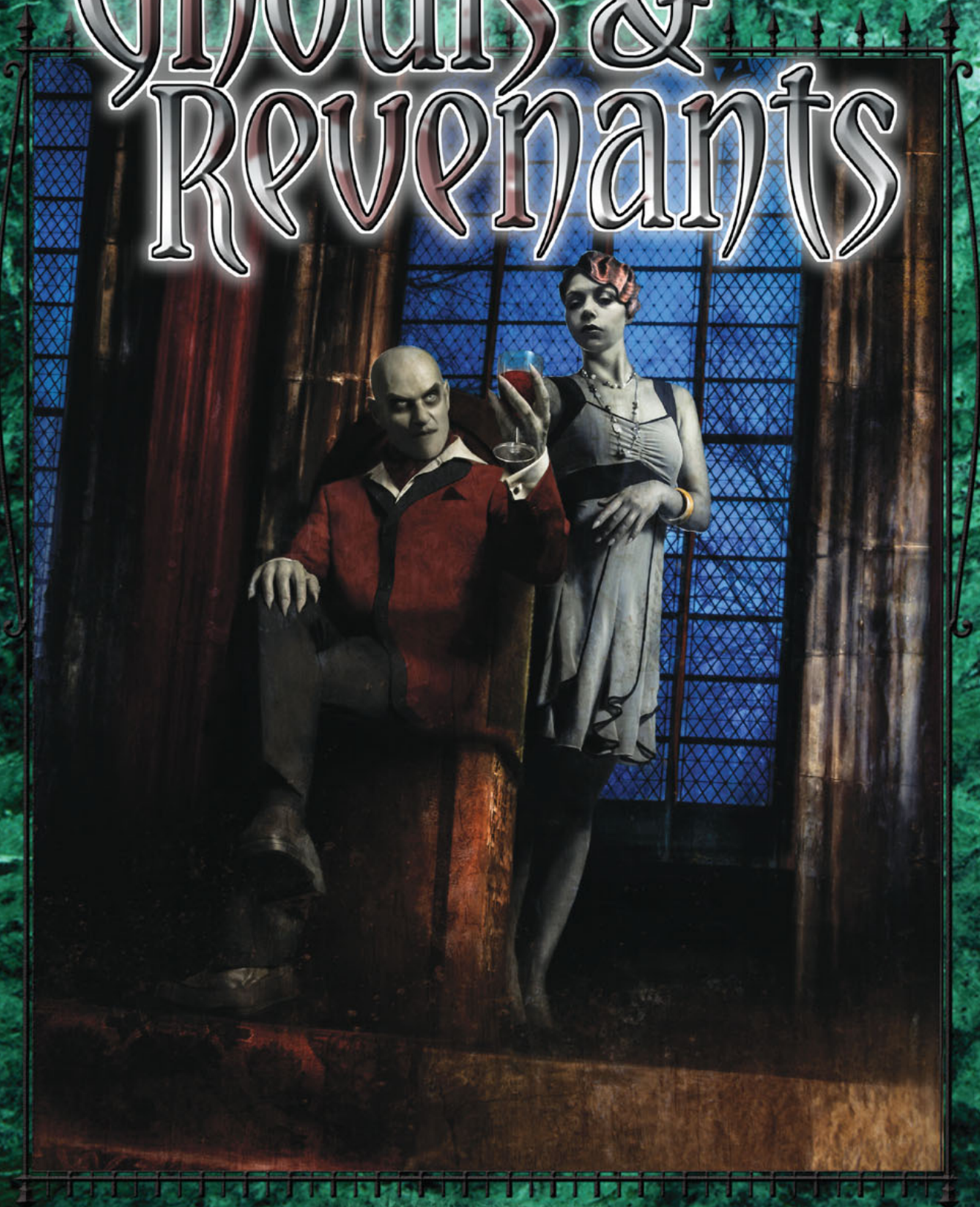


# Ghouls & Revenants



20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY EDITION

VAMPIRE  
THE MASQUERADE

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## Credits

**Authors:** Jason Andrew, Bill Bodden, Jennifer Coy, Dhaunae De Vir, Matt M McElroy, Karen Needham, Andrew Peregrine, Matthew Sanderson, and Monica Valentinelli

**Developer:** Matt M. McElroy

**Line Developer:** Eddy Webb

**Editor:** Monica Valentinelli

**Creative Director:** Richard Thomas

**Art Direction and Cover Design:** Mike Chaney

**Layout and Typesetting:** Charles Wright

**Artists:** Mark Kelly, Aaron Riley, Andrew Trabbold, Rachel Kahn, Kieran Yanner, Borja Puig Linares, Vince Locke, Lawrence Van Der Mewe, Glen Osterberger

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# Introduction

*“The strength of the vampire is that people will not believe in him.”*

– Garrett Fort, American Author and Screenwriter

The blood of the vampire is powerful and accursed. Untold centuries ago, ancient vampires discovered that by feeding their blood to their mortal servants, they could grant them a degree of their power. After a single sip of vitae, ghouls gained supernatural strength, prolonged life, and access to Disciplines. What’s more, ghouls retained the ability to walk in the sun, granting their masters a longer reach into the world of mortals. However, as all vampires know, though the Blood carries many dark gifts, it exacts a heavy price. All ghouls suffer from a lesser form of the Beast, a terrible Hunger that consumes them, and a lesser form of in-Clan weaknesses present in their master’s blood. The longer they feed on the Blood, the more ghouls are at risk of losing themselves and their humanity— unless they resist and fight for both their sanity and their freedom.


Ghouls are a unique phenomenon among vampires, while revenants, who naturally produce vitae in their bodies, are even rarer. Both, however, are valued because they walk during the daylight, and serve their masters at night. Some might claim that ghouls enjoy the best that both worlds have to offer. Others say that they have lost what it means to be truly human, and cannot be redeemed. The ghouls themselves often feel they are caught in a state of limbo, unable to be truly accepted by vampires until they are Embraced, yet forced to abandon their former lives indefinitely.



## Those Who Serve

In previous **Vampire** sourcebooks such as **Ghouls: Fatal Addiction** and **Liege, Lord & Lackey**, the lives of the servants of vampires were examined in a number of different ways. Revenants, which are also featured in this book, may also be found in the **Guide to the Sabbat** and related supplements. These previously published books were used as inspirational material for **Ghouls & Revenants**, and you are encouraged to check them out for use in your chronicles.

Additionally, the focus of **Ghouls & Revenants** is to expand upon the material presented on pages 496-506 of **V20**. Some of the material presented here offers an alternative look into those who serve vampires than what was previously published. This was an intentional effort to provide you with more options to customize ghouls and revenants for your own World of Darkness stories.







Once a human has tasted vitae and been turned into a ghoul, most vampires believe that mortal is forever changed and unable to forget them or the Blood. In fact, few typically want to, as they are intoxicated by the power and the potential that blood has to offer them. Despite this, however, most ghouls are at the mercy of their masters.

Though they are viewed by some as a necessary and controllable force, others regard ghouls as walking breaches of the Masquerade that have the potential to endanger vampires around the world. Regardless of Clan or Sect, many masters fear what would happen if a ghoul was captured and her blood examined, while others are loathe to give their servants more power. Thus, the punishments for ghouls are often severe, and occasionally results in death.

In truth, though vampires are both paranoid and hypocritical, they have always employed ghouls to do their bidding, regardless of Clan, Sect, or bloodline. They can't, however, agree on who makes the best ghoul or why. Thus, there is a multitude of factors that affects a domitor's choice of candidate, and often these opinions are shaped by the ideologies of her Clan and Sect. Sometimes, however, these doctrines might collide and the ghoul is caught in the middle, pulled in opposite directions until his master decides how he wants to proceed.

For some ghouls, serving a vampire may be the most challenging thing they have ever done. Others, however, are drawn to the Blood or are lured by the promise of riches, an extended lifespan, and the Embrace. Satisfied with the thought that they will one day be their master's equal, these ghouls settle into roles that they perform dutifully for years or, on rare occasions, centuries. As in life, not all ghouls and revenants are equally compliant, nor do they respond to the Blood in the same way. However, the power that their condition offers them — especially when combined with the influence of the blood bond — often secures their place at their master's side.

This book examines what it means to be a ghoul and a revenant, what roles these uniquely blessed (and cursed) individuals play in **Vampire: the Masquerade**, and how their perspective offers new insight into the nature of the Blood and the vampiric condition.

In this supplement, ghouls and revenants are no longer blood-addicted servants who cower in the shadows. They are a force to be reckoned with — and not only because they are responsible for keeping their masters fed and safe. Furthermore, **Ghouls & Revenants** also seeks to highlight ghouls and revenants to show that they can be just as interesting and as fun to play as their masters.

## Theme and Mood

At its core, the prominent theme in **Ghouls & Revenants** is *devotion*. By definition, ghouls and revenants are fed blood and created to serve their masters to varying degrees. However, their willingness to so do is often irrelevant, as many ghouls find that their devotion is secured by the mystical shackles of the blood bond. Viewed by many as a terrible curse to inflict upon anyone – human or vampire – Bound ghouls suffer from its influence in a specific way, as their feelings are warped. Some ghouls believe they are so in love with their masters that they are willing to die for them. Others, however, feel that their domitors are worthy of their respect and devotion, and go to great lengths to fulfill their wishes. How do these feelings conflict with the ghoul's sense of self? What happens if and when their masters test the limits of their devotion? Will they fight back and try to resist? Or will they accept their fate in exchange for another taste of sweet blood?

Though it is less common, ghouls who are not Bound also struggle with devotion, albeit in a different way. Most often, these ghouls operate independently and are on the run. In order to remain a ghoul, they must subsist on vampiric blood and often deal with their addiction to it. To cope with their struggle, most independent ghouls are obsessed with a cause, even if it's their own. Their devotion might manifest in a selfish way, as they pledge their services to vampires in exchange for what they need to survive. Other independent ghouls might join a ghoul organization, such as the Unmastered, to remain free and break the chains of bondage for others. What lengths will independent ghouls go to in order to ensure their freedom? How will they feed and ensure they remain free of the blood bond's influence?

Revenants, who naturally produce vitae, may or may not be Bound, but all of them deal with devotion to varying degrees, for they rarely act of their own volition without their family's (or patron Clan's) input. Worse, Bound revenants often struggle between fulfilling their duties to their families, their domitors, and themselves.

The mood in **Ghouls & Revenants** is one of *personal horror*. The horrors ghouls and revenants face can take many different forms for – despite the vitae flowing in their veins – they are still human. Most ghouls and revenants need to eat and sleep, even if their masters do not, unless they have survived so long they subsist on the Blood.

Often, vampires forget that their servants are, in fact, mortal. Many of the Damned do not understand why a

ghoul might recoil at the sight of splattered blood, or why a revenant shudders in the presence of a Fiend shaping the flesh of a fellow ghoul. Other vampires are more careful to treat their ghouls better than most, out of fear that they will be accused of causing a Masquerade breach. A few, however, don't care who or what they hurt, for mortals are beneath them and are meant to serve.

Those ghouls who are abused and treated like slaves experience far greater horrors than those who aren't, but they often do not remain victims indefinitely. In fact, mistreated ghouls might feel a burning passion for rebellion, akin to the fires that stoked the Anarch Revolt centuries ago, and are compelled to escape.

The mood of personal horror is different for every ghoul, and is shaped by her master. The horrors she experiences become increasingly more difficult to face over time, as a newly-created ghoul might not realize that the Blood isn't life-giving, but carries the ultimate curse: damnation. How do ghouls cope with the knowledge that they are both addicted to the Blood and Damned by it? What hopes and dreams are shattered because they are now pledged to serve a vampire? How do ghouls respond when they are asked to perform tasks that repulse and terrify them? If a ghoul is able to ignore her fears, what happens when she cannot avoid them any longer? Will she take her own life, or will she keep living, aching for another taste of the Blood or the promise of Embrace?

## What's in this Book?

**Ghouls & Revenants** presents players and Storytellers with opportunities to explore what it means to be a ghoul and a revenant in **Vampire: the Masquerade**. This book assumes that the player characters are primarily ghouls and, as such, offers suggestions for systems and setting to give them more agency than they normally might have.

**Chapter One: Blood is Life** addresses ghouls in the context of **Vampire: the Masquerade** by exploring their history, ages, uses, and relationships with their domitor. Additionally, the specifics of how, when, and why a vampire recruits a candidate are also covered in this chapter.

**Chapter Two: Ghouldom, Blood Bonds, and Systems** explores the addictive nature of vampiric blood, the blood bond, and the nature of ghouls and revenants. Updated systems governing the blood bond, ghouls, and revenants are also included, along with suggestions for optional rules.

**Chapter Three: Clan Ghouls and Organizations** begins by reviewing how Sects perceive ghouls. It then offers Clan-

specific views related to ghouls, along with their uses and descriptions of how Clan weaknesses affect them. Lastly, a list of common and uncommon ghoulish organizations is presented, describing which type of ghoul might join and what their purpose is.

**Chapter Four: Revenants and their Families** is specifically geared to address the history of revenants and their families. Surviving revenant families are offered in detail, along with rumors about what they (or their patron Clan) hope to achieve in modern nights.

**Chapter Five: Character Creation** outlines an expanded guide to character creation for a ghoul or revenant. This chapter includes an extended example, as well as new Backgrounds, Merits, Flaws, and optional rules systems for Disciplines, Blood Pools, etc.

**Chapter Six: Storytelling** offers advice to Storytellers who wish to run a chronicle involving ghouls or revenants. The suggestions incorporate troubleshooting, several plot hooks and chronicle structures, advice on handling tense scenes, and the introduction of a Chronicle Guide.

**Appendix I: Gallery of Ghouls** lists a series of pre-generated characters. These revenants and ghouls are templates that have been prepared for a Storyteller to use, or for players to draw inspiration from as they create their characters.

**Appendix II: Animal Ghouls and Monstrous Creations** covers different types of animal ghouls, their uses, and the rarely seen szlachta and vohzd.

## Lexicon

**blood bond:** A mystical power over another individual engendered by partaking of a particular vampire's blood thrice; accepting blood from a vampire is an acknowledgment of her mastery. However, no individual may fall under the blood bond's influence more than once.

**blood doll:** A mortal who freely gives her blood to a vampire. Most blood dolls gain a perverse satisfaction from the Kiss, and actively seek out vampires who will take their blood.

**Bound:** Refers to a mortal, ghoul, revenant, or vampire who is under the full strength and influence of the blood bond.

**domitor:** A ghoul's master; one who feeds her blood and issues her commands.

**ghoul:** A minion created by giving a bit of vampiric blood to a mortal without draining her of blood first (which would create a vampire instead).

**Kiss, The:** To drink blood, especially from a mortal. The Kiss causes feelings of ecstasy in those who receive it.

**Proxy Kiss, The:** The ceremonial feeding of Giovanni blood to create a ghoul from a member of one of the Giovanni families.

**regnant:** A vampire who holds a blood bond over another.

**retainer:** A human who serves a vampiric master. This term is almost archaic, referring to a time when vampires kept vast entourages of mortal servants as part of their estates.

**revenant:** A member of a family who has been magically altered and bred to naturally produce vitae.

**sudra:** (also "shudra") the lowest caste of the Ravnos, composed of ghouls and mortal servants.

**szlachta:** Soldiers, spies, bodyguards, and protectors of Clan Tzimisce. Modified to serve, these ghouls are tough, smart, and deadly – but have little-to-no humanity left.

**thrall:** A vampire under the effects of a blood bond, having drunk another Kindred's blood thrice.

**vassal:** Archaic term for servant.

**vitae:** Archaic term for vampiric blood.

**vohzd:** Flesh-melded creatures made up a dozen (or more) ghouls by way of Vicissitude and Koldunic Sorcery rituals.

**zadruga:** An ancient word for the Tzimisce-connected revenant families.

## Source Material

Ghouls appear in both classic and modern vampire tales in a variety of different forms. Often, ghouls subsist on regular feedings from a master, and are eternally pledged to serve. Storytellers and players might find it interesting to consider reviewing the following examples as sources of inspiration regarding ghouls from other media:

Renfield from Bram Stoker's *Dracula* is, by far, the most popular and well-known example of a ghoul. Though his character has been examined several times, Renfield exhibits classic characteristics of a Bound ghoul: he loyally serves and defends his master but is also afraid of him, he believes whatever lies Dracula tells him, and the effects of his damnation can be seen in the way he behaves. Often, he yearns for blood, and his addiction is exhilarating. The *True Blood* TV series (2008-2014) and *Blade* (1998), along with its subsequent films, are

also great sources of inspiration for this aspect of the ghoulish condition. Both are filled vampire familiars and characters addicted to blood.

Of course, the contract between a mortal and a more powerful being is not exclusive to vampires. The *Puella Magi Madoka Magicka* TV series (2011) and movies tells the story of young girls who sign contracts with mysterious, cat-like creatures in order to become magical girls and fight witches. However, like ghouls, they don't know the full details of their agreement, nor do they understand how "Kyubey" benefits from their arrangement – until it's too late.

In the *Angel* TV series (1999-2004), certain characters such as Lindsey MacDonald, Eve, and Marcus Hamilton who work for Wolfram and Hart retain their agency but are also subject to supernaturally-governed agreements. In their case, however, they know full well what happens if they cross their leaders. While Lindsey is addicted to power and vengeance, Eve and Marcus are "creations" of the Wolf, Ram, and Hart, and are expected to be loyal.

Many of the law firm's employees are, in fact, servants to a higher, more infernal power. Though they have agency, they are bound by more than duty, for they know if they displease their managers they might be fired or killed. Other characters who are constrained and empowered to serve other, more powerful masters include Karl Ruprecht Kroenen from *Hellboy* (2004), Caleb from the final season of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (2003), and Jacopo from *The Count of Monte Cristo* (2002).

In the aforementioned examples, the characters are flawed, but must serve a higher power or give into their addiction. Each character, however, has a well-defined personality that makes them important to the story they are in, even when groups of them band together to work for an evil law firm or fight witches. Despite falling under the influence of a powerful entity, they are not "extras" or "bit-parts", but fully-fledged characters in their own right, who are as equally as important to the narrative as the protagonists and antagonists they serve – just as ghouls and revenants do for their masters in *V20*.





# Chapter One: Blood is Life

*“The condition of the vampire is known to us. The fragility of mortals holds no secrets for us, either. The only riddles science has left to solve, are the mysteries of the Blood and its effects on ghouls.”*

– Dr. Douglas Netchurch, Malkavian Researcher

The night you met a vampire, your life changed forever. Whether you chose to become the attendant for an immortal or were forced into servitude, your old life – your *mortal* life – disappeared the minute you became a ghoul. In exchange for abandoning your friends, your family, and your lover, you’ve been gifted with vampiric blood that grants you near immortality and enhanced physical abilities. The sweet, addictive blood coursing through your veins has altered your mind, too, filling you with confidence and certainty unlike anything you’ve felt. You cannot imagine what your life was like before you tasted your master’s blood, and you fear what might happen if you stopped serving her. Would you return to your boring job? Your humdrum friends? Or would you quickly seek out a new master?

Your domitor has not only changed you physically, she’s opened your eyes to the truth: that your human existence is not what you thought it was. You are a tiny flicker of light in a World of Darkness occupied by creatures of legend and nightmare – like your master. Though the Blood makes you feel as if your flame burns a little brighter, fulfilling your master’s wishes is dangerous and unpredictable. You’ll need to be clever if you hope to survive among such mythic beings as vampires and their enemies. If you are smart, you’ll learn quickly that you are but one piece

on an eternal chess board manipulated by vampires far stronger and more powerful than you’ll ever be.

But, despite your master’s whims and wishes, you still have a choice. You have many gifts at your disposal, though some you didn’t even realize you had. Will you remain a pawn? Or will you prove yourself a knight?

## **Between Day and Night**

*“A ghoul is a necessary, irreplaceable evil.”*

– Lilavati Chandraka, Former Toreador Primogen of Bangalore

To be a ghoul is to be the servant of a vampire. However, despite the proven rumors that some vampires do not treat their ghouls well, most ghouls are cultivated into becoming trusted companions, agents, advisors, managers, and bodyguards. Some vassals are trained into becoming highly-skilled assassins or spies, and a few ghouls even find a way to become independent of their master, much to the dismay of their domitor. On the other hand, the creatures called “revenants” find themselves in a much different position, as their will is often subject to the demands of their insular family as well as their progenitors and their Clan.

But what exactly is a ghoul? This is actually a bigger question that most might expect, as there are many different types of ghouls. On a physical level, all ghouls were once fully mortal. After a human (or animal) drinks the blood of a vampire for the first time, he becomes a ghoul. While the blood is in his system, his body no longer ages naturally — but he can still be killed like any other mortal. The Blood grants enhanced strength to all ghouls, and some might acquire additional supernatural abilities or curses that are tied to the blood of their domitor. In order for ghouls to gain the benefit of the powers in their master's blood, however, they require regular feedings. This vitae doesn't necessarily need to originate from the same vampire, but it usually does if that domitor wishes to forge a strong bond with her vassal. The effects of vampiric blood on a ghoul's body tend to strengthen over time. For more information about ghouls and aging, turn to [page 41](#).

Most, if not all, ghouls are loyal to their masters due to the effects of the blood bond and the addictive nature of the Blood. Often, the first taste of vitae is enough to hook a newly-created ghoul. After her third taste of the same vampire's blood, however, she becomes subject to the blood bond. This powerful emotional domination effectively forces the ghoul to fall in love with her domitor. Those subject to the blood bond are unable to disobey their master's orders and, though the blood bond isn't guaranteed to work perfectly in every instance, many ghouls do as they are told whether they intellectually resist their master's commands or not. Regardless of which vampire the ghoul receives blood from, however, all ghouls are addicted to the Blood and will do anything to get it.

In order to break the blood bond, a ghoul's master must die. Though there are other ways to sever the bond, many ghouls do not possess the means to do so. Thus, it is extremely difficult to break the blood bond after it has been secured. After all, the death of a domitor is something the ghoul will do her utmost to prevent.

Though the Blood is addictive and the blood bond is strong, there are many nuances to the relationship between a master and his Bound ghoul that go above and beyond their supernatural connection. Some domitors are close to their ghouls, while others don't bother with the pretense of a relationship and treat them as servants or, in rare cases, slaves.

## Freed from Bondage

*"I used to think there was nothing stronger than a blood bond, until I met a ghoul who had no domitor. Now I know: there is nothing more dangerous than an addiction to blood that can never be filled."*

– Nicolai Antonescu, Tremere Primogen of Chicago

While some ghouls can survive on their own without the protection of a master, their lives are typically short-lived. All ghouls not only crave vampiric blood, they must feed on a regular basis to remain a ghoul. Thus, while some ghouls sell their services to opportunistic vampires seeking temporary allies in exchange for their blood, such ghouls tend to be few and far between.

The most desperate ghouls might attempt to take down a higher Generation vampire by themselves to fulfill their need for the Blood. Though it's next to impossible for a single ghoul to trap a vampire and drain her blood, the idea that it *could* happen is concerning, regardless of Clan, bloodline, or Sect. The thought of any ghoul outwitting or besting a vampire to forcibly take her vitae is both ludicrous and rage-inducing to all vampires, even those who care little about the Masquerade.

For this reason, precious few ghouls are allowed to operate independently of a domitor. If and when they do, these rogue ghouls do not suffer from the effects of the blood bond. Instead, independent ghouls continually prove their usefulness by performing services for vampires who are willing to "pay" for favors with their blood. Despite the freedoms independent ghouls enjoy, the tasks they carry out tend to be dangerous and risky, for the vampires don't care if they live or die. For this reason, some independent ghouls form groups or collectives in order to protect themselves and increase their chances for success.

In general, independent ghouls are frowned upon by most vampires, for they are considered to be unpredictable and will do whatever it takes to fulfill their addiction. Other vampires are not so foolish as to believe all independent ghouls are freed from the effects of the blood bond, and are skeptical that a so-called "rogue" ghoul is acting of his own volition. Despite the fact that independent ghouls are considered taboo, some vampires still use them because they don't require long-term maintenance, can be used in an emergency situation, or may be leveraged as another tool to confuse their rivals.

Despite the benefits of having no domitor, rogue ghouls tend to be more paranoid than those who serve a master. Many vampires make a point of hunting independent ghouls down, and Sabbat Cainites tend to kill them out of spite. To the Camarilla, independent ghouls are either a future vampire hunter or a potential Masquerade breach, regardless of their previous lives, actions, or masters. Rogue ghouls are regarded with so much suspicion that some may even be hunted as the chief suspect in their former master's death.

While other vampires aren't necessarily frightened of a rogue ghoul, they *are* concerned about the fact that they

could frenzy, expose their kind, or drain them of their vitae. After all, vampires would slaughter anyone who would dare try to use them for their blood – especially mortals.

If caught, some independent ghouls avoid their execution by becoming the Bound servant of another vampire. This can be a long, complicated, and often highly political process. The domitor would likely take extreme measures to extract the secrets a rogue ghoule is keeping to ensure that other vampires understood the ghoule was no longer operating independently. He might even spy on the ghoule before securing the blood bond, watching and waiting for any sign of potential betrayal.

## Finding Truth in Myths

*“When Methuselah had lived 187 years, he became the father of Lamech. After he became the father of Lamech, Methuselah lived 782 years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether, Methuselah lived a total of 969 years, and then he died.”*

- Book of Genesis, 5:25-27

Though the nature of the modern ghoule holds little room for speculation, there are some vampires who turn to legend in order to find facts about how the first vassals came to be. While Noddists scour biblical lore for answers, hoping to uncover the hidden history of the common ghoule by researching the long-lived Adam and Noah, other vampires question the longevity myths of mortals. Precious few wonder, for example, whether or not Dumuzid the Shepherd or the thousand-year old Zahhak the Emperor were not actually mythological figures from ancient Sumer and Persia, but were ghoules instead.

One common claim Noddists make is that Caine may have experimented with vitae in order to test the limits of His curse, and the ghoule was the unexpected result. It is also believed that Caine felt the time spent in exile would become slightly more bearable – especially during the earliest of nights – by finding a suitable companion for the vampire. Other Noddists are convinced that revenants came before ghoules. To them, it was the Tzimisce Antediluvian, along with several others, who experimented on carefully cultivated servants from the mortal families of the earliest cities’ populations.

Whichever opinion a Noddist might have on the subject of ghoules, it’s bound to be an unpopular one, for most vampires feel that documenting and researching vassals is a waste of time and effort. Still, that doesn’t stop philosophers and historians from wondering if there’s additional truths to be discovered about vitae,

the vampiric condition, and the mysteries of Caine by investigating the subject. For example, some feel that perhaps all the rumored sightings of Caine in the ancient days might be justified if He created and used powerful ghoules to act as His body double. And, if that’s true, it’s probable that other ancient ghoules could still exist in modern nights, and evidence of their whereabouts might yet be found. Is it possible that a ghoule of Zillah, Irad, or Enoch still lies waiting in the shadows to take revenge for her long dead master? If so, whose vitae would these ancient ghoules require to keep them alive or from frenzy? Would they still be lucid after millennia of existence without the respite of torpor?

The idea that an unknown, mysterious faction of ghoules or a powerful missing, revenant family have survived the centuries frightens few vampires. These myths might scare younger vampires, however, and elders spin wild tales about the vile Enrathi or the cannibalistic Bratovich to good effect. After all, there are many revenant families who thrived long ago, in periods like the Dark and Middle Ages, that have since fallen into depravity and destitution.

In truth, it is far more common for vampires to believe the Antediluvians are still plotting to take revenge upon their modern kin than it is to think that ancient ghoules have survived the ages to set their domitors’ plans in motion. While there is a sliver of possibility that such ancient ghoules still exist, they are not as common as many Noddists might believe. It is more than likely that the vast majority of ghoules that did walk the earth in the time of Caine have since turned to dust, for after their masters fell into torpor or were killed, they were probably unable to survive on the diluted vitae of the younger Generation vampires they eventually encountered.

Most vampires, however, are either willfully ignorant about the possibility that such mythic ghoules lie in wait for them, or they spend their long nights ensuring that their modern ghoules would never betray their masters. While some use their ghoules to exact revenge or spy on their foes, most vampires are far more concerned with being struck from the shadows by a ruthless rival than a ghoule. As such, many vampires do not count ghoules among their enemies and believe them to be beneath their notice until they are needed. Ghoules are, for all intents and purposes, treated like servants or, on occasion, weapons that can be wielded. Regardless of their age or length of service, they are never treated as their master’s peer or equal.

For these reasons, when and if a Bound ghoule attacks another vampire, either directly or indirectly, the injured party typically blames her master as opposed to the vassal



herself. If that Bound ghoul is caught, it is then up to her master to punish her for the slight, even if he was responsible. However, while few vampires might use their ghouls to attempt an assassination or otherwise discredit their enemies, some do sacrifice their vassals on occasion as part of a larger, long-term strategy. This has led many higher Generation vampires to mistakenly think that ghouls are lesser representations of their domitors. To some extent this is true, but it typically depends upon the age of the ghoul. Thus, though the vast majority of the ghouls are a few hundred years or younger, should any vampire encounter an ancient ghoul, that vassal should be treated similarly to her Antediluvian domitor – with the utmost respect.

## An Age of Service

*“As radical as it may sound, I feel we may have overlooked the ghoul when researching the history of our kind, because we did not value their role as much as our progenitors. Perhaps by understanding their role in centuries past, we will yet find more evidence of Caine and the First City.”*

– Victorien Loyola, **Assamite Scholar**

Vampires, vassals, and their retainers have had an almost symbiotic relationship since the days of the First City. It is generally believed that, in the beginning, mortal slaves and other servants were favored by vampires and were more commonplace than vassals, because the knowledge of the blood bond and the addictive nature of vitae were yet to be fully explored or understood in those ancient times. Thus, vassals were, for the most part, kept in secret and taught to guard the havens of the city’s vampires. These ghouls were marked and blessed by their domitors, and were treated well in exchange for keeping those early masters safe from harm. Unfortunately, no account has been found describing the exact nature of the ghoul’s treatment or the favors their masters granted them during the time of Caine. Despite the fact that no hard evidence exists, some Noddists have pieced together their own theories about the relationship between ghouls and their masters in the First City from what little they know.

While ghouls kept their domitors safe in the privacy of their inner chambers, Noddists suspect other servants ran their household. These servants, who were given money and favors instead of the Blood and manipulated in a variety of ways, were thought to have formed their own customs and eccentricities in the service of their masters. In any given household, a social hierarchy was probably structured around the tasks apportioned to the servants and ghouls at that vampire’s residence. Thus, ghouls lucky enough to be

in the direct service of a vampire were likely at the top of the hierarchy. This meant that in the absence of their domitor, these ghouls probably issued commands to the staff on behalf of their master. Most of the servants who weren’t ghouls were likely ranked beneath them, and were arranged according to the duties required to maintain the household as was common with the warlords, princes, and queens of that age.

The tiers that comprised mortal servants and their supervisors likely followed the mores of the era. The merchants, entertainers, and handmaidens were on top, while the cooks, cleaners, and common laborers remained near the bottom. Some Noddists also believe that blood slaves and willing sacrifices could be found at the foundation of this elaborate hierarchy, hidden in plain sight. Eager to give their lives for their masters, the commands given to them by their betters ensured these sacrifices were ready for their lords. In a way, ghouls, sacrifices, and blood slaves defined each house in their own unique way. Unlike many mortal rulers, few Noddists surmise, every member of a vampire’s household – including the blood slave – was considered to be blessed by the lords of the First City. As such, few complained to serve their masters and went out of their way to please their lords, resulting in a perfect harmony experienced by precious few mortals outside of the city.

Though this structure was in place for some time, no one is certain if there were any ceremonies, rituals, or laws governing the creation, maintenance, and service of ghouls. Most vampires believe that there was no need for any formalized treatment of the lords’ vassals, because though they might have been honored at one time, they were eventually subjected to the blood bond in order to guarantee that they would loyally serve their masters. Others think that the Blood itself formed limits on how many ghouls the lords had, as well as how far they went to maintain the blood bond. Thus, there are many vampires that don’t believe that Caine, or any Second Generation vampire, ever created more than one ghoul, if any at all – especially since there’s little to no evidence that has survived to the modern nights.

## Fluctuating Status Over Time

*“Is the Beast truly the cause of so much paranoia? Or is there a genetic marker waiting to be discovered in the blood that flows through our undead veins? Perhaps experimenting on an older ghoul will unlock the past.”*

– Dr. Allan T. Woodstock, **Gangrel Scientist**

There is little detail on the life of ghouls in the First and Second City, because they were far less important to

record than their masters. Despite the lack of information, the few scrolls, effigies, and statues that have survived the passage of time lead many vampires to believe that the treatment of ghouls was vastly different between the two. In the First City, ghouls had been respected as valued companions and, in some cases, were revered by mortals as well. But in the Second City, ghouls appear to have been ruthlessly controlled – and no one knows why. Just as the position of the ghoul has never been better than in the First City, it is commonly believed that it has never been worse than it was in the Second.

While the barbaric abuses heaped on ghouls during this time has remained a mystery, most vampires don't spend too long speculating about this change, with the exception of the occasional Noddist or dedicated historian. Those who do wonder why the treatment of ghouls shifted so drastically believe that it might have had something to do with the Antediluvians' feared uprising from their childer. It is a strong possibility, according to some, that the paranoia ran rampant throughout the Second City, and this naturally extended to keeping ghouls under tight, even oppressive, control. However, it is more than likely that the Antediluvians discovered the limitations of having one too many ghouls or, worse, that ghouls were not immune to the curses carried in the Blood and could frenzy. Thus, even the lower Generation vampires came to realize that though ghouls offer many benefits to their domitors, they, too, come at a cost.

As the centuries passed and vampiric blood became weaker with each generation, most vampires slowly released their grip on their ghouls. This began with the leaders of their Sects setting examples for the rest of their followers. Kindred were the first, followed much later by majority of Cainites. Eventually, vampires became increasingly more selective about forming their retinues and fed their blood sparingly and only when necessary. Therefore, many pursued more personal relationships with their servants and vassals than they had in times past.

Put to work in smaller households and estates, ghouls eventually became more valued and were heavily relied upon to act as a bridge between the society of mortals and the world of the vampire. This increasingly became important due to the stratified class structure of the Old World, as it was common for vampires to be chosen from the nobility and their ghouls from the peasantry, regardless of Clan or status. While this was not the status quo for every vampire, the idea of "those who rule" and "those who serve" was powerfully ingrained in most throughout the Middle Ages, and many vampires still follow this centuries-old philosophy in the modern age.



## **Evolving Societies and Forced Changes**

*“We have always feared what might happen if modern humans would learn of our existence, but we have never before been as paranoid about a breach of the Masquerade as we are now. Their weaponry, combined with their ever-changing technology, has turned kine into a great army that could mobilize at a moment’s notice and extinguish our kind. Thank Caine for his Dark Gift of blood, for without our powers, ShreckNET, and our ghouls, I am not certain we would thrive as well as we do now.”*

**– Kristian Toft, Nosferatu Hacker of Milwaukee**

Shifts in the treatment of ghouls tended to occur whenever there were sweeping changes in human societies. When the European Inquisitors began searching for heretics, vampires ordered their ghouls to defend them. Some even went so far as to send their ghouls to confession, while plotting their own escape to countries that were less zealous. The fluctuating power of the Vatican and the long years of the Inquisition were not the only factors that necessitated change, however, for the armies of Europe were often marching to conquer a new enemy. Thus, when the armies of a bloodthirsty warlord or queen invaded their secret dominions, vampires commanded their ghouls to spy on and infiltrate the opposition in order to ensure their survival. In this way, the treatment of ghouls ebbed and flowed throughout history for, despite the shifting nature of their relationships and needs, vampires care more about their own safety than they do their vassals’.

During the Age of Enlightenment, for example, many vampires flourished due to a fresh emphasis on rational thought and scientific studies. This had a direct impact on how they viewed, acquired, and treated their ghouls. Savvy vampires took advantage of the fact that a mortal’s belief in the supernatural was thought to be silly, superstitious, or an indication of mental illness. When they didn’t lie or manipulate mortals to look the other way, these vampires used their ghouls to hide their existence through elaborate explanations and fabricated identities. Since mortals were more likely to believe that monsters were mythological than real, Bound ghouls had an easier time convincing others that their domitors were a figment of their imaginations. This tactic proved to be so successful, and most vampires adopted the approach because they found it enabled them to keep their havens hidden and move faster and further than they had in the past. While many vampires remained in Europe,

others crossed the Atlantic to secure new territories and domains in colonized countries such as Brazil, Canada, and America.

Though the constant threat of war and the colonization were fraught with their own perils, most vampires adapted to the changing times by relying on their ghouls to monitor their enemies and report back on the comings and goings of notable mortals in their cities or towns. Then, for a few hundred years or more, the treatment of ghouls remained static, as their masters were free to move and settle into more permanent homes, relying on their vassals to carefully monitor the fluctuating political and social tides.

Then, at the dawn of the twentieth century, the status of ghouls shifted again. The Age of Industrialism confused and caught many vampires by surprise, because they didn’t understand why and how machines were changing their way of life and their ability to blend into society so quickly and so permanently. Faster methods of communication, advanced weaponry, and ever-shifting cultural zeitgeists baffled many vampires, which eventually led to deeper concerns about the protection of the Masquerade and the Silence of the Blood which escalated following World War I and II.

In modern nights it has become vital, despite rumors to the contrary, for Cainites and Kindred alike to employ specialists like ghouls. While ghouls are still regarded as servants, they now help their masters plan, scheme, and finish tasks most vampires once performed without their assistance. Protecting a haven, for example, used to require a few armed guards and reinforced walls. Now, a ghoul might tell his master that her haven needs high tech surveillance and enough protection from weapons that can blast through stone, deploy gas, or shoot missiles.

Due to the ever-expanding population, there is no shortage of highly-skilled mercenaries, hackers, bodyguards, merchants, and personal attachés to choose from. For most vampires, however, the challenge is finding the right candidate at the right time with the right set of skills. Thus, once a master acquires a ghoul who performs adequately, she often keeps her vassal under close watch.

Regardless of how masters recruit and maintain their ghouls, they now rely more heavily on their vassals in modern nights than they have in the past. Thus, most ghouls who perform to their master’s satisfaction become valued agents due to their unique skill set and their ability to move about during the day.

# Undead Immortal Seeks Aide

*“The first blow is half the battle.”*

– 18<sup>th</sup> century proverb

Given all the powers and abilities that a vampire has at her disposal, it may not make sense that she needs mortals to help her. Ghouls perform a variety of roles, often several at the same time, but many of these duties require tasks only a loyal human can do during the day. When ghouls perform well, vampires take them for granted. When they don't, however, they often ask questions that do not have easy answers. What drives a vampire to create a ghoul? Why waste precious blood? Why not lure mortals into the shadows and manipulate them with promises of gold or favors?

