

THE LONG NIGHT

Vampire: The Dark Ages for
Mind's Eye Theatre

Mind's Eye Theatre



THE LONG NIGHT

VAMPIRE: THE DARK AGES®
FOR MIND'S EYE THEATRE™

THE LONG NIGHT

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CENTURIES UNTIL DAWN

A TALE OF THE LONG NIGHT

There was blood on the stones of the balcony.

This was unusual, not because it meant that murder had been done there — Fulk often fed out here on clear nights — but because it meant that Fulk had been messy in his dining. And when Fulk the Proud, one of the most fastidious of all the Cainites of the fledgling kingdom of France, was messy in his feeding, then something was indeed amiss.

Roland stepped onto the stained stone balcony and surveyed the mess. Fulk, of course, was nowhere to be found, probably embarrassed by his lack of control. Roland could see it in his mind's eye now: Some peasant girl or other had probably caught Fulk's eye, and he'd gone and done something rash. Frowning, Roland made a note to check on the household staff to make sure none of the women were missing. As for Fulk, he'd return by morning, no doubt full of contrition over the horrible mess he'd made, and would probably present Roland with yet another hound or hawk in atonement. In the meantime, though, the fool was probably out in the woods, tearing his clothes (which would inevitably produce a whole other round of self-loathing) and frightening the local peasantry. Nothing would come of it, of course, but in the meantime it was an annoyance.

The lord of Champtocé sighed, and motioned for a servant to clean up the mess. Obediently, a short, pale man in Roland's household livery, a sloshing bucket in his hand, moved forward onto the balcony to deal with the spattered blood. In the distance, thunder grumbled a complaint, but Roland was unwilling to wager that the storm would be strong enough to wash the stones clean. Roland liked to leave nothing to chance, from his dress to his politics. He had been forced to take others' word as to his looks these days — mirrors had not been his friends for centuries, not since his Embrace — but in all other things his control was absolute. In the west, the moon was lazily sinking toward the horizon. Closer to the castle, some beast started from cover and thundered through the woods. In the creature's wake, birds briefly fluttered above the treeline.



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With a scowl, Roland turned back into the darkness of the tower chamber. As he stepped out of moonlight and into the gloom to which he was accustomed, he heard only the servant dutifully slopping water on the drying blood.

Dawn arrived, as it was wont to do, but Fulk did not. Roland waited by the portcullis until nearly the last instant, but ere Fulk appeared, the rays of the rising sun forced the lord of the manor back to his bedchamber. He left word with the servants (who, having shared his vigil, seemed more drowsy than was their habit) that any and all aid should be rendered to Fulk should the need arise, then retired.

At sunset, Roland arose. The servants told him that there was no word of Fulk. A trifle concerned, but mostly angry, Roland sent runners to the nearby villages to question the peasants as to whether they had any news of the missing child. Satisfied to wait until the messengers returned, Roland descended to the donjon so that he might sup. For the next few hours at least, the problematic Fulk vanished from mind as well as he had vanished from sight.

Midnight came and the runners returned, but neither brought any word of the missing Toreador. For the first time, Roland began to worry in earnest. He had taken the young fop in, essentially fostering him the way living princes fostered their sons, as a favor to the young fop's sire. For some reason, Severin was unaccountably fond of the overly fastidious Fulk, and would not be pleased if something had happened to his child. Of course, the repercussions would be social rather than military or physical — while respected for his skill at portraiture, Severin was not exactly worthy of fear. Still, Roland would regret needing to find someone else to portray him on canvas should his relationship with Severin sour over this. Finding another artist of the Toreador's caliber might well take decades.

Scowling, Roland found his footsteps taking him back to the balcony on which Fulk had perpetrated his little "accident." The view of the forest below was, as always, magnificent. Roland, as always, ignored it. He paced, pondering what could possibly have happened. Fulk rarely let embarrassment interfere with his comfort, Roland had learned that quite well, and as such there was no reason the younger vampire should not have returned long ago. Seeking some clue, Roland scanned the stones of the balcony again, looking for he knew not what.

He found blood.

The servant whom he'd set to cleaning the previous night had obviously not done an adequate job, and Roland resolved to punish the man. However, it was at this time that he discovered the second disturbance in his normal routine: The servant was missing. When questioned, none of the other servants remembered seeing the pasty-faced man since a few hours before sunrise. Finished with his tasks, he had simply vanished from the grounds of Champocé.

Roland did not take the news well. He spent most of the rest of the night methodically searching the castle for the missing servant, raging all the while. The other servants wisely stayed far from their master while he patrolled his haven, but not too far, lest he call for them and they, being out of earshot, not respond. The consequences of that, they knew, would be dire.

Eventually, mercifully, the night ended. Roland again returned to his darkened bedchamber and slammed the door behind him. Attentive servants heard his last bellowed orders, that the bloodstains be cleaned off the balcony by sunset, and then the sound of a heavy bolt sliding into place.

To say that Roland was astounded that evening when he strode out onto the fatal balcony would be to be guilty of vast understatement. Despite his express wishes, the bloodstains remained. "And who," he bellowed to the heavens in his rage, "is responsible for this outrage?"

"I am, m'lord," came the voice of the missing servant from inside the tower. Roland whirled, fangs bared at the shock of it.

The man stood there, pale and smiling. He still wore Roland's livery, but it was obvious he did so as a mockery. There was blood at the corners of his mouth, and dried blood in his hair. "I have sad news to report. M'lord Fulk will not be returning this night," the servant said, "but, m'lord, I suspect you knew that already."

"You." Roland took a single step toward the treacherous servant; the man did not flinch or back away. "You killed him."

"Indeed." The man bowed slightly. "He was deemed expendable, not to mention foolish and arrogant."

Roland frowned at that, and took another step forward. "I am curious, however, as to why you left the blood for me to find, why you made your guilt so obvious."

The man shrugged. "Because there are more important things at stake than my escape, m'lord. Because with the death of his apprentice Fulk — which you are honor-bound to report — Severin of the Toreador will lose much of the friendship he had for your clan, Magister Roland. He is an influential man, and his shift in affections will alter the minds of many others. Look for this past night's deeds to echo years from now, and to do so in Iberia and Italy, m'lord."

"As for my own part of it, I was instructed to do the deed and then remain behind to be captured. This way, you are certain of knowing the truth — and of knowing fear."

"Fear?" Roland sounded amazed. "You must be insane."

The man smiled, as if to say that his sanity had little bearing on the night's events. "Fear. For if one of your servants can be taken from under you, Embraced, made Autarkis — who is to say that it will not happen again, and again, until one night we slay you? Or would you prefer to know that you have traitors serving you, but not know where? Your home will become your prison then, m'lord. And in the meantime, while you ponder it, you will make mistakes — mistakes for which we will be watching."

Snarling, Roland reached out to tear the traitorous servant asunder, but with a distant roaring sound the man burst into flames. Whimpering, he collapsed into a pile of ash in mere moments, and Roland was forced to skip back lest he be touched by the blaze as well. When the fire died, nothing remained of the traitor that could serve as evidence, or even as a trophy.

Impassively, Roland stared at the minuscule heap of ash, then with infinite deliberation he kicked it. Flakes of what had been a trusted servant scattered on the breeze, some drifting off the balcony into the night. Above, a few clouds shrouded the moon briefly, then moved on. "Alain," called the lord of Champtocé to his most trusted servant, "there's another mess on the balcony. I want you to see to it personally."

"Of course, m'lord," said the pale and smiling Alain, as he emerged from the darkness of the chamber.





CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

WHAT THIS BOOK IS

This is **The Long Night**, a supplement for **Masquerade**, the live-action version of **Vampire: The Masquerade**. **The Long Night** allows you to transplant **Vampire: The Dark Ages** into the world of live-action roleplaying, taking into account all of the vital differences between modern vampires and their forebears of eight centuries ago. **The Long Night** is compatible with **Masquerade**, although certain of the vampiric Disciplines contained within differ from their modern counterparts. If you wish to use the versions included here, feel free to transplant them to your current **Masquerade** games. Otherwise, enjoy **The Long Night** for what it is — and start counting the seconds until dawn.

THE RULES OF SAFETY

Behave yourself so that everyone can enjoy this game. **The Long Night** is meant to be played in the home, at conventions or at other safe locations. At all times, you should remember that it is a game, only a game, and nothing but a game. If you feel yourself getting too wrapped up in what's going on, take a time-out and step back from gameplay for a moment. It's for your own good.

THE ONLY RULES THAT MATTER

Here are the rules of **Mind's Eye Theatre (MET)**, the only rules that absolutely must always be obeyed. These are common sense rules to keep everyone safe and happy with your game: other players, yourself, strangers in the area and the police.

These rules are designed to limit the opportunities anyone has to destroy the fun of your game. They're not intended to interfere with gameplay or your enjoyment; they're here to make sure that you play sensibly and safely.

#1- IT'S ONLY A GAME

This is by far the most important rule. If a character is killed, if a plot falls apart, if a rival wins the day — it's still only a game. Don't take things too seriously, as that will spoil not only your fun but also the fun of everyone around you.

Leave the game behind when it ends. Playing *The Long Night* is a lot of fun; spending time talking about the game is great. There are limits, however. Some of your fellow players are likely to have classes or day jobs, and as such are unlikely to want to hear about your cunning plans for overthrowing the local Tzimisce at 4:32 AM Wednesday. Keep some perspective; it's just a game.

#2 - NO TOUCHING

Never actually have physical contact with other players. No matter how careful you are. Accidents happen, and someone will get hurt. Rely on the rules to cover physical logistics.

#3 - NO STUNTS

Never climb, jump, run, leap or swing from anything during a game. Keep the "action" in your action low-key. If you can imagine you're a vampire lurking in 12th-century Europe, you can imagine that you're leaping from rooftop to rooftop. Avoid attracting the attention of people who aren't playing, and use your imagination to its fullest.

#4 - NO WEAPONS

Fake or real weapons of any sort are absolutely forbidden. Even obviously silly toy weapons are not allowed. Such props give other people the wrong impression as to what you are doing, and in the dark could conceivably be mistaken for the real thing. Swords and other nasty sharp pointy items you buy out of catalogs or at renaissance faires are doubly bad because they look real enough to worry bystanders; it doesn't matter how well a real sword matches your character's image, leave the big piece of metal at home. Use item cards to represent weapons instead.

#5 - NO DRUGS OR DRINKING

This one is a real no-brainer. Drugs and alcohol do not create peak performance. They reduce your ability to think and react, meaning that, among other things, your roleplaying ability will be impaired. Players impaired by drugs or alcohol use are a danger to other players, and to the game as a whole. There's nothing wrong with *playing* a character who's drunk or has accidentally taken an ergot trip, but actually bringing such stuff to a game is in bad taste at best, illegal at worst. Don't do it.

#6 - BE MINDFUL OF OTHERS

Remember, not everyone you see, or who sees you, will be playing the game. A game can be unnerving or even frightening to passers-by. Be considerate of nonplayers in your vicinity, and make sure that if you are in a public area, your gameplay actions

are not going to alarm anyone. Trying to explain to the local gendarmes that you're not really sitting around sharing a goblet of blood on the front lawn of the local library at midnight is going to be a fruitless task. In fact, if you can warn your local police force and merchants about what you're doing *before* you start your game, they may be a bit more sympathetic to your presence.

#7 - THE RULES ARE FLEXIBLE

Feel free to ignore or adjust any of the rules in this book if it will make your game better. We at White Wolf call this "The Golden Rule." If some rule included in this book (beyond the ones listed here) doesn't work for your troupe, change it. But be consistent and fair. Nobody likes rules that change every week or "no-win" scenarios. If your troupe finds a new way to handle, say, *Celerity*, that works better for you than the one in this book, go for it. The idea is to have fun.

#8 - HAVE FUN

Not "Win." Not "Go out and kill everyone else." Just "Have fun." The object of the game is not to win. In fact, there are no rules for "winning." The goal is to tell great stories, not to achieve superiority over the other players. In *The Long Night* it's not about how the game ends, it's about the journey and what happens along the way.

WHAT IS STORYTELLING?

We have been telling each other stories since the earliest days when cavemen acted out the tales of their hunts around their fires. We painted cave walls, pressed reeds into soft clay tablets, inked papyrus and vellum, acted plays, illuminated manuscripts, printed books, filmed movies, scripted radio and television shows, and programmed computers. Now, one of the newest methods of storytelling is actually a return to the oldest form. Live-action roleplaying (LARP), which grew out of the table-top roleplaying games of the '70s, is just the kind of "participatory" tale-telling we can still view among cultures around the globe. It is the same emphasis on character and story that led to the creation of what we call "storyteller" games, which you can find in the myths of our most ancient cultures. The book you hold in your hands is an attempt to explore those universal tales of the Hero's Journey.

WHAT IS MIND'S EYE THEATRE?

This game is probably different from any game you have played before now. In many ways, this is really not a game at all. *The Long Night* is more concerned with stories than winning, rules, game boards or dice. You will find that this game has more in common with childhood games of adventure than with card games or *Monopoly*-type board games. This book contains all the information necessary to catapult you into the worlds of imagination. You create the action, and you choose your own paths. We have a name for this style of game. We call it *Mind's Eye Theatre*.

Playing *Mind's Eye Theatre* is like being in a movie. You and your friends portray the main characters, but the script follows your decisions. The director of this improvisational movie is called the Storyteller; he, along with his assistants, called

Narrators, creates the stage and the minor characters with whom you interact during your adventure. Most scenes are played out in real-time, and always in character. You should only break character when there is a rules dispute or a change of scene which requires adjudication from the Storyteller or Narrators.

THE CHARACTER

When you play **The Long Night**, you take on the persona of a vampire trapped in the Dark Medieval world, an almost invincible predator in a time of fire, steel and faith. Your character can be anyone from any walk of life. The only limit on your character concept (besides the rules) is your imagination. You create a character, then roleplay her over the course of a story and perhaps a chronicle (a series of connected stories). You decide what your character does and says. You decide what risks to accept or to decline.

During the game, you speak as your character. Unless you're talking to a Narrator or Storyteller, whatever you say is what your character says. Because most of what a **Mind's Eye Theatre** player perceives depends on the characters around him, players must be vivid and expressive. The characters direct the plot, but at the same time, the events of the game guide and develop the characters, helping them to achieve the story's goals. To an extent, as a player in a storytelling game, you have a responsibility beyond simply portraying your character. You need to consider the story as a whole and your role in making sure that other players enjoy the game.

Creating a character for **The Long Night** is easy and only takes a few moments. Only a few things are necessary to define a basic character, and once you've done that, you can play the game. There's another phase to creating a character, though, and one that makes playing **Mind's Eye Theatre** all the more rewarding. Your character should be more than just a series of Traits and numbers. Rather, she should be a living, breathing personality with a past, motives, drives, likes, dislikes — everything you want to see from a character in a movie or a novel. So it's probably a good idea to take time to figure out *who* your character is as well as what she is *before* you start playing. While certain details and personality traits will come out while you're playing her, you'll want to have the basics in place before you start playing. It's just like an actor asking his director for his character's motivation.

Characters are the heart and soul of a story. Without them, all the patient efforts of the Storyteller would be for naught. Appreciate the Storyteller's efforts by following the rules and taking an active part in the game.

NARRATORS

In **Mind's Eye Theatre**, Narrators are the people who help the Storyteller present the adventure. Narrators are the impartial judges who describe scenes and events that cannot be staged, adjudicate rules, and occasionally play the roles of antagonists. Generally, enlisting the aid of one Narrator for every 10 players makes for a good ratio. The best number of Narrators for your game usually depends upon the gaming experience of the players; in all probability, the more experienced your players, the fewer Narrators they'll need. Narrators usually play characters of their own as well as helping out certain situations. That way, they can be a part of the action instead of just trying to correct it from the outside.

STORYTELLER

Every game must have a Storyteller, who serves as the ultimate authority and final judge in any game of *The Long Night* you play. The Storyteller creates the basic elements of the plot, and makes sure that the story unfolds well — in addition to doing all the same kinds of things the Narrators do. Storytelling is a demanding job, but it is also a very rewarding one, for it is the Storyteller who creates the framework upon which the players build their experiences.

The Storyteller makes certain the story has content, interesting hooks and a narrative flow. This does not mean that a Storyteller should just sit back and dictate the plot — characters who don't have free will are no fun to play. Instead, a Storyteller just creates the "framework" elements of the plot, then turns the players loose to see what happens.

During the game the Storyteller must be watchful and ready to create new elements to make sure that the story works out well. He is also responsible for safety, ensuring that all of the players have something to do and that everyone is abiding by the rules. Although performing all of these tasks simultaneously can be exhausting, the sense of accomplishment gained from creating a successful story makes the whole process worthwhile.

In the end, the goal of *The Long Night* is for everyone to have fun.

PROPS

Props can be anything that the Storyteller approves of that helps to define your character, including costumes, makeup and jewelry. Have fun and employ any props that you feel are necessary to enhance your character. However, if you have any doubts as to whether a prop (such as anything remotely resembling a weapon) will be allowed in-game, consult your Storyteller and abide by her decision.

VAMPIRE: THE DARK AGES

The basic premise of *The Long Night* is derived from the table-top roleplaying game, *Vampire: The Dark Ages*. It is not necessary to own or know *Dark Ages* in order to play *The Long Night*, but the world of *Dark Ages* has many useful source materials which can be easily adapted for games based on this book.

ELEGANTLY SIMPLE

This game was designed to be easy to learn and easier to play. *The Long Night* is a storytelling game. The rules are aimed at resolving conflicts quickly so that players can stay with the story without ever stepping outside their characters in order to figure out what happened. We have made every effort to create rules that maintain the integrity of the story and the background in which the story is set.

SETTING

A thousand years of history mixes with dark fantasy to create *The Long Night*. The Dark Medieval world differs not too much from actual history, at least on the

surface. But as shadows lengthen and night falls, the undead wake and walk, war, love and plot. In truth, the blackest aspects of "Dark Medieval" (the phrase we use to describe the world of **The Long Night**) are created less by the monsters stalking the darkness, and more by the total bleakness that has fallen over the world. Life is miserable for the vast part of humanity. Plague, war and famine ride unhindered. Faith slips away into simple dogma, where laws are obeyed out of fear and habit, rather than a sense of what is right. By blending Dark Medieval and history, we create the stage on which **The Long Night** falls.

1197 - CHANGES FOR GOOD AND FOR ILL

The 12th century, just ending in the year 1197 (during which we recommend you set **The Long Night**), saw powerful forces begin to change both Cainite and mortal society. The so-called "12th Century Renaissance" heralded the founding of the great French and Italian universities and the re-introduction of classical knowledge from Arabic sources (along with the vast learning of the Muslim cultures themselves, which traveled up through the Iberian peninsula). New forms of romantic literature mixed with the rhetoric of the Crusades to prod chivalric notions of honor and love into existence, as Christians struggled to hold onto the Holy Land in the face of a warlike but gloriously civilized people. The sun had not yet risen on the Dark Ages, but perhaps humanity had moved past its darkest hour.

The future for the Cainites was not so kind, although they did not know it. This is the end of their most glorious age, a time when undead knights can ride through the night to their private battles, when vampires can more openly proclaim their superiority to the herd, when they can rule in their own names instead of using puppets, where they are the true masters of the night. But the Inquisition looms on the horizon as the vampire population begins to swell. In 1197, at least, the descendants of Caine are not yet afraid of men.

MEANING, ISSUES AND SOCIETY

In 1197, mortals believe in vampires. They likewise believe in ghosts, goblins, witches, werewolves, ogres, trolls and fairies. The living see a world peopled with myriad supernatural beings, many of them servants of the Devil, and almost all of them malevolent. Any night can bring a creature of evil out of the darkness, and anyone might be a vampire, a witch or a demon (or something else) in disguise. The secret to survival is to light a bright fire, stay inside with lots of people, and hang a cross (or a horseshoe) over your door.

Vampires also believe in vampires, and likewise in the other supernatural denizens of the Dark Medieval world. Cainites' knowledge of their own kind is obviously reasonably precise, but most vampires are products of the same superstitions that mortals subscribe to. Unless, through her age and experience, a vampire has gained direct knowledge of the other dwellers in the Long Night, she is likely to have little more accurate information than any mortal.

Vampires generally hold to the myth of being descended from Caine, the first murderer, whose curse extends to all his descendants. This curse is tempered by the love of Lilith, from whence come the vast powers (called Disciplines) that vampires can develop.

THE FACTS OF UNLIFE

Feeding

Vampires must drink the blood of mortals in order to survive. Some vampires have "herds" of mortals from which they feed, while others drink only from the animals of field and wood. Most vampires seem to find animal blood unsatisfying, a poor substitute for the sweet vitae of humanity and something to be relied on only in need.

Feeding need not always kill the vessel. A Cainite can choose not to drain his vessel, healing the wound his fangs inflict by licking it. Many vampires can remove or alter memories, causing their vessels to forget the so-called "Kiss." Those Cainites without that power often feed on sleeping or wounded mortals, relying on stealth to keep themselves safe.

Overpopulation

Vampires, unlike mortals, exist free from the threats of plague or famine. Mortal wars are rarely threats to Cainites, and the unwitting mortal kine provide ready sustenance for vampire thirsts. By 1197 the mortal population has increased over the hardscrabble days after the fall of Rome, but the vampiric population has exploded during that same time. Competition between vampires for domain, herd and power has become fiercer than at any time in memory.

Some vampires seek to emulate the legendary First City of Caine, where he and his childer ruled as gods. These vampires flaunt their power before mortals, despite the frightened warnings from other Cainites. Only time will tell how these burgeoning pressures will combine and explode. Regardless, it is clear to all Cainites that change of some sort will come — and soon.

Degeneration and Dreams of Salvation

A vampire is cursed by God, damned with the mark of Caine, cast outside of the society that produced him. Vampires in the Dark Medieval age tend to take ideas about damnation and salvation quite seriously, and suffer under the notion they are damned. Some vampires destroy themselves (and often those around them) in fits of despair, but most find a way to cope. Most vampires adopt a philosophy, called a Via, or Road, seeking a set of principles to guide their unlife. There are many Roads, some of which embrace evil and some of which attempt to make amends to Heaven for the evils of the vampiric state. Vampires can be driven by guilt or delusion, and the desire for damnation, salvation or simple survival.

Salvation for the Cainites could lie in the myth of Golconda, a legendary state of enlightenment in which instinct and self-control merge harmoniously. In such a state, a vampire can control his own inner Beast, and free himself of the need to feed from the living. But such a state replaces God with conscious struggle as the source of salvation. As such, seekers of Golconda are often berated as having turned away from both God and Satan, selfishly believing that self-acceptance is more important to salvation than the mercy of God. As a result, fewer 12th century vampires seek Golconda than did their pre-Christian predecessors.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Generation, age, clan and sect determine a vampire's place in the society of the world's Cainites.



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Generation refers to the number of generations an individual vampire is removed from the legendary first vampire, Caine. The closer one is to Caine, the more potent that vampire's blood. Generally speaking, the lower the generation, the more powerful the vampire. Age, however, plays a strong role in determining power as well. While a lower generation vampire has a higher ceiling of power that he can someday reach, an older vampire has had time to develop her powers to the fullest extent and may be more effective. The dual relationship between age and generation shapes the individual vampire's might, while clan and sect work both to determine a Cainite's allies (and rivals) as well as what aspects of vampiric physiognomy she might manifest

• Generation

Caine: Legend says that Caine is the sire of all vampires. No one has ever been able to claim with utter certainty that they have met Caine, and no one knows if he still exists (or ever existed). Caine is the sole member of the first generation, and if he still exists, his powers would be essentially limitless.

Second Generation: *The Book of Nod*, the primeval source of vampire legend, claims that Caine had three children who lived with him in the city of Enoch. If the book is true, all three were slain during the Flood or the war that followed. The eldest vampires still living refuse to speak about the matter, but if any of the second generation were still extant, they would be as demigods to other vampires.

Third Generation: Known as the *Antediluvians* ("predating the Flood"), these vampires are the legendary forefathers of the clans. It is believed that seven of them are still active. They lurk in the shadows, fighting a silent war against each other through pawns and guile, rather than open conflict. The eternal struggle among these ancient beings and their tools has become known as the *Jyhad*, a word that brings fear to younger vampires. The powers of the Antediluvians can only be guessed at, but surely must be immense.

Fourth and Fifth Generations: Called the *Methuselahs*, these Cainites are the favored tools of the Antediluvians as they make war. As a result of millennia of conflict, few Methuselah remain active, save for those who remain hidden to protect themselves from Jyhad and Amaranth. The rare exceptions are among the world's most powerful princes.

Sixth and Seventh generations: These are the most powerful vampires other Cainites are likely to encounter. They are the *elders* of Cainite society. Most of Europe's princes come from their ranks, and even those who have not claimed the title of prince usually possess vast influence.

Eighth and Ninth generations: These vampires linger between the ranks of elder and the youngest neonates. The *ancillae* of vampire society often come from these generations, though this is a term largely based on age. These vampires are rarely able to claim a prince's title for themselves, but often are important vassals to a monarch.

10th and 11th generations: Often called *neonates*, these are the most modern vampires (usually little more than a century old, at most), who still hold some power and respect in the Cainite world.

12th and 13th generations: There are very few vampires of these generations (and even fewer beyond). They are considered to be unworthy of notice, and most are treated with contempt. It is rumored that the blood of those beyond the 13th generation is too thin to pass on the Curse.

- Age

As stated above, age and generation do not always align, but generally the eldest vampires are Methuselah in generation and have lived for millennia. "Elders" are usually between 200 and 1000 years, the "ancillae" 100 to 200, and the rest younger. There are exceptions to these trends, and several terms of classification require specific explanation:

Caitiff: Very rare in the medieval period. These are vampires without clan, and generally without prestige or any social position.

Childe: The newly created vampire is treated as a childe until she has proved herself. This testing period can last for several decades, while the childe remains with her sire, learning how the wheels of vampiric existence turn. The term can also be used as an insult for a foolish vampire.

Neonate: Usually the youngest generations, this word most specifically denotes vampires who have yet to carve their own niche in society. A vampire who lives for a century or so, regardless of generation, is considered ancille.

Ancilla: The youngest class of vampire with true responsibility and social power. The time from Embrace until one is considered ancilla varies widely.

Autarkis: Outlaws, vampires who refuse to obey any prince. Weak Autarkis generally do not live long, but older, more powerful Autarkis can carve out a space of respect and survive.

Mortal society, as discussed below, lacks the potential flexibility of the vampiric world. Vampires can move within their society, unlike most mortals. By dint of sheer tenacity, or by aggressively seeking and gaining power, disadvantages of generation and sire can be overcome. The Amaranth can lower a Cainite's generation, increasing her blood's potency, but it is a dangerous track to follow. Political manipulation and carefully choosing one's allies can garner more respect and authority. But the risks are terrible for those who play this game, and the Final Death awaits any Cainite who makes a mistake. Pick your allies, and your battles, carefully.

CLAN

Power and position come not only from age and generation, but also from the lineage of your sire. Vampires are divided into 13 clans, and the clans war ceaselessly amongst each other for power. An ancille Ventrue in a Ventrue-held city will likely possess a great deal more respect and clout than an ancille Tremere of the same age and generation living in the same town.

Clan, age and generation merge with one final element to determine how a vampire fits into the larger society of his kind. That aspect is sect.

SECTS

Several sects are the main political forces in Kindred society, crossing barriers of age, generation and clan. Some are informal groupings of convenience, while others are highly ritualized societies. Many vampires are not clearly members of any sect, simply participating in the highly feudalistic unlife of the European city-state.

Inconnu

The survivors of the Roman era, these patricians still have great influence over the other vampires of Europe. According to rumor, they lurk beneath Europe's great cities, especially Rome, from whence they seek to control their younger brethren. Only this desire for control unites the Inconnu. Toreador, Tzimisce and Brujah are never part of this sect, as they remember far too clearly the lessons of Carthage and Dacia.

The Furores

Outlaws among the Cainites, the Furores are banished to society's fringes, drawing their members from all levels of the third estate. A merchant city coterie and a troupe of undead actors could be considered Furores, along with the wandering band of outlaws who hide by day and raid by night.

Those outside the Furores tend to view them as wild and chaotic, lacking in even rudimentary knowledge of how vampires are supposed to act. In fact, most Furores know the Traditions quite well, but have chosen to walk the shadow's edge. Second or third childer frequently turn to the Furores, giving up hope of attracting their sire's attention away from the eldest "sibling."

Furores' society is not as chaotic as those involved in the interplay of vassals and lords would like to believe. The "thieves" have developed a guildlike structure, requiring those wishing to join a particular group to pass through initiation rites before welcoming them in full. As cities begin to grow in importance, the Furores' influence expands along with them. When led by the Ravnos among them, the Furores practice thievery, and have begun to insinuate themselves into the criminal population. When led by Toreador or Brujah, these Cainites support artisans, merchants and scholars. As predisposed to manipulation as other vampires are, the Furores choose burghers, guild masters and merchants as their favorite pawns.

Autarkis

Young vampires seeking freedom from the Inconnu and other elders, the Autarkis are neonates, malcontents and rebels against the rule of any prince. They travel relentlessly, seeking freedom, safety, blood and plunder — to stay in one place is to invite destruction. Some travel alone, some in large, violent packs. Their enemies refer to them as "plague flies," for it is said that the Autarkis follow the plague from city to city, feeding off the dead and dying.

The Promethians

The Promethians are a small sect, named for the Titan Prometheus, who braved the wrath of the gods to bring fire to mortals. These Cainites brave the wrath of ancient vampires to follow the Via Humanitas. Promethians wish to build a society in which vampires and mortals can coexist in peace, and in which younger vampires can resist the ancients through this alliance with mortality. Unsurprisingly, the voice of the would-be bringers of fire is weak.

LIFE AT THE TOP

The basic rule of Cainite society is simple: The most powerful vampire, usually the oldest, rules. Recently, these vampires have begun to use the title "prince," but the position has existed ever since one vampire asserted dominance over another. At

times one prince may hand over the reins of power to another, or have them wrested away, but in theory, the eldest vampire rules absolutely. More recently, other titles have crept into Kindred society. A prince commonly names sheriffs and seneschals, for example, to enforce the peace among his vassals. Furthermore, titles can be handed out (or removed) at a prince's whim. Titles can be given as a reward for service.

FEALTY

A prince rules by various means. She can wield her personal might, and enforce her decisions by making her subjects fear what she can do. She can create factions, and play them against each other. Certainly, a prince must have at least some support from his subjects, and the extent of this support often determines the extent of a prince's powers. External factors also come into play. How strong is the local Church? Do powerful Lupines threaten? These threats could cause an area's Cainites to rally around a prince, or betray a disliked prince to his enemies. Some princes rule absolutely. Some are ruled by their councils. There are no absolutes, only ever-changing tendencies.

GHOULS AND CHILDER

One of the major powers of princes is the ability to restrict the creation of ghouls and other vampires. Ghouls (mortals fed on the blood of Caine but not Embraced) develop a few of the powers of vampires, but retain the ability to walk in the sun. As such, a ghoul makes a superb servant for any Cainite. Princes use ghouls to guard them during the day, or to act as their hands for daylight tasks. A strong prince will punish any vampire who creates a ghoul without permission — if he gets caught. Punishments for Embracing without permission are even stricter, and almost always include killing the new childe.

THE TRADITIONS

Being prince is not all power and prestige; there are duties to be attended to as well. A prince must, in order to rule effectively, enforce the central Traditions of vampiric existence. The Traditions are an unwritten code of behavior that most vampires attempt to follow and enforce for the good of each Cainite and the species as a whole. The Traditions are:

The First Tradition: The Legacy

The first Tradition warns against trying to challenge the divine (or perhaps infernal) order. A vampire should neither feed like a beast, nor seek to return to mortality. To challenge this Tradition is to issue a direct challenge to divine wisdom.

The Second Tradition: Destruction

Only an elder can kill other vampires, and only an older vampire can kill a younger one. Generally, the prince, the eldest vampire, controls the right of destruction within his domain.

The Third Tradition: Progeny

Only the prince can grant permission to create a new vampire, on pain of Final Death for both childe and sire.

The Fourth Tradition: Accounting

If a childe is Embraced, the sire must care for him until he is ready for independence. The sins of the childe are the responsibility of the sire, and the sire will be ordered to make recompense for them. Thus, vampires try to choose carefully when they Embrace.

The Fifth Tradition: Domain

Within a region that a vampire can successfully claim as her domain, that vampire's word is law. None may hunt within it (using up resources) without permission. Keeping a valuable domain sacrosanct, however, can be quite difficult.

The Sixth Tradition: The Silence of the Blood

One mortal, compared to one vampire, is a puny creature. But should the vast mass of humanity ever discover the true extent of the vampiric population, the combined might of the Church, the armies of the nobles and the sheer masses of peasantry driven by fear and anger could pose an enormous threat to the Cainites of the Dark Medieval world. This Tradition demands secrecy. Those who violate that secrecy are to be killed.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

While many of the Traditions demand Final Death for those who violate them, princes have a range of punishments from which they can choose if they wish. Usually, a prince simply calls a Blood Hunt, and sends out his elite guards and ghouls to track down the victim. The prince is the only figure who can call a Blood Hunt, though other Cainites have tried to do so, with varying degrees of failure.

Before any punishment is meted out, guilt must be determined (to the satisfaction of the prince and the subjects). In Dark Medieval vampiric existence, ordeals are used to test for guilt for any crime, whether a violation of the Traditions, or a lesser violation (such as invading a vassal's feeding grounds). Ordeals come in many fashions, and the prince has complete control of the degree of difficulty. The most common include:

- Trial by combat
- Ordeal by fire
- Ordeal of purifying light

Ordeals tend to be unfair to the accused. Modern ideas of innocence and guilt do not apply to the medieval world. If a prince wants a vampire to die, then he can create an ordeal that is literally impossible to survive. Alternatively, if the ruler feels the need to have an ordeal (perhaps to placate her subjects), but wishes the vampire to live, she can set out difficult, but not impossible, tasks to accomplish. As always, specifics are left up to those with power.

SAFETY IN THE NIGHT, SAFETY BY DAY

The greatest threat to a medieval vampire comes from other vampires. Therefore, those vampires who wish an ordered society have developed ways of meeting safely with their fellow Cainites. From this latter need comes the Elysiums.

ELYSKIM

The Elysiums thrived during the Roman era, but are much less common in the "barbaric" north. Traditionally, a city's Elysium is a neutral meeting ground where all violence is forbidden. In Elysium, enemies can gather together to arrange the parameters of their next conflict, or the repercussions of their last one. Friends, or at those who are not currently enemies, can come together to discuss music, art or philosophy. The greatest princes hold majestic courts, parodying their mortal counterparts. For the elders, Elysium has become a place of amusements, an arena in which to seek some respite from the vast boredom of immortality. Of course, the older a vampire is, the more extreme his diversion must be to satisfy a creature who has, in fact, seen everything before. Torture, dominating Thralls and kine into grotesque *tableaux vivants*, and any game of excess and debauchery can be found in this sort of Elysium, often to the distress of the younger vampires in attendance.

THE MORTAL WORLD

The Dark Medieval society is cradled by the feudal structure. Power comes from lands held and military might. There is no concept of equality, free expression or individuality. There is no room for social movement. A peasant's child will live in poverty and die young, regardless of ability or potential, because he is the son of a peasant. A woman will first live under the domination of her father, and then her husband. The Dark Medieval world is not the historical medieval world, but it is tied to and guided by history to the extent determined by the Storyteller. Here, then, are some basic guidelines to medieval mortal life.

Medieval life, by modern standards, is a very unpleasant existence. Food is scarce and unflavored, drink is flat and often dangerous, life is short and plagues (of all sorts, not just the Black Death) ravage populations. A peasant might one day wake up to find a thousand mercenaries under the command of the local lord tromping through freshly planted fields — fields from which that same lord would later demand a share of the crops. Animal and human waste litters the streets. Torches fill the air with smoke, causing lung disease. Forget, for a moment, the glamorous images of medieval fantasy and fall into the reality of true medieval gloom. Life is generally brief, unpleasant, fraught with danger and filled with few comforts. It is, however, the only life a medieval person knows, and all try to make the best of it. Christianity, providing a hope for a better life in the next world, offers solace. Violence often provides a way out, or at least the promise of riches.

There is contrast, of course. The magnificence of royal castles and strongholds, the art patronised by the Church, the glory of tournaments and armies at muster — these stand in stark juxtaposition to the misery of the ruck and run of peasantry. It is this basic inequality, played out among mortals and walking dead, that drives the conflict at the heart of the Dark Medieval world.

THE THREE ESTATES

The simplest way to understand the medieval world is to divide it into the so-called three estates: those who fight, those who pray and those who work. Clearly, the third of these estates is by far the largest, and lumping in peasants with merchants and artisans, but this type of world view is typical of the medieval mentality.

THE NOBILITY

The military, the landholders, the ruling families

The great nobles own the land, while petty nobles gain smaller bits of land in exchange for money and military service. Such men are trained from youth to fight, but they also must enforce the law, administer their lands (especially the lesser nobles, as the great lords hire others to do their work), and serve the royal households. While the greatest lords rule in opulent luxury (although, to be honest, the King of England's palaces were cold, damp and smelly, while the food was underspiced and the ale flat), the least of the nobles are barely distinguishable from well-to-do yeomen peasants. In between these two extremes rest the majority of the nobility. These barons and wealthy knights maintain castles and fortified manors, ruling the peasants from secure positions and behind siege defenses.

Vampires who try to maintain the fiction of a noble existence often find that the strain is greater than they could have imagined. These Cainites must function as lords of the mortal world, but also obey the greater, often titleless, lords of the unliving realm. They must rule without appearing during the day, and such nocturnal behavior cannot go unnoticed for long — not in a domain where peasants earnestly do believe in vampires, demons, werewolves, witches, ghosts and goblins. A Cainite lord must rely on kine proxies and ghouls, appointing them to important positions to enforce the law and manage the estates. Reeves and sheriffs are very important positions for a Cainite noble to fill with people he can trust.

WORKERS

From a noble's perch, there is little difference between a peasant and a merchant. However, the myopia of a noble's position should not be confused with the truth of the matter. A peasant is tied to the land, often by law. The vast part of the products of peasant labor goes to their lords or to the Church. If medieval life in general was harsh, the life of the peasant was the worst of all. With only the skills of the farmer (which, while vital, did not bring in a great deal of wealth or stability), and often legally tied to the land as serfs, peasants died young, suffered the worst scourges of disease, war and famine, and had little, if any, hope of improvement.

A vampire trying to live amongst the peasantry would find the task nearly impossible. Peasant life begins with sunrise, and ends with sunset, almost by definition. Mass would be impossible for vampires to attend. It is possible, through ghouls and explaining absences from the fields, Mass and festivals as "service at the manor," that an Embraced serf could maintain the charade for a few years. Still, most vampires Embraced from this class quickly try to break free from the bonds that held them as mortals.

Merchants and craftsmen truly come into prominence in the later Middle Ages. In the Dark Medieval world at the close of the 12th century, these men had much more freedom than their agrarian brethren, but little more status. In fact, those who made their living via travel and marketing were engaged in a trade perceived as disreputable. Wealth came to those owning land, not those involved in commerce. Still, a vampire merchant would have much more ability to travel, and could maintain mortal ties much more easily than a peasant or noble could.

CLERGY

While the lords of the Church often have at least as much secular power as the "true" nobility, the medieval Church serves a wide range of functions in society. Almost all the literate people in Europe are clergy, and most libraries are within monastery walls. Art and music belong to the Church, as does education.

Furthermore, the monasteries and dioceses of Europe control vast tracts of land exempt from taxation (usually at least; there are exceptions during wartime) by the king. From Rome, the Pope attempts, with varying degrees of success, to assert authority over secular rulers. In theory, according to Catholic dogma, the clergy play the most important role in life. In this school of thought, the greatest men are those who pray, those who care for the souls of the lesser men. In fact, the Dark Medieval world hosts a great conflict between bishops and kings, as each party tries to assert dominance over the other.

The Church has many powers, chief among them the threat of excommunication. To be cast out from the community of God was the gravest of punishments for a devout man, and an excommunicate no longer had to be obeyed according to the Church. The Church could also drive the swords of secular authority, as evidenced by the Crusades. Before kings went to war, they attempted to receive the blessings of the Pope, or at least their local archbishops. In every war of Catholic against Catholic, both sides wanted to claim (and usually did) that God was on their side. Perhaps even more importantly, in the Dark Medieval world of vampires and werewolves, the Church's rituals have tremendous effect against the hunters of the night — if backed by faith. When these powers are added to the swords of the highly trained Church-knights, such as the Templars or the Hospitalers, not even ancient and powerful vampires are absolutely safe any longer.

For good or ill, the Church is no more immune to corruption than any other mortal institution. A man in doubt quickly finds that his faith serves him not at all against a vampire, and many vampires have found positions of power inside the Church itself. The role of the Cainite clergyman is a dangerous one, however, as there is always the peril of being brought into the presence of True Faith.

BELIEF

Religion and folklore intermingle within the medieval mind. Most Europeans are Christian, with Catholics to the west and the Orthodox to the east. There exist small pockets of Jews and tiny remnants of paganism in isolated places (such as Lithuania, far to the north in Lapland, and in the mountains here and there in Eastern Europe). Most common, however, are folk beliefs of the common people that have been adapted to fit into the Christian world. Holy days once attributed to the lives of the gods are now saints' days, or have been fit into the Christian mythology. Heresies

develop at the hands of those wishing to change the Church, and are either subsumed into Catholic dogma or destroyed. Monastic guides of behavior, for example, went through cycles of revisions, as a group of monks became overly worldly, and a reformer emerged to found a new order to counter the "corruption."

While most common people are Christian, they certainly believe that the world is populated by supernatural entities, both benign and evil. Such creatures are placed within a Christian paradigm, naming the evil creatures as servants of the Devil and the good ones as servants of God. Vampires serve Satan, and receive their powers from Him. This belief is held not only by medieval mortals, but also by many medieval vampires. Some Cainites mourn the "inevitable truth" of this belief, while others relish their perceived infernal origin, but all believe it.

NAMES

First names in the Dark Medieval period are often quite similar to modern ones, and are defined by the country of origin (the Russian *Piotr* becomes the Dutch *Pieter* becomes the Italian *Pietro* becomes the French *Pierre* becomes the English *Peter*). Any name from the New Testament would be a fine choice. Only some Old Testament names are used outside Jewish communities, but for the most part, names related to the kings and prophets work well. Eastern European names have changed little since medieval times, and Vlad, Boris, Anya or Vesna would sound equally right in the Dark Ages or modern times; likewise with Scandinavian names such as Erik, Lars, Ingrid or Kirsten.

The last name in the Dark Medieval world, for both mortal and Cainite, usually refers to either profession or birthplace. Tailor, Blacksmith, Goldsmith, Chapman (a sort of wandering merchant), Taverner, Carter, Cobbler, Miller or any number of other professions serve well as surnames. If a character takes his last name from a place, the preposition "of" (*de* in Spanish or French, *di* in Italian, *von* in German, and *van* in the Low Countries) is placed before the name of the city or village. In French, the "e" in *de* is dropped and the "d" is apostrophized in cases when a vowel begins the name of the place (Bernard de Clairvaux versus Bernard d'Avignon). Among Jews of this time, the name of the father is usually incorporated into the child's name using the syllables *of bat* for a daughter or *ben* for a son (Rachel bat-Eleazar or Reuven ben-Levi). Surnames also designate members of particular clans and families (such as O'Connor in Ireland, or MacClead in Scotland).

WEAPONS

Twelfth-century European weapons were not katanas, not Spanish rapiers, and not elegant, well-balanced, razor-sharp tools designed for intricately choreographed duels. Likewise, 12th-century armor was not the heavy plate mail of the later Middle Ages. Armor consisted generally of light metal and boiled leather, functional instead of decorative. The weapons designed to cut this utilitarian protection may have been slightly sharpened, but relied primarily on their weight to get the job done. Fighting was based as much on strength (being able to deliver a crushing blow past an opponent's guard, rather than dodging around it with complex feints) as on speed, and while the weapons used to bash an enemy served their purpose, they were not the gleaming rapiers that Hollywood would have us believe them to be. Certainly, court weapons were jeweled and luxurious, but they were ceremonial items, useless for real battle.

Of course, along with swords come other weapons — spears, polearms, shields (usually leather), and vastly useful bludgeoning tools like maces. Shields help little when a heavy mace shatters the arm beneath it. Most people at the time only carry eating knives. Some peasants might possess bows, but the vast majority rely on staves and other crude bashing weapons to defend themselves and their homes. Weapons are expensive, after all, another way of maintaining the power gap between the rich (who can afford weapons) and the poor (who cannot).

MONEY

Europe has little gold or silver, and not until the colonial era did large amounts of bullion find its way into the hands of European rulers. While there was some money (of various metals, depending on the region), the common people existed in a barter-based society. They paid taxes (or tithes) with part of their crop. They bought what they could not grow with their crop. Only the clergy and the nobles regularly held actual silver coins in their hands, and even then, only rarely.

GEOGRAPHY

In the Dark Medieval world, Europe is dominated by a number of small kingdoms. The Holy Roman Empire is the largest state in Europe, and covers Germany, northern Italy and part of western France. It is, however, divided internally and suffers from fractious politics. England, ruled by Richard “the Lionheart,” also controls Wales and northern France, and theoretically Ireland as well. Unsurprisingly, all three of those regions periodically undergo rebellions. Richard, however, has spent his reign on the Crusade, leaving his brother John to manage the kingdom (and to raise huge taxes in order to pay for Richard’s ransom). France, under Philip II, is powerful and intent on regaining the Norman possessions from England.

Further east, Constantinople, under Emperor Alexius III, controls much of Turkey and Serbia, and is in constant conflict with the Muslim nations on its borders. On the fringes of Europe are Hungary, Poland and Cyprus (called the Kingdom of Jerusalem at times, but the city of Jerusalem belongs to the Muslims). Scotland, Russia, Bulgaria and the Scandinavian lands complete the picture of the larger states. Iberia, or Al-Andalus, consists of a number of small Catholic kingdoms fighting the battle of the *Reconquista* against the Moors. In the West, only the Pope has any authority over all of these kingdoms, and his power depends largely upon the times. In 1198, as Celestine III dies and is replaced by Innocent III, the power of the papacy begins to rise.

HUNTERS AND HUNTED

Although vampires fancy themselves the ultimate predators, even in the Dark Medieval world, there are many who would beg to differ — and who have Cainite ashes as proof of their arguments. The vampire who attempts to kill anything that poses an obstacle to him will quickly learn that not every problem can be solved through brute strength, as the night harbors powers even greater than those of Caine’s childer — and the daytime belongs to the deceptively dangerous kine.

Templars and Church Knights: With the power of the Church supporting the might of their swords, these foes are dangerous indeed. The knights’ ability to rally



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townsfolk against "the forces of Lucifer" — real or imagined — can pose a serious threat to any Cainites who cross their path.

Mortal Authorities: Dismissed by some as insignificant, mortal authorities outside the Church can still make unlife rather unpleasant for a vampire. All it takes is one dedicated clergyman who convinces a local burgher to search his town for witches — at high noon — to put an end to a self-styled lord of the night.

Mythic Beasts: Rarely seen, these are among the most deadly enemies a vampire can face. Fortunately, creatures such as dragons, unicorns and the like are only found in remote areas unfrequented by mortals, and the Cainites shun wild places.

Werewolves: These shapechanging beasts are age-old enemies of vampires. Traveling through the forests that the so-called Garou claim as their domain is extremely dangerous, as the wolves' legendary hatred of vampires verges on lunacy.

For more information on werewolves, see **Laws of the Wild**.

Magicians: Their magicks are often potent, but many are physically weak. Still, only the most foolish neonate would scoff at the power they wield. Though the magicks that most common folk know can do little more than heal the pox or predict what the future may hold, the mightiest sorcerers are said to be able to cause the sun to shine in the dead of night, or to smite their enemies with bolts of flame from leagues away.

For more information on hedge magic, see **Antagonists**. As there are no systems for translating **Magick: The Ascension to Mind's Eye Theatre**, it is recommended that any mages in your chronicle be portrayed by Narrators or Storytellers.

Ghosts: According to legend, these spirits of the restless dead are cursed to walk the earth until Doomsday. Though not all have power in the physical world, those who do can make even the stones and winds do their bidding. Most seek revenge for wrongs done against them in life, but stories persist of mad ghosts bent on the destruction of all the living world.

For more information on wraiths, see **Oblivion**.

Faeries: Unpredictable and wild, faeries may help or harm individual Cainites at a whim. Mortals are familiar with the warnings against taking the gifts or food of faeries, but it is whispered among Cainites that a drop of their blood may bring ecstasy or fae powers... or agony beyond imagining.

For more information on changelings, see **The Shining Host**.

Demons and diabolists: Those who would serve Hell are often even more of a threat to a vampire's existence than those who serve Heaven. With their reasonable requests and often sympathetic conversation, these diabolic tempters more often than not twist the soul of a vampire to damnation and servitude.

LEXICON

There exists among the Cainites a distinct patois, drawing on many tongues and giving new shades of meaning to certain mortal words. One can often tell what generation a vampire is by listening to the parlance that she employs. There is a sharp distinction between the words used by neonates and those employed by elders. Using the wrong word in the wrong circumstances is often considered a serious breach of etiquette.



Abilities — The measure of a Kindred's expertise in specific fields. Measured in Traits.

Aggravated wounds — Wounds inflicted by a special source (fire, sunlight, Lupine claws, etc.) that are especially difficult to heal.

Amaranth — The act of drinking the blood and soul of other Cainites to increase in power; also called *diablerie*.

