). The characters should have more important matters at the moment than tracking him down and killing him.

After Carlson is out of the shop, Dent will say, "So much for interruptions. Again, what do you want?"

Dent honestly does not care that the characters are Vampires. He deals with some of the most powerful in the city and this group doesn't impress him. The characters have several options here. They can try:

- 1) **Lying** (Manipulation + Subterfuge, Difficulty 7),
- 2) **Convincing Dent** they are friends of Ehrich's and his existence is in jeopardy (Manipulation + Etiquette, 6 if they're being honest, 7 if they're hostile towards Ehrich),
- 3) **Impressing Dent** with their knowledge of the Occult (Intelligence + Occult, Difficulty 7, 6 if the character is Tremere),
- 4) **Claiming** they're representing a powerful faction of the Kindred who need to find Ehrich (Manipulation + Chicago Knowledge), or
- 5) **Using a Discipline.** Add +1 to the difficulty of any attempt because of Dent's own Occult abilities.

There are, of course, many other options the characters could try. In that case you will have to determine what skill combination and difficulty is necessary to resolve their attempt. The characters will only get one try, and need two or more successes to get Dent to tell all.

If they fail, Dent will shrug, say it is none of his business, and tell them to leave. The characters can try Intimidation or some other violent skill to get results. However, this will deprive them of Dent's help in any future adventure. Ehrich also will be displeased when word gets back to him of their actions.

More likely, they will succeed. In that case, read the following:

Dent nods, then says, "Yeah, Ehrich was here. That reporter fella was lurking outside, and Ehrich was concerned he might recognize him. He said he was going to meet with a friend over at that night club, that place called ... the ... umm ...the Succubus Club. Took out of here about a half hour ago, maybe less. You see him, give him my regards. Tell him he'll have to stay longer next time he's in town. However, it's almost midnight. The shop's closing, so you'd better be on your way."

The old man really does not have anything more to say at that point. If the characters ask him why Ehrich was here, Dent will shrug and say, "Personal business. Can't two old friends get together and talk?"

VAMPIRE™

Maxwell Dent

Attributes		
Physical	Social	Mental
Strength 0000	Charisma 0000	Perception 0000
Dexterity 0000	Manipulation 0000	Intelligence 0000
Stamina 0000	Appearance 0000	Wits 0000

Abilities		
Talents	Skills	Knowledge
Acting 0000	Animal Ken 0000	Bureaucracy 0000
Alertness 0000	Drive 0000	Computer 0000
Athletics 0000	Etiquette 0000	Finance 0000
Brawl 0000	Firearms 0000	Investigation 0000
Dodge 0000	Melee 0000	Law 0000
Empathy 0000	Musk 0000	Linguistics 0000
Intimidation 0000	Repair 0000	Medicine 0000
Leadership 0000	Security 0000	Occult 0000
Streetwise 0000	Stealth 0000	Politics 0000
Subterfuge 0000	Survival 0000	Science 0000

Advantages		
Disciplines	Backgrounds	Virtues
0000	Allies 0000	Conscience 0000
0000	Contacts 0000	Self-Control 0000
0000	Fame 0000	Courage 0000
0000	Resources 0000	
0000	Status 0000	

Other Traits		Humanity		Health	
Chicago 0000	0000000000	Brused	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hurt	-1 <input type="checkbox"/>
0000		Injured	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	Wounded	3 <input type="checkbox"/>
0000		Maimed	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	Crippled	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
0000		Incubated	<input type="checkbox"/>	Experience	
0000					

Combat		
Weapon	Difficulty	Damage

Attributes: 7/50 Abilities: 13/95 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (15/20)

Dent will begin cleaning and closing up. During their conversation, Carlson has already slipped out, and has nothing to add in any case. The best option for the characters is to head for the Succubus Club.

While there is no fight in this Scene, there are plenty of chance for physical displays of prowess, primarily when intimidating Carlson or Dent. Neither will put up a fight.

Characters

Maxwell Dent — Dent has lived in Chicago all of his life. Early in his life he had an interest in the Occult that brought him into contact with Ehrich/Harry before the latter's Embrace and faked death. Ehrich has kept in contact with him ever since. In fact, Dent is one of the few mortals that is aware that Ehrich is Harry Houdini.

Although Dent is not a true Magus, he acts as a kind of information clearinghouse for various factions. His greatest advantage is his knowledge of the Occult. Both Magi and Kindred come to him when they need information and their own resources are not adequate.

Age: (90+)

Description: Dent looks like a shopkeeper from another era. He wears thread-bare pants, a long-sleeved white shirt, an apron, and a shopkeeper's visor. He is thin and shrunken,

VAMPIRE™

Lowell Carlson

Attributes

Physical Strength 00000 Dexterity 00000 Stamina 00000	Social Charisma 00000 Manipulation 00000 Appearance 00000	Mental Perception 00000 Intelligence 00000 Wits 00000
---	---	---

Abilities

Talents Acting 00000 Alertness 00000 Athletics 00000 Brawl 00000 Dodge 00000 Empathy 00000 Intimidation 00000 Leadership 00000 Streetwise 00000 Subterfuge 00000	Skills Animal Ken 00000 Drive 00000 Etiquette 00000 Firearms 00000 Melee 00000 Music 00000 Repair 00000 Security 00000 Stealth 00000 Survival 00000	Knowledge Bureaucracy 00000 Computer 00000 Finance 00000 Investigation 00000 Law 00000 Linguistics 00000 Medicine 00000 Occult 00000 Politics 00000 Science 00000
---	--	--

Advantages

Disciplines _____ 00000 _____ 00000 _____ 00000 _____ 00000 _____ 00000	Backgrounds Contacts 00000 Fame 00000 Influence 00000 Resources 00000	Virtues Conscience 00000 Self Control 00000 Courage 00000
---	--	---

Other Traits Chicago 00000 _____ 00000 _____ 00000 _____ 00000 _____ 00000	Humanity ●●●●●●●●●● _____ Willpower ●●●●●●●●●● □□□□□□□□□□	Health Bruised <input type="checkbox"/> Hurt 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Injured 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Wounded 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Mauled 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Crippled 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Incapacitated <input type="checkbox"/>
--	--	--

Combat <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 30%;">Weapon</th> <th style="width: 30%;">Difficulty</th> <th style="width: 40%;">Damage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Weapon	Difficulty	Damage													Blood Pool ○○○○○○○○○○	Experience _____
Weapon	Difficulty	Damage															

Attributes: 7/5/5 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/21)

and looks ready to topple over from exertion at any moment. Appears inconspicuous, but can radiate power when necessary.