Answering these questions can be less challenging than finding the right candidate. Even vampires, despite their schemes and plots, aren't sure *which* mortal they need to complete a task or fulfill a role. Thus, some ghouls were created and maintained for centuries for the simple fact that their domitors needed trustworthy, loyal companions to confide in. Others view their ghouls as disposable assets, who are used and tossed aside just as quickly. These masters argue there would be less ghouls if all vampires had the use of Dominate, but even then this would not be true, for there are many roles a servant fills beyond that of a mere guard.

Though there are many different uses for a ghoul, most can be found performing a task that fits into one of the following categories: servant, protector, socialite, and companion.

## Servant

Typically, ghouls are created to perform a variety of services for their domitors. It is their job to fulfill the requirements of whatever their domitor needs; this is the one thread that ties all ghouls together in some fashion. The tasks themselves can be mundane and ordinary, but the specifics usually depend on the nature of the services a vampire requires. Many vampires, for example, use ghouls as they used footmen and chambermaids in ages past to display and flaunt their position in vampire society. The more ghouls a domitor maintains, the more wealth and power a vampire appears to have – or so some vampires believe.

Though many ghouls are expected to clean up blood and pay their master's bills, others who are cultivated into

the role of a servant may not have to deal with messy or mundane tasks. Instead, these ghouls are groomed into a supervisory position to oversee other ghouls or mortals. While no vampire cleans their own clothes or dusts their own nightclubs, there are human agencies that can be hired as housekeepers who require daily interactions. A master's ghoul might organize and supervise such activities to ensure no human employees see more than they should, while another might roll up his sleeves because his domitor wished him to scour the blood stain on the marble floor.

In addition to a household servant or supervisor, other roles a ghoul might fill include a cleaner or a concierge.

## Cleaner

When vampires need to dispose of a body, sometimes they enlist the help of a ghoul to do their dirty work in protecting the Masquerade or avoiding unnecessary inquiries. Despite being careful, accidents do happen more often than their masters care to admit. Sometimes, a vampire might gorge himself on a vessel and too much blood is spilt. Other times, a vampire might have killed her blood slave in a fit of anger, or needs to clean up after an impromptu feeding before she meets with her allies. The role of a cleaner requires careful maintenance for, without a strong blood bond and the use of Disciplines, terror and dread might begin to impact the ghoul in unexpected ways.

Forcing a ghoul to clean up large quantities of blood might have another unintended side effect as well. Ghouls have the ability to frenzy, just like their domitors do, and this may escalate an already tense situation. For this reason, some vampires “teach” their ghouls how to deal with the horrors of their job, and ask for their input to better use modern methods of disposing a body, human organs, and blood. On occasion, these lessons might result in the vampire teaching his ghoul how to frame someone else for murder, how to bribe the right people to look the other way, or how to make a death look like an accident.

## Concierge

Vampires may be creatures of the night, but they still require the trappings of a mortal life from time to time. While a few younger Generation vampires utilize their ghouls to queue up outside a tech store when a new phone is released, most domitors command their ghouls to handle more sensitive acquisitions. A good concierge would have an array of unsavory contacts to purchase advanced security systems, weapons, and explosives from, just as easily as they might buy the perfect vintage or antique set of furniture for their havens.

Most domitors task their ghouls with outfitting their havens for the simple fact that installing a few safety features

could prove very difficult, even with the use of Disciplines. The location and key features of any haven should be kept hidden from prying eyes, and Bound ghouls prevent such details from being stolen by a rival. For this reason, some domitors use Bound ghouls until their havens are built and secure, and then kill them to avoid the possibility of leaked secrets. However, domitors can be persuaded to keep a temporary concierge around on a more permanent basis, since their contacts and connections take time to forge.

Concierges who enjoy a long life at their master's side occupy a privileged position in their household and are given more freedoms than other ghouls. Due to the fact that the maintenance of their contacts and network requires constant upkeep, some ghouls operate out of temporary residences, offices, and warehouses they use to host guests.

## **Protector**

If vampires only have one ghoul, most will use her to protect themselves or their havens. All vampires are keenly aware of how vulnerable they are during the day, and understand the benefits of having a ghoul that isn't threatened by sunlight. So, no matter how secure their haven, most vampires don't feel safe without someone they trust standing guard.

The role of the protector is so prevalent that it is not uncommon for ghouls who are assigned other tasks to also stand guard as they sleep. This is also the reason why so many vampires only task ghouls with guarding their havens after they are Bound. To a domitor, a Bound protector is not simply a matter of trust, but the difference between life and death. Without the blood bond, it would be simpler for a ghoul to turn on her master during the day. Under its effects, however, vampires know that a ghoul will protect her domitor, whether she truly wants to or not.

Sometimes, however, a vampire's paranoia gets the better of him, and he decides the blood bond isn't enough to guarantee the efficacy of a protector. For this reason, ghouls used in this capacity are often recruited from either a branch of the military or a well-known security firm. Other domitors prefer to protect themselves with spies or intelligence agents, as their worth is in their duplicitous natures and their ability to improvise.

Most protectors, however, are skilled in the art of combat in some fashion. While a qualified or specific use of weapons can be important, solid melee skills are also useful, as an assailant will not respond well to a stake through the heart no matter if he's human or vampire.

In addition to specialists, the most common types of all-purpose protectors include a bodyguard and a driver.

## **Bodyguard**

The specifics of what a bodyguard does and doesn't do often depends on a domitor's preferred method and style of defense. For example, some domitors greatly distrust technology, while others feel natural defenses aren't enough to dissuade intruders.

Despite a vampire's personal preferences, every domitor understands that there are many ways a haven might come under attack, and a bodyguard will be able to see weaknesses she can't. Often, this depends on the ghoul. After all, a big, burly bodyguard might be useful to intimidate enemies, while a wiry, quick guard might be better at ambushing them.

Bodyguards spend most of their time protecting their domitor or their haven. They are often expected to stay quiet and alert, and tend to be competent in matters of security, weapons, and technology. Because they are often seen and not heard, bodyguards are surprisingly well informed since they often stand by the side of their domitors. Those bodyguards who pay attention during meetings might glean details of their master's schemes and the political underpinnings of vampire society.

Bound protectors are trained to sacrifice themselves for their domitors, and will not hesitate to willingly give their lives in the line of duty. While it is rare for such a trusted servant to go rogue, those bodyguards who do are often among the best prepared to either pledge their services to a new domitor, or to protect themselves on the run.

## **Driver**

While many bodyguards also double as drivers, this can be a unique role in its own right. Lower Generation vampires, or domitors unfamiliar with the trappings of the modern era, may require transportation to blend in with modern society. For them, cars, limousines, and planes are still new and risky to operate without help. A good driver will have quick reflexes, an excellent memory, and a working knowledge of many different types of vehicles. Some drivers double as mechanics, too, or couriers to safely transport goods and visitors from one destination to the other.

Despite how necessary they are, some domitors avoid using ghouls in such a fashion, because they believe it's a waste of blood – especially since traveling out in the open can leave them vulnerable to attack. While it is unusual for vampires to attack one another while riding in their cars, younger vampires may use them out of habit. In such situations, a ghoul with advanced driving skills would leave her domitor's hands free to fight or flee. Canny masters even go so far as to find look-alikes and buy duplicate vehicles to fool their attackers.



## Socialite

When a vampire has lived for a long time, he often feels his grip on reality slipping away. Many vampires become confused, because they're mired in ancient traditions or cultural zeitgeists that no longer have any meaning in the modern era. Holding onto the past may help keep them centered and lucid, but if they revisit their memories too often, they will be out of touch with the rapid changes that are happening all around them.

Vampires who want to blend into society, who want to be seen as climbers or hobnob with politicians, require a ghoulish who's already adept in the social circles they wish to travel in. After all, a domitor cannot train a bookworm to be a social butterfly. Those traits must already exist, which is why many domitors pick a candidate from among the social elite.

A socialite may be public-facing or operate behind-the-scenes on her domitor's behalf. Two roles a ghoulish might fit into include that of a face and a technologist.

### Face

For all their power, there is one thing a vampire has trouble doing, and that is moving about during the day. This wouldn't be much of a problem, except that many

businesses, institutions, universities, and other high profile organizations hold business hours from sunrise to sundown. While it is common for servants to perform services during the day, a ghoulish that acts as a vampire's face speaks for his domitor and makes appearances in his stead.

Because these ghoulish are required to remain visible and connected, it is often their job to keep abreast of what schemes and atrocities happen among mortals. Then, they are encouraged to report back to their masters, whispering about the movers and shakers, potential threats, and their key weaknesses. Vampires can be quite dismissive of human politics, but the clever ones know that the signs of their rivals' plots can often be found in the news of the day. There is only so much a vampire can glean from the headlines, however, and having someone connected to a vast social network will allow the domitor to hear interesting details happening near his domicile that might otherwise go unnoticed.

### Technologist

For many vampires, the industrial revolution kicked off a whirlwind of technological advances that has yet to stop. Because of how quickly the modern world moves, most vampires struggle to keep up with the basics. While

computers are the obvious example, the twentieth century has seen the invention of cars, planes, cameras, televisions, refrigerators, and advanced weaponry such as machine guns and tasers. Ghouls that can offer the knowledge or mastery of modern technology not only help their masters survive, but they also give them a profound advantage over their enemies.

For a potential ghoul, the rewards to work for a domitor in this capacity are great. In many cases, money is no object, which allows a technologist to get his hands on cutting-edge equipment. Sometimes, a domitor might recruit a researcher working on a special prototype. Other times, a vampire might be impressed by a socialite's ability to master a cell phone. Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for technologists to fail their masters, as vampires may know they need someone who is familiar with computers, but don't understand the nuances required to find the right candidate.

While there are a wide variety of backgrounds and skills a technologist might have, the best candidates will likely be social as well. A domitor might be impressed by the research a bookworm is pursuing, but a tech-savvy college student is more attractive due to her knowledge of social mores, customs, and lexicon, too.

## Companion

Vampires often crave companionship to make their immortality more bearable. Finding another immortal who understands their world and their desires is often a difficult proposition, because of their deceitful natures. Thus, some vampires ask permission to create a childer, while others simply do so expecting their neonate to follow their every whim and desire. The creation of a companion ghoul is, in many ways, a temporary solution for vampires seeking to lessen their loneliness of the long, dark nights ahead of them.

Some domitors regard their ghouls as part of their family – for a time. Unlike a neonate, many ghouls are shades of their former selves, for the blood their domitors give them changes them both physically and emotionally. Loyalty, for a companion ghoul, does not happen over time. Instead, it is expected of them almost immediately, and many domitors go to great lengths to ensure their companion ghouls remain by their side at all times.

Despite appearances to the contrary, the possession of a companion ghoul is not the same as a vampire having a "friend". Many domitors feel it's necessary to share their innermost secrets, to discuss local politics, or to rationalize their paranoia with a trustworthy individual. For most

vampires, however, trust is a luxury they cannot have. Anyone who knows a domitor's secrets, whether they be mundane worries or far-reaching concerns, has insight his enemies would kill to get. For this reason, vampires tend to be more paranoid when selecting a ghoul in this capacity, because while it's easy to keep a servant in the dark, it's almost impossible to control *other* ghouls and *their* domitors who encounter his trusted companion.

Companion ghouls take many forms, and the specifics of their roles depend upon a domitor's willingness to divulge her innermost secrets – or her desire to extract them from others. Though there are many nuances to being a companion ghoul, the two most common is to become a domitor's confidante or a sleeper agent.

## Confidante

Ghouls that become confidantes are often put in a difficult position, as they are subject to their domitors' ever-shifting moods. Vampires are a paranoid lot, and often turn to those who have served them faithfully for many years before considering them a confidante. However, it is not unknown for a vampire to remove the free will of a friend or lover before he confides in her. In such cases, a ghoul may engage in a strange conversation without ever knowing what she's really talking about. Her master may cloak every sentence in metaphor and allegory, to talk about "problems at work" or issues with the "home office". Occasionally, a domitor might wine and dine his ghoul, as if she was his lover instead of his servant. What the ghoul may not realize is that the charming date she's speaking with is actually a vampire who's been putting a few drops of his blood into her drink, and he's been forcing her to forget their conversations night after night.

Other ghouls, however, may willingly listen or do whatever their masters wish because they believe they'll one day be Embraced. These confidantes are fully aware of the terrors that might await them, and they feel an uncanny sense of loyalty to their domitors and pledge their lives in service to receive their reward. Unbeknownst to these ghouls, they may not realize that their masters have no desire to "give up" a good servant in this fashion. Other domitors may decide to Embrace their confidantes, forgetting that their blood is partly responsible for their ghouls' loyalty.

In addition to his day-to-day duties, the worth of any confidante is in his ability to obtain and share secrets with his master. For this reason, the best listeners often make the best confidantes and tend to survive the longest, since they know when to remain silent.

## Sleeper Agent

Some vampires like the idea of a companion, but do not relish the fact that other ghouls and vampires may attack them simply because of who their masters are. Those who are too paranoid to have a ghoul go to great lengths to hide their servants, and the sleeper agent is but one of many types of secretive ghouls that exist unbeknownst to anyone else.

To a domitor, a sleeper agent is a ghoul that can be activated when the time is right. There are many ways a domitor might shape a ghoul to perform an individual task or plan. A master might spend months screening candidates, planting commands using Dominate, or testing potential ghouls before taking the next step. Once a domitor has implanted a sleeper agent, that ghoul may live out a normal life in secrecy, without ever knowing what her true purpose is. Other masters, who err on the side of paranoia, may create such a ghoul out of desperation or fear of being attacked, and plan to activate them in a few weeks' time.

Sleeper agents might also be used as a reserve resource when a vampire's enemies have already destroyed all they could find. They might guard a hidden back-up haven no one knows about, or a hard drive containing their master's deepest secrets. Many, however, are left as a last resort or a final solution when all other methods of protecting themselves have failed. It is this sort of ghoul who comes out of the shadows to avenge or free her master after his rivals have taken him down.

While being a sleeper agent might seem to have all the advantages and none of the flaws as a regular ghoul experiences, it can be filled with heartache. The blood bond often creates a sense of yearning, and sleeper agents can be separated from their master for long periods of time. This might lead to other problems, should their domitor's attention wax and wane.

Despite the challenges with the domitor-ghoul relationship in this capacity, a sleeper agent can be a worthwhile asset to invest in. After all, many vampires find that a sleeper agent that has the ability to carry out a specific set of commands when needed, unbeknownst to their enemies, gives them a much-needed edge over vampires who don't.

## Recruiting Ghoul Candidates

*"The question of what makes the perfect ghoul is not one that can be answered easily."*

- Vilesh Darothar, *Lasombra antitribu*

While vampires are a force to be reckoned with, most ghouls have certain freedoms vampires do not and, given time, their powers can match those of higher Generation vampires. However, it is the ghoul's ability to walk unnoticed and unseen by day, operating in modern society, that often turns a simple servant into a crucial ally for her domitor.

Finding potential candidates can prove challenging for many vampires, since they are often far removed from the world their recruits live in. There are no public agencies offering prospective ghouls, nor are there academies to train them in servitude. Though the blood bond ensures the loyalty of a vassal, it cannot force a ghoul to become competent in her duties. So, vampires are required to search for the right candidate themselves. For example, a candidate that distinguishes himself in a particular field might come to his master's attention purely by accident. Sometimes, a talented individual will make a name for herself, and whispers of this person's prowess will reach a vampire's ears. A renowned hacker might get arrested, a decorated soldier might return from a posting abroad, and a politician might have won by a landslide.

Such individuals, like the wealthy, powerful, or famous, might be deemed worthy of becoming a ghoul, but they often present a host of other problems. The first is the logistical nightmare of isolating a ghoul from his former life. After all, most ghouls don't get to maintain a social life on their own terms, and removing an individual from the public eye can be more trouble than it's worth. Thus, the ease of cornering a future vassal often factors into a vampire's decision on whether or not a candidate is worth the time and effort.

Though there are multiple approaches to successfully finding and retaining the proper candidate, it is commonly thought that most vampires know what role they need a ghoul for before they begin their search. And, as such, they choose a potential vassal based on how they'd best fill that position by their side. Regardless, most vampires who intend to have a ghoul do not wish to waste their blood on just anyone. Thus, finding someone worthy of the Blood might occur in a few, different ways:

- **Researching Without Assistance:** Many vampires begin their search by narrowing down what services they need their ghoul to fulfill. If they require a head of household, they might look among the managing staff of a high-class hotel. If they are looking for a computer technician, they might review a software company's list of star employees. However, for many vampires this can be a problem in and of itself, since they often need someone else to perform a certain job because they don't know how to do it themselves. Thus, a vampire may not have the right contacts to



find the best person for that role, and doesn't have any idea where to begin. The more specialized the qualifications a vampire requires, the exponentially harder the process will likely become.

- **Using a Headhunter:** On occasion, a vampire might engage the services of an ally who has all the right contacts to find a candidate. However, few vampires truly trust another of their kind, even one of their own Clan, and might question the motivation of an ally who's all too eager to help. After all, a vampire might add subtle layers of domination to a group of candidates before delivering them, so one of them might become a sleeper agent, an assassin, or worse: the recruiter might subject the candidate to a blood bond, and then use Dominate to force that ghoul to forget what had happened. For this reason, most vampires prefer to use a mortal headhunter instead, and will pay that person handsomely for the task.
- **Asking Existing Ghouls:** Often, vampires will use their own ghouls to recruit a new candidate. Some vampires will employ one of their ghouls specifically as a talent agent — provided the domitor can afford to maintain multiple ghouls successfully. More commonly, ghouls or agents in the employ of a vampiric ally might recommend people they know as potential servants, hoping the vampire has a need for their skill set. However, vampires once again might question *who* is actually making that recommendation, and how much that ghoul or vampire can be trusted. Still, some vampires believe that it's worth investigating any potential candidate, especially if there's a reason why they're being pointed in that particular recruit's direction.

While many vampires seek recruits in order to utilize a ghoul over a longer period of time, there are those who need a ghoul to fulfill a specific, short-lived duty or role. In those cases, the vampire might change his methods of discovering the right candidate, knowing that he doesn't plan on keeping a new ghoul around for very long. For example, a vampire might need to utilize someone in the mayor's office, a part-time nurse, or a merchant specializing in foreign trade. Unfortunately, the mayor would almost certainly be a pawn of the Prince, and her private secretaries, chief of staff, and department heads would probably be under the control of other powerful vampires, too. Vampires are persistent, however, especially if they want to infiltrate positions of power. Thus, they might recruit the guy who shines the Mayor's high-heels every morning, the late night janitor, or that new girl working in the post room. Plenty of people outside the direct circle of power

have high levels of access, and most vampires understand the links in any given chain-of-command and know how to exploit them.

High-profile candidates might be treated like disposable assets because once a vampire gets what she needs, there's no reason to keep feeding an unnecessary ghoul precious vitae any longer. In many cases, a short-lived ghoul tends to only be useful when he's either near or in the service of a domitor's true target. This is why most vampires believe that the blood bond is a guaranteed method of getting what they want, and heavily rely on the use of Disciplines in order to corner a candidate. While some ghouls might prove useful enough to be kept in their service, many become loose ends once their usefulness ends, and are quickly disposed of in some fashion.

On the other hand, it is very difficult to manipulate a random meeting, so some vampires might pursue a candidate for a short-term use if that person catches their eye. Even though no coincidence is a guarantee that no other vampires are involved, a random gift of vitae to a person walking down the street is still considered the safest method to create a ghoul. The problem, however, is that it's also very rare for exactly the *right* person to pass a vampire in the streets, no matter how hard he might look.

Even after all the difficulties of recruiting the right vassal, the candidate might be utterly unsuited for the role the vampire has in mind. There are a few reasons why a ghoul isn't a good fit, both before and after blood has been given, for the effects of the blood bond are variable and unpredictable. However, prior to the gift of the Blood, some vampires might not be clear on what type of candidate they truly need.

Not knowing which skills are useful in a ghoul is especially common when a vampire requires someone to be well-versed in technology that she has little understanding of. For example, if an elder vampire is looking for a financial wizard, he might be impressed that his candidate knows how to play the stock market. That doesn't mean, however, that potential vassal understands how to manage millions of dollars' worth of investments, safeguard it from thieves and con artists, or choose the brokerage house. This is why it's important for vampires to think carefully about who they're choosing to bring into their haven.

## Dancing with the Devil


Selecting a candidate falls on the shoulders of the domitor. The next step, convincing a mortal to serve a vampire, is more nuanced and challenging than it seems. A vampire can't simply set up a meeting and spend an hour over drinks explaining the secrets of the Blood. While



## Planting New Recruits as Spies

Even though the task of finding a ghoul might seem mundane or non-threatening to a vampire, most are smart enough to know that nothing is ever that simple. Often, vampires will devise decades-long plots to infiltrate an enemy's haven, and the nomination of a ghoul is a clever way to force their sleeper agents into the havens of their rivals.

To fulfill this goal, a vampire might set a trap for her intended target by using Dominate on a room filled with candidates to ensure that a particular person is recommended for service. Since the recruitment process doesn't involve another vampire, the rival doesn't have to show her hand. Given the benefits of having a spy in an enemy's inner sanctum, some vampires believe it is worth taking time and effort to carefully leverage their ghouls in their schemes.



they could trick or deceive a candidate into becoming a ghoul, it's commonly thought that a willing ghoul will perform better than a victim-turned-vassal. So, how does a vampire convince someone into becoming her ghoul?

Most vampires agree, regardless of how that ghoul is treated afterward, that devising an initial approach is key to ensuring a prospective ghoul's buy in. In most cases, this encounter between a vampire and mortal will be the candidate's first glimpse into the World of Darkness. It's commonly thought that how the vampire goes about opening their desired vassal's eyes will impact how beneficial that ghoul will be long-term. Will she be seduced into an intoxicating, shadowy world of wealth and power, or will she be dragged screaming into the long, dark nights?

No vampire, however, likes to hear "No, thank you" from a candidate. If dismissed or refused, vampires might resort to threats, lies, and manipulation through the use of Disciplines to get what they want. But, if the prospective ghoul can see through the deceit, she might get the upper hand in the deal — even if it's only temporary. This would likely be the last time a ghoul has the opportunity to deny her master's wishes.

## Lies, Promises, and Tricks

When a vampire has decided on which candidate she wishes to seduce, she can be very convincing — even without the use of Presence. Some vampires might use their well-maintained appearances or charisma to charm their potential ghouls. However, the art of seduction — especially for members of the Nosferatu or Gangrel Clan — doesn't always require an attractive physical appearance. Many vampires lure ghouls into their households with promises of money, power, or an end to their very human problems. Initially, a domitor might keep up her end of the bargain, by paying off her ghoul's bills or helping her find a new job, until the blood bond has taken hold. At that point, whatever favors or boons she promised her ghoul might turn to dust once the effects of blood bond are clear. This is especially true if the favors the ghoul asked for doesn't benefit his domitor in any way.

While there are many half-truths a vampire will easily tell a ghoul, one of the more common lies is that becoming a ghoul is the first, necessary step to becoming a vampire like himself. Some masters will embellish this lie, telling their ghouls that the blood they drink will eventually change them into a vampire. Even though neither lie is true, the allure of becoming a vampire is simply another form of seduction that lures a ghoul into her master's world with the promise of eternal beauty, immortality, and power.

Of all the lies a domitor might tell, the pledge to Embrace a ghoul one day is fairly common. When a ghoul asks if the time is right, a master simply needs to reply — for months, if not years — that he's not ready yet. Or, more cruelly, *soon*. There are plenty of ways a domitor can get around the issue, either by insisting a ghoul isn't prepared for this irrevocable change or by pointing out a recent failure. When all else fails, a domitor might allow her ghoul to feed on her blood, and reinforce the bond between them. Instead of acting out in defiance, the Bound ghoul tends to work even harder to prove himself.

Eventually, ghouls might figure out that their domitors speak in half-truths and everything they do comes at a cost. Many disgruntled vassals, however, don't survive long enough (or aren't autonomous enough) to thwart their masters.

## Disciplines


If lies and promises don't work, some vampires simply take away their recruit's free will and use Disciplines to remove their ghoul's ability to make his own choices. A vampire might pick a recruit and display a wide array of dazzling Disciplines, such as Animalism, Potence, Dominate, or Presence, to impress him. Or, alternatively,



## Sealed in Blood

Many vampires, especially Kindred, believe that it is possible to court a potential ghoul without risking a Masquerade breach. To do so, these vampires seek to hire individuals and pay them handsomely, because some freelance contractors might not need convincing as much as employing. However, it is not uncommon for a vampire to select a new recruit among those they are already dealing with. Capable professionals or talented socialites are often tested for long periods of time before a vampire makes his move.

While some candidates might be aware they are dealing with a supernatural creature, this isn't always the case. A prospective ghoul might think it's weird his client wants him to drink a little blood to seal their deal, but with the salary she's offering he might overlook such eccentricities. Even then, even if a candidate is squeamish or a risky choice, it's easy for vampires to hide a little vitae in a glass of dark, red wine served during every meeting.



a vampire might simply use them to scare that potential ghoul into following her every whim or command.

Even though the use of Disciplines is a powerful tool, it doesn't change a recruit's true nature, nor is it a guarantee that candidate would make an excellent ghoul. A strong-willed human might be able to resist the use of Dominate, or might be so freaked out by a vampire's display of Thaumaturgy that she runs to the cops or leaves town. What happens then can get very messy, since the courting of a potential ghoul has consequences once it goes wrong. The ineffective display of Disciplines may result in a Masquerade breach or, alternatively, raise the alarm that an enemy vampire is in town. For example, one of the Followers of Set might use Presence to tempt a recruit into following her. If the outcome isn't what that vampire wanted, his candidate might unknowingly reveal the details of their encounter to a local Ventrue.

There are other, hidden costs of relying on Disciplines to recruit mortals. First, they might physically damage a candidate to the point that he cannot function properly. Second, another candidate might suffer needlessly or remain traumatized afterward. In such cases, a vampire might take further precautions and use more Disciplines to erase all traces of their meeting before abandoning them entirely. Others might murder their recruit if their encounter ends so poorly they have no other option but to silence that candidate forever.

## Threats and Force


Sometimes, vampires avoid brokering deals or seducing their candidates. Instead, they fall back on threats or coercing a mortal into doing their bidding. Vampires who use violence instead of seduction to get their way tend to regard humans poorly, and typically do whatever it takes, regardless of the cost, to get what they want. As a general rule, vampires who recruit candidates in such a fashion don't care about the Masquerade or laugh off the Silence of the Blood. To them, the pursuit of a potential ghoul is a game of cat and mouse, and their target is set up to fail. Such vampires might also resort to blackmail, extortion, or harassment to force a candidate into submission. Thus, depending on the nature of her threats, a vampire may keep her true nature or identity hidden for as long as possible. She could pretend to be a criminal mastermind to underline her ruthlessness, or operate in the guise of a sinister businesswoman intent on "owning" that candidate to destroy a rival. Vampires who lie about their identity might need to back up their claims, but this usually isn't a problem or a concern.

If all else fails and a candidate is too scared to comply, a ruthless vampire might resort to torture, kidnapping, and forcible feeding. More sadistic vampires might snatch their recruits, lock them in a basement, and force them to drink their blood. Such a method is brutal and often scars the newly-created ghoul permanently. For this reason, some vampires won't resort to this tactic, because they understand the blood bond isn't a guarantee for their ghoul's loyalty: there have been cases of ghouls resisting the blood bond and fighting against their domitors. Thus, many vampires believe it is worth treating their candidates like long-term investments, for brute force will likely result in problems the domitor can't anticipate. In the event of an emergency, however, many vampires might resort to force feeding if the candidate is both useful and difficult to convince.



## For the Storyteller: Violence and Ghouls

The World of Darkness is filled with many supernatural terrors that impact your characters and your players' characters. However, the removal of a character's free will can be downright terrifying since that ghoul, or that specific candidate, doesn't normally have the power to fight back against a vampire that's hell bent on pursuing him. This aspect of the game is intended for mature players, and can be tricky to handle since the boundaries of your players' comfort zones may not be clear. We recommend talking to your players ahead of time to help you tailor the specifics of your chronicle before you introduce ghouls. We also suggest determining a method of communication with your players that doesn't break the mood or stops the scene, but acts as a clear signal to indicate that scene has become uncomfortable for your players and is no longer a fun experience for them.



In general, the use of force carries more risks than rewards, especially in well-populated areas where others might be alerted to what's happening. Some neonates might default to violence for several reasons. They might not have a mentor or a sire to guide them, they may be operating outside of the rules of their coterie or vampire society, or they might simply be acting in their own best interests. In many cases, vampires who revel in the havoc they cause may not fully understand, or care, that such violence may eventually lead to a blood hunt or a spot on the Red List should their activities escalate into more dangerous transgressions. After all, the bloody torture of a ghoul might cause his domitor to frenzy, or may even force that *ghoul* to frenzy, depending upon the situation which could lead to a breach of the Masquerade that cannot be easily covered up.

Thus, while violence and force still result in the creation of a ghoul, doing so tends to be less popular than the careful pursuit of a candidate.

## Life with Master

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A ghoul's day-to-day routine typically depends on who his domitor is and what services he's expected to perform. Many of a ghoul's roles place him at his master's side, while others might require steady and consistent interaction with modern society. While a ghoul might be on call twenty-four hours a day, he may be commanded to pursue a "normal life" filled with friends and lovers, provided these commitments don't clash with his duties. Unfortunately, a ghoul is often limited in his interactions, and may not be able to start a family or pursue a career — unless his master wished it. Even so, some ghouls might either avoid human contact where they can or, alternatively, seek it out as much as possible, because they know those whom they get close to will eventually fall to their master's scrutiny.

The other factor that impacts how a ghoul is treated is the number of ghouls a vampire maintains. The more ghouls a master controls, the more intense the rivalries can become. Fortunately, many vampires are acutely aware of the cost required to maintain more than one ghoul, and may decide that a single vassal is all they can handle. The possession of multiple ghouls can, just like in ages past, put a vampire at risk because each ghoul is a potential weakness a rival might exploit. In general, vampires who have multiple ghouls tend to maintain them willingly, to flaunt their wealth and power or to intimidate their enemies.

Proper food and sleep can be a ghoul's biggest challenge if she's expected to operate while her master is asleep *and* awake. Some ghouls are assigned tasks that can only be completed during the day, but are also asked to be available for a late night meeting. Luckily, a ghoul's supernatural ability to enhance their physical form allows them to survive on less sleep, but they still need at least some. To cope with the demands of their role, many ghouls become experts at time management, finding ways to snooze anywhere and be fully awake in an instant. Plenty of would-be assassins have been ambushed by "sleeping" guards.

Due to the effects of the Blood, however, ghouls often forget their own needs and ignore them to better serve their masters. Even so, many domitors eventually realize that their vassals are suffering, for they understand that it's impossible for mortals to work seven days a week, fifty-two weeks a year without rest. Overworked ghouls might show how tired they are by becoming obsessive and losing sight of key details. Typically, older vampires who have lost touch with humanity may not realize that their ghouls aren't machines that can be turned

on and off. They might blame their ghouls too harshly for their mistakes, until they come to understand that ghouls — like vampires — do need rest to remain healthy and fully functional.

## Types of Domitors

Most vampires fit into a type of domitor that frames their relationship with their ghouls. While a master might change his mood or his behavior on a whim, these stereotypes represent how a domitor *typically* treats his ghoul.

Additionally, there are stereotypes of domitors based on their Clan or bloodline. The specifics of how different Clans treat their ghouls begin on [page 47](#). Here, the types of domitors are addressed by how personal, or how impersonal, they are in their treatment of their ghouls.

### Personal

A kindly master may come across as a doting aunt, an eccentric friend, or a sympathetic boss. These types of domitors might profess how much they care about their ghouls' welfare as they work alongside them in order to fulfill their desires. From a ghoul's point of view, a kindly domitor is the best type of master to have, because she perceives they share mutual respect and, in some cases, friendship or even love. However, this sense of closeness is artificial, and many ghouls may never realize their relationship with their domitor is built on lies. Often, vampires will promise to reward their ghouls with the Embrace or by feeding them extra blood for good behavior, but might never fulfill their promises. Others might stick to more mundane gifts such as money or other worldly possessions to retain their ghouls' interest. Despite any overtones of kindness, a master still expects her orders to be obeyed — especially since she's investing time and precious blood to possess that particular ghoul in the first place.

Some domitors who take a ghoul as their lover, on the other hand, may revel in the brief euphoria of the experience. However, a couple consisting of a ghoul and a vampire will likely end in disaster. Sometimes, a master selects a ghoul to be his lover from his existing set of ghouls, and pursues a romantic relationship out of curiosity, need, envy, or boredom. No matter how many proclamations of love vampires might profess, they are selfish, damned creatures motivated by self-preservation who cannot understand what it means to love. Ghouls that profess their undying devotion to their masters, on the other hand, often do so under the influence of the blood bond. What vampires and ghouls have, then, is an artificial, shared lust or a fleeting mutual attraction. To anyone *but* a ghoul, whose mind is clouded by the effects of the blood bond, this type of relationship

is one of the worst ways to abuse the Blood, because it serves no purpose other than to indulge an appetite. For this reason, some vampires dismissively call the practice “playing with your food.”

While domitors may be generally kind, caring, or sympathetic, their attitudes do not preclude them from punishing their ghouls whenever necessary. A ghoul that is devoted to her master will likely be reprimanded if she doesn't carry out his wishes, regardless of how nice or how pleasing her domitor has been. Thus, though there are many benefits to the positive treatment of a ghoul, a few unintended side effects may develop. For example, masters who forget to assert their dominance may find their ghouls overstepping their bounds, as they try to anticipate their master's wishes. Or, in rare cases, a ghoul might murder his fellow ghouls to prove how much he “loves” his master.

### Impersonal

The most common type of master avoids a personal relationship with her ghouls to prevent unnecessary and unforeseen complications. While an impersonal approach does not automatically equate to harsh treatment, it does mean that a domitor's ghouls are thought to be expendable employees that can be replaced at any time. Acting professional benefits both ghouls and their masters, as most ghouls understand what it's like to work in a job. This can, in some ways, also reduce the possibility of obsession or physical desire, for a formal relationship allows a master to channel the ghoul's energies into a business-facing role and establish clear boundaries. Thus, if a ghoul screws up one too many times, or cannot stomach working alongside a rival ghoul, the master might end their relationship by “firing” him.

Vampires who think of humans as kine, however, tend to not treat their ghouls any better than a candle sitting on their shelf. In these cases, a domitor's attitudes might shift from impersonal to active disdain over time. Such masters either actively avoid possessing ghouls because they don't want to waste precious blood, or they might go out of their way to assert their dominance. However, those masters that do tend to exert ruthless control over their ghouls tend to perceive the tiniest gesture as a sign of rebellion. Ironically, it is this sort of brutal treatment that often leads to a master's worst fear: a bloody insurrection.

## Four Ages of Ghouldom

As ghouls age and progress, they become both more powerful and more useful to their masters. The four ages of

ghouldom represent the maturity of a ghoul, or how long a ghoul has been feeding on her master's blood while in her service. Though many ghouls do mark their numeric age in some fashion, they tend to forget to do so once they become experienced. At that point, the difference between a ghoul serving for a century or a hundred-and-fifty years is nominal.

## Young Ghouls

Newly-created ghouls are indistinguishable from any other human. They maintain the same appearance as they always have and, while they have enhanced strength, they are not superhuman. Even so, the Blood can make young ghouls dangerously overconfident, even in the presence of other vampires. Most young ghouls have no idea how dangerous and powerful many of the "people" they meet actually are.

Until the blood bond is secure, a domitor might keep her new ghoul under close watch. For any young ghoul, the weeks that pass may seem like the beginning of an exciting, intimate relationship. Few might realize they are actually under close scrutiny, and may not understand why. Regardless, most vampires understand that the strength of the blood bond does impact how a young ghoul will respond to their commands.

In some cases, a weaker blood bond could work to a young ghoul's advantage. Clarity of mind would allow a young ghoul to focus on his duty rather than his unnatural devotion to his master. This might eventually result in the young ghoul earning more and more independence, provided his domitor is primarily concerned with the duties he must perform rather than a close, personal relationship. However, a young ghoul with a clearer mind is also at risk of being physically or mentally hurt, for she'll experience the fresh horrors lurking in the shadows differently than a ghoul whose mind and senses have been dulled by the Blood.

While there is no means of accounting how many exist, most vampires assume that the majority of ghouls are young for a variety of reasons. Young ghouls might be killed by their masters during frenzy or if they unwittingly disappoint them. More often than not, however, young ghouls die defending their masters or their havens.

## Experienced Ghouls

A ghoul who has served for the duration of a human lifetime might be considered experienced by many domitors. As time passes, an experienced ghoul is at risk of losing her connection to humanity, for people may

## Animal Ghouls

Animals ghouls gain the enhanced strength of Potence, an extended lifespan, and the accompanying loyalty of the blood bond. However, the master doesn't acquire the ability to speak to or command an animal ghoul just because he has created one. Without the use of Animalism, animal ghouls can be difficult to control, but it is not impossible. Dogs can be trained and make excellent guards, although they are not as useful as their human counterparts.

The downside to maintaining an animal ghoul is that most animals cannot be given complex tasks that require fine motor skills or human interaction. However, animal ghouls tend to be extremely loyal and, as an added benefit, it is unlikely a particular dog or raven would also be the agent of another vampire. For this reason, it is not uncommon for many vampires to maintain one or two animal ghouls for added protection in some capacity.

For more on animal ghouls, turn to [page 169](#).

begin to notice how she never ages, and how she may be resistant to adopting the nuances of fashion or cultural zeitgeists. Savvy domitors will remind their experienced ghouls of this fact, and help them forge new identities when they need to retire a pseudonym or stage their deaths to avoid scrutiny.

While they might not understand their limitations, experienced ghouls will likely have mastered their new abilities and may have learned other physical Disciplines. Though an experienced ghoul is no match for a werewolf, some can and do successfully hunt and capture lone vampires without the help of their masters. Typically, however, experienced ghouls who continue performing services for their domitors remain by their side and enjoy the perks of their position.

Experienced ghouls who have been subjected to the blood bond are not any more – or less – loyal than a young ghoul who's been given three sips of his domitor's

blood. The effects of the blood bond remain the same, and experienced ghouls know that should their domitor stop giving them blood, they will age naturally and die if they've outlived their normal lifespan.

## Elder Ghouls

Ghouls who survive longer than a century or two are rare, but they do exist. Some domitors continuing the maintenance of a specific ghouls out of habit, favoritism, or necessity. A few savvy masters, for example, may continue to keep a sleeper agent nearby, because they're paranoid that they will be attacked. Unlike young or experienced ghouls, elder ghouls may also be familiar with the ins and outs of vampire society. Unfortunately, regardless of their age, elder ghouls enjoy none of the status that a freshly-Embraced neonate does.

Elder ghouls are highly skilled, and are often more knowledgeable about how to survive in modern society than most younger vampires are. Most of them are, for all intents and purposes, experts in the role they have been practicing and perfecting for years. Their roles could have been given to them by their domitors, or they may be positions that the ghouls created or molded out of necessity over time.

Some elder ghouls are in great physical shape, and are typically fit enough to put their skills into practice. Subject to their experiences and training, they might have high levels in physical Disciplines as well. For these reasons and more, an elder ghouls will likely be able to hold his own in a fight.

