

Dust to Dust



20th ANNIVERSARY EDITION

VAMPIRE
THE MASQUERADE

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Gobb 1991



Introduction

*Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.*

— Percy Bysshe Shelly, “Ozymandus”

Gary, Indiana is a dying city. Its population has halved itself in 40 years, many of its buildings are burned husks, its citizens are disenfranchised and out of work, and even its predators have fled. Of the many Kindred who once hunted this small Midwestern city, only a handful remains. Modius, the Prince of Gary, continues his long rivalry with the Anarch known as Juggler. But their struggles are becoming increasingly irrelevant. If things continue, Gary won't have enough mortals to sustain even a small number of vampires.

The Kindred aren't willing to let the city crumble just yet, though. Juggler and Modius have hit upon a scheme to revitalize the city's importance for Kindred, though each wishes to claim the credit (and the rewards) for this renewal. While they snipe and strike at one another like two starving wolves fighting for the last scrap of meat on the carcass, the Giovanni Maria DiMatto seizes her chance.

Introduction

Dust to Dust is a story for **Vampire: The Masquerade – 20th Anniversary Edition** in which the characters have the choice to become embroiled in the

political and supernatural goings-on in Gary, Indiana. In some ways, this story is a sequel to **Ashes to Ashes**, one of the first stories published for **Vampire: The Masquerade**. Since this product is 20 years old as of this writing, though (and written for the first edition of the game, which differs quite a bit from the current one), no familiarity with **Ashes to Ashes** is required to play and enjoy **Dust to Dust**. All the players and the Storyteller need is a copy of **Vampire 20th**.

Note, too, that the characters in this story have the choice to become involved with the events of **Dust to Dust**. This story is presented as an open, ongoing event, meaning that it differs somewhat from the traditional presentation of such a product. More about what this means for you and the players can be found below.

Dust to Dust is written under the assumption that the characters are neonates, but that they have some degree of autonomy from their sires and are able to make their own decisions. That isn't to suggest that they can't be agents for more powerful vampires, of course. Conflicting loyalties make for great drama and conflict, which is to be encouraged. This story doesn't require them to take orders from anyone, however.



About the Storytelling Adventure System

If this is your first Storytelling Adventure System (SAS) product, you've chosen a fine place to start. To keep this story kit lean and focused, though, we haven't included a lot of the core premises and Storyteller suggestions that are at the heart of the SAS. Whether you're a new Storyteller or an old hand, be sure to read the *free SAS Guide*, found at the SAS website:

www.white-wolf.com/sas

Here are some of the features available in *Dust to Dust*:

- **Interactive links.** Clicking on most things in dark red will take you directly to the section referenced, or to an appropriate character sheet or prop. It may also take you to an external website that could be useful.
- **Scenes.** Clicking on a scene name in the scene flowchart or the name in the scene card will take you to the full write-up of the scene.
- **Bookmarks.** This PDF is fully bookmarked, so you can jump to major sections at any time when the file is open.



Backstory

Dust to Dust is a story of politics, but not the long, drawn-out, intrigue-laden politics of favor trading and nuance that the Kindred normally engage in. Gary is *dying*. It has been hemorrhaging people and resources for decades, and its death seems a foregone conclusion. Some of the blame for this falls at the feet of Kindred — Lodin, the late Prince of Chicago, used his influence to wreck the industrial concerns of Gary. But the city never rebounded, and much of that has to do with the way the city handles its finances.

The economics behind Gary's downfall aren't relevant for the purposes of *Dust to Dust*. The Kindred response to this downfall, however, is important. Gary was never heavily populated with vampires, but

Prince Modius did make it clear that neonates were welcome. This was in response to a long-standing policy of Lodin's that no vampire in Chicago was allowed to create progeny. Kindred in the Windy City who wished to Embrace would often choose their childer, then transport them to Gary, Embrace them, and train them there. Gary served as a "proving ground" for new vampires, and Modius got to thumb his nose at Lodin.

But then Lodin met Final Death. How exactly this happened is unclear — some vampires say it was under the claws of werewolves, while others claim that a particularly zealous vampire hunter managed to lay him low. In any case, with his policy no longer in effect, Chicago vampires could Embrace without having to leave their homes, and Gary became as irrelevant to the undead as it had become to the living. Modius tried to find a reason to keep his domain or some way to *matter*, but the eyes of the Kindred world had turned elsewhere. Within a few years no one was coming to Gary to Embrace anymore. Many of the native vampires left as well, leaving only Modius and a small number of vampires who were, if not loyal to him, at least comfortable with their home.

One such vampire was Juggler, the Anarch. Juggler initially wished to turn Chicago into a Free State, but never managed to drum up the kind of support he needed. Over the years, he lowered his expectations and made some bad concessions to the Camarilla and the Sabbat, and finally wound up losing most of his followers. Younger Anarchs view him as a sell-out, while the established factions see him as a former threat, not a current one. Embarrassed and dejected, Juggler returned to Gary, unsure of what to do next.

Modius and Juggler had always had a strange, uncomfortable relationship. As two of the only vampires left in Gary, they began to interact more. At first their discussions were mutual insults, each pointing out what the other had lost. And then one night, Modius pushed Juggler too far and the Brujah flew into frenzy.

The two of them fought, ran, ambushed, and bit each other, but neither managed to strike a killing (or even particularly injuring) blow. As they battled, Modius, who had kept his head, noticed that they hadn't seen a mortal for blocks. He hid long enough for Juggler to regain his head, and then pointed this out. Gary was becoming a ghost town, and there were too few mortals left to hunt.

Juggler disagreed — they were near a highway exit. They could simply wait in a gas station, truck stop, or fast food restaurant, feed from a traveler, and let the

poor soul go on his merry way. Alternatively, Juggler noted, Gary had so many abandoned and burned-out houses that stashing a body wouldn't be hard. The city wasn't much for nightlife, Juggler admitted, but it wouldn't be bad for a vampire willing to hunt a little differently.

And that was when inspiration struck them both. Gary *could* be a thriving city again, but not for mortals. Traveling east from Chicago all but required people to go through Gary. They didn't have to stay; they just had to stop. With that in mind as goal, the urban decay of the city was arguably a good thing. Gary could become relevant to the Kindred again. All the vampires had to do was stop thinking of the city in terms of permanent mortal population.

Despite their consensus, Modius and Juggler have two very different end goals in mind. Juggler still wants to establish a Free State within spitting distance of Chicago, while Modius eventually wants to claim Chicago as his own domain. But now that each has a plan of operation, it has become a race to see which of them would implement it first. Their strategies and styles (and what these mean for the players' characters in *Dust to Dust*) are discussed below.

Before *any* strategy could be implemented, though, a new vampire with a very different plan for Gary arrived.

Maria DiMatto

Maria DiMatto got her start in Los Angeles, and is therefore quite adept at working around warring factions of Kindred. Knowing that she'd never be a mainstream movie producer, she decided to follow an emerging trend — shooting low-budget horror movies in poor, rundown cities for a fraction of the cost that they would incur in California. This approach worked well, and it allowed Maria to travel to various cities across the country. She made a great deal of money and built up her reputation among mortals (as a strange but dedicated producer of horror films) and among Kindred (as a good luck charm for impoverished cities — her movies tended to bring revenue, and therefore mortals). One of the cities that came to her attention was Gary.

Maria journeyed to Gary and found exactly what she had been looking for — a city on the verge of death. As a Necromancer, Maria was accustomed to dealing with death and dying, but never on such a large scale. With the entire soul of the city fading away, Maria decided that Gary would be the site of her experiment in “sociological necromancy” — if she allowed

the city to die, even symbolically, could she work a large enough death-magic ritual to “raise” it? And if she could, what would that mean? She isn't sure, but she doesn't see a downside to trying. In the worst-case scenario, the town stays dead and she moves on.

In the meantime, Maria is encouraging traffic from Chicago and other nearby cities. She's already set up a shooting schedule for a zombie film called *Rust*, and she's starting off the process by organizing a zombie walk — a march through downtown Gary with everyone in full zombie makeup. She's planning to use this as an opportunity to get the local Kindred under her thumb a bit, as well as get free extras for the film. She is unaware, however, that her zombie walk proves an irresistible target for another undead creature.

Lazlo Varga

Lazlo Varga died years ago in Detroit, but that didn't stop him. A mortal necromancer of some skill before his death, the bullet in his heart did nothing but force his hand. He activated a ring he had stolen in Kiev some years back — a ring that supposedly belonged to Rasputin himself. According to reports, the ring allowed its wearer to survive any wound.

That wasn't quite the effect it had, though. Varga didn't survive the wound so much as transcend it. His body died, but his soul refused to flee. He tore his assailant apart with his bare hands and fled the city, aware that without a living body to slow him down, he was capable of death-magic the likes of which he'd never considered.

Over the next few years, Varga honed his magical skill and built up a cult of like-minded followers. He was in Gary during the Great Gary Arson (a huge fire that burned dozens of buildings and damaged hundreds more, all for the sole purpose of destroying a vampire named Jean Lisle). He happened upon the site of Sullivan Dane's battle with Jean Lisle (see below), and his magical senses told him that the pile of thick, slightly sticky ash in the center of the room was more than simply debris. He collected the ashes in an urn and left the city with it.

Since then, Varga has concentrated on building up the membership in his cult. The cult worships death as empowering condition — in death, one can be memorialized, made pure, remembered without fault. And, of course, in death a person feels no pain. Varga himself demonstrates the “insensate nature of walking death” by stabbing himself with blades and burning his flesh with hot metal, and his devotees learn to do the same.

The Nature of Varga's Magic

Varga obviously has access to some form of mystical power, but it isn't a vampiric Discipline. We've represented his powers with Disciplines, however, because that is the simplest way to do so. If the characters wish to study his necromancy, they find that it has its roots in Eastern European magical practices. Though it's different in theory and basis from most forms of Necromancy that vampires practice, it all works the same from a game perspective.

Vampires cannot learn Varga's magic, since it relies on the death of a living body as an empowering ritual. The Kindred, having already died and given their blood to their sires as part of the Embrace, are ineligible.

Sullivan Dane and Jean Lisle

Sullivan Dane is a vampire hunter, and his name is a whispered curse among ancillae. Dane has been hunting Kindred for at least thirty years, and has been aware of their existence for longer than that. He once hunted them as an agent of the Catholic Church, though he has been working independently for years now. Dane feels that the Church, while it contains many good and righteous soldiers of God, is also too large and too compromised to be trusted. As such, while he can call in help from the Inquisition, he would prefer not to. Dane hunted Gary once before, when the feud between Modius and Lodin was still going on. He stayed long enough to make unlife very difficult for the local Kindred, but he dropped off their radar several months before the Great Gary Arson. That was because he was dealing with a much greater threat to the city than Modius and his ilk: Jean Lisle.

As a mortal, Jean Lisle was a revolutionary in Haiti. Embraced into the Samedi just after the beginning of the St. Domingue Slave Rebellion, he helped the former slaves win the war and form the independent nation of Haiti. His "help," however, was mostly in the form of slaughtering French oppressors and slaveholders, and this violence took a toll on his mind and soul. By the time he arrived in Louisiana in 1900, Jean Lisle was completely insane.

Insanity did not dull his mind or his predatory instincts, however. Lisle was a vampire of large appetites, and he was too strong to simply destroy or oust from a city. Though unaffiliated with the Sabbat, he enjoyed their support — Lisle is a walking hurricane of chaos and carnage, and the Sword of Caine doesn't mind inflicting him on Camarilla-controlled cities.

Lisle is something of a rarity among elder Kindred. He doesn't have any long-term plans, and he doesn't have his rotting fingers in a thousand bloody pies. He simply wants to feed and kill. He has glimmers of memory occasionally, which cause him to aim the worst of his violence at white people (especially well-dressed or obviously wealthy white people), but he's also intelligent enough to know that such people don't just disappear. It's his propensity for bloody violence that attracted the attention of Sullivan Dane. Dane realized that this vampire was an oddity — most old Kindred don't remain so visible for so long. Though Dane made Lisle his priority, Lisle was used to being hunted.

The cat-and-mouse game lasted for months, and finally Dane called in help from the Church. The Church sent a team of Inquisitors, and they cornered Lisle in a house in Gary (whose occupants Lisle had already slaughtered). Before Dane could prevent it, one of the hunters set a fire in an attempt to smoke Lisle out. The fire spread across the city, and the other hunters scattered. Dane, however, wanted to make sure that Lisle was truly dead. He looked into the house, and through the smoke and the heat he saw Lisle collapse into dust. Satisfied that the vampire was dead, Dane fled the city.

Unfortunately for Dane, Lisle had *not* met Final Death. Instead, he had called upon his power of Ashes to Ashes (see pp. 471-472 of *Vampire 20th*). He stayed there, injured but surviving, waiting for the fires to die and night to fall. But Lazlo Varga came along and collected him in an urn before he had the chance.

Normally this wouldn't have been a problem: Lisle would simply have burst out of the urn and killed Varga (and anyone else in the area) that night. But by the time the sun set, Varga had already mixed in several necromantic compounds with the ashes and sealed the jar with an ointment of his own design. This combination of magic left Lisle's mind in a confused, dreamlike state — not quite torpor, but not awake enough to re-form. Until the urn is shattered and his ashes freed (and hopefully bloodied), Lisle cannot take his true form.

Theme

The themes of *Dust to Dust* are *recovery* and *progression*. How much of the past can be salvaged? How much *should* be salvaged? When is it time to let something die? How much effort and energy can or should

be expended making something usable again? Juggler and Modius have both grudgingly accepted that Gary is never going to be the same as it was, and are looking to change what the city is (to Kindred, anyway). Maria DiMatto wants to let the city die and then repurpose it entirely.

But all of the Kindred in the story must face the fact that the world has changed since the War for Chicago and the events of *Ashes to Ashes*. Everyone carries an atlas and an encyclopedia on a phone. Hunting is more difficult for Kindred, partially because vampires are such important parts of the cultural consciousness. Can the Kindred let their legends fade a bit, allowing them to become more effective hunters, or will they plunge the city into blood and ash once again? And if they refuse to bow to progress, are they prepared to accept the consequences?

Mood

The mood of Gary is *bleak*. The city suffers from crushing poverty and urban decay. People are streaming out of the area. Any vampire in Gary needs a reliable and defensible source of blood just to survive — there's barely even a Rack anymore.

The Storyteller can help accent this mood by finding some pictures of the urban decay in Gary. It isn't difficult; a quick image search online can provide you with plenty of material. It's important, though, to interject some humanity into these kinds of images. Although the population is dropping like a stone, people do still live in Gary. Show the characters some of the people that live here (and are still awake during a vampire's hours): third shift employees, the homeless, sex workers, drug dealers, disenfranchised youths with nowhere to go. Include a good mix, and give them names and enough detail that the players can relate. And then remind the characters that these are their victims. Do the characters really have the stomach to make things *worse* for the citizens of Gary? A few lost pints of blood can result in headache, nausea, and fatigue, and when a person isn't eating or sleeping right to begin with, that can lead to a lost job or a neglected family. So is it more merciful to kill the victim? It's not an easy choice for the Kindred, or at least it shouldn't be.

A Chapter in Your Chronicle

If you are already running a *Vampire 20th* chronicle, including *Dust to Dust* is as simple as having the characters come to Gary. *Dust to Dust* is less a prescribed series of events and more a standing situation that the characters can insert themselves into. Therefore, using this story as a chapter in your chronicle simply requires the Storyteller to decide which parts of *Dust to Dust* are the most interesting and include them.

For instance, the Storyteller might want to include the events of the zombie walk (“Offers,” “The Zombie Walk”), but not necessarily have the characters stick around to deal with Modius and Juggler and their feud. That's simple enough — the characters can simply get word from an interested third party that a rich and influential vampire in Gary is looking for outside Kindred to help her with a project she has going. The vampires come into town long enough to do the job, and get caught up in the plotlines involving Lazlo Varga, Jean Lisle, and Sullivan Dane. The larger, city-wide issues of the future of Gary don't need to apply. Of course, if the players decide this setting is interesting, then the Storyteller already has a framework set up for future stories.