Demeanor: Curmudgeon

Nature: Architect

Notes: During his studies of the occult, Dent has learned a large number of rituals (essentially whatever you as Storyteller want him to know) which allow him wide latitude in dealing with odd situations. However, these usually require a substantial amount of paraphernalia to perform, so they cannot be done at the drop of a hat.

Equipment: Owns Ye Olde Magic Shoppe. Has several mystic relics tucked away, but it would be difficult to find them on short notice.

Lowell Carlson — Carlson has been a reporter since serving in Vietnam, where he covered news for the U.S. Army. After the war he took a job with a variety of newspapers and wire services. He has had to move around a great deal because he has an amazing habit of stumbling onto stories that somebody else wanted covered up. Although much of what he stumbles on is the truth, they are all so wild that no one believes him. Those with an interest in concealing the truth eventually put pressure on his superiors and get him fired.

Carlson has been a resident of Chicago for at least eight years now, working for the same dingy wire service. His

investigations have led to several supernatural occurrences (including a neophyte succubus and an Amerindian magus), but he manages to triumph through sheer luck and tenacity. Unfortunately, his evidence is always destroyed and he is left with nothing he can use as a story.

Carlson has, until now, remained unaware of the vampiric activity in Chicago, but he and his drinking buddy, Scottie Cartwright, have been comparing notes and starting to come to some conclusions. Carlson could very easily become involved in future stories.

Age: 45

Description: Carlson looks like a 30s style reporter. He wears nothing but rumpled white suits, blue shirts, and tennis shoes ("Because I do a lot of running," he claims). He has a thinning thatch of red hair, and a nose reddened by four too many drinks after work. He always carries a small tape recorder and camera.

Demeanor: Curmudgeon

Nature: Cavalier

Equipment: Camera, tape recorder, old 1972 yellow Dodge convertible

SCENE FIVE: WE'VE GOT MAGIC TO DO

This Scene takes place at the Succubus Club, near the dance floor. The characters arrive at the Club around midnight. Here they finally meet Ehrich, and will have to decide if they will carry out their assignment or join forces with him. They will also have to deal with a demented Magus.

As the characters arrive at the Succubus Club, read the following:

The Club is, if anything, more raucous than it was a few hours ago. The band is playing full blast and the dancers pack the floor. A quick check of Nicolai's photo and a glance around the room, and you can pick out the individual known as Ehrich. He is sitting at a table just off the main dance floor. Sitting with him is an elderly old man in a rumpled, old-fashioned business suit.

As you spot him, Ehrich looks up. His eyes sweep over you for a moment, then pass on. After a few more seconds, he returns to speaking with the old man.

The characters can approach Ehrich in any manner they wish, or not at all. Due to the Masquerade, firing at him or physically assaulting him in public is a bad idea. Without those options, their best choice (if they intend to follow Nicolai's instructions without question) is to lure him outside in some manner.

As the characters approach Ehrich, read them the following:

As you get closer to the elusive Tremere, he suddenly perks up. Turning from his conversation from the old man, he looks directly at your group (or the largest group of characters). He studies you intently for a moment. Then he gestures for you to sit at the table with him.

There is no reason for the characters to refuse the invitation. They might even be able to get the drop on him, if they intend to kill him.

When Ehrich has the characters' attention, read the following:

The Kindred known as Ehrich casually reaches into the air and produces a half dollar. Idly twirling it through his fingers, he looks you over for a minute. His elderly friend has sunken back into his chair, muttering quietly to himself.

Eventually Ehrich says, "*Greetings, fellow Kindred. A friend of mine called from a business you visited earlier this evening. He said you were looking for me, and gave me your description.*"

"*Well, you have found me. Perhaps you seek me at the request of the boy-mage, Nicolai. If so, realize you will be ill-used. He seeks to see me destroyed for the threat he believes I pose to the Tremere clan. As tools, he will discard you after you have served your purpose. However, you have no doubt chosen your own fate. What is it that you wish of me?*"

At this point the characters will have to decide (if they have not already) whether they intend to fulfill their "deal" with Nicolai. If they do not, and tell Ehrich of the situation they are in, he will reply:

"*I sympathize with your dilemma. The one you call Nicolai is a powerful one. A friend of mine is Bound to him, and there are other...personal reasons. Throw in your lot with me, and those of this city that stand against Nicolai. We are not without power ourselves. In any case, I promise you that once you have made a deal with that devil, Nicolai, you will find yourselves ensnared in his web of evil.*"

The characters should realize that Ehrich is speaking correctly. Most of them should be naturally suspicious of the Tremere clan in any case, and understand the truth of what he is saying. If they accept his offer to join forces, he will say:

"*Very well. My friend Gibson here has told me what I need to know. I was to meet one more person here, but she has not arrived. She may not have been able to slip away without suspicion. I respect her caution, and so my business in Chicago is done. I must escort Gibson home, and then we can discuss our mutual desires.*"

If the characters decide to kill Ehrich read the following:

Ehrich nods his head sadly. "*So be it, then. I trust you place little value on your souls, for they shall be forfeit if you carry out this evil deed. However, shall we go outside? I*



have no reason to endanger the Masquerade by which we live by. This place is far too crowded to resolve the business which lies between us."

Ehrich will make as if to rise, but before he can do so, there is commotion.