Even at this age, the effects of the blood bond remain the same as when that ghouls was first created. Thus, while an elder ghouls is probably more powerful than her younger self, her loyalty has remained static. For this reason, some elder ghouls might feel slighted if they are not Embraced after a certain period of time. After all, they've survived long enough to prove their worth and might have seen the troubles a neonate can cause. Or, alternatively, an elder ghouls may want to die after having seen and heard many horrors over the years. Thus, once a ghouls reaches this stage, a domitor should think carefully about what use he still feels his vassal has.

## Ancient Ghouls

Though it is a rare occurrence, a few ghouls manage to survive against all odds for hundreds of years or more. These ancient ghouls often serve powerful Methuselahs, and together they have seen the rise and fall of civilizations many times over. At this point in their lifespan, ancient

ghouls will have typically divorced themselves from reality to cope with the endless parade of days and nights serving their masters.

Like any other vassal, an ancient ghouls is a representative serving her domitor, but still holds no status within vampire society, even above younger vampires and neonates. Due to their age, their master, and the experience that they've amassed throughout the years, however, ancient ghouls are frightening to many vampires even though they are still technically mortal.

Ancient ghouls hold great value for their domitors. Thus, an attack on an ancient ghouls is viewed to be an attack on his master. Younger vampires may not realize this is the case when first encountering an ancient ghouls, however, since their existence is so rare. Other vampires may try to take advantage of the encounter by attempting to Dominate or use other Disciplines to unlock the ancient ghouls's secrets. After all, if old enemies can turn a valuable vassal against her ancient master, they might finally find a way to gain the upper hand and launch an attack.

Most vampires, however, understand that caution is often warranted when dealing with an ancient ghouls. Some may even extend the hand of hospitality to such a vassal, knowing full well that she'll report back to her master—and that vampire is whom they're truly afraid of.

## Born to the Blood

Not all servants are created by the feeding of the Blood. Some ghouls-like mortals, called revenants, are creatures created by a ritualistic process involving blood magic and a ghouls couple. Revenants, who are born to long, ancestral lineages commonly referred to as *revenant families*, are not simply the byproduct of two ghouls as some younger vampires might believe. These supernatural servants are, for all intents and purposes, manipulated into being based on their family's lineage and arcane lore.

Like ghouls, revenants do not typically have status within vampire society, and share many other commonalities with ghouls because they were both created to serve. However, unlike ghouls, revenants naturally produce a weak form of vitae which has given them extended life spans and a lesser version of the Beast. Revenants, more so than ghouls, may be prone to frenzy or Röttschreck because they, like their masters, suffer the effects of the Mark of Caine, albeit in a less potent form.

Typically, revenants are often associated with Sabbat Clans like the Tzimisce. However, other Clans and Sects, namely the Tremere and the Giovanni, have also developed revenant

families of their own in total secrecy. For more information about revenants and revenant families, turn to [page 85](#).

## The Promise of Embrace

Both ghouls and revenants may be lured into service with the promise of the Embrace. However, vassals may never receive the Dark Kiss, even after years of loyal service. Sometimes, a domitor's reasons to create progeny might vary, or their reasoning may be at odds with their ghoul's due to the effects of the blood bond.

A vampire might want to Embrace a ghoul as a way to:

- Add a new member to the local Clan to fill out their ranks
- Replace a dead childe
- Fill the gap a childe has left behind after a disagreement or a move to a different city
- Provide more power to the Clan that a mere ghoul cannot provide
- Beef up the Clan's local status or position, since ghouls cannot hold status
- Reward a ghoul for service after they've earned it

The reasons a ghoul might want to be Embraced are often simpler than that of his domitor's and a lot more straightforward. Since a ghoul does not hold status within vampire society, his needs and wishes tend to be less complex, because he believes becoming a vampire will save him from his master.

A ghoul may long for the Embrace because he:

- Hates being nothing more than a glorified servant
- Has done everything his domitor wanted in order to earn it

## The Damned

The Lexicon in V20, which is found on page 35, defines The Damned as "The race of Cainites; all vampires." This definition holds true throughout **Ghouls & Revenants** as well. While it is the vampires who refer to themselves as The Damned, their servants and slaves share, to a lesser extent, some commonalities with their masters. Typically, ghouls and revenants do not fear sunlight, but they do Hunger and suffer, too, from a lesser version of Caine's curse omnipresent in the Blood of the vampire. Any living creature, human, animal, or insect, who drinks too long from the dead will eventually pay a terrible price. The dark powers they've been granted, carried in the Blood, do not come for free — and both ghouls and revenants know this all too well.

- Desires access to occult secrets or Disciplines
- Thinks he's in love with a vampire
- Seeks a cure to a fatal illness he's suffering from
- Hopes for a second chance at life, without fully realizing a vampire is damned for all eternity

Once a ghoul is Embraced, the relationship between vassal and domitor shifts to that of a sire and her childe, and the servant is no more. If the neonate wishes, he might begin recruiting a new candidate to become a ghoul, either to replace the hole he left behind or to fulfill the role of his personal vassal once he has the autonomy to make his own decisions. Thus, the cycle of finding a potential candidate, creating a ghoul, maintaining a ghoul, and creating a childe continues.





# Chapter Two: Ghouldom, Blood Bonds, & Systems

*“To be a ghoul is to be more than human, but less than vampire.”*

– Dr. Nancy Reage, Malkavian Scientist

Few vampires argue about the power of the Blood, but what they often take for granted is that the existence of ghouls is both mysterious and disquieting. While ghouls are still technically human, they are also part vampire, and walk between both worlds in the day and night. As long as they continue to be fed blood, ghouls do not age, may develop the limited use of Disciplines, and can heal themselves as well. Despite the benefits that vitae provides, ghouls also inherit many weaknesses unique to the vampiric condition. These typically include being Damned, having the ability to frenzy, suffering curses related to Clan-specific weaknesses, and acquiring a Beast that never ceases to hunger.

A ghoul, however, is more than the sum of her body and the effects of the Blood. Ghouls and vampires also differ because a ghoul has a soul and a conscience, whereas a vampire does not. This can translate to a ghoul’s inability to cope with the truth – that she is never truly alone, and that vampires exist to feed. A domitor, on the other hand, might callously tell his ghoul to dispose of a body, not realizing that his servant has never seen a blood-drained corpse before. Thus, while the effects of vitae are powerful, they are not a guarantee that every ghoul will respond to the Blood or her master in the same way.

Most ghouls are aware that what they’re dealing with night to night is not, for lack of a better word, “normal”. Depending upon the degree and frequency of the terrors they encounter, some ghouls might even develop a mental illness as a result. One ghoul might obsessively wash his hands, while another might never sleep again. A few ghouls, however, could gain a Derangement such as Fugue, Obsessive-Compulsive, or Paranoia as time passes in addition to behavioral quirks.

Despite their ordeal, living life as a ghoul is both a dangerous and thrilling proposition for many mortals. This is especially true if the vampire takes the time to entice a potential ghoul, to show them the terrible beauty lying in the darkness, and to reveal the alluring and addictive nature of the Blood.

## **Intoxicating Blood**

Part of the reason why some domitors take their ghouls for granted is because of the addictive nature of vitae. As time passes, many masters forget that their ghouls’ professed loyalty is nothing more than an aching, physical dependence on the Blood. Often, they believe their ghouls will do anything to feed upon

them, forgetting that their ghouls could just as easily drink the Blood from another vampire. Though this is true, ghouls often want to remain in their current role due to the power of the blood bond, their addiction to the Blood, and the promises of their domitors. A handful of strong-willed ghouls might try to liberate themselves from their addiction, but it is very, very difficult for them to do so. These ghouls might cling to the fractured memories of what their life was like before they drank the Blood, only to forget what they were fighting for after their next feeding.

In truth, the Blood doesn't just sustain life and unlife. Once a ghoule has had her first taste, it effects her more deeply than any food, drug, or experience she could ever hope to have without it. Thus, addiction is but one of the many effects that vampiric blood can have on a ghoule. Like vampires, ghouls can also frenzy on occasion, which presents a deeper problem. After all, the only permanent solution is to force a ghoule to stop feeding, so they no longer *are* a ghoule. Unfortunately, some ghouls are so addicted to the Blood they may also suffer withdrawal symptoms or a form of severe psychosis that compels them to please their master if they are not fed on schedule. Regular feedings also impact a ghoule's physiology, however, as all ghouls eventually suffer from the Clan weakness present in their master's blood. These weaknesses are covered in the Clan write-ups which begin on [page 54](#).

Though the Blood is highly addictive, ghouls who cannot control their impulses tend not to remain ghouls for very long. However, it is undeniable that the human condition pushes desperate ghouls to the edge, to thrive despite the odds. Ghouls, even when Bound, will often fight viciously for their rightful place at their master's side. Cunning ghouls might set goals, and become so obsessed with them to help take their minds off of feedings. Maybe they yearn for the Embrace. Maybe they desire to be set free, to become an independent ghoule. Or, maybe they revel in their current role despite the horrors they witness, for they have never felt such raw power or tasted anything like the Blood.

The painful urge to feed on vitae is often tempered by other emotions ranging from obsession to jealousy, especially if a master maintains more than one ghoule. Often, ghouls who serve the same master will compete for affection and the Blood. These ghouls regard each other as rivals, and scheme to become their master's favorite, even if their domitor is a despot and a sadist. Some might hinder their rivals' attempts to please their shared master, forcing them to fall in disgrace. Others

might even provoke the demise of their competitors, and present them as failures before their domitors. Some masters are entertained by the fight for their affection, perhaps because it appeals to their cruel natures or because, in their megalomania, they love being the center of attention — thanks to the effects of the Blood on mortals.

There are other emotional side effects linked to drinking vampiric blood that manifest in unique ways. Some ghouls might feel brief moments of euphoria, a sense of inner peace, or acute clarity. Others might be sexually aroused or inspired to pursue their passions such as painting, writing, or singing. Physically-talented ghouls might feel as if they suddenly have more energy and more stamina than they had before.

In spite of this unstable mixture of feelings, the Blood also provides the ghoule with a hyper-awareness of their human condition, as vitae affects mortals and vampires differently. While it is known that vampiric blood in a human body intensifies the activity of all living organs and tissues, some suspect the Blood triggers and shapes new connections between neurons that further excite a ghoule's nervous system. According to the scientifically-minded, the Blood may also increase the production of hormones in the body. Combined, this may be the eventual, definitive explanation for the effects of vitae on a mortal, though this isn't entirely true. Feeding may be a physical act, but the Blood itself is a fatal combination of physical, emotional, and mystical addictions.

This fatal addiction causes a dramatic change in the ghoule's core set of values and beliefs, which further complicates their feelings of confusion and their sense of shame. Many domitors understand their blood's potential effects, and monitor young ghouls closely before issuing further commands. This is done for the simple reason that significant changes to a ghoule's personality will likely be noticed by the people they encounter — especially if they knew who that person was before he drank the Blood.

While an addiction to vampiric blood can be a useful, manipulative tool to wield, no domitor wants a ghoule who cannot think straight or is forced to quickly abandon his position in life. After all, sometimes a domitor wants a ghoule to remain installed as a lead detective or the mayor's secretary. Thus, many masters wait to usher their ghouls into their havens until after the blood bond has taken hold. In truth, vampires believe the blood bond is one of the only ways they can be sure that their ghouls will remain useful and loyal.

## Blood Bonds and Ghouls

The first time a person drinks a vampire's blood, she immediately begins to feel something for the donor, almost like an infatuation or crush. Even if she only drinks a few drops, that mortal becomes a ghoul. The Blood's influence after that first taste is subtle, but present in any interactions she has with her master from that point on.

Newly-created ghouls often feel confused because their feelings might have changed or shifted drastically after that first drink. Ghouls who were suspicious of their new master might not understand how their feelings could shift so abruptly, especially if their domitor lied or withheld information from them. More often than not, ghouls might not recognize their own feelings, nor would they necessarily understand what's happening to them. If they felt sympathy for the strange-but-quiet person before, they will feel irresistibly drawn to their master now for no apparent reason.

The contrast between what a ghoul feels before and after he was Bound is greater if he initially despised (or was scared of) the vampire. What that ghoul feels afterward is now is closer to love and devotion than anything else. As a result of these newly-developed feelings, even the most frightened or skittish ghouls will adapt their habits and lifestyles to spend most of their time closer to their adopted "parent" or "lover". Other ghouls will often dream about their domitor, or find themselves thinking about them and longing for their presence every second of the day. Some, however, become so obsessed with their masters that their judgment becomes clouded, and they are unable to finish their duties.

The artificial feelings a Bound ghoul possesses might distort his emotions to such an extent that the master's identity may supplant that of his parents, influential teachers at school, supportive mentors, best friends, or even first loves. These fraudulent feelings can cause the ghoul to be less focused or confused, and may no longer be capable of distinguishing what their real emotions are without a concerted effort. Some may even experience their memories on an endless loop in their sleep, and they struggle to make sense of so many strange faces and so many happy moments. To avoid losing their grip on reality, some ghouls might bury their feelings to live in the present, while others welcome their domitor's commands to move to a new city and abandon everything and everyone they once knew.

Even though the blood bond forces a supernatural sense of loyalty, the relationship between master and ghoul

can be productive and fulfilling. In fact, a Bound ghoul is thought to have more free will and ambition than a mortal that has been conditioned to serve a vampire with the use of Dominate. This means Bound ghouls can be particularly valuable to their masters, because any servant that can retain her mental capabilities is extremely useful. After all, the more stupid or weak-minded their ghouls are, the more vulnerable both master and ghoul become.

For these reasons, many vampires have more than one candidate on hand, just in case the Blood is too overwhelming for their first choice. Other vampires do not reveal their true natures to their ghouls until after they're certain they've made the right decision. On the other hand, some masters may be too attached to their ghouls to relinquish control, and Embrace them sooner than they had initially planned. Most domitors, however, do not have the patience required to train ghouls if they cannot handle feeding or if they react poorly to the blood bond. Those ghouls who are rejected might be kept as playthings or forced to forget they ever met their masters.

Though many vampires are careful with respect to the selection, creation, and maintenance of a ghoul because they do not want to waste their blood, others see the benefit in being less picky. In general, domitors who approach Bound ghouls less discriminately tend to use them to undermine and attack their rivals. For example, a Toreador domitor might find a vagrant and subject him to the blood bond, then put that same ghoul into the path of a Nosferatu. Other masters might create several Bound ghouls, in an attempt to trick other vampires into Embracing them. Of course, this charade requires a lot of preparation from both regnant and thrall, and any vampire who discovers he's been fooled will exact his revenge no matter how long it takes. This technique is not uncommon, however, as Bound ghouls are often used to spy on other ghouls, revenants, and vampires.


Sometimes, a domitor will manipulate her ghoul by lying about the nature of the Blood and its many properties, to encourage her servant to feed and remain Bound. One ghoul might believe that if she does not please her master, she will not be able to drink any more blood, and will be punished for it. Others, however, might be brainwashed into thinking that they will one day become a vampire if they drink enough vitae, or they'll die if their master does. After all the other effects a Bound ghoul might experience, it does not take much for them to believe whatever lies their masters tell them. Though they are few, heavily isolated ghouls may start to wonder whether they are just particularly long-lived or immortal. Most are not ignorant of their dependency on the Blood, and suspect that they will suffer greatly once they stop feeding upon



## Blood Bonds and Mortals

Due to the nature of the ghoul condition, it is not unusual to find a Bound ghoul. However, the blood bond is a mystical connection between a regnant and thrall, which could just as well be between a vampire and vampire, vampire and ghoul, or vampire and mortal. Ghouls do not necessarily need to be Bound, as they require monthly feedings of blood – from any vampire – to be considered as such. Like all other thralls, ghouls can only be Bound to one vampire at a time, but one feeding a year is not enough for them to remain a ghoul.

The benefit of the blood bond provides the regnant with control after the third feeding, which allows many vampires to manipulate their relationships with both ghouls and mortals. For example, a Ventrue might subject a mortal to the blood bond over the course of a few nights. During this time, that mortal is considered a ghoul. When the Ventrue stops feeding her, however, the mortal is now Bound to the vampire, but ages naturally and is no longer a ghoul. That vampire would then visit her Bound mortal once a year to maintain the blood bond, and as long as she does so the blood bond remains in place.



it. Thus, many Bound ghouls continue feeding on their master's blood, and not just because they are addicted to it.

Many domitors will go to great lengths to ensure the blood bond remains intact and stable after it has been secured. Part of the reason why the blood bond is so important is because no thrall can have more than one regnant at any given time. Though a ghoul may receive blood from more than one vampire, she cannot be Bound to multiple masters. Thus, the blood bond between a ghoul and her master is far more complicated than the one that exists between two vampires, and it's often harder to break. Not only does the ghoul suffer from physical, social, and mental side effects, but there are also countless moral conflicts they experience, as they walk the line between their humanity and their new life in the service of a vampire.

## Blood Bond Systems

After a vampire feeds a mortal blood for the first time, the newly-created ghoul has taken his first step towards being Bound. Even if the ghoul is horrified after tasting the Blood, he will develop strong feelings for his master, yearning to see her again. After the second sip, the ghoul will find it very difficult to harm or refuse his domitor – even if he desperately wishes to. Drinking from a regnant for a third time will secure the blood bond, and that domitor will become the most important person in a thrall's life.

## Securing the Bond

In order to forge a blood bond, a vampire needs to spend three blood points over the course of three separate nights. The strength of the blood bond is not related to a vampire's Generation; it is the recurring drinks that reinforce it, though some regnants claim that a thrall should be near or appear regularly in their physical presence. Though this is not necessarily true, the blood bond will become weaker if the thrall does not drink from the regnant's blood once in a while.

Once the thrall is under the influence of the blood bond, it will be challenging for him to refuse his regnant, but he might try committing a small act of defiance such as slipping a message to his regnant's rival, sending an SOS to the police, or sabotaging the security of his regnant's haven. In that case, the thrall must make a successful extended Willpower roll (difficulty 8). At the Storyteller's discretion, that difficulty might increase or decrease depending upon the thrall's Nature and Demeanor. For example, a thrall who is a Caregiver will have a much harder time resisting her regnant's commands, especially if the domitor seems to be in need.

The amount of blood needed to retain a thrall under a regnant's power is small, especially if the ghoul is already Bound. To maintain the blood bond, a vampire only needs to spend one blood point a couple of times a year. It should be noted that this is different from the monthly feedings required to maintain the condition of a ghoul, and a close proximity to the thrall is not a requirement to ensure the bond holds.

The effects of the blood bond remain in place provided the regnant continues to secure it. This is true regardless of whether or not the thrall ceases to be a ghoul, or has been Embraced. Also, no ghoul, mortal, or vampire may be Bound to more than one regnant at any time, regardless of how many times the character feeds. In truth, however, the blood bond only exists because of the addictive nature of the Blood.

## Breaking the Bond

A blood bond can be broken, but it is extremely difficult to do. The Blood is addictive and intoxicating, but the mystical effects of being Bound are just as strong, provided the bond is maintained properly.

The first way a blood bond can be broken is if the regnant stops maintaining it. Generally, a thrall who neither sees nor feeds from her regnant for a period of (12 minus her permanent Willpower) months will find that her bond has been reduced by one level. Thus, a fully Bound ghoulish who has a Willpower rating of 4 will find that the strength of the bond is reduced after eight months if she's had no contact with, nor has she fed from, the regnant responsible. In this situation, the blood bond has frayed, and the thrall acts as if she's had two drinks from the regnant instead of three.

Secondly, the more a ghoulish resists the influence of the blood bond, the easier it is for that character to break it. Many abused ghoulish, provided their sanity remains intact, try more frequently than those who are not. To resist, a Willpower roll must be made. The difficulty is typically 8, and the player must complete a minimum of three successes, one for each drink that forged the bond. A greater number of successes may be required, however, equal to how many times the thrall has fed on a regnant's blood in the past 12 months. It should be noted that this resistance is specifically related to the vitae that caused the blood bond and not the ghoulish condition.

Bound ghoulish who only feed on one master typically find it more challenging to resist the blood bond than those who obtain blood from multiple vampires. For example, a Sabbat ghoulish who feeds from a pack over the course of many months is still only Bound to a single vampire. If the character drinks blood from multiple vampires, but only feeds on his regnant four times, then technically the player only requires four successes to resist the bond's effects. However, the mystical nature of the bond is not just reflected in a roll of the dice, but in the character's actions and their beliefs, both of which vary widely. Some regnants believe that mistreating a ghoulish gives them just cause to resist, especially if the vampire has strong feelings about maintaining the Masquerade or the Silence of the Blood. Others, however, don't bother thinking about such trivial matters, and feed their thralls more often.

Once a bond is broken, however, the effects are not permanent. When it breaks, the player must spend a Willpower point, and the bond is negated for a specific period of time, either the duration of one turn (long enough to attack the regnant) or one scene (to send a

message or communicate clearly). In order to continue attacking or acting free from the blood bond's influence, the thrall must expend additional Willpower. Thus, a Tzimisce ghoulish who has broken free from the bond would have to spend three Willpower if he wants to attack his master three separate (but successive) times. As soon as the former thrall ceases to spend Willpower, however, the blood bond returns to the same strength it was prior to its resistance. Or, in other words, if the blood bond was already weakened to two levels beforehand, the bond remains at two levels afterward.

Lastly, a blood bond may also be broken if the regnant dies. Final Death, whether it's caused by the thrall or some other means, is believed to shatter the bond. However, the specifics of what occurs following the regnant's Final Death are not clear — especially with respect to Bound ghoulish. Some may seek vengeance for their master's death, while others may be so addicted to the Blood that is all they crave, or might even be so distraught they injure themselves or kill other ghoulish within the same household.

Regardless of how a blood bond is broken, this is a significant event in any chronicle involving Bound ghoulish or revenants. Even temporary reprieves could trigger unforeseen repercussions ranging from a ghoulish fighting for his independence to a rival vampire attacking the ghoulish's haven. Thus, players who consider resisting the influence of the blood bond are strongly urged to collaborate with their Storyteller before making such an attempt.

## The Ghoulish Condition

After a mortal tastes the Blood for the first time, she not only develops a thirst for it, but her physical body goes through other changes as well. As long as the Blood remains in her system, she will cease to age naturally, and whatever ailments she had — including lost limbs or even cancer — she now has the ability to heal. Newly-created ghoulish tend to feel more vigorous and alive than they were prior to feeding, as they have not yet realized what it is they drink.

Ghoulish may feel more vibrant, but they are often not aware of the extent of their capabilities until they attempt to perform a challenging task. They might find that the activities in their everyday life, such as lifting packages or climbing several flights of stairs, are easier than they were before. As the Blood takes hold, new ghoulish might even attempt to push their bodies to the limit, feeling as if they can finally run a marathon or get up out of their hospital beds for the first time in months. Often, ghoulish



will be surprised by the outcome, and their feelings may range from being ecstatic or scared of the power residing within their body. The most daring ghouls might even try a strength of feat to test themselves, pushing them further and further until they fall.

While exploring the effects of the Blood on their physical bodies, ghouls might also notice they can peer into the world around them with more clarity, as if a blurred veil had been lifted from their eyes. For this, some ghouls might even be genuinely grateful for the gift they've been given, not knowing who or why they received such "blessings". This gratitude, however, quickly ends as long as this brief moment lasts, for the benefits of drinking vampiric blood come with a heavy price – damnation.

Regardless of how carefully a domitor explains the nature of the Blood, no new ghoul fully understands what it is they drink, nor can they unlock its secrets simply because the blood is present in their bloodstreams. Generally, a ghoul may not understand what it means to frenzy until they do so for the first time, nor will they fully be able to perceive the curses that flow within their veins. They will not know about the Hunger, either, until they have felt it burning hotter than anything they have ever felt before, or the Beast that lies in their subconscious, whispering to them in the dark – but all those who become ghouls soon will.

## Accursed Blood

Though the Blood is powerful, Caine's curse is present in every drop. One drink, one brief thrilling moment might turn a mortal into a ghoul, but only the Blood can sustain their condition. The more vampiric blood a ghoul drinks, the more she strays from her true self and her humanity.

The Blood affects every ghoul differently, and many become prone to committing terrible acts of violence not long after they drink it. Unlike the influence of the blood bond, vitae tends to ignite ghouls on a personal, deep level, fueling their darkest desires by tapping into the core of their identities and exploiting the evil within. Though there is no such thing as a finite or absolute effect that the Blood has on mortals – other than the insatiable hunger that follows – a ghoul's physical condition and Nature may be an indicator of how it might impact them.

All ghouls, like mortals, revenants, and (to a lesser extent) vampires, are shaped by their Nature. Despite the fact that feeding upon vampiric blood damns ghouls alongside their masters, the Blood does not force them to act a certain way. Instead, it influences them, tapping into

the core of their personalities. In general, ghouls who fall quickly into depravity, who are lured into picking fights or torturing kidnapped victims, might possess a Nature such as Creep Show, Monster, or Sadist. Others might feel drawn to the side of their masters, willing to sacrifice themselves all too easily due to being a Caregiver or Fanatic. The Blood is so powerful it impacts all ghouls, regardless of who they are, and the full range of its effects is unique.

The physical condition of a mortal when he drinks the Blood matters only in that he can be healed. As the blood in his system changes to accommodate vitae, he may draw from it to cure himself to heal gashes, restore a broken limb, or abate the side effects of seriously debilitating conditions or diseases such as cancer. Unfortunately, while most ghouls do not carry enough vampiric blood in their bodies to restore blindness or a total loss of limb, they can use it to good effect. Though the Blood can heal, it is not restorative: it holds pre-existing symptoms at bay. Should the ghoul cease to feed, however, wounds they once suffered will not return, nor will the systems

of their diseases accelerate – the state of their health will simply resume as it was before they drank the Blood. Of course, occasionally a vampire might unwittingly feed vitae to a pregnant woman, not knowing of the life she carries in her body. Unfortunately, the effects of vampiric blood have a profound impact on mother and child, and while the mother might survive the child most certainly wouldn't. This works differently for revenants, however, and only a certain vampires versed in their creation are privy to those dark secrets.

The longer the Blood flows through a ghoul's system, the more revelations he'll experience. Eventually, ghouls realize that they have stopped aging altogether, and most might welcome this new development – until they learn that this effect is temporary and contingent upon feeding. Despite whatever grand claims a master might make, as long as the Blood is in a ghoul's system, he will no longer age. Revenants, who naturally produce vitae, simply age slower than their mortal counterparts, but as soon as they feed on the Blood they become frozen in time. However, the moment either stops feeding, their bodies will return to their natural age and condition. The effects of withdrawal vary depending upon the ghoul's age, which are addressed on [page 81](#), due to the fact that elder and ancient ghouls carry more vitae in their systems than other ghouls. Regardless, it may be a comfort to long-lived ghouls to know they will not be forced to suffer debilitating conditions and diseases once the Blood ceases to flow through their veins. Though they may be granted a brief respite for one or two days, ghouls who have outlived their natural lifespans will die not long afterward.




## Vitae and Revenants

Though revenants naturally produce vampiric blood in their systems, if they are forced to drink the Blood from a vampire they will become addicted to it just as they would if they were ghouls. For example, a Grimaldi revenant who must drink blood from a local bishop may be Bound like any other ghoul, will stop aging, and will crave more of it.

Revenants are also at risk of developing a Clan weakness in addition to their family's inherit weakness, which is partly why many revenants despise their patron Clan. This is far more common among Bound revenants than those who are simply addicted to the Blood, as the Clan weakness manifests through regular and consistent feedings from vampires belonging to the same Clan.

Systems-wise, the vitae revenants ingest may be added to their Blood Pool, provided it does not exceed the maximum blood their bodies can hold, and is spent on a first in/last out basis.



## Independent Ghouls and the Blood

Not every ghoul or revenant is Bound, nor do they always feed from a single vampire. Typically, most ghouls remain close to their master for the simple fact that because they are so addicted to the Blood that they cannot imagine life without it. However, there are ghouls who manage to break free and run from the horrors they've experienced, to live life independently of their masters.

Independent ghouls are not truly free, however, for they require monthly feedings of vitae if they want to remain a ghoul. Desperate to satisfy their dependency on the Blood, independent ghouls go to great lengths to obtain it. As such, they are usually experienced, shrewd, resourceful, determined, and learned. In short, they are free – as free as any addicted ghoul could be – because they have done what Bound ghouls could never do. Not only have they broken free from the blood bond, independent ghouls proclaim



that they have retain their sense of free will, even though this cannot be proven or guaranteed.

Despite being freed, independent ghouls tend to suffer more than Bound ghouls, and not just because they need vampiric blood. It is not uncommon for independent ghouls to know very little about vampire society, the difference between a Clan and a bloodline, or the nuanced philosophies of the Sects. Independent ghouls may suspect they are being hunted because they have been freed, but they may not know the real reason why they've been condemned to death is because a Sheriff issued a decree due to threatening the Masquerade.

In truth, many independent ghouls are limited by what little knowledge they possess about vampires, and this can and does hurt them. In addition to possibly suffering from Clan-related weaknesses, independent ghouls might be tricked into being Bound, not realizing the logistics of the blood bond are not governed by subsequent feedings. Thus, a canny vampire might slip the Blood into an independent ghoul's drink three times over the course of many months, while others might bottle their blood and command their ghouls to sell it to them.

Most, if not all, independent ghouls are motivated by two omnipresent needs: the Blood and their freedom. Typically, there are only a few ways that independent ghouls might achieve their goals. Some ghouls sell their services in exchange for vitae, and are literally paid in blood for whatever a vampire might require. Independent ghouls know that they vulnerable, however, and for this reason they often form groups or organizations that share a common goal: survival. Others, however, go on the offensive and hunt vampires, only to feed on them after they are captured. While both options are viable, many buy thaumaturgically-sealed vials of vitae on the black market or from an organization like the Sanguinaries (p. 81), provided they have the means to do so.

Though most independent ghouls fear being Bound to another vampire, there is a strong possibility that it could happen. No ghoul has the means of tracing the source of the blood that's been sealed in a vial back to its original host, unless he witnesses the act himself. Thus, the vampiric blood sold on the black market in a given area, whether it originates from an enterprising ghoul, a sly vampire, or the occasional con artist, often comes from a questionable source. Worse, it is not unusual for the Blood to cause a terrifying side effect after it's been drunk. For example, the vitae might be irradiated before it's sold, and those who ingest it might be tracked once the tainted Blood is in their system. As another, the Blood might be cursed via blood magic and cause inverse side effects. Lastly, there are some vampires who take advantage of a ghoul's limited

knowledge by thaumaturgically preserving mortal blood and selling it to these ghouls, too.

Some vampires feel that independent ghouls can and should suffer more abuses than those who live in their service, for they do not feel obligated to provide for them. In truth, Bound independent ghouls have their uses—and they know the risks involved. Thus, many independent ghouls take precautions by building up their circle of allies and training them to look for changes in their personalities or behavioral quirks that cannot be explained. Should they display any signs of near-obsessive infatuation for a stranger, these ghouls have instructed their contacts to help them lie low. Other independent ghouls prefer to roam from city to city in the safety of a group, while a precious few have built up stores of vitae they can draw from in emergency situations. After all, though an independent ghoul only needs to drink it once a month to remain in their current condition, they may be so addicted to the Blood they feed more regularly than they should.

## Ghoul Systems

Both mortals and animals are considered ghouls after they drink the Blood for the first time. At that moment, the vampire they've fed from has become they're master. In order to remain a ghoul, they must continue feeding on a regular basis, at a rate of one blood point per month. Their masters may create as many ghouls as they wish, provided they have enough vitae to do so.

Despite the powerful and alluring nature of the Blood, ghouls and revenants should remember that the vitae flowing in their veins is in limited supply. Unlike vampires, ghouls cannot feed on the blood of mortals to replenish their blood points, and revenants do not produce vitae quickly enough to restore what they lose. Blood Pools, which are described on page 140, cannot not be refilled as easily as they are depleted. Thus, players should be cautious when spending blood points, as their master is only required to feed them once a month.

## Disciplines


In addition to the emotional and psychological impact that the Blood has on a mortal, all ghouls gain limited access to the use of Disciplines. However, no ghoul may learn or have access to Disciplines after he drinks vitae for the first time, nor does this knowledge come easily, as many domitors prevent their ghouls from becoming too powerful.

All ghouls must take three sips of vampiric blood before Disciplines can be learned or used. At that point, a ghoul



## For the Storyteller: Adapting Systems

The rules presented in *Ghouls & Revenants* for ghouls, revenants, and animal ghouls are designed for chronicles featuring these types of characters. It is assumed that a ghoul- or revenant-centric chronicle will require Storytellers to make some adjustments in favor of the players, as the influence of the blood bond can hinder a player-character's ability to act. Thus, you may find some discrepancies between the rules in this supplement and *V20*, as these rules have been modified to give the player characters more latitude in a chronicle.



does not have access to all Disciplines, but will find it easier to learn physical Disciplines such as Celerity, as these are innate. Revenants, on the other hand, naturally produce vitae, so they are not required to drink blood. Should ghouls or revenants acquire additional Disciplines, they may require further teaching. In general, however, a ghoul should only have access to her master's in-Clan Disciplines, while a revenant will be able to learn her family's Disciplines. Regardless of which Disciplines they choose, they should make sense narratively for the character, as ghouls and revenants are not as powerful as vampires are.

All ghouls gain one dot in Potence, as this is the one of the few Disciplines they do not require further instruction to use. Following that, a ghoul's ability to learn additional Disciplines is guided, but not guaranteed by, the Blood. Thus, a ghoul who feeds on Ravnos blood may have access to Chimestry because it is an in-Clan Discipline, but still requires a willing teacher to instruct him on how to use it. Revenants, on the other hand, naturally produce vitae in their systems, and their families have access and knowledge to Disciplines just as a Clan or bloodline might.

Despite the fact that ghouls and revenants may both spend blood points to use Disciplines, they are prevented from accessing higher levels of Disciplines. Simply, this is due to the fact that they often do not have the prerequisite blood points needed to use them. However, if a ghoul or revenant subsists on an elder's blood, there may be some

cases where this is possible, provided they have a willing teacher. Among ghouls and revenants, this can be quite rare, as vampires generally do not wish to empower their servants. In general, the acquisition of Disciplines is more likely if they are being groomed for the Embrace.

When a ghoul is Embraced, he retains the knowledge of the Disciplines he's learned — provided he is still a ghoul when the Kiss is given. Or, in other words, the use and knowledge of Disciplines fades if he no longer drinks vampiric blood for a long period of time. Former ghouls who do not taste the Blood for a period of six months will start to lose the theoretical knowledge of Disciplines they gained. Whatever dark secrets they learned as a ghoul will begin to permanently fade, at a rate of one dot per Discipline, per six-month period.

It should be noted, however, that the knowledge of any Discipline is not directly tied to the Blood, in the sense that a ghoul will lose the ability to use an Clan Discipline should she feed on the vitae from a vampire other than her master. For example, if a ghoul has a Gangrel master and has learned the first level in Animalism, if she begins drinking from a Lasombra domitor she will not forget how to use it. As long as the Blood remains in her system, whatever knowledge of Disciplines she gains, she will have access to.

*Ghouls & Revenants* presents new systems for using and acquiring Disciplines. These rules and basic guidelines are further outlined beginning on [page 120](#), and cover the systems required for both ghouls and revenants.

## Aging

A ghoul's immunity to aging is contingent on her supply of vampiric blood. If she misses her monthly feeding and is still within her normal lifespan, she resumes aging naturally. This means that if a ghoul was twenty-five years old when she first drank the Blood and she misses a monthly feeding for the first time in five years, her body's age will progress as if she was still twenty-five until she feeds again. The state of a ghoul's body, however, may be adversely affected if the character suffered from an ailment prior to feeding. Though regenerated limbs and organs will not suddenly disappear, a ghoul who had cancer may feel that the disease is coming out of remission.

Once a ghoul has outlived her natural lifespan, a missed feeding can have severe consequences. If she's lived for 100 to 250 years, her body will begin aging at ten times the rate it normally does. Thus a ghoul, whose body was thirty when he began feeding, will age 10 days for every 1 day vitae isn't present in his system. The longer he doesn't

feed, the signs of aging begin to show: hair turns gray, skin wrinkles, bones ache. When he resumes feeding, his body's aches and pains may subside, but his new age will remain in stasis. Ghouls who have survived 250 years or more depend upon vitae to survive. A single missed feeding of the Blood is fatal, and their bodies will turn to dust.

The same is not true for revenants, however, for their bodies naturally produce vitae and their natural lifespan is approximately 300 years. Any additional blood they drink from a vampire will cease their aging process, just as it would a ghoul. Missed feedings, however, will have varying effects on their bodies, as they are a product of magic and biology.

Elder revenants and ghouls gain additional blood points in their systems, reflecting the physiological changes vitae has taken on their bodies. For each century of life, elder revenants gain one extra point in their Blood Pool. Elder ghouls, who are not revenants, gain one extra blood point for every two centuries they have been a ghoul. This effect is not cumulative, however, so elder revenants who also feed on the Blood do not gain additional blood points.

## Healing

Ghouls and revenants may heal by spending blood points from their Blood Pool, just as vampires do. Provided they have enough blood points, they can make an attempt to heal from their injuries, even if they are severe. For example, they might try to regenerate limbs or cure themselves of physical ailments.

Ghouls and revenants, despite the vitae that flows in their veins, are technically mortal. However, the Blood does impact their physiology, and this is reflected in the damage they take. Revenants take bashing damage normally, but may soak lethal damage with Stamina (+Fortitude) as a vampire might. Ghouls may as well, after their third sip of the Blood. Aggravated damage, however, affects both of them as if they were mortal.

At the Storyteller's discretion, elder ghouls may gain an edge in combat due to the vampiric blood that has saturated and altered their physiology for many years. When involved in combat, elder ghouls and older revenants may soak bashing damage as a vampire might with Stamina (+Fortitude). After the soak roll, any bashing damage applied is halved (round down).

Should a ghoul or revenant lose an organ or limb, the player will need to make a regeneration attempt. The player must spend a Willpower point, and the appropriate number of blood points (one for a finger or eye, two for a foot or forearm, three for an entire limb). Then, the

player must make a Stamina roll (difficulty 8). If the roll fails or is botched, the ghoul may never re-grow the limb.

Elder ghouls, however, find that regeneration is easier for them. For each century of age, the difficulty of the roll decreases by one. Thus, a three-hundred-year-old ghoul who has lost a hand would require the player to make a Stamina roll with a difficulty of 5 in addition to spending a Willpower point.

## Frenzy

Ghouls and revenants have a Beast, just like vampires do. However, both are mortal—which means they are prone to frenzy more often. The situations that ignite a ghoul's ability to frenzy varies widely and is based on a variety of factors. For example, some ghouls might wrestle with their Beast after being ordered to dismember a corpse, while others might be enraged if their master is attacked.

Though there are endless possibilities for a ghoul to frenzy, a character's Nature, age, Humanity, and Clan (or family) weakness can shape a scene. Brujah ghouls, for example, suffer from the Short Fuse Flaw which reflects the Clan's short temper, and have a harder time avoiding frenzy. Other Flaws, such as the Light Sensitive Flaw (p. 135), may also trigger a character's ability to frenzy as well.