A Story By Itself

Because *Dust to Dust* isn't arranged the way many pre-written scenarios are (with a triggering event, a call to duty from a more powerful character, a linear plot, and so on), using it as a standalone story might require the Storyteller to set a few narrative requirements. The most important, of course, is for the characters to have a reason to come to and stay in Gary. That might require the Storyteller to explain what the story is going to be about, and perhaps some of the backstory, in order to give the players enough information to make characters who will become engaged in the setting. If the Storyteller winds up with a group of high-society aesthetes, he may find that such characters have no driving reason to remain in the decaying, blue-collar city of Gary.


Dust to Dust is well-suited to being a standalone story setting. It could even blossom into a chronicle, particularly if the characters decide that *they* want to be the ones that oversee Gary's rebirth (or downfall).



How it Played Out in New Orleans

Dust to Dust was first run as a series of one-shot events by The Wrecking Crew at The Grand Masquerade convention in 2011. There was so much material that in order to fit into the five hour slot, The Wrecking Crew cut out some of the material, subplots, and side scenes to focus primarily on the necromancy cult and Maria's plans. We present the options used during that session partly to help recreate the experience, and partially to showcase how selective removal of elements and subtle emphasis on others can provide a very different experience with the SAS system.

If you'd like to replicate how it was run during the Grand Masquerade, make the following changes to the story:

- Reduce or eliminate the rivalry between Modius and Juggler – Modius is primarily a figurehead in Gary at this point, and the party in “Welcome to Gary” is mainly to introduce Maria.
 - Similarly, the presence of Sullivan Dane is drastically reduced or eliminated.
 - The scene “Offers” focuses primarily on Maria's offer.
 - The following scenes aren't used: “The Hunter,” “Juggling Lessons,” “Toothless Hounds,” and “Tomorrow Night.”
- 

Set-Up

The Storyteller should pay close attention to the events preceding **Dust to Dust**, because the players will think of avenues of approach not covered by the following scenes. If the Storyteller knows what came before and what the principal characters' motivations are, he will be much better able to roll with the proverbial punches.

In **Ashes to Ashes**, a group of neonates, while attending a New Year's party in Gary with Prince Modius, were summoned to Chicago to present themselves to Prince Lodin. They then found themselves enmeshed in a complicated web of plots, intrigue, lies, blood bonds, and manipulation that ended with Prince Lodin being kidnapped and possibly killed. For purposes of **Dust to Dust**, the exact events of **Ashes to Ashes** aren't relevant — this story is more of a thematic sequel. If you have read or played through **Ashes to Ashes**, feel free to alter anything in this story to fit with your own troupe's continuity. If you haven't read **Ashes to Ashes**, don't worry about it. Relevant characters are given all the detail you need to portray them here. The following are assumed to be true for purposes of **Dust to Dust**:

- Modius is still Prince of Gary
- Lodin, former Prince of Chicago, has been destroyed. Who or what destroyed him isn't relevant. If your players want to know, though (and there is nothing in the history of your personal **Vampire** chronicles to decide the matter), consider seeding rumors of a rotting corpse (Jean Lisle) or a dedicated, implacable hunter (Sullivan Dane) felling the Prince of Chicago.
- Lodin's prohibition on siring new Kindred died with him.
- Most of the native Kindred of Gary have left, died, or fallen into torpor. The only established vampiric residents of Gary at the beginning of **Dust to Dust** are Modius, Juggler, Maria DiMatto, Jean Lisle (in dust form), the characters, and any Contacts, Allies, or Mentors they choose to establish. The total vampire population of the city might therefore be less than a dozen.

Plots and Goals

Modius

- Modius wants to continue being Prince of Gary, but to have the title mean something. He wants more Kindred in the city, so that he can have parties and plots and praise and hangers-on and all the things he had before, when he was Lodin's rival.
- Modius is willing to kill mortals as necessary to achieve this goal. He is not willing to kill or fatally endanger vampires to get it.
- Modius has monetary resources, a superb knowledge of the city and its history, and a small stable of ghouls on his side. He has used up or lost the favors he accrued from other Kindred over the years, however.

Juggler

- Juggler wants Gary to become a Free State. He doesn't necessarily want to be the Baron, but he wants the city to become relevant to Kindred again.

- While Modius wants Gary to be a Kindred hot-spot to validate his own existence, Juggler is willing to leave the city in order to see it succeed. He is also willing to kill whoever he needs to, vampire or mortal, in order to get the Kindred of Gary fired up, passionate, and thinking about Chicago as the next major Free State.

- Juggler has very little in the way of temporal resources and he hasn't kept in touch with his childer. He knows the city at least as well as Modius, and is a physically formidable opponent. While he doesn't have a large stable of ghouls at the ready, between his potent blood and his command of Dominate, he could have loyal servants in short order if he needed them.

Maria DiMatto

- Maria's goal is twofold. First, she is working to bring in money, favors, and power to her family and herself. To that end, she is setting up film concerns in low-income cities like Gary (especially such cities without a strong presence from the Camarilla or the Sabbat). Second, she wants to experiment with the concept of "sociological necromancy," which is the study of what happens to a town when it dies.

- Maria is largely amoral, but she doesn't want to kill people if she can avoid it. She would rather work with existing corpses. That said, her objections to killing have more to do with inconvenience and potential exposure than ethics. She has no problem manipulating or endangering Kindred, but she would rather trade favors, because she views this as a renewable resource (it just doesn't make sense for vampires to run short cons). She will use, abuse, destroy, and otherwise damage ghosts without a second thought, however.

- In addition to her own personal wealth, Maria can draw on the network of connections and resources that her profession provides. If she needs backup, the Giovanni can have armed bodyguards at her side in a few hours, to say nothing of her ghostly guardians. Maria herself wouldn't be hard to destroy, but getting to her would be extremely difficult.

Lazlo Varga

- Varga wants power. More specifically, he wants necromantic power. He wants to be free of pain, wor-

ry, hunger, and care, to be strong and vigorous, and to live (or, rather, to continue to exist) forever.

- Varga is willing to kill, sell out, or use anyone and anything in order to achieve his goal. His most prized resource is the urn, mostly because he is unaware of what it really holds.

- Lazlo has some money squirreled away, but for the most part he steals what he needs or instructs his cult to procure it. His cult is his most useful resource. Lazlo himself is nearly impossible to kill, but he recognizes the importance of the word "nearly."

Jean Lisle

- Jean Lisle wants nothing but blood. He retains the barest shreds of Humanity, and is driven by base impulses. When he isn't hungry, he turns his attention to killing with intent, out of a long-smoldering need for revenge for his people.

- Jean is willing to murder anything in reach to satiate his hunger. Jean will not, however, risk his own unlife — his self-preservation instinct is the strongest he possesses.

- Jean has no resources except his own undead might, which is considerable. While he is only slightly above a mindless killer, he is capable of plotting, retreat, and strategy. He is also aware that most vampires can't stand against him in a fight for very long.

Sullivan Dane

- Dane wants God's will to be done. As he sees it, vampires are abominations on the Earth, and he is called to destroy them.

- While Dane is zealous, even obsessed, he is not willing to commit mortal sins in pursuit of his goal. He doesn't kill human beings, and will only injure them in self-defense. He is especially unwilling to kill or harm people that he knows to be un-saved, since killing them would damn them to Hell. Dane is willing to destroy property and to steal in pursuit of God's will, but always tries to make restitution. He has become much less keen on the notion of using fire to hunt vampires since the Great Arson.

- Dane has money, equipment, and experience on his side, but his most important resource is his Faith. God shows Dane where he needs to be, and usually leads him to the resources that he requires. Dane finds that making plans in the long term doesn't pan out, because God always puts him where He needs him anyway. Dane could, in theory, call on the Inquisi-

tion for help, but is leery of doing so. He might recruit other hunters himself, however.

Involving the Characters

The characters need a reason to be in Gary. A few suggestions follow, but the Storyteller is encouraged to have the players come up with their own reasons for the characters to be in the city.

- A character might be a childe of Modius or Jugler, or even Maria (though Maria is extremely unlikely to sire a child and then just let it go).
- A character might be in the employ of one of the Kindred in the city, perhaps contracted as part of a boon.
- A character Embraced and given no instructions might wander into the city, as might a nomadic vampire.
- Characters (probably more than one) from Chicago might be in Gary representing the interests of the Camarilla — or one particular elder — there. A vampire looking to extend his power base might send agents into Gary, for instance, as might an old ally or enemy of Modius.
- Sabbat, Anarch, or independent agents might wish to investigate the city, to see if anything salvageable remains.
- A character might have once been a Gary native, but previously they moved away. Now she wishes to return home.

Are the characters an established coterie, or are they individual Kindred who will meet and form a coterie during the course of the story? Both possibilities have benefits for the story.

Established Coterie

If the characters are an established coterie, take some time and have the group decide on their history together (unless you are running **Dust to Dust** as part of an established chronicle). Figure out their reasons for forming a coterie, their goals, and why they are in Gary. More importantly, make sure they have a reason to *stay* in Gary. Hopefully the events and the situations in **Dust to Dust** will prove interesting enough to keep them there, but it never hurts to have a bit of personal business to attend to as well.

The advantage to having the characters as an established group is that you don't have to try and find a way to get them together. With no Prince to order

them all to solve a common problem and no common sire to ride herd on them all, the characters willingly getting together can be a big time-saver. A disadvantage, though, is that you might not see as much diversity in their reasons for being in Gary.

A Group of Strangers

The other possibility is that the characters don't know each other, and are all in Gary for their own reasons. This will help you flesh out the setting and make it unique to your chronicle, because each player should contribute details about your version of Gary. The problem, of course, is that you then need to devote in-game time to getting the characters together, and **Dust to Dust** doesn't provide much of a framework for that.

In this case, we recommend that the Storyteller ask the players directly what would push their characters to work together or interact. Don't just guess and hope it happens; you might wind up with five players all doing different things.

Your Very Own Gary

One thing that you can — and should — do no matter what the coterie setup is to incorporate any supporting characters into the setting. For instance, if a character has a Contact, Ally, or Mentor, have the player come up with some supporting details about that character that you can use to broaden Gary out a bit. The number of Kindred in Gary, as written, makes for a sparse group of characters, which is in-theme for **Dust to Dust** but also doesn't give the characters many people to interact with.

Whether to add more characters is a decision for the Storyteller. If you feel that more Kindred should inhabit Gary, by all means add some, but consider what role you want them to play in the story. Don't include characters "just because," and don't feel the need to put authority figures from any given group or faction. In particular, notice that no Sabbat Kindred are detailed for Gary. This isn't because it's important to **Dust to Dust** that Gary has no Sabbat, but rather because the Sword of Caine isn't an important factor in the story, and with a limited amount of space, it's better for us to keep things simple. If, however, you want to add a Sabbat presence (or even to have the players create Sabbat characters and have them try and take the city for the Sabbat), feel free! Gary's fate is up to you.

The Cast

Sullivan Dane

Quotes: “God’s will be done.”

“I have seen nothing from any of you that justifies your existence. Nothing.”

“I would be happy to tell you what you wish to know. No, I don’t want your money.”

Background: Sullivan Dane was born in England in 1957. Little is known about his early life, except that he felt a calling to do the Lord’s work from a young age. He applied to the Jesuit order in 1980, and in 1982 had his first encounter with the Kindred. He destroyed a neonate vampire in Washington, D.C., and something snapped into place for him. Sullivan Dane was meant to hunt vampires. In that moment, he felt knowledge flood his mind, as scenarios, names, faces, and voices came rushing in. He attempted to convince the order of what had happened to him, but their faith apparently did not extend to vampires. He struck out on his own, and eventually the Inquisition found him.

Sullivan Dane has hunted Kindred across the United States. He is wanted by the FBI (though they do not know his real name) as well as the police departments of Boston, New York, Detroit, Chicago, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, and many others. He prefers to work alone, hunting his prey down and burning the Kindred while they sleep, but he has been known to call in assistance from the Church when he feels he is out of his league.

Description: Dane is of above-average height and build, with lean, sharp features. His once-dark hair is greying, and he keeps it short. His eyes are dark green. He bears the scars of severe burns across both of his hands and forearms, though he usually wears gloves to cover them. Dane dresses to avoid standing out. When on the hunt, he wears a long coat with wooden stakes stitched into the lining. Dane is a violinist of almost savant-like skill, and plays to relax himself.

Storytelling Hints: Dane knows that his hunt will be his death. He has known that for years, but it hasn’t happened yet. More than anything, he wants to see all of the Kindred turn on each other and destroy themselves, and to that end he is willing to give up any information he knows about one vampire to any vampire that asks. He does not lie, cheat, or steal, and he attends Mass every chance he gets. His faith



is so strong that it informs literally every decision he makes, and the only sin he never quite feels absolved of is the feeling that maybe, just maybe, he deserves a day or two without God. That feeling passes when he takes up his stakes again, though.

Name: Sullivan Dane

Concept: Devout Hunter

Nature: Loner

Demeanor: Eye of the Storm

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity (Cat-Like) 4, Stamina (Determined) 4

Social Attributes: Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2

Mental Attributes: Perception (Curious) 4, Intelligence (Discerning) 4, Wits (Devilishly Clever) 5

Talents: Alertness (Supernatural) 4, Athletics (Gymnastics) 4, Awareness (Vampires) 4, Brawl (Boxing) 4, Empathy 1, Intimidation 3, Streetwise (Street Culture) 4

Skills: Crafts 2, Drive 2, Etiquette 1, Firearms (Assassination) 4, Larceny 3, Melee (Staking) 5, Performance (Violin) 5, Stealth (Darkness) 5, Survival 3

Knowledges: Academics 3, Computer 1, Investigation (Investigation) 5, Law 3, Medicine 2, Occult (Vampires) 4

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Contacts 5, Resources 2

Virtues: Conscience 4, Self-Control 5, Courage 5

Willpower: 10

Humanity: 9

Notes: True Faith 5; see pp. 372-373 of *Vampire 20th*

Lazlo Varga

Quotes: “Birth is the truly unfortunate part of the life cycle. Death is underrated.”

“I am not a killer. I don’t enjoy it. A killer would enjoy it.”

“I miss eating, but not enough to miss indigestion. Do you see?”

Background: Lazlo Varga emigrated from Hungary in his early 20s. He spoke no English, and he was offended and appalled at how Americans treated him — they saw him as stupid, lazy, and untrustworthy simply because he did not speak their language. He learned quickly how to communicate, but he never really accepted his new country.

In his homeland, Lazlo was intelligent, erudite, and well-read. Always interested in the occult, he tracked down a secret society of spiritualists and mediums in Detroit. But they, like many Americans, did not even attempt to listen to what he had to say (though they did accept his money for membership). One night, for reasons Lazlo still does not understand, someone fired

a gun into the society’s meeting house. He was hit and died en route to the hospital.

But in the morgue that night, he sat up. One of the rituals he had performed faithfully every morning had worked — he had become a walking corpse. His body heals most wounds in mere minutes, and he found he did not feel pain, fatigue, or hunger. He stole everything of value from the spiritualists’ headquarters, and founded his own cult — a cult that would accept him, listen to him and, if necessary, die for him.

Description: Lazlo is a muscular, solidly built man in his late 40s. He shaves his head and wears a full beard, and he wears an iron pendant around his neck that he makes a great show of polishing and cleaning (this is a decoy, meant to fool attackers). Lazlo usually has charcoal under his fingernails and ink stains on his hands from his daily rituals. He dresses in simple clothing and expensive, sturdy boots. He speaks with a thick Hungarian accent.

Storytelling Hints: Lazlo fears weakness and age, but not death. He’s already died once, after all. He is aware on some level that he *can* still be killed, but since conventional methods have no effect, he grows more power-drunk with each passing night. As he has more contact with vampires, his contempt for them grows. They might play at being undead, but they are all one wooden stick away from oblivion.