At this point two young women come to the table. They are entranced Blood Dolls (see Characters below). Have the characters make a Perception + Alertness roll versus Difficulty 8. If they succeed, they remember the girls were talking with a young man (Orloff) just before they came over to the table.

If the characters do not approach Ehrich, read the following:

You see two women step out of the crowd. Without warning they draw knives and throw themselves at the old man. Before you can move, Ehrich reacts with superhuman speed, grabbing both of them by the wrist and deflecting the attacks away. He tosses them back into the crowd, then grabs the old man and gets him to his feet.

If the characters are at the table with Ehrich and Gibson, read the following:

Suddenly two girls step out of the crowd. They are smiling slightly, but there is a glassy, unfocussed look to them. Before you can do anything, they whip out knives



from beneath their jackets. Without a sound, they throw themselves at the old man, Gibson.

Orloff has commanded them to kill Gibson. Have the characters make a Wits + Alertness roll to react. Any that succeed may roll for initiative against the Blood Dolls. If Ehrich has been talking to the characters, he is surprised: do not bother rolling for him.

The Blood Dolls will strike out wildly at anyone who gets in their way. They will make their attacks in utmost silence. In fact, most of the club members will be unaware of the attack (and the rest will not care).

If it looks like the two girls are going to be defeated on the first round, Orloff will project a knife at Gibson. An Athletics + Dexterity roll against Difficulty of eight will allow a character to deflect it. Three successes will allow the character to grab it.

The girls probably will not last more than two melee rounds. If it looks like any characters are coming for Orloff, he will duck back into the crowd. If the characters actually get to him, have two more Blood Dolls distract them while he makes his escape.

When the characters have thwarted the attack, go to Scene Six.

Characters

Ehrich Weiss (Harry Houdini)

Embraced: 1926

Apparent Age: 52

Generation: Eleventh

Clan: Tremere

Description: Short and stocky, muscularly built. Has a high forehead with receding black hair just turning grey. Piercing eyes. Usually wears casual clothing.

Demeanor: Survivor

Nature: Trickster

Jackson Orloff—Orloff is a resident of Chicago. At an early age he realized his mystical potential. He was contacted by Gibson, who decided to initiate him into the ranks of his own magical order. Orloff trained with the old Magus, but was impatient for more power than Gibson would give him. The mystical order he belonged with have given him minor punishments for his violation of their vows of public spellcasting, but he believes they are simply jealous of him. Orloff believes that by killing his mentor, he will prove his worth to the Magi and they will have to accept

VAMPIRE™

Erich Weiss

Attributes		
Physical	Social	Mental
Strength ●●●●	Charisma ●●●●	Perception ●●●●
Dexterity ●●●●	Manipulation ●●●●	Intelligence ●●●●
Stamina ●●●●	Appearance ●●●●	Wits ●●●●

Abilities		
Talents	Skills	Knowledge
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		
Disciplines	Backgrounds	Virtues
Awakened ●●●●	Allies ●●●●	Conscience ●●●●
Dominance ●●●●	Contacts ●●●●	Self-Control ●●●●
Thaumaturgy ●●●●	Master ●●●●	Courage ●●●●
Mind ●●●●	Status ●●●●	
Flames ●●●●		

Other Traits	Humanity	Health
00000	●●●●●●●●○○	Brused <input type="checkbox"/>
00000		Hurt -1 <input type="checkbox"/>
00000		Injured -2 <input type="checkbox"/>
00000		Wounded -3 <input type="checkbox"/>
00000		Mauled -4 <input type="checkbox"/>
00000		Crippled -5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		Incapacitated <input type="checkbox"/>

Combat	Willpower	Experience
Weapon Difficulty Damage	●●●●●●●○○○	
	□□□□□□□□	

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/21)

Special: Using his Movement of Mind Discipline (his Primary Form), Orloff can throw knives by making a Thaumaturgy + Perception roll. He knows whatever rituals you want to give him.

Gibson — Gibson has been a Magus since the age of 14. Although he was quite powerful in his day, his abilities have faded with time. He is still respected by his fellow Magi, many of whom believe his eccentric absent-mindedness is an act. Unfortunately, such is not the case. Overestimating his waning powers, they allowed him to train Orloff. Despite his advancing senility, Gibson has given the boy enough knowledge to be extremely dangerous.

Gibson and Ehrich are old friends. Ehrich's visit to him is more a courtesy call than anything else, and he has just discovered the extent of Gibson's fading powers. Gibson himself is unaware of Orloff's hate for him, and has not mentioned his pupil to Ehrich.

Age: 82

Description: Looks every day of his 82 years. Is balding, with a long white beard. Usually dresses in rumpled old suits.

Demeanor: Curmudgeon

Nature: Traditionalist

him as an equal. They will not, but Gibson will be dead by then.

Orloff is rude and impatient. He grows irritable when matters are not going his way. He believes himself invulnerable and acts accordingly in combat. Despite his youth and arrogance, Orloff is a skilled magician. Among his mystical developments has been a ritual similar to that of the Blood Bond, or the sharing of blood that the Blood Dolls perform. The ritual appears identical to the normal Blood Doll exchange of blood, but when performed Orloff's partner ends up in a state similar to that of a Blood Bounding. Orloff has used this ritual to enchant a number of young women.

Age: 26

Description: Jackson is of medium height, with wavy (and somewhat greasy) black hair. He has ankh earrings and silver finger rings. He dresses like a Blood Doll, with black leather jacket and jeans, and a silk shirt.

Demeanor: Bravo

Nature: Child

Equipment: Six braces of throwing knives underneath his jacket (used with his telekinesis abilities), one switchblade knife he uses in hand-to-hand combat.