Despite the fact that ghouls and revenants may encounter more opportunities to frenzy, the difficulty to resist is typically decreased at the Storyteller's discretion due to their mortality. To do so, the player must make a Self-Control (or Instinct) roll. The number of successes required to stave off frenzy is also up to the Storyteller, as the circumstances in each scene will vary widely. Each success grants the character a reprieve from frenzy for one turn, up to a maximum of five successes.

## Clan Weaknesses

In addition to its addictive properties, the Blood carries Clan-related weaknesses that affect ghouls and revenants differently.

All revenants suffer from a curse that is omnipresent in the blood of their family. These weaknesses are tied to their genetics. However, revenants may also gain a Clan-associated weakness, and are at risk of suffering this additional curse if they are Bound. In order for the Clan weakness to manifest, the revenant must drink from vampires belonging to the same Clan once a month for a period of five months. Should this extend to twelve months, the Clan weakness does not become permanent, as all revenants already suffer from their own family weakness. However, the Clan weakness *will* remain for as long as that revenant primarily drinks from that single Clan.

In order for the Clan weakness to fade, revenants must stop feeding on the Blood from a Clan, and the Clan's vitae must no longer be present in their system for a period of five months at minimum. The moment a revenant is Embraced, however, their family weakness is typically replaced with their new Clan weakness, but some unlucky revenants retain both.

Ghouls, on the other hand, have mitigated versions of Clan weaknesses, and often these progressively worsen the longer they feed. Clan weaknesses typically take time to manifest, though, and will not be revealed until after a period of five feedings over the course of as many months, or five blood points. Assuming a ghoul has fed on her Setite domitor's blood, for example, she will gain the Light Sensitive Flaw.

Unfortunately, ghouls permanently suffer from a Clan weakness if they subsist on a specific Clan's vitae for twelve feedings (or twelve blood points). Typically, this reflects a period of one calendar year. At that time, the ghoul's Clan weakness will remain as long as the ghoul feeds on any vampiric blood from that point forward. Should a ghoul be fed by more than one vampire belonging to two or more different Clans, the ghoul will suffer the Clan weakness that makes sense based on the number of feedings. Most likely, this will reflect her master's Clan, especially if she is Bound.

When a ghoul is Embraced, however, she will suffer from her sire's Clan weakness, even if it differs from her former master's.

## Overfeeding

Occasionally, ghouls can take in more blood than their mortal bodies can comfortably handle, but this often causes dangerous side effects. For each point of Stamina a ghoul has, she can "cram" an extra blood point into her body. If a ghoul imbibes more vitae than she can contain, she must make a Stamina check (difficulty 8). If she succeeds, she may use the excess blood as she normally would, and immediately spend the extra blood points. Thus, ghouls might use the excess blood on Disciplines, or they might spend a maximum of one blood point per round to enhance their physical Attributes up to twice their base level.

If she fails, she suffers one point of lethal damage per blood point above her maximum. Moreover, the excess blood can't be used. It takes a full scene of vomiting to burn off such "useless" blood points; until this takes place, the ghoul cannot use any blood points whatsoever.

While a ghoul is overdosed, her chance to frenzy becomes equal to that of a vampire's, though certainly the ghoul will

not hunger at this point. Reaction time increases (the ghoul temporarily gains a dot in Dexterity), but the overdosed ghoul must make a Perception + Self-Control (or Instinct) roll each scene or suffer from violent hallucinations (effects are up to the Storyteller's discretion).

Elder ghouls, however, have less chances to overfeed as their Blood Pool increases as they age.

## Withdrawal

Though the effects of vampiric blood on the mortal body are not consistent, it does have addictive properties that turn most mortals into desperate souls. Ghouls who stop feeding on the Blood suffer from withdrawal, and this should manifest narratively. Any ghoul who drinks vitae thirsts for another drink, and is so dependent upon the Blood he will do anything to get it. Both players and Storytellers should consider the consequences surrounding a character's withdrawal from the Blood, and should not simply rely on the rules to highlight what happens next.

Withdrawal occurs as soon as a ghoul misses his monthly feeding, and may occur if lost blood points are not quickly replenished. Usually, a ghoul will suffer from withdrawal for approximately one month or weeks equal to 6 - Stamina. Withdrawal symptoms vary widely, and depend upon how long a ghoul has been feeding on vitae. In general, however, the symptoms of intense Hunger are physiological and psychological. They may include seizures, fever, nightmares, and disorientation. Certain Natures, such as Bon Vivant and Thrill-Seeker, may feel the symptoms of withdrawal sooner as well.

During withdrawal, the ghoul needs to make a Self-Control (or Instinct) roll (difficulty 7) in order to resist taking the opportunity to feed on the Blood again. In addition, the ghoul must make a weekly Intelligence + Self-Control roll (difficulty 6) in order to not succumb to her cravings and translate them into human desires (food, sex, drugs). These cravings might be resisted by spending a Willpower point.

Ghouls who skip feedings for a month or more are also at risk of suffering other effects from withdrawal, and this is compounded by the character's age and the strength of the blood bond. For example, a 150-year-old Bound ghoul will watch in horror as her body begins to age, will crave the Blood to "fix" what's happening to her, but her loyalty to her domitor will not diminish. However, a twenty-three-year-old ghoul who is not Bound will likely fixate on his withdrawal symptoms, as he sees it as a more immediate problem.

Domitors view the addiction to the Blood differently. Some think of their blood as a prize that their ghouls can



### **Optional Rule: Daylight and Aging Ghouls**

Ghouls may still be mortal, but they are also Damned – along with their masters. At the Storyteller’s discretion, ghouls who have fed regularly for over 100 years or more might find that they grow sluggish during daylight hours, and feel the need to rest. This urge may be fought off successfully with a Willpower check, or with strong stimulants that the ghoul may develop an addiction to: coffee, caffeinated soft drinks, cigarettes, or even illegal drugs such as cocaine or speed. If the character fails the roll, or neglects to consume sufficient stimulants to stay awake, he may fall asleep only to awake at night.

The urge to lie down and rest, if only for a moment, is nearly overwhelming in such cases, and the ghoul may roll Stamina + Alertness (difficulty 7) to see if he awakens after a few minutes and realizes she dozed off. Failing this roll, the character will sleep until sunset. This optional rule causes a disruption to a mortal’s natural sleep cycle, and may eventually result in the ghoul mirroring the restful habits of her master. However, many ghouls are valued for their ability to walk about during the day, and losing the ability to do so will likely displease their masters.

“win”, while others might be more frugal with their vitae. Most vampires, however, understand that vampiric blood is required to maintain their ghouls, and will likely ensure they remain fed – unless they are withholding the Blood as a form of punishment or because they no longer need them.

Independent ghouls are at considerable risk of suffering from withdrawal, because they do not typically have steady or guaranteed access to vitae. Thus, some independent ghouls become increasingly desperate the longer they remain on their own, because they know on a subconscious level their feeding may be interrupted. In general, the older the independent ghoul, the greater his dependency is on the Blood, and the more dangerous he will be.

## Humanity

Though ghouls and revenants are technically mortal, they are at considerable risk of losing their Humanity. The actions they take, even when Bound, should have a profound impact on their psyche. The Blood, for all its properties, does not erase or alter a mortal's memories. Thus, ghouls who assist a Tzimisce master in his use of Vicissitude will understand and remember what it is they have done. Ghouls might resist the influence of the blood bond to avoid participating in such horrific acts, but their Humanity is not fully controlled by their masters.

There are many factors governing a ghoul's Humanity that surpass what the character has been commanded to do. First, not every vampire treats their ghouls the same, as their actions are shaped by their personal beliefs, Natures, and allegiance to their Sect and Clan. Ghouls, however, are also shaped by their Natures, as well as certain Merits and Flaws that affect the character's worldview. And, despite being Bound, ghouls have other means of maintaining their Humanity that hinge upon retaining a strong connection to the outside world.

One way to ensure that their Humanity doesn't slip away is to focus on fulfilling their basic needs. Ghouls and revenants still require meals and adequate rest, and these needs may be forgotten the longer they feed. For example, elder ghouls are technically sustained by vitae and do not necessarily need to eat. They also, however, have a conscience and feel emotions differently than their masters do, and serving a vampire directly risks their Humanity. To prevent sliding into damnation, some ghouls share their emotional and psychological burdens with other ghouls during the day. Others, however, embrace the new life they've been given, and revel in the horrors they help cause.

Elder ghouls face a greater chance of degeneration the longer they have lived past their lifespan, as their master's blood is supernaturally keeping them alive. They may forget to eat or participate in casual conversations, as the Blood has taken hold. Ancient ghouls must force themselves to consume regular food as their palates, having grown so accustomed to the sweetness of vampiric blood, find anything else unappealing and banal.

In some ways, revenants are more at risk of losing their Humanity due to the nature of what they are. Revenants are mysterious, hybrid creatures with extended lifespans, family weaknesses, and supernatural powers. Created through magical means and crossbred to produce similar heirs, revenants were born to serve undead masters, and

there are few chances to escape their fate. Additionally, most revenants maintain strong connections to their families, and their relatives often shape and guide them toward a particular future. Thus, the older the revenant, the less Humanity he likely has — even though he is still technically mortal.

The loss of a ghoul's Humanity will shape his actions and his willingness to slip further away from his former self. However, doing so does not necessarily mean that character will follow a Path of Enlightenment.

## Paths of Enlightenment

Ghouls and revenants are both mortal and, as such, do not typically share a vampire's faith. This is partly because neither type of character has the knowledge or the means required to identify with the Damned in every way. In many cases, the secrets a vampire possesses are not freely given, and this is especially true for their servants. Many ghouls do not understand the difference between two Clans, nor are they aware of apocryphal texts such as the *Book of Nod* or legends like Golconda.

While it is rare, ghouls and revenants may follow a Path of Enlightenment in some cases. After all, though their Humanity may slip away, ghouls and revenants cannot feed on mortals as vampires do, as they are still alive. And no ghoul or revenant, regardless of age or master, is a member of a Clan, bloodline, or Sect. These limitations preclude them from participating in many Paths, such as the Path of Bones. Thus, when selecting which Path is worthy of forsaking the character's Humanity for, ghouls and revenants should take extra precautions when doing so, as they do not have the same strength or powers their masters possess.

Should they do so, however, the Path will need to be adapted to make sense for a mortal to follow. The Path of Caine, for example, may be altered to better fit a ghoul. Instead of instructing other vampires to learn the Path of Caine, that character might recruit other ghouls instead. Instead of failing to diablerize a "humane" vampire, however, the character might be forced to kill those who retain a strong connection to their Humanity. In general, a mortal who follows a Path will have a harder time interacting with other mortals, and this translates to challenges performing basic functions that ghouls and revenants are often commanded to do.

Regardless of which Path of Enlightenment characters choose to follow, doing so should be at the discretion of the Storyteller.



# Chapter Three: Clan Ghouls and Organizations

*“No vampire would readily admit how greatly she relies on her ghoul from night to night. And yet, there is no disputing they have considerable value.”*

– Cyril Masters, Ventrue elder of London

## The Camarilla

Given the wide-ranging and differing views on ghouls and their intended uses among the individual Clans of the Camarilla, it might seem impossible for there to be any common opinions on the subject. Nonetheless, the Camarilla is a Sect that often speaks through a political facade, and the topic of ghouls has been addressed from time to time.

The Camarilla’s “official” stance on the creation of ghouls and, to an even larger extent, revenants is that they should be avoided at all costs. Some Princes preach that significant advances in technology and medicine over the past hundred and fifty years necessitates this centuries-old position. Cameras are found everywhere, from street lights to cell phones, and could track a ghoul’s movements day and night. Vitae could be drawn from a ghoul’s veins and studied using state-of-the-art equipment, which might substantiate a believer’s claims that vampires exist, or be utilized in experiments normally reserved for thaumaturgists and sorcerers. Even more worrisome are the expert analysts and record keepers who spend their days proving falsified birth certificates and “accidental” deaths, thereby attracting undue attention to ghouls and their masters.

In the halls of Elysium, Clan dignitaries and high-ranking members of the Sect often spin tall tales like these in order to warn higher Generation vampires of the dangers of maintaining ghouls. These stories are used as a means of instruction, however, as opposed to a final say on the matter. For, while a single ghoul is unlikely to cause significant problems for a single vampire, a dozen could potentially shatter the Masquerade. Consequently, conservative Kindred might profess that ghouls are unnecessary in the modern age to toe the party line, and a truly loyal member of the Camarilla might seek out an alternative method of finding and using servants.

Because of the intrinsic danger to the Masquerade that ghouls are thought to represent, the Camarilla’s secondary position is that if a ghoul is created, he should be maintained only as long as necessary, and then all traces of him should be destroyed. If, however, a domitor seeks to Embrace her ghoul, she must petition the local Prince of her city just as she would for any other potential childe. While this position isn’t necessarily problematic, some vampires view it to be outdated, especially since a number of Clans select potential childe from ghouls who are groomed for the Embrace. Since ghouls are rarely, if ever, presented in Elysium or to a high-ranking member of the Sect, Clans feel that the Prince’s blessing for any ghoul they wish to Embrace is largely ceremonial.






## For the Storyteller: Ghouls as Player Characters

When drawing inspiration from this chapter for your chronicle, keep in mind that the biggest difference between a ghoul as a player character versus a ghoul as a Storyteller character is the illusion of choice. Though it's true, in many cases, that domitors may be cruel, paranoid, and unforgiving, Storyteller characters may not need as much free will as player characters do in order to propel the plot.

Thus, when helping your players figure out which Clan would be best for their ghouls, don't forget to remind them they also get to choose who their domitor is, and what primary and secondary roles they would like to fulfill. For players seeking characters with full autonomy, you might steer them toward becoming an independent ghoul.



The Prince's role in the creation, maintenance, and Embrace of ghouls, however, is not always simple and straightforward. Some Princes might strictly enforce the Traditions by forbidding ghouls entirely, while others might introduce new laws. For example, a Prince might suggest limits upon the number of ghouls that Kindred should maintain. Or they might restrict how many ghouls can be recruited from a specific institution, organization, or location. In general, however, the Prince has the final say on matters pertaining to ghouls in his city, since most ghouls fall well beneath the notice of the Inner Circle.

Ironically, if the Camarilla Clans actually *followed* any of these decrees, the entire Sect would ground to a halt. All vampires are duplicitous, and ghouls are commonly found throughout every Clan and bloodline. They are, for all intents and purposes, the Sect's worst-kept secrets. Many Kindred prefer not to reveal the details of how they maintain their havens, businesses, or households, as a weakness might be uncovered. Other masters don't necessarily say how or why they use their ghouls, nor do they discuss what they do when they're done with them. To pragmatic vampires within the Sect, ghouls are a tool like any other, and they can be used for a variety of purposes beyond that of a mere servant.

While it's impossible to know precisely how many Camarilla ghouls there are and what types of servants they might be, the majority are thought to be retainers whose sole existence is to serve their domitors in order to protect the Masquerade by masking the truth of their masters' nature during the day. Though each ghoul is, in fact, a breach of the Masquerade, this slight shift in philosophy is how some Kindred have come to accept the role of the ghoul within the Sect. After all, ghouls can do what their domitors cannot: operate in the daytime.

Most Kindred agree that the blood bond ensures that ghouls are more reliable than if their masters would simply use Disciplines to command them. Thus, the blood bond is thought to give vampires more opportunities to protect the truth of their existence without fear of reprisal from their Bound vassals. For this reason, it is commonly thought that most Princes set elaborate decrees so they do not have to concern themselves with such an insignificant topic. This rule, however, is often followed by a warning: woe to the vampire whose ghoul *does* come to the Prince's attention.

Public opinion in the Camarilla is that a ghoul's worth is as a servant and nothing more. Many vassals are believed to be guards, secretaries, technologists, lawyers, accountants, and other professionals who provide their domitor with the ability to thrive and hide despite the challenges of living in the modern age. In exchange, the Clans reward their ghouls – if at all – in the manner they see fit. Some masters reward their ghouls by providing them with the financial security to live a luxurious life, while others whisper of unimaginable rewards, such as the Embrace or the secrets of Thaumaturgy, provided they are totally compliant.

Despite the attitude that ghouls should be barely visible and never heard, Kindred domitors tend to avoid ruling their vassals with an iron grip. Other Sects often wrongly believe this is because Camarilla masters are weak and overly sympathetic. In truth, Kindred domitors have discovered long ago that the true secret to ensuring that a ghoul performs optimally is to remember that she is human. Some vampires tend to forget that humans need to eat regularly, and that their ghouls cannot function both during the day and at night. The domitors who never forget that ghouls are, in fact, only slightly different than other mortals, are the same masters whose ghouls last considerably longer than others.

Given the hierarchical separation between ghoul and domitor, however, the only realistic way a ghoul will form a long-lasting connection with another being will be with another ghoul. It is not uncommon for a Prince to require that ghouls should cut ties with their former selves and rid

themselves of attachments. Enthrilled by the power that vitae gives them, Camarilla ghouls might consider this a small price to pay for immortality, instead of as a punishment.

Recently, however, relationships have begun to develop between ghouls of allied Clans. Semi-regular meetings are thought to allow ghouls to blend in better with society, but the hidden benefit may help retain a ghoul's humanity while lessening the burden of serving their Kindred domitors. Within the past few years, for example, some ghouls within the Ventrue, Toreador, and Brujah Clans have met under the cover of daylight for meals or coffee. In their minds, it's less of a Masquerade risk for a ghoul to dine with other ghouls than it is for a ghoul to pursue long-term relationships with everyday people.

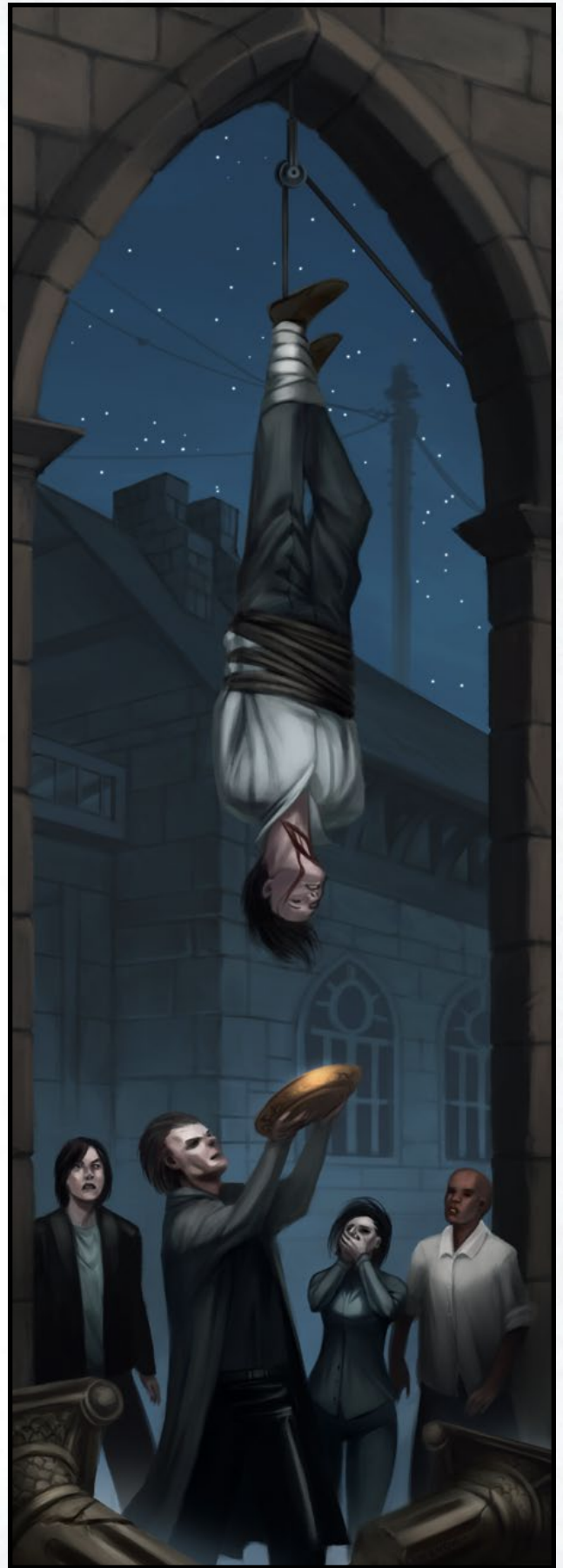
On the other hand, many Kindred don't encourage fraternization among ghouls because they're too paranoid. Some vampires believe that these meetings are anything but innocuous, while others worry what information might be unwittingly repeated afterward. Despite their concerns, most domitors will not scrutinize every minute of their ghoul's day-to-day lives, because they do not have the time to do so. In truth, this is the reason why most Kindred domitors maintain Bound ghouls in the first place. Thus, unless the outcome of a meeting is cause for concern, they will likely overlook the occasional lunch or tea.

## The Sabbat

Though no one is certain how many ghouls exist among members of the Sabbat, it is a commonly held belief that Cainites maintain a fraction of the ghouls that the Camarilla does. And, of the Clans within the Sect, the Lasombra, Tzimisce, Nosferatu *antitribu*, and Ventrue *antitribu* utilize ghouls more than the rest.

Sabbat members consider themselves to be, without a shadow of a doubt, on the top of the food chain, and believe that humans are a step up from animals. Thus, many Cainites think it is disgusting and irritating to rely on mortals for any task, no matter how mundane it might be. Others believe that relying on ghouls would be the Sword of Caine's greatest weakness, because they signal to other vampires that the Sabbat is not as independent and powerful as Cainites often profess.

Most members of the Sabbat do not waste much time mulling over the benefits and drawbacks of maintaining ghouls. Instead, those who do choose to become a domitor have historically treated their ghouls poorly, through verbal abuse and physical violence, to reaffirm their superiority over humans. This, however, typically



depended on whether or not the master had a use for her ghoul. Cainites who needed ghouls for a specific purpose often treated them better than tormented playthings to ensure they performed optimally.

Now, however, most members of the Sabbat have realized that they cannot ignore the fact their enemies use ghouls to carry out tasks during the day. Some Cainites are questioning whether or not their Sect grows weaker by the night because they are *not* using ghouls for mundane tasks. Though they are loathe to admit it, most Cainites are begrudgingly aware that the Sect's power doesn't lie in their nightly actions, but in their ability to thwart the other Sects. How, some dare to ask, can they plot a siege when they're forced to go shopping for guns and knives? Why can't a Bound ghoul scout out potential havens, make pipe bombs, or monitor a club to watch for Kindred spies instead?

Regardless of how much technology they might buy or where they might hide, Cainites are acutely aware that they are vulnerable in their havens. Thus, even the most reluctant Cainites have learned to tolerate ghouls because, aside from the standard tasks the servitors are usually assigned, they can be used effectively as guards. After all, if the Tzimisce's revenant families are so heavily relied upon, why couldn't Clan ghouls be, too?

Alternatively, the use of Sabbat ghouls can vary depending upon the domitor's Generation, for elders might opt to place their ghouls into strategic roles designed for combat. For example, some ghouls might be used as couriers for dangerous missions or be tasked with driving a truck to transport supplies or set up traps. Other ghouls could be used as spies or planted deep into enemy territory as sleeper agents, too. Should those ghouls die in an ambush or during interrogation, then, the Sect suffers no losses, as their ghouls don't require much information to carry out a specific deed.

In general, however, Sabbat ghouls are not treated as valuable assets, nor do their domitors remember they have limitations. Instead, Sabbat ghouls are often regarded with contempt, viewed to be utterly replaceable, and are often abused and misused. Their mortality rate is high, and they are often forbidden from fraternizing, even among members of their own kind.

Though no one knows for sure, the fact so many Sabbat ghouls don't last longer than a few years or so is likely the reason why so many escape the first chance they get. This, to a larger extent, is a growing problem for the Sect, as some of these ghouls are thought to flee straight into the arms of their enemies – along with all their secrets.



## Ghouls vs. Revenant Families

To many Cainites, there are significant differences between a ghoul and a revenant beyond their physiology. Many members of the Sabbat are aware of Clan Tzimisce's role in creating revenants, and feel that the Fiends cannot be excluded from a request or transaction without fear of reprisal from the Clan. While this has never been confirmed, it is true that many high-ranking members of the Sabbat do benefit greatly from the services of the Clan's families. It has long been suspected that the Grimaldi, for example, have all but single-handedly funded the Sabbat for centuries.

Thus, other Clans tend to treat carefully whenever the revenant families are concerned, for while they might benefit from utilizing their services, they do not want to run afoul of the Fiends. Instead, Clans who do use ghouls, such as the Lasombra and Ventrue *antitribu*, are beginning to recruit candidates from powerful mortal families. Only time will tell if these Clans are hoping Clan Tzimisce will reengineer revenants from these impressive lineages, or if the Fiends are no longer capable of producing them.



## The Anarch Movement

Because Anarchs don't follow the rules of the Camarilla or toe the line for the Sabbat, they tend to be more varied in their opinions when it comes to ghouls with the exception of one, common belief: those who vocally oppose the creation of ghouls and preach how the blood bond that shackles ghouls is akin to the same restraints that the elders placed upon their childer long ago. Oppression can exist in many forms, the Anarchs claim, and the sparks that caused the Anarch Revolt could exist among ghouls, too. Ultimately, however, the service that ghouls can provide the Movement is enough for most Anarchs to put their morals on hold regarding this subject.

Unlike the Camarilla, where the treatment and maintenance of ghouls is influenced by both Sect and

Clan, the influence of the Clans among Anarchs is less pronounced. In fact, many gangs tend to develop friendships with ghouls, and pretend to regard them as friends and equals. Anarch gangs also tend to share ghouls, similar to a Sabbat pack, but make it a point to treat them better than any Cainite would.

Though the Movement may profess to hold itself to a different standard than the Sects, there have been several parallels drawn between how the Anarch Movement and Caitiff use their ghouls. In general, both tend to recruit ghouls as survival mechanisms, especially in cities such as Los Angeles and Krakow. After arriving to a new or contested area, Anarch ghouls are often charged with plotting numerous escape routes as one of their first duties. Sometimes, they are even encouraged to formulate such plans after scouting out an area ahead of the Anarchs' arrival. In this way, the Anarch Movement is unique, for while they may not trust ghouls implicitly, they do rely on their ability to strategize to keep them safe. In addition to scouting out havens, safe houses, and escape routes, the Movement also uses its ghouls to spy on rivals and the major Sects.

Anarchs are acutely aware, however, that a security and logistics network made up entirely of ghouls comes with a heavy price. Not only do these operations require a large number of ghouls, but each and every ghoul costs blood and money to maintain. Some Anarch gangs have built up small armies of ghouls in the past, only to discover they had few resources to support them. Thus, despite their proclamations of freedom and liberty, Anarchs tend to forget that ghouls are not, and can never be, as independent as the vampire. They may be able to maneuver in the daylight, but ghouls require more than the Blood to live: they need food, shelter, and water. Once a group of Anarchs realizes the physical limitations of their ghouls, they tend to "set them free" instead of watching and waiting for them suffer any longer. Occasionally, a ghoul may be Embraced, but that choice is hers and hers alone to make.

The challenges associated with maintaining a ghoul organization has led some Anarchs to seek out alternative methods of protection. Though members of the Movement tend to make decisions independently of one another, several Anarchs are beginning to reach out to ghoul organizations such as the Unmastered to hire independent ghouls for specific jobs. Others are more reluctantly discussing the benefits and drawbacks of hiring members from a revenant family. While most, if not all, Anarchs would avoid owning or creating revenants, working with them seems to be more advantageous to them than dealing with ghouls.

## Other Sects

### Inconnu

As far as anyone can tell, all of the ghouls serving the Inconnu are incredibly old, extremely powerful, and scary, for many of these ancient ghouls are believed to be older than the foundation of the Camarilla or Sabbat. Thus, Inconnu ghouls seem disinterested in the petty squabbles of modern vampires, and seek only to accomplish whatever elaborate tasks their masters have assigned to them. Thus, whether they are sent out into the world as spies or messengers, most vampires have the sense to not run afoul of these ghouls.

The servants of the Inconnu are usually treated with fear and (occasionally) a muted respect, despite the fact that they technically don't hold any status. Many, however, are older than most modern vampires active in the Camarilla and Sabbat, have centuries' worth of experience, and a working knowledge of Disciplines. Additionally, vampires are afraid of what they don't know about them, for the presence of an Inconnu ghoul means their masters may be nearby. It is suspected, however, that Inconnu ghouls travel far and wide delivering messages or looking into their domitor's interests. Thus, some vampires speculate that since Inconnu ghouls are away for extended periods of time, they carry thaumaturgically-sealed vials that contain the vitae of powerful vampires. Despite the rumors that swirl in their wake, Inconnu ghouls are rarely around long enough for anyone to get a closer look at them. After they fulfill their masters' wishes, the ghouls vanish mysteriously into the shadows from whence they came.

Their rare sightings and long-lived existence has generated no shortage of rumors. Some Cainites have spent many months chasing down whispers of these ghouls, hoping for a chance to acquire their secret vials or find out where their elders may be hiding. However, the only Inconnu ghouls vampires encounter regularly, if at all, are those serving the Monitors, the Inconnu members assigned to watch over a specific city or region. Yet, even these ghouls are enigmatic and powerful enough to protect themselves from overzealous vampires, which might explain the lack of information about them.

### Tal'Mahe'Ra

Despite their secretive nature, the Manus Nigrum's servants are not unknown to other Sects. While the Hand primarily relies on groomed ghouls they refer to

as “Chatterlings”, they often work with revenants tied to the Enrathi, Rafastio, and Marijava families.

Unlike the vast majority of ghouls that serve other Sects, most Chatterlings are kidnapped or purchased by the Enrathi slavers at a tender young age. From the time these children are ushered into the Sect, members of the Hand train their ghoul candidates in a variety of Sect-specific tasks which are both mundane and occult-related. Thus, by the time they reach their teen-aged years, the Chatterlings have been cultivated into loyal servants, well before receiving their first taste of the Blood. To this end, the Hand uses a variety of Disciplines and brainwashing techniques to remove any possibility for rebellion.

While the Hand does not encourage free thinkers, the Sect’s ghoul candidates are offered one life-changing choice after their training is complete. At the age of eighteen, all Chatterlings are given the option of joining the cult during a mysterious ceremony. Should that Chatterling choose to join the Sect, she is then assigned to a domitor and undergoes a few, additional years of training before becoming a ghoul. Of course, in the rare event that a Chatterling refuses indoctrination, that servant would be killed and quickly replaced.

In this way, the Hand is unlike any other Sect, for while they treat their ghouls as replaceable pieces of property, they train them for several years first. Then, when a ghoul is finally given vitae, the Blood seems like a precious gift instead of an insurance policy. Due to the extensive and intense training regimen, vitae is usually given when, and if, the potential ghoul survives her new domitor’s initial scrutiny. Thus, most of the Sect’s Chatterlings tend to be in their early-to-mid-twenties.

In theory, all Chatterlings serve the Sect rather than an individual vampire. This prevents the Hand’s ghouls from putting one master’s personal goals above those of the cult’s. Despite this, the Sect’s elders are not above cultivating their own, personal retinues from desired, adult candidates to serve them exclusively for the promise of the Embrace.

## **Oradea League**

This small Sect is almost exclusively comprised of elder Tzimisce who did not join the Sabbat alongside the rebellious, younger members of their Clan. While there are a few Oradea League members of the Gangrel and Nosferatu Clans, the Tzimisce Clan does influence the Sect’s policies which include the treatment of ghouls and revenants.

While the League does maintain some ghouls, most of them have been serving alongside their masters in Romania for many years, and are almost as inhuman as their domitors. The League’s primary servants in recent years, however, have been cultivated from bloodthirsty members of the Oprichniki revenant family. After the League re-connected with their peers in Russia, the Russian Fiends brought their revenant minions with them. Occasionally, the Oprichniki find it amusing that they have more of a connection to modern society than the ghoul minions of the League, but they tend to keep their opinions to themselves.

Recently, the youngest member of the League, Praskovya Danislav, has begun trying to convince other members that they should not rely so heavily on the Oprichniki mercenaries. Praskovya claims that the League needs to recruit ghouls that are better integrated into the modern world to ensure their survival. Unfortunately, Praskovya’s agenda has had some unintended consequences, as an allegiance is beginning to form between the League’s elder ghouls and the Oprichniki who feel their positions may be threatened by newcomers.

## **Ashirra**

The Middle Eastern and North African vampires who belong to the Ashirra Sect rely on ghouls to serve and protect them much like their American and European counterparts. They commonly refer to their ghouls as ansar, or “helper,” as a reminder of their mortality and importance to the Sect. Though the Sect has not expressly forbidden hiring or using revenants in this capacity, members of Ashirra do tend to shy away from them for a variety of reasons, with the exception of the Banu Haqim (Assamite) Clan, who have enlisted the help of a small family.

The Sect’s ghouls are often chosen for their skills in addition to their social and community-related connections. Thus, Ashirra members of the Rayeen al-Fen (Toreador), Qabilat al-Kayal (Lasombra), and Bay’t Mujrim (Ravnos) tend to make the most use out of their ghouls, whereas the Bay’t Majnoon (Malkavian) typically do not. Regardless, all within the Ashirra Sect do have both ghouls and non-ghoul servants tending to their needs.

Ashirra members are expected to treat their servants well, and the Sect frowns on the abuse of ghouls. Even the blood bond is considered taboo, as members believe loyalty should be earned and rewarded, rather than supernaturally compelled. Though the members of the Sect are against slavery, they often realize that their ideals become a moot point as their servants require a monthly infusion of the

Blood in order to remain ghouls. Thus, after three months, many are Bound to their masters regardless. Of course, the only way to ensure that a blood bond is not secured is to encourage Sect domitors to rotate ghouls for feedings.

In truth, Bound ghouls are often tasked with protecting their masters from the region's hunters. While the Ashirra

does maintain its own version of the Masquerade, even if they don't call it by that name, there are several skilled hunter factions who not only track the movements of the dead, but destroy havens and attack ghouls indiscriminately. Thus, it is up to Ashirra ghouls to keep unwanted eyes from discovering the truth by protecting their masters during the day.



# Assamite

The ghouls serving the Assamite Clan often suffer from the same stereotypes their masters do. They are believed to be selected exclusively from skilled mercenaries and violent killers, and are thought to be fanatics for the glory of Haqim. In truth, many of these rumors are related to the ghouls who belong to the Web of Knives, a paramilitary group operated by the Warrior Caste.

The Web of Knives is an elaborate operation that incorporates training camps and strict rules for its members. After mortals are selected, the Web's eager warriors are subjected to rigorous drills and trained to assassinate targets. In truth, the Web of Knives trains Bound ghouls for a period of seven years to kill a key target on behalf of the Clan. After this period, the Warrior Caste rewards their ghouls with the Embrace.

Although these ghouls are rarely seen, their reputation is so widespread that many shocking assassinations are thought to be the work of this group.

While there are several fanatics and assassins within the Assamite Clan, there are not as many as other Clans believe. In fact, the Assamites choose their ghouls in much the same way other Clan members do, according to the needs of each Caste. In addition to the Web of Knives, the Warrior Caste creates ghouls in addition to those candidates they are grooming for Embrace. These ghouls are often short-lived, being disposed of after they've fulfilled the task they were selected to accomplish. These duties might range from providing a little extra muscle

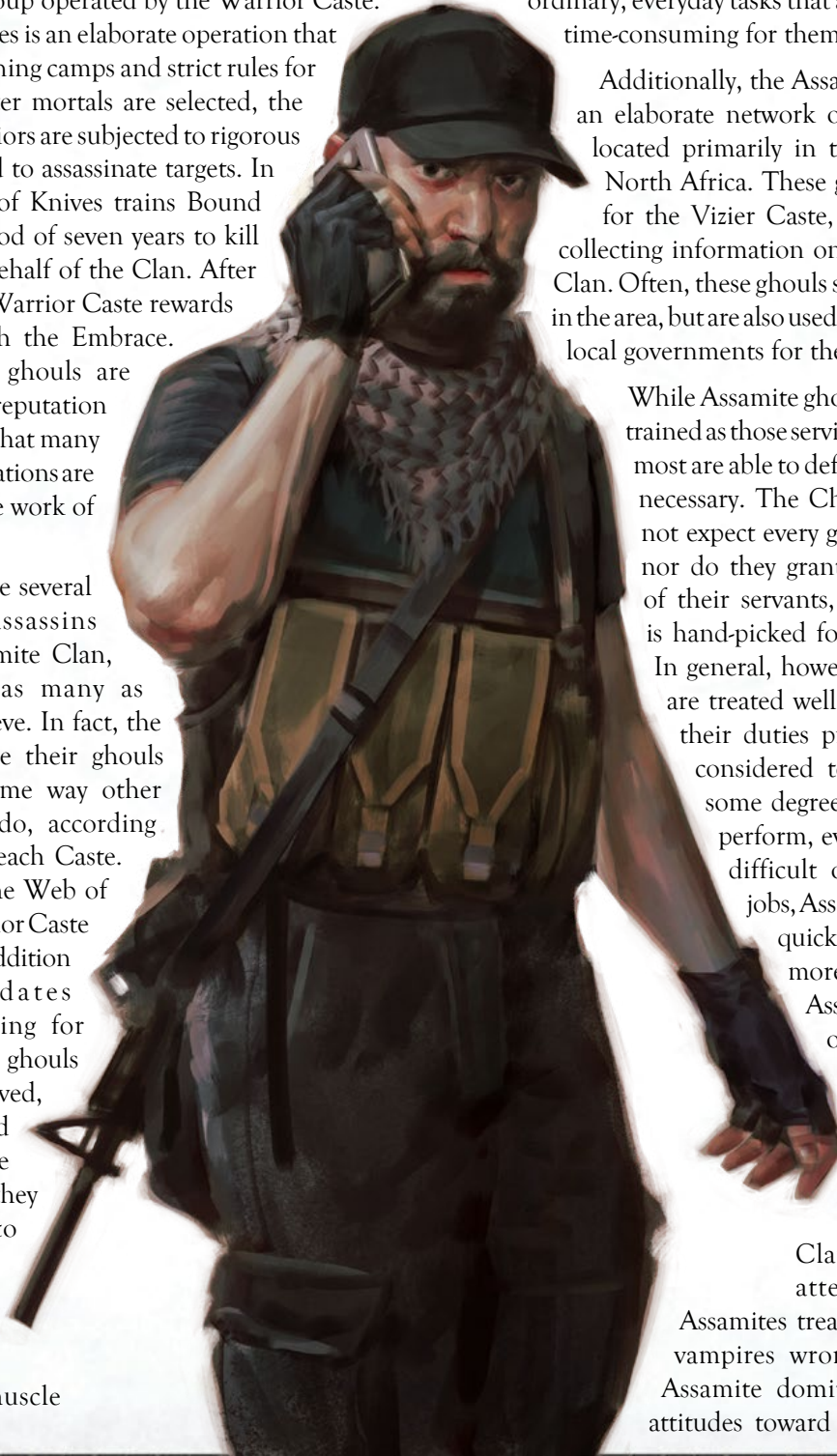
to spying on a target. The Vizier Caste, on the other hand, prefers ghouls to act as their bodyguards, financial advisors, and accountants, while the Sorcerer Caste uses technologically-savvy ghouls for research and assistance in their labs alongside their revenant family. Thus, despite their reputation, the Assamite Clan uses ghouls to perform ordinary, everyday tasks that are too mundane and time-consuming for them to perform.