Name: Lazlo Varga

Concept: Zombie Cult Leader

Nature: Rogue

Demeanor: Autocrat

Physical Attributes: Strength (Brawny) 5, Dexterity (Fluid) 4, Stamina (Solid) 5

Social Attributes: Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2

Mental Attributes: Perception 2, Intelligence (Well-Educated) 4, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 2, Athletics 3, Awareness (Ghosts) 4, Brawl (Throws) 4, Intimidation 3, Leadership 2, Streetwise 1

Skills: Crafts 1, Etiquette 1, Firearms 2, Larceny 2, Melee 3, Stealth 2

Knowledges: Academics 3, Investigation 2, Medicine 2, Occult (Necromancy) 4, Science 2

Backgrounds: Resources 3, Retainers 5

Disciplines: Celerity 2, Fortitude 5, Potence 5

Virtues: Conscience 1, Self-Control 2, Courage 4



Willpower: 7

Humanity: 2

Notes: Lazlo cannot be killed through conventional means. He ignores bashing damage (but is subject to knockdown effects; see pp. 279-280 of *Vampire 20th*) and may soak lethal damage as though he were a vampire. Any lethal or aggravated damage he suffers heals within one day. Lazlo spends Willpower, rather than blood, to activate his Disciplines.

Jean Lisle

Quotes: “*J’ai faim.*”

“*Le mort lent est le seul mort.*”

“*I remember you. Holding a whip.*”

Background: Jean Lisle’s birth name is lost to him now, just like his family, his people, and his mortal life. He remembers being given the name “Jean” as a young man, still a slave in what is now Haiti. He remembers his Embrace, a rotting monster grabbing him and forcing its putrid blood down his throat. Every night since has been an exercise in revenge. What he saw and felt during his time as a slave was burned into his brain, immortalized in the moment of his death and rebirth. Thus his bloodlust can never be sated, no matter how many people he kills.

Jean came to New Orleans in the mid-19th century, and the Kindred there gave him the nickname “Jean L’Isle” to differentiate him from other “Jeans” among their kind. He didn’t much care, and kept to himself, hunting the red light districts, the wharfs, and other places where mortal authorities rarely trod. The Prince of New Orleans exiled him in 1904, and he began to move northeast, killing the mortals he fed upon but never staying in a city long enough to trigger a Blood Hunt. He arrived in Indiana in the mid-1990s, where his depredations brought him to the attention of Sullivan Dane. The fire that was meant to destroy him took most of Gary, instead, but it did lead his unfortunate imprisonment in a clay urn.

Description: In life, Jean Lisle was a strong, handsome black man in his early 20s. The Embrace, of course, changed that. Like all Samedi, Jean Lisle is ghastly to behold. His nose, ears, and eyelids have long since rotted away. His hair is gone, except for the occasional moldy curl on the back of his head. His lips hang loosely from his face, leaking bloody fluid whenever he moves them. Jean wears tattered, mold-eroding clothes stolen from various victims. He carries



nothing in his pockets, but keeps the handle of a whip tucked away in the folds of his flesh.

Storytelling Hints: Jean Lisle is barley cognizant. He retains language and intent, but his Beast is, for the most part, the one in control. Centuries of hate have made him into what he is, and changing that would be a Herculean effort (and require some way to contact the man buried deep in the rotting flesh). All Jean wants is to kill, because killing reminds him of the rage he felt when he was still alive. When he can't feel that, he feels a pull to sleep, which terrifies him.

Name: Jean Lisle

Concept: Former Slave/Monster

Clan: Samedi

Generation: Sixth

Nature: Monster

Demeanor: Monster

Physical Attributes: Strength (Relentless) 6, Dexterity (Savage) 4, Stamina (Unyielding) 5

Social Attributes: Charisma 2, Manipulation 1, Appearance 0

Mental Attributes: Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits (Feral) 4

Talents: Alertness 2, Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Brawl (Grappling) 4, Intimidation (Monstrous) 5

Skills: Animal Ken 1, Melee 3, Stealth (Hunting) 5, Survival 3

Knowledges: Academics 1, Occult 2

Backgrounds: None

Disciplines: Auspex 1, Celerity 2, Fortitude 4, Obfuscate 4, Potence 4, Thanatos 5

Virtues: Conscience 0, Self-Control 1, Courage 5

Willpower: 5

Humanity: 1

Notes: Language (French) Merit.

Juggler

Quotes: “This used to be such a nice city. Well, no, I guess that’s an overstatement.”

“Modius. Did I ever tell you about his stupid parties?”

“Maybe it’s another fire we need. Got a lighter?”

Background: Juggler is extremely tight-lipped about his background, his Embrace, and his sire. He has not, as far as anyone knows, shared these details with any vampire still extant. He tells his own childer only that his life in the Old World is unimportant, and it is his new existence, as Juggler, that now consumes his heart and occupies his mind. About the only clue to his origins is that he lapses into Italian when he is angry, but he speaks American English with no notable accent the rest of the time.



Juggler used to be passionate. Now he is merely interested. The city crumbles around him, and he could probably destroy Modius and seize control, but he has become so accustomed to the Prince of Gary and their squabbles that the notion of unlife without Modius terrifies him. He wants to *beat* Modius, to throw down the Camarilla (such as it is, here), but have Modius to be around to witness it.

Description: Juggler is of slightly below-average height and lightly built. He has shoulder-length dark blond hair and dark gray eyes with green-flecked irises, and he never blinks. He has average, undistinguished features. Juggler has a habit of steepling his fingers when listening, and throwing his arms wide when making a point.

Storytelling Hints: Juggler wants freedom, but his oppressors quit before he could throw them off. He wants people to rally around his cause, but his cause is meaningless. In order to do anything meaningful for the Kindred of the city, he has to improve life for the mortals (or at least get more mortals into the city somehow). Time is passing Juggler by, and only his odd quasi-friendship with Modius gives him any real context for his own existence. When the characters talk to Juggler, they might, at first, be attracted to his enigmatic statements and his knowledge of politics. As things progress, though, they should see him for what he is — a story about rebellion, not a rebel.

Name: Juggler

Clan: Brujah

Generation: Eighth

Concept: Would-be Anarch

Nature: Enigma

Demeanor: Trickster

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity (Graceful) 5, Stamina 3

Social Attributes: Charisma 3, Manipulation (Cunning) 4, Appearance 3

Mental Attributes: Perception (Probing) 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness (Double-Cross) 4, Athletics 2, Awareness 2, Brawl (Grappling) 4, Intimidation 2, Leadership (Fierce) 5, Streetwise (Anarchs) 4, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Drive 2, Etiquette (Gangs) 4, Firearms 3, Larceny 3, Melee 2, Stealth 3

Knowledges: Academics 1, Investigation 2, Occult 3, Politics 1

Backgrounds: Contacts 3, Herd 3, Allies 2

Disciplines: Celerity 3, Dominate 4, Fortitude 1, Obfuscate 2, Potence 2, Presence 2

Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 4, Courage 4

Willpower: 8

Humanity: 5

Notes: Language (Italian) Merit.

Maria DiMatto

Quotes: “Oh, no thanks. I never drink wine!”

“Sure, send me the script.”

“Everybody’s heard of a ghost town, right? But ghosts are boring and insubstantial. Now, zombies...”

Background: Maria DiMatto is a neonate, Embraced in 1980. The daughter of a Giovanni cousin, she was interested in the seedier side of her family from an early age. When she turned 16, she made what she referred to as an “art film” involving two of her friends from high school, a claw-foot tub, and a straight razor. Her family was impressed by her initiative (though her uncle did help her to tone things down a bit), and she decided she might like to go into filmmaking full time.

Through a combination of ambition, connections, and natural talent, Maria worked her way up the ladder in Hollywood. When she was selected for the Embrace, she was initially concerned that her new restrictions might bar her from doing what she loved, but she had made enough money and enough contacts that her family didn’t care. They wanted her to come back home and run things from afar — and that’s just not the way Maria DiMatto wanted to do things.

Instead of going home, on the night after her Embrace she staked her sire (who was also her cousin) and arranged meetings with new investors. Riding the wave of torture-porn films, she founded a new studio: After Sunset Films. Their mission was simply to produce frightening and profitable horror films without pretension and without Hollywood. She had four movies lined up to start production within a month. When she presented this to her uncle, he congratulated her, and asked her to please remove the stake from his son’s heart and let him go.

Description: Maria was Embraced in her early 20s, but she often employs makeup to make herself look more mature and professional. She is pale, with dark eyes and hair, drawn features, and a somewhat stocky build. Maria almost always wears black and white, but



for movie premieres she wears red, just for contrast. She never carries weapons, but frequently has a bodyguard close by.

Storytelling Hints: Maria loves what she does, but her aptitude for filmmaking does not mean that she doesn’t share her Clan’s preoccupation with death. One of her favorite phrases is that one death is a tragedy, but a million is a statistic. She is trying to find a way to equate the two, to make it possible for the “many death” of a town’s viability and livelihood dying to be more similar to the “one death” that can lead to a controllable ghost. Maria’s family doesn’t understand what she is trying to do, but her uncle has learned that telling Maria “no” just means she’ll do it anyway, and he doesn’t want anyone getting staked this time.

Name: Maria DiMatto

Clan: Giovanni

Generation: Eighth

Concept: Movie Producer

Nature: Visionary

Demeanor: Gallant

Mental Attributes: Perception 3, Intelligence (Incisive) 4, Wits 3

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Charisma (Enthusiastic) 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2

Talents: Alertness 2, Awareness 3, Brawl 1, Intimidation 2, Leadership 3, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge (Negotiation) 4

Skills: Etiquette 2, Firearms 2, Larceny 3, Melee 2, Performance 3, Stealth 1

Knowledges: Academics 3, Computer 2, Finance (Laundering Money) 4, Investigation 2, Law 1, Occult 3, Politics 3, Technology 2

Backgrounds: Contacts 5, Fame 2, Herd 3, Influence 2, Mentor 2, Resources 4, Retainers 5

Disciplines: Dominate 3, Necromancy 3, Potence 2

Necromancy Paths: Sepulchre 3, Ash 2

Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 5, Courage 3

Willpower: 6

Humanity: 4

Modius

Quotes: “Get away from me.”

“No one creates. Everything is dust. The fire did not spread far enough.”

“No, I won’t leave my home! I will not give up what I have fought to hold!”

Background: Modius rarely discusses his early unlife, let alone his mortal life. It’s not that he wants to keep it secret; it’s just that there hasn’t been anyone around who cares for years. He claims to have been instrumental in the formation of the Arcanum (*Vampire 20th*, pp. 375-376), and to have been the society’s first supernatural patron. He also claims to have known any and all 19th or early 20th century literary or occult figure the characters can name. He might really believe these claims, but it’s hard to know.

Modius is an elder vampire who has reached the point in his unlife that vampires fear: Time has simply passed him by. It was once possible to be a true Prince in this part of the country, with Dominated servants and expensive halls, with blood-bound mayors and councilman and the like, but the world has changed. Scrutiny is higher because information is cheap. Other Princes have adapted (or hired advisors to help them do so), but Modius has lost his power base, his childer, his allies, and even his servants. All he has left is Juggler, and he *hates* Juggler. But hate is the only passion remaining to him.

Modius tries to present himself as the Prince of Gary and have that mean something. He still has money and he still has his mansion, so he dresses like a rich



man as he hunts the streets. Unfortunately, that only makes him stand out more, because no one in Gary is rich anymore.

Description: Modius was Embraced in his early 40s. He is of slightly less than average height, but of above-average girth. He looks a little like Albert Einstein, but his clothing is more expensive (if rather outdated) and he carries himself like a rich gentleman. He is prone to loud outbursts, especially if the subject of his Princeship is raised.

Storytelling Hints: Modius wavers between being imperious and standoffish to new Kindred and being unctuous because there is no one else for him to talk to. In truth, Modius is lonely. Left to his own devices he will probably either meet Final Death or sink into torpor within a year or two, unless something changes drastically in his city — and on some level, he knows this. So if the characters need an ally or a mentor, Modius will try to sweep in and act in this role. Of course, he is so hopelessly out of touch that he might make a horrible mess of even this.

Name: Modius

Clan: Toreador

Generation: Seventh

Concept: Outdated Prince

Nature: Conniver

Demeanor: Child

Mental Attributes: Perception 3, Intelligence (Practical) 4, Wits 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Social Attributes: Charisma 2, Manipulation (Flattery) 4, Appearance 2

Talents: Alertness (Paranoid) 4, Awareness 2, Intimidation 3, Leadership 1, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Etiquette (Aristocratic) 4, Firearms 3, Larceny 2, Melee 2, Stealth 3

Knowledges: Academics 2, Investigation 2, Law (International) 4, Occult 2, Politics (Machiavellian) 4, Science 1

Backgrounds: Resources 3, Status 3

Disciplines: Auspex 3, Celerity 2, Dominate 4, Obfuscate 4, Presence 1, Thaumaturgy 1

Thaumaturgy Paths: Blood 1

Thaumaturgy Rituals: Defense of the Sacred Haven

Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 2, Courage 1

Willpower: 5

Humanity: 4

Scenes

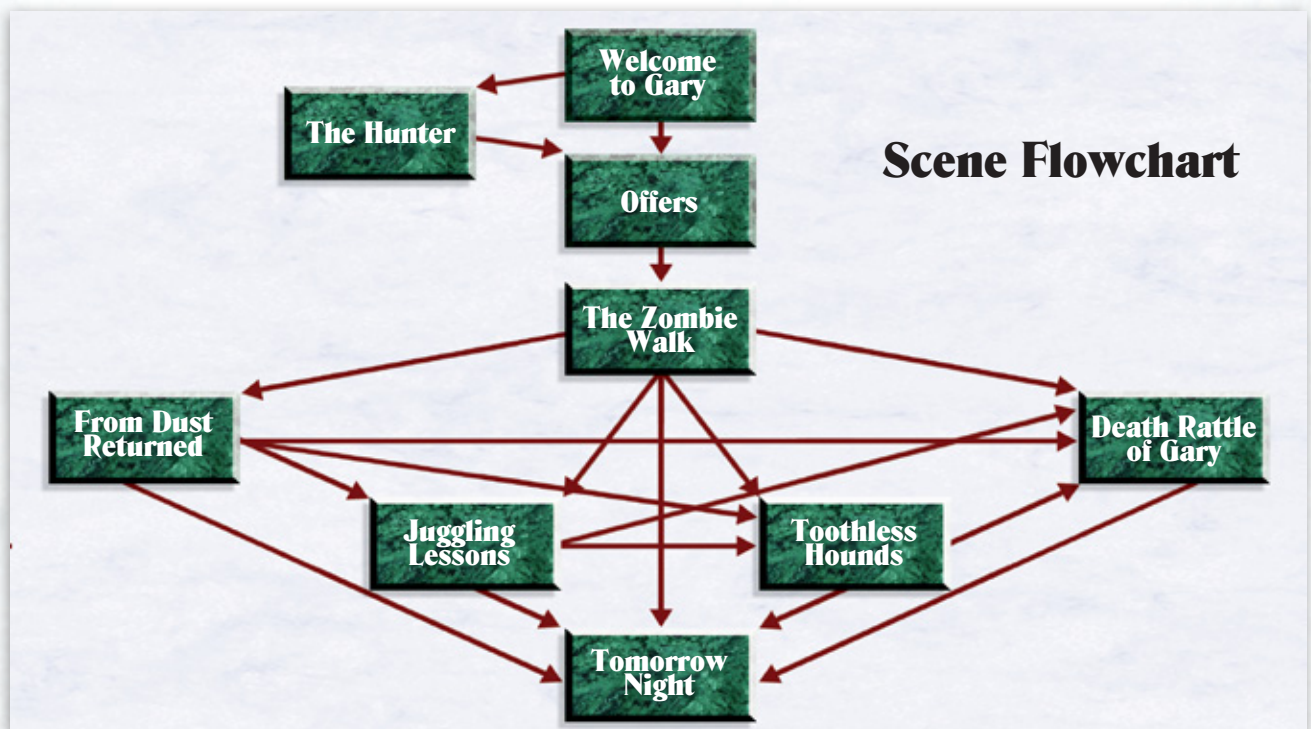
Plotting

The scenes in **Dust to Dust**, for the most part, do not need to progress in any particular order, and some scenes that might follow from existing scenes aren't always detailed. For example, in "Welcome to Gary," Prince Modius might, depending on what the characters say to him, invite them back to his mansion to "present" themselves to him. This scene isn't detailed, not because it wouldn't be important to the story but because whether it happens at all is conditional on too many factors.