Ancilla — An "adolescent" vampire; one who is no longer a neonate, but is not an elder either.

Antediluvian — One of the eldest Cainites, a member of the third generation.

Archetypes — Basic personality types, from which Nature and Demeanor are chosen.

Attributes — The measure of a Cainite's basic Physical, Social and Mental statistics; measured in Traits.

Autarkis — A vampire who refuses to be a part of Cainite society, and does not recognize the domain of a prince.

Beast, The — The drives and urges which prompt a vampire's predatory nature; if uncontrolled, the Beast can drive a vampire to become an utter monster.

Becoming, The — The moment one becomes a vampire; the metamorphosis from mortal to Cainite. Also called the *Embrace*.

Bidding — Part of the mechanism of challenges; the risking of Traits in order to win a challenge.

Blood — The vampire's heritage, that which makes a vampire a vampire.

Blood Oath — The most potent bond which can exist between vampires; the receiving of blood in an acknowledgment of mastery. This grants a mystical power over the one who is bound.

Blood Pool — The maximum amount of blood any vampire can hold at any one time.

Bloodline — A group of vampires with a distinct heritage outside of the 13 clans.

Book of Nod, The — The "sacred" book of the Cainites, tracing the race's origins and early history. It has never been published in its entirety, although fragments are known to exist in various languages.

Boons — Favors owed between vampires.

Brood — A group of vampires gathered around a leader (usually their sire). A brood may in time become a *clan* (qv).

Cainite — A vampire.

Caitiff — A vampire with no clan; frequently used in a derogatory fashion. To be clanless is not a virtue among the Cainites.

Challenges — The method by which disputes are settled in *Masquerade*.

Childe — A derogatory term for a young, inexperienced or foolish vampire. The plural form is *childer*.

Clan — A group of vampires who share certain mystic and physical characteristics.

Coterie — A group of Cainites who protect and support one another against all outsiders.



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Derangements — Mental instabilities acquired by Cainites during their unliving existences.

Diablerie — The act of feeding upon other vampires, either out of need or perversion; it is considered a crime punishable by Final Death among vampires.

Disciplines — The supernatural powers all vampires possess according to their lineage and training.

Domain — The fiefdom claimed by a vampire, most often a prince.

Elder — A vampire who is 300 years of age or older. Elders consider themselves the most powerful Cainites, and usually engage in their own Jyhad.

Elysium — The name given for the places where elders meet and gather, commonly public places of culture.

Embrace, The — The act of transforming a mortal into a vampire by draining the mortal's blood and replacing it with a small amount of the vampire's own blood.

Experience — Points given to characters as they progress through multiple games; used for increasing the character's statistics and powers.

Fledgling — A young, newly created vampire; also called *neonate*, *whelp*.

Frenzy — When a vampire completely loses control of herself and her Beast takes over.

Garou — A werewolf; the term that werewolves use for themselves.

Gehenna — The end of the Third Cycle; the impending Armageddon when the Antediluvians shall awaken and devour all vampires.

Generation — The number of steps between a vampire and the mythical Caine. Caine's get were the second generation, their brood the third, and so on.

Ghoul — A mortal who has been fed Cainite blood without the draining that would give rise to a progeny.

Golconda — The state of being to which many vampires aspire, in which a balance is found between opposing urges and scruples. Some Cainites see it as the only path to salvation.

Haven — The home of a vampire or the place where he sleeps.

Healing — The process of using Blood Traits to restore Health.

Health — The measure of how much physical damage a vampire has taken.

Hunger, The — As with mortals and other animals, the drive to feed. For vampires, though, it is much more intense, and takes the place of every other need, urge and pleasure.

Inconnu — A sect of vampires, mostly Methuselahs, who have removed themselves from both mortal and Kindred affairs. They state that they have nothing to do with the Jyhad.

Influences — The measure of how much control a Cainite has on mortal institutions. Measured in Traits.

Jyhad, the — The secret war being waged between the few surviving vampires of the third generation, using younger vampires as pawns. Also used to describe any sort of conflict or warfare between vampires.

Kine — A contemptuous term for mortals, often used in opposition to Cainite.

Kiss — To take the blood of a mortal, or the act of taking blood in general.



Lextalionis — The code of vampires, allegedly created by Caine. It suggests Biblical justice — an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.

Lineage — The bloodline of a vampire, traced by Embrace.

Lupine — A werewolf; the term that vampires use.

Mage — A human who uses the forces of magick to affect the world around him.

Man, The — The element of humanity which remains in a vampire, and which strives against the base urgings of the Beast (qv).

Methuselah — An elder who no longer lives among the other Cainites. Many Methuselahs belong to the Inconnu.

Mummy — A member of a rare race of apparently immortal beings who coexist with vampires.

Neonate — A young, newly created Cainite.

Numina — The special powers possessed by some humans, such as healing or mediumship.

Praxis — The right of princes to rule, as well as the rules, laws and customs enforced by a particular prince.

Prince — A vampire who has established a claim to rulership over an area, sometimes called a fief, and is able to support that claim *nul disputandum*. Though prince is the most common term, some rulers are referred to as the overlord, suzerain, baron or sheik of the area. The feminine form is still prince.

Progeny — A collective term for all the vampires created by one sire. Less formal, and less flattering, is *get*.

Regnant — One who has a Blood Oath over another Cainite, through giving said Cainite blood three times. See *Blood Oath*

Retainers — Humans who serve a vampire master. They are generally either ghouls or mentally dominated by their vampire master. This control is sometimes so complete that the mortals are unable to take any action of their own volition.

Road — A school of thought or philosophy to which a vampire adheres, in hopes of understanding her true nature. Also called a *Via*.

Sect — General name for one of the primary groups among the Cainites.

Sire — The parent-creator of a vampire, used both as the female and male form.

Siren — A vampire who seduces mortals, but does not kill them and takes only a little blood after putting the mortal into a deep sleep.

Status — How well-respected a Kindred is; measured in Traits.

Third Mortal — Caine, the progenitor of all vampires, according to the Book of Nod (qv).

Thrall — A vampire who is held under a Blood Oath, and thus under the control of another Cainite.

Trait — The unit by which statistics in *Masquerade* are measured.

Vessel — A potential or past source of blood, typically a human.

Vitae — Blood.

Whelp — A contemptuous term for one's own progeny.

Willpower — The measure of how strong a Kindred's will is; measured in Traits.

Witch-hunter — A human who searches for vampires in order to kill them.

Wraith — A ghost.



CHAPTER TWO: CHARACTER CREATION

The cornerstone of any roleplaying game is the character. This is especially true in live roleplaying, where dice, character sheets and other typical trappings of gaming vanish. Below are the basic rules for generating a character for Dark Ages.

CHARACTER CREATION PROCESS

- Step One: Inspiration — Who are you?
 - Choose a clan
 - Choose a Nature and Demeanor
 - Choose a Road
- Step Two: Attributes — What are your basic capabilities?
 - Prioritize Attributes (seven primary, five secondary and three tertiary)
 - Choose Traits
- Step Three: Advantages — What do you know?
 - Choose five Abilities
 - Choose three Disciplines
 - Choose three Influences
- Step Four: Last Touches — Fill in the details.
 - Assign Blood Traits
 - Assign Willpower Traits
 - Assign one Status Trait ("Acknowledged")
 - Choose Negative Traits (if any)
- Step Five: Spark of Life — Narrative descriptions.

STEP ONE: INSPIRATION

Before you write a single thing, you need to find inspiration for the type of character you want to play. Once you're inspired, you need to develop a rough idea of who your character is. This development involves choosing a concept, a clan and a personality (defined by picking a Nature and Demeanor — see below). The better you relate these three aspects of your character, the more intricate and complete the end result will be.

There are many different types of people that exist in the Dark Medieval world — nobles, stone-cutters, knights, witches, mercenaries, highwaymen, clergy, serfs and merchants are just a few examples. Characters for your game can be wonderfully rich and complex, if enough time is spent on the small details. Movies such as *The Name of the Rose*, any of the Robin Hood interpretations, or the "Cadfael" mysteries can give you great ideas for the scenery of the chronicle where your character will live. Think about incorporating references of the period, such as an article of "medieval" clothing or a sprinkling of 12th century slang. (Examples of both costume and language can be found in the sourcebook *Vampire: The Dark Ages*; there is also an invaluable lexicon on pgs. 48-49 of *Storyteller Secrets*.)

CLAN

Your choice of clan is arguably the most important element of your character. Your clan describes the lineage of your character. (Unless you are Caitiff, you are always of the same clan as your sire). You do not necessarily need to choose a clan, for some younger Cainites are of such diluted blood that no single clan's characteristics are imprinted upon them. However, the Caitiff are still fairly uncommon in the 12th century. Among the Cainites, they are outcasts — accepted by none, scorned by all. If you wish to play such a character, simply list "Caitiff" as your clan. For a full description of all of the clans and bloodlines available for play in *The Long Night*, see page 89.





CLANS:

- Assamites — The mysterious "Saracens" of the Middle East have perfected the art of the silent kill.

Disciplines: *Celerity, Obfuscate, Quietus*

- Brujah — Philosophers, scholars and warriors, the fractious "Zealots" pursue their dream of a perfect society.

Disciplines: *Celerity, Potence, Presence*

- Caitiff — The rare and luckless Cainites with no clan are outcasts and disgraced.

Disciplines: Any (except *Thaumaturgy*)

- Cappadocians — Seeking the wisdom of the grave, the "Graverobbers" call on the spirits of the dead for enlightenment.

Disciplines: *Auspex, Fortitude, Mortis*

- Followers of Set — Originally hailing from Egypt, the "Serpents" spread corruption and vice in their wake.

Disciplines: *Obfuscate (Unseen Presence, Mask of 1000 Faces), Presence (Awe, Entrancement), Serpents*

- Gangrel — Wanderers and rustics, the "Animals" are closer to the beasts of the forests than to any of their Cainite kin.

Disciplines: *Animalism, Fortitude, Protean*

- Lasombra — Masters of darkness and shadows, the "Magisters" seek to control mortal and vampiric society alike.

Disciplines: *Dominate, Obtenebration, Potence*

- Malkavian — Cursed with insanity, the "Madmen" enjoy surreal and disturbing insight.

Disciplines: *Auspex, Dementation, Obfuscate*

- Nosferatu — Hideous beyond words, the ostracized "Lepers" are spies and informants without equal.

Disciplines: *Animalism, Obfuscate, Potence*

- Ravnos — Wandering vagabonds and hucksters, the "Charlatans" gleefully practice their arts of deception and theft.

Disciplines: *Animalism (Beast Within), Chimerstry, Fortitude*

- Toreador — Lovers of art and beauty, the "Artisans" freely indulge in their tastes for the aesthetic.

Disciplines: *Auspex, Celerity, Presence*

- Tremere — A young and insular clan of wizards, the sorcerous "Usurpers" struggle to establish themselves.

Disciplines: *Auspex, Dominate, Thaumaturgy*

- Tzimisce — Terrible Slavic fleshcrafters, the "Fiends" mercilessly lord over their mortal subjects.

Disciplines: *Animalism, Auspex, Vicissitude*

- Ventrue — Imperious and commanding, the "Patricians" consider it their duty to lead vampiric society.

Disciplines: *Dominate, Fortitude, Presence*

BLOODLINES

- **Laibon** — Wanderers and mystics from sub-Saharan Africa, the “Sphinxes” show rare powers of mastery over their inner Beasts.

Disciplines: *Abombue, Animalism, Fortitude*

- **Lamia** — An offshoot of the Cappadocians, the Lamia seek the fulfillment of Lilith’s prophecies. Alas, the so-called “Gorgons” bear with them a deadly plague.

Disciplines: *Deimos, Mortis, Potence*

- **Lhiannan** — Relics of bygone pagan nights, the “Druids” are a vanishing bloodline. Their very nature shines from them, making them easy prey for hunters — and other Cainites.

Disciplines: *Animalism, Ogham, Presence*

- **Salubri** — The offspring of Saulot claim to bring healing and visions of the future. Are they madder than Malkav... or are they desperately trying to reveal the truth of the next millennium?

Disciplines: *Auspex (Heightened Senses, Aura Perception), Fortitude, Valeren*

NATURE AND Demeanor

At this point, you should choose personality archetypes that suit your concept of your character’s disposition and image. Your character’s Nature is the most dominant aspect of her true personality. While Nature describes who your character really is on the inside, your chosen Nature is not necessarily the only archetype that applies — people aren’t one-dimensional, and the face someone shows to the world isn’t always her true one.

You should also choose a Demeanor to describe the personality your character presents to others. This is the role she plays in the world. Your Demeanor need not be different from your Nature, though few people are rarely so open. Whatever you choose is what you most commonly show; people can change their outward behavior as quickly as they change their cloaks.

ROADS

The *Viae*, or Roads, are schools of thought that help to provide stability and meaning to vampiric existence. Each and every vampire is on a Road (though not they may not know it), and the mandates of that Road dictate what actions the Cainite will — or will not — take.

Road Traits are both positive and negative for a Cainite. On one hand, each Road Trait underscores an instance in which the vampire is likely to lose control of himself and frenzy. On the other hand, a Cainite can use his Road Traits precisely as he would use Willpower Traits — for any action directly related to the ultimate goal of his Road.

All characters start the game with one Trait in their chosen Roads.

VIAE

The Roads are:

- The Road of the Beast
- The Road of Blood (Assamites only)
- The Road of Chivalry
- The Road of the Devil (Narrator characters only)
- The Road of Heaven
- The Road of Humanity
- The Road of Paradox (Ravnos only)
- The Road of Typhon (Setites only)

STEP TWO: ATTRIBUTES

Attributes are everything a character naturally, intrinsically is. Are you strong? Are you brave? Are you persuasive? Questions such as these are answered by your character's listing of Attributes, the Traits that describe her basic, innate potential. Each Trait represents an aspect of your character's personality and allows her to perform deeds and actions specifically related to her strengths and weaknesses.

CHOOSING ATTRIBUTES

The first step is to prioritize the different categories of Attributes (Physical, Social and Mental), placing them in order of importance to your character. Is she more concerned with the physical than with the social? Does her knack for quick thinking surpass her physical strength? You must figure out which category is most important to your character, which is second, and which is least important.

Categories of Attributes

- Physical Attributes describe the abilities of the body, such as power, quickness and endurance.
- Social Attributes describe your character's appearance and charisma — her ability to influence others.
- Mental Attributes represent your character's mental capacity and include such things as memory, perception, self-control and the ability to learn and think.

Your character's concept and clan may suggest what his Attribute priorities should be — a feral Gangrel probably won't have Social as his Primary — but feel free to pick any way you please. For now, think in the broadest of perspectives — you can get more specific after you understand the big picture.

CHOOSING TRAITS

After you've chosen the order of the three Attribute categories, you need to choose specific Traits from each category to flesh out your character. Think back to your favorite novel. Each of the characters in it is described with adjectives — "mysterious," "arrogant," "lithe" and so on, allowing you to draw a mental picture of

what each character is like. For purposes of *Mind's Eye Theatre*, Traits work the same way. They are the adjectives that delineate who your character is and what he can do. The only difference is that in *Mind's Eye Theatre*, unlike a novel, Traits have other applications as well.

In your primary (strongest) Attribute category, you get to choose seven Traits. In your secondary category, you choose five. In your tertiary (weakest) category, you choose only three. Thus, you receive a total of 15 Attribute Traits. You can take the same Trait more than once, if you wish, reflecting greater aptitude in a specific area. Descriptions of the specific Physical, Social and Mental Traits can be found starting on page 42.

STEP THREE: ADVANTAGES

Advantages delineate what and whom your character knows, and are divided into three categories: Abilities, Disciplines and Influences.

CHOOSING ABILITIES

Abilities represent your specific training and knowledge beyond the outline provided by your Attributes. They are what you have learned and what you can do rather than what you are. Abilities let you perform specialized tasks that are only possible with training: picking locks, fighting with skill or translating text. Each character begins the game with five Abilities. A full listing of Abilities can be found on page 49.

CHOOSING DISCIPLINES

Disciplines are vampiric powers — the supernatural abilities available to a vampire. Turning into mist, vanishing from sight, superhuman strength — each of these powers is the product of a vampiric Discipline. Every vampire begins the game with three Disciplines, but he may only choose the Disciplines that his clan typically possesses (see the clan lists in Chapter Two).

Each Discipline has two powers at the Basic level. If your character has a Discipline, he must take the first power listed before going on to learn the second. Your character cannot advance to Intermediate-level powers in a given Discipline until he learns all the Basic powers of that Discipline. At character creation, you may opt to work your way up to the Intermediate level of a single Discipline rather than choosing the Basic levels of three different Disciplines. However, you must have your Storyteller's permission before selecting the Advanced levels of any Discipline. Full descriptions of each Discipline can be found in Chapter Three.

CHOOSING INFLUENCES

Influence reflects your character's control over mortal society. The source of most power and conflict in vampiric society, Influence is the primary means Cainites have of waging wars of intrigue. Your character may have the attention of the local lord, but an Influence Trait is how that fact is reflected in gameplay.

You may choose three Influence Traits, each of which represents a contact or holding in the area the Influence represents. You can take a single Influence Trait (such as *Covert*) more than once, indicating a greater degree of dominance in that area.

The only limitations on your Influence selection are those imposed by the background and identity of your character (but even seemingly weird Influences can be justified). Descriptions of most common Influences can be found starting on page 57.

STEP FOUR: LAST TOUCHES

At this point, you fill in the details of your character, including Blood, Status, generation and Health.

BLOOD TRAITS

Blood Traits work like other Traits, but they are primarily used to heighten your physical power or heal yourself. They can only be regained by feeding. Your Blood Pool indicates your maximum Blood Trait capacity, not necessarily the amount of blood you currently have in your system. Blood Traits are not assigned adjectives; each simply represents a volume of blood (about a vial's worth).

You start the game with four Blood Traits (unless you have lowered your generation by using Negative Traits). These Traits are either used as sustenance or as desperate situations arise.

WILLPOWER

Willpower reflects your basic drive, self-confidence and tenacity. It is essential for controlling the actions and behavior of your character, especially in times of stress when predatory instincts emerge. You may choose only one Willpower Trait at this point in the game, although you can gain more through Negative Traits (see below).

STATUS

One of the main aspects of your background is Status — an indication of where your character stands in vampiric society in general, and within your city in particular. You start with a single Status Trait, which represents the fact that you have been presented to and are recognized by the local prince. If you are Caitiff, or choose to be Autarkis, you have no initial Status Trait. This could be because you have never been presented to the prince, or you may have such a terrible reputation that any former Status has been lost. (You can acquire more than one Status Trait by taking on Negative Traits, but Autarkis and Caitiff cannot gain Status this way.)

Your initial Status Trait is always "Acknowledged," representing the prince's acknowledgment of your existence. You can also choose or earn other Status Traits as the story progresses.

NEGATIVE TRAITS

At this point, you may increase your character's power by selecting counterbalancing flaws. Negative Traits are Attributes that have a negative effect upon your character. They can be used against you in a challenge (a contest staged between you and other characters). Each Negative Trait is equal to one positive Trait; for each Negative Trait you take, you receive a positive Trait of your choice. By taking a Negative Trait, you can, for example, add a new Trait to your Attributes or take



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another Ability. You can take no more than five Negative Traits unless you have the Narrator's permission. Take whatever Negative Traits seem to fit your character; you need not take the full five, or any at all.

Each Negative Trait you take allows you to choose one of the following options:

- Take one additional positive Trait in any Attribute category: Physical, Social or Mental. (The maximum number of Traits you can possess in a given category is listed in the "Generation Chart" below.)

- Take one extra Ability or Influence.

Optional: Your Narrator may allow you other options for modifying your character. Possible options are:

- Lower your generation by one (from a base of 12th). It costs two Negative Traits to lower your generation by one level. All characters start at 12th generation unless generation is lowered in this way. (Generation is your distance from Caine, the primordial First Vampire; having a lower generation places you "closer" to Caine and increases the potency of your blood.)

- Three Negative Traits allow the purchase of one new Basic Discipline (even one that is not a clan Discipline).

- One Negative Trait allows the purchase of a Status Trait.

- You can take an extra Road Trait or Derangement in lieu of two Negative Traits. That is, an extra Road Trait or Derangement allows you to purchase two other positive Traits without acquiring the usual two Negative Traits. You can never take more than one extra Road Trait or Derangement. Of course, Malkavians already have a Derangement, and a second must be taken to get two positive Traits. Malkavians begin with no more than two Derangement Traits, and vampires of other clans may begin with no more than one.

GENERATION

Unless a player buys down his generation with Negative Traits, his character will start at 12th generation. For every two Negative Traits spent in this fashion, the character can lower his generation by one.

GENERATION TABLE

| Generation | Blood Traits | Willpower Traits | | Maximum Traits |
|------------|--------------|------------------|-----|----------------|
| | | Starting | Max | |
| 12th | 4 | 2 | 4 | 11 |
| 11th | 5 | 2 | 4 | 11 |
| 10th | 6 | 2 | 4 | 11 |
| 9th | 8 | 3 | 5 | 13 |
| 8th | 9 | 3 | 6 | 14 |
| 7th | 11 | 4 | 7 | 16 |
| 6th | 13 | 4 | 8 | 18 |
| 5th | 16 | 5 | 9 | 20 |
| 4th | 20 | 6 | 10 | 25 |
| 3rd | ? | ? | ? | 30 |

HEALTH

Characters are considered to be at full health at the beginning of each story unless the Narrator states otherwise. Of course, characters can be hurt or even destroyed during a story. There are four "levels" of Health beneath "Healthy": "Bruised," "Wounded," "Incapacitated" and "Torpor." See Chapter Four for details.

SPARK OF LIFE

Characters do not consist of Traits alone. Other aspects, such as motivations and secrets — while not necessarily important in terms of game mechanics — are vital to roleplaying. In many cases, the Storyteller provides, or at least suggests, these "sparks of life" for you. Your character needs to be woven into the story, and these flourishes allow the Storyteller to do just that.

OTHER ASPECTS

- **Background Story** — You need to create a background narrative for your character, describing her life before the Embrace: what she did, how she lived and what was unique about her. This background may describe what your character did for a living, how she saw herself and what others thought of her. It will probably influence who she is now — indeed, many Cainites cling to the trappings of their former lives because they find it difficult to abandon their concepts of themselves as humans. Their pasts remain with them forever.

Regardless of when you were Embraced, you have spent 50 waking years or less as a vampire. All other years of undead existence are assumed to have been spent in torpor.

- **Secrets** — Each character has secrets of some sort, things that he doesn't want others to discover. One secret almost all Cainites possess is the location of their personal havens. The Narrator is also likely to give you a number of secrets that you need to protect over the course of the chronicle.

- **Motivations** — What is your purpose? What motivates you on a night-to-night basis? Is it hate, fear, lust, greed, jealousy or revenge? Describe your motivations in as much detail as possible; ask the Narrator for help if you can't think of anything. Unless you are an experienced player, it's likely that the Narrator will provide you with a motivation or two at the start of the chronicle.

- **Appearance** — Find props and a costume that will help others understand or at least recognize your character at a glance. You need to not only act like your character, but look like him as well. Your character's appearance makes his Physical (and many Social) Traits visible to other characters. To get a medieval touch for your costumes, you might want to explore local renaissance faires and consignment stores for flowing gowns, tunic-type shirts or anything else you feel will add flair to your character's wardrobe. Remember, most peasants in the 12th century didn't wear fine silk or expensive cloth; a burlap sack with some twine at the waist would be a more feasible costume.

- **Equipment** — Your character likely begins the game with equipment of one sort or another. Ask a Narrator for more details on your personal possessions and assets. If you want to spend money on equipment right away, feel free. You may buy weapons,

clothing, land, boats, horses... anything. Use an appropriate reference book for prices, or approximate (see pages 281-282 in *Vampire: The Dark Ages* for help). Be sure to get your Narrator's approval if you wish to buy anything unusual or dangerous.

In the medieval world, it is easier to trade for what you want (think services or goods) than to buy it. Not everyone has access to currency, and most people have more use for chickens or wool than for coins.

For purposes of **The Long Night**, the money used in the 12th century is considered to be broken down into denominations of copper pennies. Twelve pennies equals a "shilling," though shillings are an accountant's invention rather than an actual coin type. The only coins that exist are pennies, half-pennies and quarter-pennies. For large amounts of money, shillings are calculated into 20-count sets called *libram*.

- **Quirks** — By giving your character quirks (interesting personal details), you add a great deal of depth and interest to her. Write a few sentences on the back of your character sheet about the strange and interesting things that define your character. Examples of quirks are things like a morbid sense of humor, a gentleness toward children or a habit of mumbling when nervous.

NATURE AND DEMEANOR

Humans instinctively roleplay. Each moment of our lives is spent playing a role of some type or another, alternately exposing and hiding our many layers of personalities, some of which we create for the benefit of our peers. In **The Long Night**, character archetypes are a way of defining these personalities. They describe the roles that are a collective characteristic of our identities, the personality types all people somehow share.

Characters, like people, do not fit into neat and tidy categories. Archetypes should not be seen as absolute standards of personality. Each individual varies from her original archetype in many ways. The archetypes listed below provide examples of the variety of human personalities, and are intended to guide, not to restrict.

Archetypes have a practical impact on the game, for characters can be manipulated according to their personalities. A character's Nature may be strong enough to pull him out of a frenzy if he is about to do something that contradicts it. For example, a Barbarian would be allowed a chance to stave off his frenzy if confronted by a torch held by an anach he had bullied in the past.

Nature also works like a Negative Trait; if you know someone's Nature, you may use it as a Negative Trait in any type of challenge or confrontation between characters. The Nature should have something to do with the challenge, so you could bid someone's Caretaker Nature when trying to talk him into going into a burning cottage to rescue a wounded Cainite. However, you could not use Child Nature when trying to look at a Cainite's aura.

ARCHETYPES

(For full archetype descriptions, see pages 109-113 in *Vampire: The Dark Ages*.)

- **Autocrat** — Stability requires order. It is your duty to bring it about.



- **Barbarian** — Civilization is a joke; honor is everything.
- **Caretaker** — Suffering is everywhere; you must temper it with love.
- **Celebrant** — Something fills you with joy, and you cannot hide that pleasure.
- **Child** — You're young, or at least you appear to be so.
- **Defender** — The meek must be protected from the wicked by the strong.
- **Fanatic** — Your cause is everything to you.
- **Gallant** — Grace is all that counts; romance is your ideal, and God's (or the Devil's) will your pleasure.
- **Innovator** — There is always a better way to do something. Your task is to bring it about.
- **Jester** — There is too much pain in the world to endure without laughter. You make a mockery of sadness.
- **Judge** — You seek justice for everyone.
- **Loner** — You've never fit in and never will.
- **Monster** — God has demanded that you play the beast; who are you to argue?
- **Penitent** — Your sins can only be forgiven after you prove your true worth.
- **Rebel** — You're sick of being ordered around! Hide your feelings well, and work for the time of change.
- **Rogue** — To hell with rules, to hell with everyone! Life (or unlife) is yours to plunder.
- **Survivor** — No matter what storm you sweep through, you will always prevail.
- **Tyrant** — The only way to get things done is to do them your way! All other paths are folly.
- **Visionary** — Wisdom is your quest, insight your key.

TRAITS

Traits have two primary purposes. The first and most important purpose is to enable you to describe your character concretely and thereby empower your roleplaying. The second is to enable you to interact with other characters in terms of the game system. The mechanics of *The Long Night* revolve around the Trait system; almost every challenge is resolved using Traits in some fashion or other.

The premise of this system is that a character who is described by a specific Trait tends to be pretty good at things that involve that Trait, and is certainly better than someone who doesn't have the Trait at all. For example, someone who is *Brawny* is a better arm wrestler than someone who isn't. Likewise, a herald needs to be *Tireless* in order to deliver a document quickly and still be standing, and a child who is *Persuasive* has a good chance of convincing his nurse that he didn't break a mirror in the antechamber.

ATTRIBUTES (BIDDING TRAITS)

Creative players can think of ways to use nearly any Trait in nearly any challenge. While this is most praiseworthy, players can sometimes go too far. To avoid this, the general rule on bidding Traits is very strict: You can only bid Traits from the category

that best suits the nature of the challenge (i.e., Traits bid are from the same category — Physical, Mental or Social). Even then, however, not all Physical Traits (or Mental or Social) are appropriate to all Physical (or Mental or Social) challenges.

For example, beginners might think they can use all their Physical Traits in combat. This is incorrect. If your character is trying to kick someone, *Resilient* is not an appropriate Trait to bid as part of the attack. Likewise, if your character is trying to read an opponent's aura, *Creative* might not be an appropriate Trait to use in a bid.

For such an "inappropriate" Trait to be allowed, both parties must agree. When an opponent bids a Trait that you feel is extremely inappropriate, politely tell her that you're not going to allow its use. If she is insistent, reevaluate your grievance. If you still can't agree, appeal to any witnesses of the contest. Then, if there is still deadlock and no one is willing to compromise, seek out a Narrator to make a ruling. Appeals to a Narrator in these situations, however, should occur very, very rarely. Learn to handle confrontations on your own, quickly and politely.

To keep things simple, you can ignore the subtleties of Traits and, say, use any Physical Trait in any Physical Challenge. This approach is particularly useful when you have a number of novice players. Eventually you will go beyond this convention and only allow players to use Traits appropriate to the situation at hand. This method is more complicated, but it can be a lot more fun. Try it out.

PHYSICAL TRAITS

Athletic: You have conditioned your body to respond well in full-body movements, especially in competitive events.

Uses: Competitions, duels, running, acrobatics, grappling and *Celerity*.

Brawny: Bulky muscular strength.

Uses: Punching, kicking or grappling in combat when your goal is to inflict damage. Power lifting. All feats of strength.

Brutal: You are capable of taking nearly any action in order to survive.

Uses: Fighting an obviously superior enemy.

Dexterous: General adroitness and skill involving the use of one's hands.

Uses: Weapon-oriented combat (*Melee*), pickpocketing, acrobatics.

Enduring: A persistent sturdiness against physical opposition.

Uses: When your survival is at stake, this is a good Trait to risk as a second, or successive, bid.

Energetic: A powerful force of spirit. A strong internal drive propels you, and, in physical situations, you can draw on a deep reservoir of enthusiasm and zeal.

Uses: Combat, *Celerity*.

Ferocious: Possession of brutal intensity and extreme physical determination.

Uses: Any time that you intend to do serious harm. When in frenzy.

Graceful: Control and balance in the motion and use of the entire body.

Uses: Combat defense. Whenever you might lose your balance (stepping on a patch of ice, fighting on four-inch-thick rafters).

Lithe: Characterized by flexibility and suppleness.

Uses: Acrobatics, gymnastics, dodging, dancing and *Celerity*.



Nimble: Light and skillful; able to make agile movements.

Uses: Dodging, jumping, rolling, acrobatics. Hand-to-hand combat.

Quick: Speedy, with fast reaction time.

Uses: Defending against a surprise attack. Running, dodging, attacking. *Celerity*.

Resilient: Characterized by strength of health; able to recover quickly from bodily harm.

Uses: Resisting adverse environments. Defending against damage in an attack.

Robust: Resistant to physical harm and damage.

Uses: Defending against damage in an attack. Endurance-related actions that could take place over a period of time.

Rugged: Hardy, rough and brutally healthy. Able to shrug off wounds and pain to continue struggling.

Uses: When resisting damage, or any challenge that you enter while injured. *Earth Melding*.

Stalwart: Physically strong and uncompromising against opposition.

Uses: Resisting damage, or when standing your ground against overwhelming odds or a superior foe.

Steady: More than simply physically dependable; controlled, unfaltering and balanced. You have firm mastery over your actions.

Uses: Weapon attacks. Fighting in exotic locations. Piloting ships over difficult waters.

Tenacious: Physically determined through force of will. You often prolong physical confrontations, even when it might not be wise to do so.

Uses: Second or subsequent Physical Challenge.

Tireless: You have a runner's stamina — you are less taxed by physical efforts than ordinary people.

Uses: Any endurance-related challenge, second or subsequent Physical Challenge with the same foe or foes. *Celerity*.

Tough: A harsh, aggressive attitude and a reluctance ever to submit.

Uses: Whenever you're wounded or winded.

Vigorous: A combination of energy, power, intensity and resistance to harm.

Uses: Combat and athletic challenges when you're on the defensive.

Wiry: Tight, streamlined, muscular strength.

Uses: Punching, kicking or grappling in combat. Acrobatic movements. Endurance lifting.

NEGATIVE PHYSICAL TRAITS

Clumsy: Lacking physical coordination, balance and grace. You are prone to stumbling and dropping objects.

Cowardly: In threatening situations, saving your own neck is all that is important. You might even flee when you have the upper hand, just out of habit.

Decrepit: You move and act as if you are old and infirm. You recover from physical damage slowly, are unable to apply full muscular strength, and tire easily.

Delicate: Frail and weak in structure; you are easily damaged by physical harm.

Docile: The opposite of the *Ferocious* and *Tenacious* Traits; you lack physical persistence and tend to submit rather than fight long battles.

Flabby: Your muscles are underdeveloped. You cannot apply your strength well against resistance.

Lame: You are disabled in one or more limbs. The handicap can be as obvious as a missing leg or as subtle as a dysfunctional arm.

Lethargic: Slow and drowsy. You suffer from a serious lack of energy or motivation.

Puny: You are weak. This could mean diminutive size, or just substandard strength.

Sickly: Weak and feeble. Your body responds to physical stress as if it were in the throes of a debilitating illness.

SOCIAL TRAITS

Alluring: An attractive and appealing presence that inspires desire in others.

Uses: Seduction. Convincing others.

Beguiling: The skill of deception and illusion. You can twist the perceptions of others and lead them to believe what suits you.

Uses: Tricking others. Lying under duress.

Charismatic: The talent of inspiration and motivation, the sign of a strong leader.

Uses: In a situation involving leadership or the achievement of leadership. Awe contests.

Charming: Your speech and actions make you appear attractive and appealing to others.

Uses: Convincing or persuading. *Entrancement* challenges.

Commanding: Impressive delivery of orders and suggestions. This implies skill in the control and direction of others.

Uses: When you are seen as a leader. *Presence* challenges.

Compassionate: Deep feelings of care or pity for others.

Uses: Defending the weak or downtrodden. Defeating major obstacles while pursuing an altruistic end.

Dignified: Something about your posture and body carriage appears honorable and aesthetically pleasing. You carry yourself well.

Uses: *Presence* challenges. Defending against *Social Disciplines*.

Diplomatic: Tactful, careful and thoughtful in speech and deed. Few are displeased with what you say or do.

Uses: Very important in intrigue. *Leadership* situations.

Elegant: Refined tastefulness. Even though you don't need coin to be *Elegant*, you exude an air of richness and high society.



Uses: High society or Toreador celebrations. Might be important in some clans for advancement. Defending against Social Disciplines.

Eloquent: The ability to speak in an interesting and convincing manner.

Uses: Convincing others. Swaying emotions. Public speaking.

Empathetic: Able to identify and understand the emotions and moods of people with whom you come in contact.

Uses: Gauging the feelings of others. *Beast Within* contests. Not useful in defense against Social Disciplines (might actually make it easier to use them on you).

Expressive: Able to articulate thoughts in interesting, significant, meaningful ways.

Uses: Producing art, acting, performing. Any social situation in which you want someone to understand your meaning.

Friendly: Able to fit in with everyone you meet. Even after a short conversation, most find it difficult to dislike you.

Uses: Entrancement challenges. Convincing others.

Genial: Cordial, kindly, warm and pleasant. You are pleasing to be around.

Uses: Mingling at gatherings. Starting an Entrancement challenge. Generally used in a second or later Social Challenge with someone.

Gorgeous: Beautiful or handsome. You were born with a face and body that is good-looking to most people you meet.

Uses: Entrancing, posing. *Beast Within* challenges. Entrancement challenges.

Ingratiating: Able to gain the favor of people who know you.

Uses: Dealing with elders in a social situation. Entrancement challenges. Defending against Social Disciplines.

Intimidating: A frightening or awesome presence that causes others to feel timid. This Trait is particularly useful when attempting to cow opponents.

Uses: *Dread Gaze* and *Majesty* challenges. Inspiring common fear. Ordering others.

Magnetic: People feel drawn to you; those around you are interested in your speech and actions.

Uses: *Presence* challenges. *Beast Within* challenges. Seduction.

Persuasive: Able to propose believable, convincing and correct arguments and requests. Very useful when someone else is undecided on an issue.

Uses: Persuading or convincing others.

Seductive: Able to entice and tempt. You can use your good looks and your body to get what you want from others.

Uses: *Subterfuge*, *Entrancement*, *Summon* and seduction.

Witty: Cleverly humorous. Jokes and jests come easily to you, and you are perceived as a funny person when you want to be.

Uses: At celebrations. Entertaining someone. Goading or insulting someone.

NEGATIVE SOCIAL TRAITS

Bestial: You have started to resemble the Beast of your vampiric nature. Maybe you have clawlike fingernails, heavy body hair or a feral glint in your eyes. However your Beast manifests, you definitely seem inhuman.

Callous: You are unfeeling, uncaring and insensitive to the suffering of others. Your heart is a frozen stone.

Condescending: You just can't help it; your contempt for others is impossible to hide.

Dull: Those with whom you speak usually find you boring and uninteresting. Conversing with you is a chore. You do not present yourself well to others.

Naive: You lack the air of worldliness, sophistication or maturity that most carry.

Obnoxious: You are annoying or unappealing in speech, action or appearance.

Repugnant: Your appearance disgusts everyone around you. Needless to say, you make a terrible first impression with strangers.

Shy: You are timid, bashful, reserved and socially hesitant.

Tactless: You are unable to do or say things that others find appropriate to the social situation.

Untrustworthy: You are rumored or perceived to be untrustworthy and unreliable (whether you are or not).

MENTAL TRAITS

Alert: Mentally prepared for danger and able to react quickly when it occurs.

Uses: Preventing surprise attacks. Defending against *Dominate* challenges.

Attentive: You pay attention to everyday occurrences around you. When something extraordinary happens, you are usually ready for it.

Uses: Preventing surprise attacks. Seeing through *Obfuscate* when you don't expect it. Preventing *Dominate*.

Calm: Able to withstand an extraordinary level of disturbance without becoming agitated or upset. A wellspring of self-control.

Uses: Resisting frenzy or commands that provoke violence. Whenever a mental attack might upset you. Primarily for defense.

Clever: Quick-witted resourcefulness. You think well on your feet.

Uses: Using a Mental Discipline against another.

Creative: Your ideas are original and imaginative. This implies an ability to produce unusual solutions to your difficulties. You can create artistic pieces. A requirement for any true artist.

Uses: Defending against aura readings. Creating anything.

Cunning: Crafty and sly, possessing a great deal of ingenuity.

Uses: Tricking others. *Command* challenges.

Dedicated: You give yourself over totally to your beliefs. When one of your causes is at stake, you stop at nothing to succeed.

Uses: Useful in any Mental Challenge when your beliefs are at stake. Defense against *Forgetful Mind*.

Determined: When it comes to mental endeavors, you are fully committed. Nothing can divert your intentions to succeed once you have made up your mind.

Uses: Facedowns. Useful in a normal Mental Challenge.

Discerning: Discriminating, able to pick out details, subtleties and idiosyncrasies. You have clarity of vision.

Uses: *Auspex*-related challenges.

Disciplined: Your mind is structured and controlled. This rigidity gives you an edge in battles of will.

Uses: *Thaumaturgy* contests. Facedowns. Useful in a Mental Discipline contest.

Inightful: The power of looking at a situation and gaining an understanding of it.

Uses: Investigation (but not defense against it). Reading auras. Using *Heightened Senses*. Seeing through *Obfuscate* when you expect it.

Intuitive: Knowledge and understanding somehow come to you without conscious reasoning, as if by instinct.

Uses: Reading auras. Seeing through *Obfuscate*.

Knowledgeable: You know copious and detailed information about a wide variety of topics. This represents "book-learning."

Uses: *Forgetful Mind* contests. Remembering information your character might know. Employing *Thaumaturgy*.

Observant: Depth of vision, the power to look at something and notice the important aspects of it.

Uses: *Heightened Senses*. Picking up on subtleties that others might overlook.

Patient: Tolerant, persevering and steadfast. You can wait out extended delays with composure.

Uses: Facedowns or other mental battles after another Trait has been bid.

Rational: You believe in logic, reason, sanity and sobriety. Your ability to reduce concepts to a mathematical level helps you analyze the world.

Uses: Defending against emotion-oriented mental attacks. Defending against an aura reading. Not used as an initial bid.

Reflective: Meditative self-recollection and deep thought. The Trait of the serious thinker, *Reflective* enables you to consider all aspects of a conundrum.

Uses: Meditation. Remembering information. Defending against most mental attacks.

Shrewd: Astute and artful, able to keep your wits about you and accomplish mental feats with efficiency and finesse.

Uses: Defending against a Mental Discipline.

Vigilant: Alertly watchful. You have the disposition of a guard dog: your attention misses little.

Uses: Defending against investigation, *Forgetful Mind* and *Command*. Seeing through *Obfuscate*. More appropriate for mental defense than for attack.

Wily: Sly and full of guile. Because you are *Wily*, you can trick and deceive easily.

Uses: Tricking others. Lying under duress. Confusing mental situations.

Wise: An overall understanding of the workings of the world.

Uses: Giving advice. Defending against *Dominate* Challenges.

NEGATIVE MENTAL TRAITS

Forgetful: You have trouble remembering even important things.

Gullible: Easily deceived, duped or fooled.

Ignorant: Uneducated or misinformed, never seeming to know anything.

Impatient: Restless, anxious and generally intolerant of delays. You want everything to go your way — immediately.

Oblivious: Unaware and unmindful. You'd be lucky if you noticed a herd of cattle headed straight toward you.

Predictable: Because you lack originality or intelligence, even strangers can easily figure out what you intend to do next. Not a very good Trait for chess players.

Shortsighted: Lacking foresight. You rarely look beyond the superficial; details of perception are usually lost on you.

Submissive: No backbone; you relent and surrender at any cost rather than stand up for yourself.

Violent: An extreme lack of self-control. You fly into rages at the slightest provocation, and frenzy is always close to the surface. This is a Mental Trait because it represents mental instability.

Witless: Lacking the ability to process information quickly. Foolish and slow to act when threatened.

ABILITIES

While you can easily and quickly execute many complex actions in *Mind's Eye Theatre* with simple challenges, this is not always the case. Sometimes Abilities — the skills, talents and knowledges that characters use — are necessary.

An Ability allows your character to engage in, if not excel at, a particular type of activity that she would not normally be able to attempt. Performing such a task often involves risking Traits; if the character is defeated in the challenge, she may choose to temporarily sacrifice a level in the appropriate Ability to call for a retest. While any Traits risked are lost regardless, it is possible to still win the challenge. An Ability lost in this manner is recovered at the beginning of the next session. If your character loses all her levels in an Ability in this manner, she may not use that Ability again until she recovers at least one level.

Often, a challenge of one sort or another accompanies the use of Abilities. The Narrator choreographs some of these challenges, not only assigning the relative difficulty of the challenge in Traits, but also actually performing the test with you. The Narrator also sets a difficulty against which the Static Challenge is performed, interprets the amount of time required to attempt the skill, and may even ask you to pretend that you're performing the skill or to drop out of play for the duration of the task.

Also, you can use other Abilities, such as *Subterfuge* or *Melee*, directly against another player. These rarely require the assistance of a Narrator. Note that you may



choose Abilities multiple times to represent a high degree of expertise in that skill or in a broad number of fields, as is the case with *Performance*, *Science* and *Linguistics*.

ACADEMICS

You understand Latin, can read and write, and have been taught something of theology and philosophy. This is the standard medieval education, and requires that you have attended at least a cathedral or monastery school. A high rating indicates that you attended one of the universities in Paris, Salerno, Oxford or Bologna. This education did not come cheap. You, your parents or your guardians obviously had some wealth.

Remember, most medieval people are entirely illiterate. Without some understanding of *Academics*, you can neither read nor write.

ACTING

You are practiced at feigning emotions, beliefs or a certain frame of mind. If the situation calls for it, you can easily play the role of someone rather different from yourself. However, simply because you have this Ability does not mean you use it unethically. Honorable leaders have used *Acting* to lend power and depth to their speeches. You are able to feign tears, anger, friendliness and virtue.

ANIMAL KEN

Vampires are among the most efficient predators in the world. For humans, this is not always apparent, but animals seem instinctively aware of this and actively avoid the undead. A character who possesses *Animal Ken*, however, has practiced long and hard to regain (or simply never lost) the ability to interact and cooperate with natural animals. Given time and access to an animal, she may train it to perform simple tasks (i.e., fetch, guard, attack, etc.). When the command is given, the animal must make a Mental Challenge to understand and carry out the order. The difficulty of the test is based on the level of domestication of the animal as well as on the complexity of the task required. The character may also attempt to calm an injured, attacking or frightened animal by defeating it in a Social Challenge.

ARCHERY

You can fire bows and crossbows with skill. You can also string a bow, and care for and make minor repairs to bows, crossbows, arrows and quarrels.

ATHLETICS

This Ability describes your general athletic prowess and skill at physical games. It determines your ability to jump across a chasm, swim through a storm, throw a rock, vault a fence or climb a tree. *Athletics* concerns complex motor actions; physical actions, such as lifting, do not use the *Athletics* score, nor do athletic actions classified under another ability. (Wrestling, for instance, would fall under *Brawl*.)

BRAWL

You are adept at using your body as a weapon. This includes any form of unarmed combat, from dirty in-fighting to highly stylized martial arts. *Brawl* may be used in

coordination with claws, teeth and other types of natural weaponry. In this manner, even a character who is stripped bare can still represent a formidable foe.

CRAFTS

Crafts are simply the professional skills most medieval people have, which they use to survive. Remember that almost everyone at this time works with their hands. Some may have two *Crafts* (e.g., a farmer who also works as a carpenter), but most specialize in one.

Such Skills often include various petty abilities. So, *Farming* does not just cover sowing and reaping; it includes handling domestic animals, repairing buildings and driving carts. *Goldsmithing* allows a character to evaluate gems and metal or to speculate upon the age of jewelry. Examples of *Crafts* include *Farming* (the most common), *Carpentry*, *Blacksmithing*, *Glazing*, *Stonemasonry*, *Wheelwright*, *Tanning*, *Brewing*, *Goldsmithing*, *Dyeing*, etc.

DODGE

The most effective way to win a fight is to not be struck. In that case, becoming proficient in the *Dodge* Ability is a very wise choice. Your skill in this area describes your ability to avoid both *Melee* and missile attacks, which includes diving for cover and ducking punches.

EMPATHY

You understand and can sympathize with the emotions of others, and are thus able to respond to them appropriately. You can often discern the motives behind someone's actions by simply listening to him. You can also detect when you are being told a lie. *Empathy* has a downside, however — because you are so open to the feelings of others, you often feel the same emotions as those around you.

ETIQUETTE

You understand the small nuances of social life, and are able to conduct yourself in a manner that is both unobtrusive and gracious. You understand how to get along well with mortal society, whether courtly or rustic. Your specialty is the culture with which you are most familiar. You use *Etiquette* during actions such as dancing, seduction and haggling. *Etiquette* is also used when engaging in diplomacy.

FORTUNE TELLING

You may or may not have the psychic chutzpah to do this for real, but with a *Social Challenge*, you can make people believe you do. This Ability allows you to try your hand at any common fortune-telling art such as palmistry, tea leaves, Tarot cards, the I Ching, dice or rune-casting. You may engage in a *Social Challenge* to convince your client that you are telling the truth or truly have the "second sight." This is a common Ability among *Ravnos*.

HEARTH WISDOM

Yours is the common wisdom of the peasant, what some might call "superstition" or "folklore." You may not understand the complexities of *Lupine* ways or *fae Glamour*, but you know that certain simple items (silver, holy water, cold iron, etc.)



have some power over supernatural beings, perhaps more than those beings would care to admit. You may also be able to use such bits of knowledge against your vampiric opponents. *Hearth Wisdom* can also be used for simple herbal remedies, although it is not as potent as *Herbalism*, such remedies will be for minor aches, fertility, colds and other small things.

Hearth Wisdom carries certain corollaries with it, however. Folklore can vary from place to place, and what a Russian character knows may mean nothing to his Irish friend. Likewise, while a great deal of folklore may have that kernel of truth to it, the rest is chaff, and only experimentation may prove which is which. Most truth-fiction ratios should run 20/80 or so, more or less depending on the Narrator and the character. For example, a Romanian may have lots of stories and superstitions about vampires, but may know almost nothing about furies. The *Occult Ability* accounts for harder facts and the resources to acquire such facts.

HERBALISM

Important in the Dark Medieval world, this covers the identification and preparation of herbs for cooking, healing and harming. You can find, prepare, blend and preserve herbs for any of these purposes.

HISTORY

You know your history. With a successful *Mental Challenge*, this *Ability* allows you to research history quickly and efficiently, enabling you to acquire information on just about any period if it's not already in your head. You may have had no interest in history in your mortal life, but now you find it fascinating.

INTIMIDATION

The art of *Intimidation* comes in many forms, ranging from a subtle suggestion to outright physical damage. Each method of *Intimidation* has its time and place. You understand the science of being overbearing and how to use it to get what you want. People with high *Intimidation* scores seem to radiate an aura of authority.