Additionally, the Assamite Clan maintains an elaborate network of spies and contacts located primarily in the Middle East and North Africa. These ghouls typically work for the Vizier Caste, but are tasked with collecting information on behalf of the entire Clan. Often, these ghouls spy on other vampires in the area, but are also used to assess and infiltrate local governments for the Clan's benefit.

While Assamite ghouls are not all as well-trained as those serving the Web of Knives, most are able to defend themselves when necessary. The Children of Haqim do not expect every ghoul to be a warrior, nor do they grant the Embrace to all of their servants, even when a ghoul is hand-picked for a specific domitor. In general, however, Assamite ghouls are treated well provided they fulfill their duties properly, for they are considered to be Clan assets to some degree. Should they fail to perform, even when assigned to difficult or highly dangerous jobs, Assamite ghouls are often quickly replaced with other, more capable, candidates.

Assamite *antitribu*, on the other hand, tend to avoid creating ghouls and, when they do, use them for a short period of time.

Though other Clans don't pay close attention to how the Assamites treat their ghouls, many vampires wrongfully assume that Assamite domitors adopt Western attitudes toward their servants when



living in Western countries. In truth, the Children of Haqim are fully aware of the weakness their ghouls carry, and understand that a ghouls who is suspected of no longer being a mortal risks the exposure of their Clan. Thus, while many are indoctrinated into each Caste, Assamite domitors tend to actively recruit ghouls they wish to groom for the Embrace. Most other ghouls, however, don't survive very long, and often attempt to escape at the first opportunity.

**Appearance:** Assamite ghouls are selected based on their value to the Clan, and whether or not a domitor intends to train or groom them for the Embrace. Thus, the physical health and appearance of a ghouls matters greatly to the Warrior Caste, but less so to the Sorcerer Caste. Warrior Caste ghouls often wear fatigues, are in peak physical condition, and are frequently chosen for their grace and reflexes over raw muscle. Vizier Caste and Sorcerer Caste ghouls range widely, as they prize intellectual and social prowess more so than physical traits. Occasionally, some domitors select certain ghouls for their strategic value, especially if they plan for them to be placed as spies among local populations. In general, however, Assamite ghouls dress to blend in according to their customs and cultures, rather than stand out. Some Assamite ghouls are of Middle Eastern descent, but the Clan doesn't create ghouls based on this criterion.

**Character Creation:** Assamite ghouls are unlike other servants, for very rarely will a domitor feed the Blood to a mortal on a whim. Chosen for specific purposes and roles, ghouls who are selected to be groomed for the Embrace are put through taxing, often dangerous, trials. Thus, Attributes, Abilities, Skills, and Talents should be customized to whether or not that ghouls is serving the Warrior, Vizier, or Sorcerer Castes. Though this is the case, all Assamite ghouls have the ability to defend themselves in basic combat, at least long enough to escape to safety.

**Weaknesses:** The blood of Assamite ghouls carries the taint of the Clan's many curses. Over a period of seven to ten years, their mortal blood begins to darken and eventually turns pitch black. After that time, it is believed that the Assamite ghouls suffer an additional curse that's related to their domitor's Caste, and it is for this reason why the Clan does not maintain ghouls for longer than a decade. Warrior Caste ghouls become addicted to their master's blood, Vizier Caste ghouls develop an Obsessive-Compulsive Derangement, and the auras of Sorcerer Caste ghouls reflect that of a thaumaturge, regardless of whether or not they have the skill or ability to perform rituals.

**Quote:** "You would not be so bold, if you knew what I am capable of."





# Brujah

The Brujah Clan's quick-tempered reputation often leads other Clans to wonder how they retain any semblance of control over their ghouls. Brujah ghouls tend to be at the mercy of their domitors, and their treatment is often governed by ideology more so than their individual actions.

Some Brujah vampires avoid the blood bond altogether, because they are philosophically opposed to the removal of their free will. This, however, isn't true among all members of the Clan, and it has not stopped them cultivating ghouls as they see fit. For example, some Brujah domitors might groom candidates for Embrace, while others feel that tactic is especially cruel as it forces a potential child into a form of slavery.

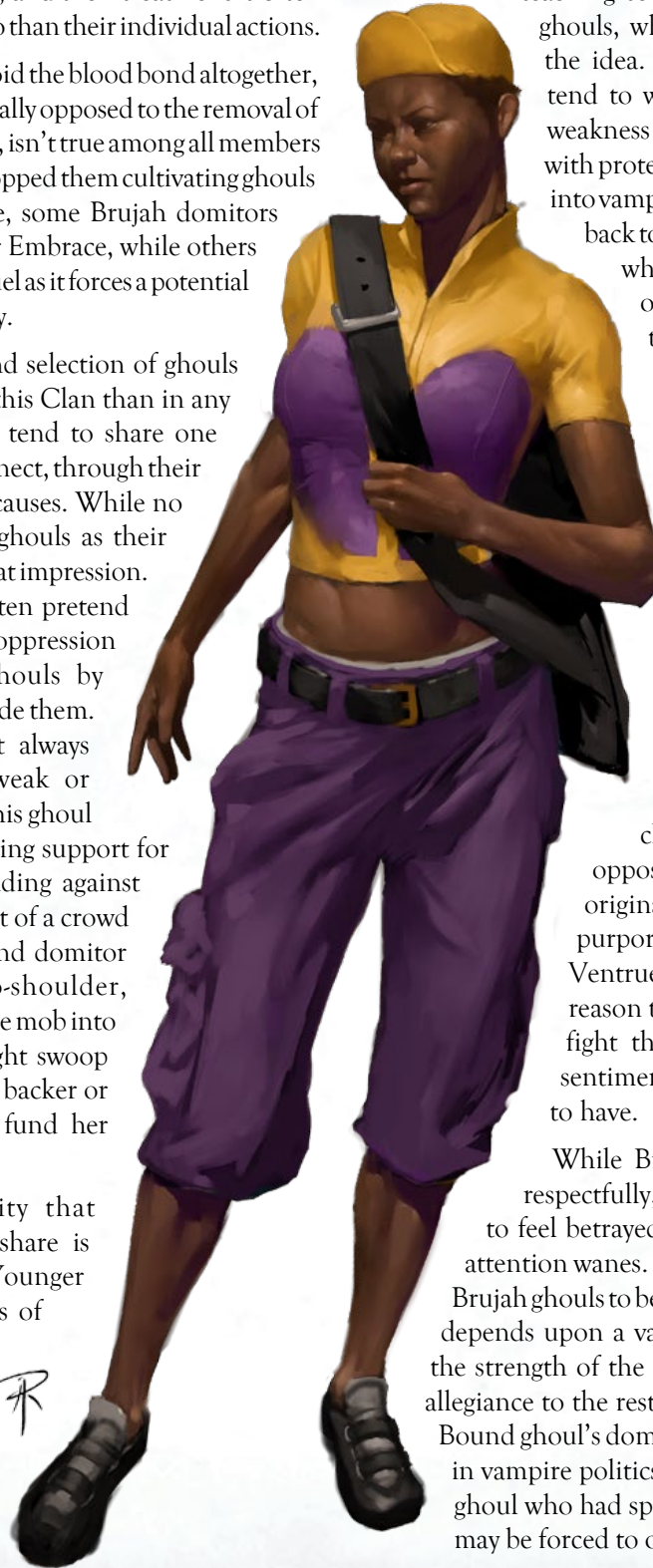
Though the treatment and selection of ghouls tends to be more varied in this Clan than in any other, all Brujah domitors tend to share one common trait: a need to connect, through their ghouls, to their individual causes. While no vampire would treat their ghouls as their equals, they might give off that impression. In fact, Brujah domitors often pretend to share the burdens of oppression with their prospective ghouls by championing causes alongside them. A Brujah domitor doesn't always choose the side of the weak or defenseless, as both he and his ghoul could be found demonstrating support for a dictator just as well as siding against police brutality. In the midst of a crowd of protesters, both ghoul and domitor might stand shoulder-to-shoulder, holding signs or whipping the mob into a frenzy. Or a domitor might swoop in as a benevolent financial backer or mysterious donor to help fund her ghoul's efforts.

The other commonality that Brujah domitors tend to share is based on vampiric age. Younger Brujah domitors, regardless of Generation, often get wrapped up in trying to control their tempers and their passions. The fires that rage in their blood make it difficult for new

Brujah to master their impulses, and this is reflected in how they treat their ghouls. Some domitors, such as those among the wild Brujah *antitribu*, don't bother teaching self-control techniques to their ghouls, while others are obsessed with the idea. In general, Brujah domitors tend to worry more about their Clan weakness if they've tasked their ghouls with protecting their havens or blending into vampire society to feed information back to them. After all, Brujah ghouls who cannot maintain control over their tempers are less useful than those who can.

Despite any illusions of loyalty, ghouls might mistake their domitors' interest as a sign of their shared connection or even love. However, while a Brujah ghoul might dedicate his entire life to overthrowing an oppressive government or trying to institute fair wages for the working class, his master might lose interest, especially if a cause cannot be championed due to mounting opposition or hazy solutions to the original problem. Of course, if a purported rival is involved, such as a Ventrue lord, a domitor has another reason to rebel and keep up the good fight that goes beyond any feigned sentiment the vampire might profess to have.

While Brujah ghouls may be treated respectfully, they are also the most likely to feel betrayed by their masters when their attention wanes. Thus, it is not uncommon for Brujah ghouls to become independent. This, too, depends upon a variety of factors ranging from the strength of the blood bond to the domitor's allegiance to the rest of the Clan or Sect. When a Bound ghoul's domitor becomes more embroiled in vampire politics, for example, a union leader ghoul who had spent years devoted to his cause may be forced to obey his master. Some Anarch



Brujah domitors may set their ghouls free, giving them the opportunity to find their own way as independent ghouls. Other masters will conveniently shift their ghouls' attentions to their own fights, and slowly stop giving their servants the freedom they once enjoyed.

Brujah ghouls are employed in a variety of roles, similar to how they might be used in other Clans. For most Brujah domitors, however, they tend to be selfish with their ghouls and think about how they might best serve them as opposed to the Clan as a whole. An Anarch Brujah who often travels doesn't have the same concerns as an elder who has an estate to maintain. Thus, the tasks a ghoul performs may be specific to a domitor's wishes, but it is not uncommon to find ghouls who have been trained to multi-task and run a variety of errands.

**Appearance:** Regardless of which background or culture Brujah ghouls hail from, they tend to favor clothing reflective of their local counter-culture. Typically, Brujah ghouls might adorn themselves in confrontational slogans or symbols designed to provoke whomever they're fighting against. Since Brujah domitors don't select

ghouls based on any one particular cause, their ghouls might also wear uniforms, suits, or other clothes that denote their career choices.

**Character Creation:** Brujah ghouls might be gang leaders, radical activists, and sociopolitical professors just as easily as they might be government agents, police officers, and talk radio pundits. Though the Brujah might give the impression that they select ghouls based on sheer passion alone, they are far more selective than they're given credit for. Thus, when creating a Brujah ghoul, think about what the character did prior to becoming one. Vocal ghouls might favor Social Attributes and Talents, whereas more hands-on ghouls favor Physical Attributes and Skills. Allies and Contacts, however, are common backgrounds.

**Weakness:** Brujah blood carries with it the same inflammation of passion that the Clan is well-known for. Brujah ghouls suffer from the Short Fuse Flaw on page 486 of V20.

**Quote:** "Get up off your ass and protest with me! Apathy is for the weak."



## Followers of Set

Setite ghouls are believed to be less relied upon than the many cultists serving the Clan, and to some extent this is correct. The Followers of Set do tend to focus primarily on maintaining their cults, and they occasionally create Bound ghouls as a way of rewarding cult leaders and keeping the other cultists in line. However, Setites do not waste precious vitae on just anyone, especially since the Blood carries the Clan weakness. Over time, all Setite ghouls develop light sensitivity, which defeats the purpose of having servants who can walk in the daylight.

Most Setite domitors will spend time observing their cultists, and then promise those individuals a way of connecting with their god, Set. It is commonly believed that, at this point, the truth about the Setite's nature is then revealed. The fact that the Followers of Set are vampires may or may not be a revelation to young ghouls. However, further indoctrination into the cult, while it comes with a price, is often welcomed by young Setite ghouls eager to prove themselves to their domitors. Setite ghouls who persevere are further indoctrinated into the Clan, and are often observed to see if they are faithful, capable, cunning, or deadly. Those who are simply faithful and loyal are kept as ghouls, likely to be forever denied the Embrace, but serve believing one day it will be granted to them.

Common tasks assigned to Setite ghouls are related to the maintenance of the cult. Setite ghouls might recruit a fresh group of cultists and lead ceremonies, or could police its members from within. These ghouls are almost always as charming and seductive as their domitors, even though they have little to no knowledge of what the Setite Clan is truly about. Other ghouls are involved with assassinations, guard duty, forging contacts in the underworld, or finding contractors

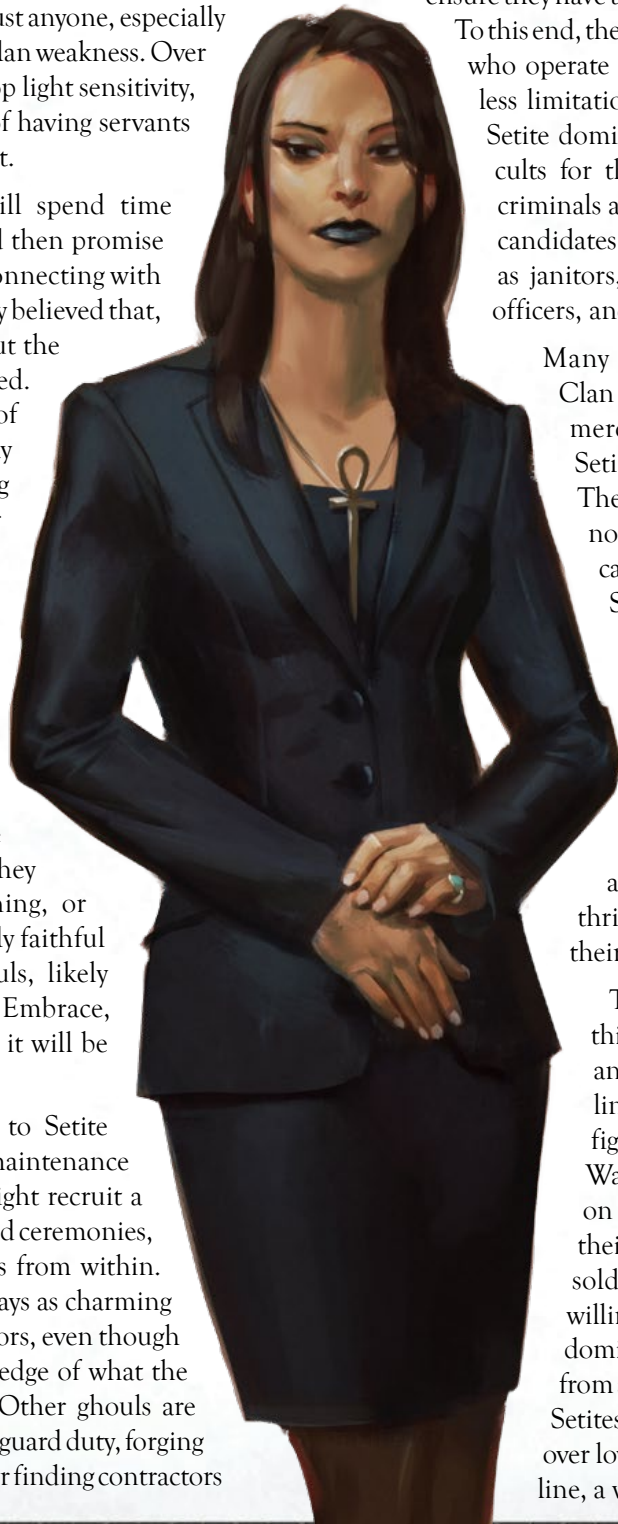
and small businesses to hire. These Setite ghouls are tough but canny, and seem less like mindless followers than those ghouls chosen from the throngs of cultists.

Additionally, the Followers of Set are also opportunists who understand the need to replenish their cultists and ensure they have the necessary resources to survive.

To this end, they tend to recruit ghouls who operate during the night, so they suffer less limitations due to the Clan's weakness. Setite domitors will recruit outside of their cults for this purpose. They might select criminals and vagrants, or focus on finding candidates from third shift workers such as janitors, bodyguards, watchmen, police officers, and drivers.

Many vampires outside the Setite Clan believe that all Setite ghouls are mercenaries and thugs. However, Setites consider their blood holy. The feeding of vitae to a mortal is not a gift given lightly. Even if a candidate was physically impressive, Setite domitors select ghouls who they feel are worthy of handling revelations of their god. This does not mean Setites avoid feeding vitae to their bodyguards, for some do. But, the typical Setite ghouls is more often a smiling supplicant than a sneering villain. The Setite Clan thrives by defying expectations, and their ghouls are no different.

Though some vampires tend to think that all Setites are fanatics and seducers, the Warrior Setite line is more militant and focused on fighting in the name of Set. Thus, Warrior Setites tend to be more reliant on ghouls than other members of their Clan, because they need new soldiers that are well-trained and willing to sacrifice themselves for their domitors. Candidates might be chosen from a cult's members, but the Warrior Setites value physical traits and abilities over loyalty at the onset. To the Warrior line, a whimpering, eager cultist may be



useful, but that ghoul isn't as valuable as a strong, fierce soldier who can protect his domitor. For this reason, it's often suspected that the Warrior line grooms only the most promising candidates for the Embrace.

Other Setite domitors include the Daitya and Tlacique bloodlines, as well as the heretic Serpents of the Light. Since the Daitya bloodline tends to operate similarly to Set's followers and cultists, they also tend to be selective about their ghouls. The Tlacique, on the other hand, are more pragmatic because their numbers are so few. They tend to find guards, scouts, spies, and guardians to protect themselves while they rebuild and replenish their bloodline.

The Serpents of the Light, however, tend to be more aggressive with their use of ghouls than the rest of the Clan. Their ghouls are often used as pawns in the war against the Followers of Set, and might be found infiltrating Setite cults, battling warrior ghouls, or remaining inactive as sleeper agents until needed. The Serpents of the Light also trains spies, guards, and couriers picked from the general populace.

**Appearance:** Setite ghouls are found throughout the world alongside their masters, and are drawn from a

diverse range of backgrounds, classes, and cultures. Most Setite ghouls, however, do not wear culturally-or-religious appropriate clothing for the same reasons other mortals might, for they worship Set. For this reason, some Setite ghouls either tattoo or adorn themselves with a reptilian symbol of their god, while others are prohibited from showing their loyalty to avoid detection by authorities or rival Clans.

**Character Creation:** Setite ghouls are selected for different reasons. Those who are chosen from their throngs of cultists tend to have strong Social Attributes and Skills that reflect their charismatic leadership and ability to recruit new members. These ghouls also make excellent spies and propaganda machines, too. Physically-talented ghouls, on the other hand, are often assigned to security. They may also be recruited to become soldiers who fight in Set's name.

**Weaknesses:** Ghouls who subsist primarily on Setite vitae gradually develop an aversion to daylight. They suffer from the Light Sensitive Flaw found on [page 135](#).

**Quote:** "You stumble blindly, friend. Come, let us speak of the One True God."



# Gangrel

The Gangrel Clan is often typecast as a circle of nature lovers who prefers the wilderness to any city. In truth, members of the Clan play up this belief by flaunting their animal ghouls who guard their havens in city parks, abandoned lots, county zoos, and surrounding forests. What many Gangrel have, however, is a thirst to wander, and the Clan's domitors choose ghouls to ensure not only their safety and security, but also their way of unlife.

Animals often make loyal, dependable and, more importantly, predictable servants. Unlike mortals, animals do not have dangerous ambitions or roam far from their master's side to prove themselves. In truth, the Gangrel Clan employs animal ghouls more so than any other Clan, because they blend into the flora and fauna right alongside their domitors.

Gangrel domitors have learned that animal ghouls are best suited for specific, simple roles. However, the actions they might take are dependent on their species. Domesticated dogs, for example, make good hunters and trackers, and can be easier to control than wild, untamed wolves. Birds, such as crows or pigeons, might keep watch for early intruders or get a different view of a battlefield. On the other hand, ferrets, rats, and other small rodents can be great infiltrators because they are able to crawl up drainpipes, enter most buildings, and steal small items.

The Clan's natural propensity toward communing with the animal kingdom eliminates a lot of barriers that other domitors might face. However, animal ghouls require vitae just as a mortal ghoul might, and they do require training. Thus, while some Gangrel domitors feel a well-trained animal ghoul is a precious commodity, others release them into the wild after they've outlived their usefulness. Regardless, most Gangrel domitors are able to get the most use out of animal ghouls, because they tend to consider their natural environment when putting them to the task. While some Ventrue domitors, for example, might pride themselves on maintaining purebred

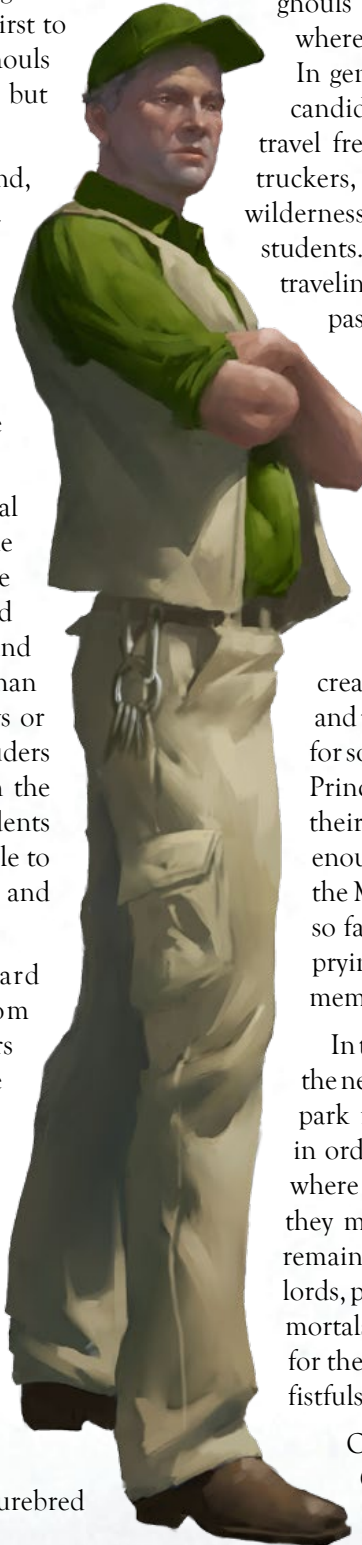
hounds to impress visitors, Gangrel domitors tend to choose breeds based on whether or not those dogs are commonly found in the area.

Though no one knows for certain how many mortal ghouls the Clan keeps, there are many cases where they are more preferable to animals. In general, Gangrel domitors favor selecting candidates based on their ability to roam or travel freely. Thus, their ghouls might include truckers, drivers, tour guides, entrepreneurs, wilderness experts or enthusiasts, and college students. Such ghouls can aid their masters while traveling long distances, allowing them to swiftly pass through dangerous territories in the course of their journey. However, these ghouls are also tasked with finding victims for their domitors to feed upon, and might be ordered to help dispose of the bodies.

In truth, the Gangrel Clan regards ghouls much in the same way other Clans do. Often, a domitor's Sect will govern not only which ghouls are created, but why. Gangrel in the Camarilla and the Anarch Movement may show disdain for some protocols, such as bowing down to a Prince or respecting artificial lines governing their rivals' territories, but are pragmatic enough to understand the value of protecting the Masquerade. Elder Gangrel may even go so far as to select ghouls that can help keep prying eyes away from themselves and other members of the Clan.

In the Sabbat, City Gangrel also understand the need for discretion. Thus, they might select park rangers or zookeepers as their ghouls, in order to control access to areas of the city where their animal ghouls reside. However, they might also choose ghouls to help them remain comfortable in the city, such as slum lords, pet store owners, or street vendors. Those mortals can not only provide access to havens for the vampire's pack, but also the occasional fistful of cash.

Of all of the Clan's members, the Country Gangrel are the least likely to maintain mortal ghouls for a variety of reasons.



These Gangrel tend to be on the move more often than other members of the Clan. Due to the fact that many Country Gangrel follow a Path of Enlightenment, their interactions with mortals are arguably either more difficult or are not worth the effort from their perspective. Thus, Country Gangrel tend to select animal ghouls to serve them, or they rely on their packmates for help. Even though they tend to isolate themselves, Country Gangrel do interact with other members of the Sabbat, including the Bratovich revenant family who they can often be seen hunting with.

**Appearance:** Given that Gangrel ghouls spend a lot of time with their domitors in the great outdoors, they often dress accordingly. Outdoor clothing, including camouflage and combat boots, is commonplace. Many Gangrel ghouls are rugged and in great physical condition, and they often prefer to wear durable clothing that matches their athletic, outdoorsy personalities. Should their connection to society fade, Gangrel ghouls often become less interested in their appearance.

**Character Creation:** Gangrel ghouls are often drawn from careers or lifestyles that allow them to be transient, but also help their masters in many, different ways. Since Gangrel domitors tend a hard time connecting to people, they often rely on ghouls that have strong Allies and Resources. Physical Attributes and Skills are valued, because Gangrel domitors aren't always around to protect their ghouls. Animal Ken, however, is an important Skill to invest in, for Gangrel ghouls will often encounter their domitors' animal servants or ghouls.

**Weakness:** Gangrel ghouls, regardless of bloodline, are affected by the phases of the moon. They suffer from the Lunacy Flaw which is found on p. 486 of V20. This Flaw affects their difficulty to avoid frenzy, and reflects the animalistic nature of the vitae they drink.

**Quote:** "You might want to wander elsewhere, friend. This place is too wild, even for you."



# Giovanni

Giovanni ghouls and the Clan's fabled Proxy Kiss often whispered about with equal amounts of curiosity and dread. Unlike other bloodlines, Clans, and Sects, the family professes to observe ritualistic protocols that are so strict, punishment for breaking any one of these traditions may end in death of the ghoul, domitor, childe, or sire.

Most vampires mistakenly assume that all Giovanni ghouls are destined for the Embrace, since the Clan does not have to ask the Prince for permission to create childe, and the Proxy Kiss ceremony is a way of reassuring potential ghouls of their value to the family. However, most vampires are not clear on the ratio of ghouls-to-vampires among the Giovanni families, nor do they know how many mortal allies they possess. Some vampires suspect there might be more Giovanni vampires than they initially realized.

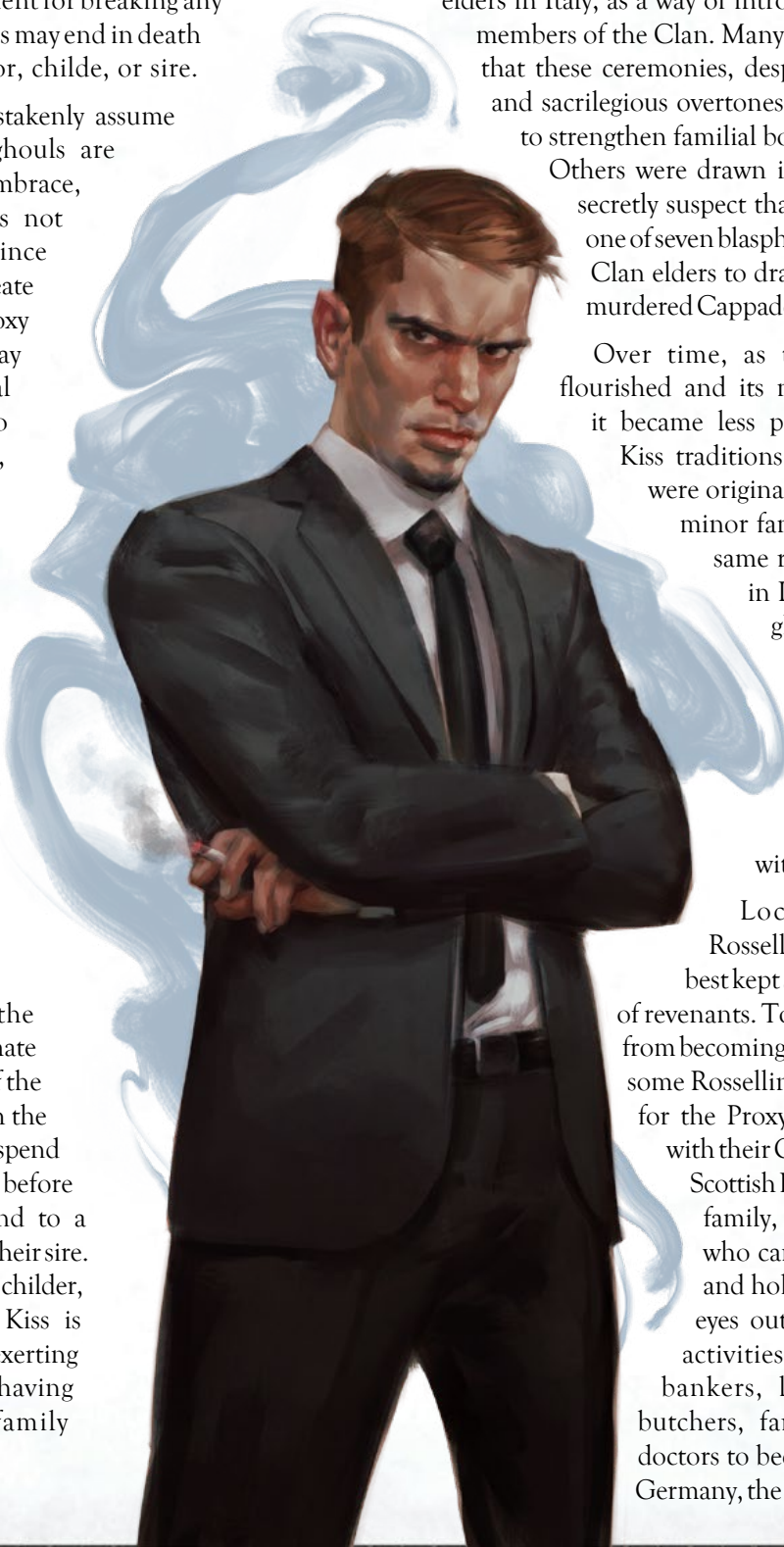
Scholars within the Giovanni family estimate that more than half of the current vampires with the name "Giovanni" did spend some time as ghouls before their Embrace, Bound to a domitor who was not their sire. In addition to creating childe, however, the Proxy Kiss is also used as a means of exerting control over misbehaving or overachieving family members.

Though the Giovanni Clan creates ghouls by feeding them vitae like all other vampires, the circumstances surrounding this act are highly ritualized. In years past, all candidates were presented before the Giovanni elders in Italy, as a way of introducing them as future members of the Clan. Many Clan members believe that these ceremonies, despite their necromantic and sacrilegious overtones, were largely designed to strengthen familial bonds and relationships.

Others were drawn into the spectacle, and secretly suspect that the Proxy Kiss is but one of seven blasphemies performed by the Clan elders to draw on the power of the murdered Cappadocius and all his childe.

Over time, as the Giovanni family flourished and its minor families spread, it became less practical for the Proxy Kiss traditions to be upheld as they were originally intended. Thus, the minor families do not share the same rituals as their relatives in Italy do, and often lure ghouls with the promise of Embrace, but rarely fulfill that wish out of necessity. Due to their low numbers, the minor families supplement their ranks with ghouls.

Located in Italy, the Rossellini family is the Clan's best kept secret, for they are a line of revenants. To prevent the Rossellini from becoming too powerful, however, some Rossellini each year are selected for the Proxy Kiss and sent to live with their Giovanni domitors. The Scottish Dunsirn, another minor family, tends to select ghouls who can increase their wealth and holdings, and keep prying eyes out of their cannibalistic activities. They often choose bankers, lawyers, bodyguards, butchers, farmers, coroners, and doctors to become their servants. In Germany, the Koenig family are much



more discriminatory, in part because they are rumored to be working closely with the Giovanni. In addition to creating ghouls, the Koenig family may also be experimenting with other, more mundane means of drawing in allies.

The Pisanob in South America, on the other hand, finds candidates among police officers, archaeologists, doctors, nurses, professors, occultists, librarians, and collectors, while the American Milliner family opts for socialites, bankers, spies, celebrities, entertainers, lobbyists, and con artists. Lastly, the Rothstein family, who is centered in Las Vegas, is infiltrating casinos and establishing connections to organized crime in order to funnel profits back to the main Clan. Of all the minor families, they've been granted the most amount of leeway to create ghouls as they see fit.

In theory, all family members must seek the approval of a Clan elder before creating a ghoul, even if that ghoul is not destined for the Embrace. However, when they do so, they put themselves at risk because they might run afoul of their elders. For example, say a Pisanob domitor wishes to turn a local police officer into a ghoul. This decision, provided it helps that vampire be a more productive family member, would be deemed practical and overlooked. However, if a Milliner domitor selects her cousins to become ghouls as enforcers, the elders would view that as a possible threat due to the close ties between them. Repercussions of running afoul of the Giovanni can be severe and range from being Bound to serving the family as a ghost after the domitor's death.

**Appearance:** Giovanni ghouls who are blessed by Clan elders tend to be impeccably dressed, but often wear more durable, sensible clothes in their day-to-day duties. Other ghouls, however, are chosen for their ability to blend in and not be noticed, so they tend to have a plain, unremarkable appearance.

**Character Creation:** Giovanni ghouls are divided into three groups: candidates for the Embrace, family members, and useful acquaintances. The duties of most Giovanni ghouls, however, are geared to fit their natural talents. However, those who are geared for the Embrace might be embroiled further into family politics or encouraged to increase their knowledge of Disciplines.

**Weakness:** Giovanni ghouls tend to think and act as if they were related by blood, even if they are not part of the Giovanni lineage. While they are not a revenant family, Giovanni ghouls retain close ties, and even go so far as to fight each others' battles. All Giovanni ghouls suffer from the Vengeance Flaw found on p. 486 of V20. This Flaw manifests whenever the player character discovers that a member of the extended Giovanni family, either herself or another mortal, ghoul, revenant, or vampire, has been wronged. The player will take on other vows of vengeance as if she herself had been hurt. This Flaw may be resisted for a day by spending a Willpower point.

**Quote:** "You think you can take me? Try taking on me and my whole family, asshole."

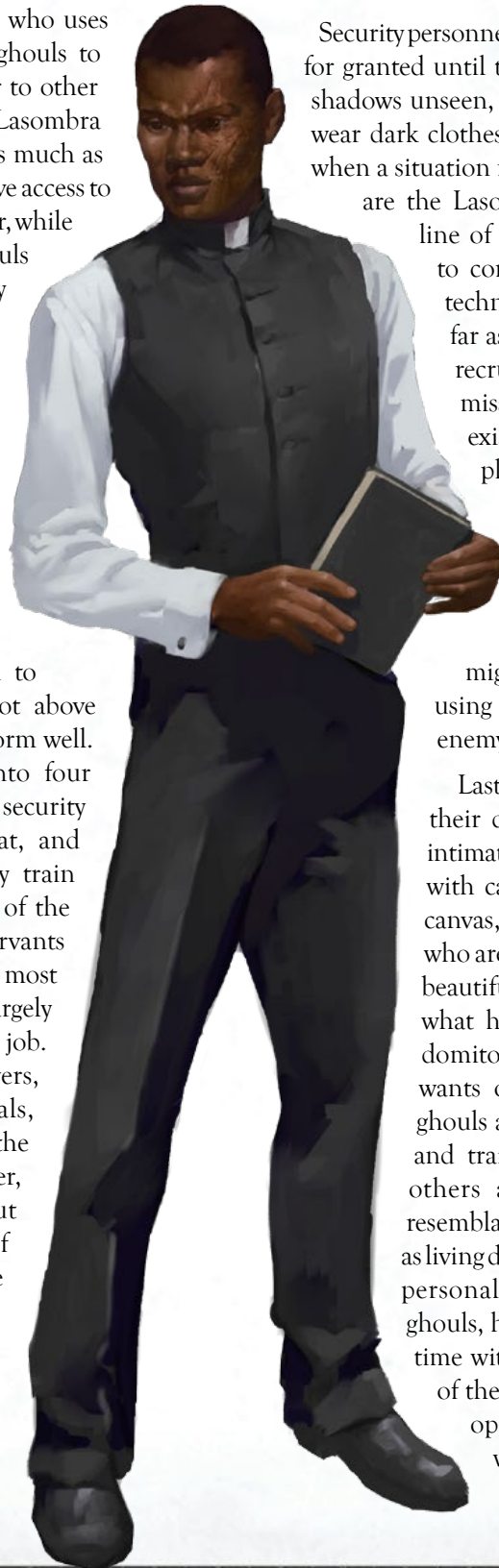




# Lasombra

Members of the Lasombra Clan are nothing but duplicitous, especially when it comes to the subject of ghouls. They might profess their hatred of ghouls and look down upon any vampire who uses them, while recruiting scores of ghouls to attend to their every need. Similar to other Clans who possess Dominate, the Lasombra does not necessarily need ghouls as much as other vampires might, since they have access to mortals to do their bidding. However, while the Lasombra Clan sneers at ghouls and their domitors with disdain, they recruit and use them for a variety of purposes. Younger vampires often cannot see past the Clan's rhetoric, and buy into the myth that they are setting an example for other vampires of the Sabbat. Older vampires, however, understand that the Clan's words are just that, and suspect that Lasombra ghouls are used to great effect.

The Lasombra Clan does tend to think long-term, and they are not above using ghouls – provided they perform well. Lasombra ghouls tend to fall into four main types: personal attendants, security personnel, servants to the Sabbat, and freelance mercenaries who mostly train under the guidance of the Talons of the Black Rage. Of these four types, servants to the Sabbat are, perhaps, the most often overlooked because they are largely left alone, provided they do their job. Comprised of accountants, lawyers, corrupt police officers, criminals, technophiles, investigators, and the occasional occultist or clergy member, these Lasombra ghouls carry out explicit instructions on behalf of their domitors. Many of them are commanded to influence certain policies, whereas others might be tasked with steering mortals away from a specific building or alleyway. In part, what a Lasombra ghoule does



largely depends upon her domitor's role within the Sabbat. Bishops and Cardinals, for example, will deploy their ghouls very differently than the average Lasombra pack.