The point is this: **Dust to Dust** does not progress neatly from one scene to the next. Rather, it presents a setting, some characters and a general situation, as well as a few events that happen and require the characters reaction (the term in video game parlance is "sandbox"). This avoids the issue of a scenario that feels too linear and forced, but it also asks for more work and improvisation from the Storyteller.

Systems

In the scenes below, the systems are sometimes broken up into "One Success, Three Successes, Five Successes." This is simply to save space and to provide guidelines for what the differing numbers of successes might indicate. The Storyteller should be able to decide what two or four successes means from these examples.





Welcome to Gary

Mental •• Physical •• Social •••

Overview

In this scene, the characters are introduced to the vampires of Gary. They learn how sparse feeding is here, as even the “elders” of the city are reduced to hunting down their prey in alleys like neonates.

Description

The Barrens

The houses burned 10 years ago and were never rebuilt. The streetlights are all out: some shot, some damaged by weather, some just lost to time. The city looks, if not dead, then seriously injured. You’ve been out here for an hour, and you haven’t seen a living soul. Finally, someone’s walking toward you. Based on his gait and the odor, he’s drunk. He might be lost, or he might be homeless. He’s the first person you’ve seen here, and somewhere in the back of your mind, your Beast says, “Kill. You won’t feed again soon.” You don’t have time to make that decision, though, before a hand grabs the man from an alleyway, pulling him into the dark.

Storyteller Goals

While the Storyteller needs to pay some attention to why the characters are in Gary in the first place, we recommend that you do this out of game time, in discussion with the players. Then jump straight to the hunt. It’s an iconic **Vampire** activity, and what happens on a hunt can speak volumes about how the characters’ experience of a city is going to play out.

With that in mind, the goal here is to present Gary in an unflattering light, from an undead perspective. The city is damaged, broken, and burned. There are clubs and bars, of course, but they are sparsely populated and people in them look askance at strangers, which makes them dangerous hunting grounds. Out on the street, the characters can employ whatever tricks they want to hunt, but finding food is difficult because of a simple lack of targets.

In a mechanical sense, the Storyteller can underscore the problems with hunting by increasing difficulties on hunting-related rolls (see pp. 259-260, **Vampire 20th**). This should be accompanied by some discussion, though, about what those difficulties mean, especially because the other Kindred in the city are also attempting to solve those problems.

While feeding, the characters should run across Juggler, Modius, or Maria. If the characters have split up to hunt (if they don’t, they’re likely to be fighting over scraps), you can run this scene by cutting between one group of characters and another. The reason for having the characters happen across these vampires is twofold. First, the characters should meet the other Kindred in the city and learn a bit about their machinations (this may also help the characters choose a side, eventually). Second, the characters might, if they are used to larger cities, think that powerful Kindred have networks of people to bring them blood dolls and vessels. Not so in Gary.

Three simple vignettes, one for each vampire, are presented below. Feel free to change the details as appropriate, depending on where the characters go to feed.

Juggler

Juggler is hunting in a parking lot of a big box store. He waits by a car until a lone shopper returns with a cart full of merchandise, then grabs her and feeds. He doesn't kill the victim, but does drop her on the ground rather than put her back in her car.

If the characters approach Juggler before or after his hunt, he welcomes them to Gary and asks if they have come here to get away from "the Camarilla's bullshit." He is not receptive to actively loyal Camarilla members, and derides them, asking how long they've been "off the leash" and if they remembered their membership cards. Sabbat members don't get the same derision, but he immediately adopts a defensive stance as if he expects them to attack him.

Modius

The Prince of Gary hunts homeless people in one of the many burnt-out sections of the city. He dresses completely inappropriately for the task, and relies on getting close to a target and Dominating the victim into following him somewhere dark. He then feeds on the victim, alters her memory, and goes on his way. His method of feeding is one of his many rituals, and while it's responsible, as such things go, it also makes him predictable (and therefore a target for hunters).

If the characters meet him before he feeds, he is irritable and volatile. He might even attack, if you feel the characters would stop at subduing him (if they're likely to kill him for his blood, best to leave it at posturing, unless you wish this story to turn on their murder of the Prince!). Once he's fed, he is quite willing to talk, and offers to take them to his mansion for a "true presentation ceremony."

Maria DiMatto

Maria is scouting locations, looking for a good starting point for her zombie walk. She starts around the Town Hall, taking pictures and chatting on her Bluetooth headset. She knows that this kind of attention brings onlookers fairly quickly, so when people show up she photographs them, asks if anyone there has acting experience or wants to be an extra in a horror movie, and then picks a naïve-looking citizen to become her meal for the evening. Unlike Modius and Juggler, though, she can't rely on the Kiss to cover what she is doing (due to her Clan weakness), so she drugs her prey first. She takes her victim to her RV, slips a narcotic into his drink, and takes the blood she wants.

If the characters speak with her at any time during this process, Maria greets them warmly and introduces herself. She asks if the characters know "if this place has a Prince or a Baron or a President or what?" She is enthused about her movie project, but says that she can't

say too much about it yet. If they press, she reveals that it's a zombie film and she's going to need some extra help to make it work — would the characters be interested? If not, she doesn't press the issue. She does note, however, that no one ever starved working for After Sunset Films.

Character Goals

Talk with the local Kindred and learn the political lay of the land.

Actions

Making a Good First Impression

Dice Pool: Charisma + Etiquette (difficulty 6)

Hindrances: *Modius* — Characters talk with him before he feeds (+1 difficulty); *Juggler* — Characters lead off with anything pro-Camarilla or pro-Sabbat (+1 difficulty); *Maria* — characters interrupt her phone call or "casting" spiel (+1 difficulty)

Help: *All* — Characters do not call attention to themselves or the vampire (-1 difficulty)

Roll Results

Botch: *Modius* — He walks off in a huff, muttering about the deplorable state of Kindred education these nights. *Juggler* — Check for frenzy. He'll snap out of it in two turns. *Maria* — She remains friendly and effusive, but quietly asks her bodyguard to keep these people away from her in future.

Failure: The vampires aren't thrilled with the characters, but will still speak with them. The next Social roll the players make with this particular character is at +2 difficulty.

One Success: The characters make a good first impression. The vampire continues talking with the characters, but doesn't reveal anything too interesting.

Three Successes: The characters say something that resonates with the vampire, and the vampire reveals more personal or detailed information about his plans or desires for the city.

Five Successes: The vampire *trusts* the characters, just a little, and lets the characters in some deeper motive for his/her actions.

Consequences

This scene mainly sets up the characters' initial reactions to (and from) the important vampires in Gary. The impressions they make should color future interactions with these characters, but even a botch shouldn't be insurmountable. After all, if the only Kindred in the city are these three plus the characters, no one can afford to be choosy.



The Hunter

Mental •• Physical • Social •••

Overview

The characters spot Sullivan Dane in a place where neither can attack. He attempts to convince them to kill themselves. He does know a bit about the voodoo cult, and will tell the characters some information, but makes no bones about being willing to kill them later. He even takes notes.

Description

He sits down next to you and takes off his hat. He's wearing black gloves and a long coat, and something about his presence makes you feel unclean. He looks at you and you find that you can't meet his eyes. He speaks, and his voice – gentle, low, and with a faint English accent – is at once soothing and humbling. "Why haven't you met the sun yet?"

Storyteller Goals

This scene is meant to introduce the characters to Sullivan Dane and make them understand that he is a threat to them, but also a potential source of information, if they don't mind dealing with someone who would just as happily take their heads.

Dane can sense the Kindred on sight, and can even see through Obfuscate and similar Disciplines (in addition to the other abilities that his True Faith grant him – see pp. 372-373 of *Vampire 20th*). He does not, however, approach the characters while they are out hunting or in a similarly dangerous position. This scene happens when the characters are in public, perhaps in a restaurant or on a bus. Dane approaches them and begins to speak with them.

Dane honestly does want to know why they haven't greeted the sun, especially if the characters seem otherwise decent. He can present arguments for why this is a good choice, ranging from the fact that the characters have to steal blood to survive all the way up to the idea that sooner or later, they will wind up "like Modius." Dane has been familiar with Gary's Kindred long enough to know that Modius is losing his grip (he has, in fact, been toying with the notion of making the Prince of Gary his next target), and he is happy to use this as a way to get under the characters' skin.

This scene should be a conversation — as hostile or angry as the characters want to make it, but only a conversation. Dane doesn't rise to baiting and he doesn't engage in religious debate. He isn't interested in explaining how he knows God's will, because he doesn't see it that way. He simply tries to let go of his own fate and will, and let God direct him — and here he is.

This would be an easy notion to dismiss, if Dane's Faith weren't an almost palpable thing. He repels Kindred by his very presence, and his touch makes their flesh sting. The characters may even have heard of him (see below), and if they display appropriately fearful responses, Dane is quick to capitalize on that. It is right that they should fear God, he says, and they should think about why.

Once it becomes clear that the characters aren't going to kill themselves to make things right with God, Dane moves the conversation on. He mentions that he isn't sure why God brought him back into town, but he thinks it might have something to do with a group of

men he saw several days ago. They weren't vampires, but the leader — a broader, bearded man with an accent — filled Dane with dread. Dane admonishes the characters to watch out for these folks. "They're from your world," he says, "and I worry about what they are here to do." If pressed, Dane says that he dreams of the Gary Arson, but sees the bearded man (Lazlo Varga, though Dane doesn't know that) in the flames.

Character Goals

Talk with Dane. Learn about the zombie cult.

Actions

Knowing About Sullivan Dane

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Occult or Streetwise (difficulty 7)

Hindrances: Character is less than 10 years from the Embrace (+1 difficulty); character was deliberately sheltered from other vampires (+1 difficulty)

Help: Character has dealt with hunters (-1 difficulty); character is more than 20 years past the Embrace (-1 difficulty)

Roll Results

Botch: The character believes that Sullivan Dane is a vampire, perhaps the former Prince of London or something equally ostentatious.

Failure: The character has no idea who Dane is.

One Success: The character has heard of a hunter who wears black gloves and works for the Catholic Church.

Three Successes: As above, and the character remembers the name "Dane" and knows that Dane is feared by vampires across the country.

Five Successes: As above, and the character has heard rumors that Dane can see through Obfuscate and that a single drop of his blood burns Kindred to ash.

Consequences

Dane won't fight the characters in public; he doesn't want innocent people to get hurt. If the characters get violent with him, he calls upon his True Faith to repel them and leaves. Note that Masquerade breaches bring publicity and Kindred involvement from nearby Chicago, which can change the tone of the story remarkably. If the characters are calm and polite, he gives them a phone number and tells them to call him if they wish. He will share whatever he learns in the course of his own investigations. In any case, though, he makes it clear that if the characters won't do the right thing (that is, kill themselves) soon, he will do it for them.





Offers

Mental ... Physical ... Social ...

Overview

The characters get offers from the three major players — Maria wants them to work security for the zombie walk (and feed as they like, provided they don't kill their vessels), Juggler wants them to help him do some leg-breaking, and Modius wants them to scout and take photos of buildings.

Description

Modius

The Prince of Gary slides a new camera bag toward you. "Top of the line, or so I'm told," he says. "Of course I spare no expense." He runs a hand through his hair, and pretends not to notice the fraying seam in his jacket. "Have you any experience taking photographs? Obviously I need them for informative purposes, but I wouldn't mind an eye toward composition as well."

Maria

Maria spreads the map out before you. "We start here," she says. "We walk down the block here, make a right, two more blocks, left, two blocks, and here we are the parking lot. All I need is for you to work crowd control." She smiles brightly. "You know, make sure the police don't hassle us, the zombies don't start eating people. That kind of thing." She nudges you in the arm, just to make sure you get the joke.

Juggler

Juggler laughs quietly. "See, it's too many balls to juggle," he says. "I need to go to Chicago to hook up with some friends of mine, but I haven't quite made my point to these assholes here in Gary. So I want you to make my point for me." He glances at the door of the bar, tensing, but the patron entering heads straight for the cigarette machine.

Storyteller Goals

This scene is meant to get the characters embroiled in the plots of the city. The three ambitious Kindred of Gary — Modius, Juggler, and Maria — all have things that need doing, but not enough in the way of competent help to get them done. Since Gary doesn't have a full vampiric court anymore, Modius can't fob off jobs on a Seneschal or Sheriff. Likewise, Juggler might once have been able to call up a group of Anarchs, but those nights are past. These vampires therefore look to the characters for help.

Note that these three jobs aren't mutually exclusive. Nothing says that the characters can't do all three of them, or, if the coterie is large enough, that they can't split their attention and handle all three jobs. While the three Kindred are rivals, they aren't bitter enemies, so even if Modius learns that the characters did a job for Juggler, it doesn't sour him on the idea of hiring them (especially since he lacks other options).

Modius

Modius is looking for buildings that are burnt out or otherwise abandoned, but would be serviceable havens for visiting Kindred. He wants the characters to venture into the neighborhoods near the highway and take photos of these buildings, inside and out. The work isn't especially hard, but it is time-consuming.

Compensation: Modius initially tries offering the characters boons and favors, and then positions as Primogen once the city gets on its feet again, and finally money. He has very little else to offer them. It's worth noting that although his offer of position and favors are worthless now, if they help him put his court back together then these things might actually appreciate in value. Although, for the same amount of work, the characters could probably claim the domain themselves.

Doing the Work: Systems for taking photos can be found below. While on the job, the characters might run into homeless people, drug dealers and users, members of Lazlo's cult, rogue Kindred, Sullivan Dane, ghosts of people who died in the Great Arson, or anything else the Storyteller finds interesting.

Juggler

Juggler had a difference of opinion with some people on the northeast end of Gary. Who exactly he had this altercation with is up to the Storyteller. Some possibilities include: Members of Varga's cult, scouts from the Camarilla in Chicago, rabble-rousers from the Sabbat in Detroit, or hunters (unaffiliated with Dane — at least so far). In any event, they caught him low on blood and short-tempered, and while some violence was exchanged, neither side came away too badly damaged. Now, unfortunately, they're in Gary looking for Juggler, and he has bigger fish to fry.

Juggler doesn't necessarily want them dead, though depending on the characters' affiliations and who exactly is involved, deadly force might be appropriate. Juggler tells the characters who they're looking for and where he found them, meaning that some investigation might be necessary for this task.

Compensation: Juggler isn't rich and doesn't have the kind of money that would probably entice the characters, but he is willing to trade favors, information about the Anarch Movement, and instruction in Disciplines.

Doing the Work: The combat systems found in *Vampire 20th* should suffice for when the characters find their targets, and traits for antagonists can be found in Chapter Nine of that book.

Maria

Maria's zombie walk is an important enough plot point in *Dust to Dust* that it gets its own scene, but for purposes of working security, the characters simply need to walk along with the "zombies," handle any security issues that arise, and feed (if they so desire). Systems for feeding during the walk are provided below.

Compensation: Maria is happy to pay the characters for their time. She won't pay exorbitant rates, but she does pay considerably more than the going rate for security, plus free blood. If the characters want something else for their time, Maria is willing to negotiate for boons or instruction. She will not, however, teach Necromancy to non-Giovanni, though if the characters are having ghost trouble she will use it on their behalf.

Doing the Work: See "The Zombie Walk" for more details.

Character Goals

Make some cash, make some friends, learn some new tricks, and figure out their own plans for Gary.