VAMPIRE™

Jackson Orloff

Attributes		
Physical	Social	Mental
Strength ●●●●	Charisma ●●●●	Perception ●●●●
Dexterity ●●●●	Manipulation ●●●●	Intelligence ●●●●
Stamina ●●●●	Appearance ●●●●	Wits ●●●●

Abilities		
Talents	Skills	Knowledge
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		
Disciplines	Backgrounds	Virtues
Animalism ●●●●	Master ●●●●	Conscience ●●●●
Awakened ●●●●	Resources ●●●●	Self-Control ●●●●
Thaumaturgy ●●●●		Courage ●●●●
Mind ●●●●		

Other Traits	Humanity	Health
00000	●●●●●●●○○○	Brused <input type="checkbox"/>
00000		Hurt -1 <input type="checkbox"/>
00000		Injured -2 <input type="checkbox"/>
00000		Wounded -3 <input type="checkbox"/>
00000		Mauled -4 <input type="checkbox"/>
00000		Crippled -5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		Incapacitated <input type="checkbox"/>

Combat	Willpower	Experience
Weapon Difficulty Damage	●●●●●●●○○○	
	□□□□□□□□	

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/21)

Blood Dolls — Orloff's Blood Bound Blood Dolls, Janet Hickes and Allicia Frazer, have the typical Attributes of their type from the first chapter, though their Appearances are threes. They also have a Melee and Stealth of one. Their knives, given to them by Orloff, are bigger than the usual Blood Doll blades, and have a difficulty of four to hit. They are attractive young women, ages 16 and 22. They are dressed in typical Blood Doll style, with tight black dresses and silver jewelry.

These Blood Dolls have been entranced by Orloff's pseudo-Binding ceremony. He is using them as mindless berserkers in his attack on Gibson.

SCENE SIX: INTO THE MAZE

This Scene takes place in the labyrinth in the basement area of the Club. Maps of this area are in the earlier sections of this book.

In this Scene, the characters either accompany or pursue Ehrich and Gibson into the labyrinth. Hinds' men have blocked the exits and prevented Ehrich's (and possibly the characters') escape. The only place to go is down. Meanwhile, Orloff and his Blood Dolls will pursue Gibson and try to kill him and anyone with him.

If the characters have already joined forces with Ehrich, read the following:

Ehrich glances towards the exit, then mutters another curse. "*Hinds' Anarchs. Curse me for a novice, I didn't see them. They guard the doors.*" Looking towards one exit, you can see several burly men lounging by each exit. They are casually leaning on baseball bats as if the weapons were walking sticks.

"Hinds must still believe me a traitor for my activities those years ago. And perhaps he was right. However, we must get out of here now. The basement is our only chance. Are you game?"

A quick appraisal of the situation will assure the characters the only escape route is through the basement. Ehrich will help Gibson, who has sat dazed through everything, to his feet and guide him to the basement entrance.

If the characters did not approach Ehrich, read the following:

Ehrich and the old man head for the basement door. Your target glances towards the outer entrances. Following his gaze, you see several burly men with bats lounging nearby.

The characters will have no problem leaving the Club, but will have failed their assignment. If they choose to head after

Ehrich, they will be unable to prevent him from getting into the downstairs area due to the crowd on the dance floor.

If the characters did make contact with Ehrich, then Hinds' men will assume they are his friends. The teamsters will attack any character who tries to leave. There are three teamsters at each door, and three more will come over if the characters try to go through a door *en masse*.

Once the characters are in the basement, read the following:

You step into the area beneath the Club. A haze of smoke enshrouds the entire chamber. Individuals from all walks of life mingle here. Yuppies rub shoulders with street punks.

Behind you on the stairs, the sound of rushing footsteps suddenly echoes down to you. The people after Ehrich have not given up their pursuit.

Quickly glancing around, you see a door to your side. It is open, as if someone has just passed through. Those of you familiar with the Club know that a deliberately created labyrinth of corridors and cul-de-sacs runs through the basement area.

The characters at this point have little choice but to enter the Succubus Club's labyrinth. If they did not approach Ehrich above, and choose to mingle with the crowd, they succeed in evading their pursuers. However, they will have no chance of catching Ehrich before Keaton or Hinds' men do. Since Keaton is one of the people behind them, word will get back to Nicolai that they did not fulfill his orders. Nicolai will react accordingly (see Wrap-Up).

When the characters enter the labyrinth, read the following:

You enter a dimly lit corridor. Passages branch off in all directions. The sounds of the main floor are cut off. However, you can hear muffled sighs and groans from deep within the winding corridors.

If the characters are with Ehrich and Gibson, they only have two options: try to get to one of the other exits in the labyrinth, or set an ambush.

1) The characters could try to get to another exit. Have them checking for encounters every five minutes as they move through the labyrinth. If they are unfamiliar with the maze layout, you can role-play out the entire procedure. Alternately, simply give each character a Wits + Alertness roll. Because of the pressure situation, the Difficulty is 9 for them to find an exit. A botch automatically puts them in an encounter from the chart below (reroll rolls of 1-4).

When they do escape the maze, they will have to deal with four teamsters. Two are guarding the door leading up, the other two are guiding the door to the labyrinth that the characters passed through. Due to the restrictions of the Masquerade, and the need to avoid noisy violence (such as gunshots), firearms are not recommended.

Patrons will ignore any conflict that goes on as long as it is hand-to-hand with nothing more dangerous than a knife. A few might cheer the combatants on. However, characters will have to be careful when using vampiric abilities such as Potence. However, biting with their teeth would not be out of place in the Club.

Every other round while fighting the teamster guards, roll on the random encounter table below. Reroll on a 1-4. If one of these results come up, the appropriate characters have found their way out of the labyrinth and enter the fight.

If the characters fight their way past the teamsters and anyone else, they can exit the club and make it to safety. Go to "Wrap-Up."

2) The characters could set an ambush. There are several places where they might work. Once the characters have prepared an ambush, roll for a random encounter to see who stumbles into their trap. If it is one of the pursuers, give him a Perception + Alertness roll to detect the trap. When somebody wanders into the ambush, roll a die and divide by five (round up). That is the number of rounds until you should roll another random encounter, as the noise draws some of the other individuals who hunt the party. After that, roll another die divided by 5.

The characters will still have to escape the maze. The four men guarding the initial labyrinth entrance and the stairs up (see #1 above) will have to be dealt with. If Orloff or Keaton was eliminated in the maze but you roll for them to enter the battle during every other round, ignore the result and do not roll over.