INVESTIGATION

You possess the learned skills of a diligent investigator. You can often pick out or uncover details and clues that less attentive individuals would overlook or ignore. With a *Mental Challenge*, you can tell if a person is carrying a concealed weapon (e.g., a dagger or knife) or to determine if he is acting in a suspicious manner. When dealing with plots, you may also request a *Mental Challenge* with a Narrator to see if any clues have been overlooked, to piece together clues, or to uncover information through formal investigation. Hunters often employ this *Ability* to track down their Cainite prey. This sort of attention to detail is most often found among paranoids, agents of princes or the Church, or those responsible for upholding the law.

LARCENY

Larceny actually covers a wide range of criminal activities, including both knowledge of the physical aspect of skills and the ability to find and deal with criminal groups. That said, there isn't much of an organized underworld in medieval Europe. Most criminals act alone or with small bands of friends. Cities are simply too small and

communications too poor to support large criminal syndicates. Only in the largest cities — Venice, Genoa, Paris, London — might one find large groups of organized malefactors.

However, this Ability is still very useful, both for dealing with these scattered groups and for committing pretty crimes. First and foremost, *Larceny* allows you to blend in with the local scene without drawing attention to yourself. Gossip, felony, theft and street slang are also imparted by using this Ability. Finally, those skilled at *Larceny* can perform minor criminal acts involving sleight of hand (drugging drinks or cutting purses, for instance).

LAW

Prisons do not exist as a formal institution, and a criminal's rights are often whatever the local authorities feel like granting. This Knowledge allows characters to know what is locally illegal and how severely infractions are punished. More often, this Ability allows local judges, officials and rulers to settle disputes over property and the like. In a feudal society, the laws of ownership are of paramount importance.

LEADERSHIP

You have the gift of influencing and inspiring others — a function of confidence, bearing and a profound understanding of what motivates others. After defeating a subject in a Social Challenge, you may use this Ability to cause him to perform a reasonable task for you. Subjects must first be under your command or serving as your subordinates. Examples include an elder and her clan, a general and his soldiers, a baroness and her servants, or a warlord and his followers. These requests may not endanger the subject or violate the subject's Nature.

LINGUISTICS

You have received tutelage in one or more languages other than your native tongue. In their long lifetimes, some Cainites pick up a multitude of languages. These can be anything from hieroglyphics to common national languages or local dialects. You must specify the language when you choose the *Linguistics* Ability, and you may not change it. Each level can represent an individual language, or, if assigned to the same language more than once, a particular fluency with that single language. This skill allows you and anyone who also knows the language to speak privately. Furthermore, you can translate written text in one of the languages you know. This may or may not require a Mental Challenge, depending upon the clarity of the text.

MEDICINE

Medieval medicine is still very primitive by modern standards. Even the simplest internal surgery requires a Mental Challenge against nine Traits. In practical terms, this Ability is only useful for basic "first aid" — stopping bleeding, treating burns — and for simple procedures like treating fractures, sprains or stopping wounds from festering.

MELEE

You possess a degree of training or experience in armed combat. Whether you acquired this experience on a battlefield, in the streets of Constantinople or from

formal training does not matter. You can use any weapon, from staves and battle-axes to katanas and crossbows. A character without this Ability may not use any of the advantages of Abilities in armed combat, including retests.

OCCULT

This Ability is a catch-all dealing with local folklore, arcane texts, ancient legends and most other forms of supernatural facts and hearsay. This understanding of the more sinister side of the world includes knowledge of curses, rituals, magic and mysticism, and contains much that is only speculation and fantasy. This Ability is of the utmost importance to many medieval vampires, and pursuit of *Occult* knowledge may indeed become a major facet of your chronicle. *Occult* deals with the "harder" facts of the supernatural; for superstition and most folklore, see *Hearth Wisdom*.

For a Tremere or Cappadocian not to have least one level in *Occult* is unheard of.

PANHANDLING

You beg with skill and ease — people just give you pennies. You may engage in a Social Challenge at any time to encourage passers-by to share the wealth.

PERFORMANCE

You have the gift to make your own original creations and/or express those creations to your peers. A Social Challenge determines the genius of your creativity or the power with which you convey it. With a successful Social Challenge, you can even entrance particularly sensitive types of Cainites. When you take the skill, you should declare your specialty, some examples of which include painting, poetry, composing music or playing a single type of instrument. While not all Toreador actually create art, those who do tend to be truly gifted in their field.

POLITICS

This Ability provides a familiarity with the politics of the day, including the people in charge and how they got there. It can be applied to almost any organization, from the Church to a local gaol. This can be an essential Ability when attempting to deal with mortal authorities in any way. This Ability even has some influence on being a capable politician yourself. Long familiarity with a subject can sometimes give one ideas....

REPAIR

You possess a working understanding of what makes things tick. With time, tools and supplies, you can fix or slightly alter most of the trappings of the Dark Ages society. This knowledge also allows you to excel at sabotage. The *Repair* Ability is widespread among blacksmiths, stonemasons and armorers. Using this Ability usually calls for a Mental Challenge, the difficulty of which depends on such factors as the item's complexity, tools and supplies available, extent of damage and time spent on the repairs.



RIDE

You are able to ride comfortably on a horse, and with practice might be able to fight from horseback. You can also tell the rough value of a horse, are familiar with tack (bridle, saddle, etc.), and can spot obvious ailments and defects. Factors influencing difficulty performing a *Ride*-related challenge could include breed of horse, road conditions and the sort of stunt desired. Furthermore, because the *Ride* Ability allows a character to move relatively quickly from one game scene to another, the Narrator can reduce any "out of game" travel time usually assigned for moving from scene to scene if a character has this Ability and access to a horse.

SCIENCE

You have a degree of factual and practical expertise in a single field of the primitive sciences. Your knowledge is tempered by local beliefs and superstitions; still, you have enough practical learning to be in demand. A Mental Challenge is necessary for all but the most trivial uses of this skill, difficulty depending on resources (equipment, information, etc.) available, complexity of the task and time. You must choose a field of study when you take the *Science* Ability. A few examples are *astronomy*, *botany*, *optics* or *metallurgy*. Other fields can be allowed at the Narrator's discretion (in keeping with the time period).

SCROUNGE

Scrounge enables you to produce items through connections, wits and ingenuity. Many individuals who lack the wealth to purchase the things they desire or need (such as Nosferatu and poorer vampires) develop this Ability instead. Materials acquired with *Scrounge* aren't always brand new, are rarely exactly right and often require some time to acquire, but this Ability can sometimes work where finance or outright theft fail. A Mental or Social Challenge is necessary to use *Scrounge*. Some factors that influence the difficulty of the challenge include the rarity and value of an item and local supply and demand.

SECURITY

You have a degree of experienced knowledge of the variety of ways people defend and protect things. Not only can you counter existing security, such as locks, barricades and guards, but you can also determine the best way to secure items and areas. Other uses include breaking and entering, infiltration and lockpicking. Almost all applications of the *Security* Ability require a Mental Challenge determined by the complexity of the task, the thoroughness of the defenses, your equipment and the length of time required.

SENESCHAL

During your breathing days (or perhaps in your unlife), you were responsible for managing and maintaining a household or organization. Maybe you were Mother Superior of a convent or the abbot of a monastery, or you might have been the chief steward of a nobleman. Perhaps you maintained a cathedral, or you were simply the lady of the house. This reflects your knowledge and experience in balancing the books, keeping inventory of the larder and wine cellar, managing the servants, entertaining the guests, keeping the house and lands in good repair, and in general making certain



that everything was in good working order. Along with the attendant experience, this Ability may allow you to evaluate how another household is running (and to spot and correct problems), appraise quality of trade goods or entertain a guest even if you're not in your usual freehold.

STREET SENSE

You have a feel for the streets of the largest cities. You know some of their secrets and how to use their network of personalities. You can get information on events, deal with robber bands and lepers, and survive (if somewhat squalidly) without an apparent income. Some uses of *Street Sense* require a Social Challenge that is influenced by such things as the composition of the local street community and the current environment on the street. A Nosferatu without at least a level of this Ability is an unusual creature indeed.

STEALTH

Stealth is the ability to sneak about or hide without being seen or heard, and is often bid against another character's Mental Traits. *Stealth* is of extreme importance when vampires engage in the hunt.

SUBTERFUGE

Subterfuge is an art of deception and intrigue that relies on a social backdrop to work. When participating in a social setting or conversation with a subject, you can attempt to draw information out of him through trickery and careful probing. Cainites, whose taste for intrigue and politics is practically unequaled, favor this Ability.

A successful use of *Subterfuge* can reveal information such as one's name, nationality, Negative Traits, friends and enemies. The first requirement is that you get the target to say something dealing with the desired knowledge, perhaps by entering a conversation about foreign culture to find out a character's nationality. If you can accomplish this, then you may propose your true question and initiate a Social Challenge. If you win, your target must forfeit the information. To use the Ability again, you must once again lure him into a conversation. Furthermore, *Subterfuge* may not reveal more than one Negative Trait per session, and it may be used to defend from others with *Subterfuge*. If successful in a defense with *Subterfuge*, you could even slip false information that they would believe to be true.

Conversely, you may also use the *Subterfuge* Ability to conceal information or lie without detection. You may not, however, use it to lie while under the influence of *Command* or other such Disciplines.

SURVIVAL

You have the knowledge and training to find food, water and shelter in a variety of wilderness settings. Each Mental or Physical Challenge allows you to provide yourself or another living creature with basic necessities for one day. You can also use this Ability to track beings in a wilderness setting; the Narrator usually sets the nature and difficulty of this challenge. Important factors in a *Survival* challenge are abundance or scarcity of resources, time of the year, equipment and the type of wilderness. Many Gangrel possessed this Ability in their days as mortals, and find it useful even now when "living" off the land.

INFLUENCE

Influence is the mechanism by which Cainites control the daily affairs of the innumerable hordes of mortals for often inscrutable reasons. Influence may take the form of contacts, allies or direct control of a mortal agent, but the form is irrelevant; it's simply a way to get things done. In a practical sense, Influence can make almost any Cainite's life easier, as it can be used to protect one's haven, hunting habits or activities (not to mention the power it can levy against one's foes or fellow vampires).

Characters may expend Influence Traits to accomplish goals relating to a specific aspect of mortal society.

To use Influence actively, you should explain to the Narrator what sort of effect you wish to create with your Influence. The Narrator then decides the Trait cost, the time involved (both real and in-game) and any tests required to achieve the Influence effect. Influence Traits used this way are temporarily considered to have been expended, and are not recovered until the next session. The effects of using Influence can be instantaneous and brief, or slow to manifest and permanent, depending on the nature of the manipulation and the degree of power the character wields.

The difficulty of a task is set by a Narrator, and equals the number of Influence Traits that must be expended to accomplish the task. A given chore's difficulty can be subject to sudden change, depending upon circumstance. The suggested guideline listed along with each area of Influence can change dramatically between chronicles or even between sessions. After all, you may not be the only Cainite attempting to Influence something.

Sometimes a Narrator will require a challenge of some sort to represent the uncertainty or added difficulty involved when exercising Influence. Some uses of Influence may not actually cost Influence to use, but rather require that the Cainite simply possess a certain level of the Influence in question.

Cainites can trade Influences with each other much like children swap toys. These trades may be permanent or temporary. In the case of permanent trades, the old owner erases the Trait from his sheet and turns over the appropriate Influence Card (if your chronicle uses these) to the new owner. The new owner then records her newly acquired Influence Trait on her character sheet. Temporary trades of Influence occur when a Cainite is merely doing a favor or loaning her Influence to someone else. In this case, the owner does not erase the Trait, but instead makes a note that it is no longer in her possession. The holder of the Influence Trait may use it immediately or hold onto it until she feels she needs it. However, the original owner of the Influence Trait may not regain the Trait until the current holder expends or voluntarily returns it.

TIME LIMITS

Obviously, an unwise Cainite can find his Influences tied up in the hands of others for a long time if he is not careful. For this reason, some chronicles dictate that the Trait reverts to its original owner after a certain time. A good rule of thumb for this is that one month is the maximum duration of any loan of Influence. If your chronicle's sessions are scheduled less frequently than once a month, the Narrator(s) should probably expand this window of opportunity. Any exchange of Influence Traits requires the presence and assistance of a Narrator.

Sometimes characters may wish to try to counteract the Influence of other characters. In such cases, it generally costs one Trait per Trait being countered. The Cainite willing to expend the most Influence Traits (assuming she has them to spend) achieves her goal; all Traits used in this sort of conflict are considered expended.

In practice, the use of Influence is never instantaneous and rarely expedient. While a character may be able to, say, have someone excommunicated, it will probably not be done that night. For sake of game flow, a Narrator may allow trivial uses of Influence to only take half an hour. Major manipulations, on the other hand, can become the center of ongoing plots requiring several sessions to bring to fruition.

The guidelines below by no means limit the number of Influence Traits that can be spent at one time or the degree of change a character may bring about. They are merely an advisory measure to help Narrators adjudicate the costs of certain actions.

Actions followed by an asterisk (*) below indicate that their effects can generally be accomplished without expending an Influence Trait.

CHURCH

Even churches are not without politics and intrigue upon which an opportunistic Cainite may capitalize. *Church* Influence usually only applies to mainstream faith — "The Church." Sometimes other religious practices fall under the *Occult* Influence, or can be the subject of a specific Influence that the Storyteller creates. Contacts and allies affected by *Church* Influence include priests, bishops, cardinals, witch-hunters, nuns and various church attendees and assistants.

| Cost | Desired Effect |
|------|---|
| 1 | Identify most secular members of a given faith in the local area Pass as a member of the clergy* |
| 2 | Identify higher church members Track regular congregation members Suspend lay members |
| 3 | Dip into the collection plate (20 shillings) Find a church-associated hunter |
| 5 | Access to private information and archives of church |
| 4 | Access ancient church lore and knowledge |
| 6 | Borrow or access church relics or sacred items Use the resources of a diocese |

COURT

An elite clique of mortals exists that, by virtue of birth, blood, possessions, talent or quirks of fate, holds itself above the great unwashed masses. The *Court* Influence allows the character to direct and use the energies and actions of this exceptional mass of mortals. Among their ranks, one can find dilettantes, artists, nobility, great beauties, rich landowners and the like.

| Cost | Desired Effect |
|------|--|
| 1 | Learn what is fashionable (e.g., Turkish drugs, imported cloth) * Learn about celebrations well in advance * Obtain invitations to smaller celebrations easily |



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|---|---|
| 2 | Be known on sight in local area "Borrow" 150 shillings as idle cash from rich contacts |
| 3 | Crush promising careers Hobnob well above your station * |
| 4 | Be well-known outside of your local area |
| 5 | Obtain invitations to important and royal celebrations |

HEALTH

During the Dark Ages, health care is primitive at best. Common sources of health care are hedge witches, wise men/women, healers, herb doctors, alchemists, spiritualists and midwives. All of these people are subject to exploitation by a Cainite with *Health Influence*.

| Cost | Desired Effect |
|------|--|
| 1 | Easily access the services of midwives and village healers* Get a Blood Trait |
| 2 | Easily access hedge witches and wise men/women Access to a limited supply of herbs/medicines used to treat minor ailments Easy access to alchemists, herb doctors and spiritualists Access to a limited supply of herbs/medicines used to treat major illnesses |
| 4 | Access to a limited supply of non-fatal poisons Access to a large or unlimited supply of herbs/medicines used to treat minor illnesses |
| 5 | Access to a limited supply of fatal poisons |
| 6 | Access to a large or unlimited supply of herbs/medicines use to treat major illnesses |

LEARNING

In an age where the quest for learning and knowledge is taking on a new significance, those who have access to knowledge (and can read) are powerful indeed. Someone with this *Influence* can control the amount of knowledge dispensed to the peasantry — and the percentage of truth dispensed. Within this sphere of *Influence*, one finds the tutors, scholars, monks, jongleurs, minstrels, archivists, clergy, and many young and impressionable minds.

| Cost | Desired Effect |
|------|--|
| 1 | Access to a limited variety of books Control information dispensed to a small audience (e.g., tutoring a noble's son) |
| 2 | Know a contact or two with useful knowledge or skills Quote the classics extemporaneously |
| 3 | Obtain access to the historical archives of minor nobility |
| 4 | Get certain books or studies banned |

- 5 Control knowledge in a medium-sized area (e.g., cloistered nuns)
- 5 Obtain access to a large variety of books and tomes
- 6 Forbid or encourage specialized studies across a kingdom

OCCULT

The occult world of the 12th century is rich and complex, with denizens ranging from wise hearth-women to Goddess-worshippers to the mysterious blood cults of the Far East. Most citizens have at least a passing knowledge of what cults or religions are practiced in a given city; in fact, some may even belong to such groups. Followers of Set are particularly interested in blood cults, and use them to the best of their advantage.

Members of the occult community include cult leaders, Gypsies, charlatans, witches, worshippers and would-be occultists.

| Cost | Desired Effect |
|------|--|
| 1 | Contact and use common occult groups, practices* Know some of the more visible local occult figures* |
| 2 | Know and contact some of the more obscure local occult figures* Access resources for most rituals and rites |
| 3 | Know the general location of certain supernatural entities and possibly contact them (Cainites, Garou, mages, mummies, wraiths, etc.) Access vital or very rare material components Access occult tomes and writings (perhaps part of an alleged Book of Nod) Research a Basic Ritual |
| 4 | Research an Intermediate Ritual |
| 5 | Access minor magic items Unearth an Advanced Ritual |
| 6 | Research a new or unheard of ritual or rite from tomes or mentors |

POLITICS

It is said that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. If this is so, then the movers and shakers among the Cainites should be quite taken by the artful and cutthroat antics of their mortal counterparts. Some of the individuals this Influence allows you to contact include minor nobles, merchants and landowners, lackeys, Church higher-ups and affiliates of the local prince.

| Cost | Desired Effect |
|------|---|
| 1 | Gaining the prince's ear on a minor issue Be in the know as to what's really going on, policy-wise* |
| 2 | Have contacts among those in power (e.g., bailiffs, members of the Curia Regis or court of the city) Have a forewarning of new laws and the like |



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- 3 Gain information on and from secret meetings
- 4 Gain the prince's ear on a major issue
Sabotage the ambitions of another through political machination
- 5 Suspend minor laws temporarily (e.g., horses must be led inside the city gates)

STREET

Disenchanted, disenfranchised and ignored by their "betters," an undercurrent of humanity has made its own culture and lifestyle to deal with the harsh lot life has dealt them. In the dark alleys and slums reside robber bands, ruffians, orphans, whores, street performers, lepers and the forgotten.

| Cost | Desired Effect |
|------|---|
| 1 | Have an ear open for the word on the street Identify most bands of robbers/pickpockets on sight |
| 2 | Live mostly without fear on the underside of society Keep a contact or two in most aspects of street life Access small-time contraband (e.g., drugs) |
| 3 | Get insight on other areas of Influence Arrange some services from street people or thieves Get uncommon melee weapons (throwing knives, caltrops) |
| 4 | Mobilize groups of street urchins Panhandle or hold a "collection" (50 shillings) Gain respect among thieves, can have a word in almost all aspects of their operations |
| 5 | Control a single medium-sized band of thieves/ pickpockets |

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is arduous and difficult. Without the means to perform this monumental task, the world quickly is reduced to a daunting expanse with large, isolated stretches of dangerous wilderness. The people who keep this circulation in motion include horse wranglers, carriage drivers, sailors, grooms, heralds and sea captains.

| Cost | Desired Effect |
|------|---|
| 1 | A wizard at arranging for horse and/or carriage Can travel locally with relative speed * |
| 2 | Arrange passage safe (or at least concealed) from mundane threats (sunlight, robbery, etc.) |
| 3 | Seriously hamper an individual's ability to travel |
| 4 | Avoid most supernatural dangers when traveling (such as hunters and lupines) |
| 5 | Smuggle with impunity |
| 6 | Control several ships |
| 7 | Isolate small or remote regions for a short period |

BLOOD

Blood Traits aren't assigned adjectives as other Traits are; each Blood Trait simply represents a volume of blood. A breakdown of the ways Blood Traits can be used includes:

- Upon awakening from sleep each night, you expend one Blood Trait. This represents the basic nourishment your character requires to survive.
- Blood Traits can be used to heal Health Levels on a one-for-one basis. The wounds are healed instantly. Note, however, that injuries inflicted by fire, sunlight and other supernatural creatures (aggravated wounds) require three Blood Traits and a Willpower Trait to heal. You may also let other vampires drink your blood, thereby healing them. However, if a vampire is in torpor, only the blood of a vampire three generations or more lower than she is can revive her.
- Vampires often use blood to fuel Disciplines, such as *Celerity* or *Thaumaturgy*.
- You may use blood to boost your Physical Traits during a Physical Challenge. Each Blood Trait spent adds one to your total Physical Traits for the duration of a single conflict. When employed in this manner, Blood Traits can be used just as if they were Physical Traits, including the ones used to bid. The effect lasts for the duration of the conflict, not the challenge. The difference is that a conflict may actually involve several challenges. You may hold onto used Traits up to five minutes after the last challenge in the conflict is completed, at which time all marked Traits are gone. Each used Trait must be marked in some manner (e.g., crossed with an X).

The most common way a character can regain Blood Traits is by feeding, but a Cainite can never imbibe more Traits than she has room for in her permanent Blood Pool. Vampires of lower generation have much larger pools than those of higher generation, which is one of the greatest advantages of being of low generation.

WILLPOWER

Willpower gives a character the extra strength to overcome obstacles and to succeed where others would surrender and fail. Each character begins the game with a number of Willpower Traits. For vampires, the number of Traits depends on the character's generation. These Willpower Traits can be used for almost anything that the player deems important. For example:

- Willpower can be used to negate the effects of frenzy (by using a Willpower Trait, the character gains a new tolerance of the situation that would ordinarily throw her into frenzy).
- Willpower allows a character to replenish all lost Traits in any one category: Physical, Social or Mental.
- Willpower allows a character to ignore the effects of wounds, up to and including "Incapacitated", for one challenge.
- A Willpower Trait can be expended to negate the effects of any one Mental or Social Challenge.

Once a Willpower Trait has been used, it is gone until the end of the story. At this time, the character regains all Willpower used during the course of the story.

ROADS

The Beast is a harsh master. No matter how compassionate and virtuous the mortal, the Embrace floods her very being with urges and instincts far beyond anything a human feels. Consequently, the childer of Caine must hold to some form of discipline, some code that allows them to keep the Beast in rein. The Roads represent paths of morality, ones which maintain a Cainite's control over herself. Some, like the Road of Humanity, are unspoken reflections of vampires' mortal nature. Others, such as the Assamites' Road of Blood, are codes of morality developed long ago by elders of a certain mindset. No matter the origin, a Road is the only connection a vampire has to his sentient nature. If he falters along this path, he may fall utterly to the Beast.

Many vampires do not even think of themselves as on a path to some sort of enlightenment. Their ethics can only be coincidentally classified under one of the eight roads detailed below. There are certainly more, but these are the ones that the majority of European Cainites follow.

The way Road Traits work is simple. Each Road Trait a Cainite acquires produces another set of circumstances likely to provoke frenzy in the Cainite. The more advanced the Cainite on his Road, the more stringent those frenzy conditions are. If one of those conditions is met, the Cainite must spend a Willpower Trait or drop into a frenzy immediately. See page 147 for more on staving off frenzies.

However, advancing along a Road has an advantage as well. Each Road Trait can be bid like a Willpower Trait on any challenge directly related to that Road's goal.

Other Cainites cannot use a vampire's Road to goad him into frenzy, save by forcing him to acts that contradict the demands of his Road.

FOR PLAYERS OF MASQUERADE

For purposes of *The Long Night*, Road Traits replace and combine the effects of Beast Traits, Path Traits and Humanity. The medieval vampire is, in many ways, a different creature than his modern counterpart, and this rules change reflects that.

ROAD OF THE BEAST

The Beast Road, or *Via Bestiae*, is an instinctive path. Those that walk the Beast Road behave like animals, though not in excess. The greatest danger to those on the Beast Road is the wilderness. The Lupines hunt any vampires that wander far from the cities, and few Cainites can elude or outfight a pack of werewolves. The Cainites of the Beast Road, compelled to shun cities, constantly run the risk of encountering Lupines or worse.

The vampire on this Road must be clever, instinctive and act without hesitation, yet never endanger her territory or existence. She does not look to needlessly kill, but will fight to protect her unlife. She avoids too much contact with the cities and devices of humanity. Her control over her frenzies and fear stems from her desire for survival. By becoming an animal, she avoids devolving into a monster. Cainites of the Beast Road can be quite civil and urbane if needed. Most of them, though, prefer their simple code to any of the "civilized" manipulations of their fellow undead.

Road of the Beast Traits are:

| Trait Number | Frenzy Condition |
|--------------|---|
| 1 | Abstaining from feeding when hungry |
| 2 | Showing mercy to a dire enemy |
| 3 | Failing to defend your territory |
| 4 | Refusing to kill when important to your survival |
| 5 | Making a sacrifice for someone unrelated to you |
| 6 | Needless torture |
| 7 | Avoiding contact with nature or wild animals |
| 8 | Killing for any reason other than survival |
| 9 | Not challenging a clearly weak leader for dominance |
| 10 | Attacking a clearly superior foe |

ROAD OF BLOOD

The mysterious Assamites of the East practice their own moral code, one handed down from their clan's founder. This code is known as the *Via Sanguinus*, or the Blood Road. If the vampire of the West knew the secrets of the well-guarded Road, they would surely make war on the Assamites in order to destroy them all.

The Road of Blood is taught only to those Assamites who are deemed most loyal to their clan and kin. It teaches that the childer of Khayyin (Caine) are corrupt, one and all, save for the descendants of Haqim (Assam). Haqim bade his progeny to make war on the Cainites, to fight their taint. Therefore, the truest Assamites are those who slay vampires of other clans and feed on their blood. By following the teachings of the Blood Road, one may achieve enlightenment.

Assamites on the Road of Blood (and no other clan is permitted to learn this Road) have a strict code. They must follow the teachings of Haqim and seek all knowledge that would aid their struggle. They must take as much vampire blood as possible to strengthen their clan. They must also keep apart from the get of Khayyin unless duty requires otherwise, and keep their spirits pure of the Cainites' corruption. Finally, the vampires of the *Via Sanguinus* believes strongly in honor and self-restraint. They must resist the Beast at any cost, and deal fairly and honorably with mortals. Assamites must not shrink from spilling blood if such becomes necessary, but must hold onto their honor at all times.

Road of Blood Traits are:

| Trait Number | Frenzy Condition |
|--------------|---|
| 1 | Ignoring an opportunity to gain blood of a vampire of lower generation |
| 2 | Succumbing to frenzy for any reason |
| 3 | Failure to pursue Cainite blood or knowledge of Caine despite moderate danger |
| 4 | Being disrespectful to clan leaders or not seeking Haqim's teachings |
| 5 | Breaking your word of honor to a mortal |
| 6 | Failing to pursue Cainite blood or knowledge of Caine in the face of minor danger |



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- 7 Not killing a non-Assamite vampire when there is need
- 8 Placing personal desires or ambition above duty
- 9 Failing to assist or avenge a clanmate; revealing clan secrets to outsiders
- 10 Breaking your word of honor to a clanmate

ROAD OF CHIVALRY

While the age of chivalry does not reach its peak in mortal society for some time yet, Cainites of this period practice a similar chivalric code of their own creation. The Road of Chivalry is more formal than most *Viae*, with the same principles holding true and being passed from sire to child or prince to vassal, regardless of geographic area. Followers of this Road believe themselves to be of a closer association to Caine, and thereby must adhere to stricter standards than those around them. The Embrace carries great power, but equally heavy responsibilities. They hope that their example will encourage right behavior in other Cainites, elevating all in the sight of God and Caine.

The values of the *Via Equitum* are very much like those that will be practiced in later times. Honor and nobility of character are held above all, and the Cainite with neither is a sad thing indeed. One must respect one's lord and superiors, and duty to them is a solemn matter. Pleasure and one's own desire are secondary. Oaths are not made to be broken; any oath must be kept without question. Those weaker or unable to protect themselves are to be aided when in need.

Road of Chivalry Traits are:

| Trait Number | Frenzy Condition |
|--------------|---|
| 1 | Breaking a sacred oath |
| 2 | Breaking your word to your lord or prince |
| 3 | Treating a superior with disrespect |
| 4 | Failing to provide hospitality to another Cainite |
| 5 | Striking an unarmed opponent |
| 6 | Failing to assist peers or clanmates in need |
| 7 | Breaking your word to a clanmate or peer |
| 8 | Placing personal desire above duty |
| 9 | Treating a peer with disrespect |
| 10 | Failing to assist mortals in need |

ROAD OF THE DEVIL

Cainites who follow the *Via Diabolis* — the Devil's Road — believe that the Embrace irredeemably damns them. Some of these reason further that they have been turned into servants of the Devil. They believe that, as vampires, it is their lot to spread evil on Earth; indeed, they're sure that if they do not engage in heinous acts, they will be punished. The very nature of a vampire's form can be taken as proof that Cainites were created to do evil. After all, there's nothing virtuous about preying on innocents. Interestingly enough, followers of the Devil's Road have no real contempt for what is good and holy. They simply believe that they, as vampires, must oppose the forces of virtue to their best ability. Of course, those of the Devil's Road have difficulty dealing



with vampires of other Roads. Any vampire who embraces a philosophy other than theirs is clearly deluded or lying. Either way, the Devil's childer cannot trust other Cainites. Those on the Via Diabolis try to make their unives as enjoyable as possible. They trust only those vampires who openly agree with their philosophy. Above all, they avoid associating with priests and the like, who are their eternal foes.

Warning: Characters on this path can be very destructive to a chronicle by their very nature. As such, characters on the Road of the Devil should be restricted to Narrators and Storytellers.

Road of the Devil Traits are:

| Trait Number | Frenzy Condition |
|--------------|---|
| 1 | Aiding servants of virtue |
| 2 | Acting altruistically |
| 3 | Turning down a chance for material gain |
| 4 | Refusing to tempt the virtuous |
| 5 | Refusing to commit acts of cruelty that are in your best interest |
| 6 | Refusing to murder humans when it would be in your best interest |
| 7 | Avoiding injury to others at the cost of your own pleasure |
| 8 | Failing to ride the wave of a frenzy |
| 9 | Failing to pursue a new form of pleasure |
| 10 | Refusal to sire new vampires |

ROAD OF HEAVEN

Some vampires, when struggling to come to terms with their Cainite nature and why God would create creatures such as themselves, come to one of two conclusions. Either they owe their existence to the Devil and should serve him, or they are part of God's plan and must serve Him. Those who believe the latter follow the Via Caeli, the Road of Heaven. They believe that vampires were invented by God to be His avenging angels.

Interestingly, not all of these believe vampires believe in the Cainite mythology of Caine and his descendants. Many on this Road are not even Christian. The only requirement for this Road is faith in some sort of purpose or plan to the universe, a purpose which includes supernatural beings created to destroy the corrupt and sadistic. The Cainites of Heaven's Road kill without the slightest sense of irony or concern. Murderers are common prey; so are petty thieves and those who somehow offend the powers-that-be. God has given these vampires the task of destroying sinners by any means necessary. They are damned by their actions, but their actions are for the good of all people. They regard themselves as the ultimate martyrs.

Road of Heaven Traits are:

| Trait Number | Frenzy Condition |
|--------------|--|
| 1 | Aiding a demon or other creature of evil |
| 2 | The murder of an innocent |
| 3 | Allowing a crime or major sin to go unpunished |
| 4 | Blasphemous or heretical acts |
| 5 | Feeding from an innocent without permission |



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|----|---|
| 6 | Causing harm to a pious and virtuous person |
| 7 | Theft, robbery, willful vandalism |
| 8 | Being motivated by one of the deadly sins |
| 9 | Failing to speak out against corruption or evil |
| 10 | Failing to show respect to God or the Church |

THE ROAD OF HUMANITY

Those who follow the *Via Humanitatis*, whether they call it that or not, try to hold on to their mortal scruples. These Cainites think of themselves as people, not monsters. They recognize that they can succumb to the Beast, but they choose to fight it with the ethics of their human lives. The Road of Humanity recognizes that people have a certain potential for goodness and charity, and encourages such behavior. Some advanced Cainites on this road have become virtuous, honorable and fair; other are fierce warriors. The balance of necessity and virtue is a hard path to walk. The *Via Humanitatis* has no formal code of ethics. Generally speaking, its followers must refrain from cruelty and perversion. They must not kill unless absolutely necessary, and must respect the rights of others. They should be concerned with the welfare of mortals as well as vampires. The easiest summation is one espoused by many religions and philosophies: Treat your neighbor as you would want him to treat you.

This Road is open to interpretation; after all, the values of the common people are different in the Dark Ages. Narrators and players often reflect their morality in the way they deal with this Road. This is perfectly all right, as it gives you the chance to explore your own values in a harmless environment.

Road of Humanity Traits are:

| Trait Number | Description |
|--------------|---|
| 1 | Only the most heinous and demented acts |
| 2 | Meditated murder |
| 3 | Sadism and perversion |
| 4 | Deliberate cause of injury |
| 5 | Wanton destruction |
| 6 | Unmeditated murder |
| 7 | Theft and robbery |
| 8 | Purposeful infliction of injury |
| 9 | Purposeful wrongdoing |
| 10 | Accidental Wrongdoing |

ROAD OF PARADOX

The *Via Paradocis*, or Road of Paradox, is practiced solely by the Ravnos. Followers of this Road believe that unlife is a dream, and that living creatures are merely phantasms. The *Via Paradocis* teaches that all things are composed of ethereal matter or *weig*. In its natural state, *weig* flows from being to being and object to object, creating and destroying without care. A person can be brimming with this life-force at one moment and nearly empty at the next. According to the Ravnos, the Antediluvians were momentarily full of *weig* and never released it. They strove to sculpt reality into a fixed shaped that would enable them to retain their new power.



To aid their cause, they passed on small amounts of *weig*, molding them into their own images. Thus other vampires were created. Of course, the Antediluvians plan to reabsorb their *weig* in due time. On this night — Gehenna — the 12 Antediluvians plan to devour the borrowed *weig* of their children and use it to shape the world into the gray mausoleum of darkness that is their ideal. Only the childer of the 13th Antediluvian, the Ravnos, know of this plan. Their sire created them to fight the Antediluvians on their own terms, and to carry on the struggle against them. Ravnos on the Road of Paradox struggle to unravel the reality of the Antediluvians through the practice of illusion and trickery, and to destroy items that contain high amounts of *weig* (e.g., Lupine fetishes and low generation vampires).

Road of Paradox Traits are:

| Trait Name | Frenzy condition |
|------------|---|
| 1 | Actively inducing boredom |
| 2 | Actively hindering change |
| 3 | Actively joining or maintaining an existing Cainite power structure |
| 4 | Refusing to destroy an empowered device |
| 5 | Being caught stealing |
| 6 | Failing to trick others when the opportunity arises |
| 7 | Failing to acquire knowledge or items that would affect reality |
| 8 | Showing any concern for mortals |
| 9 | Refusing to lead a "locked" being into the light — or destruction |
| 10 | Refusing to commit Amaranth on an elder of another clan |

THE ROAD OF TYPHON

The Followers of Set teach a moral code that has been handed down from sire to childer from the time of the great Set himself. Setites on this Path believe that corruption, pain, sin and lies are things to be cherished and spread throughout the world. They reject self-control and immerse themselves in their own darkest desires and weaknesses. Only through such can evil be understood, and only through understanding evil can it truly be purged or assimilated. True happiness is found only through succumbing to one's desires. The Road of Typhon is more like a religion than a philosophy. Its followers are rumored to worship various entities with blood sacrifices in order to glean mystic understanding. They also continually seek to spread war, plague, poverty and fear throughout the world. Those on the Via Typhonis reject the ideals of purity and spiritual progress espoused by mortals. Only in corruption can enlightenment be found; in weakness lies the greatest strength of all. They refuse to struggle against their inevitable decay, and force others to see and accept their most carnal inner selves. Typhonites attempt to keep redemption from as many as possible, lying and destroying to keep others from bettering themselves.

Road of Typhon Traits are:

| Trait Number | Frenzy Condition |
|--------------|---|
| 1 | Not attempting to waken Set as soon as possible |
| 2 | Refusing to corrupt another Cainite |

- 3 Allowing one's feelings for a mortal to interfere with that mortal's corruption
- 4 Failing to exploit another's weaknesses
- 5 Failing to replace faith with cynicism and despair
- 6 Failing to undermine the current social order in favor of the Setites
- 7 Destroying a foe mercifully rather than "artistically"
- 8 Failing to destroy a vampire in Golconda
- 9 Refusing to succumb to one's own weaknesses
- 10 Attempting to maintain any sense of self-control, purity or worth

DERANGEMENTS

All vampires possess some sort of neurotic need or even madness that guides their behavior. When you are under stress or find a situation offensive, a Derangement can "activate," controlling your actions. This curse is a form of frenzy. Other vampires who sense weakness in you can also activate your Derangements and cause you to frenzy.

Derangements are characterized by the situations that provoke their onset and by the behaviors that are exhibited when they are provoked. An activated Derangement always rules the mind of the character. Derangements are engaged only when a Narrator decrees, or when provoked by another character who knows you possess a particular Derangement. The other player must name the correct Derangement, the circumstances must be appropriate (you must be under some stress related to your Derangement), and your opponent must win a Social Challenge. Derangement frenzies have no set length, but 10 minutes is standard. Such frenzies always end as soon as the circumstances of their onset are eliminated.

You can take Derangements during character creation, but be aware that you can also gain them at any time during a story. You are most likely to gain one if your Blood Traits are depleted and you enter frenzy out of desire for more. The Narrator may also assign Derangements in response to inhuman actions inflicted upon or by you — suffering or committing them can both have adverse effects.

Sample Derangements include:

AMNESIA

In highly traumatic situations, you sometimes forget who and even what you are. This typically occurs when you come face-to-face with your vampiric condition. You may simply forget the memory of a single situation, or you may forget everything about your identity, including your true nature. When events and situations that might remind you of your lost memories present themselves, those memories may return, sometimes doing so violently and sending you into a frenzy.

ANGELISM

You imagine that you are far better and greater than you really are — you adopt a glorious self-ideal. Perhaps you think of yourself as prince, or you may believe yourself to be the mayor or the Messiah. By imagining yourself safe from that which you fear, you avoid the terror that looms so near. Should anyone contradict your delusions, you may frenzy.

FANTASY

You enter a self-created world of delusions in which you are the unappreciated hero. Your desire to be good and pure is fulfilled by accomplishing imaginary achievements which sometimes overlap with reality. Should your illusions be shattered, you may frenzy.

MELANCHOLIA

You sink into deep and fitful depressions, showing no interest in anything that used to capture your imagination. You view the world as flat and gray, holding nothing of value for you. You cannot rouse yourself to do anything, though you will go along with others rather than expend the energy to resist. Conversely, occasional fits of great energy grab hold of you, and you will work for hours or even days on your projects. During this time you resist even the need to sleep as you burn up blood and Willpower on your schemes. Should anyone attempt to rouse you from your depression, or thwart you in your manic phase, you may frenzy.

MULTIPLE PERSONALITIES

You possess a number of different personalities, and may change Nature and Demeanor in times of great personal stress. Thus you behave in radically different ways at different times. Naturally this causes others to distrust you, as they're never quite sure who they're talking to. Your current personality persists until either you change personality again during a stressful situation or you expend a Willpower Trait to return to your "basic" personality.

OBSESSION

When a new person enters your life, or you are faced with a dramatic situation, you can sometimes become obsessed with that person or some fetish associated with the situation. This obsession is a sort of perverse ambition toward which you direct all your energy. If you are directly thwarted in your obsession, you may enter into a frenzy.

OVERCOMPENSATION

You cover up your moral weaknesses by playing up one of your moral strengths to an extreme. You believe that you are exceptionally moral and virtuous in one way or another — that you are honorable, loyal, brave, compassionate or self-controlled. Your behavior is thus bound by your desire. You constantly lecture others on what you believe to be their moral weaknesses, and demonstrate extreme arrogance about what you believe to be your strengths. Of course, when the forces of reality reveal the emptiness of your delusion, the embarrassment will be great. You do not believe yourself capable of falling into frenzy, and will thus do nothing to prevent or avoid situations that might cause it.

PARANOIA

When someone threatens or stubbornly opposes you, you become convinced that the person is after you. You become obsessed with those you believe to be your enemies, and make all kinds of mad preparations to protect yourself. During bouts of



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this Derangement, you trust no one and hold even your closest friends under suspicion. If you are pushed too far while in a paranoid state of mind, you may enter into a frenzy.

PERFECTION

When nothing seems to be going right, you can become obsessed with perfection. Everything must be just so, and you use all your energy to prevent anything from going wrong. You focus all your attention on keeping everything about you in perfect, unaltered condition. When things become hopelessly confused, fault-ridden or messy, you may enter into a frenzy.

REGRESSION

In times of stress, when much is being demanded of you, you can become childlike, retreating to a less mature aspect of yourself. At such times you find it difficult to do anything for yourself, and without the aid of others, you are quite helpless. If, after you have become childlike, you are physically threatened, you may enter into a frenzy.

MERITS AND FLAWS

Merits and Flaws allow you to describe your character in more detail than that provided by the basic character creation process. These new rules are optional. If you do not take Merits and Flaws for your character, you will not suffer a disadvantage in gameplay.

Merits may only be bought with Negative Traits. Flaws give you extra Negative Traits to spend on Merits or anything else. You can purchase as many Merits as you wish, up to the full number of your Negative Traits (though that leaves you weak in other areas). Each Merit has a different cost, which is described in terms of Traits — if you wish to take one, you must have already taken that number of Negative Traits (this includes Derangements or Flaws).

Each Flaw you purchase gives you additional Negative Traits that allow you to buy Merits. The number of Negative Traits gained is listed with the Flaw. For instance, the Flaw *Absent-Minded* gives you three additional Negative Traits, which you could then use to buy the Merit *Calm Heart*, which costs three Traits.

Keep in mind that you can only take up to five Negative Traits' worth of Flaws (which makes it impossible for any character to have or spend more than 10 Negative Traits). Additionally, Merits and Flaws can only be bought when the character is first generated (unless the Narrator makes an exception for someone who missed the opportunity earlier).

The Narrator has the final say on all Merits and Flaws for each character, and may not choose to allow any in her game.

APTITUDES

These Merits and Flaws establish your vampire's special capacities and abilities, or modify the effects and powers of his other Traits.

AMBIDEXTROUS (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You have a high degree of off-hand dexterity, and can perform tasks with the "wrong" hand with no Trait penalty.

EAT FOOD (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You can still eat food, an aptitude you picked up early in your undead experience. Although your peers find this disgusting, you can pass for living with much greater ease than can the majority of Cainites.

NATURAL LINGUIST (2 TRAIT MERIT)

You have a flair for languages. This Merit does not allow you to learn more languages than the number permitted by your Linguistics Trait rating, but you are automatically three Traits up on any challenges involving languages (both written and spoken).

FAST LEARNER (5 TRAIT MERIT)

You learn very quickly, and pick up on new things faster than most. You gain one extra experience Trait at the conclusion of each story (not each game session).

JACK-OF-ALL-TRADES (5 TRAIT MERIT)

You have a large pool of miscellaneous skills and knowledges obtained through your extensive travels, trades you've held, or just all-around know-how. You may automatically attempt any action even though you do not have the appropriate skill, and you need not spend Willpower to do so. However, if you lose this challenge, the Traits you bid are also gone. You can, of course, spend a Willpower Trait to avoid losing the Traits you just bid.

UNSKILLED (5 TRAIT FLAW)

You have never trained extensively in any skill or craft, and therefore have three fewer Traits to spend on your Abilities. Freebies can be spent to raise your Skills, and you can learn new Abilities through experience.

AWARENESS

These Merits and Flaws involve perception (or the lack thereof).

ACUTE HEARING (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You have exceptionally keen hearing. You are automatically two Traits up on any challenges relating directly to your sense of hearing. You are able to make precise distinctions between even the faintest sounds. Combined with *Heightened Senses*, this Merit can provide superhuman acuity.

ACUTE TASTE (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You have an exceptionally keen sense of taste. You are automatically two Traits up on any challenges relating directly to your sense of taste. You are able to make precise distinctions in taste, enabling you to distinguish between rare wines—or other

vintages. Combined with *Heightened Senses*, this Merit can provide superhuman acuity.

ACUTE VISION (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You have exceptionally keen eyesight. You are automatically one Trait up on all challenges that involve sight perception. Combined with *Heightened Senses*, this Merit can provide superhuman acuity.

ACUTE SMELL (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You have an exceptionally keen sense of smell. You can make precise distinctions between scents. Combined with *Heightened Senses*, this Merit can provide superhuman acuity. You are automatically two Traits up on any challenges relating directly to your sense of smell.

HARD OF HEARING (1 TRAIT FLAW)

Your hearing is defective. You are automatically two Traits down on hearing perception tests. You may not take *Acute Hearing* if you take this Flaw.

BAD SIGHT (2 TRAIT FLAW)

Your sight is defective. You are automatically two Traits down on all sight perception tests. This Flaw is neither nearsightedness nor farsightedness; it is a minor form of blindness, and is not correctable. You may not take *Acute Vision* if you take this Flaw.

ONE EYE (2 TRAIT FLAW)

You have one eye — choose which, or determine randomly during character creation. You have no peripheral vision on your blind side, and are two Traits down on any test requiring depth perception. This includes missile combat. To simulate this Flaw, you may choose to cover one eye while you're playing.

DEAF (3 TRAIT FLAW)

You cannot hear sound. If you are not truly deaf, this can be difficult to roleplay, and you should get your Narrator's approval before selecting this Flaw.

COLOR BLINDNESS (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You can only see in black and white. Color means nothing to you, although you are sensitive to color density, which you perceive as shades of gray.

Note: Color blindness actually indicates an inability to distinguish between two colors, but we fudged a bit for the sake of playability. It's a game, after all.

BLIND (6 TRAIT FLAW)

You automatically fail all tests involving vision. You cannot see — the world of color and light is lost to you.

Note: This Flaw may be difficult to act out in a live-action setting.

CAINITE TIES

These Traits reflect your status among your vampiric fellows, and any capabilities and drawbacks that result from it.

BOON (1-5 TRAIT MERIT)

An elder owes you a favor because of something either you or your sire once did for him. The extent of the boon owed to you depends on how many Traits you spend. One Trait would indicate a relatively minor boon, while three Traits would indicate that the elder probably owes you his existence.

SPECIAL GIFT (1-5 TRAIT MERIT)

For some reason, your sire gave you a valuable gift after your Embrace. The Narrator should create something suitable. You are free to make suggestions, but the final choice of item (as well as how many Traits it is worth) lies with the Narrator.

REPUTATION (2 TRAIT MERIT)

You have a good reputation among the vampires of your city. You may have earned this reputation, or inherited it from your sire. You are also automatically two Traits up on any challenges involving social dealings with the city's Cainites. A character with this Merit may not take the *Flaw Notoriety*.

PAWN (3 TRAIT MERIT)

You can manipulate and have some control over another vampire, one of weaker generation than yourself. Your hold was likely formed through Blood Bond, but can also come from a variety of other sources, such as blackmail, bribes or threats — you decide. The pawn does not necessarily know that he is being controlled. Because this Merit does not always lend itself well to a *Mind's Eye Theatre* setting, be certain to consult your Storyteller before selecting it.

ENEMY (1-5 TRAIT FLAW)

Sometime in your life, or after your death for that matter, you offended an unknown being with the power to cause you grief. The power and influence of this enemy are determined by the Flaw's value. Someone about your equal would be one Trait, while a Methuselah or potent wizard would be worth five. You and the Narrator should discuss the severity of your enemy's hatred, and whether or not you are aware that he is pursuing you.

INFAMOUS SIRE (1 TRAIT FLAW)

Your sire is distrusted and disliked by the Cainites of your home city. Perhaps he was dangerously insane, or perhaps he slew his kin without remorse or reason. The vampires of your city will distrust and dislike you by association, and this burden is not easily shed. The sins of the fathers do fall on the sons, after all.



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SIRE'S RESENTMENT (1 TRAIT FLAW)

Your sire dislikes you and wishes you ill. Given the smallest opportunity, your sire will seek to do you harm, and may even attack you if provoked. Your sire's friends will also work against you. Good luck!

NOTORIETY (3 TRAIT FLAW)

You have a bad reputation among your peers; perhaps you violated the Traditions once too often, or you belong to an unpopular coterie. You are two Traits down on anything that has to do with social dealings with other Cainites. A character with this Flaw may not take the Merit *Reputation*.

MENTAL

These Merits and Flaws deal with the mind— its strengths, weaknesses and special capacities.

COMMON SENSE (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You have a significant amount of practical, everyday wisdom. Whenever you are about to do something contrary to common sense, the Narrator should alert you to how your potential action might violate practicality. This is an ideal Merit if you are a novice player; it allows you to receive advice from the Narrator concerning what you can and cannot do, and (even more importantly) what you should and should not do.

CONCENTRATION (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You have the ability to focus your mind and shut out any distractions or annoyances above and beyond normal vampiric self-discipline. You are one Trait up on any concentration-related challenges.

CELESTIAL ATTUNEMENT (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You have an innate link to the passage of time and the movement of celestial bodies. You can estimate the time until sunrise or sunset within a minute or two, and can follow the phases of the moon in your head. Those with some training in astrology and this Merit can even foretell certain astrological conjunctions without access to charts. You can accomplish any of these feats with only a minimum of concentration.

EDETIC MEMORY (2 TRAIT MERIT)

You can remember things you have seen and heard with perfect detail. You are two Traits up on any memory-related challenges, and can recall any sight or sound accurately, even from a passing glimpse or snatch of sound.

The Narrator relates to you exactly what was seen or heard, and can be queried about what you do and do not know.