Actions

Photography

Dice Pool: Wits + Crafts or Hobby Talent/Professional Skill: Photography (difficulty 6)

Hindrances: Character is using Crafts without a specialty or a specific Ability in Photography (+1 difficulty), character uses a cheap camera (+1 difficulty)

Help: Character takes at least an hour to familiarize herself with the camera that Modius provided (-1 difficulty)

Roll Results

Botch: The battery is out and none of the pictures are saved, but the character doesn't realize this until later.

Failure: The pictures are blurry, out of focus, too dark, or otherwise low-quality.

One Success: The pictures are acceptable and show the buildings that Modius wanted.

Three Successes: The pictures are good quality and tell Modius exactly what he wanted to know.

Five Successes: The pictures show Modius perfect spots for a haven, as well as some other buildings in areas he hadn't considered. Modius is extremely grateful to the character and is willing to pay more than was originally agreed on.

Feeding During the Zombie Walk

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Stealth (difficulty 6)

Hindrances: Character is not in zombie makeup (+1 difficulty); character attempts to feed within a block of City Hall (+1 difficulty)

Help: Character attempts to feed within a block of the parking lot (-1 difficulty)

Roll Results

Botch: Sullivan Dane, watching the zombie walk, sees the character feeding and intervenes. He doesn't necessarily try to kill the character, especially not if doing so would endanger mortals, but he definitely attempts to drive the vampire off.

Failure: The character notices someone watching before he bites the victim. The character can choose

to break off the attack (or turn it into a "zombie attack," playing along with the walk), or feed and risk exposure.

Success: Any number of successes ensures a quick bite. If the character wishes to feed for more turns than the player rolled successes, the Storyteller should roll three dice each turn after that limit is reached. Any successes mean that someone sees the character, though whether they intervene depends on how the character is feeding.

Consequences

Depending on what happens in this scene, the characters may wind up injured, rich, exposed, with new friends or enemies, etc. The one consequence that definitely should result is the characters becoming more deeply mired in the politics of Gary.





The Zombie Walk

Mental • Physical ••• Social ••

Overview

Maria's long-awaited zombie walk happens, with the characters present either as spectators or as security. During the party after the walk, Lazlo Varga tries to open the urn and spread Jean Lisle's ashes over the crowd, creating a throng of mindless drones.

Description

The Walk

It looks like Maria outdid herself. There are people here from as far away as Atlanta, dressed in rags and zombie makeup, lurching around in front of Gary City Hall. Modius, watching from the sidelines, sniffs a bit. "Of all the creatures of the night to emulate," he mutters. "What happened to the nights when they would dress in elegant black and play at being us?"

The Party

The walk completed, many of the "zombies" have broken character, swilling beer and drinking some horrible alcoholic concoction called a "bloody brain." Maria DiMatto stands near her RV, still in her tasteful but hideously convincing makeup, smiling over the crowd.

Lazlo's Gambit

The man standing near the RV isn't dressed or made up as a zombie. He's broad-shouldered and pale, and carrying a clay urn. He stares out over the crowd with a look of hatred as he works the lid open.

Storyteller Goals

During this scene, the characters watch or participate in the zombie walk. People drive in from miles around — Maria's films are popular, and she's done well in promoting this event. The characters may even have been involved in spreading the word, depending on what kind of relationship they have with Maria. But in any case, the attendance is close to three thousand, the hotels in the area are booked solid (even if many people stay in Chicago instead), and the local vendors are happy to have some business.

The other Kindred in the city are going, though just to observe. Modius stays on the sidelines and laments that people are lurching about and acting like idiots, when they used to wear fangs and pretend to be cultured, composed creatures of the night. Juggler, true to enigmatic form, comes in full makeup and staggers around moaning for brains, dribbles blood out of the sides of his mouth, and feeds on young "zombies" in dark corners. Maria is at the front of the walk, surrounded by her employees and photographers (she has specifically instructed photographers to stay towards the front of the mob, in part to let Kindred feed closer to the back).

Play through the walk in as much detail as the players find amusing. They might walk alongside the zombies and poke fun, feed on the marchers, or dress up and take part. In either case, many of the locals come out to enjoy the festivities, too, and whether or not the characters are officially working security they

might have the opportunity to break up some fights. The real meat of this scene, however, happens at the end of the march.

The zombie walk starts at City Hall and goes just over a mile to the parking lot of an abandoned big box store. Maria has purchased the land and plans to use it as a shooting location for her zombie film, *Rust*. When the marchers arrive, she gets on the PA system and announces this to the crowd. She also announces that she'll be needing extras and asks the people here to agree to be filmed. This, of course, gets applause and screams of approval, and Maria (always one for doing things by the book), has her people snapping pictures and filming the celebrants.

Before the party really gets going, though, Victor Lazlo climbs up to the top of the RV and starts opening the urn. His intent is to fling the ashes out into the crowd, eradicating their free will and turning them into mindless slaves (he actually thinks this will kill their bodies, as well, but he is mistaken — he mis-translated part of the spell he is casting). The characters should see this happening and have a chance to prevent it. If they get to Lazlo before he opens the urn or scatters the ashes, he runs. He doesn't fight except to throw an attacker off (and given his strength, he's probably capable of handling a single vampire), and then runs toward the abandoned store. His followers, seeing this, flee with him.

If he succeeds in flinging the ashes over the crowd, they don't come anywhere close to reaching all or even most of the people. However, the ashes fly as though possessed of will and agency, spreading themselves over at least a hundred people. These people immediately drop to the ground and froth, as though in seizure. When they stand up, their hands and faces are stained with ash, and they go lurching off to "infect" others by smearing them with the stuff.

Lazlo can control the zombies, but it is much harder than he thought it would be (in part because he assumed the ashes would kill the people). Controlling the mob requires his full concentration. Make an extended roll for Lazlo: Charisma + Occult, difficulty 7, with one roll per turn and 10 successes required (10s count as two successes, because Lazlo's Necromancy Specialty applies). If the characters can interrupt him before he assumes control of the mob, they simply mill around "infecting" the rest of the people, which is problematic but not immediately dangerous. If Lazlo assumes control, however, he will tell the existing zombies to attack the living people — until it becomes obvious that he is under attack by vampires. At this

point, he sets his minions on the characters (and no matter how tough they are, they probably aren't going to be able to successfully fight off a hundred people who don't feel fear or pain!).

Lazlo and his cultists aren't interested in fighting a coterie of vampires in full view of thousands of people, so if the characters attack, the cultists fight to escape. Once they're out of public view, they are happy to fight to the death — Lazlo is already dead, and his cultists look at death as something desirable. (That doesn't absolve the characters of Humanity loss for killing, however).

This scene ends either when the characters follow Lazlo and his cultists into the abandoned store (at which point you should proceed to "From the Dust Returned"), or when the characters break Lazlo's hold over the cultists. If they follow Lazlo to the store after he has already loosed the ashes, you may need to return to this scene after the fight to resolve that situation.

Killing Lazlo Varga

Varga is nearly immortal. He recovers from any conventional damage the characters can throw at him. One way to kill him permanently is to let Jean Lisle have him: The elder Samedi's bite is enough to keep him dead (but see "From the Dust Returned"). Three other possibilities are provided below. The *best* method for killing him, however, is the one your players come up with. Let the occult scholar come up with an idea — not a roll of the dice and some parroted information from you — but an interesting, in-theme idea for keeping this thing dead. If it segues nicely into one of the methods below, fine, but otherwise, roll with what your players give you and have their ideas work out. Your players will appreciate it, and they will probably come up with something interesting and more appropriate to your chronicle anyway.

Maria Can Help!

Maria is something of an expert in necromancy herself. If the characters go to her and ask for help, she tells them that a physical attack might not work, but a spiritual or magical one would. She can call down angry ghosts to attack Lazlo, but she needs time to work the spell, and that means keeping Lazlo in her line of sight and keeping his cultists away from her. If that's too easy for your troupe, maybe the more combat-oriented could handle the cultists and the more research-oriented can help Maria form the ritual (see below for systems).



If successful: Lazlo convulses as ghosts swarm him, ripping his skin open from the inside and shrieking horribly at him. As he falls, howling in pain, a rent appears in the fabric of the world, leading to a place of roiling blackness and terrifying screams. A skeletal hand reaches out and grabs Lazlo, pulling him into the dark, and the rift closes.

Dane Ex Machina

If the party-goers become zombified, Sullivan Dane might show up to help with damage control. The characters see him touch zombies and cure them, the ash on their bodies burning away. They might conclude, correctly, that he can destroy Lazlo by laying him to rest (if you want to use this idea, you might seed it in conversation with Dane in “The Hunter”). In this instance, the characters need to fight their way toward Dane and ask for his help, and then help him get to Lazlo (see below for systems for clearing the way). They might still have to fight the cultists, as well. Dane, for the record, is immune to infection.

If successful: Dane touches Lazlo’s chest and whispers a prayer in Latin. Any character close enough to hear can recognize it as the last rites (Intelligence

+ Academics, difficulty 8, or 5 if the character understands Latin). Lazlo falls over unceremoniously, already dead, blood oozing out of a bullet wound in his chest (the wound that originally killed him). Dane tips his hat and vanishes into the crowd.

Embrace

Embracing Lazlo kills him, but raises him as a vampire. Draining his blood is not enough for the characters to kill him, as his healing powers kick in immediately, replacing his blood. In addition, the Kiss has no effect on Lazlo, so he fights through the entire process. Using this method will require subduing or killing his cultists, as well. Once he is Embraced, he is not powerless, but is no more dangerous than any neonate. He retains his Attributes and Abilities, but not his strange mystical powers. He gains three dots in his new Clan Disciplines, distributed as the Storyteller sees fit, but probably with a focus on Celerity, Fortitude, and Potence. What the characters do with him is up to them, but setting him on fire and staking him are viable choices.

If successful: Lazlo opens his eyes and bares his fangs, and for a moment seems to revel in this new

state of undeath. And then he looks around at the characters and realizes that, as monsters go, he is a small fish in a very big, shark-infested ocean.

Freeing the Zombies

Even if the characters kill Varga, there's still the question of how to free the people. They are infected by a combination of Jean Lisle's soul and Lazlo Varga's magic. Freeing them is as simple as getting rid of the ash, but that requires a great deal of water. The characters should be able to verify that washing the ashes off breaks the spell, but wiping them with a rag or a hand only smears them. (The ashes have no effect on vampires).

The buildings in the area have old fire extinguishers that shoot water, rather than chemicals. The characters might also be able to break open a few fire hydrants to douse the zombies or use Thaumaturgy to call up a cleansing rain.

If the characters want to pursue a more esoteric solution to the problem, Maria (or another appropriately knowledgeable character) might be able to break the effect using Necromancy. This requires a circle of blood around the infected people, infused with enough will to keep the zombies contained (see below for systems). Once the circle is complete, the necromancer's player (or the Storyteller, if Maria is doing this) rolls Charisma + Occult (difficulty 9). Even one success is enough to break the spell.

The "circle of blood" ritual only works if Lazlo is dead or has fled the area. Washing the ashes off frees a zombie immediately.

Character Goals

Enjoy the zombie walk. Stop Lazlo Varga from enslaving and killing people.

Actions

Helping Maria to Kill Lazlo

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Occult (difficulty 7, extended action, 10 successes required)

Hindrances: Character is hungry (+1 difficulty)

Help: Character has a least a dot in Necromancy (-1 difficulty)

Roll Results

Botch: Character makes a critical mistake in reasoning, but Maria doesn't catch it. All successes are

lost as a howling Spectre appears and screams at the characters before vanishing.

Failure: No successes are added to the total.

Successes: The character adds successes toward the total. Once the total reaches 10, the ritual ends as described above.

Clearing the Way for Dane

Dice Pool: Strength + Brawl (difficulty 7)

Hindrances: Character has no dots in Brawl (+1 difficulty); character has no dots in Athletics (+1 difficulty)

Help: Character has Athletics 2 or more (-1 difficulty)

Roll Results

Botch: The character is tackled and pulled down by hordes of "zombies" trying to infect him, and must immediately check for frenzy (p. 298 of *Vampire 20th*).

Failure: The character does not make any progress in clearing the way for Dane.

Successes: The characters must collectively accumulate 10 successes in order for Dane to reach Lazlo, and that isn't counting subduing his cultists. This action simply measures shoving infected people out of the way.

Making the Wall of Blood

Dice Pool: Stamina + Crafts (difficulty 6)

Hindrances: No dots in Crafts (+1 difficulty); less than half of full blood pool (+1 difficulty); multiple characters are creating blood-lines are trying to synch them up (+1 difficulty)

Help: Full blood pool (-1 difficulty); Dexterity 4 or more (-1 difficulty)

Roll Results

Botch: The character loses control of his ability to bleed, losing two points of blood and making a puddle rather than a line.

Failure: The character fails to make a straight line. Instead, he makes a broken, dribbled line of blood. The character loses one point of blood.

Successes: The character makes an unbroken line of blood. Five successes are required to circle the crowd of "zombies," meaning that one character could manage it in one action if the player rolls well. In any case, every roll costs the character one point of blood. Multiple characters can contribute.

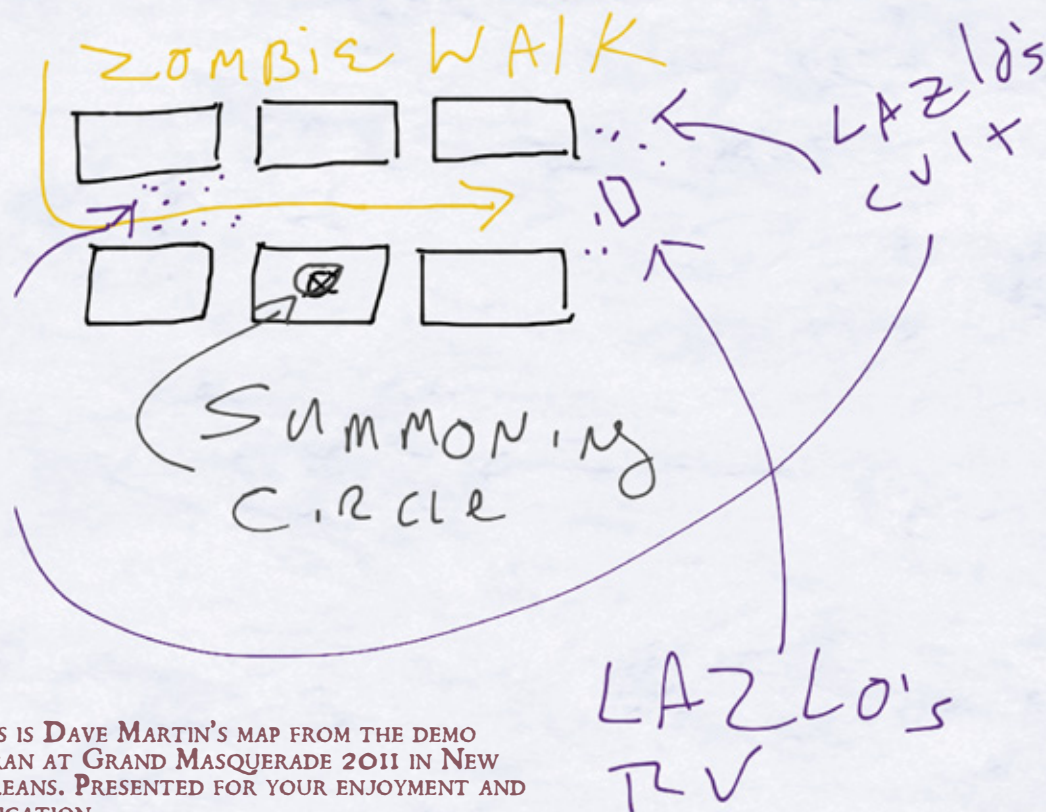
Consequences

If Lazlo managed to open the urn and mind-control a lot of people, the characters might be dealing with a massive Masquerade breach. Fortunately, some context for a “zombie horde” exists — Maria actually *was* trying to film a zombie film, after all. The characters will probably need to help with the spin, even just by talking to people or spreading the word online. Maria would be glad of the help, but the resulting fallout brings curious people to Gary, which means better feeding for a week or so. It also might mean more hunters in town, if you want to give Sullivan Dane some backup.