You also have to consider all of the chasers present. Their actions are as follow:

Ehrich: If the characters are on his side, he will stay with them, helping whenever he can. If they are hunting him, he will never stumble into an ambush. Eventually the characters will have to fight the other pursuing forces. He will use the opportunity to make his escape with Gibson.

Gibson: Is basically a drooling wreck. He will chip in with occasionally senile ramblings that may actually make some sense (your option). Although he still has several mystical abilities, characters will have to persuade him to use them (Manipulation + Empathy, Difficulty 8, at least two successes necessary). Even then, an attempt could malfunction in some peculiar way. Play this as a hindrance (but not a critical one) for the characters.

Karl and Teamsters: Will hunt the characters and attack without mercy. Karl will be unimpressed by any claims of innocence on the characters. He will rant hysterically about how Ehrich "betrayed the Anarchs to those thrice-cursed Ventrues."



The teamsters are loyal to Karl and the Anarch cause, but are not stupid. If they begin to lose, or the characters defeat Karl, they will flee.

Orloff and Blood Dolls: Orloff is intent on killing Gibson, but views the characters as obstacles in his path. If the ranged knife attack encounter is rolled, Orloff's first strike will be at the old Magus. Orloff has commanded the entranced Blood Dolls to attack Gibson, Ehrich, and the characters and to continue until they have succeeded.

Keaton and his Thugs: Keaton is here at Nicolai's orders, primarily to make sure the characters kill Ehrich. Keaton is willing to let the characters do the dirty work. Then he will step in, eliminate them and take the credit himself. However, he does not wish to endanger his standing with the Anarchs. If he comes upon a battle or ambush already in progress involving Karl and/or the teamsters, he will pitch in on their side. This way, he can still get credit for killing Ehrich. The thugs will follow his orders, but flee if the situation goes against them.

Random Encounters

Use this chart in conjunction with the random labyrinth encounter chart in the earlier part of this supplement when rolling for the characters. Roll a single die to use.



Random Encounters Chart

- 1-4 Normal encounter from the Labyrinth encounter chart
- 5 Karl and two teamsters
- 6 Three teamsters
- 7 Orloff and two Blood Dolls
- 8 Two Blood Dolls
- 9 A single telekinetic knife attack from Orloff. Check to see if he surprises the characters, then have him attack from a distance. He will duck back into the labyrinth. Disregard any future rolls that show Orloff walks into an ambush at the current location. His first attack will be against Gibson. Use the rules listed in Scene Five for the characters to deflect a throwing knife. If the characters do not bother to deflect the attack on Gibson, Ehrich will try to deflect it.
- 10 Keaton and the two thugs (Dave and Doug, or Fischbaker and Horn if the first two are out of commission)

Characters

Keaton's Thugs

Dave and Doug's statistics are in Scene One. If they were killed, Keaton has two other thugs, Fischbaker and Horn, with the same statistics.

Teamsters

Equipment: Baseball bats (treat as club), Light Pistol, \$20 ea.

Description: Burly men, wearing workers' clothing.

These men are retainers of various members of Hinds' Anarchs. They are aware of the true nature of those they serve, but do not care. They figure they are helping the union and indulging their own penchant for violence at the same time.

EPILOGUE

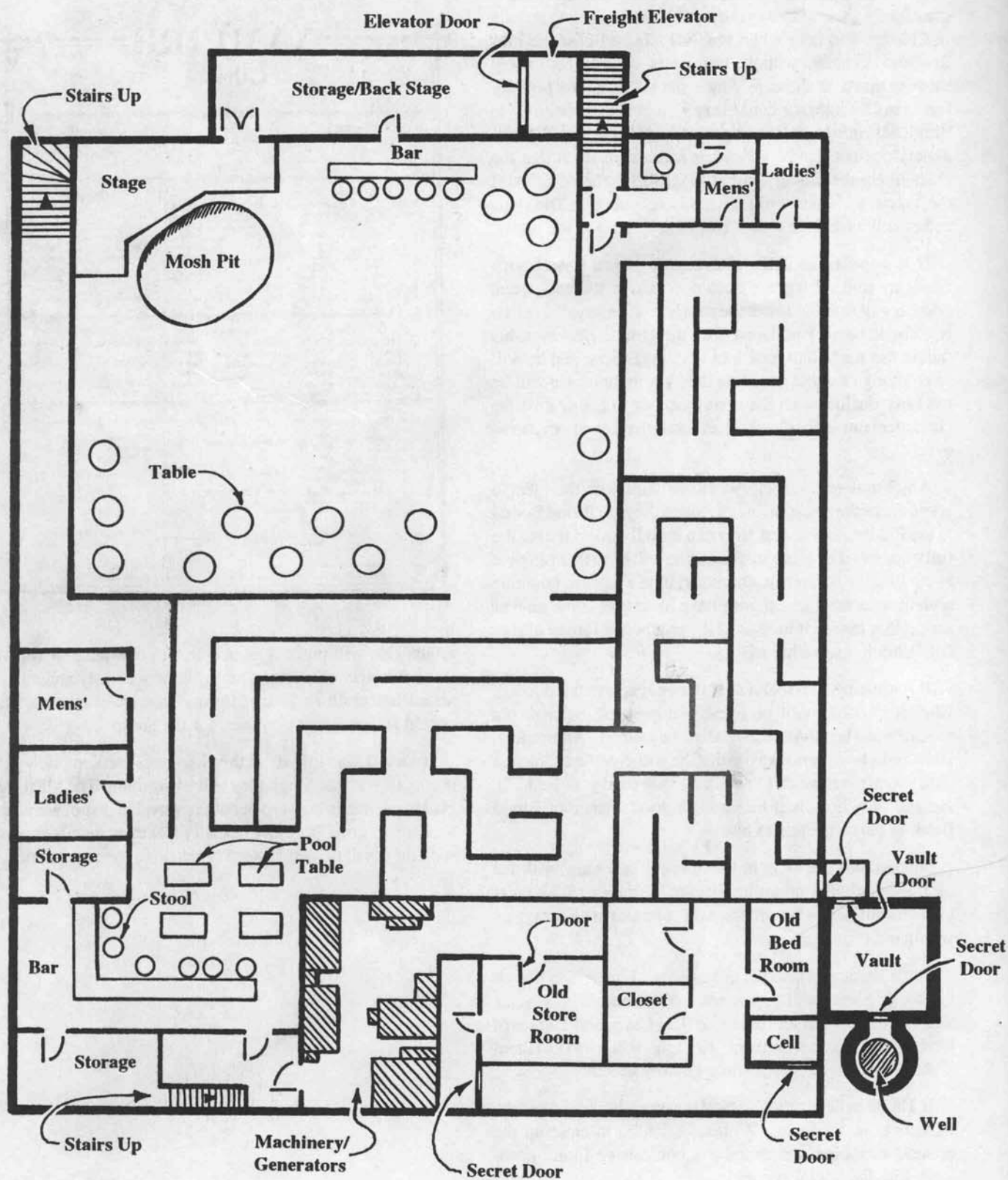
This is not a Scene per se, but wraps up the loose ends of "Grand Elusion."