LIGHT SLEEPER (2 TRAIT MERIT)

You can awaken instantly at any sign of trouble, and do so without any sleepiness or hesitation.

CALM HEART (3 TRAIT MERIT)

You are naturally calm and composed, and do not lose your temper easily. You are always two Traits up on your tests to resist frenzy.

IRON WILL (3 TRAIT MERIT)

When you are determined and your mind is set, nothing can divert you from your goals. You cannot be *Dominated*, and supernatural creatures using mental attacks or magic against you are three Traits down if you are aware of them and resisting. However, the additional mental defense costs you one Willpower per scene. Even if you are unaware of them, mages and others seeking to influence you with magic or other abilities are down one Trait to do so.

DEEP SLEEPER (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You find it very difficult to awaken. Raise the difficulty by two on any such Static Test, and roleplay your constant tardiness when meeting with your coteries or trying to keep early evening appointments.

AMNESIA (2 TRAIT FLAW)

You are unable to remember anything about your mortal life. Your past is a blank slate, and may come back to haunt you. You may, if you wish, take up to five other points of Flaws without specifying what they are. The Narrator can supply the details. Over the course of the chronicle, you and your character will slowly discover these hidden Flaws. *Amnesia* can be a dangerous Flaw; the Storyteller is under no obligation to be merciful.

CONFUSED (2 TRAIT FLAW)

You are often confused, and the world seems to be a very twisted and distorted place. Sometimes you are simply unable to make sense of things. You need to roleplay this behavior all the time to a small degree, but your confusion becomes especially strong whenever strong stimuli surround you (such as when a number of people talk all at once, or you enter a cavern with an overpowering stench). You may spend Willpower to override the effects of your confusion, but only temporarily.

ABSENT-MINDED (3 TRAIT FLAW)

This Flaw may not be taken with the Merit *Concentration*. Though you do not forget such things as Abilities and Disciplines, you do forget such things as names, titles and the last time you fed. In order to remember anything more than your own name or the location of your haven, you need to spend a Willpower Trait.

MORTAL SOCIETY

These Merits and Flaws dictate your interactions with the mortal world.

CHURCH RANKING (1-3 TRAIT MERIT)

You were part of the Church in life, and somehow maintain the illusion that you still live, thereby possessing some of the advantages of Church rank. You can influence local politics to some extent, and locals respect you as a representative of God. One

Trait of this Merit might mean you are a summoner or deacon; two would be a monk, nun or pardoner. Three Traits represents a local friar or ranking monk. Higher rank (abbot, bishop and so on) should only be allowed with the Storyteller's permission (at an even higher cost) — these ranks carry a greater amount of influence, and a grave level of responsibility.

This Merit does not automatically confer True Faith, nor does it protect a Cainite from a mortal or site with Faith.

NOBILITY (1-3 TRAIT MERIT)

You possessed a noble title before your Embrace, and have somehow managed to pass yourself off as alive. Consequently, the advantages of nobility are open to you. One Trait of this Merit translates roughly as a minor title with little prestige (like a knight). With two Traits, you could be a baronet, and with three you might even be a minor baron. Higher titles should be given to players on at the Storyteller's discretion. In the Dark Medieval world, titles represent great power, but require an equally great amount of work to maintain.

Even with this Merit, you are presumed to be landless unless by Storyteller dispensation.

MANSE (2 TRAIT MERIT)

You own a large manor — a home with 25 or more rooms — as well as the surrounding estate. The servants, if you have any, are provided for you if you have this Merit, although they cannot be used as Herd or Retainers. The mansion is assumed to be fenced or walled in, and makes an excellent haven. While the mansion can be in as poor or as good repair as you wish, the more inhabited it appears to be, the more attention (from tax men and the like) it will garner. Similarly, superstitious mortals will go out of their way to avoid a "haunted" manor. On the other hand, there are downsides to living in a decrepit building, not the least of which is personal safety.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTROL (2-5 TRAIT MERIT)

You begin play with absolute control over one mortal institution of your choice. Either you are the head of this institution, or you have mastered its leader. In the first case, think about how you will be able to remain control among your followers without being able to appear to them during the day (it may be impossible to remain in command for long). If you control the mortal leader, think about how you keep him loyal. (Blackmail? The Blood Oath? *Dominate?* *Presence?*) The cost of the Merit depends upon the size and power of the institution. Control of a small hermitage with six monks is a two-Trait Merit. To control an opulent monastery with 200 brothers is a five-Trait Merit. Plausible institutions include: monasteries and convents (three to five Traits), cathedral chapters (monks attached to a cathedral — five Traits) hermitages (two Traits) hospitals (hostels for the poor or sick — three traits), city guilds (two to five Traits, depending on size and power), city law courts (three Traits), etc.

SPY NETWORK (2 TRAIT MERIT)

You begin play with access to a group of mortals who frequently bring you information on the daylight world or faraway places. Their information is both up-to-

date and fairly reliable, and they are not likely to lie to you. These mortals have their own aims and agendas. Why do they keep you informed. Do you pay them? Perform occasional "favors" for them? Dominate their leader? Or are they mortal friends and family? Also, how much do they know about you? (The more they know, the better they can sniff out relevant information and pursue useful rumors — but the more damage they could do if they ever betrayed you.) A spy network might be anything from a peasant family to a coven of witches, a merchant family's underlings to a network of wandering lepers. What these kine can discover will depend upon who they are; different people move in different circles, after all.

KNOWN TO BE DEAD (2 TRAIT FLAW)

Communities are small, and deaths and disappearances are known to all. You originally lived in the area where the chronicle is set, and the locals know that you are dead. Perhaps they saw you die, or you were discovered in torpor and pronounced dead (perhaps even buried). At the moment this causes you no problems — but if you use your real name or are spotted by people who knew you in your breathing days, then you can expect problems. Exorcists, pious knights and others (perhaps even local Lupines) will seek to destroy you; demons, mages and others may come to offer you "assistance."

WARD (3 TRAIT FLAW)

You are devoted to the protection of a mortal. You may describe your ward, though the Narrator is the one who actually creates her. This character is often a friend or relative from your living days. Retainers do not count as wards, as they "pay their own way." Wards have a talents for getting caught up in the action of stories, and are frequent targets of a character's enemies.

HUNTED (4 TRAIT FLAW)

You have come to the attention of a witch-hunter, or some similar individual who seeks your destruction. This hunter is beyond reason and has some form of power, influence or authority that puts you at a disadvantage. Because of you, your friends, family and associates are likewise endangered. Sooner or later, this Flaw results in a confrontation. The resolution should not an easy one, and until such time as you and your pursuer have your showdown, you are in for a hellish time.

SECOND-CLASS CITIZEN (2 TRAIT FLAW)

The simple happenstance of birth has made you a second-class citizen in medieval Europe. This tends to come in two forms. First, you might simply be female. Mortal men treat you as a natural inferior, and many male Cainites also discriminate against you. Furthermore, you must rationalize taking any combat-oriented skills (Brawl, Melee or Archery) or certain Knowledges (Finance, Academics) during character creation. Being a woman usually precludes tuition in these typically exclusively male areas.

Alternately, you might be a member of a disliked or persecuted social group, and your appearance, speech or local reputation marks you as a member of this group. You are excluded from local politics, and are distrusted and hated by most local mortals. (Remember, too, that many Cainites maintain the prejudices of the societies that bore

or sustain them). You may be an Arab in Western Europe, or a Jew. Or perhaps you were a convicted thief, with a brand on your face or forehead attesting to your conviction, or an infamous local prostitute. You might also be a member of a resented immigrant group (like a wealthy Norman in Wales). Either way, you can be targeted by an angry mob needing a scapegoat....

Bear in mind that you need not take this Flaw! A female vampire without this Flaw is simply assumed to be able to overcome societal pressure and garner respect. Take this Flaw only if you want to roleplay a vampire at a social disadvantage.

PHYSICAL

These Merits and Flaws deal with your health and physical makeup, and the unusual physiology of the undead.

DOUBLE-JOINTED (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You are unusually supple. You are one bid up on all Physical Challenges requiring body flexibility. Squeezing between gaol bars is one example of a use for this Merit.

MISPLACED HEART (2 TRAIT MERIT)

Your heart has actually moved within your body, though no more than two feet from its original position near the middle of your chest. Those who attempt to stake you find it very difficult to find the right location (which should be your most tightly guarded secret).

EFFICIENT DIGESTION (3 TRAIT MERIT)

You are able to draw more than the usual amount of nourishment from blood. Each two Blood Traits ingested increases your Blood Pool by three. Round down so leftover "halves" are ignored. For instance, taking four Blood Traits raises the Blood Pool by six, and so does taking five Blood Traits.

HUGE SIZE (4 TRAIT MERIT)

You are abnormally large in size, possibly over seven feet tall and 400 pounds in weight. You therefore have one additional Health Level, to reflect the fact that you are able to withstand more punishment than most before you are incapacitated. When acting this part, players should dress appropriately with bulky clothes, unless they already have a stature that approximates this Merit.

SANGUINE HUMOR (2 TRAIT MERIT)

The flush of life seems to fill your veins; therefore, you appear more human than other vampires. Your skin never paled with death, you never stopped breathing, and even sneezing comes naturally. You can make your heart beat if you have at least one Blood Trait. Nosferatu and Cappadocians may not take this Merit.

SHORT (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You are well below the average height, and have trouble seeing over high objects and moving quickly. You suffer a two-Trait penalty to all pursuit rolls, and you and the

Narrator should make sure your height is taken into account in all situations. In some circumstances, being short gives you a concealment bonus.

WEAK BLOOD (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You are of the 13th generation, the product of a liberal bloodline. As such, you are both less powerful than normal medieval Cainites and are looked down upon by them. You may only rise in generation through diablerie, and will likely be hunted if you do.

DISFIGURED (2 TRAIT FLAW)

A hideous disfigurement makes you easy to notice as well as to remember. You cannot take any Social Traits that would compliment your appearance, much like the Nosferatu (who cannot take this Flaw). Furthermore, you are two Traits down on any Social Challenge (except intimidation) when your true appearance is visible.

CHILD (3 TRAIT FLAW)

You were a small child at the time of the Embrace. Although time and experience may have changed your outlook, you are stuck with a child's body for eternity. You find it difficult to be taken seriously by others (two-Trait penalty to all relevant tests). Because you have never before experienced any sort of transformation change (such as the experience of puberty), you are ill-suited to withstanding the demands of the Hunger.

DEFORMITY (3 TRAIT FLAW)

You have some kind of deformity — a misshapen limb, a hunchback, a club foot — which affects your interactions with others and may inconvenience you physically. You are one Trait down on all tests of a physical nature. Furthermore all challenges related to physical appearance are two Traits down.

LAME (3 TRAIT FLAW)

Your legs are injured or otherwise prevented from working effectively. You suffer a three-Trait penalty to all tests related to movement.

LEPER (3 TRAIT FLAW)

Before you were Embraced you suffered from leprosy or a skin disease that might easily be confused with leprosy. You may not take any Social Traits that compliment your appearance (such as *Gorgeous*, *Alluring* or *Seductive*), and your flesh is marred by rashes, pale patches, festering sores, scars and so on. Your skin disease, whatever it actually is, is obvious to any who look upon you. Mortal authorities refuse you entry to any city, and you are treated with fear and revulsion. Very likely (Narrator's discretion) your condition is still contagious, although because you are undead it cannot have any further effects on you. You may, however, transmit to those upon whom you feed. This Flaw is worth only one Trait to Nosferatu, and then only if their disease is contagious.

ONE ARM (3 TRAIT FLAW)

You have only one arm — choose which, or determine randomly at character creation. You lost your arm before the Embrace and thus are accustomed to using your remaining hand, so you suffer no off-hand penalty. However, you do suffer a two-Trait penalty to any test where two hands would normally be needed to perform a task.

PERMANENT WOUND (3 TRAIT FLAW)

You suffered injuries during the Embrace, which your sire did nothing to repair. You start each night at the Wounded Health Level. Your wounds can be healed like normal damage, but each evening, after sleep, your injuries always return.

MUTE (4 TRAIT FLAW)

Your vocal apparatus does not function, and you cannot speak at all. You can communicate through other means — typically writing or signing.

Note: American Sign Language obviously did not exist during the Middle Ages, but there is an early form of fingerspelling available to monks living under vows of silence, and to deaf nobility. Remember that literacy is irregular in these times, and that only the educated would be able to read written messages.

THIN-BLOODED (4 TRAIT FLAW)

You have weak blood and are unable to use it for anything but sustaining yourself from night to night and healing your wounds. Blood cannot be used to add to your Physical Traits, to fuel blood Disciplines or to create a Blood Bond. Moreover, you will not always be able to create a vampire. Half the time, the Embrace will simply not work for you.

SUPERNATURAL

These extremely rare Merits and Flaws give you different kinds of supernatural benefits or detriments. Because of the potential of these particular Traits and the liberal way in which they deal with the “laws of reality,” the Storyteller may not allow you to choose from this category — ask before you pick one. Furthermore, you should not select such Traits unless they firmly fit your character concept, and you can explain why your character possesses them. In general, it is not recommended that anyone have more than one or two Supernatural Merits or Flaws — they should be strictly controlled by the Storyteller.

TRUE LOVE (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You have discovered, but may have lost (at least temporarily), a true love. Nonetheless, this love provides joy in an existence usually devoid of such enlightened emotions. Whenever you are suffering, in danger or dejected, the thought of your true love is enough to give you the strength to persevere. In game terms, this love allows you two extra Traits in a challenge, but only when you are actively striving to protect or come closer to your true love. Also, the power of your love may be powerful enough to protect you from other supernatural forces (Narrator's discretion). However, your true love may also be a hindrance and require aid (or even rescue) from time to time. Be forewarned: this is a most exacting Merit to play over the course of a chronicle.

DANGER SENSE (2 TRAIT MERIT)

You have a sixth sense that warns you of danger. When you are in a perilous situation that would potentially surprise you, you have five seconds in which to react instead of the normal two seconds.

FAERIE AFFINITY (2 TRAIT MERIT)

Your presence does not frighten faeries; indeed, it attracts them, and you are naturally attuned to their ways. Unlike most Cainites, you can enter Arcadia, the mystical kingdom of the faeries, provided you find an entrance.

UNBONDABLE (3 TRAIT MERIT)

You are immune to the Blood Oath. No matter how much blood you drink from other vampires, you can never be bound to another.

LUCK (4 TRAIT MERIT)

You were born lucky — or else the Devil looks after his own. Either way, you can repeat three failed tests per story. Only one repeat attempt may be made on any single test.

TRUE FAITH (7 TRAIT MERIT)

You have a deep-seated faith in and love for God, or whatever name you choose for the Almighty. Perhaps your faith came to you before your Embrace and was strong enough to survive even this test; or, incredibly enough, the adversity you have experienced in your current condition has brought out what is best in you. You begin the game with one Trait of Faith. Your Faith provides you with an inner strength and comfort that continues to support you when all else betrays you. It can be used just like Willpower Traits to avoid frenzy and to retain your lost Traits in a challenge. The exact supernatural effects of Faith, if any, are completely up to the Narrator (though it typically has the effect of repelling Cainites). It certainly varies from Cainite to Cainite and is almost never obvious — some of the most saintly people have never performed a miracle greater than managing to soothe an injured soul. The nature of any miracles you do perform is usually tied to your own Nature, and you may never realize that you have been aided by a force beyond yourself.

You must not have any Derangements in order to choose this Merit, and if you ever get a permanent Derangement, you lose all Faith Traits. You can recover them only through extensive penitence and work (and even then, only after your Derangement is gone). No one may start the game with more than one Faith Trait. Additional Traits are only awarded at the Narrator's discretion.

TAINT OF CORRUPTION (1 TRAIT FLAW)

Plants wither at your approach and die at your touch. Some vampires believe that Caine himself possesses this Flaw.

DEMON-HOUNDED (1-4 POINT FLAW)

A demon has taken a special interest in your soul. She appears to you occasionally, using threats, bribes and honeyed words to win you to her cause. Sometimes she just

asks you to perform innocuous favors for her. Other times she asks you to sell your soul. Sometimes she offers favors or information without any apparent catch. In any case, it is not your interests she serves, but those of her infernal masters. All of her plots are ultimately designed to ensnare you and win your soul. A minor demon (one-Trait Flaw) may be an annoying imp, capable of nothing more than distracting you, stealing small items and pleading for your soul; its plan are unimpressive, but it can be frustrating. A greater creature (four Traits) is your physical equal and can concoct horribly devious plans to damn you. In either case, the Narrator creates the demon's character, and keeps track of both its plots and its powers.

REPULSED BY GARLIC (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You cannot abide the smell of garlic, and the smallest hint of its scent drives you from a room. The full force of its pungent odor brings bloody tears to your face and renders you nearly blind, while its touch causes boils and even open wounds. You are always one Trait down on any challenges when the smell of garlic is in the air.

HAUNTED (3 TRAIT FLAW)

A wraith that only you (and mediums) can see and hear haunts you. It actively dislikes you and enjoys making your life miserable by insulting, berating and distracting you — especially when you need to keep calm. It also has a number of minor powers it can use against you (once per story for each power): hide small objects; bring a "chill" over others, making them very ill at ease with you; cause a loud buzzing in your ear or the ears of others; move a small object such as a knife or pen; break a fragile item such as a bottle or mirror; trip you; or make eerie noises such as chains rattling. Yelling at the wraith can sometimes drive it away, but it will confuse those around you. A Narrator will likely personify the wraith in order to make things all the more frustrating for you.

For more information on wraiths, or if you want to make your personal ghost a bit more real, see *Oblivion*.

DARK FATE (5 TRAIT FLAW)

You are doomed to experience a horrible demise or, worse, suffer eternal agony. In the end, all your efforts, your struggles and your dreams will come to naught. Your fate is certain, and there is nothing you can do about it. Even more ghastly, you have partial knowledge of this, for you occasionally have visions of your fate — and they are most disturbing. The malaise these visions inspire in you can only be overcome through the use of Willpower, and returns after each vision. At some point in the chronicle, you will indeed face your fate, but when and how is completely up to the Storyteller. Though you can't do anything about your inevitable doom, you can still attempt to reach some goal before it occurs, or at least try to make sure that your friends are not destroyed as well. This is a difficult Flaw to roleplay; though it may seem as if it takes away all free will, we have found that, ironically, it grants freedom.

PERSONALITY

These Merits and Flaws deal with the personality of your character, and may describe ideals, motivations or pathologies. Some Personality Flaws can be tempo-

rarily ignored by spending Willpower Traits, and are noted as such. If you possess such a Flaw and do not roleplay it when the Narrator thinks you should, then she may tell you that you have spent a Willpower Trait for the effort. Flaws cannot be conveniently ignored.

CODE OF HONOR (1 TRAIT MERIT)

You have a personal code of ethics to which you strictly adhere. You can automatically resist most temptations that would bring you in conflict with your code. When battling supernatural methods of persuasion (*Dominare*, mind magic, etc.) that would make you violate your code, you gain one automatic Trait for the challenge.

You must construct your own personal code of honor in as much detail as you can, outlining the general rules of conduct by which you abide. As always, double-check what you create with a Narrator.

HIGHER PURPOSE (1 TRAIT MERIT)

Everyone has "reason to live," but you have a special commitment to a single ideal. Your chosen goal drives and directs you in everything. You do not concern yourself with petty matters and casual concerns, because your higher purpose is everything. Though you may sometimes be herded along by this aim and find yourself forced to behave in ways contrary to the needs of personal survival, it can also grant you great inner strength. You are have two extra Traits on any challenge having to do with your higher purpose. You need to decide what your higher purpose is before you start playing; make sure you talk it over with the Narrator first. (You cannot take both this Merit and the Flaw *Driving Goal*.)

BESERKER (2 TRAIT MERIT)

You can direct the Beast better than most and can frenzy at will, thus ignoring wound penalties. However, you must still pay the consequences of your actions in frenzy, and your chance of unwillingly entering frenzy is unaffected.

DUAL NATURE (2 TRAIT MERIT)

You have two distinct yet compatible Natures, both of which influence your personality. You may regain Willpower using both Natures. You may still choose a Demeanor, one as different from your Natures as you like. This Merit is not the same as having multiple personalities (which is a Derangement).

COMPULSION (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You have a compulsion of some sort, which can cause you a number of different problems. Your compulsion may be for cleanliness, bragging, stealing, gambling, exaggeration or just talking too much. A compulsion can be temporarily avoided at the cost of a Willpower Trait, but it is in effect at all other times.

INTOLERANCE (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You have an unreasoning dislike of a certain thing. It may be an animal, a class of person, a color, a situation or just about anything at all. Some dislikes may be too trivial to be reflected here — an aversion to red-haired Sicilian cobblers, for instance. The Storyteller is the final arbiter on what you can pick to dislike.

NIGHTMARES (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You experience horrendous dreams every time you sleep, and memories of them haunt you during your waking hours. Sometimes the nightmares (or daymares, if you prefer) are so bad they cause you to be down one Trait on all of your actions for the next night (Storyteller's discretion). Some of the nightmares may be so intense that you mistake them for reality. A crafty Storyteller will be quick to take advantage of this.

PHOBIA (1 OR 3 TRAIT FLAW)

You have an overpowering and irrational fear of something. You instinctively and illogically retreat from and avoid the object of your fear. Common objects of phobias include certain animals, insects, crowds, open spaces, confined spaces and heights. You must make a Simple Test whenever you encounter the object of your fear. The consequences of failure depend on the severity of the Flaw. If you have taken a one-Trait phobia, you must retreat from the object upon failure. If the fear is worth three Traits, you will not approach the object with fewer than three successes. If you fail, you will flee in terror. The Storyteller has final say over which phobias she allows in a chronicle.

PREY EXCLUSION (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You refuse to feed from a certain class of prey. For example, a pacifistic hermit might avoid feeding from humans, or an erudite vampire might decide to spare scholars or musicians. You become angry when others prey on this class of kine, and might enter a frenzy (Narrator's discretion) if you see others doing so. If you accidentally feed upon this class of prey yourself, you automatically enter a frenzy and risk gaining a Derangement.

OVERCONFIDENT (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You have an exaggerated and unshakable opinion of your own worth and capabilities — you never hesitate to trust your abilities, even in situations in which you risk disaster by doing so. Because your abilities may not be enough, such overconfidence can be very dangerous. When you do fail, you quickly find someone or something else to blame, though — you couldn't possibly be to blame. If you are convincing enough, you can infect others with your overconfidence as well.

LOW SELF-IMAGE (2 TRAIT FLAW)

You lack self-confidence and don't believe in yourself. You are two Traits down in situations where you don't expect to succeed (at Narrator's discretion, though the penalty might be limited to one Trait if you help the Narrator by pointing out times when this Flaw might affect you). At the Narrator's option, you may be required to use a Willpower Trait to do things that require self-confidence, in situations when others would not be obliged to do so.

SOFT-HEARTED (1 TRAIT FLAW)

You cannot stand to watch others suffer — not necessarily because you care about what happens to them, but simply because you dislike the intensity of emotion it

causes in you. If you are the direct cause of suffering, and you witness it, you experience nights of nausea and days of sleepless grief. You avoid situations where you might have to witness others' pain, and will do anything you can to protect people from it. Whenever you must witness suffering, you are one Trait down on all challenges for the next hour.

TERRITORIAL (2 TRAIT FLAW)

You do not like to leave your territory, nor do you like to have strangers enter it. In fact, you get so nervous and disoriented while outside your own domain that you are down one Trait in any situation. In addition, you must make a frenzy roll when other vampires enter your territory, unless they have first obtained your permission to pass through.

VENGEANCE (2 TRAIT FLAW)

You have a score to settle. This score may be from either your mortal days or vampiric days. Either way, you are obsessed with wreaking vengeance on an individual (or perhaps an entire group), and make revenge your first priority in all situations. The need for vengeance can only be overcome by spending a Willpower Trait, and even then it only subsides for a single scene.

DRIVING GOAL (3 TRAIT FLAW)

You have a personal goal, which sometimes compels and directs you in startling ways. The goal is almost limitless in scope, and you can never truly achieve it. "Overthrow the Church" or "Achieve total enlightenment" are acceptable goals, while "Overthrow the local prince" is not. Because you must work toward your goal throughout the chronicle (though you can avoid it for short periods by spending Willpower), it will get you into trouble and jeopardize other actions that you might prefer to take. Choose your goal carefully, as it is the focus of everything your character does.

HATRED (3 TRAIT FLAW)

You have an unreasoning hate of a certain thing. This hate is total and largely uncontrollable. You may hate a color, animal, class of person or situation — anything. You constantly pursue opportunities to harm the hated object or to gain power from it.

EXPERIENCE

By doing, we learn how to improve what we've done. Thus, characters can take experience points (awarded for superior roleplaying, expert leadership or even simple survival) and convert them into improved statistics. Only one Ability, Trait or Discipline should be gained per session.

USING EXPERIENCE

After experience has been awarded, it may be spent to purchase new Abilities, Traits and Disciplines, improving upon the character and giving the player a sense of satisfaction as he watches his character grow and improve. The following lists the cost of improving Traits, Abilities and Disciplines.



THE LONG NIGHT

- New Attribute Trait — One experience point per Trait.
- New Ability — One experience point per Ability Trait.
- New Discipline — Three experience points for Basic Disciplines, six for Intermediate Disciplines and nine for Advanced Disciplines. It costs an additional point to learn a Discipline outside of your clan.
 - New Willpower — Three experience per Trait.
 - Buy off Negative Trait — Two experience per Trait.
 - New Influence — One experience point per Influence Trait, with Narrator approval.
 - New Merit — The cost of the Merit, with Narrator approval.
 - Buy off existing Flaw — The point cost of the Flaw, with Narrator approval. This should not happen instantaneously, and it is recommended that Narrators find a way to integrate the removal of a character's Flaw into an ongoing plotline.
- New Road Trait — Road Traits should not be awarded without roleplaying that demonstrates that the character has indeed advanced along his chosen Via. In addition, each new Road Trait costs the Cainite's current Road rating in experience.

SAMPLE CHARACTER

Charles gets invited to play in a **Long Night** game, and as such decides to take a break from his day job and figure out his character. He looks over the various character types that seem appropriate to a game set in the Dark Medieval world, and decides that he doesn't want to play a noble character — he's a bit bored with *thees* and *thous*. Instead, he wants someone on the fringes of society, a bit of a rogue. As a result, he comes up with a character named Eric, who's a traveling troubadour. While Eric is welcomed at court for his entertainment value, he can also move in less savory circles, giving the character a bit of versatility.

With his concept firmly nailed down, Charles starts thinking about Traits and otherwise building Eric from the ground up. The first thing to settle is clan, and Charles first thinks about Toreador. After all, Eric is a musician; it's natural that the Artisans would Embrace him. However, he's looking for something different, and decides that one of the doomed Dark Ages bloodlines would be fun to play. With that, Eric is one of the vanishing Lhiannan.

Next come Nature and Demeanor. Nature is easy, as Eric is a Rogue through and through. However, his Demeanor has to be something a little different, if for no other reason than to hide his shady side. A *Gallant* works well as a cover, so Charles sets that down as Eric's Demeanor. After all, no one will suspect someone who's gallant of having dirty secrets, would they?

A Road comes next, and Charles goes down the list a few times. Nothing really jumps out at him, but eventually the Gallant aspect of the character leads him to the Road of Chivalry. Although Eric may be a bit of a bandit at heart, he's smart enough to show respect for other Cainites — if not humans.

STEP TWO: ATTRIBUTES

Attributes are important, and Charles comes to the conclusion that for a troubadour, Social Traits are the most important. After all, an antisocial entertainer is unlikely to find welcome at courts or inns, and thus probably won't last too long. As

an added bonus, good Social skills can help Eric get out of scrapes without fighting. For his seven Social Traits, Charles writes down *Beguiling*, *Charming*, *Diplomatic*, *Eloquent*, *Expressive*, *Magnetic* and *Witty*. The broad range should serve Eric well in almost any situation. Mental Traits come next, as Eric has to survive by his wits. Therefore, Charles picks *Clever*, *Creative*, *Cunning*, *Observant* and *Shrewd*. While Charles regrets having only three Physical Traits, he doesn't anticipate having Eric get into too many pitched battles. Therefore, Charles selects *Dexterous*, *Lithe* and *Nimble*.

STEP THREE: SPARK OF LIFE

Now comes time for Charles to write down Eric's five Abilities. As the character is a troubadour with a little bit of theft in his heart, Charles selects *Acting* twice (to help with telling stories), *Crafts* (for making musical instruments), *History* (to provide him with source material) and a single Trait's worth of *Larceny*. After all, singing doesn't always pay off.

With Abilities out of the way, it's time for Disciplines. As Eric is a Lhiannan, he has his choice of *Animalism*, *Ogham* and *Presence*. Charles finds the potential of *Ogham* intriguing, so he takes one power from it, but takes the other two in *Presence*.

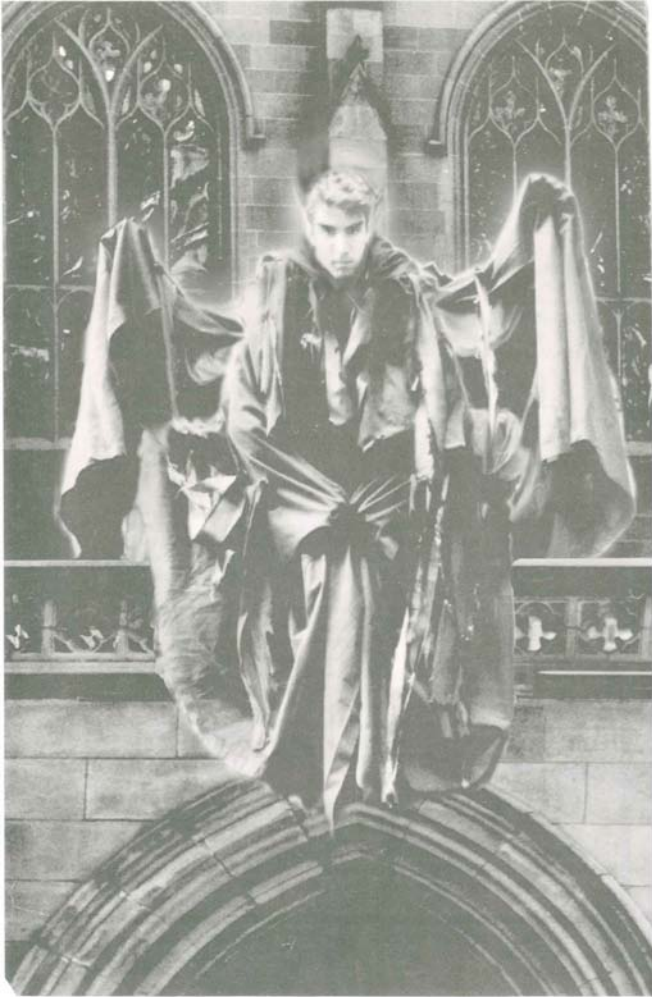
With that out of the way, Charles moves on to Influences. He thinks *Court* would be a good idea, as Eric has probably at least met many mortal lords and princes in his travels. *Politics* and *Intrigue* come next, acquired in countless hours of observing courtiers dance around each other. Last is *Transportation*, just in case Eric needs to get out of town in a hurry.

STEP FOUR: FINISHING TOUCHES

As a 12th generation vampire, Eric starts with four Blood Traits, one Willpower Trait and one Status Trait (*Acknowledged*). Now all that's left is rounding out the character with Negative Traits, Merits and Flaws. As Charles thinks Eric needs the *Performance* Ability, he looks around for a way to pay for it. He comes up with the Negative Trait: *Impatient*, and decides that Eric's not very good at holding his tongue, unfortunately.

With all of the Traits in place, Charles works up a little bit more of a background for his character. According to the story Charles devises, Eric was born the son of a peasant, but ran away rather than be tied to a small patch of farmland. Eric's grandfather had taught him enough woodworking to craft some crude instruments, and his voice earned him an apprenticeship with a traveling singer who heard the starving boy singing for his supper. Eventually Eric earned journeyman status, but had the misfortune to spend a night on the road in a grove sacred to one of the last Lhiannan. She Embraced him after hearing him sing himself to sleep, and taught him a little of the ways of the Lhiannan. He left after a few weeks, however, too impatient to wait for more training. Now he travels the roads of Europe singing for — and to — his supper.

With that done, Charles scribbles out a few notes on personality and dress. He decides that Eric has well-tailored but worn clothes which can still stand up to inspection in court — almost. The troubadour often picks out a melody on his lute as he travels, and usually has a biting witicism ready at the slightest provocation. He does his best to be chivalrous when he remembers, but that's not all of the time. Satisfied, Charles takes his character off to the local Storyteller for approval. With Eric's help, Charles is now ready to step into the Long Night.





CHAPTER THREE: CLANS, BLOODLINES AND DISCIPLINES

Included in this chapter are all of the clans and bloodlines available to players of *The Long Night*, and the Disciplines characters can learn.

CLANS

Every vampire is a member of a clan or bloodline, each with its own unique perspective and powers. Below is a brief summary of the clans extant in the Dark Medieval world, as well as several of the more common Dark Medieval bloodlines.

MISSING CLANS AND BLOODLINES

Certain bloodlines known to be extant in the Dark Medieval world are not presented here. In some cases (Gargoyles, Baali), it is for reasons of playability. In others (Children of Osiris, Kiasyd), it is because these bloodlines were so secretive that they had no real role in Cainite society. If you wish to play a Kiasyd or Child of Osiris, the rules for doing so are in *Laws of the Night*. If Storytellers feel the need to insert Baali, Gargoyles or other such bloodlines, they should feel free to give those characters whatever powers are necessary, based upon *Vampire: The Dark Ages*, *The Dark Ages Companion* and *Dark Ages Storyteller Secrets*.

ASSAMITE

Assamites bear a fearsome reputation as remarkably skilled assassins, made all the more terrifying by their belief in diablerie as a means of bringing them closer to Caine (and therefore Heaven). Though sometimes employed by foreign vampires as assassins in return for payments of blood, Assamites owe allegiance only to their clan. The Crusades into their homelands have brought them more into conflict with Western vampires, whom the Assamites consider to be unclean and impious.

Any Assamite wishing to reduce his generation without diablerie must do so by means of a special potion known only to the clan. He starts by gathering 200 Blood Traits from non-Assamite vampires of equal or lower generation — it often takes decades to gather this much blood. The blood, which can then be made into the elixir, is generally stored in special clay pots or glass containers, and is an Assamite's most prized possession. Each Assamite must tithe a tenth of the blood he gathers to his sire, which can lengthen the gathering time considerably.

Clan Disciplines: *Celerity, Obfuscate, Quietus*

Advantage: Grim and taciturn, the Assamites are a unified clan. Many Cainites fear their retribution, and are reluctant to challenge them outside the bounds of a contract. Additionally, Assamites have a special means of lowering their generation, as detailed above.

Disadvantage: Assamites have two blood-related disadvantages. The first is the clan requirement that all its members give a 10 percent blood tithe to their sires. The second is that any Auspex use or ritual which could detect a diablerist will pinpoint an Assamite (even if the Assamite has yet to commit diablerie) due to the clan's practices.

Suggested Via: Road of Blood

BRUJAH

Brujah are the ultimate scholar-warriors, always striving toward the perfect union of mind and body. They oppose the status quo, and throw themselves into causes devoted to changing it, but can rarely agree with on how best to bring such changes about. Despite their fractious nature, the Brujah rally to one another's side in an hour of need without expecting reward or favors in return.

Clan Disciplines: *Celerity, Potence, Presence*

Advantage: The lessons of past defeats have forged a powerful "us against them" attitude among the Brujah. Clan members are quick to side with their own, even at the risk of personal danger and often against any personal doubts. They frown upon the cowardly practice of refusing a fellow Brujah aid, resulting in the offender's loss of a Status Trait and possibly even ostracism. Those who overuse or abuse this advantage, however, may find themselves losing Status. A Brujah who has lost all her Status Traits can no longer expect the aid of her former allies, who may ignore her with no repercussion to themselves.

Disadvantage: As a whole, the Brujah clan is cursed with a hair-trigger temper. While many members spend their existence trying to come to grips with the destructive force within themselves, few have ever conquered it. All Brujah therefore begin with the Negative Mental Trait *Violent*. The character receives no compensa-

tion for this Negative Trait, nor may it be bought off or lost by any means short of Golconda.

Suggested Via: Road of Humanity, Road of Heaven

CAPPADOCIANS

Obsessed by the secrets and mysteries of death, the members of this macabre clan devote their unlives to researching and studying what lies beyond life. Cappadocians are respected for their insight and wisdom, and are often trusted due to their apparent lack of interest in temporal power. Their secretive nature, however, contributes somewhat to an aura of fear that surrounds them. The so-called "Graverobbers" are often found as advisors in the courts of princes.

Clan Disciplines: *Auspex, Fortitude, Mortis*

Advantage: Because of their well-known intellect and insight, all Cappadocians receive the Status Trait *Respected*. While a Cappadocian may lose all other Status Traits during the course of a chronicle, this one Trait may never be stripped or lost.

Disadvantage: No matter how much blood a Cappadocian drinks, her skin will always remain as pale and cold as a bloodless corpse. Because of this deathly pallor, Cappadocians are automatically one Trait down in any Social Challenge where appearance is involved.

Suggested Via: Road of Heaven, Road of Humanity

FOLLOWERS OF SET

The Followers of Set, or Setites as they often call themselves, constitute one of the most widely loathed clans in the world. Few vampires would willingly grant hospitality to a Setite, and for good reason. Masters of moral and spiritual corruption, the Serpents seem to have an uncanny ability to find the weakness in any organization or individual, and an irresistible urge to exploit it once found. Heresy, sex, wealth and power are the Setites' weapons of corruption, and they take great delight in using them against Cainites and mortals alike. Fierce, cunning and amoral manipulators, the Setites believe that the power of decay and corruption is absolute; they take it as a point of pride that they (allegedly) have not yet found anyone who is immune to their wiles.

Clan Disciplines: *Obfuscate, Presence, Serpents*

Advantage: The Followers of Set are all extremely well-connected to the medieval underworld. Consequently, they automatically start with one additional Influence in *Politics, Street or Underworld* (at the player's discretion).

Disadvantage: Setites are extremely susceptible to sunlight, and take double aggravated damage from any exposure to it. They are also susceptible to bright lights, and are one Trait down on all challenges while in bright light (e.g., bonfires, watchfires, torchlit halls, etc.).

Suggested Via: Road of Typhon

GANGREL

The Gangrel are wanderers who spurn civilization and rarely remain in one place for any significant period of time. This nomadic behavior sets them apart from most other Cainites. Few beings know the wild places like the Gangrel do; they wander and converse with the beasts of the field and forest, lacking any clan organization. They seem unconcerned with the political upheavals which mark Cainite society, but will defend their territories against encroachment from settlers with remarkable ferocity.

Clan Disciplines: *Animalism, Fortitude, Protean*

Advantage: Gangrel rarely allow themselves to be tied down to one place for long, except when they feel there is some task or goal they must accomplish before moving on. As a result, few princes expect the nomadic Gangrel to present themselves as they journey from one place to the next. This is not to say that a prince cannot tell them to leave, but they rarely worry about seeking out the prince of every domain into which they wander.

Furthermore, when Gangrel deal with werewolves, they do not show a taint of the Wurm. Only Gangrel who have three or more Beast Traits will bear the scent of the Wurm (see *Laws of the Wild*). This is obviously a great advantage when dealing with Lupines.

Disadvantage: Each time the Beast (in the form of a frenzy) washes over a Gangrel, it leaves a mark of its passing in its wake. These marks take the form of animalistic features, like excessive body hair, pointed ears or slitted pupils. The player should record these new features on her character sheet and include them in her description. For every three of these features she possesses, the character must take either *Bestial* or *Repugnant* as a Negative Social Trait. Such Traits can and probably will be taken multiple times as the Cainite becomes more and more animalistic.

Suggested Via: Road of the Beast, Road of Paradox

LASOMBRA

Elegant yet predatory, the openly aggressive and competitive Lasombra perceive themselves to be the apex of Cainite existence. The Magisters have little patience, though sometimes pity, for those vampires they consider to be their inferiors (which are almost all other Cainites). The Lasombra seek the reins of power wherever they may be found, in the firm belief that no one can hold them better. For the most part, however, the clan's members prefer to exert control from behind the scenes, leaving the limelight to others.

Clan Disciplines: *Dominance, Obtenebration, Potence*

Advantage: The Lasombra were often members of the nobility or clergy in life; each Lasombra receives one free *Politics* or *Church Influence* Trait.

Disadvantage: Lasombra are invisible in mirrors, water, pools of mercury or reflective surfaces of any kind. In mortal society, this immediately identifies Lasombra as supernatural.

Suggested Via: Road of Heaven, Road of Chivalry, Road of Humanity

MALKAVIAN

To the medieval mind, insanity is one of the most frightening conditions imaginable. Thus the Malkavians, who claim their Beast has granted them insight through madness, are both ridiculed and feared by their fellow vampires. Scoffing at the petty intrigues of other Cainites the way an adult scoffs at a child's infatuation with toys, Malkavians manipulate others to alleviate their boredom. These vampires believe the insight they have distilled from madness prove that all other Cainites are insane, and they are heeded at more than one prince's court as oracles.

Clan Disciplines: *Auspex, Dementation, Obfuscate*

Advantage: Malkav's children are sometimes idiots, sometimes seers — only they know which and when, as their madness grants them freedom from the restrictions which bind their Cainite fellows. As a result, once per evening, any Malkavian may choose to ignore one of the following: any use of Status Traits in a Social Challenge, the loss of Status, or any of the other uses of Status. This benefit may only be evoked in a single situation and can only benefit the Malkavian personally. Any Status Traits risked in a challenge are neither lost, nor are they considered to have been bid — they simply do not exist to the Malkavian.

Disadvantage: While any Cainite can become insane during the course of his existence, Malkavians begin that way. Upon character creation, one Derangement must be chosen to represent the madness the character's bloodline bears (or enjoys, as the case may be). Furthermore, this Derangement is always active and should be continually played by the Malkavian. These Derangements can never be "bought off" or removed during the course of a chronicle.

Suggested Via: A Malkavian may follow any Road or her own medley of them all.

NOSFERATU

The Nosferatu are outcast from mortal and vampire society alike as a result of their revolting appearance. The clan members' smell and visage mark them as true monsters — some have long bulbous noses, coarse-skinned skulls covered with tufts of hair, or elongated faces marked with disgusting warts and lumps. Such a harsh existence has forced the Nosferatu to become masters of information and espionage in order to survive. The Nosferatu select the medieval world's pariahs for their own: idiots, lepers and criminals.

Clan Disciplines: *Animalism, Obfuscate, Potence*

Advantage: The Nosferatu are the undisputed masters of the undercity. They know the paths and byways of the drains, aqueducts, wells, sluices and cisterns, and a portion of these are the sole property of the Nosferatu clan. No others can access this area without a Nosferatu guide, the use of powerful Disciplines or Storyteller dispensation. Attempting to do so results in the character getting lost, alerting the Nosferatu or setting off any number of traps or precautions taken by the sewers' true masters. Furthermore, a Nosferatu standing near a cesspit or cistern may use it for the "Fair Escape" rule.

Disadvantage: Because of his horrifying countenance, a Nosferatu may not initiate Social Challenges with others while his true visage is apparent. The exception to this is Social Challenges involving intimidation or threatening an opponent.

Suggested Via: Road of Heaven, Road of Humanity, Road of the Beast

RAVNOS

The Ravnos are the tramps and thieves of Cainite society. Like the Gangrel, they are nomadic and value their freedom above all else. The Ravnos love companionship, and are often found in groups and campsites along the medieval byways. Larceny and con games are their meat and drink, and the clan's reputation for thievery and deceit is well-deserved. Constant traveling makes it harder for Ravnos to be caught engaging in their favorite pastimes, and gives them an infinite number of marks and skills to exploit. Ravnos find no greater pleasure than taking advantage of other Cainites, and a vampire is advised to watch his purse, sword and cloak when these tricksters are in town.

Clan Disciplines: *Animalism, Chimerstry, Fortitude*

Advantage: Members of the clan are often accepted into many cities, mostly because many princes prefer one Ravnos to the mass visitation that would occur should they try to bar their borders. The Ravnos would come en masse as a challenge to such a decree until finally the borders broke; wise princes have learned from the mistakes of their peers. Furthermore, as deception and trickery are the calling cards of the clan, Cainites rarely attempt retribution against them, no matter how outrageous their stunts. Instead, individual marks usually blame themselves for their own stupidity.

Disadvantage: Ravnos are infamous for their trickery. Each has a specific field of thievery and deception in which she specializes and practices every chance she gets. The player should decide during the creation process what type of "crime" attracts the character, and should indulge it at least once per session. Some common habits include con games, thievery, gambling, cheating and extortion. Players and Storytellers should feel free to create new aspects of dishonesty if the mood strikes them.

Furthermore, because of the Ravnos' habit of dishonesty, they are thoroughly distrusted by the rest of the Kindred population.

Suggested Via: Road of Paradox

TOREADOR

The members of this clan consider themselves to be the preservers and guardians of all that is beautiful. They immerse themselves in the aesthetic, the exquisite and the inspirational. Indeed, the Toreador are concerned with beauty in a way no mortal can fathom. They use the rarefied senses and tastes given to them by the Embrace to become as consumed and impassioned by beauty as possible. For a Toreador, nothing matters as much as beauty, though in many cases, the search for beauty devolves into a search for pleasure, and a Toreador becomes little more than a seeker of sensation.

Clan Disciplines: *Auspex, Celerity, Presence*

Advantage: In their worldliness and continued dalliance with mortals, members of Clan Toreador inevitably collect a herd of devotees, followers and hangers-on that

can form a convenient and relatively safe source of vitae. The character may harvest one Blood Trait per evening per level of *Performance Ability* she possesses. No challenges need to be made, but the character must still take 15 minutes per Blood Trait and must have access to her herd.

Disadvantage: Toreador have a fine appreciation for artistic and natural beauty. This appreciation can reach epic proportions when it concerns truly captivating subjects. Any medium that the Storyteller deems is sufficiently enthralling, or the successful use of the *Performance Ability* at levels three or higher, entrances a Toreador for half an hour unless he spends a Willpower Trait. While in this state, the Toreador ignores (but is not unaware of) his surroundings and avoids other responsibilities, even to the point of endangering himself. In this condition, any reasonably unobtrusive foe can surprise the distracted Toreador.

Suggested Via: Road of Humanity, Road of Heaven

TREMERE

Once a cabal of mortal mages, the Tremere achieved vampirism through the destruction of a Tzimisce elder and the Salubri's founder Saulot. Hence, they are hated by several clans and distrusted by most. Only the Tremere's magical powers and the remoteness of their hidden chantry strongholds prevent them from losing their toehold on undeath. Dedicated and extremely well-organized, the Usurpers badly need allies to stand with them against the enemies they have made.

Clan Disciplines: *Auspex, Dominate, Thaumaturgy*

Advantage: Once they prove themselves to their superiors, lower-ranking Tremere can expect training in both Disciplines and Rituals. Many elders are paranoid of younger, more aggressive Tremere and guard their knowledge jealously. However, most reward loyal and effective clan members for their accomplishments. While they respect competent and powerful leaders, Tremere are highly competitive and will seize any opportunity to further their personal power as long as it does not jeopardize the clan as a whole.

Disadvantage: The head of a chantry holds a Blood Trait of each member of that chantry. Furthermore, the seven clan founders in Vienna have access to another two Blood Traits, taken when the member was introduced as a *childe*. They use these Traits not only for punishment and control, but also to help locate missing clan members, particularly those captured by any of Clan Tremere's many enemies. Upon his presentation, a *childe* is also fed a Blood Trait from each of the seven elders, bringing him one step toward becoming Thrall to the entire clan.

Suggested Via: Road of Humanity, Road of the Devil

TZIMISCE

Clan Tzimisce is renowned for its twisted practices and unshakable cruelty. While the Tzimisce are sometimes just, their sense of justice is considerably more merciless than most. The Fiends are fiercely territorial, striking down intruders with terrible swiftness and ruling their chosen domains with the proverbial iron hand. Currently, their hatred and enmity is unleashed against the Tremere, against whom they seek to exact vengeance for the theft of Tzimisce vitae.



THE LONG NIGHT

Clan Disciplines: *Animalism, Auspex, Vicissitude*

Advantage: The Tzimisce are the proud masters of large estates and are accustomed to the privileges of rank and title. Thus every Tzimisce receives a free *Finance* or *Politics Influence Trait* (at the player's discretion).

Disadvantage: The Discipline of *Vicissitude* is actually thought to be a disease which somehow warps the mind of any vampire using it too often. Each time a Tzimisce uses the Discipline more than three times per night, he gains a *Derangement* (at the Storyteller's discretion).

Suggested Via: Road of the Devil, Road of the Beast

VENTRUE

The Ventrue are the avatars of conquest — whether in battle or in trade, the members of this clan are proudly dedicated to the tenets of rulership. Clan members maintain that adherence to tradition and etiquette enables Cainites to ignore the lesser concerns of safety and sustenance and thus attend to higher concerns and more sophisticated pursuits. Ventrue assume (or take) great authority and great power. They feel they are responsible for properly ruling Cainite society, and seek to impose order upon it — their own, regardless of what others want. As part of this order, young Ventrue are taught to respect their elders.

Clan Disciplines: *Dominance, Fortitude, Presence*

Advantage: Clan Ventrue has always been intimately associated with wealth and resources. Whether this is the result of their exacting choice in progeny or by virtue of their bloodline is debatable. In any case, each Ventrue receives a free *Finance Influence Trait*. While this Trait can be expended or temporarily neutralized, it cannot be destroyed, stripped or permanently traded away.