Security personnel, on the other hand, are often taken for granted until they fail. Taught to blend into the shadows unseen, these bodyguards and technicians wear dark clothes and stay hidden, only to emerge when a situation needs to be handled. These ghouls are the Lasombra domitor's first and second line of defense, and are also encouraged to continue training to stay on top of technological advances. Some even go so far as to scout out other havens, screen recruits, and run small reconnaissance missions, too. Though many groups exist, the Lasombra rely on individuals placed in strategic positions around the city. One Lasombra domitor might implement a ghoul as a sleeper agent near her rival's haven, only to be triggered at a precise moment, while another might strategize a decades-long plan using ghouls to cut off support to an enemy within the Camarilla.

Lastly, many Lasombra ghouls serve their domitors in a more personal and intimate capacity. Some are painters, tasked with capturing their masters' images on canvas, while others are makeup artists who are instructed to make their domitors beautiful. How a personal servant fares and what he does largely depends upon his domitor, for not every Lasombra master wants or desires the same thing. Some ghouls are rumored to act as majordomos and train other Lasombra ghouls, while others are selected for their uncanny resemblance to their masters and are treated as living dolls. The biggest difference between personal servants and other Lasombra ghouls, however, is that ghouls spend more time with their domitors. In the presence of their masters, these ghouls have more opportunities to succeed and fail, which results in greater rewards and punishments for their actions.

How, when, and why a Lasombra domitor rids herself of her ghoul is at her discretion, but the relationship does not always end in death. Sometimes, a domitor might not fully relinquish control, even after she stops feeding her ghoul vitae, and uses Dominate to issue further commands to that same mortal. Other times, a master might brand or tattoo his ghoul's face in front of his other ghouls as a show of power, to keep them in line. Regardless, most Lasombra domitors are aware that the mistreatment of their ghouls could lead to insurrection, so they tend to walk a fine line between an unforgiving, ruthless leader and a benevolent, sympathetic dictator to ensure their ghouls know who rules them.

Ghouls who are Bound to Lasombra *antitribu* are largely assigned to personal tasks as opposed to political. While Lasombra *antitribu* might scheme against their rivals, they are less concerned with ideology and more with their own affairs. Thus, should any Lasombra *antitribu* ghouls be recognized either in greater frequency or larger numbers, it would be a sign that their domitors are active again.

**Appearance:** Some Lasombra ghouls are selected because they resemble their domitors in some fashion,

while others are chosen for their regal bearing or carriage. Most Lasombra ghouls are well-kept, and some may even be considered fashionable. Those tasked with blending into the local populace wear clothes befitting the role they've been assigned.

**Character Creation:** Lasombra ghouls tend to be excellent at what they do, else they would not have been chosen. Ghouls trend toward either being able to help their master on a personal basis or with matters pertaining to their holdings, security, or politics. Lasombra domitors tend to prefer ghouls who are disciplined and well-maintained, and will shy away from rough-and-tumble types unless they have good reason not to.

**Weakness:** Lasombra ghouls walk a fine line between their mortality and their damnation. Due to their masters' connection to the Abyss, shadows will subtly lean toward them. This effect is more noticeable when a ghoul is standing still beneath direct light, but it is still dangerous as the behavior of the shadows may also draw the attention of hunters and other vampires who know what to look for.

**Quote:** "My face is not my own, for it belongs to someone else."



# Malkavian

Contrary to popular belief, the Malkavian Clan does not typically create ghouls solely on a whim, nor do they waste vitae on the blood bond to abuse victims. In truth, how Malkavian domitors select and treat their ghouls based on the same criteria that other Clans might use. Despite their reputation, the most lucid members of the Malkavian Clan are aware that they are unable to function fully without help, and it is for this reason that they not only use ghouls, but rely on them for help.

Unfortunately, Malkavian ghouls suffer as their masters do, for they are not immune to the Clan's curse. The nightmares and phobias that afflict Malkavian ghouls torment them in different ways, and this mental anguish often takes its toll on their physical bodies and natural sleep cycles. Some Malkavian ghouls are insomniacs, careful to avoid falling asleep to prevent another terror-filled night. It is for this reason that many vampires mistakenly believe that all Malkavian masters torture and abuse their servants. If giving a mortal cursed vitae is the definition of torment, however, then all vampires are guilty of the crimes attributed to the Malkavian Clan.

Though most Malkavian domitors do not willingly persecute their ghouls, serving them is challenging and greatly depends upon their lucidity. In a way, the Blood governs how, when, and why a Malkavian master selects a ghoul, for Malkav's curse affects each vampire differently. Thus, some Kindred masters are drawn toward medical professionals and caregivers, such

as nurses, psychiatrists, and therapists, while others are far less discriminatory and instinctively choose mortals based on their compassionate or nurturing personalities.

During moments of self-control, other domitors — especially Camarilla Malkavians — recognize the limitations they live with from night to night, and choose ghouls to help them maintain the Masquerade and survive in the modern era. These masters lean toward more practical candidates, such as accountants, lawyers, bodyguards, security technicians, construction experts, and computer programmers. And, to an extent, these types of ghouls are guarded from being unduly blamed for their domitors' flawed mental state as their masters command them from a distance.

Some Kindred domitors even go so far as to seek advice on how to best use their ghouls for the betterment of their Clan or Sect, knowing that such conversations will result in a favorable opinion.

In general, however, regardless of a ghoul's ability to fortify a haven or clean up after a messy feeding, most domitors care more about their own, selfish desires to ease the effects of Malkav's curse than their performance as a servant. Thus, when Malkavian domitors suffer, it is not uncommon for their ghouls to pay the price simply because they happened to be nearby. This is especially true for ghouls with a medical background, for while Malkavians know that there is no cure for their ailments, that does not stop them from trying to seek a temporary salve. Thus, punishments vary widely, and depend upon the master and the circumstances surrounding their anguish. One domitor might yell at her ghoul for being too loud even though



she didn't say a word, while another might sew his ghoul's lips shut so he never gets the chance to talk.

Many masters, especially those of a young age who have not had time to deal with the reality of Malkav's curse, put their misguided faith in science. Unfortunately, despite significant advances in the field of psychiatry over the past century, there is no medicine or therapy that can help a vampire, ghoul, or revenant cursed with the Blood. Malkavian domitors, despite their intentions to find help, do have a tendency to behave erratically, and their treatment of ghouls is often exacerbated as a result.

Malkavian *antitribu* domitors are more demanding and less forgiving than others among their Clan, and they are not beneath abusing their ghouls. Though they select candidates that seem practical, such as nurses, assistants, bodyguards, and secretaries, their servants suffer greatly for their domitors expect a miracle they cannot perform. Some Malkavian *antitribu* domitors may punish their ghouls by beating or killing them in a rage, while others might even go so far as to damn them with the Embrace, to lock them in a state of eternal suffering.

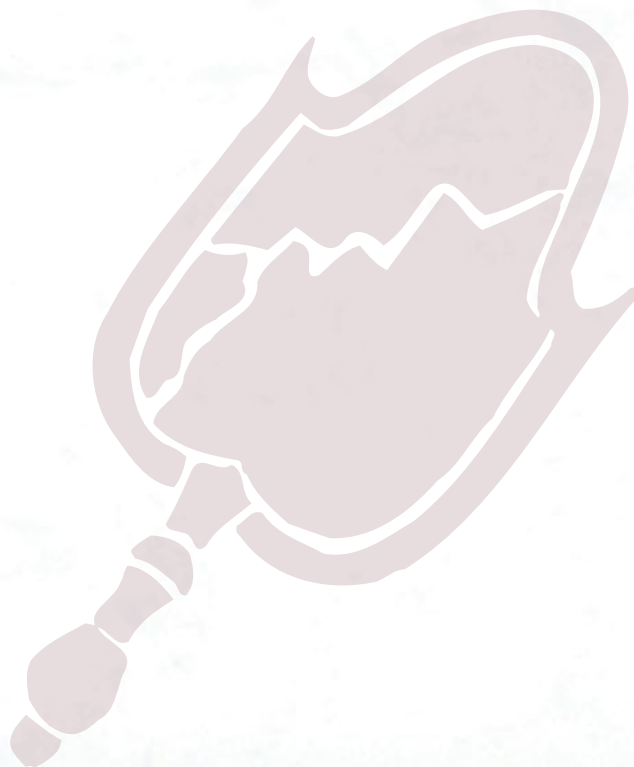
**Appearance:** The appearance of a Malkavian ghoul depends largely on the nature of their service. Some

ghouls are ripped from their mortal life, and are never given the opportunity to change their clothes again even after they get dirty. Others are encouraged to move into their domitors' havens, and bring practical, functional outfits. Over time, however, Malkavian ghouls tend to care less about their looks, and more about their fragile mental state.

**Character Creation:** Malkavian ghouls are generally selected from care-giving occupations or environments that the domitor has easy access to, such as hospital workers, asylum patients, doctors, psychiatrists, psychics, and spiritualists. Mental Attributes, Skills, and Talents are highly prized, as is their ability to be resilient or survive trauma.

**Weakness:** All Malkavian ghouls acquire either the Nightmares or Phobia Flaw found on pp. 485-486 of V20. The player chooses whichever Flaw most fits their character's background. Eventually, should a Malkavian ghoul survive for at least a year, their Flaw changes into an incurable Derangement.

**Quote:** "I cannot sleep. I cannot eat. I feel nothing but fear."



# Nosferatu

The Nosferatu Clan tends to choose their ghouls from the lonely, alienated, and forgotten members of society. Usually, Nosferatu ghouls are either people that would not be missed if they suddenly disappeared, or mortals who make their home in the lowest rungs of society. In general, the Clan's curse dissuades the Nosferatu Clan from gathering pawns in high-ranking or visible positions, as their ghouls make people uncomfortable around them. Instead, the Nosferatu Clan prefers to control those who keep the city functioning, support the movers and shakers, and move unseen.

Nosferatu domitors are careful to select candidates that might be overlooked by other Clans. A Nosferatu might stalk the city's subway system under the cover of Obfuscate, following late-night commuters, listening to their conversations as he tries to identify potential targets. Another vampire might wander the city streets at night, scouring alleyways for thieves and vagrants. Once a candidate is chosen, most Nosferatu domitors take some time to explain the terms of their relationship. While they are not usually straightforward, the Nosferatu tend to appeal to the candidate's feelings, and will talk about how they take care of their own, and even mention the word "family". Others may use Obfuscate to hide their deformed appearances and the truth of their nature as they impart their vitae.

In addition to being chosen for their ability to access specific sources of information, some Nosferatu ghouls are selected for their ability to move about during the day, such as janitors, delivery drivers, and maintenance workers. Not only can they walk above ground and act on behalf of their domitors, Nosferatu ghouls can help conduct the Clan's affairs by interacting with other ghouls and mortals. One key task that these ghouls perform for their masters, outside of acting as their

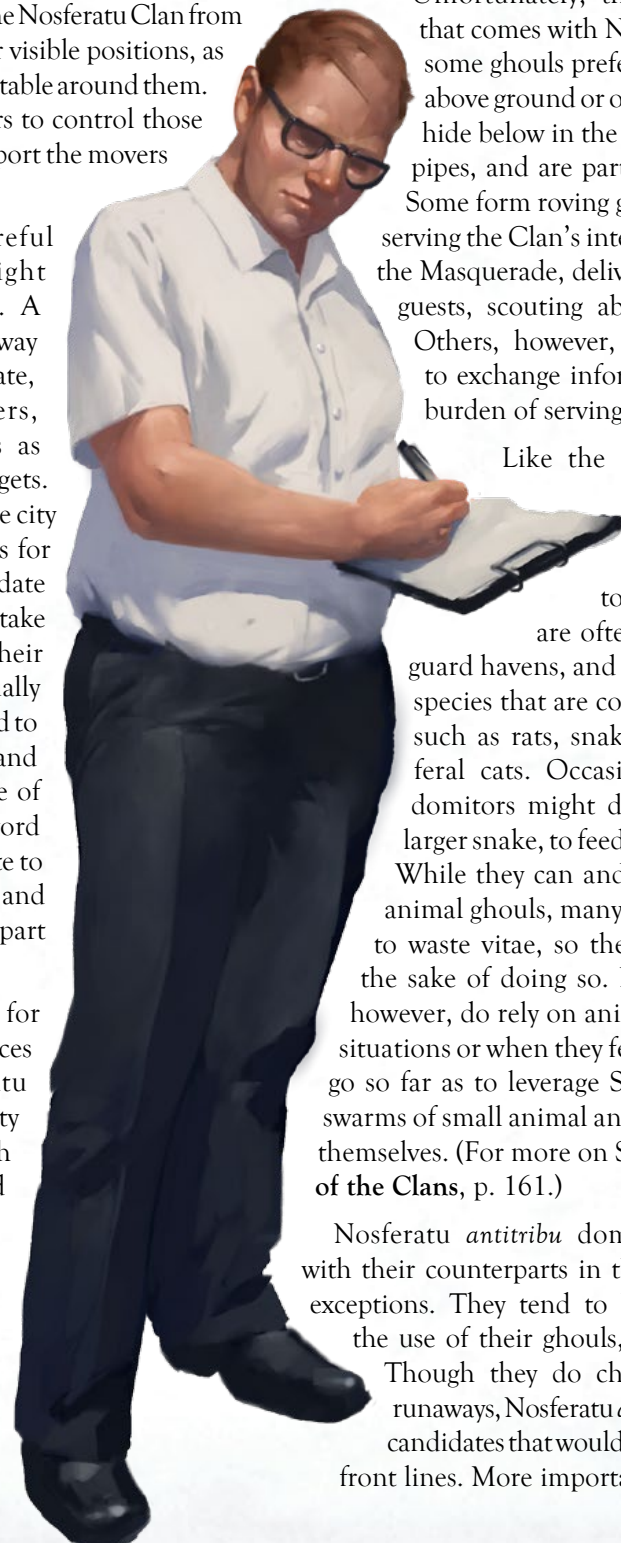


eyes and ears, is to draw victims toward them. Criminals, thieves, and gangs might kidnap or lure innocents into dark alleyways, while sanitation or construction works might rig traps.

Unfortunately, the affliction of ugliness that comes with Nosferatu vitae means that some ghouls prefer to spend a limited time above ground or out in public. These ghouls hide below in the sewers, cluster near drain pipes, and are part of the city's underbelly. Some form roving gangs who are tasked with serving the Clan's interests, such as cleaning up the Masquerade, delivering messages, escorting guests, scouting abandoned buildings, etc. Others, however, stray into the darkness to exchange information and to share the burden of serving their domitors.

Like the Gangrel, the Nosferatu Clan also shares the gift of Animalism, and they put this Discipline to good use. Animal ghouls are often used below ground to guard havens, and the Clan tends to rely on species that are commonly found in sewers such as rats, snakes, bats, stray dogs, and feral cats. Occasionally, some Nosferatu domitors might displace an alligator or a larger snake, to feed into local urban legends. While they can and do maintain individual animal ghouls, many domitors are careful not to waste vitae, so they don't create them for the sake of doing so. Most Nosferatu masters, however, do rely on animal ghouls in emergency situations or when they feel threatened. They even go so far as to leverage Spawning Pools to create swarms of small animal and insect ghouls to defend themselves. (For more on Spawning Pools, see **Lore of the Clans**, p. 161.)

Nosferatu *antitribu* domitors share similarities with their counterparts in the Camarilla, with a few exceptions. They tend to be more aggressive with the use of their ghouls, and less discriminatory. Though they do choose loners, thugs, and runaways, Nosferatu *antitribu* kidnap and snatch candidates that would make good soldiers on the front lines. More importantly, however, is the fact



that they don't waste time trying to convince candidates to come along with them. When a Nosferatu *antitribu* wants a ghoul, she finds a way to turn that candidate to her side.

Despite their appearance, Nosferatu ghouls are a crucial part of the Clan. Often overlooked, their domitors are not examined too closely with respect to their treatment. While they are not abused or mistreated, they are looked down upon by other Clans and their ghouls, a feeling their domitors know all too well.

**Appearance:** Nosferatu ghouls who operate above ground favor nondescript clothing that allows them to blend into a crowd. The last thing they want to do is stand out, either on the street or in an office, and they take great pains not to. Most Nosferatu ghouls maintain good hygiene, despite the effects of the Clan's curse on them, as they also wish to avoid repelling people.

**Character Creation:** Recruited for the ability to procure information, Nosferatu ghouls are expected to infiltrate every corner of society. As such, sanitation

workers, janitors, criminals, hackers, city employees, journalists, transients, and drug addicts are prime choices to be exploited and controlled. Thus, Social Attributes and Talents are favorable, and Allies and Contacts are preferred Backgrounds. However, like most ghouls, if they are deemed useful to a domitor, then their masters are less picky about their specific traits.

**Weakness:** Nosferatu ghouls are often shocked to discover their appearance degrades over time, much like their domitors. This can manifest in numerous ways: severe acne, greasy hair, weight problems, body odor, etc. Once it occurs, the transformation is initially noticed more by animals (dogs bark, cats hiss, and so on) at first, while mortals only notice when their deformities become more pronounced. Mechanically, the ghoul loses one to two points of Appearance over time, although their total Appearance may not drop below 1.

**Quote:** "I may be beneath your notice, but I have eyes that see more than you."



# Ravnos

The tales of how and why the Ravnos Clan creates ghouls are full of half-truths, deception, and misdirection. Other vampires have little information to go on, other than rumors and barely-remembered encounters with them. Of course, that may be the point of any interaction with those who serve the Ravnos.

The Ravnos Clan has been using and relying on ghouls for centuries, and their reasons for doing so have changed along with the slow decline of the old ways. The Ravnos from India, for example, may have once referred to all ghouls as *sudra*, but as the caste system continues to deteriorate, it isn't always clear to younger Ravnos how and if they *are* *sudra*, or if they should all be treated the same. In the West, however, where the Ravnos see how quickly cities and technologies change, they subconsciously realize how much they need their ghouls and, at the same time, despise them for it. Thus, each individual Ravnos has conflicting thoughts on how much the Clan should rely on mortal servants. Often, this changes from group to group, settlement to settlement, town to town.

At the heart of the Clan, however, are questions related to the Paths each master follows. Ravnos domitors who maintain their humanity tend to use ghouls for short periods of time. They direct their ghouls to fulfill specific tasks such as guarding their havens or leading victims back to them. Those Ravnos who follow one of the Paths of Paradox, on the other hand, are more discriminatory, and argue whether or not the creation of a ghoul violates their beliefs. Some feel that feeding *vitae* to a mortal halts the process of aging and freezes their bodies

at a fixed moment in time, which removes them from the cycle of life. Thus, orthodox Ravnos masters see the creation of a ghoul as a direct violation of their edicts, and prefer to hire revenants such as the *Marijava* because they present less of a moral dilemma. Even those Ravnos who don't strictly follow one of the Paths, or who may interpret them differently, question whether or not ghouls even have a *svadharma*, and wonder if the Clan's curse prevents them from fulfilling it.

Despite their misgivings, the Clan has a utilitarian use for ghouls. In order to continue moving and wandering from city to city, Ravnos domitors need drivers, bodyguards, and scouts. Often, Ravnos masters need ghouls who can blend in, and they often pick candidates who are pious or innocent knowing that eventually the Clan's curse. Though there's no guarantee a candidate will perform well, ghouls can be a source of stability for the Ravnos, and defeat many of the Clan's stereotypes as unstable vagrants and loners, thieves and con artists. However, some Ravnos masters, like other Clans, use this to their advantage by choosing candidates that do fit the stereotypical Ravnos, and let others discover them to intentionally throw their enemies off their scent.

Most Ravnos ghouls are not chosen for their physical appearance, nor are they screened heavily ahead of time. In many cases, Ravnos domitors cannot afford to be choosy, for their needs can be immediate. Defense during the daylight hours is a major part of the typical Ravnos ghoul's job, and they do so any way they



can. Thus, many Ravnos ghouls aren't necessary tough or imposing. Rather, they often use tricks or cunning to dissuading nosy mortals into opening the door to an illegally parked van or visiting a campsite. A ghouls who can fight well and fool passersby is doubly useful, but many masters find this out after they are Bound.

In addition to making connections with criminal elements of a city and protecting their havens, Ravnos ghouls frequently procure blood for their master as well. While some Ravnos have the luxury of traveling with a herd, their nomadic lifestyle often makes maintaining it difficult. Ghouls help ensure that their domitors stay fed, and will kidnap, seduce, and bribe victims back to their encampments. Typically, Ravnos ghouls tend to be more self-sufficient, as they are highly adaptable and skilled manipulators. Needing to move, protect, and feed their masters as they travel, Ravnos ghouls also develop a wide variety of skills to call upon that ranges from fixing vehicles to conning police officers. Those who survive are often as worthy of the term Deceivers as their masters, and may be considered for the Embrace.

The worst problem Ravnos ghouls have is that the Beasts of Deceivers drive them toward their vices. Sometimes, those sins can affect their ghouls, too. Some Ravnos will not rob or assault their ghouls; others may do so, willingly or not. Often, it depends on the ghouls's vice and the domitor's Nature. Regardless, many Ravnos domitors find it difficult to maintain multiple ghouls at once, as it becomes harder to unravel the lies they both tell.

Lastly, there is another type of ghouls that the Ravnos create: animals. They tend to be more common among

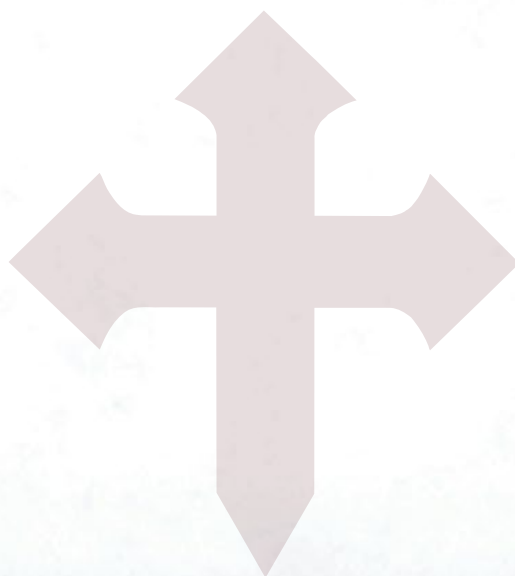
Ravnos *antitribu* than the rest of the Clan, but animal ghouls have many uses. Often, the Deceivers will find stray dogs, feral cats, ravens, and birds of prey to add a little extra security and peace of mind.

**Appearance:** It can be difficult to identify a Ravnos ghouls based on looks alone, as they are often chosen to help their masters blend into the local scene. Some Ravnos ghouls, however, might bear the physical signs of their vice. For example, a Ravnos ghouls who cannot resist shoplifting might wear an oversized jacket. In general, however, Ravnos ghouls tend to dress for comfort and function as opposed to fashion.

**Character Creation:** The Deceivers value ghouls for their mortality, and often keep their vampiric natures hidden from them as much as possible. Thus, most Ravnos ghouls do not follow a Path at first, as they are often prized for their ability to make fast friends and charm the cold-hearted. Characters with Resources, Retainers, and Contacts make good choices, as these increase the ghouls's worth to their domitors.

**Weakness:** Ravnos ghouls suffer from a lesser form of the Clan weakness. The Blood ignites a ghouls's inclination to indulge in their natural vice such as avarice, hedonism, etc. After a year of subsequent feedings, the Ravnos ghouls will feel compelled to indulge in that vice whenever the opportunity presents itself. To resist, the ghouls must make a Self-Control or Instinct roll (difficulty 5). The difficulty for this roll may increase or decrease depending upon the circumstances, at the Storyteller's discretion.

**Quote:** "Of course I'm telling you the truth, sweetie. I got no reason to lie."





# Toreador

Of all the Clans, Toreador vampires maintain the closest relationship with their ghouls, with a rare few even going as far as to marry them under false pretenses. While some Toreador ghouls suspect that their masters are inhuman, they often fall prey to the elaborate and inventive lies their domitors tell, and buy into the illusion that they are loved by a real person.

The Toreador Clan surrounds themselves with mortals, and blends in by designing families that either remind themselves of the one they had prior to their Embrace, or fit a romantic ideal. They tend to create ghouls then stop feeding them, knowing that they'll age but still be Bound to their domitor. Some younger Toreador go to great lengths to maintain an illusion of normalcy by creating false identities for themselves and their family members, and occasionally abduct children to solidify their deception. As the years pass, however, there are only so many people domitors can lie to, so many mortals that are impressed with their plastic surgery and cold beauty. Sooner or later, the dream begins to fall apart, as the master finds she cannot control every word, every movement, every decision of those around her.

While every web of lies ends in tragedy, these obsessive Toreador domitors take a different, more brutal approach to the concept of family. Instead of attempting to blend in, they isolate themselves and draw victims to their side from the shadows, slowly feeding and luring them back to a place of their choosing. The domitor visits his "family" from time to time, acting the part of a beloved parent who is keeping an eye on his children. When he grows tired or angry with them, he disposes of them and starts over again.

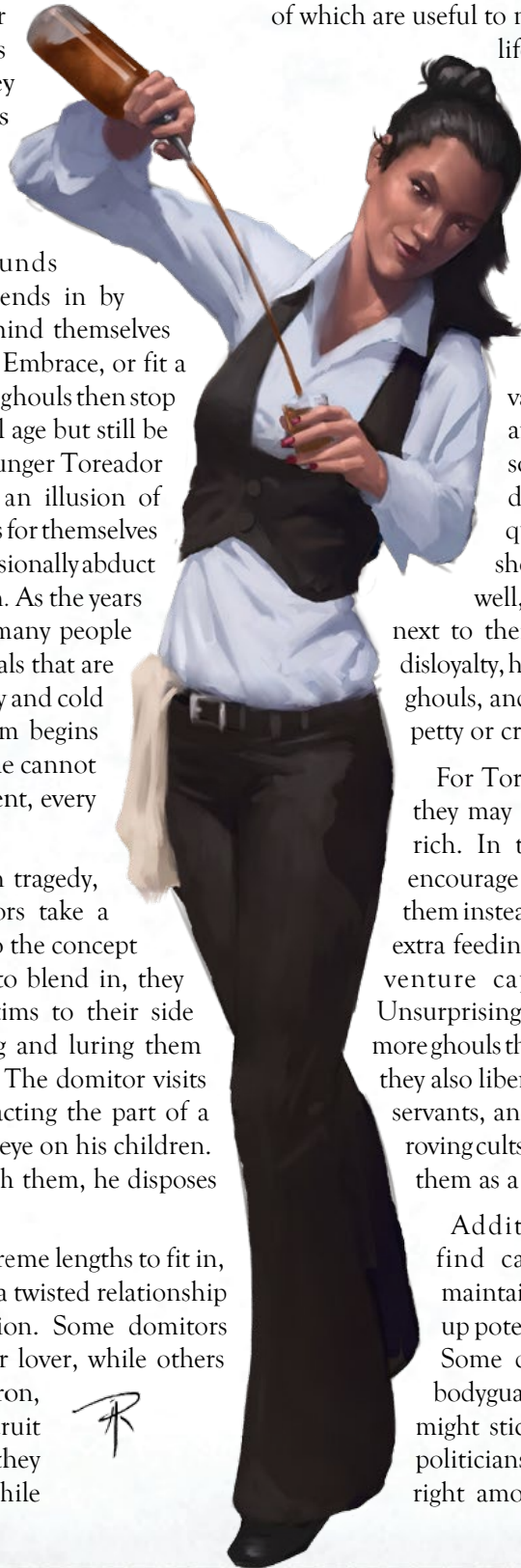
Even if they don't go to such extreme lengths to fit in, most Toreador domitors carry on a twisted relationship with their ghouls in some fashion. Some domitors pretend to be their best friend or lover, while others take on the role of a mentor, patron, or doting aunt. Thus, when they recruit candidates, they seek mortals they admire for some tangible reason. While

beauty is a factor, Toreador domitors are not hedonists who only care about physical appearances. Many of their ghouls have unique attributes, talents, or resources, some of which are useful to maintain appearances and certain lifestyles. Examples of candidates include dancers, artisans, museum curators, socialites, nouveau riche, musicians, and trust fund babies.

Since the Toreador are more than likely to reward their ghouls with dazzling gifts, their servants mistakenly believe these trappings are a sign of their affection. The vast majority of Toreador ghouls are created to serve their masters in some fashion, and are expected to do so without complaint, without question. Provided they not only show their devotion but also perform well, Toreador ghouls live side-by-side next to their domitors. At the first sign of disloyalty, however, the Toreador turn on their ghouls, and their displeasure could result in petty or cruel punishments.

For Toreador domitors that lack wealth, they may seek ghouls who are disgustingly rich. In these relationships, the masters encourage their ghouls to spend money on them instead, and return their affections with extra feedings. Candidates include investors, venture capitalists, and entrepreneurs. Unsurprisingly, these Toreador seem to employ more ghouls than the rest of their Clan. However, they also liberally use Presence to impress their servants, and some even go so far as to form roving cults of devoted followers, who worship them as a god and pay tribute.

Additionally, the Toreador also find candidates to help them with maintaining their security and covering up potential breaches of the Masquerade. Some domitors might select reporters, bodyguards, or investigators, while others might stick to high profile bloggers, local politicians, or minor celebrities. With the right amount of pressure, loyal Toreador



A small, stylized signature or mark, possibly the initials 'JR', located near the bottom of the illustration.

ghouls can do considerable damage to the Clan's enemies by swaying public opinion against them.

Among the Toreador *antitribu*, their selection and use of ghouls mirrors their darker, artistic pursuits. Wealth matters to them, but not as much as the rest of the Clan. Instead of painters and sculptors, they might choose serial killers or dominatrixes. In place of performers, they commonly select drug lords or gang members instead. Since many of the Toreador *antitribu*'s ghouls hail from a criminal background, they also act as enforcers who defend their domitors day and night.

**Appearance:** Whether they have been recruited for their good looks or not, Toreador ghouls are expected to maintain their "look" in any way they can. Since many Toreador ghouls cannot afford an extravagant lifestyle, their domitors often gift them with cutting-edge fashions and jewelry. Most, if not all, Toreador ghouls do stand out in some way, as the Clan prides themselves on associating with the unique.

**Character Creation:** Many Toreador ghouls manage their domitors' affairs, but are also selected because their domitors connect with them in some way, either through an appreciation for art or a unique experience. Thus, candidates are recruited from art gallery managers, night club owners, models, singers, dancers, and personal assistants. Social Attributes, such as Appearance, as well as socially-based Skills or Talents are preferred provided these traits complement the ghoul's personality.

**Weakness:** Toreador ghouls suffer from a tendency to overprotect their masters. Often, Toreador ghouls might perceive a threat where there is none, and lash out believing that the safety of their domitors is at risk. At the Storyteller's discretion, when a Toreador ghoul leaps to the conclusion that her domitor may be harmed, she must make a Self-Control or Instinct roll. The difficulty is 6.

**Quote:** "This piece here? I painted that for my patron. It's not for sale."



# Tremere

The Tremere, more so than any other Clan, often employs strict guidelines regarding the creation and maintenance of ghouls, whether that ghoul is being groomed for the Embrace or not. Secretive and paranoid to a fault, some Tremere domitors spend months investigating potential candidates, writing and storing dossiers filled with volumes of background information. Other Tremere domitors are presented with candidates and commanded by their elders to choose one. Regardless, all Tremere ghouls are tracked in some fashion, both before and after they are given their first taste of vitae, and may even be monitored by more than one Warlock. In many ways, the Tremere's policies are designed to protect their knowledge and prevent run-ins with mortal mystics. While some vampires believe the Tremere want to find occult adepts, the opposite often holds true. For any potential ghoul to be considered, he needs to have a curious and open mind as opposed to being skeptical or claim to have definitive knowledge of the supernatural.

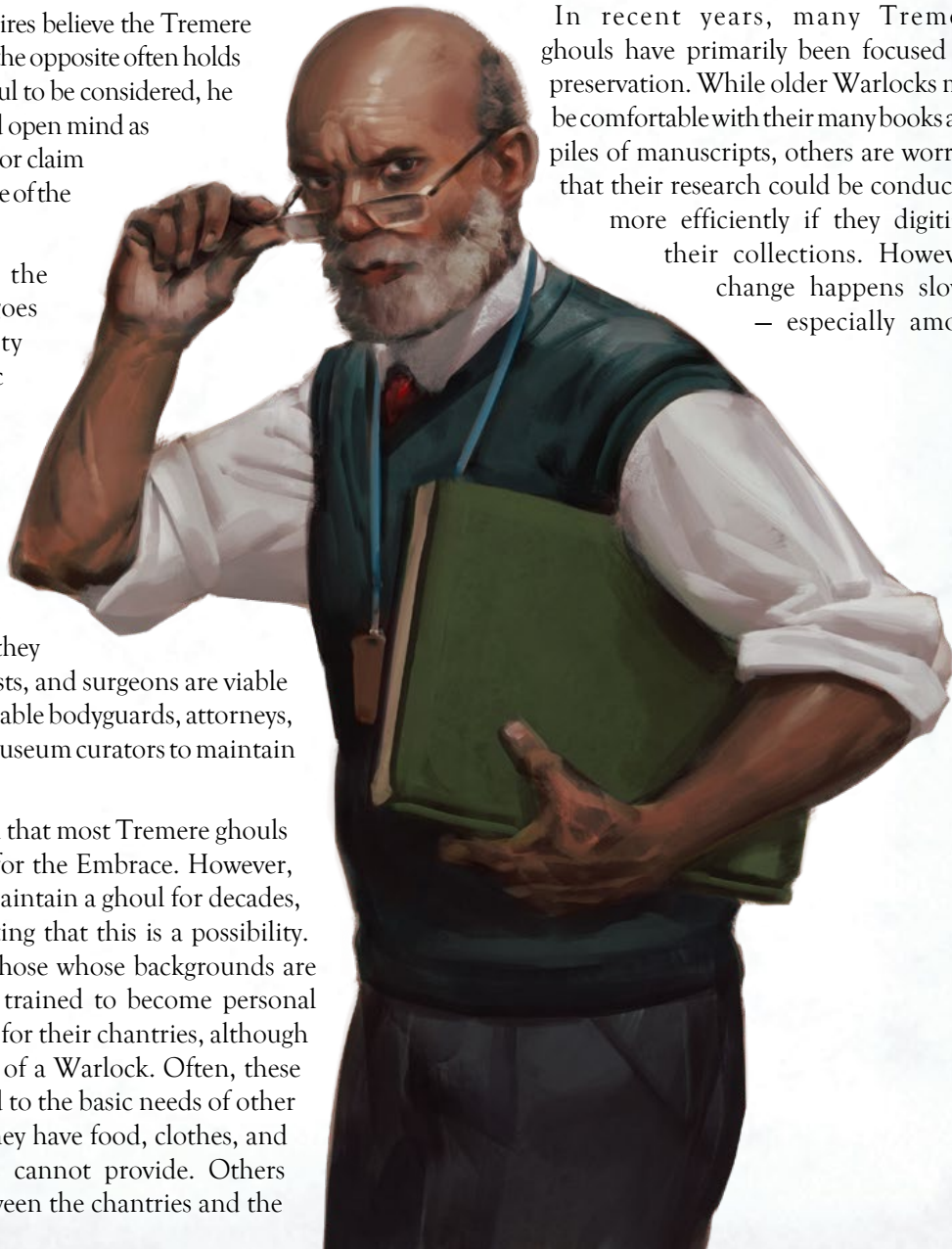
For many Warlocks, the value of their ghouls goes beyond the opportunity to train them in esoteric arts. Tremere domitors tend to seek clinically-minded candidates who work in hospitals, blood banks, and clinics, or those who have easy access to victims or stores of blood. Thus, they find that doctors, specialists, and surgeons are viable choices, but also select capable bodyguards, attorneys, financiers, brokers, and museum curators to maintain their influence.

It is commonly believed that most Tremere ghouls are potential candidates for the Embrace. However, Tremere masters might maintain a ghoul for decades, if not longer, before hinting that this is a possibility. Some ghouls, especially those whose backgrounds are a little questionable, are trained to become personal attendants and guardians for their chantries, although still under the command of a Warlock. Often, these ghouls are asked to attend to the basic needs of other ghouls, by making sure they have food, clothes, and medicine their domitors cannot provide. Others act as intermediaries between the chantries and the

Tremere's revenant family, the Ducheski, as well as the Clan's other allies.

Fortunately, most Tremere ghouls are not required to carry out mundane tasks, as those are typically reserved for homunculi. Still, young ghouls might feel trapped or frustrated for the first couple of months. As time passes, however, Tremere ghouls are slowly given more responsibilities, such as memorizing basic occult concepts or alphabetizing a particular section of their libraries. Once a ghoul is deemed competent, her domitor will continue her training by asking for her assistance in a thaumaturgical ritual.

In recent years, many Tremere ghouls have primarily been focused on preservation. While older Warlocks may be comfortable with their many books and piles of manuscripts, others are worried that their research could be conducted more efficiently if they digitized their collections. However, change happens slowly — especially among



the Tremere – and this effort could take years before the Warlocks are comfortable storing and using their new archives. Consequently, some ghouls are employed as research assistants, and are recruited from analytical and academic professions such as librarians, history or literature professors, software analysts, and computer engineers.

Though life as a Tremere ghoul may seem ideal, they operate under a heavy set of restrictions. First, Tremere ghouls are not given permission to increase their use of Disciplines without the guidance of their domitor, nor are they allowed to study Thaumaturgy. Second, they are not allowed to move or travel freely, and are required to check in more frequently than other ghouls. And lastly, Tremere ghouls are subjected to varying uses of Dominate and thaumaturgical rituals to ensure they remain loyal and truthful to their masters. Thus, most Tremere ghouls never have the opportunity to disappoint their masters, and those who don't are either sent to live with the Ducheski, or allowed to age naturally before their release.

These rules are a precaution to avoid other Clans from stealing their secrets, and are often exploited to intentionally seed misinformation to their enemies. A Tremere domitor might send her ghoul into contested territory with a healthy supply of magically-sealed vials of vitae to meet with an independent ghoul, except the vials are filled with human blood, a ruse designed to draw enemies out into the open. Other Tremere domitors know that their ghouls are at risk of being compromised by the Sabbat, infernalists, or the

Anathema, and anticipate their capture by preventing them from learning too much.

Tremere among the Anarchs tend to rely less on ghouls and more on their Allies and Disciplines. However, despite their low numbers, most rogue Tremere who do maintain ghouls tend to favor minions who excel at a particular task such as hacking, or those who have useful connections.

**Appearance:** Like their domitors, there is a distinct difference between the way Tremere ghouls present themselves in public and in the privacy of the chantry. While in public, they tend to dress smartly and conservatively. Among the Warlocks, however, Tremere ghouls wear adorned robes that are embroidered with symbols that denote their age, domitor, and field of study.

**Character Creation:** Tremere ghouls are often selected for their keen minds and curious natures. Candidates are recruited heavily from medical, academic, and technology professions, but also might be pulled from financial, spiritual, or food services. Thus, Mental Attributes and Knowledges tend to be favored over more physical or social traits. The Mentor Background is often selected to represent the relationship between the ghoul and their domitor or, in some cases, future sire.

**Weakness:** Tremere ghouls are extremely susceptible to the blood bond. Their difficulty to break the blood bond is twice that of other ghouls (twice as many months or twice as many successes, for example), as detailed on page 37 of V20.