Note that many of these conditions are not exclusive.

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Teamsters

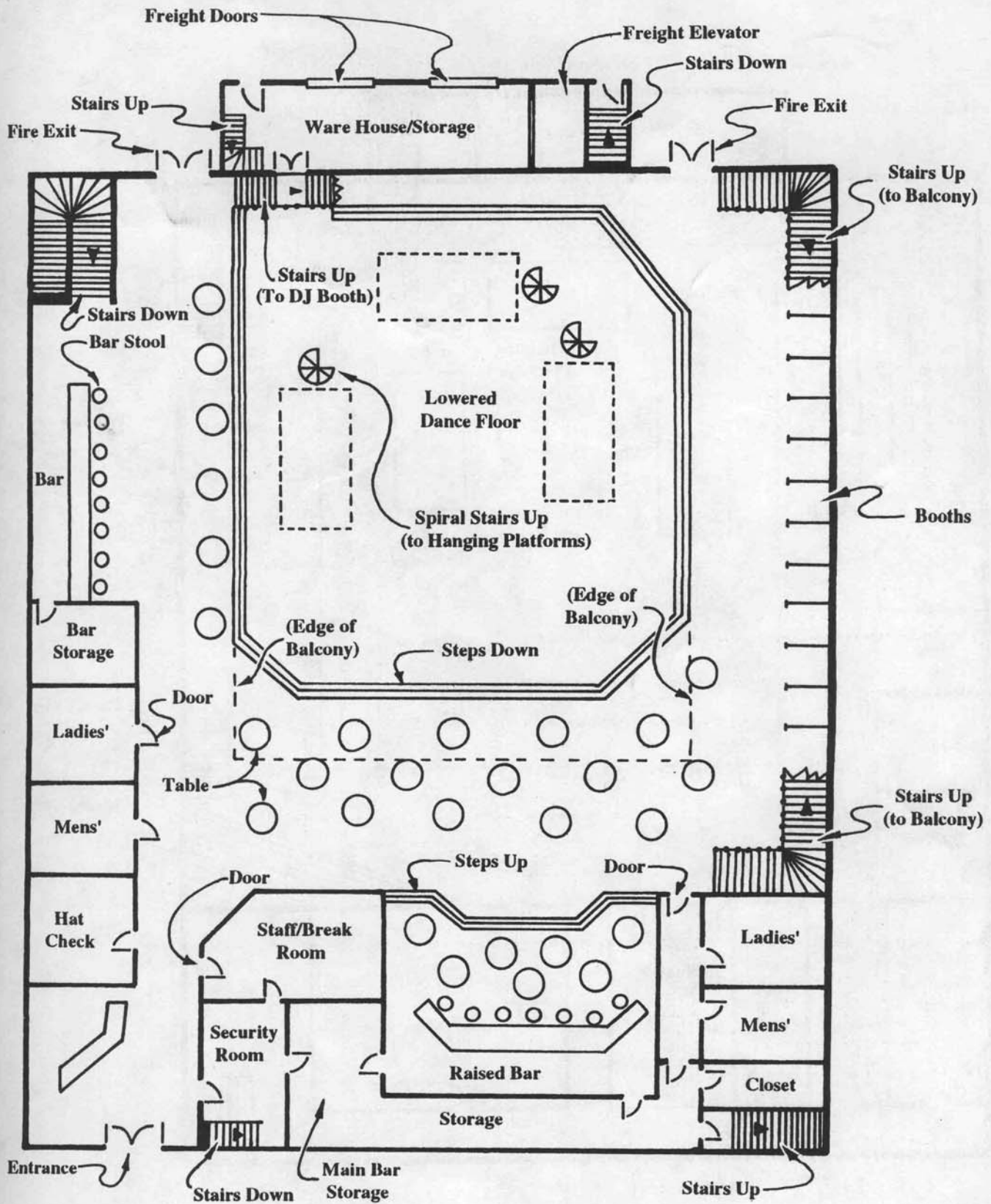
Attributes											
Physical Strength.....●●●●● Dexterity.....●●●●● Stamina.....●●●●●	Social Charisma.....●●●●● Manipulation.....●●●●● Appearance.....●●●●●	Mental Perception.....●●●●● Intelligence.....●●●●● Wits.....●●●●●									
Abilities											
Talents Acting.....●●●●● Alertness.....●●●●● Athletics.....●●●●● Brawl.....●●●●● Dodge.....●●●●● Empathy.....●●●●● Intimidation.....●●●●● Leadership.....●●●●● Streetwise.....●●●●● Subterfuge.....●●●●●	Skills Animal Ken.....●●●●● Drive.....●●●●● Etiquette.....●●●●● Firearms.....●●●●● Melee.....●●●●● Music.....●●●●● Repair.....●●●●● Security.....●●●●● Stealth.....●●●●● Survival.....●●●●●	Knowledge Bureaucracy.....●●●●● Computer.....●●●●● Finance.....●●●●● Investigation.....●●●●● Law.....●●●●● Linguistics.....●●●●● Medicine.....●●●●● Occult.....●●●●● Politics.....●●●●● Science.....●●●●●									
Advantages											
Disciplines _____●●●●● _____●●●●● _____●●●●● _____●●●●● _____●●●●●	Backgrounds Resources _____●●●●● _____●●●●● _____●●●●● _____●●●●● _____●●●●●	Virtues Conscience.....●●●●● Self-Control.....●●●●● Courage.....●●●●●									
Other Traits _____●●●●● _____●●●●● _____●●●●● _____●●●●● _____●●●●●	Humanity ●●●●●●●●●●	Health Bruised <input type="checkbox"/> Hurt -1 <input type="checkbox"/> Injured -2 <input type="checkbox"/> Wounded -3 <input type="checkbox"/> Muted -4 <input type="checkbox"/> Cracked -5 <input type="checkbox"/> Incapacitated <input type="checkbox"/>									
Combat <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th style="width: 50%;">Weapon</th> <th style="width: 50%;">Difficulty</th> <th style="width: 50%;">Damage</th> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </table>	Weapon	Difficulty	Damage							Willpower ●●●●●●●●●●	Blood Pool ○○○○○○○○○○
Weapon	Difficulty	Damage									
Experience _____											
Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 3 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)											