Disadvantage: The Ventrue maintain that they are an uncommon, if not rarefied, breed among vampires. It is perhaps quite fitting that their taste for vitae is similarly demanding. Upon Embrace, each Ventrue instinctively realize that only one type or source of blood will satisfy his hunger — sources such as “virgins,” “children,” “blond men” or “peasants.”

Suggested Via: Road of Humanity, Road of Chivalry

BLOODLINES

The following are bloodlines that have been adapted for play in *The Long Night*. *The Vampire Players Guide Second Edition* offers a complete section governing rules for creating your own bloodlines. As always, get your Storyteller's approval before you use any of these bloodlines, as they can dramatically change the scope of a chronicle.

LAIBON

The Laibon inhabit the vast expanses of Africa. They are solitary hunters and mighty shamans who wander freely beyond even the Moorish kingdoms. The Laibon do not fear their Beast as do Europe's vampires; indeed, Laibon know a form of magic enabling them to tame and control their inner demons. Dwelling alone amid expansive territories, sometimes acting as guardians for some of the native tribes, they

delight in tales, stories and particularly in riddles. Rarely, a Laibon will wander into one of the northern Cainite cities.

Disciplines: *Abombrue, Animalism, Fortitude*

Advantage: For now, Laibon seem content merely to travel and observe. Their unthreatening demeanor and evident lack of interest in the power-games of Europe have made them valued company among those Cainites aware of their existence. Few princes bar their cities to these wanderers, giving them free passage. They stay, observe, regale their hosts with tales and riddles, and eventually move on.

Disadvantage: The Discipline of *Abombrue* involves direct dominance of the Beast, but this power has a price. A Laibon's Beast is particularly ravenous and recalcitrant, consuming a "tithe" of blood each time the vampire uses Blood Traits. If a Laibon expends or ingests Blood Traits, the Beast automatically "consumes" a point. Thus, if a Laibon spends three Blood Points to heal herself, she actually loses four. Laibon grow hungry much more quickly than do other Cainites, and most try to ensure that ample feeding stock is within reach, lest they do something unseemly in their hunger.

Suggested Via: Road of the Beast, Road of Heaven

LHIANNAN

The Lhiannan are a remnant of Europe's pagan past. Haunting rural areas, forest groves, mystic sites and isolated villages, the matriarchal Lhiannan reflect on the terror their blood cults once inflicted on mortals before the coming of Rome. Now a dying line, the Lhiannan are hounded by both mortal and Cainite hunters; they make convenient scapegoats for mortal witch-hunters, while their power base (which involves mystic aspects such as blood cults, ley lines and pagan rites) is blasphemous to the Church and inconvenient for the Roman-descended Cainites who have largely displaced them.

Disciplines: *Animalism, Ogham, Presence*

Advantage: Those mortals who still follow the pagan ways constitute a herd from which the Lhiannan may harvest one Blood Trait per evening per level of *Ogham* she possesses. No challenges need to be made, but the character must still take 15 minutes per Blood Trait and must have access to her herd.

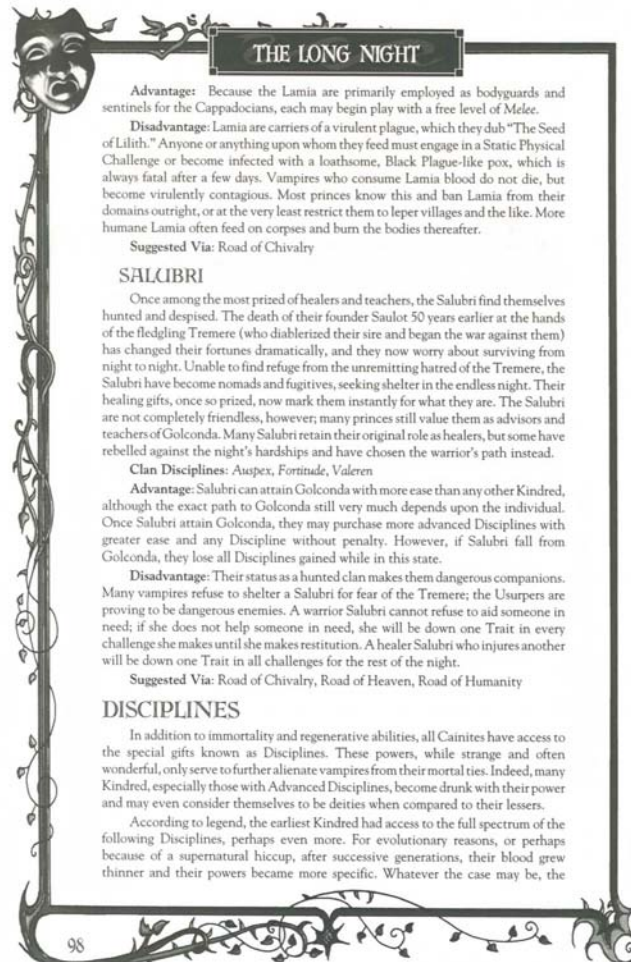
Disadvantage: Lhiannan are innately pagan; the mark of their Mother-Goddess, the Crone, flows through their dead veins. As such, Lhiannan are one Trait down when resisting Faith magic — even pagan Faith.

Suggested Via: Road of the Devil, Road of the Beast

LAMIA

Created by the Cappadocians, the Lamia share their sires' thirst for knowledge, though Lamia prefer the realms of sensation and experience to the pages of dry tomes. Lamia often serve as bodyguards and sentinels for their masters, but instill even these defensive duties with a darkly spiritual outlook. These rare vampires worship a personification of death in the form of the Dark Mother Lilith, performing their rites and services in abandoned, wild places near their masters' havens.

Disciplines: *Deimos, Mortis, Potence*



THE LONG NIGHT

Advantage: Because the Lamia are primarily employed as bodyguards and sentinels for the Cappadocians, each may begin play with a free level of *Melee*.

Disadvantage: Lamia are carriers of a virulent plague, which they dub "The Seed of Lilith." Anyone or anything upon whom they feed must engage in a Static Physical Challenge or become infected with a loathsome, Black Plague-like pox, which is always fatal after a few days. Vampires who consume Lamia blood do not die, but become virulently contagious. Most princes know this and ban Lamia from their domains outright, or at the very least restrict them to leper villages and the like. More humane Lamia often feed on corpses and burn the bodies thereafter.

Suggested Via: Road of Chivalry

SALUBRI

Once among the most prized of healers and teachers, the Salubri find themselves hunted and despised. The death of their founder Saulot 50 years earlier at the hands of the fledgling Tremere (who diablerized their sire and began the war against them) has changed their fortunes dramatically, and they now worry about surviving from night to night. Unable to find refuge from the unremitting hatred of the Tremere, the Salubri have become nomads and fugitives, seeking shelter in the endless night. Their healing gifts, once so prized, now mark them instantly for what they are. The Salubri are not completely friendless, however; many princes still value them as advisors and teachers of Golconda. Many Salubri retain their original role as healers, but some have rebelled against the night's hardships and have chosen the warrior's path instead.

Clan Disciplines: *Auspex, Fortitude, Valeren*

Advantage: Salubri can attain Golconda with more ease than any other Kindred, although the exact path to Golconda still very much depends upon the individual. Once Salubri attain Golconda, they may purchase more advanced Disciplines with greater ease and any Discipline without penalty. However, if Salubri fall from Golconda, they lose all Disciplines gained while in this state.

Disadvantage: Their status as a hunted clan makes them dangerous companions. Many vampires refuse to shelter a Salubri for fear of the Tremere; the Usurpers are proving to be dangerous enemies. A warrior Salubri cannot refuse to aid someone in need; if she does not help someone in need, she will be down one Trait in every challenge she makes until she makes restitution. A healer Salubri who injures another will be down one Trait in all challenges for the rest of the night.

Suggested Via: Road of Chivalry, Road of Heaven, Road of Humanity

DISCIPLINES

In addition to immortality and regenerative abilities, all Cainites have access to the special gifts known as Disciplines. These powers, while strange and often wonderful, only serve to further alienate vampires from their mortal ties. Indeed, many Kindred, especially those with Advanced Disciplines, become drunk with their power and may even consider themselves to be deities when compared to their lessers.

According to legend, the earliest Kindred had access to the full spectrum of the following Disciplines, perhaps even more. For evolutionary reasons, or perhaps because of a supernatural hiccup, after successive generations, their blood grew thinner and their powers became more specific. Whatever the case may be, the



bloodlines or clans of today show a distinct definition in the Disciplines they possess. While any Kindred can learn and eventually master almost any Discipline, he will find his clan Disciplines the easiest to master.

To reflect this, characters may only begin the chronicle with Disciplines from their clan list (see "Clans," above, for details). To learn out-of-clan Disciplines, a character must first locate a willing mentor who possesses the desired Discipline. Furthermore, the character must pay an increased experience point cost for these Disciplines (see page 86 for more details).

The clanless Caitiff are an exception to this rule. Because of their mixed heritage, they may begin with any three Disciplines except *Thanatogeny*. These Disciplines are considered their "clan" Disciplines from that point forward. Any other Disciplines are then considered out-of-clan and must be acquired and paid for as mentioned above.

When learning Disciplines, a character must first master the lower levels before moving on to more advanced levels; before learning *Rapidity*, for instance, a character must possess *Alacrity* and *Suiftness*. Additionally, some Disciplines, such as *Thanatogeny*, have special limitations that must also be observed. These limitations are listed along with the Discipline in question.

Regardless of the nature of the Discipline, it is suggested that a character actually learn the Discipline between sessions. This prevents the player from instantly gaining the most efficient or effective Discipline during play, and it helps to realistically reflect the time it takes a Kindred to master her newly developing power.

ABOMBWE

The Beast, for Laibon, is not so fearful as it is for European vampires. *Abombwe* gives the vampires direct control over the Beast Within — their own and others'. Laibon are less burdened with Christian concepts of sin and the accompanying guilt, and thus more receptive to the urges of their Beasts.

BASIC

Predator's Communion

You are able to utilize your Beast's mystical senses, keeping it on a psychic "leash" and enabling it to act as a bloodhound of sorts. To do so, you must spend a Blood Point (actually two, because of the clan weakness). Thereafter, you may mystically sense other "Beasts" (other vampires, Lupines, wraiths and Spectres, predatory animals and mortals with one or more Derangements) within 50 feet of where you stand. Note that this power does not reveal the number or nature of the Beasts, only their presence. However, you may "sniff out" such a Beast by winning a Static Mental Challenge, which reveals the exact location of your quarry. Neither *Unseen Presence* nor *Cloak the Gathering* are proof against this Discipline.

Taming the Beast

You may enter into a pact with your Beast, allowing you to draw strength from your animalistic side for a brief time. There is a price to be paid for this assistance, however, as the Beast demands its due almost immediately. To use this power, you must spend a Blood Trait and in return can take two extra Physical Traits for the duration of the scene. However, as soon as the scene ends, you must win a Willpower challenge against five Traits or else frenzy immediately.

INTERMEDIATE

Whistling up the Beast

You have learned the "songs" that cajole and frighten the Beast Within. To exercise this power, you must whistle for a full minute and then defeat your target in a Social Challenge. If the target loses, he runs from you in a panic, unable to take any action against you and avoiding you for the next hour. Furthermore, the victim cannot initiate challenges against you, and departs at once if you appears. If somehow forced to remain in your presence, the target is extremely uncomfortable and must bid an additional Trait in all challenges against you (unless directly attacked, in which case he may defend himself as normal).

ADVANCED

Predator's Mastery

You may confront any other creature possessing a Beast (for a basic list, see *Predator's Communion*, above). You may attempt to use your Beast to dominate your opponent's and, if successful, the "subdued" Beast must obey the "dominant" one. To activate this Discipline, you must expend a Blood Trait and defeat the target in a Social Challenge. If you succeed, the creature grudgingly obeys you. This is not a willing vassalage, but the servitude of an animal cowed into submission; the dominated creature will bear no love for you, but will be too fearful to act directly against you. Commands which are blatantly suicidal require an immediate Social Challenge; if you lose, the victim is freed. Otherwise, this forced servitude lasts for one hour.

ANIMALISM

This collection of powers serves as a primal link between the Beast that lurks in the souls of all Kindred and the wild spirit of the natural order of things. While some might see the Kindred as unnatural, in truth, they occupy a very vital niche in the ecology of the World of Darkness. Of particular significance to the Gangrel, this Discipline represents the Kindred's ability to remain in touch with and understand their role in Nature's vast scheme.

BASIC

Drawing Out the Beast

Your affinity with the animalistic side of the Kindred gives you some power over it in others. In particular, you can draw upon a victim's bestial nature and force him to give in to this darker side.

This Discipline allows you to activate one of an opponent's Derangements (the victim chooses which one) if you can defeat him in a Social Challenge. You need not know any of your target's Derangements, but if you do, you need not risk one of your Social Traits when trying to activate that particular Derangement (knowing his Derangement takes the place of your Social Trait during your initial bid). If you should fail in the attempt to use this Discipline against a target, you may not attempt it again on her for the rest of the evening. See p. 68 for rules concerning active Derangements and recovering from them. If the target has no Derangements, she must test for frenzy.



Noah's Call

You can issue a compelling siren's song to nearby animals. Almost any type of animal ordinarily found within your current locale may be called, but you must declare what you are calling when you activate the Discipline.

Generally, it costs one Social Trait to summon an animal, but a Narrator may issue a higher cost for larger, rarer or more unruly animals. As a rule, the summoned animal will arrive in 10 to 30 minutes. The animal can be represented by a card that should be displayed prominently. Use the animal stats listed in *The Masquerade* second edition, Chapter 10, as a guide.

INTERMEDIATE

Cowing the Beast

By reaching deep within the soul of an individual, you can tame his bestial nature, or at least quiet it for a while. This is useful not only in calming your allies, but also for robbing a foe of her spirit and energy.

To use this power, you must make a Social Challenge. If you win the test, *Cowing the Beast* brings a Cainite or Lupine out of frenzy. Furthermore, if used against an individual who is not in frenzy, this Discipline quenches the fire in his soul, making him weak and malleable. In this state, he may not spend Willpower and gains the Negative Mental Traits *Submissive* x 2. This use of the Discipline lasts for the remainder of evening or session. You may not use this Discipline on yourself, and its effects are not cumulative.

ADVANCED

Embrace the Beast

This level of *Animalism* allows you to tap the dark, brutal wellspring of power that lies in the souls of all Cainites, transforming you into a ferocious, unrestrained monster.



THE LONG NIGHT

While under the influence of *Embrace the Beast*, you are not affected by *Dominare*, *Presence* or *Beast Within*. Furthermore, for the duration of the power, the character gains the Physical Traits *Ferocious* and *Relentless*. The Discipline is not without its drawbacks, however. During this time, you may not initiate any Mental or Social Challenges (except for ones related to intimidation). Additionally, you temporarily gain the Derangement *Crimson Rage*. If you already have this Derangement, it becomes very active for the duration of the Discipline's use. It costs one Mental Trait to activate this Discipline. The Discipline's effect comes to an end at the end of the evening, the session or completion of the character's first physical confrontation.

AUSPEX

Auspex encompasses the vast array of expanded sensory powers that some Cainites experience and can develop upon the Embrace. Most vampires fortunate enough to possess this power find it exceptionally useful not only in night-to-night survival, but also in appreciating the beauty of their surroundings. The Toreador, in particular, delight in this last aspect.

BASIC

Heightened Senses

You can enhance one of your senses to access a world of sensory input most people will never enjoy. *Heightened Senses* can be used to spy on conversations, see in inky (but not complete) darkness, read letters by touch, identify an individual's scent or pick up telltale tastes. The Discipline can intensify any sense, but only one sense can be magnified at any time.

A Storyteller may determine that a Mental Challenge is necessary for particularly difficult tasks. Additionally, if you are bombarded by a large amount of sensory input while using this Discipline (i.e., an overpowering stench, bright light, loud thunder), you will totally lose the sense in question for 15 minutes.

Soulsight

Halos of energy surround sentient beings and shift constantly to reflect their mental and emotional states. With *Soulsight*, you may observe these halos and discover clues about your target's true nature and intent. By winning a Static Mental Challenge, with a difficulty equal to the target's number of Mental Traits, you may demand that the target answer one of the following sorts of questions honestly: "What is your Demeanor?", "Have you committed diablerie (within the last six months)?", "What is your current emotional state (brief summary)?", "Was the last thing you said a lie?", or "What sort of creature are you?" (human, Cainite, Lupine, mage, spirit, faerie, mummy, etc.). Additional uses of this Discipline allow for additional questions.

INTERMEDIATE

The Spirit's Touch

This power allows you to sense the residual energies and impressions remaining on an object after it has been handled or touched. Specific information, such as the identity of the individual, her emotional and/or mental state at the time and her perceptions, may be acquired by using this power.

Various factors, such as brief contact, multiple handlers or the unusual nature of the handler or object, can dramatically affect the results of this Discipline. In some strange cases, no impressions may be present at all (at the direction of a Storyteller). Curiously enough, Cainites using *Obfuscate* powers leave no impressions. If the possessor of the object being tested is nearby, you may question him about the object and he must answer honestly. Often, however, *Spirit's Touch* requires a Narrator's assistance to use.

Telepathy

You have honed your preternatural senses to such a degree that you can actually receive and transmit thoughts. Be forewarned, though — many of the things buried within the minds of others are best left untouched. With effort, you can even force your way into stubborn minds, but a voluntary subject makes the task less difficult and less unpleasant for both parties.

You can use this Discipline to communicate privately with a willing subject (or more than one). Roleplay this communication by passing notes or holding a quiet side conversation that cannot be "overheard" except through *Telepathy* or similar powers. (In order to accomplish this effect, other players are expected to ignore the note-passing or conversation. However, characters with *Telepathy* automatically notice something unusual going on and can attempt a Mental Challenge against either player to listen in on the conversation.)

You can also use *Telepathy* to spy on a subject, access surface thoughts or discern the truth while asking a question. If you defeat your subject in a Mental Challenge, you may ask him one "yes or no" or short answer question about any subject or conversation in which he is currently engaged, and the subject must answer truthfully.

Note: Individuals possessing active Derangements may bid them as Mental Traits when subjected to involuntary *Telepathy*. Each Derangement bid in this fashion requires the telepath to bid an additional Mental Trait, representing the difficulty of reading such a twisted mind. If the defender opts to bid one or more of her active Derangements against the telepath and wins the challenge, she infects the aggressor with her madness. The telepath must now either spend a Willpower Trait or actively play out one of the Derangements bid for 30 minutes. Unfortunately for the defender, the telepath is now acutely aware of the defender's Derangement and may use it against her in the future.

ADVANCED

Anima Walk

With a conscious mental exertion, you can safely sever the bond between your spirit and your body. In this state, your invisible spirit may travel incorporeally through the physical world. Mundane barriers cannot hold you, but supernatural ones, such as pentagrams and wards, are another matter entirely. Individuals with highly advanced sensory powers (such as *Heightened Senses*, *Telepathy* and the like) may realize something is amiss, but must still win a Mental Challenge in order to perceive you.

Exercising *Anima Walk* is not without its dangers. Your body is left helpless and inert during your sojourn. Furthermore, your ability to interact with the physical world is greatly diminished. You cannot, for example, stop or interfere with physical actions occurring around you. While in spirit form, you can only use sensory Disciplines, such as *Soulsight*, *Heightened Senses* (sight and sound only) and *Telepathy*. The only powers that may be used against you are those that affect the spirit or mind, and even then, the attacker must first be able to perceive your presence. If you wish to become visible

and communicate with a single individual in the physical world, you may do so at a cost of one Mental Trait for every 10 minutes.

CELERITY

After the Embrace, many vampires benefit from a variety of amazing physical improvements. One of these is the Discipline of *Celerity*. This power reflects the Cainite's mastery of her form in the areas of speed and quickness.

When employed against a foe with an equivalent degree of *Celerity*, many of the advantages of this Discipline are negated. For example, an attacker with *Swiftess* would still get her bonus attack against a foe who also possessed *Swiftess* (as would the foe), but neither suffers from the Trait penalties. In any case, each combatant using *Celerity* still gets his total number of attacks. Also, a character using her *Celerity* to evoke a "Fair Escape" can be intercepted by a foe with an equal or greater degree of *Celerity*.

BASIC

Alacrity

You possess a supernatural degree of speed and coordination that outstrips both normal mortals and your fellow Kindred.

If you are aware of an upcoming physical threat, you may spend a Blood Trait to preempt the actions with a physical action of your own. Some examples of such threats include: melee attacks, falling objects, arrows, oncoming wagons or thrown objects. Examples of preemptive actions are: drawing a sword of your own, moving out of the path of a falling object, and so on. To preempt a foe using *Alacrity*, you must have a greater degree of *Celerity*.

Using *Alacrity*, you may also apply the "Fair Escape" rule against foes who do not have at least an equivalent degree of *Celerity*. This power costs one Blood Trait to activate.

Swiftess

You can move with a shocking degree of speed. While you are using *Swiftess*, slower foes and bystanders often appear to you to be standing still.

Swiftess allows you to make a follow-up attack against a foe in physical combat. To do so, you must declare that you are activating *Swiftess* before making a bid and expending a Blood Trait. The first challenge is then carried out as normal. Afterward, if you are able, while using *Swiftess*, you may attempt an immediate follow-up challenge. Foes who do not have or have not activated *Swiftess* can only defend themselves in this challenge — they cannot harm the user of the Discipline in any way, nor in this follow-up challenge can they use any Traits that they had bid in the prior challenge(s), even if they did not lose them.

Using this Discipline, you may also expend a Blood Trait to cut in-game travel times in half.

INTERMEDIATE

Rapidity

With time and experience, you have outstripped the fledgling power of *Swiftmess*. What was once merely dazzling speed is now a mind-numbing blur of motion. In a moment's notice, you can burst into a whirlwind of destruction, crippling, if not slaying, a slower opponent.

You may make two extra challenges when employing *Rapidity*. Otherwise, the power is the same as *Swiftmess*, including cost. If used to cut travel time, the time is reduced to one-fourth of normal.

ADVANCED

Fleetness

Your feats of speed defy ordinary logic. To the average observer, you almost disappear when your form explodes into motion. The roar of wind in your passing extinguishes small flames and causes loose clothing to whip about.

You may take three extra challenges when employing *Fleetness*. Otherwise, the power is the same as *Swiftmess*, including cost. If used to cut travel time, the time is reduced to one-eighth of normal.

CHIMERSTRY

This is the *Ravnos* Discipline of deceit and trickery, and represents those vampires' ability to create illusions and hallucinations. While using *Chimerstry*, keep this basic rule of thumb in mind: a vampire cannot create an illusion that she cannot sense. Thus, a blindfolded vampire cannot create a visual illusion, but could create a tactile one if she herself could touch it.

BASIC

Ignis Fatuus

You can create a simple, static (i.e., immobile) illusion that affects only one sense. While this illusion is not real and cannot cause physical harm, it can be used to trick or deceive others after a successful *Social Challenge*. The illusion lasts for as long as you want it to, until you leave the vicinity, or until your opponent succeeds in a *Social Challenge*.

This illusion affects only one person.

Dweomer

You can create an illusion, visible to only one person like *Ignis Fatuus*. However, this illusion affects as many senses as you wish, including sight, sound, touch and even smell and taste. While this illusion is not real and cannot cause physical harm, it can be used to trick or deceive others after a successful *Social Challenge*. The illusion lasts for as long as you want it to, until you leave the vicinity, or until your opponent succeeds in a *Social Challenge*.



THE LONG NIGHT

INTERMEDIATE

Apparition

You can create a complex illusion that moves, looks and sounds like the real thing. However, because the illusion is still not actually there, others can pass through it. As above, you must defeat your opponent in a successful Social Challenge and also expend a Mental Trait to create the illusion lasts for one scene.

This illusion affects only one person.

ADVANCED

Horrid Reality

You can now create illusions so realistic that you can even harm others with them. If your opponent believes the illusion to be real, she treats it as real: an illusory fire will burn her, an artificial wall will stop her, and a fake knife will wound her. Again, you must defeat your opponent in a Social Challenge and expend both a Willpower and a Mental Trait. The illusion lasts a scene or 10 minutes.

This illusion affects only one person.

DEIMOS

The Lamia share the Cappadocians' obsession with the world beyond, though they express it in different fashion than their more scholarly counterparts. The Discipline of *Deimos* embodies the Lamia's devotion to thanatology through the asps of the Dark Mother Lilith.

BASIC

Whispers to the Soul

You may whisper one of Lilith's secret names in a victim's ear. Thereafter, nightmares plague the victim, and fearful thoughts of doom torment her waking hours. To use *Whispers to the Soul*, you must whisper the name and then win a Social Challenge. If you succeed, the victim suffers hideous visions and nightmares for one hour. During this time, the victim is one Trait down in all challenges.

Kiss of the Dark Mother

You can evoke an entropic, life-draining force. Furthermore, you can transmit this through a bite, slaying foes with remarkable swiftness. To grant the *Kiss of the Dark Mother*, you must expend a Blood Point and coat your lips with your own vitae, which turns your bite into an even deadlier weapon than normal. Thereafter, any creatures you bite for the duration of one hour take an extra level of aggravated damage.

Note: The extra damage only applies to bites, and not slashes, clawings, stabbings or kicks to sensitive places.

INTERMEDIATE

Ichor

By spending two Blood Traits, you can secrete a Trait's worth of one of four ichors, each of which has a unique effect on a victim. The ichor must touch your victim in order to have any effect, and you are immune to your own secretions. After the ichor makes contact with the victim's skin, you must win a Physical Challenge for the poison

to take effect. If the victim wins, the ichor is rendered harmless. Ichor can be hidden in beverages, on weapons and so on.

Phlegmatic ichor induces lethargy, and if the Trait touches a victim, he is down a Trait in all Physical Challenges until sunrise.

Melancholy ichor produces visions of death and doom, and causes the victim to be down a Willpower Trait until sunrise.

Sanguine ichor produces excessive bleeding, and a victim loses a Blood Trait as well as a Health Level every time he is wounded until sunrise.

Bilious ichor causes the victim to take an additional aggravated Health Level of damage above and beyond any wound inflicted. The victim must then win a Static Physical Challenge against five Traits or take an another level of aggravated damage.

ADVANCED

Black Breath

You can breathe the fetor of the grave on your victims. Victims engulfed in this black mist find themselves overwhelmed by hopelessness and depression. When exhaling the *Black Breath*, you must expend a Willpower Trait and target your victim by making a successful Physical Challenge (the Breath can be dodged). An engulfed vampire is rendered Incapacitated for 10 minutes. Mortals (including ghouls) in the *Black Breath* are instantly overcome with a powerful catatonia, immediately falling into an unconscious state which lasts a number of nights equal to the number of your Road Traits.

DEMENTATION

The Discipline of *Dementation* allows Malkavians to induce their own twisted mental state in others. Hallucinations, confusion, increased perception and Derangements — all these go a long way toward distracting, discrediting or otherwise befuddling mortals and other Cainites.

BASIC

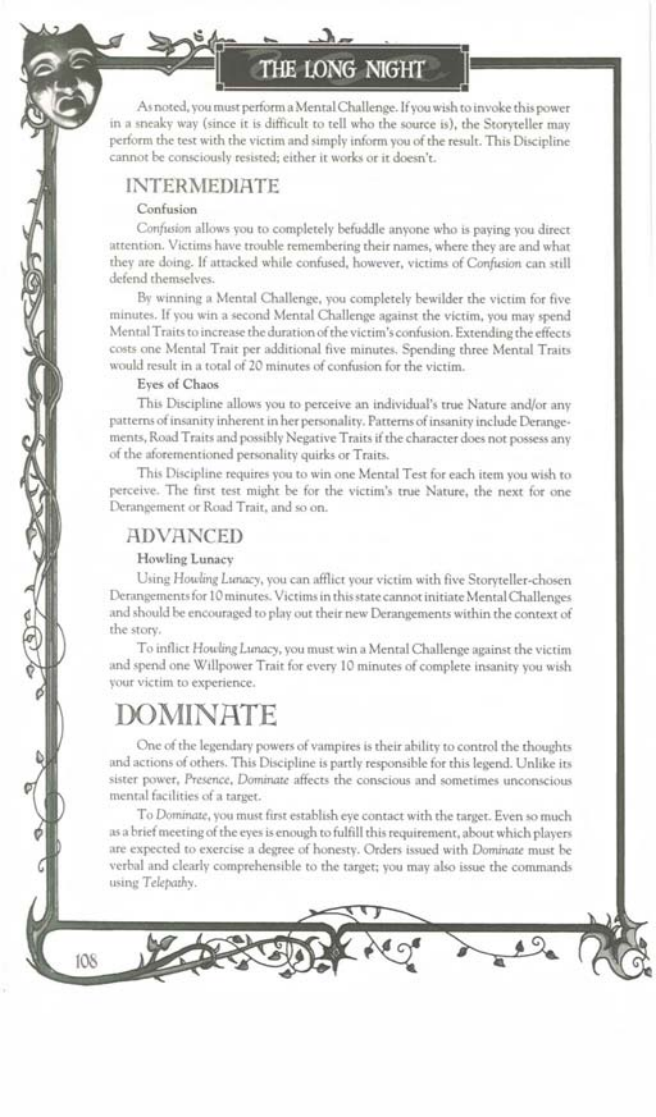
Incubus Passion

With *Incubus Passion* and a successful Social Challenge, you can increase a victim's emotional intensity to near-psychotic levels. You cannot chose the emotion you amplify — the power simply intensifies what is already there. The effect of this power lasts for one hour.

Haunt the Soul

You can induce minor hallucinations, but cannot control what your victim sees. To use *Haunt the Soul*, find a Storyteller and engage in a Mental Challenge. If you win, your victim is affected in whatever way the Storyteller chooses (fear, disorientation and temporary Trait loss are common). This power is an excellent distraction technique.

You cannot use this Discipline simultaneously with any physical action that would distract you from concentrating on the target. In other words, you could use this Discipline while walking slowly toward the victim, but not while running furiously away from, actively fighting or throwing an object at him.



THE LONG NIGHT

As noted, you must perform a Mental Challenge. If you wish to invoke this power in a sneaky way (since it is difficult to tell who the source is), the Storyteller may perform the test with the victim and simply inform you of the result. This Discipline cannot be consciously resisted; either it works or it doesn't.

INTERMEDIATE

Confusion

Confusion allows you to completely befuddle anyone who is paying you direct attention. Victims have trouble remembering their names, where they are and what they are doing. If attacked while confused, however, victims of *Confusion* can still defend themselves.

By winning a Mental Challenge, you completely bewilder the victim for five minutes. If you win a second Mental Challenge against the victim, you may spend Mental Traits to increase the duration of the victim's confusion. Extending the effects costs one Mental Trait per additional five minutes. Spending three Mental Traits would result in a total of 20 minutes of confusion for the victim.

Eyes of Chaos

This Discipline allows you to perceive an individual's true Nature and/or any patterns of insanity inherent in her personality. Patterns of insanity include Derangements, Road Traits and possibly Negative Traits if the character does not possess any of the aforementioned personality quirks or Traits.

This Discipline requires you to win one Mental Test for each item you wish to perceive. The first test might be for the victim's true Nature, the next for one Derangement or Road Trait, and so on.

ADVANCED

Howling Lunacy

Using *Howling Lunacy*, you can afflict your victim with five Storyteller-chosen Derangements for 10 minutes. Victims in this state cannot initiate Mental Challenges and should be encouraged to play out their new Derangements within the context of the story.

To inflict *Howling Lunacy*, you must win a Mental Challenge against the victim and spend one Willpower Trait for every 10 minutes of complete insanity you wish your victim to experience.

DOMINATE

One of the legendary powers of vampires is their ability to control the thoughts and actions of others. This Discipline is partly responsible for this legend. Unlike its sister power, *Presence*, *Dominate* affects the conscious and sometimes unconscious mental facilities of a target.

To *Dominate*, you must first establish eye contact with the target. Even so much as a brief meeting of the eyes is enough to fulfill this requirement, about which players are expected to exercise a degree of honesty. Orders issued with *Dominate* must be verbal and clearly comprehensible to the target; you may also issue the commands using *Telepathy*.

Note that *Dominare*'s one major limitation is that it is totally ineffective against Cainites of lower generations than the user of the Discipline.

BASIC

Observance of the Spoken Word

This Discipline is a form of mind control focused through a piercing gaze and commanding voice. If you can catch the eyes of your target, you can attempt to exert your considerable mental control over her.

To employ this Discipline, you must first defeat your opponent in a Mental Challenge, then issue a single simple command to your subject, such as "Sleep," "Stop," "Sit" or "Leave" ("Silence!" is also acceptable). The command cannot be blatantly suicidal or self-destructive, but it may drastically violate the subject's Nature or Demeanor. In any case, the effects of the command cannot last more than 10 minutes.

Reveler's Memory

You can use your mental powers to warp the conscious and unconscious memories of a victim. After defeating the target in a Mental Challenge, you may add, alter or eliminate memories concerning a single event. The extent of the information can be as limited as the color of someone's cloak or as encompassing as the entire experiences of a 15-minute period in the subject's life.

INTERMEDIATE

Lure of the Subtle Whispers

By staring into someone's eyes, you can creep insidiously into her mind and plant subtle suggestions to direct and guide her behavior. These mental Trojan horses are hidden within the target's mind until a trigger event occurs.

Using this Discipline requires that you first defeat your subject in a Mental Challenge. Even if a suggestion is planted, your victim will ignore the order if it poses a clear threat to her life. You may only implant one suggestion in a given individual's mind at any one time. Furthermore, both the trigger and the suggestion must be concise and easily understandable. Some examples include:

Triggers:

- Upon seeing a particular person, item or place
- Upon hearing a certain word or sound
- At a precise time
- After performing a specific action

Suggestions:

- Behave in a bizarre or inappropriate manner
- Deliver a brief spoken message
- Experience a single emotion
- Suddenly "recall" planted information

The target subconsciously retains these details until the suggestion is triggered, but will not be able to explain why she performed the action. Once the suggestion is carried out, the Lure is lifted.



THE LONG NIGHT

Fealty

Your powers of mental manipulation have reached such a level of prowess that you are now capable of completely rewriting a target's personality. The process involves a great deal of time and effort, but the results are astounding and practically irreversible. The end product is a fanatically loyal if somewhat dull servant. Your degree of control can even challenge the supposedly infallible power of the Blood Oath.

To begin the process, you must have complete access to the victim for the full duration of three consecutive evenings. During this time, you slowly erode the will of the subject, eventually replacing it with your own. To do so, you must defeat the subject in three consecutive Mental Challenges (one per night). Once accomplished, you must permanently expend a Mental Trait. If one of the challenges is unsuccessful, the entire process fails.

The resultant degree of control is intense. Foremost among the effects is a permanent and automatic command, wherein the subject carries out even the most self-destructive of orders. Furthermore, the conditioned victim gains three Willpower Traits for the sole purpose of resisting control and manipulation that would cause her to perform actions counterproductive to her master's wishes. If a previous Blood Oath exists, you and the Regnant must engage in a Mental Challenge (out of character) every time the two of you issue contradictory orders.

On the downside, the subject of *Fealty* is little more than a pale automaton lacking free will, imagination and creativity. She is not without hope, however; this selfsame power can be used to restore the subject to normal, albeit at great risk.

There also exists the possibility of revoking your control over someone conditioned with this power. Over the course of three nights, you must win three Mental Challenges. The Storyteller bases the difficulty of these challenges on such factors as the length of time and how intensely the subject was controlled. The subject's bonus Willpower Traits will come into play here to resist the would-be savior. If you fail just one of these tests, the subject's mind is permanently shattered, leaving her a vegetable. If successful, however, you only need to expend a Willpower Trait to reaffirm the subject's identity and undo the effects of the Discipline.

ADVANCED

Vessel

This Discipline allows you to forcibly inject your consciousness into another's body, suppressing his existing will and personality. In doing so, you gain complete physical control of your host's body, while leaving your body completely inert and vulnerable. Moreover, while in a foreign body, you will find yourself subject to its physical limitations. You may not use any of your physical Disciplines or any of the host's mental or social Disciplines or faculties.

To possess someone, you must first touch and then defeat your victim in a Mental Challenge. If successful, the original body falls over, apparently lifeless, and your consciousness immediately takes over the victim. You may remain in the host's body until sunrise, when you must return to your own form. If your body has been destroyed in the meantime, you suffer Final Death at this point. During the course of the use of *Vessel*, the victim is totally unaware of her condition and surroundings.

Spiritually empty but physically viable bodies, such as the bodies of those who are using *Anima Walk* or currently using *Vessel* on others, cannot resist *Vessel*. However, when the *Walking* spirit tries to return to its body, you must succeed in a Mental Challenge to retain control.

When you fail a Mental Challenge to possess a body, you become extremely disoriented. You cannot control your body or concentrate for a full minute, during which time you are very vulnerable (two Traits down) to physical and mental attacks.

As a game effect, characters possessing the bodies of other characters should adopt the appropriate dress and trappings of the host body. Additionally, a name badge or label could be employed to signify the change.

FORTITUDE

All vampires possess an amazing constitution, supplemented by gradual regeneration and an immunity to aging and most diseases. Cainites with *Fortitude* possess an even greater degree of toughness. Considering the numerous destructive forces a vampire can and probably will encounter in her long life, *Fortitude* can prove to be a tremendous asset.

BASIC

Endurance

This level of *Fortitude* represents your ability to shrug off the effects of damage, including damage caused by fire or sunlight. With it, you can ignore the side effects of being *Wounded* or *Incapacitated* — you are not out of play until you reach *Torpor* or *Final Death*. This Discipline costs nothing to use and is automatically activated when needed.

Mettle

Because your form has been hardened against the dangers and threats of the world, you gain an additional Health Level, which is recorded on your character sheet. You can temporarily lose and heal back this Health Level just like any other, and you use it as a second "Healthy."

INTERMEDIATE

Resilience

You are highly resistant to harm and injury from all sources, including the traditional banes of your breed — fire and sunlight. While excessive or persistent forces can still bring an end to your immortal existence, this does not come about easily.

Whenever you suffer aggravated wounds, you may try to reduce them to ordinary wounds once per wound taken. You must spend an appropriate Physical Trait (*Stalwart*, *Resilient*, etc.) and win a Simple Test for each wound resisted. Thus, if you suffered three aggravated wounds at once, you could attempt to reduce each of them separately to ordinary wounds by spending three appropriate Traits and winning three Simple Tests.

ADVANCED

Aegis

Your ability to survive the hostile forces of the world has surpassed mere physical resilience; it takes a truly monumental and unrelenting force to destroy you. In the face of annihilation, you can call upon deep reserves of tenacity, enabling you to shrug off fatal injuries.

When you suffer a wound that would destroy you in a challenge, or if you encounter a lethal situation (such as direct exposure to sunlight), you may permanently expend either three Physical or one Willpower Trait to avoid destruction. If directly exposed to sunlight, you remain unharmed for five minutes. Normal damage is not inflicted — its results are ignored. Indeed, those witnessing this Discipline often find it hard to believe that any creature could survive the punishment being meted out, and many will assume the you are destroyed unless they are given cause to believe otherwise.

MORTIS

Mortis is the Discipline of death and decay. It allows a Cainite to summon the forces of the grave to afflict another, or himself, if he wishes. The effects of this Discipline are almost always grotesque, and mortal and Cainite alike can suffer greatly from them.

BASIC

Masque of Death

This allows you to imitate a corpse. Your skin becomes drawn and taut, the warmth of the blood in your body leaves you, and you become indistinguishable from any other desiccated dead body. Nor are the effects of *Masque of Death* limited to yourself, as you may inflict this dreadful effect on another as punishment or camouflage.

To use *Masque of Death* on yourself, you spend a Blood Trait and perform a Simple Test. If you succeed, you take on the appearance of a corpse, with all of the attendant effects.

If you wish to use this power on another, you must spend a Blood Trait, then succeed in a Physical Challenge with your intended target. At that point, the victim is affected by the *Mortis* power, and becomes corpse-like.

While motion and even Discipline use are possible, all of your movements appear stiff and unnatural. Mortals and vampires affected by this power remain afflicted until the next sunrise or sunset. A character tainted by *Masque of Death* is down two Traits for all appearance- or dexterity-related challenges.

Blight

Blight allows you to add the weight of years — temporarily — to a victim. With but a touch, the victim grows old and feeble. Bones become brittle, hair whitens and falls out, muscles atrophy, and eyesight dims. Needless to say, a mortal — or even a Cainite — affected in this way becomes a less formidable opponent.

Blight requires the expenditure of a Blood Trait and a successful Physical Challenge with the target. If the challenge is successful, the victim immediately



appears as if he were 70 years old. Cainites affected suffer as well, appearing as if they were Embraced at age 70.

A victim of *Blight* is down two Traits for all challenges until the next sunrise or sunset, at which point he reverts back to his normal age. A mortal or ghoul affected by *Blight* must make a Static Physical Challenge against six Traits for each scene spent in strenuous activity, or else suffer a heart attack.

INTERMEDIATE

Awaken

By exercising this manifestation of *Mortis*, you are capable of rousing yourself or another vampire from the clutches of torpor. While the difficulty of this act depends upon several factors (the age and generation of the sleeping Cainite, as well as how far advanced he is along his Road), with sufficient concentration you can work miracles.

To wake another vampire, you must perform three challenges with your target: Willpower, Road Traits and generation. A Cainite in torpor cannot deliberately lose one of these challenges; nobody said this was easy, after all. You must win all three challenges. A tie allows a new test, but a loss ends the sequence immediately.

You can use this power to attempt to rouse yourself from torpor as well. That sort of effort requires the same three Tests, against 10 Traits each time.

ADVANCED

Black Death

This fearful manifestation of *Mortis* is feared by all Cainites who know of it. With but a touch, you can inflict a fatal sickness on a mortal or drive a vampire into torpor. Surely part of the legend of vampires as plague-carriers has sprung from the use (and abuse) of this power, and most Cainites who can summon *Black Death* now do so discreetly.

Mortals infected with *Black Death* waste steadily away over a period of 24 hours, at the end of which death is inevitable. Thankfully, the disease is not contagious, though in all other ways the disease is identical to bubonic plague. Vampires stricken with *Black Death* fall into torpor immediately.

Black Death requires the expenditure of a Willpower Trait and a successful Physical Challenge against the intended victim.

OBFUSCATE

Cainites hide in the midst of teeming hordes of humanity. For those who are truly hideous, the gift of *Obfuscate* is priceless. Most of the powers of *Obfuscate* cloud the minds of observers, preventing them from perceiving things as they truly are.

BASIC

Unseen Presence

This power allows you to remain obscured and unseen even in crowds. You can walk about without being seen or heard, lurk while listening to whispered conversations and escape from dangerous situations.



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While this Discipline is activated, other players must pretend not to see you; if you choose to spy upon them, they must continue acting normally, as if you are not there. To engage this power, you must cross both your arms in front of you, demonstrating your actions to everyone around you. As soon as you touch objects around you (other than walking around), talk to others or otherwise interact with your environment, you instantly become visible to everyone (uncross your arms).



If you are moving, a Cainite with *Heightened Senses* will detect something is amiss, but must defeat you in a Mental Challenge to actually pinpoint your location and see you. In any case, you cannot surprise an individual with *Heightened Senses* by using *Unseen Presence*.

You may attempt to evoke the "Fair Escape" rule with *Unseen Presence* by winning a Mental Challenge. If you win, you have slipped away unnoticed (watch out for characters with *Heightened Senses*, however). You cannot use this method of escape if you are currently involved in a challenge.

Mask of a Thousand Faces

This Discipline allows you to assume a completely different appearance. To adopt this convincing disguise, you may be required to assume new props and clothes, change badges or use the appropriate hand sign to indicate your change in appearance. This Discipline is extremely valuable to the hideous Nosferatu.

You possess one "instinctive" illusory disguise that you can adopt automatically while conscious. You can assume other disguises temporarily, but each costs one Mental Trait. While asleep, when in Torpor or upon Final Death, you return to your true appearance. Characters with *Heightened Senses* can sense something is amiss with your looks, but they must defeat you in a Mental Challenge to pierce your projected veil.

INTERMEDIATE

Cloak the Gathering

Not only can you mystically mask your own passing, but others can also benefit from your power. You may place others (if they are willing) under your mantle of *Obfuscate*, thereby rendering them invisible to observers. After you disappear, you must expend a Mental Trait for each individual you wish to Cloak. Each individual Cloaked in this manner must cross her arms to indicate the use of *Unseen Presence*.

Individuals under the effect of this power must always remain within three paces of you to remain hidden. While Cloaked, you and your allies can still see each other. Each individual hidden by this Discipline must abide by the limitation listed under *Unseen Presence*, or the Cloaked companion immediately forfeits the Discipline's effect. If one member of the group becomes visible in this manner, she can no longer see the rest, who remain unaffected. If you violate the limitations of *Unseen Presence*, all participants become visible.

If a vampire with *Heightened Senses* defeats one of the Cloaked individuals in a Mental Challenge, she perceives only that individual. However, if a perceptive Cainite challenges and defeats the vampire projecting the Cloak, all of the subjects are revealed to the challenger. Usually, it is not readily apparent which vampire in the gathering is employing this power.

ADVANCED

Soul Mask

What *Mask of a Thousand Faces* does to the body, *Soul Mask* accomplishes for the inner self. Vampires possessing *Soulsight* and *Telepathy* often become smug in their ability to unearth others' deepest secrets and personalities. You, however, have the ability to render those powers impotent. Your true nature is inscrutable. This is not to say that your secrets cannot be fathomed, but it takes a very dedicated and decidedly nosy individual to do so.

A single Mental Trait must be expended for each piece of information about yourself you wish to disguise from snooping minds. The types of information that can be masked are Nature, Demeanor, recent diablerie, emotional state, surface thoughts, type of creature and Derangements. Each of these "masks" must be recorded when the power is activated. The masks remain until sunrise or until you choose to change them (at additional cost).

OBTENEBRATION

Vampires are creatures of shadow, none more so than practitioners of *Obtenebration*. This Discipline enables the Lasombra to bend even formless shadows to their will.

BASIC

Shadow Play

You can blend in with shadows. If there is a real shadow, you may stand in it with arms crossed for *Unseen Presence* and remain unseen. To see you, another Cainite must initiate a Mental Challenge, which, even if successful, cannot distinguish between *Obscure* and *Obtenebration*. This Discipline may not be used unless real shadows are present. Acceptable places include very dark rooms, closets, under tables (if it is dim) and so forth.

Nocturne

You can create an area of inky black matter that blinds everyone within, even if they use *Heightened Senses*. This darkness extinguishes light and stifles, but does not eliminate, sound. Use of this power looks unusual to those on the outside, appearing as a huge, black blob nothing like a natural shadow.

Nocturne costs you one Blood Trait for every 10 feet you wish the darkness to extend. A Storyteller should be present to explain the phenomenon to all involved. Unless others notice your high concentration level, they will be unable to physically trace the phenomenon back to you.



THE LONG NIGHT

INTERMEDIATE

Arms of Ahriman

With this Discipline, you can force shadows within 15 feet of you to attack a specific target. Use of this Discipline requires a real shadow to be present and visible to the victim (although the victim does not actually have to be looking at the specific patch of darkness to be animated). If the character being attacked is blind, then a Storyteller may vouch for the shadow's existence. Furthermore, you cannot engage in any other physical action while causing the shadow to hold, knock over, trip, grasp, block or otherwise attack an opponent.

This Discipline costs one Blood Trait per shadow animated and requires a Physical Challenge (the shadow's Physical Traits, listed below, versus the victim's Physical Traits). Once you have spent the Blood Trait, other characters see the shadow form into a tendril and move about, seemingly of its own volition. While the shadow tendrils cannot move around an area, they can whip, slash and grab from their initial point of origin. They both inflict and take normal damage.

Each shadow possesses three Physical Traits. Storytellers should feel free to allow characters with this Discipline to choose their own adjectives, so long as they suit the shadow. You have the option of spending additional Blood Traits to add Physical Traits to your shadow tendrils at a one-for-one cost.

ADVANCED

Tenebrous Form

You can turn your body into an oozing form of shadow, making yourself impervious to physical harm except for that taken from sunlight or fire (which inflict one extra Health Level of damage on Cainites in this form). You may not initiate any challenges or attack in any way while using *Tenebrous Form*. This power also allows you to slip through cracks in walls and slither at walking speed along any surface.

This Discipline costs two Blood Traits, one to assume the shadow form and one to return to normal form. It takes one full minute to change forms.

OGHAM

The Discipline of *Ogham* is unique to the Lhiannan, though there are rumors of similar script-based magics being practiced elsewhere. *Ogham* allows its practitioner, through attunement to her blood and knowledge of the ancient names of things, to inscribe runic glyphs and thereby evoke various effects.

Note: By 1197 the Lhiannan are already dying out, and their arts are being lost. Hence, there are only three *Ogham* powers available.

BASIC

Consecrate the Grove

By bleeding widdershins (in a counterclockwise pattern) onto an area of vegetation, you awaken the spirits of the immediate area, rousing them to your defense. To use this power, you open a vein and bleed one to three Blood Traits of vitae on the earth. One Blood Trait allows a 10'-diameter area to be affected; each further point spent doubles the radius. This process takes one minute per Blood Trait spent.



Once the spiral has been drawn, you must expend a Willpower Trait to awaken the plant- and soil-spirits of the area. Once you do, however, the effects are astonishing. Tussocks blast outward like earthen geysers, roots reach to trip foes, branches whip at enemies, and so on. Victims in the affected area are down two Traits in any challenge. This power lasts for five minutes per Blood Trait expended.