Consider, though, what happened to Jean Lisle. If you still want to include him, you might give the players a Perception + Alertness roll to notice little drabs

of ashes wriggling off and merging. (Strictly speaking, Jean can't do this, but it's a nicely creepy image, so you can assume that the magical treatments that Lazlo gave the urn also give Jean some temporary latitude). If you want to get really strange, maybe Jean's ashes become concentrated in one unfortunate “zombie,” who walks around the area absorbing the ashes until enough of them are concentrated for Jean to reform. If you don't want to bother with Jean (maybe destroying Jean is the players' reward for taking care of Lazlo), just assume he's too scattered to reform and is washed away with the next rain.

In any case, you can progress from this scene to “From the Dust Returned” (if Lazlo and his thugs fled to the abandoned store, or if you want to have the fight with Jean Lisle later on), or “Juggling Lessons” (if you have resolved Jean Lisle's story or wish to do it later on).



THIS IS DAVE MARTIN'S MAP FROM THE DEMO HE RAN AT GRAND MASQUERADE 2011 IN NEW ORLEANS. PRESENTED FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT AND EDIFICATION.

From the Dust Returned

Mental • Physical ••• Social •••

Overview

Lazlo runs from the zombie walk into the abandoned store and fights the characters. The resulting blood-bath, however, awakens Jean Lisle, the elder Samedi.

Description

One of the cultists falls backwards, blood spraying from the wound in his neck. The blood splatters onto the urn that the bearded man holds. It slips from his grasp and shatters, the thick ash inside soaking up the blood on the floor. Slowly, the ashes solidify, and a human figure stands up from the ash, white and gray powder changing to putrescent, stinking flesh and wicked fangs. The vampire turns and stares at you, its gaze muddy and hungry.

Storyteller Goals

This scene is about bloody combat, pure and simple. The cultists fight to the death because they want to die (since they believe Lazlo will raise them up as immortal zombies like him).

The cultists shouldn't prove a great threat to the characters. Use the traits for the Criminal Enforcer on p. 377 of *Vampire 20th*, and assume that they are armed with pistols (if the characters aren't especially combat proficient) or daggers (if they are). Don't worry too much about making the cultists a challenge; the fight with them shouldn't go more than about three turns (you might want to consider using the rules for

extras on p. 284 of *Vampire 20th*). The goal for this part of the fight is getting some blood on the ground so that Jean Lisle can appear. That said, don't forget to have the players make degeneration rolls for killing people, as appropriate to their respective Humanity or Path ratings.

Once most of the cultists are dead or badly wounded, Lazlo accidentally drops the urn. If you can time this with a character's attack on him, or have the urn shattered early in the fight so that the ashes are on the ground already, even better! Jean Lisle rises up from the ground, starving and half crazed.

His first act is to kill Lazlo. As mentioned above, normally Lazlo can recover from any physical injury, including massive blood loss. However, touched as he is by Samedi death magic, Jean Lisle cuts right through Lazlo's enchantments and consumes his life. Lazlo collapses to the ground, desiccated and skeletal, and Lisle turns his attention to the characters.

At this point, Jean has 10 blood points (he had to spend the points he absorbed from the cultists to reform and heal his body, so the blood he presently has is all from Lazlo). After so long in prison, however, he is angry and hungry for fresh blood, and attacks. The characters need to flee, beat him, or try to make him lucid again. If they win a physical combat, one of the characters might choose to commit diablerie upon him (see pp. 293-295 of *Vampire 20th*). Running is the simplest option, but if Jean follows them out into the crowd of "zombies," he grabs people and starts feeding.



The characters might choose to stop him then; see Consequences if they don't.

Jean Lisle fights fiercely. He isolates the most dangerous combatants and attempts to either fling them out of the building or subdue them by breaking their legs and backs. In the former case, Jean needs to establish a clinch (see p. 276 of *Vampire 20th*), and then roll Strength + Athletics + Potence (difficulty 2 + character's Stamina + Potence, maximum 10). If the roll succeeds, the character is thrown out of the building. She suffers bashing damage equal to the successes rolled, and must spend an action to get back into the fight. In the latter case, Jean establishes a clinch and then attempts to break bones. Roll Jean's Strength + Brawl + Potence in an opposed roll against the character's Stamina + Strength + Fortitude + Potence. If Jean wins, the targeted bone is broken. The character suffers lethal damage equal to Jean's net successes, but more importantly, cannot move faster than a slow limp (broken leg) or cannot walk at all (broken spine) until the damage is healed.

If Jean doesn't feel any immediate threat, he grabs a character and attempts to feed. Jean doesn't acknowledge bullets as a threat; he is so frenzied he barely feels them (though he still takes damage normally).

If Jean suffers more than two levels of lethal damage, roll his Willpower. If the roll succeeds, he flees. If the characters let him get away, he becomes a running threat to the Kindred and citizens of Gary (see the "Consequences" section of this scene).

The characters might be able to talk Lisle down from his frenzy. This is difficult, but not impossible, especially for a socially-oriented coterie. Systems for this can be found below. Those systems assume that the characters don't attempt to use a power like Entrancement (Presence 3), which works normally (although Lisle is a fairly powerful Generation).

Character Goals

Survive, escape, and destroy Jean Lisle.

Actions

Talking Jean Down

Dice Pool: Charisma + Expression (difficulty 9)

Hindrances: Every gunshot or attack on Jean (+1 difficulty); characters have already damaged Jean (+1 difficulty); character is white (+1 difficulty)

Help: Character uses Presence 1 (-2 difficulty); character speaks French to Jean (-1 difficulty)

Roll Results

Botch: Jean's frenzy only deepens, and he immediately attacks the character that spoke. No further attempt to talk him down is possible.

Failure: Jean hesitates for a moment and mutters "we will be free again" in French. He then attacks again. The characters can continue their attempts to talk him down.

One Success: Jean stops attacking and stares at the character. If they do nothing threatening or sudden for three turns, his frenzy ends and he speaks with the characters. However, for the rest of the scene, he is still volatile (which the character can realize with a successful Wits + Empathy roll). Any threatening action will set him off again.

Three Successes: Jean's frenzy ends and he becomes lucid enough to speak with the coterie. He is not interested in sharing personal information or exchanging favors, but he will listen to reason.

Five Successes: Jean breaks off the attack and becomes lucid. He doesn't necessarily like the characters, but he remains reasonable about following the Traditions and not endangering the Masquerade, at least for the time being.

Consequences

If the characters lead Jean to the party and don't stop him from feeding, Maria calls her bodyguards and steps in. Jean kills all of her bodyguards, but she manages to get a stake into his heart from behind and load his stinking body into her RV. She immediately damns the characters as cowards and cuts off all contact with them. Depending on how many people Jean managed to kill, the other Kindred of the city might follow her lead. In any event, the Storyteller might consider degeneration rolls, depending the characters' conduct or morality.

If Jean flees the scene, he eventually comes out of the frenzy. He sets up a haven in the city's sewers and emerges every night to hunt. Unlike other Kindred in the city, he isn't especially discerning and is happy to kill vampires as well as mortals. The Storyteller might consider running a scene where the characters run across Sullivan Dane (possibly with Church backup) hunting for Lisle. The two sides might even exchange information, though Dane isn't interested in teaming up.

If the characters managed to talk Lisle down from his frenzy, they might be able to convince him to leave town or at least to keep his predations under control. This is left largely to Storyteller fiat, but remember that Lisle isn't in good control of his Beast on the best of nights. Any control he manages is short-term at best.



Juggling Lessons

Mental •• Physical •• Social •••

In either case, when this scene is resolved, proceed on to “Juggling Lessons” or “Toothless Hounds.”

Overview

The characters interact with Juggler, who tries to sway them to the Anarch Movement. During his “lesson,” the characters run across Prince Modius’ photograph, and Juggler takes the opportunity for an object lesson.

Description

“I don’t mean to climb up on a soap box,” says Juggler. “But I’m just saying — we know what happens to cities with Camarilla Princes. This.” He gestures to the burnt-out buildings around you. “And here’s fucking Modius trying to reestablish his bullshit court again. Deck chairs on the Titanic, I sw—”. He stops short, and cocks his head to the side. And then you hear it, too — the rapid-fire clicking of a camera’s shutter.

Storyteller Goals

This scene is meant to increase tension among the city’s factions, and possibly within the coterie. Juggler, not the most patient of Kindred on the best of nights, seeks to sway opinion against Modius and the Camarilla in general. More specifically, he wants to bring the characters around to his way of thinking.

If the characters have a standing reason to speak with Juggler, use that to frame this scene. Maybe he

owes one or more of them a lesson in a Discipline (see “Offers”). Maybe the characters seek him out to help them deal with Lisle or Varga. If that’s the case, resolve whatever the character came for before actually running this scene; if Juggler does a favor for the coterie they should be more inclined to listen to what he has to say.

When portraying Juggler, don’t monopolize the conversation. Juggler isn’t interested in hearing himself talk; he honestly wants to know what the characters think about the Camarilla versus the Anarch Movement. He talks enough to get the conversation going and jumps in when he hears the characters say something he thinks is obviously wrong, but beyond that, he serves as a prod for the conversation. If you find yourself monologuing during this scene, stop and involve one or more of the players.

Juggler engages the characters in a discussion about Kindred politics, the efficacy (or lack thereof) of the Camarilla’s policies, and how the Sabbat is arguably worse. He then points out that the Free States out in California seem to run just fine without a Prince, and in fact Kindred in general can conduct their own affairs without interference from more powerful vampires.

The characters might agree or disagree, in whole or in part. If they argue with him, though, he has responses to many of the more obvious discussion points:

- “But without the Traditions? What’s to stop vampires from going on the news?” Juggler points that weird news stories make the rounds every day (and

night), and no one really believes them. People excel at rationalizing what they can't accept. Vampires are generally smart enough to understand why they shouldn't reveal themselves, and those that aren't need to be culled. The greater vampiric population can handle that without a huge, global organization.

- **“Won't that just be anarchy, then?”** Juggler concedes that without any governance, the older and most powerful Kindred would be able to feed and kill almost unchecked. But that just means that younger, less powerful vampires need to band together and find a system that works *for them*. Juggler isn't against forming alliances; he just doesn't want someone he never acknowledged as a leader telling him what to do.

- **“What about the Sabbat/Lupines/hunters/other threat?”** Same answer applies, according to Juggler. Kindred in general need to learn to leave well enough alone. Besides, Juggler argues, when was the last time a Prince took up arms in defense of his city? Normally, Princes just unleash Hounds or other warriors in their courts to go and handle such threats. Or else, they conscript neonates who don't know any better (depending on what kinds of experiences the characters have had, they might relate strongly to this).

- **“Don't you just want to be Prince by another name?”** Juggler takes mild offense to this insinuation, but he does answer the question. While he wouldn't shy away from being a leader among Anarchs, that's not what he's interested in. He wants to see the existing power structure thrown down, because at present it only exists to reinforce the *status quo*. This isn't like corporate America, he notes. The CEOs there eventually *die*. This is an everlasting dictatorship, but it only need last as long as young vampires think there's no other choice.

- **“What about educating vampires and the Traditions?”** Juggler scoffs at the Traditions. It isn't that he doesn't agree with them (most of them, at least), but he feels they're something a smart vampire could figure out on her own. Besides, the Camarilla doesn't educate vampires: It puts that onus on the sire of a new Kindred, and then kills sire and childe if there are any mistakes. They set the rules but assume no responsibility for them.

During this conversation, Juggler tries to get the characters out into the streets of Gary. It's out among the mortals of a city — or the lack thereof — that a vampire can learn the real nature of that city, or so Juggler claims. The only reason Modius ever leaves his mansion anymore is because he doesn't have slaves to

bring him vessels. If the characters express any kind of sympathy for Modius, Juggler points out that back when being Prince of Gary meant something, Modius always had two servants attending him. They were always Dominated to the point that they couldn't think for themselves, and they were always black men. This, Juggler claims, is one of the dangers of letting elder vampires run things. They tend to forget what century it is.

Juggler points out the burned buildings and the damaged structures, and explains his plan for the city. He wants to remake Gary as a stopover for traveling Kindred. It's never been done; traditionally Kindred just didn't travel much because moving between cities was too risky. Lupines prowled the wilds, and sending word to (and just finding) the vampires of the next domain was difficult to do, especially on short notice. Now, says Juggler, the werewolves are less of a threat (“Where are they going to hunt? The suburbs?”) and sending a message to all of the vampires in a city can be as simple as sending a text message. There is no reason for the insular nature of vampire society except hidebound tradition. In Juggler's view, tradition is what got the Inquisition sharpening stakes.

Juggler makes these points while indicating various buildings, noting which ones might make good havens. Feeding, of course, would require getting more people into Gary, but lots of folks travel through Gary. Coming up with a system would necessitate some attention to mortal traffic patterns and the like, but Kindred have been influencing, if not directing, this kind of thing for decades. It's just a matter of rethinking the methods.

When it seems like Juggler is getting through to the characters, they hear the clicking sounds of a camera. Nearby, a character is taking pictures for the Prince, as requested in “Offers.” It might be one of the players' characters, in fact, or it might a Storyteller character. In the latter case, Modius has Dominated the photographer to take the pictures and then return to him.

The photographer is dazed, but not so completely Dominated that he has lost his free will. Juggler recommends that the characters deprive Modius of this resource. He leaves the characters to figure out what he means by that, but the two obvious possibilities are to kill the man or to undo the mental control that Modius put in place. Systems for the latter can be found below.

If the characters kill the photographer, assess degeneration rolls as necessary. Juggler doesn't care one

way or another, but if the characters do kill the man, he points out that undoing the Dominate might have annoyed Modius more. If the characters mention undoing or changing the man's instructions through Dominate but lack the ability (as one of them needs at least Dominate 3), Juggler volunteers to do it. He still looks to the characters to choose how exactly he should change the instructions.

If one of the player characters is taking the photographs, Juggler tries to spur the discussion again, hopefully getting the photographer to renege on the deal with Modius (Juggler suggests taking pictures of urinals for the Prince). He doesn't advocate killing the messenger, however.

Character Goals

To decide where their ideology fits in the Camarilla/Anarch divide.

Actions

Undoing Dominate

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Leadership (difficulty 4)

Hindrances: Character has ever been Dominated by Modius (+1 difficulty); character has tasted Modius' blood (+1 difficulty)

Help: Modius has tried to Dominate the character and failed (-1 difficulty)

Roll Results

Botch: The man is free from the Dominate and immediately wonders what he is doing here in the mid-

dle of the night with a camera. The character takes on the mental commands, which are: "Take pictures of this particular stretch of buildings and bring the pictures back to me." The character must begin immediately.

Failure: The character fails to change the photographer's commands. The character can try again at +1 difficulty.

Successes: The player needs to roll at least three successes to successfully override Modius' commands on the photographer. At that point, the character can issue new commands to the photographer, or alter the existing one. The usual rules of Mesmerize (pp. 152-153 of *Vampire 20th*) apply.

Consequences

If the photographer returns to Modius with his commands altered — or doesn't return at all — Modius is furious and contacts the characters via messenger (again, Dominated — Modius is nothing if not a creature of habit), demanding that they appear at his mansion. If Juggler is still with them at that point, he laughs maniacally and urges the characters to attend. "There is nothing that old fool can do to you," he says, "but I would love to watch him flail." If the characters go, with or without Juggler, proceed to "Toothless Hounds."

If the characters leave the messenger alone, Juggler doesn't interfere further. Modius summons Juggler some time later on unrelated matters, which leads to "Toothless Hounds."



Toothless Hounds

Mental ••• Physical ••• Social •••

Overview

Prince Modius declares a Blood Hunt on Juggler. Juggler laughs it off, and declares a reverse Blood Hunt on the Prince.

Description

Modius rises from his seat, fangs bared, one quivering finger pointed at Juggler. "Traitor! Charlatan! Gadfly! I cast you out! I banish you! I call Lextalionis on you! Your blood and soul are forfeit to whosoever wish to have them!" He looks about the room, as if expecting waves of furious Kindred to fall upon Juggler and tear him apart.