**Quote:** “I know less than you think, but more than you'd believe.”



# Tzimisce

In ages past, at the height of the Clan's power, the Tzimisce heavily relied on ghouls for a variety of purposes. When other Clans think of Tzimisce ghouls, they remember tales about the terrifying szlachta and the vozhd, war ghouls that have not been seen by outsiders in centuries. The Clan is also attributed with the creation of a new type of ghoul: revenants. Bred for centuries, revenants naturally produce vitae, have limited use of Disciplines, and do not require regular feedings, so they tend to develop autonomy and agendas of their own. While the Clan has not created every revenant family, they have founded many of them, and only a handful have survived into the modern nights. Some of these families, like the Bratovich, have knowledge of Vicissitude and use it to modify hounds they use to guard their estates.

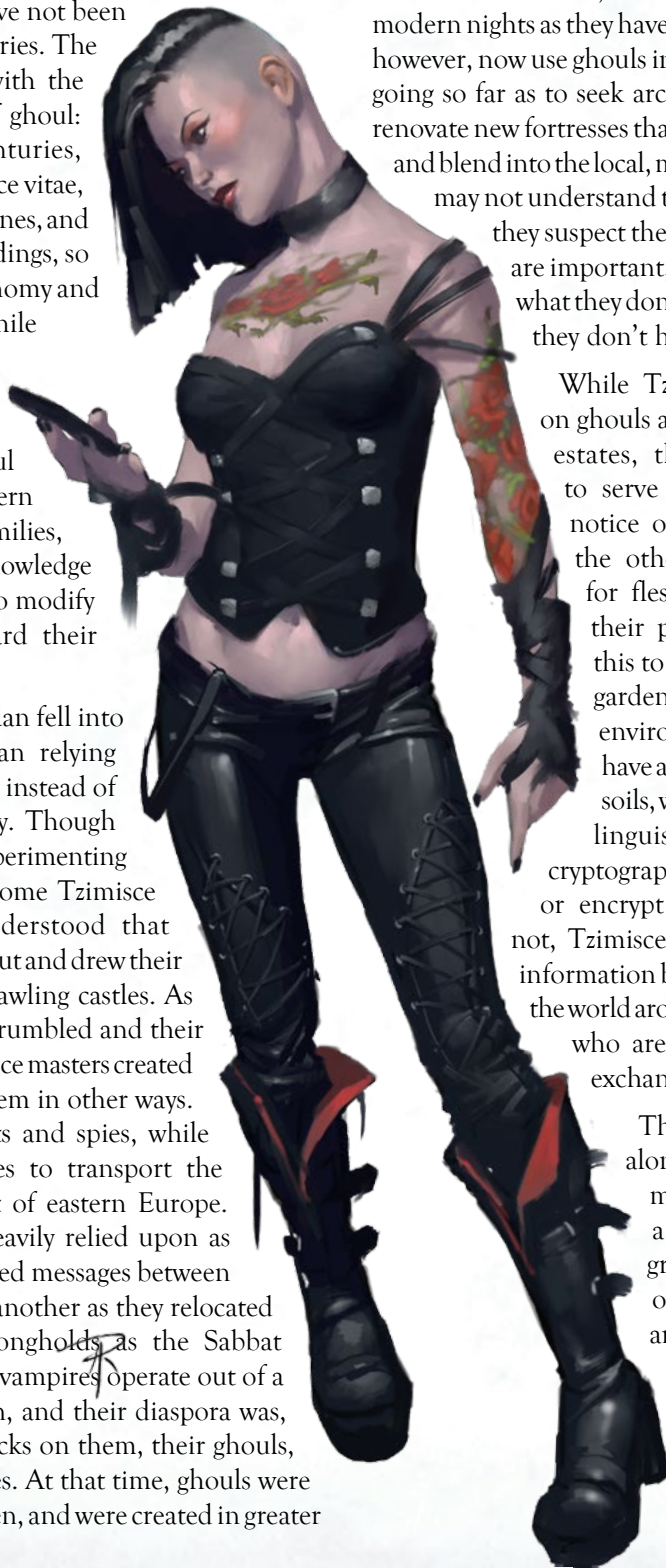
Over the years, as the Clan fell into disarray, the Fiends began relying more and more on ghouls instead of revenants out of necessity. Though they have never stopped experimenting on ghouls and animals, some Tzimisce domitors eventually understood that fleshcrafted ghouls stood out and drew their enemies back to their sprawling castles. As their once-proud estates crumbled and their resources dwindled, Tzimisce masters created ghouls who could help them in other ways. Some were used as scouts and spies, while others cleared safe routes to transport the Fiends and their soil out of eastern Europe. Others, however, were heavily relied upon as couriers, transporting coded messages between one Tzimisce domitor to another as they relocated to safer havens and strongholds as the Sabbat expanded. Most Tzimisce vampires operate out of a desire for self-preservation, and their diaspora was, in part, fueled by the attacks on them, their ghouls, and their revenant families. At that time, ghouls were used as they always had been, and were created in greater

numbers to move their native soil across the Atlantic to the Americas.

Of course, many elder Tzimisce remained behind in their traditional domains, and continue to employ ghouls in modern nights as they have in the past. Younger Tzimisce, however, now use ghouls indiscriminately. Some are even going so far as to seek architects who can help build or renovate new fortresses that will withstand a direct assault and blend into the local, modern skyline. Other domitors may not understand technology or social mores, but they suspect there are certain conventions that are important, and use ghouls to supplement what they don't know or, in many cases, what they don't have.

While Tzimisce domitors experiment on ghouls and revenants in their fortified estates, they also choose candidates to serve them who fall beneath the notice of their rivals. In many ways, the other Clans suspect and watch for fleshcrafted ghouls as a sign of their presence, and the Fiends use this to their advantage. Some choose gardeners, botanists, geologists, and environmental engineers who would have a natural reason for transporting soils, while others find archaeologists, linguistics experts, occultists, and cryptographers to research ancient sites or encrypt messages. More often than not, Tzimisce domitors make good use of information brokers who can keep an eye on the world around them, as well as negotiators who are able to sell their services in exchange for much-needed resources.

Though these ghouls are left alone long enough to fulfill their masters' commands, working for a Fiend does not come without great cost. Tzimisce ghouls that operate semi-independently are never truly alone, as their domitors encourage them to travel together, to keep an eye on one another, and to report if anything is amiss. Tzimisce domitors make



it a point to show their ghouls the true brunt of their powers, and punish transgressors by turning them into horrific mockeries of their former selves. Altered beyond recognition, they are turned into living coat racks, chairs, and lampshades to warn other ghouls what happens if they dare to cross their masters.

In addition to their use of *Vicissitude*, the Tzimisce also have a reputation regarding how they treat their invited guests. The Clan's hospitality is well-known, and the Fiends go to great lengths to ensure their visitors are treated with the utmost respect. To fulfill the requirements of their visitors, no matter how mundane or bizarre their tastes might be, Tzimisce masters allocate ghouls for this task: butlers, housekeepers, majordomos, and other servants devoted to maintaining the splendor of the Tzimisce *manse*.

Lastly, there are some ghouls selected for their skills as occultists and scholars. Among the members of the Old Clan Tzimisce, they remain quiet and studious, attempting to unravel the secrets of Koldunic Sorcery. While some ghouls are employed as bodyguards, these servants are modified through the use of *Vicissitude* to gain advantages in combat. Mostly, however, the Dracul are concerned with unlocking long-forgotten mysteries, and recruit candidates to help them decipher old texts and track down rare ingredients.

**Appearance:** It is difficult to spot a Tzimisce ghoul, for they are more common than most Clans suspect. They have a tendency, however, to seem less than human. They stick to the shadows, have greasy hair, or wear too much makeup to hide their bruises. Though they don't intentionally ignore their upkeep, Tzimisce ghouls are creepy, even if their domitors have not modified their flesh. Those ghouls who have been modified are unique; some might have a third eye on their forehead, while others have an extra limb or bony armor.

**Character Creation:** Tzimisce ghouls who wish to survive long-term should specialize in a useful service or trade their domitors need. The Fiends don't understand the nuances of positions within a certain field, like computer science, so it's often up to ghouls to ferret out the specifics. Generally speaking, the Tzimisce Clan prize intellectual or physical traits over social.

**Weakness:** While Tzimisce ghouls are not undead, the vitae that flows through their veins causes mortals to be wary and uneasy around them. Because of this, difficulties of all rolls related to social interaction with mortals untainted by vitae are increased by two.

**Quote:** "I am more than my flesh, and I will prove it to you."



# Ventrue

Maintaining the Masquerade is often a priority for the Ventrue. Thus, instead of creating a ghoul, it is commonly believed that Ventrue rely on their gifts of Presence and Dominate. This, however, is a half-truth. The Ventrue do use Disciplines to test candidates for extended periods of time, but they do so primarily because they want to ensure their ghouls can sufficiently perform before they feed them. In this way, the Ventrue keeps from murdering ineffective ghouls once they have outlived their purpose, and their use of Disciplines grants the Clan the opportunity to maintain less ghouls than other Clans.

In general, Ventrue ghouls may be found in prominent businesses and government offices that form the backbone of local municipalities. For those vampires who wish to develop a more visceral means of control over a city, pawns may also be installed in various criminal circles. Ventrue ghouls also tend to be selected from the Clan's unwitting pawns who have proven themselves in some capacity. Many of these candidates are seasoned politicians, socialites, entrepreneurs, and dignitaries.

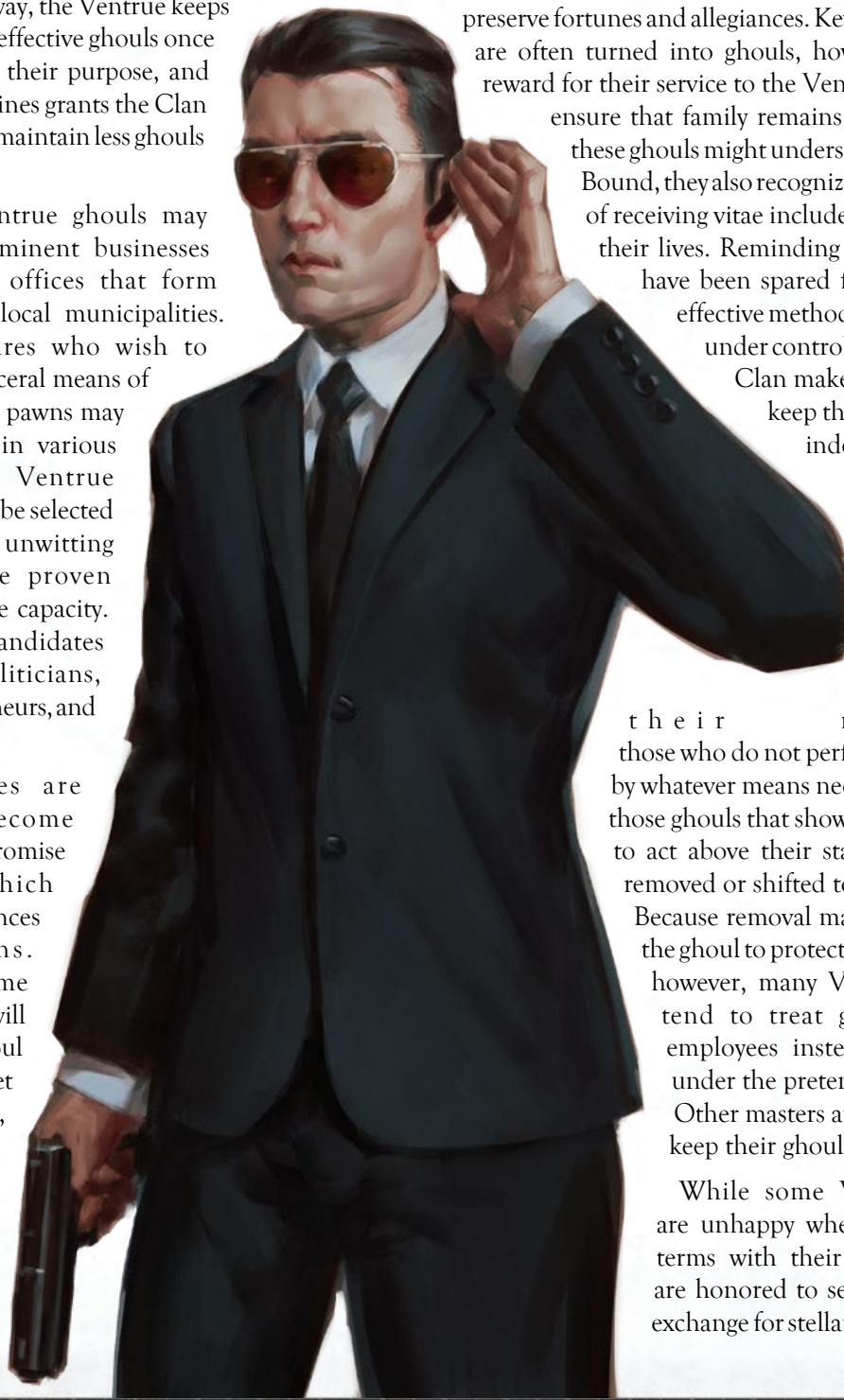
All candidates are recruited to become ghouls with the promise of a reward which may include finances or connections. Occasionally, some Ventrue domitors will only create a ghoul under a specific set of circumstances, one that allows their candidates to choose someone to inherit their legacies. It is rare that such ghouls

would do so willingly without good reason, but when they do, they fall back to the shadows and manipulate their successors from behind the scenes for the benefit of their domitors.

The Ventrue also recruits their ghouls from renowned and well-established families. Many Ventrue ghouls are hand-picked and promised an eventual Embrace to preserve fortunes and allegiances. Key family members are often turned into ghouls, however, both as a reward for their service to the Ventrue Clan and to ensure that family remains an ally. Though these ghouls might understand that they are Bound, they also recognize that the benefits of receiving vitae include the extension of their lives. Reminding ghouls that they have been spared from death is an effective method of keeping them under control, but the Ventrue Clan makes no promises to keep them from this fate indefinitely.

Regardless of their status among mortals, all Ventrue ghouls are servants to their masters, and those who do not perform are replaced by whatever means necessary. Likewise, those ghouls that show signs of wanting to act above their station tend to be removed or shifted to a new position. Because removal may include killing the ghoul to protect the Masquerade, however, many Ventrue domitors tend to treat ghouls as their employees instead of operating under the pretense of friendship. Other masters are far stricter and keep their ghouls at arm's length.

While some Ventrue ghouls are unhappy when they come to terms with their new life, many are honored to serve the Clan. In exchange for stellar service, Ventrue



ghouls might be granted the ability to check in on their mortal families. In general, however, the keys to a Ventrue ghoul's longevity largely depends upon the domitor. Despite their pretenses, the Ventrue believe in a more traditional or archaic class structure, and many of these ideas are reflected in the way they treat their ghouls.

In ages past, the ghouls in a Ventrue manor were sorted according to a traditional hierarchy befitting a noble or a magnate. Over time, however, as the lifestyles of the upper class changed, Ventrue domitors saw the importance of modernization and adapted. In modern nights, servants are still hired as they had been in the past, but now they file paperwork and work for a busy executive instead of the lord or lady of a manor. A corporate structure allows for a competitive atmosphere, as Ventrue ghouls fight to rise further up the ladder of power – even though they will never be allowed to climb fully. In their efforts to perfectly balance their performance, Ventrue ghouls compete to earn the favor of their masters hoping they'll be promoted above their peers.

The more military-minded Ventrue *antitribu*, however, tend to select ghouls based on their skills and potential use in combat. While they do treat their ghouls better than other Cainites, Ventrue *antitribu* domitors often position ghouls in battle, because they think of them as strategic assets more so than servants. Thus, their candidates are chosen from police, military, and organized crime

backgrounds, and are ordered to serve as scouts, fighters, spies, and living weapons.

**Appearance:** Power and authority tend to characterize the way a Ventrue ghoul dresses. Immaculately groomed, Ventrue ghouls often wear well-tailored, timeless clothes that may be accentuated by finer, expensive details. Some Ventrue domitors take a special interest in the appearance of their ghouls, and occasionally dictate how their servants should be dressed. It is a rare Ventrue ghoul, however, that would ever be allowed to outshine her domitor.

**Character Creation:** Ventrue ghouls are often drawn from the ranks of entrepreneurs, investors, financiers, traders and, in rare cases, celebrities, politicians, and socialites. Other ghouls tend to be more functional, fulfilling the roles of guards, drivers, historians, and highly-skilled assassins. Mental and Social Attributes are prized almost equally, and relevant Talents and Knowledges are also a must. Resources at a high level is a common Background, as is Influence at a similar level.

**Weakness:** Ventrue ghouls are more susceptible to the commands of their masters. As such, when attempting to resist an order from any vampire, their difficulty to resist the use of the Dominate Discipline is increased by two.

**Quote:** "I stand above the rest, for I have been chosen by royalty."





# Ghoul Organizations

In modern nights, most vampires either don't know that ghoulish organizations exist, or they don't take them very seriously. While some organizations are often compared to hunter groups and treated as such, other groups are thought to be short-lived or designed solely to benefit ghouls. Thus, the finer details tend to fall beneath the notice of most vampires, who are more concerned with their night-to-night affairs.

In truth, ghoulish organizations tend to operate in secret because they are often targeted by Sects for various reasons. The Sabbat, for example, knows that many of these groups are comprised of independent ghouls who have run afoul of their former domitors, and seek to put these wayward souls back in their place. The Camarilla, on the other hand, takes issue with the fact that while ghouls are tolerated in the Sect, a ghoulish organization represents a more significant threat to the Masquerade. Though the Camarilla has not expressly assigned resources to the task of dismantling such groups, its Alastors have targeted leaders within these organizations, such as the Unmastered, believing that a ghoulish organization can easily be manipulated by the Anathema.

While there are no requirements to join these groups per se, ghoulish organizations tend to take precautions when recruiting for new members. In modern nights, it is not uncommon to find Bound ghouls attempting to infiltrate and sabotage these organizations at the behest of their masters. For example, the Unmastered tends to be skeptical of any ghoulish who approaches them, given the Camarilla's repeated attempts to wipe them out. Thus, ghouls who seek to join a ghoulish organization will likely be regarded with suspicion, and kept apart from devoted members until their threat level has been assessed.

Turnover in ghoulish organizations is high, which is the reason why some groups tend to be shorter-lived than others. Though no one is certain how many ghoulish organizations exist, or how far their influence spreads, some of the more common ghoulish organizations are described below.

## Arcane Historical Society

While some ghouls pursue occult knowledge for their masters, this secretive group of independent ghouls researches forbidden lore for their own benefit. Rumor has it that the Arcane Historical Society, or AHS, seeks to unlock the mysteries of vampirism and their own ghoulish natures. It is thought to be one of the newest ghoulish

organizations, and may have originated near Milan, though that has never been confirmed. Members tend to be split between occult researchers, hunters, and transition experts who help newly-freed Bound ghouls break their connection to their domitors.

The Society is led by a group of renegade Tremere ghouls and, so far, these five are thought to be in charge of the organization. The names of these leaders, however, have been suppressed by the Tremere Clan despite the Camarilla's pledge to help track down the AHS. This has led some Kindred to believe that the ghouls are more than just an embarrassment to the Tremere, and that the AHS may have stolen scrolls or artifacts the Tremere desperately wants to reacquire.

In truth, regardless of whatever transgressions the AHS may have committed against the Tremere, their worst offense is that they continue to liberate ghouls from their masters – even when those ghouls do not wish to leave the side of their domitors. Thus, the AHS has gone from being a single Clan's headache to the concern of all. Not only is the AHS seeking to acquire more "free" ghouls for their Society, they also wish to gather samples from every possible vampire bloodline, regardless of Clan or Sect, for their experiments.

Within the past five years or so, the Society has accidentally discovered the existence of revenants and their families. This has led to a series of tense debates as to whether or not the AHS should seek an alliance with one or more of the families. Some Society members believe that the physiology of a revenant may unlock the vampiric and ghoulish conditions, while others think that revenants are an aberration or a fluke of nature.

While the AHS has been known to recruit new members and buy occult artifacts, their primary purpose is unclear due to the fact that the original founders are tight-lipped. Some members speculate that the founders' true goal is to remove Clan weaknesses from vitae, while others believe their work is related to ensuring their ghoulish condition remains static, without having to feed on any more blood. Most vampires, however, do not believe the AHS has the resources or the knowledge required to be a serious threat, so they shrug the Society off as a minor annoyance.

## Disciples of Set

The Disciples of Set cult was initially formed in 1989 by a pair of Setite ghouls: Aziza Mohareb of Giza, Egypt, and Steven O'Malley of San Francisco, California. Aziza had been turned into a ghoulish by a Setite elder who forced Aziza to debase herself and fall prey to debauchery. Aziza was disgusted by his orders, but could do little against the

power of the blood bond—until Set spoke to her in a vision. He told the ghoul he would give her the opportunity to free herself from her foolish master’s clutches in exchange for her faithful service.

Upon awakening from her trance, Aziza felt as if a hand had pulled away the cloudy veil of the blood bond, and her mind was clear. While she prepared herself for a fight with her master, Aziza was approached by a group of Setites who gifted her with the means to leave the city. They vowed to slaughter her domitor for Set’s glory, and reminded her of her oath to their god. That night, Aziza fled from Giza while Set’s agents tore him apart.

Shortly after they destroyed her master and his cohorts, Aziza flew to San Francisco where she met with another Setite ghoul named Steven O’Malley. Steven, who was his domitor’s former bodyguard, had also been freed from his master’s cruel grip in much the same way. Together, the two Setite ghouls conspired to repay Set for their freedom by purging wayward members of the Setite Clan, and by recruiting new ghouls to serve their god.

For several years the ghouls, with the blessing of devoted Setites, cured the sickness that was rampant in the Setite Clan by attacking the havens of known heathens and their allies during broad daylight. In exchange for their service, the ghouls fed on the vitae of the fallen to sustain themselves, and were granted the means to expand and recruit new members for their cause.

In modern nights, the Disciples of Set are believed to operate in or near several major cities including Atlanta, Pensacola, and Chicago, as well as London, Berlin, and Cairo. While their efforts have not gone unnoticed by other Clans, most vampires treat the Disciples of Set as an extension of the Setite Clan, and steer clear of these ghouls—unless they, themselves, are somehow caught up in their zeal to purify Set’s believers.

## Sacrament of Caine

The Sacrament of Caine is a Noddist cult who claims to have in their possession a near complete copy of the *Book of Nod*, that was recently given to them by the Anathema Ayisha Jocastian. Previously, the group had been studying fragments and testimonies, and Ayisha’s gift has renewed the Sacrament’s faith in their long-held beliefs. Though their connection to the Anathema only recently brought them to the Camarilla’s attention, the Sacrament of Caine is a small but devoted group of ghouls that has congregated for centuries. In many ways, the Sacrament’s beliefs mimic that of a monastic order. Most of its members are scholars and collectors, who scour forgotten tomes searching for the teachings of Caine.

The Sacrament regards most modern vampires as sinners who have violated the original teachings of Caine. These ghouls desire the balance of power to be restored as it was in the First City when there were fewer vampires, many ghouls, and willing blood slaves. In truth, the Sacrament’s original founders have always believed in this philosophy, even when they were ghouls pledged to masters from such fallen and ancient Clans and bloodlines as the Salubri, Cappadocian, and True Brujah.

The founders believe that they have been betrayed by the Clans and Sects, and they openly blame anti-Noddists for destroying their masters. Left to survive on “lesser” vitae, these ghouls spread the teachings of Nod to mortals and vampires alike, which has greatly concerned the Camarilla. Alastors within the Sect believe the Sacrament is both serving and protecting Ayisha Jocastian, but have thus far been unable to infiltrate the group.

While most mortals regard the Sacrament to be a doomsday cult, independent ghouls are aware of the Sacrament’s sermons and avoid them as much as possible, for they have clashed with the Unmastered. Unbeknownst to all but a few, the Sacrament has ranked ghouls according to their Clan’s domitor and allegiance to a Sect. For example, the Sacrament does not recognize the Tremere nor do they acknowledge the Giovanni usurpers who erased all traces of the Cappadocian Clan. Members also claim that fleshcrafted abominations, such as the szlachta and vozhd, should be put down along with gargoyles, the Blood Brothers, and infernalists.

At the moment, the Sacrament of Caine seems to be gathering its forces in two cities: Berlin and Buenos Aires. A small cell has also recently set up near Montreal. Though the group has not gone on the offensive, some Alastors believe that it is only a matter of time before the Sacrament shifts from a passive cult of Noddist scholars into an organization that seeks to exact Caine’s vengeance.

## The Sanguinaries

Though the Sanguinaries may seem like an extremely secretive society, the ghouls within this organization are not connected to one another by a set of beliefs or a common mission. Comprised of entrepreneurs and opportunists, the Sanguinaries is a loose circle of vitae merchants whose clientele primarily consists of independent ghouls. They are, for all intents and purposes, a vitae bank.

According to urban legend, the first Sanguinary was set up by a mysterious Anarch vampire named Katerina just a few years ago. Frustrated by the ghouls’ dependence on vitae, Katerina donated several vials of her own vitae to a pair of independent ghouls who, in turn, could sell them to

other ghouls. Initially, the pair began selling vials of blood in exchange for favors, but quickly increased their prices when they realized the demand for vitae was so high they could not fulfill their orders. Katerina was appalled that she had unwittingly strengthened their dependence on vitae by offering it for sale. Thus, it is commonly believed that she reluctantly withdrew back into the shadows after learning a painful lesson. Ghouls were not just dependent upon vitae; they would always be slaves as long as they remained a ghoul.

As word began to spread, the legend of the Sanguinary outgrew its usefulness, for there was more demand for vitae than one pair of ghouls could hope to fulfill. Where there is demand, however, there is opportunity. Other independent ghouls soon filled the void by whatever means necessary, even going so far as to involve fake pharmaceutical companies and marketing campaigns, billing vitae as a new sexual enhancement or performance drug.

Typically, ghoul merchants would make deals with vampires in exchange for vitae, but a few revenants had other, grander ideas. Recently, for example, it's rumored that an escaped D'Habi revenant joined a Sanguinary by drawing vitae from a vampire she betrayed and staked. Other ghouls, namely escaped Tremere and Tzimisce servants, are believed to have discovered how to mystically preserve vitae in glass vials to ensure their freshness.

Though all of the Sanguinaries sell vitae, that is where their similarities end. Each shop is run independently of one another, which makes it almost impossible for the Sects to shut them down. Soon after one cell is eliminated, another pops up in its place in a different part of the same city. Thus, it is impossible to tell how many Sanguinaries exist or how widespread they are. It is believed, however, that the Sanguinaries are primarily concentrated in North and Central America.

## **Talons of the Black Rage**

Originally, the Talons of the Black Rage was a secret organization of ghouls trained by the Lasombra Clan to carry out daytime raids on strategic targets. They are thought to date back to the nineteenth century, and began as a small group of mercenaries and soldiers who had been taken under the Clan's wing. Over time, the ghouls were trained to operate in peak, physical condition and master certain Disciplines, such as Obtenebration and Potence, that would give them an edge in combat. They are also taught how to guard themselves against vampiric manipulation, which prevents the Talons from being unduly used by the Clan's enemies.

To high-ranking officials within the Sabbat, the Talons of the Black Rage is the Sect's advanced expeditionary unit

that is sent out prior to the attack on a Camarilla-held city or territory. To the Camarilla's Justicars, however, the Talons are an elite paramilitary force that is capable of hunting vampires. In fact, many of the Talons have either been selected from the military or have experience in urban warfare. Most vampires are not aware that the Talons of the Black Rage exist, and those who do are under the mistaken impression that there are only thirteen members, seven men and six women, in total. That, however, is the number of members for each unit.

Though the Talons of the Black Rage are often commanded by high-ranking members of the Lasombra Clan when their mission is to attack the Camarilla, in recent years the Talons have also been tasked with gathering information about the growing influence of the revenant families, including those serving the Tzimisce. To this end, the Talons have been secretly monitoring and tracking down as many family members as they can, with the help of the Lasombra, but the task is time-intensive. Some of the Talons feel the best way to learn more about revenant families would be to kidnap members to interrogate them. However, others within the group believe the timing isn't right, because they don't want to start a war just yet.

Most of the Talons train hard and are expected to live short, brutal lives, but they are not suicidal. They believe they have been chosen for a higher purpose, to bring terror and death to the Lasombra's adversaries. Often, the Talons are sent after high level Camarilla targets and Lasombra antitribu such as Stephen Lenoir and the Methuselah Lord Aludian Thex.

## **The Unmastered**

Formed in the 1950s, the Unmastered was founded by Gregory Winter, Ginerva Salamanca, Enrico Sagunto, and Philip Marshall to assist independent ghouls who have recently either escaped from or were abandoned by their domitors. Of the four original members, it is believed that Ginerva Salamanca and Gregory Winter are the only founders who are still active in modern nights. Winter is a powerful old ghoul, having lived long past his mortal lifespan and being completely dependant on vitae to survive. His tactical leadership of the Unmastered has helped them liberate many abused ghouls. Ginerva Salamanca is actually a revenant (from the Salamanca branch of the Grimaldi family), having abandoned her family's compound near Mexico City many years ago. She is deliberately keeping the truth of revenants from the Unmastered, and has pretended to be a ghoul. While no one is clear what her motives are, she does seem to take extra care in directing Unmastered units to attack nomad packs of the Sabbat.

The core purpose of the Unmastered is twofold. First, the group seeks to obtain enough vitae to sustain its members without drawing undue attention to themselves. Second, the Unmastered pledges to free ghouls from cruel domitors who take undue advantage of their servants. Once freed, newly independent ghouls are then given the option of remaining a ghoul, or of returning to the life they once lived.

The Unmastered does not have an unlimited amount of resources, nor are its members well-trained, but they do help young, former ghouls transition back into their former lives by procuring new identities for them. The Unmastered also has a reputation for operating on the fringes of vampiric society. The Sects assume the group targets weaker vampires in locations that are easily infiltrated, because they do not have the means to launch a devastating attack. While this is true to a certain extent, the Unmastered is a collection of tightly-focused cells that gather and share confirmed information prior to hitting their targets.

In recent years, the Unmastered has splintered, and a new group is beginning to form out of a desire to better utilize other allies and resources. This group, which calls itself the Unchained, is actively trying to forge alliances with other ghouls and ghoul organizations that might share similar interests, such as the Young Bloods. While the Unchained is still loosely connected to the Unmastered, the group tends to be more inclusive of other ghoul organizations than its standoffish counterpart.

## Other Organizations

Due to the short-lived nature of ghoul organizations, other groups frequently rise and fall or fade into the background. One such group is the *Young Bloods*, a vampire hunting biker gang that preys primarily upon Anarchs

and nomadic Sabbat packs in the southwestern United States. (For more on the Young Bloods, see **Hunters Hunted II**, p. 151.)

While groups such as the Young Bloods tend to be chaotic and self-serving, other organizations tend to form around a specific need or belief. Sometimes, these groups might use a legitimate business as a front, such as *The Acquired Taste Company*, which legally specializes in fulfilling fetishes. By night, the London-based company employs dommes and madames in a club-like atmosphere for the benefit of its guests. By day, however, the business matches prospective ghouls with vampires seeking a specific kind of servant in exchange for vitae. Unlike other ghoul organizations, however, The Acquired Taste Company's core staff of independent ghouls have opted to remain anonymous.

Generally speaking, there is one type of ghoul organization most vampires would likely rally to destroy out of a desire for self-preservation. Passed off as doomsday cults by mortals, rumors are popping up all over the world that infernalist ghouls are on the rise and they are organizing. The *Devil's Fury*, which is thought to be headquartered in Europe, is one such group that hunts vampires and other supernatural creatures for their demonic masters. Thus far, the only information that's been recorded about Devil's Fury is what can be found on SchreckNet.

In truth, most ghoul organizations are considered to be fragile, and are often treated as minor threats. Thus, the Sects, Clans, and bloodlines tend to deal with ghoul organizations only when necessary. Individual domitors, on the other hand, may single-handedly try to dismantle a group to exact their revenge on their former servants. However, high-ranking members of the Sects, such as Alastors, Josians, Inquisitors, and Bishops, may have their own reasons for investigating them, ranging from the hunt for infernalists and the Anathema, to punishing transgressions against the Sect.



# Chapter Four: Revenants and their Families

*“What is a revenant but a living, breathing testament to the greatness of our Clan?”*

– Old Tzimisce Saying

While many ghouls become more twisted and inhuman over time, revenants are often born that way. They are the scions of families who have had the taint of vitae flowing in their veins for generations, and are one of the most disturbing creations the Children of Caine have unleashed on the world. Revenants are believed to have existed for thousands of years, and their fates have often been tied to their patron Clans.

Most vampires lay the blame for the existence of these horrors on the shoulders of Clan Tzimisce. Some neonates, unfamiliar with the innermost workings of the Clan, wrongfully assume that revenants are yet another unclean manifestation created at higher levels of Vicissitude. Vampires versed in the ways of blood magic, on the other hand, suspect that the dark rites of Koldunic Sorcery served as the womb that brought these bizarre creations into the world.

The Fiends among Clan Tzimisce also have many legends and few, definitive facts. Some tales suggest that the Eldest, the Clan’s Antediluvian, created the Koldunic rituals to ensure that ghouls could pass their Disciplines on to their offspring. Other legends suggest the pact with the land the Eldest held was so great that those who dwelled upon it – human, ghoul, or vampire – were warped by

the eldritch powers of that august Fiend. A select few, however, place the blame at the feet of Yorak, a master Koldun, whose Metamorphosis experiments could easily have spawned such horrors.

Ultimately, no vampire knows for certain how revenants came to be or how they’ve managed to survive to the present day. Most, however, have been taught that over a dozen revenant families were once wielded as powerful weapons by Clan Tzimisce, and most vampires dared not face them until the rise of Clan Tremere.

## **Victory and Death**

Most Noddist scholars concur that revenants appeared sometime around 500 B.C.E. The vast majority of revenants lived in Eastern Europe, the home of the Fiends, while other families likely existed in secret in the Mediterranean.

It is commonly believed that revenants were chosen to serve based on the strength of a particular family lineage and its perceived benefit to a Clan, bloodline, or Sect. Clan Tzimisce, for example, might have selected candidates for experimentation from families that had already proved useful or talented in some fashion to warrant such effort.

Why else would the Fiends risk giving these mortals more power, if they did not intend for them to serve their Clan?

While the attention of Clan Tzimisce can bring suffering to those who fall under their scrutiny, the “lucky” few who survived their experiments became powerful patriarchs and matriarchs of their revenant families. Their new and lofty positions, of course, were paid with a heavy price: their humanity.

Before the Middle Ages began, the existing revenant families spread so far and wide their influence could be felt almost everywhere. In part, their diaspora was encouraged in order to refresh their genetic stock and prevent issues with incest. Of those original families, the Tzimisce Clan revenants are often the most referred to, even to this day.

Likely, most vampires associate revenants with the Tzimisce Clan because they did not operate in secret like the other families did, and their actions tended to be predictable. Typically, the Tzimisce revenant families would mirror how their Clan patrons conducted their affairs, so that anyone who dealt with them would suspect that a Fiend was pulling their strings. While some vampires believe the early revenant families were either being groomed for the Embrace or were commanded through the use of Disciplines, few wasted time on investigating them further and rightly assumed their fate was tied to their patron Clan. Additionally, some of the non-Tzimisce revenant families remained hidden and had very few members for several generations, so they fell beneath the notice of most vampires. Following in the haunted footsteps of their Tzimisce masters, their revenant families eventually fought battles with each other in the name of family pride, while their mighty Lords selected the best revenants to become their childer.

While the servants of the Fiends enjoyed many years of triumph and, to a lesser extent, glory, their gilded days were doomed to end. As Roman Catholicism spread and the Holy Roman Empire’s influence grew, Church Inquisitors sought out more than heretics, and many – if not all – revenant families suffered losses in greater and greater numbers in order to protect their founders and Clan patrons. Some witch hunters, for example, concentrated their efforts in Italy, near the seat of the pope’s power, and plagued the Rossellini revenant family as well as the Enrathi. Others suffered as well, and followed their masters across the seas to explore new countries and escape the long arm of the Church.

Despite the fear and desperation that swept across Europe, some Clans felt that revenants would ensure their survival, and pushed to experiment with the creation of new families that might best serve their needs. Thus, it is

commonly thought that the Giovanni, then a branch of the Cappadocian Clan, sought to follow in the footsteps of the Fiends the same way they accomplished everything else: by stealing what they felt was rightfully theirs. In the safety of their catacombs, the Giovanni were free to spawn a new type of revenant, while witch hunters sought other ghouls and revenants above ground.

In the Middle East, however, while the other Clans did not share the same persecutions as their European counterparts, they also worried about their security as they faced other perils following the conclusion of the Arab conquests. Here, too, the Holy Roman Empire’s influence was seen and felt, as peasants and nobles took up the sword to battle their way through to Jerusalem during the many Crusades and wars that plagued the region. While the Church was commanding witch hunters to track down the unholy and accursed throughout Europe, crusaders were attacking all the way to Jerusalem. It is more than likely that Clans in the region, such as the Assamite Clan, were experimenting with revenants and using ghouls to protect themselves from these threats, just as European vampires were hoping to safeguard themselves and their havens in much the same way.

## End of a Golden Era

The Tzimisce Clan’s golden age was doomed to crumble eventually. The Clan’s downfall did not happen overnight, however, and slowly occurred over the course of a few centuries. Several factors, including the rise of the Tremere Clan in the Dark Ages, irrevocably changed everything in the lands beyond the forests, and the revenant families were unable to stop these powerful newcomers. Clan Tremere stopped at nothing to crush the revenants when they discovered them, and these attacks were deadly to the mighty Fiends and their families.

Weakened by constant battles with the Tremere Clan, the once proud Tzimisce Clan and their revenants soon found that their troubles were not exclusively vampire-related. In the thirteenth century, the Mongols invaded Europe and found the revenants hungry for what they assumed would be an easy victory over barbarians. Instead, the Golden Horde swept through every revenant family’s army and slaughtered their soldiers, including a number of revenants to the north of Transylvania who had managed to avoid the brunt of Clan Tremere’s attacks.

Not long afterward, the Ottoman Turks began to inch their way deeper into Eastern Europe and, in time, conquered much of Transylvania and Hungary, only

## For the Storyteller: Family Ties and Descendants

Did the Rafastio revenant family descend from the D'habi? Are the Tzimisce revenant families simply imports from the Hand? There are certainly those who think so. A Baali Methuselah whose aware of the Hand might make this assumption, or might claim the Fiends performed similar rites to create their families. However, there is not, and probably never will be, definitive proof of this.

Revenant families are created using different magics in unique sets of conditions. Thus, it is not impossible the Rafastio revenants found some members of the D'habi family and used them as a basis for their dark rituals. Nor is it unlikely, however bizarre it may seem, that members of Clan Tzimisce captured some Enrathi revenants to reverse engineer the blasphemy of their genesis.