Basement Level: The Labyrinth

Scale: 1 inch = 35 feet

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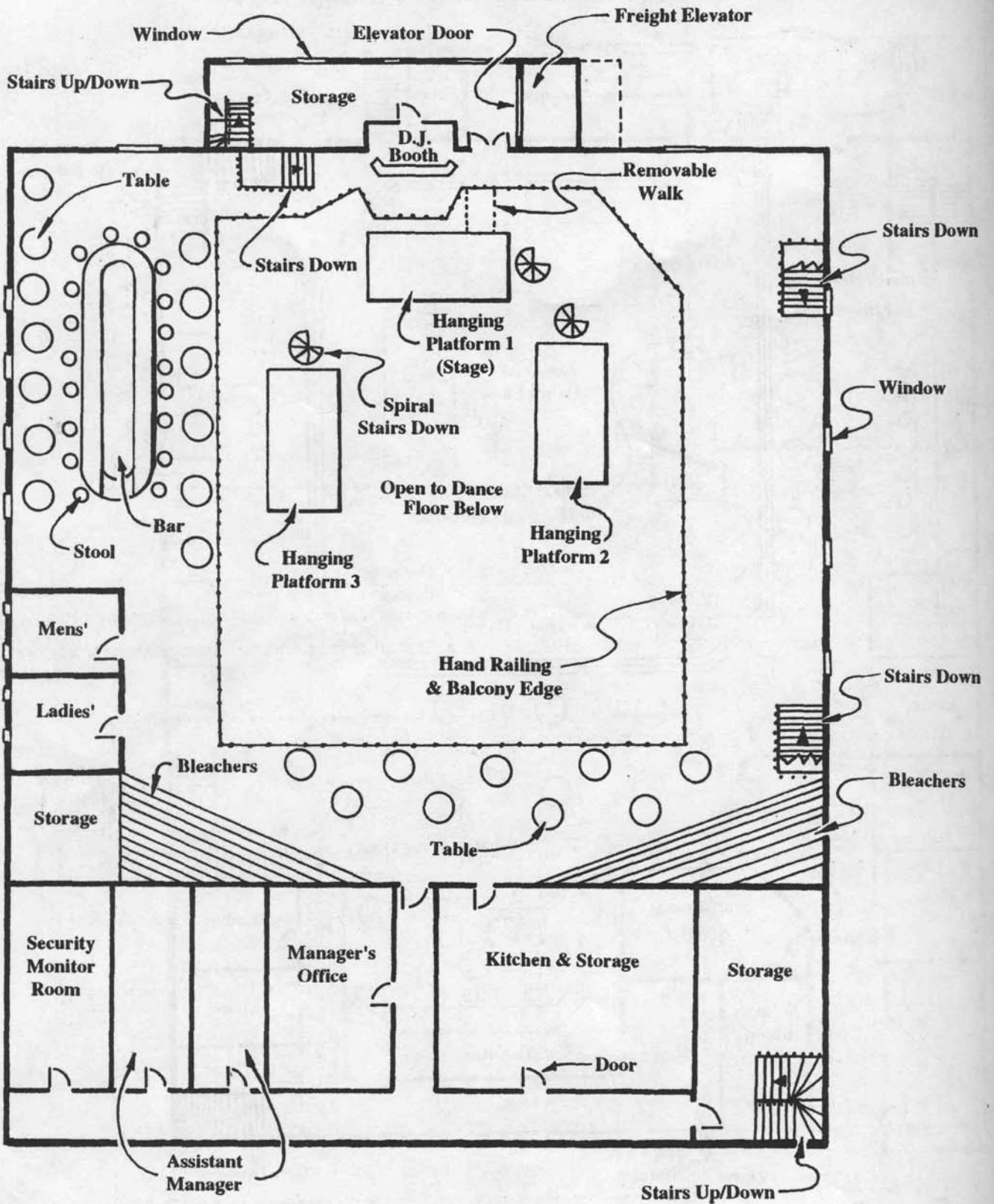
Level One: The Dance Floor