"Really?" says Juggler. He sits down in a chair and puts his feet up on the table. "You think you command that kind of authority? All right." He waves a hand at Modius. "Then I declare a Blood Hunt on you." Juggler glances at you. "No, really. Go ahead and kill him. He's a dinosaur anyway, so you get to be the meteor." He smiles as though pleased with the metaphor.

Storyteller Goals

This scene brings the tension between Modius and Juggler to a head. As such, it can immediately follow "Juggling Lessons," or you can run intermediary scenes in which the characters witness the two elders sniping at each other in different ways. In any case, this scene requires both vampires to be present in a place without mortals around, whether it's the Prince's mansion or a declared Elysium.

In this scene, Modius loses his temper and declares a Blood Hunt on Juggler. This has happened before, as Modius and Juggler have a long history of antagonizing each other. This time, though, Juggler decides to up the ante, and declares a Blood Hunt on Modius. In his view, Modius doesn't have any real authority in the city anyway, so his own word is just as valid as the Prince's.

This scene can go any number of ways. The characters might decide that both of these Kindred are full of shit and ignore them both. They might agree with one or the other, and attack the target of whichever Blood Hunt they wish to honor. They might even decide that neither of these Kindred is an acceptable leader of the city, and try to destroy them both (which probably won't end well for the characters, but a large coterie might be able to take them both down).

This scene might end with a protracted battle in the Prince's mansion, a chase scene throughout the streets of Gary, a tension, barely-contained-frenzy argument, or with the characters leaving the two fools behind to their endless, irrelevant bickering. Much depends on the characters and how they have interacted with the city's elder Kindred so far.

If the characters attack Juggler, he fights back, but knows he probably can't take on a full coterie. That said, he is a Brujah, and therefore prone to frenzy. Make the appropriate roll for him to see if he can control himself (it's appropriate to spend Willpower for him), and assuming he doesn't frenzy, he runs. If the characters give chase, Juggler runs at 48 yards/meters per turn (see Movement, p. 258 of Vampire 20th). Juggler also has Celerity 3, meaning that if

he moves at a flat-out sprint and puts three points of blood into Celerity, he can run up to 140 yards/meters every turn (35 per action instead of 48, since the dots in Celerity are converted from Dexterity dice to extra actions). This puts him out of the reach of the characters unless they have comparable levels of Celerity and Dexterity. If they do, or if they manage to alter the situation such that they can catch up with Juggler, use the Pursuit rules (pp. 261-262 of *Vampire 20th*) to simulate the chase. Note, though, that if one character chases down Juggler, he has no problem stopping long enough to kill the character before running on.

If the characters attack Modius, he is outraged and fights to the death. He doesn't really believe the characters can beat him because he's still subconsciously expecting his followers or childer to jump in and defend him... but no such help is coming. The characters can probably destroy Modius in fairly short order. He's not incapable of combat, by any means, but he's no match for a group of vampires working together. If he's still able to act after taking five levels of lethal damage or three aggravated, he attempts to burn his mansion down. If he's not fighting in his mansion, he attempts to flee after taking this damage.

If the characters attack them both, the elders don't exactly join forces, but they fight the characters together. It is possible for the characters to goad Juggler into attacking Modius, and then leave them to destroy each other (see below for systems).

Finally, if the characters leave, the scene ends. Go to Consequences.

Character Goals

Decide whose side they're on, once and for all.

Actions

You Want to Fight Him, Not Me

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Brawl or Athletics (player's choice; difficulty 6)

Hindrances: Large, open area (+1 difficulty); fewer than 3 other characters visible (+1 difficulty); character has already harmed Juggler (+1 difficulty)

Help: Close, tight area (-1 difficulty); at least 4 combatants present other than Modius and Juggler (-1 difficulty); Juggler is already in frenzy (-1 difficulty)

Roll Results

Botch: Juggler immediately attacks the character and focuses all of his rage on her.

Failure: Juggler doesn't realize what the character is trying to do and acts as the Storyteller feels appropriate.

One Success: The character directs Juggler's attention to Modius before attacking. Juggler must check for frenzy. If he fails to resist frenzy, he attacks Modius on his next action.

Three Successes: As above, but Juggler suffers a +1 difficulty to the roll to avoid frenzy.

Five Successes: As above, but Juggler automatically frenzies.

Consequences

The outcome of this scene might change Gary's vampiric community forever. The most likely outcomes are covered here, but the Storyteller should be prepared to make some judgment calls.

If the characters drive Juggler away, he flees the city for Chicago. Gary is too small for him to hide, and he knows that. He starts spreading the word that Prince Modius has a coterie of Dominated flunkies at his side, and that Gary should be the next Anarch target. Of course, this has the effect of getting the Camarilla's attention, and more Kindred wind up in Gary the next night. Modius finds his power rising again, and if he promised the characters favors or positions, he makes good on those promises.

If the characters destroy Juggler, Modius names them the new Primogen of the city. However, without Juggler to spread the word that Modius is a tyrannical bastard, that might not mean much. The characters can help Modius realize his (and Juggler's) vision of making Gary a stopover for Kindred, or they can help Maria with her plans for the city — or perhaps they'd rather take Modius out and take the city for themselves.

Should the characters destroy Modius, Juggler declares Gary a Free State. If one of the characters claims the title of Prince or otherwise asserts Camarilla authority, Juggler stays in town looking for an opening to destroy the new Prince. If the characters decide on a different style of leadership, one not beholden to Camarilla methods, Juggler approves, and becomes involved to whatever degree the characters wish him to.

If the characters destroy both vampires, the city's nights are theirs to do with as they please. The other Kindred in the city (Maria and Jean Lisle, provided that he hasn't been destroyed) have no interest in claiming titles.

Finally, if the characters simply leave and refuse to become involved with the squabbles of Modius and Juggler, nothing changes. Both Kindred are still trying to enact the same plan, but put more effort into making sure the other fails.

Whatever the result of this scene, proceed to "Tomorrow Night" or "The Death Rattle of Gary" as appropriate.

The Death Rattle of Gary

Mental ••• Physical •• Social ••

Overview

Maria shares her plan for necromantic control of a dead town. The characters can witness, participate, or stop her plan from coming to fruition.

Description

Preparation

The map of Gary is pinned to the table with shards of sharpened human ribs. A skull rests at the northwest end of town, closest to Chicago. Maria runs a hand across the map and whispers, "The city suffers. You can almost hear it gasping for breath." She looks at you, eyes bright, lips parted. "I've never seen a city die before. Look at me, I'm almost shaking!" She breaks into a grin and reaches for a jar of what looks like iron filings.

Sacrifice

Maria opens a door in the back of the room, and one of her bodyguards leads out an old woman. She wears a flowered, cotton dress and a gag, and she looks at you, terrified, eyes pleading for help. "This," says Maria, "is Gary, Indiana."

Success

The section of the map inside the border of iron dust blackens and burns. Around you, you feel something change. Colors dim, the air grows stagnant and musty, and the temperature drops ten degrees. "Yes," whispers Maria. "This city is dead. And that means this city is mine." Her eyes, you note, have turned a rusty brown color.

Storyteller Goals

This scene brings to a close Maria's plan for "urban necromancy." She wants to watch the city die, and then raise its "ghost" as some kind of spiritual servant. The characters might be here to witness it, help her, or stop it.

What Maria is trying to do is esoteric and flat-out *weird*. She is taking the notion that cities have spirits or souls and applying to that the notion that human beings can die and leave behind ghosts. In the World of Darkness, both of these notions are objectively true, but whether her conclusion is true — that a city can die and rise up as a ghost — has yet to be tested.

Gary has been dying for years, in the sense that it is losing population and industry. The city makes continual efforts to fight this stagnation and bring in revenue, but in the World of Darkness, the entropy seems inescapable. Maria has been marking murders, car accidents, fights, foreclosures, and other tragedies on her map of the city, waiting for enough of them to justify, by her twisted math, the city's symbolic death. When that happens, she enacts her ritual.

The characters might become involved in a number of ways. If they have Maria's ear or are allied with her, she might invite them to watch. She has no reason to think this ritual will have any effect at all on vampires, after all, so she considers it a winning proposition all around. She wants an audience for her triumph, so asks the characters to join her.

If the characters have been working against Maria, though, they'll need to hear about it from another source. If they have a method for keeping track of her in place already — a ghoul spy, a bug in her RV, etc. — then let them learn about it through their own agency. If not, Sullivan Dane finds the characters and informs them that he has sense “great spiritual disruption” coming from the RV. If they don't seem interested in handling the problem, he shrugs, and says that he'll do it himself. What happens then is up to you (but some suggestions are provided below, under Consequences).

The ritual consists of Maria creating a “barrier” around the city by tracing its borders on a map with iron dust. She then says a prayer for the dying in Latin, and opens a closet to reveal an elderly woman, bound and gagged. She has lived here for her entire life, Maria explains — nearly 90 years. She has seen the city go from prosperity to ruin. And she, like the city, is dying, though her cancer is literal, rather than figurative. Maria intends to sacrifice the old woman to power her spell.

The characters may not feel comfortable with Maria murdering an old woman in front of them. If they wish to stop her, they need to act fast. Maria isn't interested in discussion, and if the characters don't act

within one turn of the old lady being revealed, Maria crushes her throat with her bare hand. The woman dies with confused tears streaming down her face. Maria drops the body, and then slams her hand down in the center of the map.

The section of the map marked off by the iron dust turns black. Have the players roll Perception + Awareness. If the roll succeeds, the characters feel the change in the atmosphere mentioned above, under Description.

If the characters do attempt to stop Maria, they need to get the old woman medical attention within 10 minutes. If they try to talk her out of it, Maria points out that this unfortunate woman has less than a few months to live anyway. Her town is dying just as surely as she is — why shouldn't she be used to contribute to Maria's understanding of death and dying? If Maria is unable to convince the characters, she releases the old woman to the characters' care, and postpones the ritual (Maria is sure she can find another candidate, and doesn't want to risk her possessions or her safety in a brawl). That still leaves the characters the issue of whether to stop Maria at a later date, or put her down now before it comes to that.



If she succeeds at the ritual, the town symbolically dies. What exactly this means depends on what you want to do with the chronicle going forward, but some suggestions follow:

Go Big or Go Home

A maelstrom of ghosts and death bursts forth from Maria's map. It doesn't harm living people, but vampires suffer five dice of aggravated damage immediately (which probably won't kill them, but is certainly enough to get their attention). Over the next few hours, the barrier between the worlds of the living and dead becomes paper-thin. Ghosts materialize to haunt, terrify, or just contact their living anchors and family. Supernatural beings of all kinds flock to the area to investigate, correct the problem, feed on the chaos, or punish those responsible.

This kind of event changes the World of Darkness significantly, especially if the effect spreads or is reproducible. But that's not a bad thing, necessarily. Maybe the government rolls in and cordons off the whole area. Maybe the characters get recruited by the Inconnu to help solve the problem and reverse the damage. Perhaps the characters all develop the Medium Merit (or the Haunted Flaw), which might help in correcting what happened. In any case, Maria might be destroyed by the ensuing ghost-storm, or she might rise up as the undead queen of the Underworld.

Subtle Changes

A similar possibility, but one that doesn't shift the landscape of the World of Darkness quite so much, is to have the life ebb out of Gary over the next few days. People become listless, those who are already seriously ill die, and the city becomes muted and quiescent. Vampires are unaffected. Ghosts immediately become slaves to Maria, who declares Gary her domain. If Modius has survived, she sends her ghostly servants to drag him bodily out into the sun.

The characters can become part of her new regime (she's happy for supporters, and treats them well if they stay — she'll even call them "Primogen" if they want the title), or they can try to oust her from power. But throwing down Maria won't necessarily put the city back on track. For that, the characters might have to delve deeply into the secrets of Necromancy, which could be the start of another story for them.

Beginning of the End

A third and even subtler possibility is that the spell starts driving out the rest of Gary's residents. Businesses close, people move away, social services falter, and within a year or two the city is effectively a ghost town. This brings in sociologists

and researchers trying to figure out why people left a perfectly good (or at least livable) city behind, but mortals aren't really equipped to understand the truth of what happened.

This kind of end is best played out in an epilogue, since it requires the perspective of months or years to be really effective. If you want to play through it, maybe the characters have a chance to inject life back into Gary. Or, if you want to continue the "Gary as dying person" metaphor that Maria was using, is there a way that the characters could symbolically Embrace the city? What would a vampiric city, as opposed to a ghost city, be like? Would it feed on the residents, or perhaps just visitors? Would it empower Kindred within the city or treat them especially harshly (since vampires don't generally get along)?

Character Goals

Witness Maria's triumph, or prevent her sick ambitions.

Actions

Saving the Old Lady

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Athletics (contested against Maria's Strength + Brawl + Potence; difficulty 6 for both)

Hindrances: Standing close to the door, away from Maria (+1 difficulty)

Help: N/A

Roll Results

Botch: Maria spins the old lady around so that the character's hand or weapon strikes her. She dies of heart failure in seconds, and Maria flees the area.

Failure: Maria kills the woman as described above.

Successes: If the player exceeds the successes you roll for Maria, he snatches the old woman away before Maria can harm her. As mentioned above, the victim dies in 10 minutes if not given medical attention. A player can roll Wits + Medicine for her character to notice this.

Consequences

If the characters walk away from the situation and let Sullivan Dane handle it, he destroys Maria and burns her RV. He lets her ghoul bodyguards live, but injures them severely, hoping that an extended hospital stay will give them time to get the vampire blood out of their systems. He also puts the characters next on his hit list.

If the characters participate in the ritual, several different outcomes are listed above. You will need to choose on based on your (and your players') vision for the chronicle.



Tomorrow Night

Mental •• Physical • Social •••

Overview

The characters speak to Sullivan Dane again, and he repeats his request for them to meet the sun. They reflect over what their time in Gary has brought, and Dane takes his leave of the characters.

Description

Violin music drifts through the night, and you glance across the street. Sullivan Dane stands on the sidewalk, his violin case open in front of him. His eyes are shut and he gently plays Schubert's "Ave Maria." People stop around him, some toss coins into his case, but he doesn't acknowledge them. He stops after a moment, opens his eyes, collects the coins, and pockets them. And then he beckons to you, waving a white handkerchief.

Storyteller Goals

The goal here is to provide some symmetry with the beginning of this story, take stock, and figure out what happens next. This scene won't work if the characters have killed Sullivan Dane, so if that's the case, you might consider having Juggler, Maria, or even Modius take his place (minus the admonition to commit suicide). If the characters have destroyed or driven off all of the other important Storyteller characters, either skip this scene or find a way to frame it that makes sense.

Dane approaches the characters and reminds them of what he said to them on this initial meeting. He

asks if any of them are willing to do the right thing, and offers absolution from their sins before they do so, if they wish. Once that initial point is out of the way, Dane talks with them about their time in Gary, what has happened in the city, and what they think about it all. Depending on what *has* happened during the story, this might be very low-key or it could include elder vampires murdering people on the streets and ghosts rising up from their graves. Either way, Dane takes it in stride.

The best way to let this scene progress is organically, with the characters adding their thoughts and Dane responding as necessary. Dane is attempting to make up his mind about whether to kill the characters, however. If they have maintained their Humanity and refrained from killing people, or, better, deliberately taken action and risk in pursuit of doing the right thing, Dane decides he can let them survive a while longer. He isn't unrealistic about the fact that some vampires are worse than others, and he doesn't want to waste resources killing the ones that aren't much worse than mortals. If, however, they have killed people for their blood, taken willing part in Maria's experiments, or are obviously on some inhuman Path, he is much more likely to determine that they deserve nothing more than a sharp stake and a quick splash of lighter fluid.

During the conversation, refer back to as many significant events of the chronicle as you can. Try and get the characters talking about and reflecting on what has happened, and whether they feel like they man-

aged to help or hurt the city of Gary. Did they even consider that they *could* help? Did they only focus on their own goals? And if so, did they achieve them?