INTERMEDIATE

Crimson Woad

By inscribing mystical characters on your body, you may channel spirits of blood and battle into your frame. You must spend 10 minutes inscribing your body with the correct runes, and must then make a Static Mental Challenge. Success means you may ignore the side effects of being Wounded or Incapacitated for the remainder of the evening.

ADVANCED

Moon and Sun

You may use your blood to inscribe the ancient symbols of the moon and sun on your forehead. By doing so, you channel the power of the celestial spirits, creating a form of talisman. You must spend 15 minutes and three Blood Traits inscribing the symbols to take full advantage of this power. If you inscribe the moon sigil on yourself, you gain a one-Trait advantage in all challenges for the remainder of the evening. However, you are one Trait down in all challenges which attempt to affect your Beast (such as *Drawing Out the Beast*). Additionally, any werewolf who sees you wearing such a glyph becomes violently enraged.

If you inscribe the sun symbol on yourself, you may expend a Willpower Trait whenever you take damage from fire or sunlight; for each Willpower Trait spent, one level of aggravated damage is instead considered normal damage.

POTENCE

Another distinctly physical Discipline from which many Cainites benefit is a supernaturally heightened degree of strength known as Potence. Those vampires employing this gift find themselves able to perform incredible feats and inflict astonishing amounts of damage on foes. Unfortunately, like so many of the physical Disciplines, Potence easily marks the user as something other than human.

BASIC

Prowess

You possess a degree of supernatural strength beyond that of the average Cainite. Even when your strength should be spent, you can call upon the might that is your bloodright.

You may expend a single Blood Trait to recover all Physical Traits related to brute strength that you have depleted or lost this session; you may not use Potence to restore any other type of Physical Traits. Thus, while Potence restores the Traits *Brauny*, *Wiry*, *Ferocious*, *Stalwart* and *Tough*, it can't restore Traits representing coordination, grace or speed.

THE LONG NIGHT

Might

You can redouble your efforts in any test of strength, often overcoming obstacles that would daunt lesser Cainites. If you should lose a challenge involving strength, you may call for a single immediate retest. Any Traits you lose remain lost, although you need not bid another Trait. You do, however, stand to win the object of the challenge should you win the second test.

This Discipline can only be used once per challenge and cannot be recalled by an opponent's use of an Ability, but can be overcome by another Cainite using *Might*. *Might* may not be used in tests of coordination, grace or speed, as it is applicable only to tests that involve raw strength.

INTERMEDIATE

Vigor

Your physical strength has reached truly astonishing proportions, unquestionably marking you as superhuman. When using *Vigor*, you should make the hand signal called the "Bomb," which is a clenched fist with thumb extended upward. You may apply the Bomb in combat and Physical Challenges that are strength-related, but not in challenges of coordination, speed, grace or the like. The Bomb interacts with other signals in a manner befitting its name: it defeats both Rock and Paper, but in turn is defeated by Scissors (the fuse is cut). You must declare that you are able to use the Bomb before you can use it to resolve a test.

Note: You do not need to use the Bomb every time simply because you possess *Vigor*.



ADVANCED

Puissance

You possess monumental strength. What you consider casual exertion is sufficient force to deform metal and fracture stone. Your full strength shatters the bones of the toughest mortal, rends plate armor and grinds marble blocks into gravel. Even your fellow Cainites cannot survive the type of punishment you can inflict for long.

In hand-to-hand combat, you inflict an additional Health Level against your foes. Furthermore, you win all ties in Physical Challenges involving strength, regardless of who possesses the most Traits. Of course, if your opponent also has *Puissance*, the winner is determined normally.

PRESENCE

Presence can be seen as sort of a supernatural magnitude of charisma, personality and appeal. Vampires possessing this Discipline are often seen as being magnetic or having an intangible quality that draws people (particularly mortals) to them. While *Dominate* controls the logical and conscious mind, *Presence* appeals to the emotions of the subject. Unlike *Dominate*, however, *Presence* can affect vampires of lower generation.

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effect is always active while you are conscious and takes no effort on your part to maintain. However, when there is a question as to your level of expertise in Presence, you should signify that you have Majesty by holding your arms out from your sides when you enter a room or other area.



Anyone attempting an offensive or aggressive action against you must first defeat you in a Social Challenge. If the attacker fails, she cannot continue with the planned action and cannot challenge your Majesty again that evening. Furthermore, unlike other powers, the subject may not spend a Willpower Trait to ignore Majesty's initial effects, although at a later time, she may spend one to challenge its effects. At least an hour must pass before the next attempt, if the first one fails.

PROTEAN

This Discipline allows a vampire to transform either her entire body or a part of her body into something nonhuman. The vampire can thus grow claws, turn into a bat or even become mist.

BASIC

Talons of the Beast

At will, you can instantly cause long, razor-sharp claws to grow from your fingertips. Because the claws are obvious and not easily hidden, using this Discipline among mortals definitely marks you as something nonhuman. When used in combat, *Talons of the Beast* causes aggravated damage.

Interred in the Earth

Eerily and effortlessly, you can sink into the protective bosom of the earth. This is an ideal way to flee such threats as fire and the sun, provided you can find an open patch of earth. You can also use this Discipline as a "Fair Escape." However, a vampire using this power during combat as a defensive action will have to relent if he is attacked; he will fade into the ground at the end of the turn. The power will not work on any substance other than soil. *Interred in the Earth* leaves no trace of its use, and only a few powers may be able to detect the hidden Cainite (Storyteller's discretion). This Discipline costs one Blood Trait to use, but the character may return to the surface at no cost.

INTERMEDIATE

Form of the Beast

You are capable of transforming into a wolf or bat. The process requires a full 10 seconds and one Blood Trait. During this time, you may not engage in any other action, although you may make the transformation instantaneously with the expenditure of three Blood Traits.



BASIC

Dread Gaze

You are able to inject others with feelings of terror and fear by looking into their eyes. By defeating your target in a Social Challenge, you can cause her to run from you in a panic. Unable to take any action against you or to initiate a challenge, your victim must flee the area without stopping until out of your presence. For the next hour, he actively avoids you and leaves immediately should you appear. If somehow forced to remain in your presence, the individual will be extremely uncomfortable and must bid an additional Trait in all challenges against you. If you attack the victim, he may defend himself as normal.

Entrancement

This Discipline describes your ability to attract, sway and control others. Your seductive glamour ensnares everyone you look upon — even those who despise you and wish you harm can be rendered civil, if not docile.

You may attempt to Entrance an individual by engaging him in a Social Challenge. If you are successful, the target must speak to you politely and in a civil manner. Furthermore, he may not attack you while Entranced. *Entrancement* is broken if you initiate an act of aggression against the subject or behave in an obviously insulting or crude manner toward him — otherwise, the power lasts for one hour. If your break *Entrancement* by attacking the individual, you may not Entrance that individual again for the remainder of the night.

INTERMEDIATE

Summon

You can demand the immediate appearance of a person known to you, and he will come. Your mental summons is nigh-impossible to resist, even across the miles.

The standard method of employing this power is to select an out-of-game envoy to carry your summons. This should be someone who doesn't mind or who can take the time out to perform the duty (say, a Narrator). You declare to the envoy the number of Social Traits you wish to devote to the power. Each Social Trait beyond the first allows a retest if your target wins the Social Challenge or resists the power of the call. In the meantime, you must remain in the same place so that the subject can find you if he loses the challenge. Any Social Traits invested in the call are considered lost, even if the subject relents.

There will often be quite a time lag when using this power. This is easy to understand when one considers the amount of time it normally takes to find the subject, engage in a challenge and respond. Players are therefore advised not to use this power frivolously, for the sake of both the flow of the game and their own enjoyment.

ADVANCED

Majesty

You exude an aura of power and insurmountable might. Those around you find it difficult to think about, let alone act out, offenses against your person. You can expect to be treated with great respect, if not awe.

The effect of this Discipline extends about 10 paces from you and immediately fades if you take offensive actions against anyone within range of your power. This

The change only alters your body and normal clothes — weapons and other equipment do not change. Furthermore, certain Disciplines and Abilities may be impossible to use (for instance, bats cannot use weapons). A Storyteller should be consulted in any questionable cases.

As a bat, you can navigate easily in darkness and use flight to escape most foes (as per the "Fair Escape" rules). You also gain the Trait *Quick* x 3. However, you must avoid well-lit areas. Obviously, bats are difficult to attack in melee, so in this form you are usually only vulnerable to ranged attacks.

As a wolf, you can pass yourself off as a normal animal to most individuals. You can communicate with other wolves (although this is different from understanding the Lupine tongue), and might be able to associate with lupines to a degree, if they are not too hostile and you don't stink too much of the Wurm. You gain the Traits *Ferocious*, *Tenacious* and *Cunning* when in this form.

ADVANCED

Body of Spirit

Through rigorous control of your physical form, you can slowly diffuse into a fine mist. This process requires intense concentration and one full minute. In this vaporous state, you can slip through any structure, provided it isn't airtight. You are also immune to physical injuries except for those caused by fire and sunlight. Movement in this form is slow, equivalent to walking, and strong winds will reduce this to a slow walk or even push you in an undesired direction.

It costs one Blood Trait to assume mist form and one to return to human form. While in mist form, you may not use Physical Abilities or Disciplines. Obviously, being in such a state also prevents you from using certain other non-physical powers, like *Observance of the Spoken Word*, *Thaumaturgy*, *Talons of the Beast*, rituals and so on.

QUIETUS

A quiet death is the goal of this Discipline, ensuring the height of secrecy while the Assamite's victim spends her last moments in murderous silence. Through their blood, Assamites master this Discipline, often combining it with *Obscure* to form a most potent tool for murder.

BASIC

Silence of Death

At the cost of one Blood Trait, you can create a zone of silence. Everyone within 20 feet of you cannot speak or make any other noises. You gain the additional advantage of a one-second surprise rule when employing this Discipline.

Weakness

With this power, you can utilize your blood as a contact poison. Flesh-to-flesh contact, the expenditure of a Blood Trait and a successful Physical Challenge are all required to use *Weakness*. However, if the attempt is successful, the victim is down two Physical Traits in all challenges for an hour.

INTERMEDIATE

Blood Agony

With the expenditure of a Blood Trait, you can coat a blade with your own blood. Poisonous to other Cainites, the blood coating enables the weapon to inflict aggravated damage on an opponent. *Blood Agony* may be used one time per Blood Trait spent.

ADVANCED

Blood Sweat

You can make an opponent sweat blood by concentrating on him. You must announce how many Blood Traits you are trying to make your opponent lose, then initiate a Mental Challenge. If you are successful, your opponent must discard his Blood Traits. However, if you lose, your Willpower Trait(s) are still spent. Every three Blood Traits costs one Willpower Trait.

The victim of *Blood Sweat* does not automatically know who is affecting her.

SERPENTIS

This Discipline is entirely derived from the legendary powers of Set. As such, it is unique to the Followers of Set.

BASIC

Eyes of the Serpent

You can paralyze others with your gaze. Like a serpent's, your eyes appear gold with large black irises, hypnotizing those with whom you establish eye contact. After making eye contact, you may initiate a Social Challenge. If you are successful, your victim is paralyzed for as long as you maintain the eye contact. Mortals may only bid half their Traits to resist this challenge.

The Tongue of the Asp

You can now transform your tongue into that of a serpent's. Transmogrifying to a length of 18 inches, your tongue inflicts aggravated damage and drains a Blood Trait from your opponent on a successful attack.

INTERMEDIATE

The Form of the Cobra

You can now transform your entire body into the shape of a serpent, six inches in diameter and six feet long. You gain all the obvious advantages of this form (slither through holes, rarefied sense of smell, poisonous bite — to mortals at least). To use this Discipline, you must expend one Physical Trait and one Blood Trait, and may take no action for one full minute — you can't even speak.

ADVANCED

Cheat Thoth's Scale

You can remove your heart from your body, thus rendering yourself immune to staking. However, if someone else finds your heart, you are completely at her mercy. With several hours of physicking, you can also perform this Discipline on other

vampires. Because this Discipline takes several hours to perform, it is usually done between game sessions.

THAUMATURGY

The Discipline of *Thaumaturgy* is Clan Tremere's most closely guarded secret, giving the emerging Tremere an edge over other vampires they do not relinquish easily — hence, the Tremere do not teach this Discipline to any vampire not of their blood.

While characters may only start with the Path of Vitae, it is fundamental to learning the other Paths mentioned below. See the section on other Paths for further details.

THE PATH OF VITAE

BASIC

Blood Mastery

In possessing a portion of a subject's blood, you can, in turn, exercise power over him. Used in such fashion, *Blood Mastery* often acts as a prerequisite to other *Thaumaturgy* rituals.

You can declare the use of *Blood Mastery* before or even during a challenge, as long as you do so before a test is performed. To use *Blood Mastery*, you must possess a Blood Trait from the subject, which is destroyed when you activate the Discipline. By destroying the Blood Trait, you automatically win a single test, and the subject is not allowed any retests. If either you or the subject bid any Traits, those Traits are not lost.

Inquisition of Captive Vitae

You are able to ascertain certain bits of information by carefully examining an individual's blood. Some types of information that you can glean are: clan, generation, creature type, diablerie (up to one year) and physical nature.

For each question asked, you must have at least one Blood Trait — which is destroyed in the process — and you must win or tie a Simple Test.

INTERMEDIATE

Theft of Vitae

By concentrating, you can visibly coax blood from a container or target into your body. Because the source of the theft is obvious, you should expect an immediate attack if you use this ritual on another Cainite. This power works automatically against visible containers or receptacles, even those in somebody's possession. If the source of the blood is another creature or a hidden (but known) source, you must first win a Mental Challenge against the target. If you win, you may choose to expend a Mental Trait for each Blood Trait you want to siphon out of your target. You must spend all Blood Traits above your maximum immediately or that blood is lost.

Once in your body, this blood is considered yours and cannot be used against the original owner in any other use of *Thaumaturgy*.

Blood of Potency

You can manipulate the blood within you, distilling it and making it more potent, effectively lowering your generation. The more dramatic the alteration, the greater the price.



THE LONG NIGHT

Each step from 12th to 10th — One Blood Trait

Each step from 10th to 8th — Two Blood Traits

Each step from 8th to 6th — Three Blood Traits

Each step from 6th to 5th — Four Blood Traits

5th to 4th (maximum reduction) — Five Blood Traits

These costs are cumulative. For example, it would take the prodigious sum of 10 Blood Traits to lower a 10th generation vampire to 6th generation. While few Cainites can contain that much blood, vampires can store additional blood externally for the process. You may only be under the effect of a single application of this Discipline at one time, and the effects fade at the next sunrise.

ADVANCED

Cauldron of Blood

With a touch, you can cause the very life-fluid inside a foe to boil and burn within her veins. Unless the victim cannot resist, you must first win a Physical Challenge to establish a firm grip on the victim. Once this has been achieved, you spend a Willpower Trait to activate the *Cauldron of Blood*. At this point, you may choose to expend a variable number of Mental Traits, each of which destroys a single Blood Trait and inflicts an ordinary wound. You may not inflict more wounds than the victim has Blood Traits. A human who loses two or more of her Blood Traits in this manner will die.

OTHER PATHS

While the Path of Vitae comes instinctively to the Tremere bloodline, other, more difficult Paths are available to Kindred who display arcane predispositions. Generally, you cannot take any of the following Paths upon character creation, although you can learn them through experience and the instruction of a tutor or arcane text.

The first Path that you learn — the Path of Vitae — is your primary Path. You may not raise subsequent Paths above your mastery in this primary Path. Additionally, you or your chantry must seek out and uncover the knowledge required to study it. One method of doing so involves using the *Occult Ability*; other possibilities may form the basis for stories involving occultists or Clan Tremere in your chronicle.

Remember that you must first find knowledge before you can learn it. Learning new Paths after the first requires time, patience and experience, just as would any other Discipline.

CREO IG NEM

This Path allows you to manipulate and create an unnatural fire that does not ignite objects until you release the flames.

BASIC

Hand of Flame

You may instantly call forth a flaming wreath about your hands. If you defeat a foe in a Physical Challenge with the flaming appendage, you inflict an aggravated

wound instead of a normal one. Flammable foes or objects hit with the *Hand of Flame* may ignite (Storyteller's discretion).

Flame Bolt

By expending a Mental Trait, you can summon forth and hurl a fiery brand at range. This functions exactly like a ranged weapon, except that you use your *Occult Ability* instead of *Archery*. Use Mental Traits for all challenges involved. Other trivial (no test needed) uses of this power include lighting torches and candles at range or destroying light cloth and paper items. More resilient items require a Static Challenge to ignite.

INTERMEDIATE

Engulf

You can engulf a foe in a searing column of flames by initiating a Mental Challenge using the *Occult Ability* (to master the fiery energies and place the flames accurately), while the defender must employ Physical Traits (to avoid the flames).

To initiate the challenge, you must expend a Willpower Trait. If the casting is successful, the subject combusts, suffering two aggravated wounds. For each challenge or every full five seconds (whichever is greater) that passes, the victim may attempt to win or tie a Simple Test to extinguish the flames. Failing or engaging in alternative actions results in another aggravated wound and continued burning. Success indicates that the flames are out and no further damage is inflicted.

ADVANCED

Firestorm

By will alone, you can summon a firestorm that encompasses areas and incinerate multiple foes. To activate this Discipline, you must expend a Willpower Trait and define the area you wish to affect. This area may be no more than 20 feet in diameter. Animated targets in this area must win a Static Physical Challenge (difficulty of six Traits) to leap to safety. If there is nowhere for a victim to escape to (Narrator's discretion), he fails the test, or if he cannot or will not leave the area, he suffers one aggravated wound.

REGO MOTUS

This path allows you to move objects with the power of your mind.

BASIC

Force Bolt

You can focus your will into a tangible, ranged bolt of mental force that can send a foe reeling. Casting this effect requires the expenditure of a Willpower Trait. If you defeat your opponent in a challenge (using your Mental Traits against the subject's Physical Traits), you knock down and stun the subject for 15 seconds (counted aloud). During this time, the victim cannot not initiate any physical actions, although she may use appropriate stamina-related Traits to avoid damage from further challenges. Opponents with *Swiftness* are only stunned for 10 seconds. *Rapidity* reduces this to five seconds, and *Cainites* with *Fleetness* recover immediately. Treat this Discipline as ranged combat.

Manipulate

By concentrating intently, you can perform fine and delicate manipulation of items at range. However, because using Abilities in a challenge in this manner is somewhat difficult, you must risk two Traits instead of one. In general, you may only manipulate objects that an average human can lift in one hand. Furthermore, the speed of manipulated objects is equal to a casual walk. The range of this power cannot exceed 100 feet.

INTERMEDIATE

Flight / Snare

You can lift and move large objects (no more than a few hundred pounds), but cannot exercise fine manipulation over them. If you use this power on yourself, you can "fly" for short distances and avoid falls. Used against an opponent, this Discipline holds foes at bay by lifting them off the ground. (This does not prevent the victim from firing a crossbow, calling for help or using her own Disciplines, however.)

To snare an opponent successfully, you must first defeat the subject in a challenge using your Mental Traits versus the subject's Physical Traits. This power is too awkward and clumsy to drop objects on foes accurately or to hurl projectiles at an opponent.

If used to fly, the power costs one Mental Trait per five minutes of use.

ADVANCED

Major Manipulation / Lifting / Control

With this power, you can lift great weights (up to a wagon) and immobilize or hurl foes away. To use this Discipline against an opponent, you must first defeat him in a challenge (Mental Traits against your foe's Physical Traits). If you choose to immobilize your foe, he must remain absolutely motionless for as long as you maintain complete concentration on him. While doing so, you can take no other action.

Alternatively, after winning the challenge, you can throw the opponent, who loses one Health Level and must move (as an out-of-game action) to an area within 100 feet as you direct. Finally, objects thrown at or dropped on targets cause one (for man-sized objects) or two (for larger objects) Health Levels of damage if they hit. Once again, a Mental versus Physical Challenge (as aforementioned) is necessary to hit a foe.

You must spend a Mental Trait to activate this power.

REGO TEMPESTAS

This path allows you to manipulate, change and otherwise command the weather.

BASIC

Cloak of Fog

You can call up an obscuring fog that blankets the area. The fog bank can only appear out of doors and can cover an area up to 100 feet across.

The Discipline costs one Mental Trait and takes 15 minutes to activate. Within the fog, visibility (and thus ranged actions) are cut to five feet. Furthermore, visual tests require you to risk two Traits instead of one, although Heightened Senses and the like eliminate these penalties. At the Storyteller's option, fog may reduce the damage a vampire takes from sunlight.

Downpour

You can cause the skies to darken and moisture-laden clouds to bring rain. The rain is very heavy, but only affects a small area (about 100 feet), while surrounding areas are overcast and sullen.

This power costs a Mental Trait and takes 15 minutes to activate. Everyone exposed to the torrential downpour risks two Traits for Physical Challenges, while ranged actions are reduced to a maximum range of 20 feet. At the Storyteller's option, darkened rainstorm skies may reduce the damage that sunlight causes vampires.

INTERMEDIATE

Tempest

You can alter the local weather patterns of large areas and call forth a variety of weather effects. By spending a Willpower Trait, you summon the chosen type of weather form, which lasts for one hour, plus an additional hour for each Mental Trait you expend. The Storyteller may assign a higher cost or require a Static Mental Challenge for very unusual or unseasonable weather. Weather you can create includes thunderstorms, hailstorms, blizzards or clear skies. The game effects are similar to that of *Cloak of Fog* and *Downpour*, but the *Tempest's* effects are citywide.

ADVANCED

Call Lightning

By will alone, you bring forth devastating bolts of lightning from the heavens to smite your foes. This power only works outdoors in overcast, stormy or rainy conditions and costs a Willpower Trait to activate. If your attack — using your Mental Traits and Survival Ability against your foe's Physical Traits — succeeds, your victim suffers three aggravated wounds.

RITUALS

Rituals are arcane formulas and incantations that, properly and skillfully enacted, can bring about powerful magical effects. They are not, however, commonplace or easily mastered.

For each level (Basic, Intermediate or Advanced) of mastery in your primary Path, you can begin to study one of the following rituals of the same level, with Storyteller approval. You may learn additional rituals with experience and instruction from a mentor who has mastered the ritual in question. The guidelines for uncovering and learning Paths also apply to rituals.

BASIC

Basic Rituals take 30 minutes to perform, unless an individual ritual description states otherwise.



THE LONG NIGHT

Crimson Sentinel

This ritual allows you to inscribe a warding rune, making it difficult or even impossible for a subject to enter the affected area. You must inscribe the rune with one of the subject's Blood Traits, which affects an area up to 15 paces across (a small room). The number of Mental Traits you expend when casting the ritual determines the difficulty of the challenge necessary to pass the ward. Once the ward is engaged, anytime the subject attempts to enter the warded area, she must win a Static Challenge against this difficulty. If the rune is discovered and destroyed, the ritual is dispelled.

Defense of the Sacred Haven

You can use this handy ritual to protect your haven or chantry from one of the vampire's deadliest banes—sunlight. The ritual costs one Blood Trait to cast, but lasts as long as the structure is intact and you remain within. After it is cast, no sunlight can enter the haven through a window or door (so long as they remain closed). The ritual affects structures up to the size of a small house, but the Storyteller may rule that it can also affect larger structures at a higher cost.

Deflection of the Wooden Doom

By performing this ritual within a circle of wood (of any sort), you can make yourself or someone else impervious to staking. The ritual costs one Mental Trait to enact, but lasts until you are staked—if this happens, the challenge is lost, the staking implement is destroyed, and the enchantment ends. Neither party suffers wounds, and no Traits are lost. To represent the presence of this ritual, you should record it on your character sheet and carry a small wooden sliver (like a toothpick) on you. Only one of these enchantments may be present on a subject at a given time.

Devil's Touch

You can place a temporary magical curse upon a mortal, causing others to view him with revulsion and disgust. The subject must bid at least two Traits on all Social Challenges while under the effects of the ritual. Using either skillful roleplaying or the *Street Sense* or *Security Ability*, you should slip a penny or similar coin onto the victim. The ritual ends when the subject finds and discards the coin, or at sunrise, whichever comes first.

Purity of Flesh

This ritual mystically purges impurities (mundane pollutants, poisons and drugs, but not diseases or magical effects) from a target by concentrating these impurities into the subject's blood. To enact the ritual, you take one Blood Trait (which becomes thoroughly putrid and useless afterward) from the subject. A Storyteller may require a Simple Test or challenge for particularly stubborn substances.

Engaging the Vessel of Transference

You can mystically prepare a vessel to act as a conduit, exchanging the blood it contains with the blood of anyone whom it contacts. While you need not initiate any tests to accomplish the transfer (causing a slight shivering sensation in the victim), the container only conveys one Blood Trait per use. Once you have transferred all of the original blood in this manner, the magic fades, but the collected blood remains. Often used to obtain blood samples or to Blood Oath a subject, this ritual costs a Mental Trait to perform.

Ward Versus Ghouls

You can create an arcane sigil that detrimentally affects creatures such as ghouls, who have both mortal and Kindred blood. Placed on an unbroken and immobile circle or loop, the ward produces discomfort in ghouls approaching the edge of this barrier (from within or without), and causes three aggravated wounds to ghouls who actually cross the barrier. Alternately, placing the ward on a melee weapon causes it to inflict an aggravated wound (in addition to normal damage) on ghouls.

To inscribe and enchant the warded area, you must destroy a Trait of mortal blood and permanently expend a Mental Trait. If the symbol is somehow discovered and destroyed, the ward's magic is destroyed. If you wish, you can exclude individual ghouls from either version of the ward if said ghouls are present at the casting and each donate a Blood Trait to attune the ward to ignore them.

INTERMEDIATE

Intermediate Rituals take an hour to perform, unless the description of an individual ritual below states otherwise.

Bone of Lies

You can enchant a mortal bone to ascertain whether or not anyone who possesses the bone is telling the truth. The bone must be at least 200 years old, and be taken from the skeleton of a mortal who never tasted of Cainite blood. This ritual takes one hour to perform, and the bone must be bathed in and absorb 10 Blood Traits. Thereafter, each time someone bearing the bone lies, it visibly darkens. The bone may be used 10 times before it is rendered useless.

Pavis of the Foul Presence

It is rumored that the Tremere created this ritual primarily to counter the Presence Discipline in which the Ventrue specialize. Indeed, this ritual is almost never found outside Clan Tremere. The ritual costs a Mental Trait to cast and lasts until you invoke its power or until sunrise, whichever comes first. When someone uses a Presence power against you, a test is performed as normal, but if you win, the Presence power instead affects your foe. If you lose, the Presence power has no effect. In either case, to use the ritual again, you must recast it. Only one of these enchantments may be present at a time; you cannot "stack" your defenses.

To represent the presence of this Discipline, you should record it on your character sheet and wear (not necessarily visibly) a blue silken cord about your neck.

Ward Versus Lupines

You perform this ritual exactly like Ward Versus Ghouls except that you must use silver dust, not blood, to cast it. The ritual affects Lupines in all their forms.

ADVANCED

Advanced Rituals require 90 minutes to perform unless stated otherwise.

Night of the Red Heart

You perform this ritual in two sessions of one hour each — the first just after sunset, and the other just before sunrise. If you enact the ritual successfully, its target dies horribly at sunrise. His heart boils and is consumed as if by the burning rays of the sun.



THE LONG NIGHT

Performing the ritual properly requires three of the victim's Blood Traits and a fellow Thaumaturgist (although only one of you need know the ritual). The subject immediately realizes that she is the target of a ritual after you have completed its first part, although she may not be aware of its origin. The target can only save her life by killing one of the Cainites performing the ritual or otherwise preventing the second ceremony. You must cast both parts of the ritual in the same place, which must be in the same general vicinity as the target. To invoke the final effect, each caster must permanently expend a Mental Trait.

Nectar of the Bitter Rose

The mysteries of this ritual are held in strict secrecy by those able to cast it, for the ritual's very existence poses a threat few Cainites would tolerate. During the course of this three-hour ritual, the participants drain and devour the life essence of a vampire. The victim must be present and somehow restrained throughout the entire process. The end result is a draught that may be shared by up to five diablerists. Each drinker may benefit from the generation of the victim, if applicable, though only once per victim and ritual.

There are risks, however. Each diablerist must engage in a Simple Test (no Traits are risked) against the victim. If the diablerist wins or ties, she lowers her generation. If she loses, the blood rejects her and she gains nothing from the ritual, nor may she ever benefit from the ritual in the future. At the very least, the victim of the ritual is utterly destroyed, his soul consumed in the process.

Abandon the Fetters of Blood

Through this powerful and taxing arcane ordeal, you can free a target from the legendary shackles of the Blood Oath. To perform the ritual, you must use all the blood from the subject and a single Blood Trait from her Regnant. At the ritual's climax, when the last of the target's blood leaves her body, she suffers the permanent loss of a Physical, Mental and Social Trait of her choice as a result of the ordeal. The subject's blood is then returned, and the Blood Oath is no more. You cannot use the Regnant's blood again, as it is destroyed during the course of the ritual.

Ward Versus Kindred

You perform this ritual exactly like *Ward Versus Ghouls*, except that you use Kindred blood to cast it and it affects vampires of all sorts.

VALEREN

This Discipline was first manifested by Saulot, who refined the raw power into its healing gifts. His child, Samiel, created the secondary uses. The secondary uses have been lost for the most part to vampires in the 20th century, who would recognize the tattered remnants of the Discipline as *Obeah*. Some Salubri learned the secondary uses of the Discipline for martial or other, darker purposes. The Discipline is almost never taught to outsiders, as it makes rigorous demands of its users, and the Salubri wish to keep their usefulness. The third eye appears about the time the Salubri masters the second level of *Valeren*. Thereafter, the eye opens when she uses any power above the second level.

A Salubri must decide whether to follow the calling of Healer or Warrior before choosing her *Valeren* powers. Once begun, she may only learn and make use of the

powers of her path. If she wishes to learn the powers of the secondary path, she must pay an additional experience point per level purchased.

BASIC

Gift of Sleep (Healer)

With but a touch, you can put a patient to sleep. If the patient is willing, this power costs a single Blood Trait. If the patient is unwilling, or if he is unintelligent (say, an animal), then the power costs a Blood Trait and requires a successful Willpower Challenge. The effects of *Gift of Sleep* last an hour.

Sense Life/Death (Warrior)

With a successful touch and a Mental Challenge, you can determine the current Health Level of an opponent. You must actually touch her in order to initiate the challenge and discover her current status. If you succeed on the first challenge, you can initiate a second one, which can give you specific details about the target's health (Was she poisoned? Stabbed or bludgeoned? Bitten?).

A successful use of this power also automatically informs you as to whether your subject is Cainite, ghoul or mortal.

Healing Touch (Healer)

With a touch and the expenditure of a Blood Trait, you can heal one Health Level of another's wounds, even aggravated ones. This touch requires no test, providing the subject is willing. However, you must succeed in a Physical Challenge if your subject chooses to resist.

Burning Touch (Warrior)

Searing pain erupts from the Salubri's touch, causing no physical damage but effectively paralyzing her opponent. The Salubri must first win a Physical Challenge to lay her hands on her opponent, and then spend a Blood Trait to begin to cause pain. Her opponent is then paralyzed, unable to move or speak, for as long as the Salubri's hand remains in place (which may require additional Physical Challenges if the victim is not standing on a stable surface). If the Salubri removes her hand, the pain and paralysis cease at once.

INTERMEDIATE

Shepherd's Watch (Healer)

By spending two Mental Traits, you can protect yourself and those under your care from harm. Once enacted, no one not already within 10 feet of you can approach unless you voluntarily drop your guard or the attacker defeats you in a Mental Challenge. However, if you are successful in the challenge, he is paralyzed for five minutes. If you take any hostile action while using this Discipline, you automatically cancel the *Shepherd's Watch*.

Loving Agony (Warrior)

You may dispense a paralyzing pain using the same procedure as in *Burning Touch*, but can now prolong both the pain and paralysis after you have removed your hand. You must expend a Blood Trait for each additional minute you wish the target to remain paralyzed.

ADVANCED

The Ailing Spirit (Healer)

With this Discipline, you can diagnose and cure someone else's Derangements for an evening by winning a Mental Challenge. If you choose to expend three Mental Traits permanently, you may make your healing effects permanent. However, you are two bids down whenever you try to remove a Malkavian's Derangement, the effects are never permanent, and you can never heal his last two Derangements.

Vengeance of Samiel (Warrior)

By invoking the power of her own blood, you may guide your weapon infallibly toward your foe. You must spend three Blood Traits, after which you gain three extra Physical Traits (*Righteous* x 3) on your very next attack. Furthermore, if the attack succeeds, it causes aggravated damage to your opponent. He may not dodge the attack, but can block it, and *Fortitude* can still protect him. This power causes a Salubri's third eye to open and glow a wrathful red.

VICISSITUDE

This Discipline allows the Trismisce to alter appearances and physiological structures — whether her own or someone else's — sometimes in painful ways. Not just a Discipline, *Vicissitude* is often considered a disease (and some say more than just a disease). Using this Discipline can be a tremendous strain on a vampire's mind; if a vampire uses this Discipline more than three times per night, he may permanently gain a new Derangement at the discretion of the Storyteller.

BASIC

Malleable Visage

You can alter your own appearance as much as your natural bone structure allows. That is, you may not go from being a 5' 1" overweight man to a six-foot slender woman. You may look completely different, but your basic size and shape remain the same.

This Discipline costs one Blood Trait per use and takes five minutes. Unlike *Obfuscate*, you cannot just pop in and out of disguise. The use of this power requires time and concentration on your part.

When using *Malleable Visage*, try to bring a few extra costume pieces with you so that your allies will know not to recognize you when you are wearing the red shirt or the green cloak. Also, if your group is using numbers, you must change yours to identify you as someone different.

The effects of *Malleable Visage* last until you change yourself (or are changed back) to your natural form.

Transmogrify the Mortal Clay

This allows you to alter another creature's flesh. The Discipline requires you to engage in a Physical Challenge with an unwilling victim and win, or to tie a Simple Test with a willing one. The challenge's outcome determines whether or not you can lay your hands on the victim while invoking the Discipline. In any case, this Discipline does not function without physical contact.

If you use this Discipline to improve another's appearance (requiring a Simple Test), the victim gains one appropriate Social Trait for the duration of the physical alteration. Failure on the Simple Test means that the victim loses one Social Trait.

This Discipline costs one Blood Trait each time you use it and takes at least 10 uninterrupted minutes to perform (if altering an entire face).

INTERMEDIATE

Rend the Osseous Frame

Rend the Osseous Frame allows you to alter the bone structure of your victim. With *Rend the Osseous Frame*, you can increase or decrease the size of a bone, insert objects into bone (as long as the bone itself can be touched), carve bone with your bare hands or engage in similar practices. You cannot use this Discipline to break bones in combat (that would involve your Physical Traits and *Brawl* Ability). However, you can bend bones while touching the victim (a Physical Challenge with strength-related Traits). The effects of this Discipline are permanent unless someone else alters them using the same Discipline.

Rend the Osseous Frame costs one Blood Trait to use and requires a Physical Challenge (unwilling victim) or Simple Test (willing victim). If you wish to use *Rend the Osseous Frame* on yourself to enhance the effects of *Malleable Visage*, you run the risk of a pain frenzy. The alteration of an entire skeleton takes at least 20 minutes to perform, and the victim must either spend one Willpower Trait to avoid frenzying from pain or engage in a Static Physical Challenge.

Note that Storytellers may feel free not to allow the use of this Discipline in their games.

ADVANCED

Awaken the Zulo Shape

With this Discipline, you can assume the form of an enormous, disgusting monster. Your body is transformed into a seven- to eight-foot-tall creature with blackish, oily skin and other enchanting features like bony knobs protruding from the spine, a hideously deformed head and huge, clawlike, seven-fingered hands. You also must find a way to alert other nearby players to this change. Raising your hands from your sides, fingers splayed and clawlike can be appropriate.

You must spend two Blood Traits to *Awaken the Zulo Shape* and, while in it, cannot use any Social Traits except *Intimidating*. Moreover, you gain the following Physical Traits: *Brazeny*, *Ferocious*, *Dexterous*, *Quick*, *Enduring* and *Stalwart*. All damage inflicted while in this form is aggravated.







CHAPTER FOUR: RULES AND SYSTEMS

TIME

Time in *Mind's Eye Theatre* works as it does in real life, moving forward inexorably, relentlessly. For the most part, everything is played out in real time, and players are expected to stay in character unless they have a rules question.

During the course of a story, it is assumed that a player is always "in character." Because dropping out of character ruins the atmosphere for everyone involved, players should only do so under certain circumstances. If they wish to talk through challenges or need to take a break, players should inform a Narrator and should not interact with any of the other players while out of character.

The only other exception occurs when a Narrator calls for a "hold." This may be necessary to resolve a dispute or to change the scene if the story requires it. When "Hold!" is called, all players within hearing distance must stop whatever they are doing until the Narrator calls out the word "Resume." Holds should be kept to a minimum, since they interrupt the flow of the story.

CHALLENGES

During the course of most stories, there will come a time when two or more players will come into a conflict that cannot be resolved through roleplaying alone. This system allows for conflicts to be resolved simply and quickly, whether they're firefights or tests of will. This face-off is called a challenge. In most cases, a Narrator does not need to be present when a challenge is played.

USING TRAITS

Before you can begin to learn how challenges work, you must first understand what defines a character's abilities. You create a character by choosing a number of adjectives that describe and define that person as an individual. These adjectives are called Traits, and are fully described in Chapter Two. These Traits are used to declare a challenge against another character or against a static force represented by a Narrator.

INITIAL BID

A challenge begins when a player "bids" one of her Traits against an opponent. At the same time, she declares what the conditions of the challenge are, e.g. slashing with a sword or attacking with a stake. The defender then decides how to respond — either by relenting immediately or by bidding one of her own Traits.

During bidding, players should only employ Traits that seem sensible within the context of the situation — that is, bidding players usually should use Traits from the same category as the opponent's, whether Physical, Social or Mental. Experienced players may offer each other more creative leeway, but that is strictly by mutual agreement.

If the defender relents, she automatically loses the challenge (for example, if she were being attacked, she would suffer a wound). If she matches the challenger's bid, the two immediately go to a test (described below). Those Traits bid are put at risk, as the loser of the test not only loses the challenge, but the Trait she bid as well.

TESTING

Once both parties involved in a challenge have bid a Trait, they immediately go to a test. The test itself is not what you may think — the outcome is random, but no cards or dice are used. The two players face off against one another by playing Rock-Paper-Scissors (see below). It may sound a little silly, but it works.

If you lose the test, you lose the Trait you bid for the duration of the story (this usually means the rest of the evening). Essentially, you've lost some of your self-confidence in your own capabilities. You can no longer use that Trait effectively, at least until you regain confidence.

The test works like the moment in poker when the cards are turned over and the winner is declared. From the test, there may be one of two outcomes: either one player is the victor, or the result is a tie.

In a tie, the players reveal the number of Traits they possess in the bid category (Physical, Social or Mental). The player with the least number of Traits loses the test and thus the challenge. Note that the number of Traits you've lost in previous challenges or for any other reasons counts toward this total. The trick to the declaration is that you may lie about the number of Traits you possess, but only by declaring fewer Traits than you actually have — you may never say that you have more Traits than you actually do. This allows you to keep the actual number of Traits you possess a secret, although doing so may be risky.

The challenger is always the first to declare his number of Traits. If both players declare the same number of Traits, they draw and both lose the Trait(s) they bid.

Incidentally, certain advanced powers allow some characters to use gestures other than Rock, Paper and Scissors. Before players can use these gestures in a test, they must explain what they are and how they are used.

ROCK-PAPER-SCISSORS

If you don't happen to know (or remember) what we mean by Rock-Paper-Scissors, here's the concept: you and another person face off, and, on the count of three, show one of three hand gestures. "Rock" is a basic fist. "Paper" is a flat hand. "Scissors" is represented by sticking out two fingers. You then compare the two

gestures to determine the winner. Rock crushes Scissors. Scissors cuts Paper. Paper covers Rock. Identical signs indicate a tie.



ADJUDICATION

If you have question or argument about the rules or the conditions of a challenge, you need to find a Narrator to make a judgment. Try to remain in character while looking for a Narrator. Any interruption in the progress of the story should be avoided, so work problems out with other players if at all possible. If you don't know the exact correct application of a certain rule, try to wing it rather than interrupt the flow of the story — cooperation is the key to telling a good story.

COMPLICATIONS

There are a number of ways in which a challenge can be complicated. The above rules are enough to resolve most disputes, but the following rules help to add a few bells and whistles.

NEGATIVE TRAITS

Many characters have Negative Traits; these are Traits that an opponent can use against a character. After you have each bid one Trait during the initial bid of any challenge, you can call out a Negative Trait that you believe your opponent possesses. If he does indeed possess the Negative Trait, your opponent is forced to bid an additional Trait, although you must still risk your one Trait as usual. If he does not possess that Negative Trait, you must risk an additional Trait. (Blood Traits cannot be used to substitute for Physical Traits in this instance.) You may integrate as many Negative Traits as you wish one by one during the initial bid phase of a challenge, as long as you can pay the price if you're wrong.

If your opponent does not have additional Traits to bid, then your Trait is not at risk during the challenge. Additionally, if you guess more than one Negative Trait that your opponent cannot match, you gain that many additional Traits in the case of a tie or an overbid. The same works in reverse, favoring your opponent if you do not have additional Traits remaining to match incorrect Negative Trait guesses.

OVERBIDDING

Overbidding is the system by which elder vampires (who often have considerably more Traits than younger opponents) may prevail in a challenge, even if they lose the initial test. An elder vampire with 18 Social Traits should be able to crush a neonate with five. This system is designed to make that possible.

Once the players have made the test, the loser has the option of calling for an "overbid." In order to do so, you must also risk a new Trait; the original one has already been lost. At this point, the two players reveal the number of Traits they possess,

starting with the player who called for an overbid. If you have double your opponent's number of Traits in the appropriate category, you may attempt another test. As with a tie, you may state a number of Traits less than the actual number you have and keep your true power secret. This can be dangerous, unless you are completely confident in your estimation of your opponent's abilities.

STATIC CHALLENGES

Sometimes you may have to undergo a challenge against a Narrator rather than against another player, such as when you are trying to pick a lock or summon an animal. Under such circumstances, the Narrator chooses a difficulty appropriate to the task you are attempting, and you bid the appropriate Trait, then immediately perform a test against the Narrator. The test proceeds exactly as it would if you were testing against another character. Of course, you may overbid in a Static Challenge, but beware, because the Narrator can overbid as well.

Sometimes Narrators may leave notes on objects, such as books and doors. These notes indicate the type of challenge that must be won for something to occur (such as understanding a book, opening a door or identifying an artifact). With experience, you may learn how difficult it is to open a locked door. However, difficulty ratings can be as different as lock types.

SIMPLE TESTS

Simple Tests are used to determine if you can succeed at something when there is no real opposition. Often used when determining the extent of a Discipline's effect, most Simple Tests do not require you to risk or bid Traits, although some may.

When a Simple Test is called, players use the Rock-Paper-Scissors test against the Narrator. In most cases, the player succeeds on a win or a tie, although at Narrator discretion, it may be necessary for him to win.

HEALTH

A character in *The Long Night* has five Health Levels that represent the amount of injury the character has suffered: Healthy, Bruised, Wounded, Incapacitated and Torpor. If a Healthy character loses a combat challenge, she becomes Bruised. If she loses two, she becomes Wounded, and so on.

- **Bruised** — When a character is Bruised, she is only slightly injured, having perhaps suffered a few scrapes and bruises, but little more until she is healed. In order to enter a new challenge, she must risk an additional Trait. Thus, to even have a chance in a challenge, a Bruised character must bid at least two Traits.

- **Wounded** — When a character is Wounded, she is badly hurt. She might be bleeding freely from open wounds and may even have broken bones. She must bid two Traits to have a chance in a challenge. In addition, she will always lose when she ties during a test, even if she has more Traits than her opponent. If she has fewer Traits, her opponent gets a free additional test.

- **Incapacitated** — When a character is Incapacitated, she is completely out of play for at least 10 minutes. After 10 minutes has passed, the character is still immobile and may not enter into challenges until she has healed at least one Health Level. At

the mercy of other characters, she is only capable of whispering and is barely aware of her surroundings while incapacitated.

• **Torpor**— When a character is in Torpor, she is in a deathlike state. Effectively out of play until another character revives her, she is completely at the mercy of other characters and the environment around her. Only the blood of another vampire at least three generations lower than the Cainite in Torpor can revive her. The Storyteller may, of course, allow other exceptional circumstances to rouse a vampire from this state.

HEALING

Vampires require blood in order to heal wounds. Blood Traits must be expended to restore Health Levels on a one-for-one basis. More information on Blood Traits can be found in Chapter Two of *The Long Night*.

Aggravated Wounds

Vampires cannot heal aggravated wounds with blood alone. Exposure to sunlight, fire and the claws or teeth of a vampire or werewolf cause aggravated wounds, and require the expenditure of three Blood Traits and a Willpower Trait to heal. Additionally, only one such wound may be healed per night, representing the gradual regenerative properties a vampire possesses. Cainites can completely heal extreme injuries, such as broken or severed limbs, but they require blood and time to do so.

THE MOB SCENE

During the course of many stories, you are inevitably going to be drawn into a challenge in which several people want to be involved. Multi-party challenges can be confusing, but if you follow these simple guidelines, you shouldn't have much difficulty. These rules are most useful in combat challenges, but they can be used with nearly any sort of group challenge.

The first thing you need to do is to decide who is challenging whom. This is usually obvious, but when it's not, you need a quick way to work things out. Simply have everyone involved count to three at the same time. On three, each player points at the individual he is challenging.

The first challenge that must be resolved involves the person who has the most people pointing at him. Determine which category of Traits would be most appropriate — Physical, Social or Mental. Each player pointing at the defender bids one appropriate Trait, and the group chooses a leader. The attacking group cannot exceed five people — there is a limit to the number of individuals who can attack a single person at one time.

The defender then bids as many Traits as there are people opposing him. If he does not have enough Traits to do so, he automatically loses the challenge. If he does have enough Traits, he performs a test against the chosen leader of the attackers. The rest of the challenge continues as normal, although only the group leader can compare and overbid Traits.

If the defender wins the test, he remains unharmed, but he can choose to affect only one member of the attacking group — usually by inflicting one wound (as during combat). Additionally, the attackers lose all Traits they bid. If the attackers win, they may inflict one wound, and the defender loses all the Traits he risked.



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After the first challenge is concluded, go on to the next one. Continue the process until each character who has declared an action has been the target of a challenge or has donated Traits.

Order of Challenges

Some players wonder exactly how to respond when challenged. Typically, if someone initiates a Physical Challenge, the defender can only respond with Physical Traits, unless he possesses a Discipline or some other ability that is considered to be always active. He cannot respond by using a Discipline or another ability until after the first challenge has been completed. Some Disciplines, which specify this contingency in their description, pose an exception to this rule. Social and Mental Challenges work the same way.

This part of the chapter discusses additional rules and complications that sometimes come into play in **The Long Night**. It also describes a multitude of different systems for resolving character interactions. However, this part is more a set of permutations than a set of rules. There is *nothing* contained in the next several pages that you need to know, only things that you might want to know. These complications can add more depth and detail to your game.

COMBAT

The basic challenge system used in **The Long Night** has already been presented. This section contains a few basic modifications to the combat system and elaboration on it.

Combat is the usual intent behind Physical Challenges. Essentially, combat involves two characters in physical conflict. The players agree what the outcome of the challenge will be, each player bids an appropriate Trait, and a test is resolved, determining the victor. The following rules allow for variances to those basic rules, such as situations using surprise or weapons.

The agreed outcome of a Physical Challenge usually involves the loser being injured. This is not, however, the only result possible. For instance, you could say that you want to wrest a weapon from your opponent's hands or that you're trying to trip him. The result can be nearly anything the two parties agree upon, whether that's simply raking someone with claws or dramatically throwing someone through a window. The results of a combat challenge may also be different for both participants. (For example, a frenzied Brujah may wish to attack a Toreador who affronted him, while the Toreador may simply want to escape).

SURPRISE

If a player does not respond within three seconds of the declaration of a Physical Challenge, the player is considered surprised; he is not fully prepared for what's coming. Sometimes a player is busy with another activity, doesn't hear a challenge, or is playing a character who just isn't prepared for the attack (such as when the character is led into an ambush). It is considered highly improper to sneak around whispering challenges to try to get an element of surprise. Surprise is only in effect for the first challenge of a conflict; all further challenges are resolved normally, as explained below.

WEAPONS

No real weapons are ever allowed in Mind's Eye Theatre games.

Even nonfunctional props are forbidden if they can be mistaken for weapons. This system does not use props of any kind, nor are players required (or allowed) to strike one another. Weapons are purely an abstraction in this game. Weapon cards, which display the facts and statistics of a particular weapon, can be used instead. The damage a weapon inflicts is limited only by mutual agreement, although it is generally assumed that an injury incurred from a blow reduces the target by a Health Level.

While some weapons have special abilities, most weapons give their wielders extra Traits, although sometimes a Negative Trait disadvantage offsets this advantage. Each weapon has one to three extra Traits; you can use these in any challenge in which you employ the weapon, but you cannot use them in place of your Traits when placing your initial bid. Instead, they add to your total when comparing Traits during a tie or an overbid (for instance).