Scale: 1 inch = 35 feet

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• 1/0/2 •



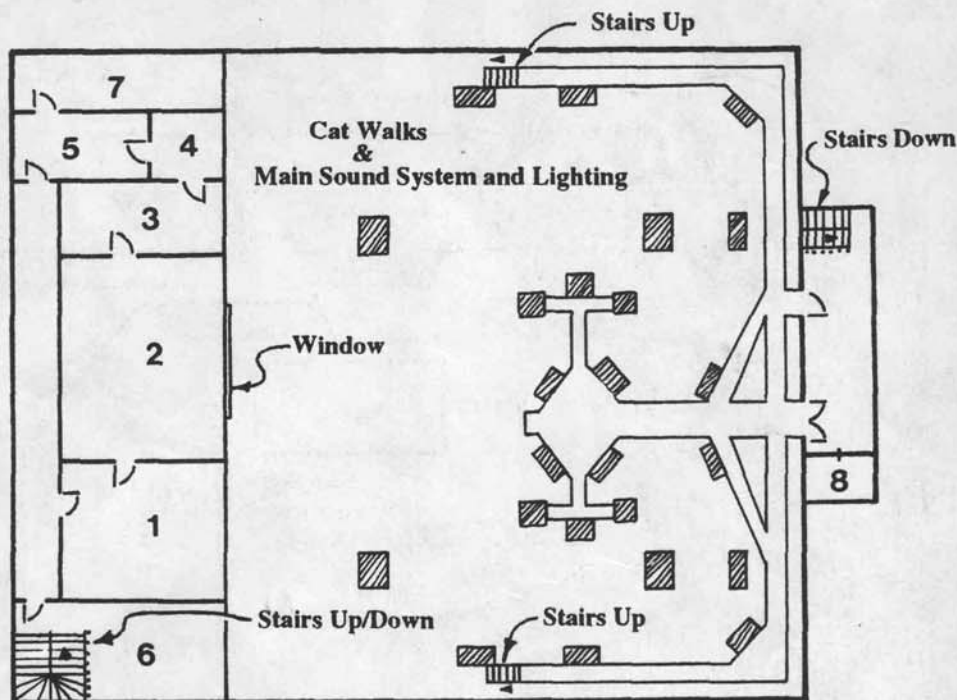
Level Two: The Balcony

Scale: 1 inch = 35 feet

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Floor Plan Key

- 1 Brennon's Office
- 2 Private Lounge
- 3 Bedroom
- 4 Full Bath
- 5 Annex Room
- 6 Storage (unused)
- 7 Cell
- 8 Freight Elevator
- 9 Storage



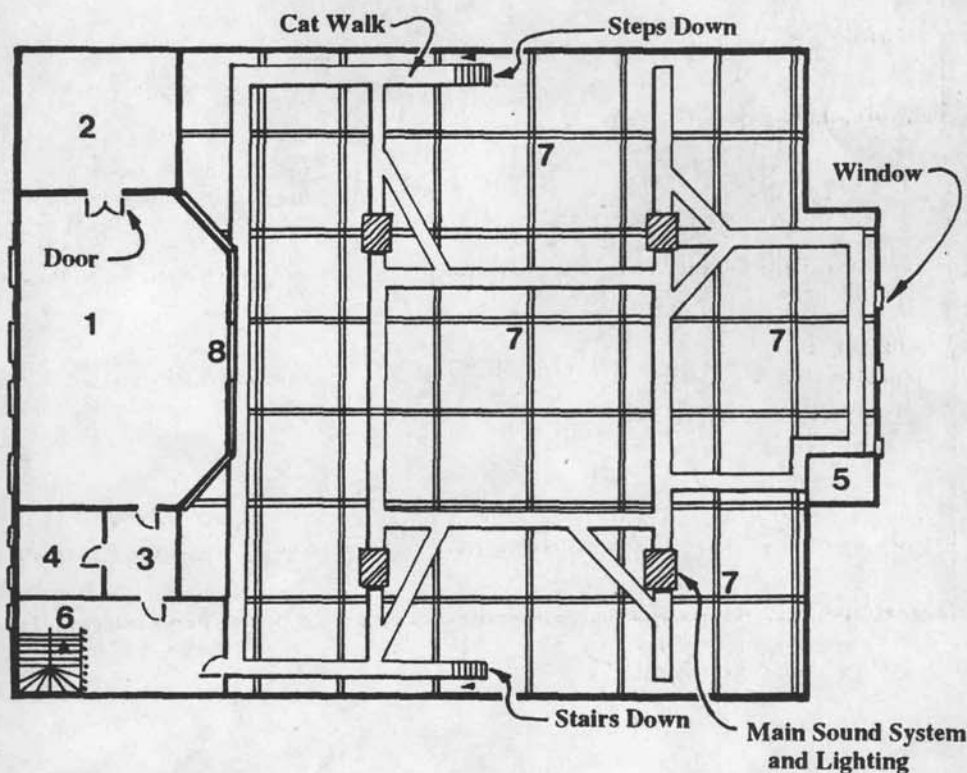
Scale: 1 inch = 70 feet



Level Three: Brennon's Rooms

Floor Plan Key

- 1 VIP Observation Lounge & Bar
- 2 Art Gallery
- 3 Annex Room
- 4 Full Bath
- 5 Elevator Motor
- 6 Up/Down Stairs to Roof
- 7 Support Beams Lattice (above)
- 8 Sliding Glass Doors



Scale: 1 inch = 70 feet



Level Four: The VIP Lounge

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THE SUCCUBUS CLUB



The Passion of Life

The pain never goes away. Immortality comes with a price, and the full sum must be paid in tears and blood – your own blood, not the blood of victims. This is a horror which cannot be escaped, but can be forgotten, if only briefly. Only in the places of dance and pounding music, where the scent of blood reddens the air, can solace be found.

That is why the Kindred gather at the Succubus.

That is why they are drawn back.

That is why they die there.

The Passion of Death

The Succubus Club is a Sourcebook detailing the most notorious nightclub in the Chicago Rack. This book includes not only a complete description of this infamous club, but six complete one-chapter stories, each of them set within its confines.

Cainites know of it as a huge and extravagant dance club where mortal vessels are easily obtained, friends and enemies meet and intrigues and plots are hatched. Only a few know of what ancient secrets it contains,

The Succubus may well become the central meeting spot for your characters, for so many stories start and end there. It is the nexus of this dark city. It is the place of dreams, the place of nightmares.

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