Even if Juggler, Modius, and Maria are dead by this point, refer to them as well. If the characters destroyed or had a hand in destroying these Kindred, are they interested in taking on the domain of Gary? Can they make it better for Kindred (or mortals, which ultimately benefits Kindred)? Do they care? If any or all of these Kindred still exist, consider what they are doing now and whether the players' characters have any interest in becoming involved.

This final scene is meant to be an open question: What happens next? Where will the characters go? Any resolution to the plotlines introduced in **Dust to Dust** should already have happened by the time your troupe reaches "Tomorrow Night." If this resolution hasn't happened, use this scene to find out if the players are interested in pursuing it. Use Dane as a way to keep the discussion on track; he's a good listener.

As he questions them, he looks for attributes such as empathy, compassion, faith, and humility. If you wish to let their roleplaying be the guide here, that's fine, but a system is provided below as well. At the end of the conversation, if Dane believes that the characters will act more or less human, he tells them that he is leaving the area for a while and that he hopes he won't see them again. If not, he informs them they are going to meet their Maker soon, one way or another, and he advises they make peace now. And then he packs up his violin and walks off.

Character Goals

Reflect over what has happened. Make plans for the future. Convince Sullivan Dane they aren't worth killing.

Actions

Displaying Humanity

Dice Pool: Charisma + Empathy or Humanity, whichever is less (difficulty 9). Vampires on Paths of Enlightenment automatically fail.

Hindrances: Character has committed murder or fed in front of Dane (+1 difficulty); character has a Nature such as Monster, Rogue, or Creep (+1 difficulty)

Help: Character has committed acts of charity or self-sacrifice in front of Dane (-1 difficulty); character has a Nature such as Child, Caregiver, or Penitent (-1 difficulty)

Roll Results

Botch: Dane is disgusted by the character, and considers her to be a monster undeserving even of a final confession. He doesn't lose his temper or attack immediately, but he will attempt to follow the character back to her haven.

Failure: Dane decides that the character deserves his attention. He focuses his questioning on this character, and the player may make another roll at +1 difficulty (maximum 10). Any failure on this second roll is treated as a botch.

One Success: Dane makes a note of the character's name, description, and any identifying details. He won't pursue the character immediately, unless the Storyteller is interested in running such a story, but might pass along his notes to another cell of hunters.

Three Successes: The character impresses Dane with her humility and humanity. Dane is under no illusion as to the character's goodness (she's still a vampire, after all), but does decide that there are many greater evils in the world. Dane notes the character's general description and leaves it at that.

Five Successes: Dane is amazed at how humane the character is. He mentions the word "Golconda" to the character quietly, and assures her that it is real and attainable. "This is the only way," he says. "This or the sun." If the character asks for more details, Dane blinks and appears not to realize he said anything at all.

Consequences

From here, proceed to "Aftermath."



Aftermath

The characters have undoubtedly changed Gary by their time here, but how much? And in what ways? Where the story goes from here — if anywhere — depends on the answers to these questions. No matter what happened, the Storyteller should have events and consequences that he can use to build further story arcs if the players wish to continue with these characters.

Experience

Dust to Dust can take anywhere from one to three game sessions to complete. Each character should receive experience point awards at the end of each chapter, as detailed in *Vampire 20th*, pp. 123-124. At the end of the story, you can award additional points based on the outcome of the story. Some examples are:

Success: If the coterie managed to fulfill their own goals while working with (or in the face of) the Kindred of Gary, they should each get an extra experience point.

Danger: Surviving the zombie walk or an attack by the hunters should count as dangerous for an experience point award. Depending on the nature of the story, surviving attacks from the other Kindred of Gary may count as well.

Wisdom: Coming up with a plan to prevent the various factions' taking advantage of the coterie can lead to an experience point for wisdom. Convincing Sullivan Dane that the coterie is no immediate threat may also qualify.

SCENE: Welcome to Gary

MENTAL ●●●
PHYSICAL ●●●
SOCIAL ●●●

HINDRANCES

Making a Good First Impression:
Modius — Characters talk with him before he feeds (+1 difficulty);
Juggler — Characters lead off with anything pro-Camarilla or pro-Sabbat (+1 difficulty);
Maria — characters interrupt her phone call or “casting” spiel (+1 difficulty)

HELP

All! — Characters do not call attention to themselves or the vampire (-1 difficulty)

STs

Introduce important Storyteller characters, present Gary to the characters.

PCs

Talk with the local Kindred, learn the political lay of the land

SCENE: Offers

MENTAL ●●●
PHYSICAL ●●●
SOCIAL ●●●

HINDRANCES

Photography: Character is using Crafts without a specialty or a specific Ability in Photography (+1 difficulty), character uses a cheap camera (+1 difficulty).

Feeding During the Zombie Walk: Character is not in zombie makeup (+1 difficulty); character attempts to feed within a block of City Hall (+1 difficulty).

HELP

Photography: Character takes at least an hour to familiarize herself with the camera that Modius provided (-1 difficulty).

Feeding During the Zombie Walk: Character attempts to feed within a block of the parking lot (-1 difficulty).

STs

Embroid the characters in the plots of the city.

PCs

Make some cash, make some friends, learn some new tricks, figure out their own plans for Gary.Candidate: Prove selfworth and get Embraced.

SCENE: The Hunter

MENTAL ●●●
PHYSICAL ●●●
SOCIAL ●●●

HINDRANCES

Knowing About Dane: Character is less than 10 years from the Embrace (+1 difficulty)

Character was deliberately sheltered from other vampires (+1 difficulty)

HELP

Character has dealt with hunters (-1 difficulty)

Character is more than 20 years past the Embrace (-1 difficulty)

STs

Embroid the characters in the plots of the city.

PCs

Make some cash, make some friends, learn some new tricks, figure out their own plans for Gary.

SCENE: The Zombie Walk

MENTAL ●●●
PHYSICAL ●●●
SOCIAL ●●●

HINDRANCES

Helping Maria to Kill Lazlo: Character is hungry (+1 difficulty).

Clearing the Way for Dane: Character has no dots in Brawl (+1 difficulty); character has no dots in Athletics (+1 difficulty).

Making the Wall of Blood: No dots in Crafts (+1 difficulty); less than half of full blood pool (+1 difficulty); multiple characters are creating blood-lines are trying to synch them up (+1 difficulty).

HELP

Helping Maria to Kill Lazlo: Character has a least a dot in Necromancy (-1 difficulty).

Clearing the Way for Dane: Character has Athletics 2 or more (-1 difficulty).

Making the Wall of Blood: Full blood pool (-1 difficulty); Dexterity 4 or more (-1 difficulty).

STs

Reveal Lazlo's plot and Jean Lisle's presence. Establish a relationship between characters and Maria DiMatto.

PCs

Enjoy the zombie walk. Stop Lazlo Varga from enslaving and killing people.

SCENE: From the Dust Returned

MENTAL
PHYSICAL
SOCIAL

HINDRANCES

Talking Jean Down: Every gunshot or attack on Jean (+1 difficulty)

Characters have already damaged Jean (+1 difficulty);

Character is white (+1 difficulty).

HELP

Talking Jean Down: Character uses Presence 1 (-2 difficulty)

Character speaks French to Jean (-1 difficulty)

STs Kill Lazlo and his cult, establish Jean Lisle as a threat to the city or destroy him.

PCs Survive, escape, destroy Jean Lisle.

SCENE: Toothless Hounds

MENTAL
PHYSICAL
SOCIAL

HINDRANCES

Let's You & Him Fight: Large, open area (+1 difficulty)

Fewer than 3 other characters visible (+1 difficulty)

Character has already harmed Juggler (+1 difficulty)

HELP

Let's You & Him Fight: Close, tight area (-1 difficulty);

At least 4 combatants present other than Modius and Juggler (-1 difficulty);

Juggler is already in frenzy (-1 difficulty)

STs

Bring the tension between Juggler and Modius to a head.

PCs

Decide who's side they're on, once and for all.

SCENE: Juggling Lessons

MENTAL
PHYSICAL
SOCIAL

HINDRANCES

Undoing Dominate: Character has ever been Dominated by Modius (+1 difficulty)

Character has tasted Modius' blood (+1 difficulty)

HELP

Undoing Dominate: Modius has tried to Dominate the character and failed (-1 difficulty)

STs

Increase tension between the city's factions, and possibly between the characters of the coterie.

PCs

To decide where their ideology fits in the Camarilla/Anarch divide.Candidate:

SCENE: The Death Rattle of Gary

MENTAL
PHYSICAL
SOCIAL

HINDRANCES

Saving the Old Lady: Standing close to the door, away from Maria (+1 difficulty)

HELP

None

STs

Resolve Maria's experiment in "sociological necromancy."

PCs

Witness Maria's triumph, or prevent her sick ambitions.

SCENE: **Tomorrow Night**

MENTAL ••
PHYSICAL •
SOCIAL •••

HINDRANCES

Displaying Humanity: Character has committed murder or fed in front of Dane (+1 difficulty)

Character has a Nature such as Monster, Rogue, or Creep (+1 difficulty).

Characters on Paths of Enlightenment automatically fail.

HELP

Displaying Humanity: Character has committed acts of charity or self-sacrifice in front of Dane (-1 difficulty)

Character has a Nature such as Child, Caregiver or Penitent

STs

Bring the chronicle to a close.

PCs

Reflect over what has happened. Make plans for the future. Convince Sullivan Dane they aren't worth killing.

SCENE:

MENTAL
PHYSICAL
SOCIAL

HINDRANCES

HELP

STs

PCs

SCENE:

MENTAL
PHYSICAL
SOCIAL

HINDRANCES

HELP

STs

PCs

SCENE:

MENTAL
PHYSICAL
SOCIAL

HINDRANCES

HELP

STs

PCs

VAMPIRE

THE MASQUERADE

Name: Jean Lisle

Nature: Monster

Clan: Samedi

Player:

Demeanor: Monster

Generation: Sixth

Chronicle: Dust To Dust

Concept: Former Slave/Monster

Sire:

Attributes

Physical

Strength *relentless* ●●●●●●○○○
Dexterity *savage* ●●●●○○○○○
Stamina *unyielding* ●●●●●○○○○

Social

Charisma ●●○○○○○○○
Manipulation ●○○○○○○○
Appearance ○○○○○○○○

Mental

Perception ●●●○○○○○
Intelligence ●●○○○○○○○
Wits *feral* ●●●●○○○○○

Abilities

Talents

Alertness ●●○○○○○○○
Athletics ●●○○○○○○○
Awareness ●●○○○○○○○
Brawl *grappling* ●●●●○○○○○
Empathy ○○○○○○○○
Expression ○○○○○○○○
Intimidation *monstrous* ●●●●●○○○○
Leadership ○○○○○○○○
Streetwise ○○○○○○○○
Subterfuge ○○○○○○○○

Skills

Animal Ken ●○○○○○○○
Crafts ○○○○○○○○
Drive ○○○○○○○○
Etiquette ○○○○○○○○
Firearms ○○○○○○○○
Larceny ○○○○○○○○
Melee ●●●○○○○○
Performance ○○○○○○○○
Stealth *hunting* ●●●●●○○○○
Survival ●●●○○○○○

Knowledges

Academics ●○○○○○○○
Computer ○○○○○○○○
Finance ○○○○○○○○
Investigation ○○○○○○○○
Law ○○○○○○○○
Medicine ○○○○○○○○
Occult ●●○○○○○○○
Politics ○○○○○○○○
Science ○○○○○○○○
Technology ○○○○○○○○

Advantages

Disciplines

Auspex ●○○○○○○○
Celerity ●●○○○○○○○
Fortitude ●●●●○○○○○
Obfuscate ●●●●○○○○○
Potence ●●●●○○○○○
Thanatosis ●●●●○○○○○

Backgrounds

○○○○○○○○○
○○○○○○○○○
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○○○○○○○○○
○○○○○○○○○

Virtues

Conscience/Conviction ○○○○○
Self-Control/Instinct ●○○○○
Courage ●●●●●

Merits & Flaws

Merit	Cost
Language (French)	—
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
Flaw	Cost
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Humanity/Path

Humanity
●○○○○○○○○○
Bearing: Normalcy (+2)

Willpower

●●●●●○○○○○
□□□□□□□□□□

Blood Pool

□□□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□□□

Blood Per Turn: 6

Health

Bruised □
Hurt -1 □
Injured -1 □
Wounded -2 □
Mauled -2 □
Crippled -5 □
Incapacitated □

Weakness

Experience

VAMPIRE

THE MASQUERADE

Name: Juggler

Nature: Enigma

Clan: Brujah

Player:

Demeanor: Trickster

Generation: Eighth

Chronicle: Dust To Dust

Concept: Would-be Anarch

Sire:

Attributes

Physical

Strength ●●○○○○○○○○
Dexterity *graceful* ●●●●●○○○○○
Stamina ●●●○○○○○○○

Social

Charisma ●●●○○○○○○○
Manipulation *cunning* ●●●●●○○○○○
Appearance ●●●○○○○○○○

Mental

Perception *probing* ●●●●●○○○○○
Intelligence ●●○○○○○○○○○
Wits ●●●○○○○○○○

Abilities

Talents

Alertness *double-cross* ●●●●●○○○○○
Athletics ●●○○○○○○○○○
Awareness ●●○○○○○○○○○
Brawl *grappling* ●●●●●○○○○○
Empathy ○○○○○○○○○○○
Expression ○○○○○○○○○○○
Intimidation ●●○○○○○○○○○
Leadership *fierce* ●●●●●○○○○○
Streetwise *Anarchs* ●●●●●○○○○○
Subterfuge ●●○○○○○○○○○
○○○○○○○○○○○

Skills

Animal Ken ○○○○○○○○○○○
Crafts ○○○○○○○○○○○
Drive ●●○○○○○○○○○
Etiquette *gangs* ●●●●●○○○○○
Firearms ●●●○○○○○○○
Larceny ●●●○○○○○○○
Melee ●●○○○○○○○○○
Performance ○○○○○○○○○○○
Stealth ●●●○○○○○○○
Survival ○○○○○○○○○○○
○○○○○○○○○○○

Knowledges

Academics ●○○○○○○○○○
Computer ○○○○○○○○○○○
Finance ○○○○○○○○○○○
Investigation ●●○○○○○○○○○
Law ○○○○○○○○○○○
Medicine ○○○○○○○○○○○
Occult ●●●○○○○○○○
Politics ●○○○○○○○○○
Science ○○○○○○○○○○○
Technology ○○○○○○○○○○○
○○○○○○○○○○○

Advantages

Disciplines

Celerity ●●●○○○○○○○
Dominate ●●●●●○○○○○
Fortitude ●○○○○○○○○○
Obfuscate ●●○○○○○○○○○
Potence ●●○○○○○○○○○
Presence ●●○○○○○○○○○

Backgrounds

Allies ●●○○○○○○○○○
Contacts ●●●○○○○○○○
Herd ●●●○○○○○○○
○○○○○○○○○○○
○○○○○○○○○○○
○○○○○○○○○○○

Virtues

Conscience/Conviction ●●○○○○○
Self-Control/Instinct ●●●●●○
Courage ●●●●●○

Merits & Flaws

Merit	Cost
Language (Italian)	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
Flaw	Cost
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Humanity/Path

Humanity ○○○○○○○○○
Bearing: Normalcy ○○○○○○○○○ (-0)

Willpower

●●●●●○○○○○
□□□□□□□□□□

Blood Pool

□□□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□□□

Blood Per Turn: 3

Health

Bruised
Hurt -1
Injured -1
Wounded -2
Mauled -2
Crippled -5
Incapacitated

Weakness

Experience

Dust to Dust

A story for
Vampire: The Masquerade
20th Anniversary Edition
using the

STORYTELLING ADVENTURE SYSTEM

SCENES

9

MENTAL

PHYSICAL

SOCIAL

●●●●○

●●●●○

●●●●○

XP LEVEL

0-35

20th ANNIVERSARY EDITION

VAMPIRE
THE MASQUERADE