Opponents may use a weapon's disadvantages, or weaknesses inherent in the weapon, in precisely the same way they do Negative Traits. The weapon's Negative Traits can only be used against its wielder and only when appropriate to the situation. For instance, if you're firing a longbow and your opponent wants to apply the weapon's Negative Trait: *Clumsy* against you, you can ignore that Negative Trait if you've taken the time to set up your shot beforehand.

If your opponent names your weapon's Negative Trait, and it is appropriate to the situation, you suffer a one-Trait penalty (i.e., you are required to risk an additional Trait). If your opponent calls out a Negative Trait that doesn't apply to the situation, your opponent suffers a one-Trait penalty in the challenge.

Along with your character card, you carry cards listing the statistics for your weapons. Weapon cards specify the capacities of each weapon and allow other players to see that you actually possess a weapon. When you have a weapon card in your hand, you are considered to be holding the weapon.

Each weapon also has a concealability rating. If you cannot conceal a weapon, you must display that card at all times — you cannot, for example, pull a two-handed sword out from under your cloak. Optionally, you can pin weapon cards to your shirt, indicating that, for instance, you have an unconcealable weapon slung over your shoulder.

Note that some weapons have special abilities, such as causing extra Health Levels of damage or affecting more than one target.

Bidding Traits with Weapons

During a normal hand-to-hand fight, you bid your Physical Traits against your opponent's Physical Traits. However, if you're using the Archery Ability, you can use Mental Traits instead. If your opponent is also using a bow or other ranged weapon (crossbow, spear, Roman *pilum*), he too bids Mental Traits. If your opponent is not using a distance weapon and is merely trying to dodge, the attacker uses Mental Traits to attack, while the defender uses Physical Traits to dodge. This is one of the few instances when Traits from different Attributes are used against one another.

Note: Obviously, we can't go into every single variety of sword, dagger, bow, poleaxe, spear, mace, flail and other weapon extant in the Dark Medieval World. The ones listed below are generalized examples, designed with ease of play (and not



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necessarily historical accuracy, *per se*) in mind. Please keep this in mind before getting upset over the fact that you can't find find Trait listings for *godentags* or *sgian dhus* in here.

Weapon Examples

• **Knife/Dagger** — This easily concealed weapon is very common.

Bonus Traits: 2

Negative Traits: *Short*

Concealability: *Sleeve*

• **Club** — This can be anything from a chair leg to a tree limb.

Bonus Traits: 2

Negative Traits: *Clumsy*

Concealability: *Short cloak*

• **Wooden Stake** — Though not the most powerful weapon, if it transfixes a vampire's heart, the victim is immobilized (see below).

Bonus Traits: 2

Negative Traits: *Clumsy*

Concealability: *Short cloak*

• **Broken Jug** — A good example of a weapon made from scratch.

Bonus Traits: 1

Negative Traits: *Fragile*

Concealability: *Sleeve*

• **Mace** — A blunt weapon used for crushing, the mace is a favorite of clergymen when they ride to war.

Bonus Traits: 2

Negative Traits: *Short*

Concealability: *Short cloak*

Special Power: Three successful attacks with a mace will destroy a shield.

• **Short sword** — This blade is usually 18 to 24 inches long, and used for stabbing.

Bonus Traits: 2

Negative Traits: *Short*

Concealability: *Short cloak*

• **Longsword** — This single-edged blade is nearly impossible to conceal.

Bonus Traits: 3

Negative Traits: *Heavy*

Concealability: *Cloak*

• **Greatsword** — This blade is impossible to conceal, and requires two hands to use.

Bonus Traits: 5

Negative Traits: *Heavy, Slow, Clumsy*

Concealability: *Castle*

- **Spear** — A spear is usually six to eight feet long, and on occasion may be thrown (leaving its wielder defenseless). Using a spear in combat requires both hands.

Bonus Traits: 2

Negative Traits: *Clumsy*

Concealability: Not bloody likely

- **Polearm** — This weapon requires two hands and cannot be thrown.

Bonus Traits: 4

Negative Traits: *Clumsy, Slow*

Concealability: None whatsoever

- **Short Bow** — This weapon has limited range and stopping power.

Bonus Traits: 3

Negative Traits: *Fragile*

Concealability: Cloak

Special Power: Chain armor does not protect against arrow attacks.

- **Crossbow** — A crossbow has short range, but tremendous shocking power.

Bonus Traits: 4

Negative Traits: *Heavy, Slow*

Concealability: Cloak

Note: A crossbow requires an action to reload after firing, meaning that it can only be fired half as often as a regular (short or long) bow.

Special Power: Chain armor does not protect against crossbow attacks.

- **Longbow** — This weapon has tremendous range and shocking power, but is so tall that it cannot be used indoors.

Bonus Traits: 6

Negative Traits: *Fragile, Clumsy, Heavy*

Concealability: None whatsoever

Special Power: Chain armor does not protect against longbow attacks, and it only takes one shot from a longbow to render a shield useless. (In real life, often the arrow would punch through the shield and the arm behind it as well.)

Trebuchets, ballistae, catapults, mangonels and other siege engines lie outside the scope of this game.

PROTECTION

Armor

Armor is the second-best defense against weapon-based attacks (the best, of course, is being somewhere far away from the combat). **The Long Night** uses a simple armor system to determine the effects of armor in combat.

There are three types of armor in **The Long Night**: leather, chain and plate.

Leather armor consists of hardened leather stitched together. A character wearing leather armor does not gain any Negative Traits by doing so, and the armor absorbs the first Health Level the character takes in combat during a session. After the first Health Level has been absorbed, the armor is useless.



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Chain armor is made from hundreds of tiny rings of steel interwoven to form a "fabric" of metal. While chain mail absorbs the first two Health Levels of damage for its wearer, it comes with the Negative Trait: *Heavy*. Chain armor is also permeable to arrow fire, which goes through this defense as if it were nonexistent.

Plate armor is, as one might expect, the stereotypical solid steel armor one sees in movies and on the covers of fantasy novels. This sort of armor is fantastically heavy, and gains the Negative Traits: *Heavy* and *Clumsy*. Plate armor sops up the first three Health Levels of damage.

Shields

A shield is nothing more than an edged board, usually round or targe-shaped, worn on the arm to block opponents' blows. Shields are often reinforced to stand up to multiple blows, and some have metal bosses in the middle for bashing purposes. (Treat shields as having a single bonus Trait and the Negative Trait: *Clumsy* for attack purposes.) Shields are considered to be indestructible, except in the special cases noted above.

ETIQUETTE OF ARMS AND ARMOR

While one might wish to be as well-armed and armored as possible at all times, there are certain problems with tromping around in plate mail and wielding pointy objects all the time. For one thing, it gets heavy and uncomfortable. For another, it is extremely rude to wear armor indoors, unless one is a guard or man-at-arms who specifically needs to wear armor to fulfill his duties. Toting weapons around indoors, sheathed or otherwise, is also considered insulting, and may well get you in more trouble than having your mace at hand could possibly be worth.

For purposes of *The Long Night*, there are two classifications of shield: small and large. Using a shield precludes using a bow or two-handed melee weapon. Also, shields are impossible to conceal.

A small shield has the Negative Trait: *Heavy*. Whenever anyone attacks the bearer of the shield successfully, the attacker must then succeed or tie on a Simple Test, or the shield absorbs the damage.

A large shield has the Negative Traits: *Heavy* and *Clumsy*. Whenever anyone attacks the bearer of the shield successfully, the attacker must then succeed on a Simple Test, or the shield absorbs the damage.

STAKE THROUGH THE HEART

The bane of all vampires is the dreaded wooden stake. Although all Cainites must live in fear of this threat, placing a stake into the heart of a conscious opponent is a difficult task at best.

Staking a vampire's heart completely immobilizes him. However, in order to do so, a character must first win a Physical Challenge against the vampire, then two Simple Tests in which he impales the vampire's heart. If one or both of the Simple Tests fail, the vampire only suffers a wound from the stake, but is not immobilized.

RANGED COMBAT

Many weapons allow you to stand at a distance from a target and engage him in combat. In such situations, you still go over to the target (after shouting "Twang!") and engage in a challenge. Ranged combat, incidentally, is one of the few instances in which Traits of a similar type are not bid against one another; in ranged combat, the attacker uses Mental Traits while the defender uses Physical (unless, of course, he is returning fire, in which case both characters bid Mental Traits).

If you have surprised your opponent, even if you lose the first test, you have the option of calling for a second test. Once you call the second challenge, play continues as normal. Your target is considered surprised for the first attack, and if he has no ranged weapon with which to return fire, he is considered "surprised" for as long as you can attack him without facing resistance (that is, if he wins on a challenge, you don't take damage).

If your target is aware of you before you make your initial ranged attack and has a ranged weapon of his own, he is not considered surprised for your first attack. He may shoot back right away, and your challenges are resolved as stated below.

After your first arrow is fired (the first challenge is resolved), your target may attempt to return fire, assuming he is armed. The loser of a firefight challenge loses a Health Level.

If the defender is unarmed, he may declare his victory condition as escape, providing he is not cornered. If the defender wins the challenge, the attacker remains unharmed, but his target, the defender, has escaped from view and must be searched out if the attacker decides to press the attack. In instances such as this, a new challenge cannot be made for at least five minutes.

COVER

Fighting with hand-to-hand weapons — clubs, knives or swords — requires that combatants be within reach of each other. Fighting with ranged weapons allows combatants to stand apart; participants can therefore "dive for cover." When you resolve each ranged combat challenge, you can present one Trait of cover to add to your total number of Traits. These cover Traits can't be used for bidding, but they do add to your total when comparing Traits. You can find cover behind nearby obstacles as long as they are within your reach (you don't actually dive for them). A Narrator might be required to tell you what cover is around, but if combatants know the area, they can agree upon what cover is available. In some instances, there may be no cover, leaving a combatant in the open with only his own defensive Traits.

If cover is extensive — a brick wall, perhaps — it may be worth more than one Trait for one challenger. The number of Traits available for cover is left for challengers to agree upon, or for a Narrator to decree. Hiding behind a large tree, for example, might be worth two cover Traits, while hiding behind a thin wall might only count as one. If one combatant goes completely under cover — he cannot be seen at all and is thoroughly protected — he is considered impossible to hit. The attacker must change his position to get a clear shot.

FRENZY

Vampires, like mortals, are creatures of instinct — the instincts of a hunter, however, not a gatherer. As the ultimate predators, vampires stand at the apex of the food chain, highly developed killing-machines, the harbingers of death.

Cainites call their own predatory vampiric nature "the Beast." Even the most sedate and civilized vampire can turn into a ravaging, mindless animal with enough provocation. While in this frenzy of emotion, a vampire often cannot tell friend from foe or control his desire for blood.

Most Cainites struggle against the Beast — some eventually yielding to its seduction and breaking the rules of vampiric society. If their crimes are not heinous, these vampires merely become outcasts; otherwise, they are hunted down and destroyed. Once a vampire has given herself to the Beast, it becomes incrementally easier to be lured into a frenzy, at which point the almost inevitable downward spiral toward constant, raging bestiality begins.

The **Long Night** quantifies frenzy via Road Traits; each Road Trait lists a situation(s) that causes a vampire to enter a frenzy. The rule is simple — when that situation occurs, the character frenzies. The only way to avoid entering frenzy is by spending a Willpower Trait, which staves off the frenzy for about 10 minutes. During that time, the character should try to get away from whatever is calling out to the Beast within her.

There are also frenzies that have no relation to a Cainite's Road. These are:

- **Rage Frenzy** — Such a frenzy causes the vampire to go into a terribly destructive rant. The Cainite will often try to destroy everything nearby. He will start with whatever sent him into the frenzy, followed by everything else in the immediate vicinity. His anger is swift and impossible to control.

- **Control Frenzy** — These types of frenzies are usually associated with feeding. The Cainite will often begin to drink blood in huge quantities, going from victim to victim with no subtlety. The Cainite will tear through walls and even her friends to get at more blood until completely sated. Even then, she may still try to drink.

- **Terror Frenzy** — The few things that vampires fear — fire or sunlight, for instance — cause these frenzies, during which the vampire frantically flees the fear-invoking stimulus. The Cainite is dangerous to approach until she has fled the flame or sunlight and has had a few minutes to calm down. Many well-intentioned Cainites have met their demise while trying to stop a vampire in a frenzy.

When a Cainite enters a situation that a Narrator or even the player feels would provoke one of these three types of frenzy, he must make a Willpower challenge against four Traits. If he succeeds, he does not go into a frenzy. If he fails, he frenzies just as surely as if he had violated his Road.

Frenzies do have one advantage. While in this state of blind emotion, you can ignore all damage until reduced to Torpor or Final Death. Unfortunately, you can't heal yourself with blood or attempt Social Challenges. Obviously, you need not risk any Social Traits if someone tries to initiate a Social Challenge against you during a frenzy. Reasoning with someone who is screaming for blood can be somewhat awkward, to say the least.

When roleplaying a frenzy, remember not to do anything dangerous; don't actually run during a Terror Frenzy or physically attack someone during a Rage Frenzy. This may sound like a silly warning, but it's one of those times in which you are most likely to forget the prime rule of live roleplaying.

ENDING A FRENZY

Before entering a frenzy, you can stave it off for 10 minutes by spending a Willpower Trait. If you are already in a frenzy, you can try to end it at any time by spending a Willpower Trait and winning a Static Mental Challenge against a difficulty of four Traits. You lose the Willpower Trait even if you fail the test. If the frenzy is about to cause you to do something completely against your Nature, you may try to end the frenzy once without needing to spend a Willpower Trait. You must still win the Static Challenge, however.

You also get a free Static Challenge after whatever has caused you to frenzy goes away. Otherwise, the frenzy will burn itself out five to 10 minutes after the cause of the frenzy disappears. If you are undergoing a Rage or Terror Frenzy, you must escape the cause of the frenzy in order for the frenzy to fade. For a Control Frenzy, you must either feed fully from a target or sate yourself.

You can also try to talk someone out of a frenzy by winning a Social Challenge against her. This is considered to be a Static Challenge with a difficulty equal to twice the number of Road Traits the frenzied character possesses. (For instance, you must risk four Social Traits to calm someone with two Road Traits.) Remember that a frenzied vampire, when challenged socially, does not need to risk a Trait. The same rule applies here — you are trying to reason with her bestial nature. Failing the Social Challenge often draws the frenzied vampire's attention to you.

RULES SUMMARY FOR FRENZY

| Action | Rule |
|-------------------|---|
| Starting a Frenzy | None. Event in a Beast Trait happens |
| Stopping a Frenzy | Spend a Willpower Trait before the frenzy OR Spend Willpower Trait and win a Static Mental Challenge against four Traits OR go against Nature and win Static Mental Challenge against four Traits OR burn out 10 minutes after the problem goes away OR have someone talk you down by winning a Social Challenge against twice the number of Beast Traits you possess |
| Special | While in a frenzy, you are not affected by Social Challenges. You may ignore all damage until torpor. |

DIABLERIE

Some vampires seek to become more powerful by draining the very essence of their elders. Particularly voracious Cainites can quickly come to rival the power of Methuselahs if they can pursue this dangerous course of action for very long. Their goal, however, is made exceedingly difficult by the elders, who have made the drinking of another Cainite's essence the most heinous crime the Damned can commit.

Diablerie is very easy to spot. In *The Long Night*, a diablerist's aura is tainted by black threads or veins that remain for three months after the act was committed. Any vampire who uses the Discipline of *Soulsight* can see these veins. A vampire who murders his elders is almost sure to end his existence as the target of a Blood Hunt. If the prince declares a Blood Hunt on a criminal, any recognized Cainite may hunt the criminal down and destroy him without punishment.

The advantages of committing the Amaranth, however, are enough to tempt many Cainites into preying upon their own kind. Upon successfully draining a vampire of lower generation, the diablerist gains some of the power of that extinguished vampire. The diablerist lowers her generation by one, bringing her closer to Caine, increasing her resistance to control from more powerful Cainites, and increasing her Blood Pool. She also gains two experience points (on top of any which would normally be gained) if she can survive to the end of the evening.

For players choosing to risk diablerie, additional rules follow. First, the target must somehow be incapacitated via combat or Disciplines. He must then be drained of Blood Traits at a rate of one Trait per action. Once the target of diablerie is drained of Blood Traits, a lone vampire must drain her of Health Levels until the victim is in Torpor. Each Health Level drained in this way requires a separate Physical Test. The victim of diablerie may bid any remaining appropriate stamina-related Physical Traits to defend herself. However, if she wins a test, the diablerist is not harmed, but merely delayed another round. Once the Cainite has begun to drain Health Levels, he is incapable of any other physical action. If another Cainite attacks him or tries to pull him away from his feeding, the diablerist may not bid any Physical Traits to the challenge. His attention is fully consumed by the act of diablerie. Thus, he will lose automatically unless some of his friends are standing nearby to aid him.

When the second part of diablerie begins, both the diablerist and the target collapse and are completely unaware of the world outside them. No Mental or Social Challenges may be directed against either of them.

The final part of diablerie requires one last test for the diablerist to free his target's essence from her body. This is a Physical Challenge. The target begins the challenge three Traits up on the diablerist, so there will always be a test. The diablerist may keep trying to finish the Amaranth until he can no longer match the three Physical Traits. If he can no longer challenge, he loses a Health Level (from exhaustion) and drops away from the target.

No vampire may assist the diablerist. However, one Cainite may drain away someone's Blood and Health Levels to allow another to complete the final stage of diablerie. The seduction of the last feeding, however, is very strong. To stop before fully extinguishing a vampire, a Cainite must spend a Willpower Trait and win a Static Mental Challenge against a difficulty of three Traits.

RULES SUMMARY FOR DIABLERIE

| Action | Challenge |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Stage 1: Drain Blood | Automatic one Trait/action |
| Stage 2: Drain Health | Physical Challenge against victim; diablerist cannot defend physically |
| Stage 3: Drinking Soul | Physical Challenge against victim (who has three additional Traits) |
| Stop drinking after Stage 2 | Mental Static Challenge against difficulty of three Traits |

GOLCONDA

Golconda is a state of being wherein the character has managed to control her frenzies and can restrain the Beast. This blessed state is not easy to attain, but for many vampires, it is the only goal worth having. It must not be misunderstood, for it is not a reconnection to one's mortality — quite the opposite. Golconda is an acceptance and mastery of one's bestial nature. It is the final acceptance of one's curse and the subsequent gaining of power over it.

BENEFITS

A vampire who reaches Golconda makes peace with himself. He no longer exists in a life filled with horror and self-pity. He has finally mastered the Beast Within by accepting that the Beast is a part of him.

There is only one major benefit to attaining Golconda in **The Long Night** — a vampire who reaches Golconda no longer frenzies. He is no longer at the mercy of the Beast.

A lesser benefit of this is the fact that the character does not need to drink blood as often. The character only loses one Blood Trait per week, rather than one Blood Trait per day. Even if the vampire has reached the age when the need for more potent blood arises, the desire is subdued.

BLOOD OATH

The exchange of blood between two vampires creates a Blood Oath. One Cainite (the Thrall) must drink the second's (the Regnant) blood three different times on three different occasions (on different nights). It can be any amount of blood — a sip, or even a taste if the Regnant is of ancient blood. Unlike the limitations of the many Disciplines, it is possible for weaker blood to hold Regnancy over more potent blood. Thus, a 10th-generation vampire can hold Regnancy over a ninth-generation vampire.

As more blood is consumed, the Oath is reinforced. Most Regnants have their Thralls drink of their blood several times a year just to make sure the Oath remains

potent. Many Regnants are fearful that if the Oath is broken, the Thralls will seek vengeance. This is perhaps why so many Thralls are treated fairly well by their Regnants — after all, any Oath can fail. Hate and neglect can weaken the power of the Oath, sometimes fatally.

Once a vampire has been bound, he cannot be bound again by another. He is thus "safe" from other Blood Oaths if he is already bound. However, he can be bound to a number of different vampires if he drinks their blood at the same time (e.g., blood mixed in a chalice before consumption). Usually the feelings produced by such a widespread Oath are more diffuse than normal, but they are no less powerful; the vampire becomes attached to the group and not to any one individual. The Tremere desire this diffusion of attachment in their neonates, and thus often bind them to the seven elders of the clan.

All characters are already one step on their way to being in Blood Oath, for their sires have already given them at least one taste of blood. Thus, if a character partakes of her sire's blood two more times, she is held in Regnancy. In some cases, the sire may already hold the character in Regnancy.

POWER OF THE OATH

The Blood Oath is primarily an emotional power. Thralls view the vampires to whom they are bound as central figures in their unives. They are invariably obsessed with them. Though a Thrall may despise his Regnant, he will do nearly anything to aid him. The Thrall will do nothing to harm his Regnant, and will even attempt to protect him against enemies. Although the Thrall usually understands on an intellectual level what is happening to him, he is unable to do anything about it.

Blood Oaths sometimes (but not always) give the Regnant insight into the moods and feelings of the Thrall. A Regnant may even know his Thrall's location from moment to moment if the Oath has been maintained long enough. Sometimes the Regnant can intuitively find the Thrall simply by following his hunches.

Just because the Thrall is under the Regnant's influence does not mean the Thrall is helpless; he may expend Willpower Traits to resist the power of the Blood Oath. Depending on circumstances, a single Willpower Trait eliminates the effects of the Oath for a single scene or conversation. However, if the Thrall wants to actively attack his Regnant, he must spend one Willpower Trait per challenge.

If a character's Regnant asks him to do a "favor," he does so if it is at all possible. However, if it requires him to risk his life, he need not do it. Thralls almost always fulfill requests in line with their Natures and Demeanors and at least consider others. If there is an emergency and the Regnant is attacked, the Thrall's first instinct is aid her. Self-sacrifice is not unknown, especially if the Oath has been reinforced over the years. If the Thrall is treated well, the Oath grows stronger. If the Thrall is humiliated and degraded, the hate that develops diminishes the Oath's influence.

It is possible to break a Blood Oath, but doing so can be difficult, as it requires not only a massive expenditure of Willpower over a long period of time, but also that the character avoid his Regnant. If a Thrall does not see his Regnant at all for some time, the Oath may eventually die (after many decades or even centuries). Some types of Natures, such as *Child* and *Fanatic*, may never escape the Blood Oath, while others, such as *Conniver* and *Loner*, may do so more easily. Characters cannot escape the Blood

Oath through experience points or successful challenges — the breaking of the Oath must be roleplayed.

STATUS

Status is the central focus of many Cainites' existence. It represents the amount of power and social prestige a character has within vampire society. Those of lower status are expected to show respect to those of higher status. As one's status increases, one is granted more respect and deference by other Cainites — and one may become more of a target as well. Within a city, the prince typically (though not always) has the most status. Neonates generally have little status, while anarchists and most Caitiff have no status. In-between are the power-hungry ancillae and elders who continually jockey for position in hopes of increasing their status.

Common Status Traits include: *Admired, Adored, Cherished, Esteemed, Exalted, Famous, Faithless, Feared, Honorable, Influential, Just, Praised, Respected, Revered, Trustworthy* and *Well-Known*.

GAINING AND LOSING STATUS

Once "accepted" by the prince, a neonate acquires a single Status Trait, usually *Acknowledged*. During the course of a chronicle, the character may gain or lose Status. In small games, the Storyteller is generally responsible for awarding or taking away Status. However, larger games usually allow the Status system to blossom fully, as other Cainite in the game govern Status gains and losses while the Storyteller only monitors (and occasionally arbitrates) them.

Note that you may never gain more than one Trait of Status per story. There are only two exceptions to this rule: If the prince awards or sanctions an additional Trait, or if the Status Trait(s) are conferred when a Cainite assumes a station within Cainite society.

Status can be lost for a multitude of reasons as well, such as making an enemy of an elder, ignoring a boon or refusing to recognize another Cainite's Status. You can also lose it as a result of committing diablerie or breaking any of the Traditions. Obviously, if you plan to commit such acts, it's best to ensure that no one is around to report your actions.

USING STATUS

Players usually begin with one Status Trait, representing the fact that they have been presented to the prince and accepted by the Cainites of the city.

There are two types of Status, permanent and temporary. Permanent Status is recorded on your character sheet. It is your actual standing in Cainite society — no matter how much temporary Status is lost, it has no effect on permanent Status. You can lose both temporary and permanent Status over the course of a story, although you'll probably lose temporary Status more often. A permanent Status loss or gain is permanently added or removed from your character sheet. Temporary Status losses or gains are added or removed for the duration of the story. Temporary Status Traits may be represented by Status cards to keep track of them more easily.

You can use Status Traits in any applicable Social Challenge, and can add them to your Social Traits during a Social Challenge (if Traits must be compared). You can choose to ignore another character's Status Traits, but by doing so, you risk losing one or more of your own Status Traits permanently if word of the offense spreads. If you happen to offend less influential people, you may only lose Status temporarily or not at all.

It would seem that Autarkis have an advantage in this case, seeing as they have no Status to lose. (Some anarchy groups, however, have their own form of Status.) However, having no Status usually hurts more than it helps. Elders almost never grant favors to anarchs (they are untrustworthy and have no Status to back their deals), rarely give them the benefit of the doubt, and are much more likely to vent their full wrath on them (it is much easier to pick on those who have no political backing).

Although paying "lip service" to your elders has its price, the benefits are almost always worthwhile — receiving protection, gaining the benefit of the doubt and getting favors granted. Therefore, as a general rule, it is considered prudent to possess and preserve at least one Status Trait.

EXAMPLES OF STATUS

The following are some examples of the uses of Status:

- Temporary Status may be used to add to your Social Traits during an applicable Social Challenge.
- Status is a measure of a character's credibility. In any situation where there is an open debate between Cainites (one Cainite's word against the other), Status is used as the determining factor. The same is true in the case of accusing another of a crime in which there is no concrete evidence. In all such cases, the character with the most Status is the one whose word is accepted.
- You may give Temporary Status to another to show your favor, though the individual to whom you give the Status must return it immediately upon the asking. However, the bearer may spend this Trait as a temporary Trait, after which it is gone for the duration of the story. (This is the only way a character's temporary Status can rise above her permanent Status rating.) You can use loaned Status exactly as you would use your own, but you can only give one Trait of Status to any one person in this fashion.
- You must possess at least one Trait of Status (your own or one borrowed from someone else) in order to petition the prince for any reason, such as when gaining feeding grounds or accusing someone of a crime.
- Anyone of higher Status may remove permanent Status from those lower than themselves at a cost of one permanent Status Trait per Trait removed. Temporary Status may be removed in the same fashion.
- You may grant permanent Status to another of your own clan if he has less than half of your permanent Status. The cost for such a boon is one temporary Status Trait, and the boon must be made publicly.
- A clan may remove one Status Trait from its elder by expending a group total of permanent Status Traits equal to the elder's permanent Status.

• Remember, you may only gain one Status Trait per story, but may lose more than one Trait. Again, there are two exceptions to this— Status granted or sanctioned by the prince, and Status received for assuming a station.

PRESTATION

Prestation is the art of cutting a deal, an invaluable resource for those who know how to use it. Consequently, those ignorant of its applications should beware. Technically, Prestation is defined as the system through which one Cainite becomes officially indebted to another for services rendered. In actuality, it is something much more complicated — and deadly.

When striking a deal, players should make clear who's doing the favor and who's receiving it. Except in cases of mutual favors, there should always be a bestower and a receiver. The receiver owes a boon to her bestower, which must be categorized as a trivial, minor, major, blood or life boon. The players either assign the boon an appropriate number of Status Traits, which the receiver then gives the bestower, or they make other arrangements, such as giving Influence rather than Status. The agreement must be amenable to all Cainites involved in the deal.

The bestower may continue to use the Boon Traits just as he would any other loaned Status Traits. However, the bestower's loss of Boon Traits is only temporary — they are restored at the beginning of the next story, at which time he may use them again as usual. The primary difference between Boon Traits and other loaned Traits is that the original owner of the Traits may not request their return as is usual with such Traits. They may only be returned once the boon has been settled.

The only way for a receiver to rid herself permanently of a boon is to repay or ignore the favor. By ignoring a favor, the receiver not only certainly loses Status, but also risks the bestower's ire. If the bestower is a minor Cainite, the receiver who ignores a boon may only temporarily lose a Status Trait (the Status Trait returns with the next story). However, if the bestower has considerable social influence, word may spread of the receiver's offense, causing the permanent loss of a Status Trait, especially if word gets out. Furthermore, when the receiver disregards a major, blood or life boon (regardless of the bestower's standing), the receiver loses Status. Breaking boons is considered a major social *faux pas* among vampires.

When a deal is cut (a favor is arranged), both parties should agree on the nature of the favor, the number of Traits assigned to it and any other stipulations or additions. Cainite who bestow boons usually require only one thing: "You may not take any physical action against me for the duration of this boon." In terms of the story, the receiver may seek to eliminate the bestower rather than repay the favor, but the bestower can use the legal terms of their agreement as protection from harm. It is usually a good idea to clarify agreements in writing and to have both parties sign the document to assure its validity.

PAYING THE PIPER

Paying back a favor — getting yourself out of debt — is usually an event arranged through roleplaying. Typically, players eliminate boons by returning equivalent favors. However, if a bestower is in sufficient trouble, you could pay off your debt by returning only a small favor; everything depends on your skill at bartering. To set some

standard, a favor is as valuable as the Traits associated with it. Thus, a minor boon (two Traits) and a major boon (three Traits) are fair compensation for a life boon (five Traits).

Trivial boons are one-time favors, such as protecting someone for the evening, aiding someone using a Discipline or supporting another's political move.

Minor boons can last more than one evening and usually entail some sort of inconvenience, such as allowing safe passage through a hostile city, revealing crucial information or disposing of a threat.

Major boons usually entail a great expenditure of time or resources on the bestower's part. The effects of the favor usually last for many game sessions. An example of such a boon would be teaching the receiver a new Discipline or ritual, or purchasing a tavern or inn to serve as the receiver's haven.

Blood boons occur when the bestower places herself in a potentially life-threatening situation in order to help the receiver. Thus the name "blood boon": the bestower is willing to shed her blood for the receiver.

Life boons involve the bestower actively risking her immortal life for the receiver so that the receiver may live.

FAIR ESCAPE

Fair Escape is a simple rule that allows players to escape from potentially deadly situations without actually vaulting over tables or charging headlong out of a room, possibly causing harm to themselves or others. This rule also allows players to avoid combat without going through cumbersome challenges to see if they can "get away."

When you use this rule, you can call "Fair Escape" any time you see another player approaching with whom you do not wish to interact. Once you call "Fair Escape," you may leave the area without being pursued. There are several guidelines which must be followed when using this rule, however:

- You may not use the Fair Escape rule if the person approaching is nearby (within conversational distance). In such cases, you must initiate a challenge. Use common sense in places where there is a great deal of noise and conversational distance is reduced to a minimum (e.g., a city market).
- If someone calls, "Fair Escape," you may counter by calling, "Celerity" if you possess the appropriate Discipline. The person attempting to flee may then counter with *Celerity*. At this point, the players must determine who has the greatest amount of *Celerity*.
- Situations which involve an ambush (all exits are blocked, or the target is surrounded) may negate the use of Fair Escape. Again, use common sense.
- A character with *Obfuscate* (*Unseen Presence*) may employ Fair Escape at any time before a challenge has been initiated, unless someone with *Auspex* (*Heightened Senses*) counters him.

These guidelines are intended to quicken play, not to obstruct it. Always try to use common sense when employing Fair Escape.

TRUE FAITH

The best defense the mortal world has against the Cainite influence is not fire or steel, but rather faith. True Faith is a special power driven by the belief in a being or consciousness higher than one's own. People from many religions (not just Christians) may possess True Faith. It is something that must be constantly fed by habit and practiced every day. True Faith is possessed by few, and most mortals (and Cainites) who have it aren't very conscious of it because they focus on the good of others instead of the good in themselves. True Faith is selfless, hopeful, dedicated and above all, rare. Still, in a time when the Church is both a spiritual and temporal power, there are enough true believers and holy men and women in the world to make True Faith a palpable threat to Cainites everywhere.

True Faith gives the wielder the power to turn back evil. It is based on a strong belief in a specific deity whom you may call on to strengthen your will. When using True Faith, the phrase, "In the name of ___," must be used. It is not the *character* who is turning evil away, it is the *force of the belief*.

People who possess True Faith do not have to be saccharine in demeanor; they must simply practice their ethics. Most involve kindness, fairness, helpfulness and a strong sense of right and wrong.

Advancement in one's True Faith rating is earned, not purchased, and Faith's effects (other than that stated below) are largely the Storyteller's option.

FAITH AND WILL

For every hour of meditation and prayer the character is willing to sit alone communicating with no one, she may either add to her Willpower one additional temporary Trait which lasts 12 hours, or she may regain one Willpower Trait previously lost. The number of Willpower Traits obtainable is limited to the Faith Rating (a number between one and five), determined by the player and Storyteller together. A Faith of five would indicate a saint. An average mortal is lucky to possess one point in Faith; the considerably-above-average mortal is extraordinary to possess three.

A mortal possessing three points in Faith would be required to spend three hours in meditation, prayer etc. in order to reacquire three Willpower Traits every 24 hours. A mortal possessing one point in Faith would only be able to concentrate for one hour because of the limit to his practice and dedication, so he could acquire or restore only one Willpower Trait in any given 24-hour period.

In the case of a long game (one lasting over consecutive nights or a regular chronicle game), these meditation hours may take place during the day or when the game is not in session, as long as the 24-hour time limit is observed. If a short four to six-hour game is being played, the Storyteller may feel free to shorten the meditation periods required, as long as she keeps in mind that Willpower Traits are not easily regained and should not be tossed around carelessly or used the way a vampire uses blood.

CAINITES WITH FAITH

It is technically possible for a vampire to possess True Faith, but this condition is extremely rare. Faith cannot be purchased with experience, and should only be handed out to Cainite characters at Storyteller discretion. Members of the Lasombra, Toreador and Nosferatu are the most likely to have True Faith, but the power comes with a price. A Cainite with True Faith is often shunned or even actively hunted by his fellows, as his mere presence can be agonizing to them.

USING AND LOSING TRUE FAITH

In order to use True Faith, a character must speak the phrase "In the name of ___" and engage in a Social Challenge. If the character wins, the vampire (or other creature) must flee the scene. If the character loses, the vampire must back off a few feet and cower before taking action. The vampire may not take any action for one full round (including using Traits in any bids or invoking any Disciplines) immediately following the challenge. This delay may allow the wielder of True Faith to initiate another challenge or call Fair Escape. Any vampires who use *Celerity* may eventually catch up. True Faith has an automatic negative effect on vampires, and the challenge is engaged simply to determine if the vampire flees the scene in terror or if he is only repelled a short distance.

If a mortal loses a challenge and the vampire does not flee the scene as anticipated, the mortal (if she survives) is left with a question of Faith. She is down one Social Trait for the remainder of the evening (beyond the one she lost in the challenge), and loses the ability to invoke her True Faith again until she has engaged in one half-hour of meditation. Storytellers of short games may wish to abbreviate this time. As stated previously, an additional half-hour allows her to engage extra Willpower Trait(s) or replace a previously lost Willpower Trait. The character must find a location appropriate to the nature of her faith in which to meditate. A Druid priestess must go to the woods, a Christian must go to a church, a rabbi must go to a synagogue. The important thing is for the character to go to a place that will make her feel unquestionably surrounded and engulfed by safety and the presence of her deity.

True Faith automatically repels any demon worshippers or infernalists. If an antagonist is such, under no circumstances may she do anything other than relent and flee the scene. Those possessing True Faith will not be able to distinguish infernalists from other nasties who flee their Faith unless, of course, other proof is given within the story.

CONFRONTATIONS

When more than two or three Cainites are confronted with a wielder of True Faith at the same time, all should engage in a simultaneous Static Social Challenge with the wielder. Those who lose flee the scene regardless of Willpower Traits. Those who win must recoil approximately 10 feet from their current position (this takes one full round) before attempting any action.

If players resist this overbidless system, or if the Storyteller wishes, after the initial challenge has been won and lost, each Cainite on the losing side may, in turn, call out the number of Willpower Traits they wish to bid to attempt an overbid. The challenged wielder should then respond in kind. This should be conducted as a group affair with all the Cainites (or challengers) going first and the defender going last. There should be no individual challenges at this point. Those who successfully double the Willpower of the character with True Faith may then proceed through one additional test. If any vampires win, they may retain their current positions. Losers must flee the scene entirely. All Willpower Traits bid in this challenge will be lost until the Storyteller restores them or a Willpower-regaining ritual or Discipline is used.

Those who are able to remain in the presence of the mortal may use Disciplines or ranged weapons against him if they so desire. Those who flee may not remain within range for such.

HOLY SYMBOLS

A holy symbol is an object used to represent the influence of the deity invoked by those with True Faith. Any character who possesses True Faith may choose to wield a holy symbol as a weapon against creatures of the night. This may stir up thoughts of the classic, fearless vampire-slayer turning back the powers of evil with a cross. In the World of Darkness however, many symbols of faith will serve a similar function.

The wielding of a holy symbol involves the character speaking the phrase "In the name of _____," and brandishing the object of their focus. The object possesses its own Physical Traits (see below) and does not affect the Social Challenge between players in any way except by adding the Social Trait: *Intimidating* to the Trait Pool of the wielder for the length of the challenge. If used in physical combat to touch the target creature, a holy symbol will do one level of aggravated damage on contact, per round, as long as the verbal invocation above is made and the Physical Challenge won.

The character using a holy symbol as a weapon must engage in a Physical Challenge with the target character. Holy symbols lose their Traits as would any other weapon, and only blessing them will restore their usefulness. Holy symbols that have been blessed in-game by a priest of whatever faith will generate one extra temporary Trait. Blessings may only occur once per night. Each blessing requires the expenditure of one Humanity Trait by the blesser. Note: Objects that are used in combat as holy symbols must be specific items, not just two fingers placed together in the shape of a cross or the equivalent makeshift.

The adjectives or Physical Traits possessed by all holy symbols are *Burning* and *Searing*. Alternate Traits, or Traits for use after blessings, are *Blinding*, *Branding*, *Purging*, *Cleansing* and *Purifying*.

BLESSED WEAPONS

It is possible for those characters who have connections within the Church (of any religion) to acquire blessed weapons. Commonly, these are daggers, knives, stakes or crossbow bolts. Blessed weapons all possess one extra Trait from the list above for holy symbols. This Holy Trait may be used only once. The character bidding the Holy

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Trait may inflict one level of aggravated damage with his blessed weapon for each challenge he wins. If the character uses the blessed weapon but does not bid the Holy Trait, only regular damage is inflicted.

Blessed weapons do not have to be wielded by those with True Faith in order to work. As a rule, they are extremely rare and very hard to come by. Those characters operating within the Inquisition will most likely carry at least one blessed weapon. Finding a priest with a Faith rating high enough (5) to pass his blessing on to an object for an extended period of time is no easy task. Any weapon can be blessed multiple times throughout the history of its use, although this additional blessing will not add up cumulatively. If a weapon is blessed 13 times and remains unused, it will only retain the original Holy Trait. The weapon cannot accumulate Holy Traits at all. One must be spent for another to slide into its place. Weapons may be blessed either prior to the start of the game or during the game. An individual weapon may only be blessed once per 24-hour period, and the blessing must come from a priest with a Faith rating of five.

RELICS

Relics are pieces of saints' bodies or belongings that have somehow been preserved over the centuries and are imbued with holy energy. Relics that are not frauds are extremely rare. They can be as large as an altar or as small as a splinter of bone. Any container that houses a relic is known as a reliquary. Most relics are too fragile to be moved, and therefore are rendered useless to most hunters. Relics may, however, possess as many Holy Traits as the Storyteller wishes to suit the story. A sliver from the True Cross would probably wield a maximum of 10 Traits, while St. Aloysius Gonzaga's alms bowl might only possess one or two. A vampire touched by a relic would suffer one level of aggravated damage for each Trait contained within the relic. Traits possessed by relics are permanent, and will not wear off or become used up.



HOLY GROUND

If the Storyteller wishes, she may establish holy ground somewhere in the geography of the setting. The amount of attention currently paid to the place is important in determining its value as a holy site. A seemingly less mysterious location that is constantly used by people of genuine piety has a higher Faith value than will a place in ruins and entirely unused, but more impressive due to size, architecture or history.

Being present on holy ground will allow the character who already has True Faith to boost her Trait Pool up by however many Traits the holy site is worth. A cathedral attended by hypocrites may have no Faith at all, while a hill by a deep pond where a dedicated congregation has met twice a week for the last 30 years may have a Faith of two or three. The Vatican, because it is a site of countless pilgrimages, could potentially possess a Faith of five or six, depending on the current administration. Holy ground is not limited to Christian sites; such places might also include sacred groves, synagogues, mosques or sites of pilgrimages (such as Canterbury or Jerusalem).

Holy ground is not something that should be common or created as an emergency escape. It should be established at the beginning of the game for those who would know of its existence and left anonymous for those who would not. Cainites may travel freely on holy ground if they are invited and must otherwise spend a Mental Trait to tread over the boundaries. A vampire who has been successfully warded off holy ground by someone wielding True Faith may not set foot on that ground again without burning a Willpower Trait for every 50 feet she wishes to travel.







This chapter is for Storytellers and, to a lesser extent, Narrators. Storytelling *The Long Night* is very different from Storytelling *Vampire: The Dark Ages*, or even any other *Mind's Eye Theatre* game. *The Long Night* involves running a game displaced in time and probably space. The details of running any game, as well as bringing in the trappings that aid in re-creating a Dark Medieval setting, need to be taken care of. Both the vampiric and the mortal society need to be developed, and costuming and setting the scene can take creativity and time. Running a live role-playing game, especially this one, is not for the lazy. With proper preparation, however, *The Long Night* re-creates of an exciting environment, allowing you to tell epic stories of high dark fantasy, medieval conflict, courtly intrigue and countless other topics. In the end, your effort can create something thrilling.

CHRONICLES

If characters are the lifeblood of *Mind's Eye Theatre*, then the chronicle is the body those characters sustain. Although *The Long Night* can be used and enjoyed as a series of loosely connected stories, such games often lack a sense of continuity and offer little opportunity for character development. Furthermore, most characters develop around long-term goals (of power, prestige, status, revenge, knowledge — to name a few); one story is rarely enough to resolve anything satisfactorily. In a chronicle — an ongoing series of stories — not only do characters reside in a familiar environment, but one that evolves as they interact with it. Developing and maintaining a chronicle is a satisfying task, but it requires continuous effort and dedication on the behalf of you and your Narrators.

SETTING THE STAGE

The first element to consider in chronicle construction is the atmosphere you desire. The two aspects of atmosphere are mood and theme. Each is a fundamental ingredient in the alchemy of a chronicle. Although mood and theme have already been discussed in terms of story, and some ideas previously presented apply here, mood and theme for a chronicle involves other aspects.



MOOD

Mood is the underlying emotional sentiment of a chronicle. It sustains and flows through everything you do, unobtrusive yet omnipresent. While the mood of a chronicle is intangible, your choice of mood can be one of the most important ones you make with regards to plot, character and theme. After all, if you're going for a mood of terror, a hack'n'slash plot (and characters to match) won't make much sense.

THEME

Themes are central ideas of a chronicle, ones that help define the shape of the action. They can be as visceral as the struggle for freedom, or as intellectual as the age-old questions of good and evil. Themes can emerge as seemingly inconsequential encounters or as the major focus. Avoid overemphasizing theme, however. Overemphasis makes related events expected and predictable rather than haunting and prophetic.

SETTING

The setting is the stage upon which the drama of a chronicle is played. Setting is composed of environment and locale. Environment describes the overall scheme of the world. The environment of *The Long Night* involves the many levels of vampiric existence: conflicts between and within clans and sects, the battles between elders, the struggles of the young to avoid becoming pawns, the hunt for mortal vitae, Baali, princes, forbidden knowledge, ancient vendettas and much more. A myriad of potential alternatives is available. It's your reality — do with it what you will.

Locale, or the physical place where you choose to set your chronicle, is the next step toward chronicle creation. Obviously, your setting must be a location in the medieval world, and it is often easiest to use a city you have some knowledge of, if possible. Alternatively, choose a medieval location you are especially interested in, one you would like to learn more about. Cities, towns, monastic communities and isolated castles are four possible locations, but there are many more. Go to bookstores and libraries for the historical information, and use your imagination. For many real medieval cities, you can find actual maps and descriptions. If you choose to develop your own location, rely on books to guide you to the sorts of things that should be found there. This all takes a great deal of imagination, but the more detail spent in developing a locale, the richer the chronicle will be.

CREATING THE CITY

Most chronicles are focused around a city or a town, even if the characters might travel widely from it as time goes on. This place is the locus of your chronicle. You need to present your city in a realistic and consistent manner so that players believe in it. The setting must live and breathe for players, and until it does, characters cannot come to be. The city is where your stories take place — the more interesting and exotic it seems, the more your stories come to life. With each story you run, define the city a little more, but don't give away everything at once. As the chronicle progresses, add details of geography, custom and plot. Build the city bit by bit at whatever pace you choose.

The mortal half of the city is fairly easy to establish. Let the medieval half of "Dark Medieval" shine through, pulling from film and book to create a medieval "feel" to the mortal world. Learn the history of a place first, and learn what types of mortals would have been there. However, the city isn't quite the one that actually existed historically — it's fictional. Feel free to change a few details here and there to suit the mood of your game.

Only after you have finished with the mortal aspects should you want to consider the Cainite half of the equation. The history of your city should help, determining what types of vampires would live there, and of what clans, sects, and ages. Still, you need to decide where the prince's hall is, what sites of mystic power might be nearby, and especially which clans live there. Last but not least, you should make sure the design of the city meshes well with the motif of your overall chronicle. If the chronicle is going to be about corruption, the city ought to be corrupt as well, both in its mortal and Cainite aspects.

CASTING THE PARTS

Once you know what is in your city, it's time to think about who. Both mortals and vampires should be your concern here; neither side is terribly effective without the other. It's generally best to start at the top — who rules? Who is the local prince? Who advises? What mortal lord is in charge (at least nominally) here? Who does that lord serve? Who commands the soldiers, who are the rich merchants, and who are the vampires who would like to control all these men? Who leads the local Church? Which vampires lead which sects in the area? Methuselaha and similarly ancient vampires should be used sparingly, if at all; they're simply too powerful. You should think about whether Assamites, Baali or other enemies of the local vampires have infiltrated the undead society. On the mortal side, consider which mortals are most likely to fight against the Cainites. If there is another supernatural presence in your city, you will want to detail that as well. The local werewolf, wraith, faerie and mage populations, and their relations to the vampires, are all important things to have mapped out in advance.

INTRIGUE

Intrigue is a vital ingredient of your chronicle. For people to play out intrigue, they need to be drawn into it — there has to be a tangible reward for all the scheming. Power is often an effective lure, but if power is a reward, it needs to be immediate and real. It needs to be visible and obtainable. Most importantly, it needs to be given out only occasionally to inspire characters to pursue it, but not so often that opportunities are passed on or that the power level of the game rises to unmanageable levels.

AMBITION

Many characters eventually want to assume positions of power in the city. In some games, this is just another aspect of the self-generating plots players contrive on their own. In other games, you may plan the characters' search for power from the beginning. In either case, you need to learn what long-term goals your players want to accomplish in the chronicle. You can then tailor an occasional session to these goals, but don't give the players everything they want. Some may covet powerful positions from the prince, or to advance the agendas of outsider sects they belong to. Others may seek Golconda

or knowledge of the origins of vampires. Both goals are power in one form or another, both over others and over one's self. More than a few players don't know or admit what they want in the long-term, or may not desire power. Don't worry, they'll set their sights on something in time, especially if guided by the *Viae* they follow or other players. Practice stringing players along. Keep a carrot dangling before them. After all, you've got the whole world to play with as a Storyteller; you can certainly offer something to keep them coming back for more.

THE PRICE OF POWER

In most chronicles, it's likely that one or more characters are in a position of power. If this is the case, the players need to know exactly what their responsibilities and advantages are. In general, any players in the role of prince, sect leader, faction head or, rarely, *Inconnu* should be experienced enough to assist you as a Narrator. As powerful characters can have tremendous impact on lesser characters and the story as a whole, players should know what the ramifications of their actions are and must take them into consideration. Only experience in play develops this insight, but it is vital that players with characters in positions of power understand both their responsibilities and limits. Powerful characters, if abused, can serve to discourage players with weaker characters. This drives off new players, and eventually the power-gamers may find themselves with no one to lord it over except one another.

CHRONICLE DYNAMICS

The key to a successful chronicle is a constant and uninterrupted flow of action. In the real world, events never stop occurring, and everyone, in one way or another, gets dragged into life's chaos. Your chronicle should have the same ebb and flow to it. All characters should be drawn into the events around them. Every character should be doing something. Those in conflict may hide their time and pause to marshal their forces, but the tension never recedes. After all, if you give your players too much time to rest, relax and think, they may think about the fact that they're just playing a game. Too much time for reflection can shatter the most carefully crafted illusionary worlds.

TROUBLE IN ALL SHAPES AND SIZES

There are dozens of things in a story that can go wrong. This is particularly true of a chronicle. With the added level of complexity that comes with a chronicle, problems with continuity, advancement, numerous players, constant change and background plots are inevitable. A few of the more common chronicle problems, and how to deal with them, are detailed below:

- **Problem Players** — This problem is probably one of the most delicate and potentially disastrous you can face. For one reason or another, one or more players are disrupting the story and ruining everyone's good time. This can be the result of many things: cheating, excessive rule quotation ("rules lawyering"), personal vendettas or improper behavior. Once you detect a problem, your first action should be to approach the players privately, explain what they are doing and why you don't like it. At that point, most people attempt to change their ways, and that's that. Unfortunately, some are prone to backsliding or just don't take the problem seriously, disregarding your warning. The next step to consider is some sort of penalty. Temporary suspension from

the chronicle is usually effective. If players continue to make trouble, you may have to perform the distasteful task of barring them entirely from your chronicle. Do not be afraid to destroy characters that unbalance your game. If the character's player is worthwhile, he'll understand the need for the sake of all of the other players.

- **Favoritism** — There is often a tendency to give friends special treatment. Be vigilant in watching for this habit in all those who run and play the game, including yourself. If the problem does arise, try to remember that *Mind's Eye Theatre* is just a form of entertainment; no one can reasonably hold you responsible for a character's loss. If the problem continues, try to isolate problem individuals from encounters where favoritism might occur. As a final option, remove the offender from any position in which she can dispense favors.

- **Grudge** — In this situation, an individual is treated unfairly for some reason that is not related to her character's nature or actions. Such is often the case with players who are not fond of each other in the real world. Handle it in a manner similar to favoritism problems.

- **Stagnation** — Even the most imaginative Storyteller occasionally runs out of ideas. Perhaps you're running the game too often to give yourself time to create new and original stories. If this is the case, consider spacing sessions further apart to provide yourself more planning time. Another solution is to take on more Storytellers or Narrators to give the chronicle a greater creative base to draw on. A plot coordination council of some sort is almost essential to running large-scale chronicles.

- **Logistics** — Problems with supplies and locations are bound to arise. If this is the case, be sure to communicate with everybody involved in the game. Players are often able to help procure a setting, props, incidental supplies and all manner of other vital materials.

- **Getting the News Out** — Sometimes you just don't have enough people to play the type of chronicle you've planned. This is more often a case of poor advertising than genuine lack of bodies. Consider posting notices on electronic bulletin boards or on your local university network, in game and hobby stores, at conventions, at gaming organizations, with theatre or drama groups, on college campuses and anywhere else you think imaginative people with a taste for the original might be found.

- **Staying Focused** — At times your story may drift away from its original plot, or players may become lost. They may become too wrapped up in their own subplots, or may be unable to unravel a puzzle that's vital to moving the plot along. When this happens, you need something to bring the story back on course. Having a few extra props available can be helpful when the story goes off on a tangent. Many of the prop ideas already suggested can be used to reorient players. For example, an intercepted letter with the duke's seal on it containing an important message (that just happens to be a vital plot point) can renew characters' interest in their original goal.

MAINTENANCE AND RECORD KEEPING

It's a simple fact that the longer a chronicle runs, the more complex it becomes. The increased size of some chronicles only amplifies this fact. Developing a method for and the habit of keeping records is essential. The easiest part of the chronicle to keep records on is characters' statistics. Make a master copy of each character. Someone is bound to lose his character card and need a replacement. Without a good

memory or a master copy, this can pose a problem, especially with advanced characters. Storyteller records of characters also discourage unscrupulous players from altering their characters in the field. Furthermore, you can make use of character information when designing new stories. It's also a good idea to update your master copies after each story, given changes arising from experience, rewards and penalties.

A journal of events from each session proves equally invaluable, helping you understand changes the chronicle undergoes. You can then apply these changes to new stories. Ideally, you, the Narrators and players should all file some sort of informal report after each story. Records from everyone can keep you apprised of all events and let you in on players' individual intentions. To encourage players to provide this information accurately, consider making reports mandatory or award experience only after you receive them. Make it clear that these reports are confidential and will not be used to "screw players over."

ADVANCEMENT AND BALANCE

The greatest reward for some players is the sheer joy of playing. However, many players prefer to see their characters improve in status and power. Both needs must be satisfied. Players who enjoy the story for its own sake are easy to please. In fact, they often please themselves by pursuing the goals their characters desire, which are often interpreted by the players themselves.

Pleasing accomplishment-seekers is a little more difficult. Allow characters chances to improve their station in the chronicle, if it's within the scope of things. When characters reach tangible goals, their players are happy. However, to keep players happy without their characters achieving massive power, be prepared to take characters down a peg or two, or allow other characters to do so for you. Besides creating revenge motives, such attacks fire players' desire to achieve more.

Experience Traits, which players spend to improve their characters, are one form of reward, but there are others that are just as satisfying. Gaining the favor and support of other vampires can be more rewarding than any Discipline. Furthermore, there are numerous positions of power that experience can't buy, but ambition and tenacity can.

Even in well-planned chronicles, players may reach a point where they are bored and discontented with their place in the story. A player in this position actually has a couple of options. Starting a new character (and only playing the old one from time to time) helps players see if they still have what it takes to see a character survive. As a Storyteller, make sure the player doesn't use this option to accumulate power for both his characters. Bringing in an old character's "relative" and allowing interaction between the siblings can mean trouble as they "work together." The easiest way to discourage this is to deny any direct ties between old and new characters.

Another option to is to take the "advanced" character as a Narrator or Storyteller character. The character's experience with your chronicle and game as a whole can be used as a resource by lesser characters (i.e., other characters seek help from the experienced character), and the older character can be the basis for future stories.

SETTING

Storytelling is more than simply voice and action. The effects that create your playing environment also make your story come to life. When you're running a story,

you don't want your players to imagine they're playing in a world where the undead hunt the night. You want them to feel they're actually there. Setting the stage for a convincing Dark Medieval world is a challenge, unless you happen to have a real castle nearby to use. With creativity, however, creating this sort of setting becomes surprisingly easy. It requires some effort and imagination, but with a minimum of difficulty, you can have taverns, castles, tourney fields and cathedrals looming in no time. To help you get started, we've provided some hints and ideas. Ultimately, though, creating an environment is limited only by your imagination. Take the advice we provide and run with it.

SETTING AND ENVIRONMENT

More than any other element, the setting of a story has impact on that story's feel. Your setting should therefore be taken into careful consideration when deciding on your story's mood (which is discussed later). The fictional location you choose must fit the needs of your game as well as the atmosphere you have in mind.

FINDING LOCATIONS

The first practical step in planning a game is finding a good place to play. Where you play the game is influenced by the specific needs of your story. Factors like the number of players involved, theme, mood and nature of the plot all have an influence on the type of location you should choose. The scale of the game is your first consideration. Make certain you have enough room for all the players to move about. Multiple rooms or areas are helpful. The best layout usually involves a central meeting room that all the players can congregate in and multiple smaller sites for secret meetings. Choose a site that will work well logistically, and then worry about decorations later. Possibilities include college campuses, dorm lounges, museums, night clubs, coffee houses, conventions, parks, office buildings and warehouses.

Obviously, extreme care must be taken when using these sites. You must ensure that all of the players are courteous and unobtrusive when playing in a public place. No one not involved in your game should ever be disturbed in any way by a game, and players need to understand that the session is over if anyone finds out about the game and is disturbed by what you're doing. If your players arrive in costume, sometimes you will draw attention, so always be polite and careful when "mundanes" come up and ask what's going on. Under no circumstances should you try to "feed" on innocent bystanders — feel free to explain at length what you're doing, but don't make them a part of the game unless they specifically ask to play.

Some sites are more conducive to certain types of stories than others. You may find a particular location is your favorite, but even then, you should keep your mind open to change. A change of locale, even if for only one scene, can help revive a dying chronicle. Most locations (or "sets") can be decorated to convey a specific mood. You must seek out sites that cater to the style of your game and nature of its plot. For best results, the setting should have a basis in reality. In other words, if it's a high-energy social atmosphere you seek, stage your story in a tavern (and find a place with heavy wooden furniture, a fireplace and other trappings that lend themselves easily to the period). If you're looking for a calm and intellectual setting, perhaps a monastery library (and thus a real one) would be best. For politics and power plays, try a noble's hall. When choosing a location, look for an area that establishes the mood and atmosphere you're after.

CHANGING SCENES

Sometimes it's necessary to use one area for different settings within the same story. Actual set changes should be performed quickly and efficiently. Lengthy set changes leave players bored. When your scene is changed, give it a last once-over, making sure everything is in place. A scene change should be just that. When the players enter the room again, they should have the distinct feeling that they're entering a new place. Your new decorations don't even need to be overly complicated. A quick shift of the couch or table, switching or removing a throw rug, draping a love seat, and moving or removing chairs all help to change the feel of a room without necessitating major alterations. Changing the lighting and music can also make a big difference in a set's feel.

AMBIANCE AND MOOD

The *Long Night* offers you a chance to create a world from another time, and challenges your creativity to do so. Establishing the right feel for a scene is governed by setting and environment. However, ambiance and mood are established and maintained by effects that are imposed upon the environment. Room decorations, recorded music and careful lighting are often the final touches for creating a scene.

- **Decorations** — Most modern rooms look, well, modern. Some people are lucky, and can find a room they can use built with nice wooden walls and tapestries, but most people will be using a modern meeting hall. All it takes is a few simple touches to spark players' imaginations, allowing them to place themselves back into medieval times. Wall hangings, both decorated or even plain cloth, are usually the first place to start. Cover up modern features, and decorate a few banners with in-character signs and sigils. For a night at a tavern, make the tavern's painted sign. For a royal hall, design a simple banner and shield crest to go on the decorations. If you can't make a setting look 100% medieval, aim for guiding the imagination of the players in that direction, and trust their good will to do the rest.

- **Music** — Music can be an integral part of establishing the mood of a story. It lends a hand in creating drama and, when appropriate, tension. When planning your story, be certain to select music that complements your intended mood. Also make sure you have a variety of music on hand in case the mood changes. There are two types of music, in-game and out. In-game music may be either simple classical or folk music. If you want more authentic medieval music, check in the classical section of the local music store, or look for music dealers at medieval faires and Celtic festivals. Recordings by the Anonymous Four, the soundtrack from the "Cadfael" TV series or the "From the Vault" collection will do wonders to encourage players to believe they're no longer in the 20th century.

You can also use music as background out-of-game music to enhance particular scenes. For this music, use whatever creates the mood you are seeking. However, take care not to let the music get obtrusive. If your players have to shout over thundering lyrics, your game will rapidly dissolve into chaos.

You may also be lucky enough to have a player or two who's willing to perform in-game. Take advantage of this (assuming your player won't be embarrassing himself by opening his mouth or taking out his guitar), and let his performance become part of the game. It's not unreasonable to award a little experience to someone for playing

the part of troubadour or minstrel, and a live performer certainly enhances the mood better than a black plastic CD player.

- **Audio effects** — Above and beyond music, certain sounds and effects can enhance an evening. Horror and sound effect CDs, found in any music store, are a good place to start. A good FX CD can provide a variety of sound effects to simulate many different events, like screams, clashes of arms, clanging portcullises and so on. Proper timing of these sounds is critical. If you're able to pre-mix a tape of effects, you can play those sounds at appropriate moments in the story. Preparation is the key. Have your effects cued up ahead of time so that, with the mere touch of a button, hideous screams or church bells can be heard by all. Preparation makes for infinitely more drama than delaying the entire game while you search for the right sound.

- **Lighting effects** — The Dark Medieval world consists of smoky, torch- and firelit nighttime rooms. While real fire is absolutely out of the question for most sites, you can recreate the effect of smoke and flickering torchlight for your chronicle. Remember, a few well-placed shadows can hide a great many anomalies that might otherwise distract your players from the game.

When setting up your lights, follow these simple guidelines. Avoid high wattages and white light. Multicolored light bulbs have the broadest effect. By arranging multicolored light bulbs in different parts of the room, you can create shadowy areas and still have well-lit "white light" areas where the colors intersect. If you have track lighting, recessed multicolored bulbs work very well. If you can't get multicolored bulbs, cloth draped over lights works just as well (but avoid putting cloth in direct contact with hot bulbs). The key is contrast from low-wattage bulbs. Keeping enough low-wattage lights to contrast with one another results in plenty of light to see by and plenty of shadows to hide in. Play around with different combinations to determine what works best for your mood and scene. While candles may be very atmospheric, they should be used extremely sparingly. Recreating the world lit only by fire is in theory a good thing, but doing so by burning down your site generally has a detrimental effect on a chronicle. Even without candles, if you keep your wattage low, avoid direct white light, and experiment with your color schemes, and locations of lamps, you should be able to find the right combination to create the proper atmosphere for your story.

PROPS

After you've got a story, players, a place to play and even selected an appropriate soundtrack to accompany the game, something else is still needed to bring the story to life. This is the point at which props come in. Props for a story don't need to be grandiose or expensive. Most props can be found in your own home, your grandparents' attic, or simply constructed.

In *Mind's Eye Theatre*, props should be kept relatively simple and should not attract more attention than the story itself. Only a few touches are needed to help a player's imagination fill in the blanks. Since this is a storytelling game, imagination is of the utmost importance. This is not to say that you should be sparing with props. If you have the available materials, go wild. Just make sure that the props are not the focus of the story. The spotlight should always remain on the characters, not on what surrounds them.

GENERAL PROPS

General props are items that can help you further a story by giving players something that they can physically examine. The Storyteller should be wary of how often physical props are used and what impact they have on the story. If physical props are allowed to dominate a story, players may begin to rely on them rather than interacting with one another. Be sure to inform players when props will be used in a story. Otherwise, they are likely to disregard an important clue, considering it just another feature of the place you're playing in.

Many items can be used as general props to help enhance your story. Scrolls, jewelry, documents and pieces of artwork are a few examples. These props can be used to give game information, or they can merely grant insight into the character of the person possessing the prop. Sometimes an item has to be represented by an item card, as in the case of weapons. Also, a card may be discreetly attached to an item, giving more information to a player who inspects that particular prop. Creative and effective usage of general props can make a story more interesting for everyone, particularly if props are used to represent important items with plot (as well as character) significance. The important thing is to stay focused and avoid overloading yourself with gadgets and gewgaws. If you come up with an idea for a prop, but are unable to implement it, don't panic — your story can stand on its own without every last widget. After all, people, not things, make a story.

PERSONAL PROPS

Personal props, like costumes, can be used by players to help distinguish them as their characters. In a Dark Medieval game, such props are very important to help with mood. This form of assistance can be particularly useful for Narrators, especially when they must often change from character to character. Cloaks, tunics, scarves, hats, staves and jewelry are only a few of the accessories that can give a character a distinctive look. You may want to provide certain items to players to aid them in this manner, especially if players are uncertain of the identities of the characters they are playing. For example, providing matching tunics or tabards for the city guard or a particular band of Furores will help to identify players as members of that group.

Many people feel intimidated about making "medieval" clothing, but, again, providing the right feel is fairly easy. Sweatpants or an ankle-length skirt, boots of any sort, and a simple "T-tunic" is the standard garb of medieval gaming, and is easy to assemble. You can often buy "poet shirts" (shirts with puffy sleeves and lots of ruffles) instead of making your own tunic. Costume shops sell simple inexpensive cloaks, as do vintage clothing stores. More complex clothing will come with time, as skilled sewers among your gamers and Narrators become involved, but the tunic/poet shirt, sweatpants/tights/skirt, and boots combination always works just fine.

For other personal props, items such as costume jewelry work best; real jewels can be far too valuable to lend out for a game. Should all else fail, second-hand stores can be great places to pick up a few last-minute props at an affordable price. All manner of clothing, including hats, canes and costume jewelry, can be acquired at such emporiums. In many stories, not much is needed by way of personal props. Sometimes, only a cane or piece of jewelry can make a character. The most important thing to remember is to have fun with props, avoiding dangerous ones.

NO-NOS

Weapons should never be used as props. In addition, props must be understood to be someone's property, not some character's property. If your players start taking home the props that belong to their characters, perhaps it's time to reconsider using props at all. If you choose to go this route, cards (like those used to represent weapons) are the best way to go.

CREATING STORIES

Story creation can be as simple or as detailed as you want. The more effort you put into preparing a story, the smoother it runs when it's executed. There is no small amount of satisfaction to be gained from writing a successful and well-appreciated story — but that's easier said than done. Finding the right combination of stimuli to ignite creative thought can be difficult. For some of us, creativity comes naturally. For others, it's more difficult to bring creative aspects of one's personality to the fore. However, this is exactly what you must do in order to create a good story.

Inspiration can come from any source. Magazines, movies, books, theatre, television, friends, family... you get the picture. The challenge is to take what you see and change it into something all your own. Inspiration can be, quite literally, any stimulus that ignites the process of creative thought. Hence, inspiration is very often as dependent on what's without as on what's within. What sends one person's mind racing may bore someone else. You must find the things that inspire you (if you don't already know), and associate with them in order to ignite your creative fires.

COMBAT

When people think of medieval movies, they often think of glorious battle scenes and exciting tournaments. These can be a part of your chronicle, but you must never allow players to try to act out medieval combat. Follow the combat rules for *Mind's Eye Theatre* strictly, never touch, and always think about safety. That said, there are ways to make medieval combat fun without the actual swinging of a sword. After all, half of combat is planning, positioning and scouting.

As a Storyteller, try to develop certain combat scenes ahead of time. Sculpt the setting as well as you would any other scene, and let the players work with it, organizing their forces, developing tactics and strategies. If the players blindly rush into things, then you and your Narrators (and perhaps other players) can take advantage of this, and recreate some of the disorientation of a surprise attack by positioning yourselves to come out of hiding from many directions without comprising safety. Small combats (one-on-one or two-on-two) are relatively easy, but make sure that any large-scale conflict has several Narrators around to guide it and keep it flowing quickly.

PLOT

A story's plot is its progression of events. Plot not only involves the machinations of the powers that be, but the machinations of the characters as they pursue their own goals in the story. Plots are essential to the successful advancement of the story, as plot is really nothing more than a term for the series of events making up the story.

A story can have any number of plots (see "Story Style," below, for more details on this). These plots should all be wound together with skill and care before the actual game begins, however, so you at least know how things are supposed to turn out. The trick is to have all the pieces of a plot already written in the characters' briefings so they can read about their own respective parts of the overall plot at the game's beginning — and then piece things together once gameplay starts. Together, the characters' backgrounds compose the main plot, and by pursuing their own parts of the plot, characters advance the plot as a whole.

During a story, it's often helpful to keep a schedule of events. This device is basically a pre-planned sequence of events (usually initiated by outside forces) that are going to occur regardless of the characters' actions. Typically, characters played by Narrators keep the schedule on track. It is also helpful to integrate occasional Narrator characters into the story to assist the progression of the plot (or plots). These tactics should be used sparingly; otherwise players may grow dependent upon interaction with Narrators instead of with each other. However, occasional Narrator intervention can add a new level of unpredictability and excitement to a story.

ELEMENTS OF A STORY

The elements of a story are best defined by its components or stages. It is often helpful to think of plot elements in terms of tense (past, present and future). In terms of story structure, these elements are addressed in the opening, climax and resolution of your chronicle. At the beginning of the story, characters reflect on events of their past that have brought them to the story. The story's climax is where the story's plot (or plots) are exposed and dealt with by some or all of the characters. Finally, there's the resolution, where the story comes to a close and you can set up story hooks for future tales.

OPENING

The opening can be any point at which you choose to begin your story. It can be a gradual, gentle start or a shocking plunge into the world of the Cainites. The latter works best if the characters start out as living humans; the former is better for extended chronicles with older vampires. At the beginning of a story, each character should have a written synopsis of recent events that "everyone" would be aware of. This provides a basis for your plots, as well as laying down some common ground for characters to discuss. ("Did you hear about the elder who just got captured?" "Verily, I hear there will be an ordeal by combat." "Oh? Who is he going to fight?" "That I do not know. He's tough, though, and I'm certain I couldn't defeat him.") With such common knowledge, you're also helping to set the tone and theme of your game.

The synopses of common knowledge and recent personal events should be brief explanations of the situation at hand. They should be precise and intriguing. These

synopses should be the first media through which players get a feel for the story's mood. The synopsis should also hint at the story's main theme. You may even wish to foreshadow the plot, but that depends on your personal style.

CLIMAX

When the main plot is on the verge of conclusion, the story is considered at its climax. This usually happens when characters have discovered all they need to know to solve whatever problem faces them and are on the verge of resolving the story. The tension is usually at its highest point at this time. If the opening was staged carefully, and the players are cooperative and imaginative, the climax can be reached with little additional effort on the part of Narrators. However, even the best of plans can be mislaid, or perhaps the Storyteller and Narrators prefer to take a more active role in the progression of your story's plot. Either way, there are times when a Narrator's intervention is warranted.

The climax should be the high point of the story, something the players should always anticipate and work toward. However, this element should never be rushed. It's a matter of timing. Extended chronicles shouldn't have everything wrapped up in a single climax. After all, you need to have something for the vampires to do next week.

Often, a story's climax takes the form of a combat, but this doesn't always have to be the case. Decisive votes, debates, unveilings, trials by fire and so on can all bear the dramatic weight of serving as a story's climax.

RESOLUTION

The story's resolution is where all (or most) of the pieces come together. The resolution should be used as a means of winding the excitement down while cultivating an interest in future stories. Players should always end a story feeling as though they have accomplished something. They do not have to uncover the big picture; merely knowing they've found another piece of the puzzle is often enough.

In *Mind's Eye Theatre*, players often enjoy gathering for a group wrap-up session after a game. Unlike players of tabletop games, players of *The Long Night* rarely see all of the action that takes place — they get wrapped up in their own plots, not the group's. During wrap-up sessions, many players look forward to learning more about "the big picture." At the wrap-up, players share their version of the story and, in so doing, give other players an opportunity to see more of the game they just took part in. Plus, it's a great chance for everyone to tell stories about their characters — and show off their accomplishments, which can be great fun as well.

OFF-LINE GAMING

The game doesn't have to end when everyone puts down their character sheets. In-character emails, informal discussions at coffeehouses and the like can all serve both as roleplaying exercises and as ways to advance plots. As long as players keep some perspective on this sort of thing (phone calls at 3 A.M. to discuss minor plot points generally signal a need for help), off-line gaming can be a great way to shade in the gray areas of your game.

STORY CONSIDERATIONS

There are several factors that must be taken into consideration before you can begin scripting a story. The scale, number of players and general character types are all important elements that must be kept in mind. Rampaging Brujah-led barbarians and vicious demons don't fit well into Inconnu political chronicles; pacifist philosophers don't last long in hack'n'slash games. Tailor your plots to what you have to work with in terms of group, character and setting.

SCALE

Scale is the number of people you have playing. Games can range in size from handfuls to hundreds, and you need to ensure that no matter how many vampires are out there, there's something for everyone potentially to do. Oftentimes, players set their own plots in motion based on roleplaying and character interaction, but there needs to be a metaplot, a grand scheme that gives everyone a starting point. Not everyone is capable of making his own fun, and as such you need to prepare a story that, at minimum, has something for everyone.

SCOPE

The scope of your story is a very important consideration. Whether the story involves a massive plot to awaken an Antediluvian or kidnap an abusive prince is a matter of scope. Scope boils down to what's won or lost. Scope can be limited by the number of players in the game. You shouldn't always have stories with huge scope; players grow bored with always "saving the world." On the other hand, you should not keep the players from getting involved in potentially earth-shattering stories. Balance is the key. Metaplots should have bigger scopes than local plots. Obviously, the more characters involved in a plot, the higher the stakes should be. Don't forget your mortals when creating plots, either. The actions of the living have a huge effect on the Cainites, in terms of herd, influence and even emotion. On a more pragmatic note, it's no fun to sit around as a member of a herd, waiting patiently to be chomped upon. Make sure your humans have something worthwhile to do, too.

CAST

Another factor to take into consideration is the type of characters players portray. The best way to determine this is to ask them. A story usually works best if players are enacting characters they are comfortable with, although it can occasionally be interesting to cast players in roles different from what they're used to playing. This variation in casting should only be done if you think it would be enjoyable for all the players. An important consideration is whether you are giving players pre-made characters, with complete backgrounds, Attributes and Disciplines, or if players are allowed to make their own characters. Sometimes the guidelines lie somewhere in-between. Obviously, the easiest of these options is to use pre-made characters. This allows you to customize your story to the characters, tying them to one another to make for a more intriguing plot. The problem with this is that players are sometimes disappointed with the characters they get. This can detract from everyone's enjoyment.

STORY STYLE

Style is the method you use in constructing your story. It describes how the subplots tie in with the main plot and how characters interact with the environment you have chosen. Style is the thread from which your story is woven. Without style, a story has no cohesive form and might well become boring for players. You need to develop and hone your style so as to be able to craft a finely tuned story, with many layers and intricacies for players to explore.

MAIN PLOT

The main plot, or metaplot, is the root of a story, and any other lesser plots branch off from the main plot. The main plot is what brings characters together, unifying their attention. The main plot of a story should be all-encompassing, in that all characters should be affected by it in at least a minor fashion. It should illuminate every other aspect of the story. Not every character needs to be touched by your metaplot directly, but each character should be aware of the main plot at least on some peripheral level.

SUBPLOTS

In most novels and movies, subplots are just filler material. Subplots are essential to *Mind's Eye Theatre*, however. These secondary stories keep characters busy and carry them from moment to moment. They are the stories that are woven around the characters. A story gives players ample opportunities to explore subplots, and due to the unique nature of this sort of game, subplots can be taken as far as the players want to take them. Each character should be involved in as many subplots as possible.

A subplot can be any personal goal a character is trying to accomplish. Subplots should be crafted so as to intermingle with one another, so that characters become embroiled in a web of intrigue as one subplot leads them to another. The more layers of intrigue in a story, the more players enjoy untangling them. Indeed, if your setting is intricate enough, you may find players developing subplots of their own, adding to the confusion. This wild metastasis of plot should be encouraged, because it helps the story grow and gives it a life of its own. A subplot can sometimes be almost as large in scope as the main plot, the difference being that in a subplot, it is not necessary for everyone to be involved for it to come to fruition. However, you should take care that the subplot does not override the main plot; the word is prefixed with "sub-" for a reason.

CHARACTER RELATIONS

Character interaction is a part of every story and every chronicle. Intricate character interaction is essential to a story. That is not to say that all characters will get along harmoniously — character strife is usually much more interesting than One Big Happy Vampiric Family. However, making sure that characters relate to one another requires a bit of planning on your part. Making sure that players create backgrounds for their characters helps, as it gives you more material to work with to create common ground for Cainite characters to share. Spreading rumors that provide incentive for discussion, trade and cooperation is another good way to go, as is the inclusion of a nasty villain who will force characters at least to discuss working together.

MULTIPLE GOALS

Each of us possesses a multitude of goals and ambitions. Many of them conflict, and we have to choose between them. For instance, you might want to go to the movies on the same day you want to visit a friend. Multiple goals complicate matters, and while in real life that can be bothersome, in this game it only adds to the excitement. The more complicated you can make things, the better. Complications such as multiple goals give characters depth and keep players busy. A player with several goals is usually occupied throughout the course of a story and is rarely bored. Indeed, if players with multiple goals achieve even one of those goals, they probably leave the story with a sense of accomplishment.

NARRATION AND STORYTELLING

Now that you have written a story, you need to make it work in a live game. Narrating a story is an art akin to juggling; you have to keep up with all story threads, play judge and make sure that none of the players get bored — you'll have quite a few eggs in the air at all times. Storytelling requires a lot of work and planning, and usually leaves you exhausted. There is a positive side to it, however. As Storyteller, you have a ringside seat to the story, and can watch it unfold in its entirety. Because your control of the story is loose (tight control denies player freedom), you may be surprised by how the story twists and changes in the hands of your players. If you do your job well, you will be rewarded with the players' thanks and a great game as well.

Of course, with the great rewards of storytelling comes a great deal of responsibility. You have to initiate and guide the story, and present it in an entertaining manner. You, above all people involved, can most easily destroy the story. Even a very good story can be ruined if it's not presented well. If a few required player handouts are missing, or if players have no idea where the game is taking place, you have failed. It is very important that you prepare every aspect of that story as far ahead of time as possible. If you try to prepare an entire game at the last minute, you'll be stressed out by the time the game begins. The game will suffer heavily from your exhaustion.

Veteran Storytellers should take note that running a live game is very different from running old-style roleplaying games. You can no longer sit down an hour before play commences and dream up a quick plot. If you try to do this, your story will have lots of holes. If you change your setting in mid-story, you need to represent the change in some way so players realize where they are without having to ask. Prepare everything in advance, or suffer the folly of sloth. The main rule to remember when preparing your story is "show, don't tell." You have to present your story so players can make their own impressions of the environment without your impressions being forced on them. Live games work because players can take the lead based on information they discover themselves. If you have not fleshed out your story enough — if you have to tell players what's going on over and over again — you might as well be playing a tabletop roleplaying game, because everything that's special about *Mind's Eye Theatre* will be missing. Fortunately for you, players usually cooperate in every way to help you maintain the illusion, but it's up to you to direct their attention from the gamelike aspects of roleplaying.

HOW TO HOST A GAME

Running an entire chronicle can be exhausting unless you pace yourself. Expect to spend a minimum of an hour per player writing the story and setting everything up. Expect to actually play a story bi-monthly or even monthly. Trying to run a weekly game is very taxing and may result in the eventual death of your chronicle (not to mention your own nervous breakdown). Don't make your games frequent and tedious, but rare and spectacular.

STORYTELLER FOCUS

As a Storyteller, your focus should always be on keeping the game running as smoothly as possible. To ensure that the game doesn't get out of hand, make sure you have enough Narrators. They'll serve to answer players' questions and resolve the majority of inter-player disputes, as your arbitration should only be required in the most extreme circumstances. More importantly, though, your Narrators will be an integral part of game action. As the arbiters of any large-scale conflict or rituals, and guides to how the Beast might rear up at any moment within any Cainite, Narrators will be in constant interaction with players in all levels of your game. This requires a great deal of commitment from your Narrators, as they'll constantly be on the go, interacting with only a few characters at a time. On the up side, your Narrators will have a good idea of who is working with who, and can keep you informed. They also can spread information and rumors through the many NPCs they animate. Rather than having to cook up a convoluted plot to let characters know that an elder may be summoning a demon, you can have an NPC whisper it quickly into a player's ear. Of course, that NPC could be lying — which could lead to all new plots and paranoia.

At the same time, if the action slows, or people are getting frustrated, having your Narrators constantly on the floor enables you to pinpoint trouble spots quickly. Concentrate on where players stand in terms of resolving the plot or solving the mystery you have given them. If they are struggling, drop a few hints and spread a few rumors, then watch your vampires scramble to discover new information. If the players are too close to solving the mystery, throw in a red herring or create a new scene on the fly. Improvisation is a potent art, and Storytellers who learn to use it are well-rewarded. If you are playing in public, you must serve as a buffer between the authorities of the real world and the potential mayhem players can create. Discretion is the better part of valor. Educate players on responsible playing, and do not hesitate to hand out rewards or punishments as the need arises. Preparation is essential to running a successful story. The greater the preparation, the less you have to worry about maintaining focus. A well-prepared game frees you to enjoy your creation and interact with players, while a poorly prepared game leaves you scrambling to maintain control. When you maintain focus on story elements, the surroundings and your players, you need not fear the results of any game session.

PRE-GAME TASKS

There are several things you need to do to set up and run a game of **The Long Night**.

1 — Make sure you know the size and scope of your game before anything else; it's the only way to make sure there's enough staff and plot for everyone.

2 — Get all of your props and costumes lined up well in advance. These usually require the most legwork and take the most time to round up, so you don't want to be chasing after them last minute.

3 — Choose a good core staff and delegate. You can't do everything yourself; don't even try. Find people you trust and turn them loose.

4 — Make sure everyone is working on the same page. A lot of work can be wasted by duplication or misunderstandings. Have everyone aware of what everyone else is doing.

5 — Keep a paper trail. Note when tasks are accomplished and where everything is. Keep track of who did well and who didn't. It'll make next time easier.

6 — Define everyone's role. Power squabbles and unfinished tasks are both rather unproductive.

7 — Set deadlines and keep to them for all tasks related to the game.

8 — Get your essential paperwork done. This includes arranging sites, briefing sheets and plot creation. Don't save this sort of work-intensive thing for the last minute — if there's a screw-up, your whole game may be left high and dry.

9 — Pace yourself. If you burn out creating the game, you'll have no fun running it.

CHARACTER CREATION

It is your role as Storyteller (aided by Narrators) to guide players through the character generation process. It is generally best to have character creation go on off-line, well before your actual game action starts. This enables you to gauge accurately the power level and mood of your game. In addition, having access to character histories will enable you to create plotlines that force characters to interact. Knowing characters' backgrounds also allows you to bring in faces, places and items from a Cainite's past — always useful if the action starts to flag.

After your players arrive for the game session, you need to introduce them to the basic premise of the game. Your main goal should be to make contributing to the story as easy as possible for players. If your players are beginners, show them the basics, but let them discover the intricacies of the game on their own. Hopefully everyone playing will have at least a basic idea of the rules, but be prepared to field questions and help out beginners. Start by laying out any briefing sheets you want to use on a table and invite players to look them over. You can pass out character sheets at the same time. Give the players time to look everything over and ask questions. If players can refer to the briefings and their character cards while they listen to your explanations, they'll understand how things work a lot better.

It's also likely that you have certain roles in the story that you need filled. Your story probably has requirements, in terms of characters and setting, that must be

understood by all concerned. Even if you don't have specific requirements, you probably have a general idea of the types of characters you need. The best way to deal with this is to request certain players to fill those roles beforehand; usually the extra "oomph" that a precreated character is likely to have (not to mention its obviously central role in upcoming plots) will be enough to make up for the disappointment a player might feel over not being able to create her own character.

If you're running an extended chronicle, odds are that most of your players will simply show up and start playing once you declare things "on line." This makes your job a lot easier — who wants to do briefings at the beginning of each session? — but be careful to catch new players who might get lost in the shuffle. Bringing them into line with what the rest of the game is already doing will make everyone happier than if new players accidentally find themselves swimming upstream against established plots and characters.

INTRODUCING YOUR STORY

When players begin to arrive, you need to give them information. You need to tell them what's happened since the last story (if anything), and should provide goals and motivations for the upcoming evening. Prepare as much information as you can in written form for players to read as they arrive. Here are some handouts that you can create to facilitate your story's introduction.

- **Character Cards** — You need to have enough of these for all your players. It's wise to have spare cards on hand, since players may forget their cards. In addition, you'll need pencils for everyone who's forgotten their own.
- **Timetable** — (For Narrators only) This sheet contains a chronological list of all events that take place. Timetable sheets are useful for planning complex stories, and help your Narrators coordinate where they have to be when. Events listed might be, "10:00 P.M.: Herald of the prince arrives and announces a Blood Hunt on his former advisor." Make sure each Narrator has her own copy, and go through the events on the handout during your Narrator briefing.
- **Background Briefing** — This is a one-pager that you can create to provide a short background for the important characters of your chronicle. You should include any important events that have occurred, rumors that are circulating throughout the city and important things that have happened in previous games. A new player should be able to pick up this handout and immediately have an idea of what is going on. (Lost players tend to be bored players, and bored players don't come back.) The handout can mention things like what city the chronicle takes place in and the name of the local movers and shakers. Make several copies of this document and give one to each player, or leave several out in the open for players to take.
- **Character Briefing** — Depending upon how thorough your character creation process is, you may need to let individual players know special tidbits that their characters know. It's best to have these written down; even the most talented roleplayers have to resort to their notes every now and then.

GUIDING PLAYERS

As your players begin to work out the story, it's possible that they may be unsure of themselves. New players in particular need some sort of guidance to help them learn



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the rules and get used to acting out their characters' actions. Step into a minor character in your story and engage a new player in a minor challenge to get her used to the rules. The challenge system works well in play, but most people do not immediately understand it until after they've actually defended themselves in a challenge, and gotten to try out the system in a non-life-or-death situation. Try to let new players win your challenge, as it builds their confidence, and confidence is sorely needed when newcomers play in the same game as more experienced players.

Sometimes players also need help with their goals. A story that leans heavily toward investigation may frustrate players who miss one or two vital clues. Eventually, some players may come over to you asking for help. Unless the players have a rules question, or you have to clarify some point that a character should know by virtue of his history or background, you might not want to give information away too easily at first. If a player receives immediate assistance from a Storyteller or Narrator, he may become dependent on outside help.

Instead of giving direct answers to player questions, encourage players to figure things out for themselves. Later, if a player really does need help, have another Narrator, in the guise of a minor character, assist the player. If another Narrator is not available, you can approach the player and offer aid through your own character (although having another Narrator do it involves a touch of finesse). Pull your assistance off cleanly, and the player will never know you have responded to his plea.

You also need to invent things to do for players who seem bored with the game. These players have usually either accomplished or hopelessly failed to achieve their goals, or can't find the motivation to pursue a difficult goal. Your best options are to get a bored player involved in another plot, or to make up a customized plot on the spot that centers on the bored player's character. If your character mentions a lead to a powerful artifact that others are looking for, the player may spend time following that lead. Alternatively, giving the bored player a clue that someone else has missed allows you to kill two birds with one stone, as other players will need to talk to this character — giving him all sorts of new chances for character interaction.

It's a good idea to have a library of new plots on hand that you can drop into your chronicle as needed. Remember to be vigilant for bored players during your first few games; first-time players might not come back if they're bored all evening long. If you don't keep the players busy with plots, their characters may start diablerizing each other just for something to do. At this point, the game quickly degenerates into a free-for-all. You'll probably find that players stay busy as your chronicle progresses because they spend more time involved in the plots of other players.

INTERACTING WITH CAST MEMBERS

Your key to interacting with players is the minor character known as an extra. An extra can be a pre-generated character already woven into the story, or a character created on the spur of the moment to fix a problem. You rarely need to create a character card for your extra; a basic concept is usually enough. (If the player characters really want to kill or otherwise interact with the extra so that Traits are called for, improvise as the plot demands.)

Each character you introduce needs to have an easily identifiable mark so players can recognize which minor character you are playing. A wearable prop, such as a hat, cloak, scarf or amulet is usually enough. A distinct speech pattern, like an accent, is

at least as useful. Remember that the mark needs to be something that you can put on and take off quickly, since you may end up having to switch between several minor characters in an evening's story. Your extra(s) should be enjoyable to play. During the middle of a story, you may find that you and the Narrators have little to do. You then have a chance to play your bit parts just for fun. Go a little wild. Try to provide some comic relief if you feel the game is getting too heavy, and most of all, enjoy yourself. If you're not having fun, even if the players are, something's wrong.

PLAYER QUESTIONS

Aside from having a way to deal with players within the context of the story, you need to handle players' questions outside the story. During the first half-hour of a game, it's a good idea to keep a Narrator "out of game" to answer any questions players might have. When players step out of character to ask questions, you don't want them in the main playing area. Set the "outside" Narrator up in another room.

The most important thing to remember when interacting with players is to never remind them they are playing a game; addressing a Narrator as a Narrator does just that. You may occasionally need to impart information that a character cannot offer. You have to provide such information as discreetly as possible without distracting players from their characters. If you want to be stylish about offering game information to players, you can prepare notes for Narrators to hand to players who discover things. You can also put notes in closed envelopes where clues might be found. You can write requirements on the outside of an envelope, requirements that must be met before the player may look at the clue within.

One thing you want to avoid when dealing with players is letting them overuse Narrators. Players may try to use Narrators as messengers, to summon other characters, or to try new and interesting abuses of Disciplines. If a player asks for such favors too often, Narrators can simply refuse their help. With running plots and arbitrating conflict, Narrators are simply in too short a supply to allow them to become hostages to individual characters or roles.

WORKING WITH NARRATORS

As a Storyteller, you can't do everything yourself. It's not possible. No matter how good a Storyteller you are, you're going to need the help of Narrators (unless, perhaps, you have only five or six players). If you try to run the whole story, you will quickly become overwhelmed. It's best to delegate tasks and let your Narrators make judgment calls. Ideally, you, as Storyteller, should not have to deal with players very much (unless you establish yourself as a Narrator as well as Storyteller). You should wander around and observe to make sure the story is proceeding well. Players should learn to go to Narrators with their questions. A player should refer to you only if a Narrator has no idea how to handle a question.

To ensure that Narrators understand what's going to happen in the story, you should meet with them early in the evening. If no one but you knows what's going on, your Narrators aren't much use, and could even prove a hindrance if they direct events in the wrong fashion. You should assign tasks to Narrators at this time. For example, you can ask a Narrator to provide a clue to a character, but let the Narrator work out

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how and when that clue is delivered. Narrators need to keep you informed of their rulings and of story events. Avoid reversing a decision that a Narrator has made. Doing so makes Narrators seem indecisive and leads players to doubt them. If you want to run a large game, you are going to need assistants, and you have to learn to communicate with them effectively.

THE TEEMING HORDES

For *The Long Night*, you will need a large cast of willing Narrators. If you underpopulate your Narrative staff, you shortchange your players by creating long lines when multiple characters need Narrator assistance. Furthermore, a shortage of staff can make complicated scenes stagnate as Narrators try to run too much at once. Do whatever it takes to make sure that you have enough Narrators, or your story will fall apart under its own weight.

PACING THE STORY

More often than not, a story does not run according to schedule. It either drags late into the night, or players work too quickly and become bored with their accomplishments. It's during times like these that you need to reach into your bag of tricks and adjust the pace of the story. Dealing with stories that are running too long is, thankfully, relatively simple. It's easy to push on the accelerator. You can start by doling out clues and information through character contacts and the introduction of new props. One of the simplest tools you can have in your repertoire is a number of characters to throw into the adventure. Simply introduce a character who has the tools to help solve the problem, but for a price.

Prolonging play time is a little more tricky than reducing it. Prolonging play time means prolonging the story, but if the story is complete, you have to make up new events on the spot. Instead of creating an entirely new plot, you might be able to extend the "finished" story by going on past its logical conclusion. Extending stories works very well if you have a group of Narrators who are flexible, creative and who like to work "on the run." If you foresee the story ending early, there are ways of prolonging it by distracting players. Essentially, you can introduce subplots in order to pull characters off the beaten path. If you have a chance, work out one or two subplots for every story. Try not to overuse any particular devices for prolonging a story, or people will get bored, but an ever-new batch of red herrings can prove amusing. The best way to slow players down is to present them with something new. Bring in a Big Evil Nasty Thing (B.E.N.T.), or have the local Lupines threaten, and you can be certain that the linear plot will be set aside in the face of the incipient threat.

One of the more unusual tricks to use while improvising is to create a set of events with no obvious explanation. Then listen to the explanations your players propose and choose one to be the case, or base your explanation on the theory you like best. While this tactic may seem cheesy, some absolutely amazing stories can be developed this way.

RESCUE 911

In *Mind's Eye Theatre*, the Storyteller and Narrators have only limited control over what occurs in the story. While you can often predict human behavior to know where a story might lead, things never work out as planned. Players have a tendency to ignore old goals, creating new plotlines without a second thought for your hours of preparation and cunningly laid plans.

While such situations can be disconcerting, it's not always a bad thing for your players to improvise. Unforeseen plot turns are, in fact, what *Mind's Eye Theatre* is all about. The trick is to use what the players give you, instead of fighting with them. If players generate new plots, you can continue them in the next story, providing you with new material upon which to build. If you let players run with what they come up with, your story may go in entirely unexpected — but rewarding — directions. While the story may go off on a tangent, headed toward no foreseeable conclusion, you can usually apply finesse to work things out. The hardest part is knowing when to say “no” and when to stop destructive subplots in their tracks. The rule of thumb is, if a new direction adds depth to the story, entertains people and doesn't get in the way, let it run its course. As with all things, though, people can go too far in improvisation. The following are some signs indicating that events might be getting out of control:

- Characters begin attacking everything that moves for no obvious reason.
- There is excessive character “death” during a game.
- A key antagonist is killed, disabled, captured or otherwise prevented from becoming a key figure in the story.
- Important items or clues are destroyed, discarded or stolen.
- Gangs of *Furores* numbering a dozen or more start hanging out in the prince's hall and dictating policy.
- The moral center of the game (i.e., the struggle against the Beast along the *Viae*) is discarded.

Try to avoid halting the story altogether, or telling players “no.” Work within the story to put things right. Once a player puts a plan into motion that would have a detrimental effect on the game, you can encourage other characters to work against it, creating more plotlines and alleviating the suspicion that you are “out to get” any particular player.

Only when things look bleak, and you have tried in vain to fix story problems, should you introduce a *Deus Ex Machina* ending. Essentially a plot hammer, the D.E.M. should be reserved for those moments when the chronicle needs to be manhandled back into some semblance of playability. A *Deus Ex Machina* can take many forms: An invading army that unites all of the squabbling characters, a visit from an Antediluvian, and so on. However, there are limitations on this sort of approach. Use a plot hammer too often, and players will feel that they're being controlled too tightly. Use it too seldom, and characters can run amuck.

Good uses of the plot hammer include killing off problem characters, introducing a powerful outsider who'll force characters to cease pointless internal squabbling, bringing in an overwhelming threat that dictates that everyone work together to stop it, or, as a last resort, stopping the game until you've had time to regroup and your players have had a chance to calm down. Also, the downtime will allow you to introduce plot elements via email or to have conversations with players that will serve to prevent recurrences of trouble situations.

LAYING DOWN THE LAW

It's your responsibility to ensure that players are not a hazard to others, including people who are not involved in the game. It is mandatory that the normal rules of social interaction be strictly adhered to. Most players will probably work with you in this regard. However, from time to time, there will be those who prove disruptive to other players and the environment where the game is being played. Many times this disruption occurs by accident. However, there may be instances when players get out of hand on purpose. If such a situation presents itself, it's not considered bad taste or hard-nosed to remove the offender from your game. It is, after all, your game and your creation. The integrity of your game should be preserved for the enjoyment of other players. The integrity of the game should also be upheld in the minds of those who do not play or understand *Mind's Eye Theatre*.

RESOLVING ARGUMENTS

As Storyteller (and to a lesser degree as a Narrator), you have final word in any dispute that may arise between players. It is your responsibility to maintain peace between players to ensure the smooth flow of the story and its enjoyment by all. Players should be given the opportunity to speak their minds on a situation in which they disagree, but things should never be allowed to devolve into shouting or other such unpleasantness. It's a game, after all.

While it is suggested that you listen to a player's grievances, remember that your decision is final and must be adhered to by all concerned. Once you make a call, that's that — the discussion is over. Be firm, or players will always be after you to change decisions you've made. Be consistent in the way you resolve rules conflicts, or people will think you're not being fair.

It's best to combine an understanding ear and a firm hand. Keep your wits about you, and your players will respect you for it. If a player's problems prove a disruption to the story, they may have to be put on hold and dealt with after the night's session. And remember, no single individual is bigger than the game. If someone becomes a distraction to the other players, you are perfectly within your rights to suspend or even to banish that player from the game.

BREAKING THE RULES

The rules are yours to use and abuse as you see fit. The novelist Richard Bach once said, "Argue for your limitations, and sure enough, they're yours." Do not limit yourself to this set of rules. Your concept of the way *The Long Night* should be played may change constantly. Bend or break the rules to your liking. The rules serve the story; the story does not serve the rules.

If you come upon a situation that isn't covered by the rules, don't panic — improvise. Improvising rules involves nothing more than applying common sense to a situation. Don't be afraid of going against the grain in such cases. Just do what makes the most sense for your story and your characters, and things will work out fine. After all, if it comes down to a question of rules versus story, story should win every time.

STORY IDEAS

If you've never run a medieval story before, your first story ideas can be hard to develop. The traditional sword-and-sorcery plots from fantasy games do not quite work, but neither do many of the plots you might use in a modern vampire game. In fact, there are millions of possible Dark Medieval plots to run for chronicles of all shapes and sizes. Here is a quick list of story ideas to spark your imagination. Start with history, and look to see what conflicts were going on in your game's setting in the year you choose for your game. Then consider how Cainites were involved in what was going on.

Or, come up with a story idea, choose a site to locate it, and then study the history of the land to decide how it might be changed by the events of your chronicle. Smaller chronicles need to be tightly focused, whereas larger ones need complex plots that allow players to interact with each other without the aid of a Narrator at every elbow. Plots can even be run with all the players as mortals, just learning of the Cainite menace. Here are a few suggestions to start you thinking:

- A group of *Furores* sets up an abandoned castle as its new haven.
- An ancient vampire is about to awaken in a tiny village.
- The characters visit a remote monastery run by the Cainites.
- The game recreates a small merchant caravan, traveling by night from place to place.
 - A Blood Hunt has been called, and a small group sent out after the criminal.
 - In Spain, the *Assamites* attempt to wrest control of a border town from the *Lasombra*. Characters on both sides become embroiled in the conflict.
 - A book has been stolen from a local member of the *manus nigrum*. The tome contains secrets about all the local powerful Cainites, including some about the *manus nigrum* itself. Now, everyone wants the book — but no one knows who has it, or where.
 - The prince is dead. Who killed her? Why did they kill her? Who will take her power? Who will avenge her death? What vultures circle around the corpse?
 - While the cat's away — the prince has gone off on a trip for some reason, leaving a group of power-hungry, manipulative elders in charge — the mice will play. What havoc will occur, and what happens if the prince comes back unexpectedly?
 - Mortal barons in England plot rebellion as Cainites act to move their pawns in the great game.
 - An Eastern European town is suddenly invaded by barbarians! The king's army is smashed, and the horde at the gates. How do the Cainites survive/react/profit?
 - A Knight of the Bitter Ashes has died the Final Death in the area, and the rest of the order is looking for answers.
 - The Cainites get involved in the German civil war, trying to influence the outcome.
 - Pope Innocent III tries to scour Rome of vampires, with mixed success.

Status

Disciplines

Abilities

Merits

Flaws

Road

of Traits

Willpower



Blood



Influences

Derangements

Negative Traits

Mental Traits

Social Traits

Physical Traits

THE LONG NIGHT

Player _____

Character _____

Chronicle _____

Nature _____

Demeanor _____

Concept _____

Clan _____

Generation _____

Haven _____

Experience _____





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