In the end, the details shrouding a particular revenant family's origins are at the discretion of the Storyteller. While the possibilities have been presented, what is true (and what are rumors) will depend upon the needs of the chronicle.

to be thwarted by the Tremere again in Vienna. Even those European revenant families who had managed to avoid these aggressors were still not safe, for the fires of the Inquisition did not die out as quickly as the Clans hoped. Some vampires believe that, if it wasn't for the plagues sweeping across Europe and the push to colonize the Americas, revenants would have fallen back to the shadows along with their masters, hoping to be forgotten.

Toward the end of the fifteen century, the surviving Carpathian revenant families ceased being stately rulers and faded into obscurity, doomed to lurk among the ruins of grand estates and dark forests. Meanwhile, their Lords were also suffering, and eventually fell from their lofty position never to regain their former glory. First, the Fiends were overthrown by their own childer who became the new Lords of their estates. Then, toward at the end of the century, the Anarchs' loss to the Camarilla





utterly destroyed any last, remaining tendrils of power and influence that members of Clan Tzimisce had left. Gone were the nights ruling vast tracts of land from lofty castles for both liege and lackey. Thus, the revenant families that were once prized and lauded by their patron Clan withdrew into isolation.

Despite the turbulence most revenant families experienced up to this point, nothing compared to the rising tides of war and disease. Revenant families, who pledged to remain by their masters' sides, understood that their survival often depended on the whims of the vampire. Many revenants scattered and spread out across the globe, sailing away on great ships or traveling to the east, ever watchful, ever vigilant for the vampires they protected. While some revenants remained in Europe, to serve powerful masters that dared to stay behind and fight, others went into hiding to regroup and replenish their numbers.

Eventually, revenants faded from memory, and had it not been for a renewed interest in their worth to the Clans, they would have been forgotten.

## **Those Who Survived**

In modern nights, the descendents of the original revenant families are thought to lead a more precarious life than their forbearers. Many vampires believe that Clan Tremere continues to hunt survivors, forcing them to hide and scurry like roaches. Thus, revenants are often stereotyped, and are assumed to live in unkempt houses

far removed from the sprawling metropolises that were built in their absence.

However, while certain families, such as the Bratovich, do live in desolate conditions and resort to terrifying, monstrous acts of cannibalism, some vampires suspect that there is a marked increase in the number of revenant families than there ever has been before. While the term "revenant" is often associated with the Tzimisce Clan, many other Clans and bloodlines – including members of the Camarilla – have experimented with the creation of a revenant family behind closed doors.

Unfortunately, no one knows for sure precisely how many revenants there are, how many families have come and gone throughout the years, or if more Clans are continuing their experiments. Still, revenants are expected to perform services to certain Clans and Sects, just as ghouls do. While their uses vary widely, revenants are considered to be more dangerous and less trustworthy than ghouls, for the simple fact that they produce vitae naturally in their systems, and might not be Bound as a ghoul would..

The biggest issue most revenant families face, however, is genetic. When a revenant and a human mate, any children they might have no longer produce vampiric blood. Thus, in order for any family line to continue unchecked, the patron Clan must either create new revenants to pair them with existing relatives, or suggest suitable matches with other, allied revenant families. While some families, such as the Ducheski, have clearly suffered from incestuous relationships, others have managed to avoid a decline into depravity as most revenants are acutely aware of their limitations.

## Bratovich, the Penniless Depraved

The Bratovich family is something of an enigma. Long ago, these revenants were once considered noble, and their warriors fought on behalf of the Tzimisce Clan in numerous conflicts. While Bratovich hunters and soldiers fought at their masters' sides, their families were arrested for performing the dark arts and died in prison. Their numbers dwindling, surviving members of the once-proud Bratovich family were forced to scrape and beg for food in nearby rural villages.

Soon after the Convention of Thorns, whether by design or out of necessity, the Bratovich family could no longer be found training at their vast estates which had since been destroyed or repossessed by their rivals. For some time, the Bratovich faded into a distant memory. Many of their rivals believed they were either extinct, or had followed the Fiends into parts unknown along with the Grimaldi, Obertus, and Zantosa families to serve the newly formed Sabbat. Historical records seem to support this view, for up until the late 1600s there appears to be no mention of the Bratovich throughout Europe. Then, at the dawn of the eighteenth century, several Bratovich family names were found listed in a ship manifest along with dozens of merchants, traders, and soldiers bound for the West Indies.

The specifics of when and how the Bratovich family reached the shores of America are lost to history, and few vampires think deeply about how they survived. Family elders, however, speak of the terrible suffering they endured while on board galleons like the *Lonely Dove*, and the ill-gotten wealth they obtained through privateering. Though it cannot be confirmed, the Bratovich were likely separated from their Lords for some time, and the bonds of loyalty weakened as a result. This, some Fiends claim, is the reason why the Bratovich cannot be controlled as they once were long ago, for as soon as the relationship between regnant and thrall was broken, they decided to forge a new destiny independent of the undead.

Though it is impossible to know the precise details of the relationship between the Tzimisce Clan and the Bratovich family, it is assumed that

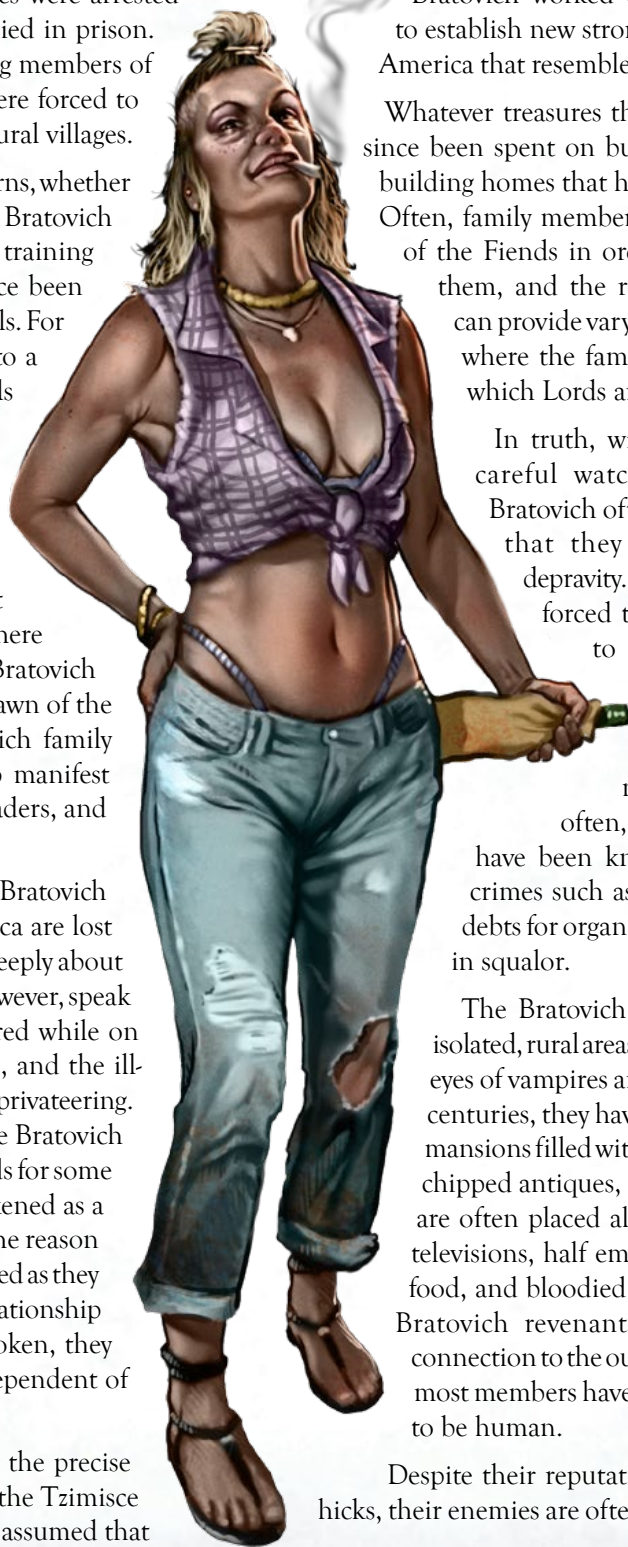
the Fiends eventually restored their relationship with their creations, and attempted to train younger family members in the art of Vicissitude. Despite any grievances they might have had, the Bratovich worked closely with the Fiends to establish new strongholds in rural parts of America that resembled their ancestral homes.

Whatever treasures their ancestors stole have since been spent on buying tracts of land and building homes that have fallen into disrepair. Often, family members rely on the generosity of the Fiends in order to continue serving them, and the resources Clan Tzimisce can provide vary greatly depending upon where the family estate is located and which Lords are involved.

In truth, without the support and careful watch of the Fiends, the Bratovich often become so desperate that they quickly tumble into depravity. Some revenants have been forced to sell their war hounds to other Cainites, while others manufacture and distribute moonshine, crystal meth, or heroin. Most often, however, the Bratovich have been known to resort to petty crimes such as robberies or collecting debts for organized crime to avoid living in squalor.

The Bratovich family tends to live in isolated, rural areas, far away from the prying eyes of vampires and mortals. For over two centuries, they have dwelled in dilapidated mansions filled with junk. Broken portraits, chipped antiques, and rusty blunderbusses are often placed alongside black-and-white televisions, half empty containers of rotten food, and bloodied cell phones. Still, many Bratovich revenants maintain a tenuous connection to the outside world, even though most members have forgotten what it means to be human.

Despite their reputation for being backwater hicks, their enemies are often surprised that they are



not what they appear to be. The family is known among other revenants for their sense of humor and fondness for gruesome practical jokes. However, as far as the Bratovich family is concerned, they are cunning and acutely aware of how others view them. In fact, a growing number of younger members are plotting to remove the scorch marks that have marred their family name for far too long, by proving their worth to their patron Clan, Sect, and each other.

Currently, the Bratovich family primarily spends their nights hunting troublesome Lupines, wreaking havoc with the local authorities, or assassinating the occasional target for the Sabbat. During their days, these revenants breed war dogs, carry out their masters' orders, and attempt to increase their holdings by whatever means they deem necessary.

Only time will tell if the Bratovich can change their fortunes, and help restore Clan Tzimisce to their former glory.

**Appearance:** The family's reputation for being inhuman is often reflected in their appearances. Those who are forced to remain in isolation might wear patchwork skirts, stolen clothes, or long beards; those with more social skills attempt to fit in as best they can. In general,

however, the family's sense of style tends to be quainter, even Edwardian. Fleshcrafting is uncommon, but when a revenant modifies his body, it is typically done for aesthetic or practical purposes.

**Character Creation:** Physical and Mental attributes are typically primary; Skills and Talents are both equally prized. When choosing a Nature and Demeanor, consider how isolated the character is, and whether or not they have any humanity left. For example, a Bratovich with Monster as his Nature and Loner as his Demeanor would have a difficult time socializing in public. Fleshcrafted animal Retainers are commonly owned as well; raptors and dogs are the most popular choices.

**Disciplines:** Animalism, Fortitude, Vicissitude

**Weakness:** The ferocity of the Bratovich family is almost as brutal as that of the Lupines they hunt. The difficulty of all rolls to resist frenzy is increased by two. A Bratovich may not spend Willpower to avoid frenzy, but may spend a Willpower point to end it.

**Quote:** "You know where you are and you know who I am. So cut the bullshit. Tell me why you miserable fucks ended up here, or I'll cut off your arm and feed it to the dogs."



## D'Habi, the Eternal Sufferers

An ancient family of revenants, the D'Habi claim that their lineage can be traced back through the ages, long before the First City was built. Millennia ago, the D'Habi family served Nergal, a Baali Methuselah, in Mesopotamia as his most sacred and holy warrior-priests. Nergal, who was worshipped as a god of the underworld in Mashkan-Shapir, commanded the D'Habi as his agents for a time, until he was overthrown.

Though Nergal created this family of revenants, the other Clans did not understand his infernal methods. At first they believed the D'Habi was a family of Bound ghouls, but did not question the family's true nature until centuries later. When Clan Tzimisce began to experiment with Koldunic sorcery, they wondered whether or not the family was a product of a demonic pact. Soon, however, they had more troublesome matters to attend to, for the Baali wars were in full swing, and the strange D'Habi were only one threat the other undead faced. Eventually, the D'Habi betrayed their master for reasons unknown, and were not present to witness the end of the wars. Many wrongly assumed they'd been utterly destroyed.

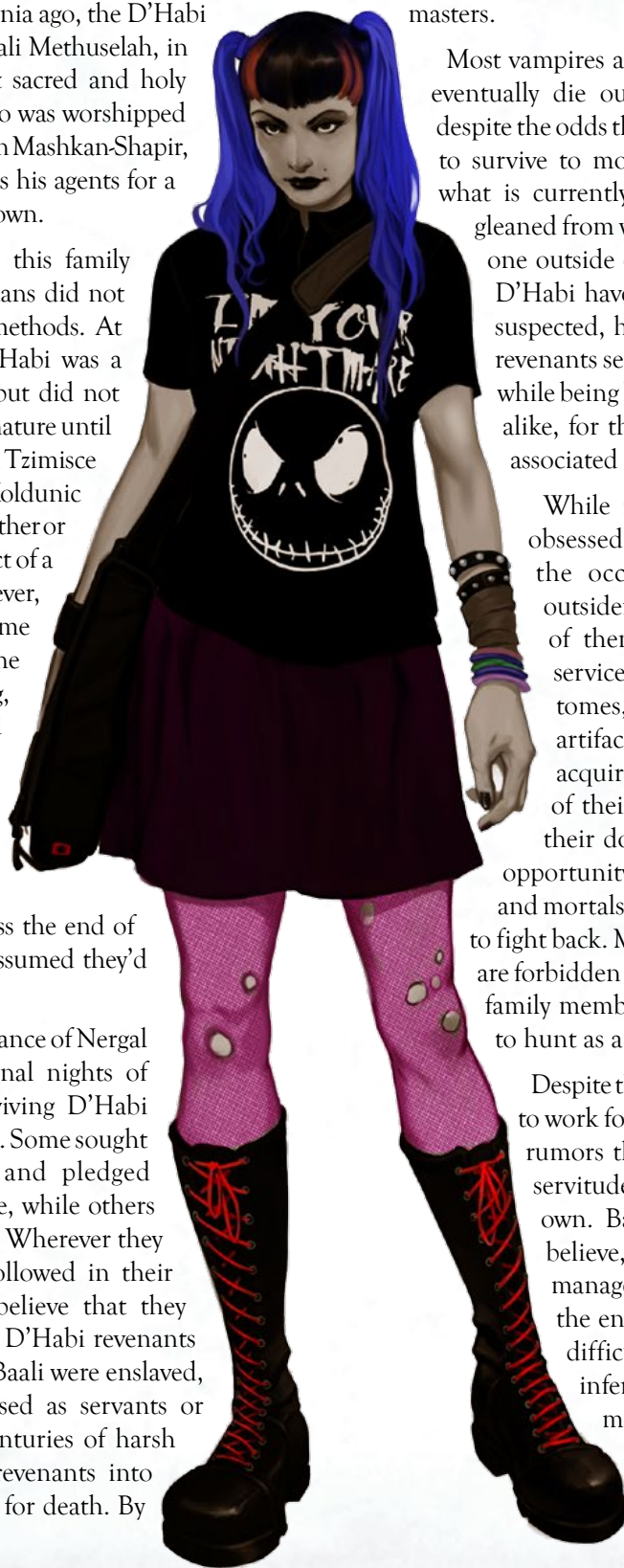
Following the disappearance of Nergal some time during the final nights of the Baali Wars, the surviving D'Habi scattered to the four winds. Some sought out other Baali elders and pledged themselves to their service, while others fled to far off settlements. Wherever they went, plague and ruin followed in their wake, leading some to believe that they were cursed. Many of the D'Habi revenants that served the surviving Baali were enslaved, Bound, and bitterly abused as servants or playthings. Over time, centuries of harsh treatment turned these revenants into broken shells that begged for death. By

the high Middle Ages, the D'Habi had become craven, cowering creatures living in the shadows of their infernal masters.

Most vampires assumed that the D'Habi would eventually die out, if they hadn't already, but despite the odds this revenant family has managed to survive to modern nights. In fact, much of what is currently known about the D'Habi is gleaned from whispered sightings of them. No one outside of the Baali is certain what the D'Habi have been commanded to do. It is suspected, however, that unwitting D'Habi revenants search for profane, forbidden lore while being hunted by vampires and mortals alike, for the D'Habi cannot escape being associated with infernalism.

While it is true that the D'Habi are obsessed with the darkest corners of the occult and avoid contact with outsiders as much as possible, many of them perform a variety of useful services which includes restoring occult tomes, procuring supplies and rare artifacts, participating in rituals, and acquiring sacrificial victims on behalf of their masters. Those who hunt for their domitors typically pick targets of opportunity such as children, the elderly, and mortals too naïve, helpless, or desperate to fight back. Most Bound revenants, however, are forbidden to go anywhere without another family member present, so the D'Habi tend to hunt as a group.

Despite the fact many revenants are forced to work for the Baali in captivity, there are rumors that some D'Habi have escaped servitude and have branched off on their own. Baali scholars find this hard to believe, and are convinced they have managed to remain a tight group over the entire family. The truth would be difficult to prove, regardless, for the infernal Baali have few allies and most vampires, regardless of Sect, would not openly admit their motivation for working with the D'Habi.



The D'Habi revenants who do not serve a Clan might be found lurking among other iconoclasts and social deviants. Operating under an assumed name, these revenants might be spotted in a crowd listening to a heavy metal band or in a fetish club like the Scarlet Crown. Most often, however, they will remain hidden from view, and will go to great lengths to protect their anonymity for fear of being attacked or hunted.

**Appearance:** The D'Habi have traveled all over the world, following wherever their masters bid them. They come in all shapes, sizes, and ethnicities. But a D'Habi can be easy to spot, if you know what to look for. Often, they'll stand with their shoulders slumped and arms crossed. Their strangely scarred bodies often communicate victimhood and submission without saying a word. Their only hint of the supernatural is their gaze: direct but vague, piercing but empty.

**Character Creation:** The centuries of abuse and servitude suffered by the D'Habi are often reflected in their personalities. Martyr, Soldier, Fanatic, and Conformist are common Natures, as most feel a desperate need to be devoted to something greater than themselves. Physical and Mental Attributes tend to reign supreme; most D'Habi have middling Appearance and Charisma scores, though skilled Manipulators are not uncommon. Like their erudite masters, several D'Habi are well-versed in the occult.

**Disciplines:** Presence, Obfuscate, Daimonion

**Weakness:** The D'Habi were originally Bound by blood and infernal magic to a powerful Baali warlord. Centuries of servitude have all but broken their spirits, and they are extraordinarily suggestible. They suffer a +2 difficulty on all Willpower rolls.

**Quote:** "I know it hurts, but you broke the rules. I warned you, and now you'll have to pay the price."



## Ducheski, the Obsessed Tinkerers

The history of the Ducheski revenant family is filled with stories of betrayal, ingenuity, and loss. Unlike other revenant families, the Ducheski were not initially related by blood. In fact, they were not the Ducheski at all.

The roots of this revenant family can be traced back to the height of Clan Tzimisce's power. While some Fiends were busy experimenting with great lineages throughout Eastern Europe, an ambitious elder named Krevcheski desired a family of his own that shared keen intellect and mechanical aptitude. While the Fiend discovered many talented engineers and builders, he did not find a suitable family filled with them. So, Krevcheski decided to create that which he did not have, by slowly kidnapping those he felt would be well-suited for breeding and experimented upon them using his arts at his mountain fortress.

While his methods were unorthodox even among the Fiends, Krevcheski's centuries-long breeding program eventually took hold. When he was satisfied with the results, he introduced the family to the rest of his Clan. Proud of his creations, Krevcheski named the family after himself and, for a time, his revenants spent their days and nights making weapons, armor, elaborate torture devices, and siege engines to be used in battle.

One night, without warning, the Krevcheski turned on their masters. So far no records have been discovered to reveal the details of their betrayal, or why the family put their lives in the hands of their masters' enemies. Whatever the reason, there are a number of stories about how and why the Krevcheski defected to Clan Tremere. One popular version describes an old man who designed a magnificent suit of armor. For ten years, he put his heart and soul into the suit, but when he was finished his master forced him to bolt the chest piece onto a vozhd and something in him snapped. This apocryphal tale is one of

many whispered about how and why the family betrayed the Tzimisce.

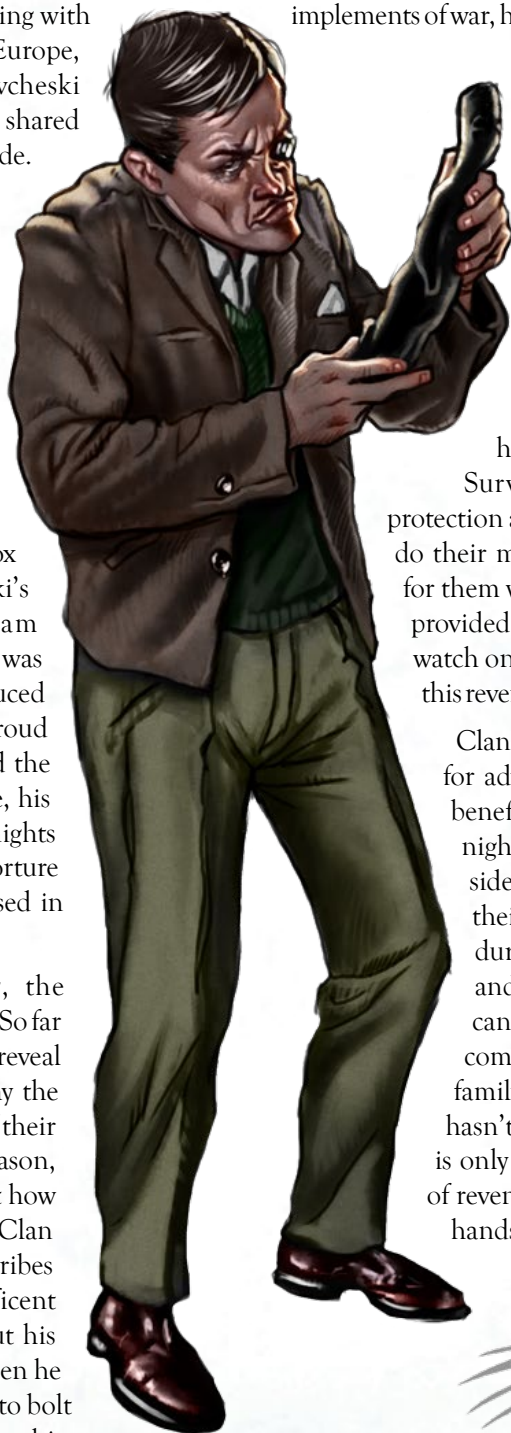
Free from their former masters, the surviving Krevcheski abandoned their surname, and became the Ducheski. Under the direction of Clan Tremere, the Ducheski continued their work in secret. Instead of concentrating their efforts on implements of war, however, the Ducheski practiced their arts by devising traps and protections for their masters' havens as well as elaborate equipment for their laboratories.

Unfortunately, there are few Ducheski remaining in the modern nights. They are believed to have two family estates located in eastern Poland, and another in Kansas. While their skills are valuable, the passing years have taken their toll on the family.

Survivors rely on the Warlocks for protection and resources, and in exchange they do their masters' bidding to provide security for them when needed. Though they are well provided for, the Tremere Clan keeps a close watch on the Ducheski, fearing that one day this revenant family would turn on them, too.

Clan Tremere may be right to be paranoid, for advances in technology could greatly benefit the Ducheski family. During their nights, they may remain at their masters' sides to devise new ways of keeping their chantries and havens secure, but during the day the Ducheski conspire and plot to learn as much as they can about modern engineering and computer science. While the Ducheski family's insatiable appetite for knowledge hasn't resulted in an insurrection yet, it is only a matter of time before this family of revenants takes their fate into their own hands.

**Appearance:** While the Ducheski are artisans, tinkerers, and engineers, their sense of aesthetics is not generally reflected in their clothes or their bearing. Those Ducheski



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who live in isolation are at the mercy of the Warlocks' generosity. Thus, their clothing tends to be plain, practical, and sturdy. In general, the Ducheski are quiet and serious; they are quick to lower their eyes in the presence of their masters. Birth defects, such as polydactylism, are common in remote branches of the family due to inbreeding.

**Character Creation:** Good choices for Nature and Demeanor would be related to the character's relationship to the rest of the family and patron Clan. For example, a Scientist/Survivor combination would work just as well as a Director/Traditionalist for any Ducheski serving Clan Tremere. Knowledges, Talents, and Skills should be related to which crafts or trades the revenant is skilled in. These might be in the fields of metalworking, electrical engineering, industrial or military chemistry, or computer science. Additionally, most Ducheski revenants have

varying degrees of occult knowledge that complements their masters' pursuit of thaumaturgy. Despite being isolated, the Ducheski have managed to retain their Humanity, in part due to the guidance of the Tremere.

**Disciplines:** Auspex, Dominate, Thaumaturgy

**Weakness:** As a result of centuries spent under the thumb of the Tremere, the Ducheski have grown quite far from the human side of their beings. Isolation has caused an aberration in the minds, bodies, and personalities of all family members. No Ducheski may ever have a Social Attribute above 2.

**Quote:** "I don't know what circumstances would require you to perform an encephalotomy in thirty seconds, Madame, but I can assure you my invention will exceed your expectations."



## Enrathi, the Vile Slavers

Legends claim that the roots of the Enrathi family tree trace back to humble beginnings in Italy, sometime in the sixth century B.C.E. They were once Etruscan farmers who had suffered greatly from the changing tides of commerce and industry, for their talents did not lie in working the land alongside their neighbors. As the Etruscan civilization shifted from farming to mining precious metals, eventually the Enrathi were forced to choose a new trade. Instead of digging for copper, however, the Enrathi became merchants and traders and prospered for a time along with their people.

Unfortunately, the newly expanded Etruscan civilization did not last long, and eventually the people were assimilated by the Romans around 500 B.C.E. Not long afterward, the Enrathi family fortunes began to crumble as the proud Romans preferred to do business with other Romans. Desperate and alone, the Enrathi joined forces with spurned traders and allies, such as the Rafastio, who were in a similar position. Not long afterward, the family turned to owning, trading, buying, and kidnapping slaves when other more respectable merchants would not.

In truth, the Enrathi may have been manipulated into becoming a revenant family of slavers over the course of many years by the Tal'Mahe'Ra. Some vampires suspect that the Enrathi may have been their loyal agents long before they realized it, and had been introduced to the Rafastio prior to the Romans stepping foot in northern Italy. While unprovable, few Enrathi doubt that their ancestors were moral and righteous, for the family has always been filled with opportunists bent on surviving at all costs, and suspect they may have agreed to an eternal life of servitude in exchange for security and the promise of Embrace.

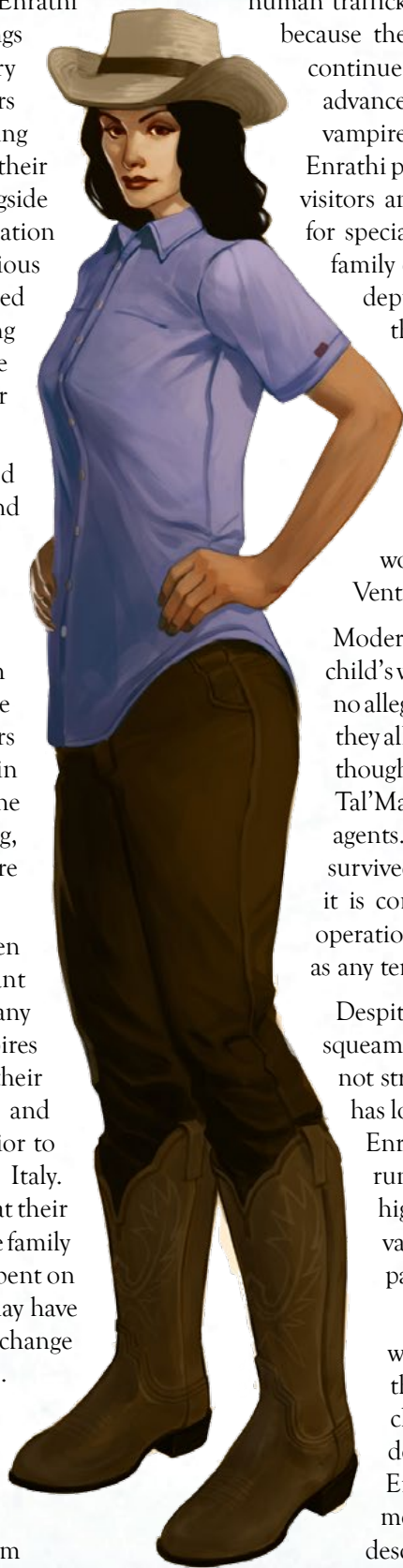
For centuries, the Enrathi slavers continued to trap and sell desperate souls as their primary source of income. As time passed, however, some vampires believe the Enrathi's focus shifted from

human trafficking for profit to kidnapping victims because they enjoyed it. Why else would they continue to risk life and limb despite significant advances to end slavery? Ironically, while many vampires benefit greatly from the services the Enrathi perform, such as kidnapping "gifts" for visitors and luring children out of their beds for special feedings, they also claim that this family of revenants is even more brutal and depraved than the Bratovich. Thus, while the Clans and Sects have not outright condemned the Enrathi, warnings are often issued to tread carefully when dealing with them, for they are not beneath kidnapping and selling vampires despite their status and position. In truth, most vampires would be shocked to learn that Clan Ventrue is one of the family's biggest clients.

Modern Enrathi are an amalgamation of a child's worst fears and a vampire's. They claim no allegiance to any Clan or bloodline, nor do they ally themselves with a specific Sect, even though one branch of the family is loyal to the Tal'Mahe'Ra, and other branches act as free agents. While no one, mortal or vampire, has survived a visit to their fortresses uninvited, it is commonly believed that the Enrathi's operation is as sophisticated and well-funded as any terrorist organization's.

Despite being mortal, the Enrathi are not squeamish when it comes to torture, and do not struggle to maintain their humanity. It has long been suspected, however, that the Enrathi revenants have encouraged such rumors, for the family also performs high-priced services such as transporting vampires through enemy territory or participating in a hunt for transgressors.

**Appearance:** Enrathi revenants who can trace their ancestry back to their Etruscan forbears have the same characteristics as northern Italians do. Of all the families, however, the Enrathi frequently intermarry, and members are occasionally mistaken for descendants of other revenant families





from eastern Europe. When seen in public, the Enrathi tend to dress well and carry arms befitting a mercenary or private security. Those who dare to examine them closer, however, might notice the dark stains on their clothing that never come out.

**Character Creation:** Most of the Enrathi have a hand in the family business, in some fashion, and characters tend to be specialized accordingly. Slavers, torturers, and kidnappers, for example, are more physical than their relatives and their Nature and Demeanor reflects their amoral personalities. While all Enrathi follow a Path of Enlightenment, it does not mean they have no social skills. Buyers, traders, spies, and lures are still unscrupulous,

but have more need to be social in order to fulfill a specific need such as entrapping innocents or collecting debts. Despite their monstrous reputation, the Enrathi are cunning and, as such, understand the importance of maintaining a public face.

**Disciplines:** Dominate, Obfuscate, Potence

**Weakness:** Centuries of moral decay has taken its toll on the Enrathi. Members of the Enrathi family may not have a Humanity rating higher than 3, nor may they have a Conscience higher than 2.

**Quote:** "My, you are a cute one! Would you like to meet your uncle now?"



## Grimaldi, the Secretive Rebels

The wealthy Grimaldi family, similar to the Enrathi, Rossellini, and Rafastio, originated in Italy. Unlike the other revenant families, however, the Grimaldi had achieved status, influence, and power prior to becoming the property of Clan Tzimisce in the late Middle Ages. Family members often warn of how their greedy ancestors were tricked by the Fiends to serve them in exchange for more power, more wealth, and more influence. In truth, the Grimaldi's early ambitions may have damned the family into becoming revenants, but they have never forgotten the price they were forced to pay. Despite their vast riches and allies, the founders of the Grimaldi family were, at first, treated similarly to other revenants, and the Clan's promises of Embrace have never been fulfilled.

Of all the families, the Grimaldi revenants have managed to keep strong ties to the outside world, and have maintained a tight grip on their humanity. Though they watched other ghouls and revenants tortured during the Inquisition, the Grimaldi infiltrated the upper echelons of the Holy Roman Empire with the help of their masters. Some vampires speculate that their connection to the Church allowed the family to hide in plain sight, and it is for this reason that they may have avoided being hunted or arrested for witchcraft. Historically, the Grimaldi have demonstrated an uncanny knack for anticipating who would benefit them the most in any conflict, which some say is the reason why they sided with the rebellious Tzimisce during the Anarch Revolt, and then later joined the Sabbat.

Following the Convention of Thorns, the Grimaldi remained influential through the Renaissance, and their continued success did not go unnoticed. Other Clans within the Sabbat, such as the Lasombra and Ventrue *antitribu*, requested their services. Soon, the family was instrumental in financial matters,

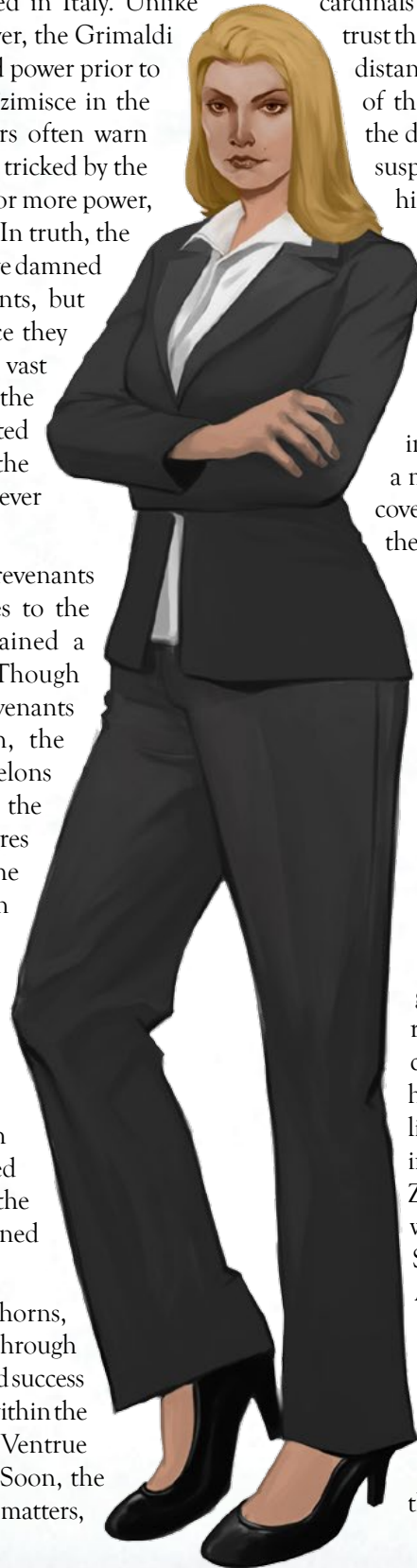
providing advice, money, and connections to bishops and cardinals within the Sect. Though the Clans did not trust the Grimaldi, the family maintained a natural distance from their masters, because the nature of their business required them to operate in the daylight. Thus, while the Sabbat was always suspicious of them, the family learned how to hide their true goals.

In many ways, the Grimaldi are an example of revenants forced to live a double life that is not governed by daylight. Under the guidance of their masters, the revenants manage the affairs of Sabbat elders and balance their accounts in order to protect the Sect's interests. When a murder, kidnapping, or theft needed to be covered up, for example, a bishop would expect the Grimaldi to do it.

Despite their purported loyalty, however, the Grimaldi would similarly work toward fulfilling their own goals, often at the same time. A broker might finance an expedition for a Lasombra domitor, and invest a small percentage of the family's money toward the same trip. An attorney might interrogate key witnesses after a Malkavian *antitribu* murdered a local official, too, and bribe them to report any further supernatural activities to an unlisted number.

Though the family's wealth and holdings granted them more freedoms than other revenants, there was one detriment they could not escape. The slow crawl of time had an impact on the health of the Grimaldi line, and in order to prevent the same issues incest caused for the Bratovich, Obertus, and Zantosa families, they sought to intermarry with suitable partners. Thus, when the Sabbat abandoned Europe to sail to the Americas, a group of Grimaldi traders asked to accompany their masters, hoping they could convince them to create a new revenant family on foreign soil.

Following the Sect's establishment of several havens and strongholds throughout Central America, the Grimaldi



once again proved their worth by becoming financial and political juggernauts of the time. Instead of the Embrace, the Grimaldi asked their masters to ensure the health of their servants, and proposed the establishment of the Salamanca branch of their line. In this way, the Grimaldi has managed to avoid the problems that plague other revenant families.

In truth, the Grimaldi revenants walk a razor-thin line between serving vampires and plotting their departure to sidewith the Camarilla. Their position, power, and influence allows them to thrive in ways that no vampire can. For all of their influence, members know that they will be tolerated in the Sabbat as long as they are useful. To the Grimaldi, however, the Camarilla represents a way out, and some revenants have even gone so far as to romanticize their future allies. No family member, however, has any doubt that the Sabbat would hunt them down to the last man, woman, and child should they learn of the betrayal the Grimaldi has been planning for centuries.

**Appearance:** Unlike other Sabbat revenant families, the Grimaldi have taken great pains to maintain their appearance. Many family members wear business casual suits and dresses, while others adopt timeless fashions befitting the wealthy and social elite.

**Character Creation:** The Grimaldi family's Demeanors vary widely, but their Natures reflect their roles in life.

Judge, Eye of the Storm, and Perfectionist are all very common. A heavy investment in Backgrounds is a must for these characters. All Grimaldi revenants have at least some levels in Allies, Contacts, Influence, Fame, Resources, or Retainers. When selecting Merits and Flaws, however, remember that the Grimaldi reward members who retain their Humanity, and tend to punish those who don't. Thus, most members do not follow a Path.

**Disciplines:** Celerity, Dominate, Fortitude

**Weakness:** From birth the Grimaldi are taught that family comes first and that the Grimaldi are superior to all others. While this family first attitude creates loyalty, it also results in an underlying arrogance and difficulty relating to non-family members. Whenever a Grimaldi character has an opportunity to brag about the family, especially when comparing them to other Sabbat revenants (and ghouls), they must make a Willpower roll at a difficulty of 7 to hold back their scorn. This arrogant attitude can make it very difficult for the family to form allegiances, or even serve alongside other Retainers in the Sabbat.

Additionally, most Grimaldi who serve as advisers and Retainers to ranking members of the Sabbat are Bound to that vampire on orders of the Regent.

**Quote:** "Who am I? Oh, just the mayor's highly-paid and well-respected advisor."



## Kairouan Brotherhood, the Fractured Family

Few revenant families are thought to be as fragmented as the Kairouan Brotherhood. The story of the family's foundation is tied to a rift within the Assamite Clan that occurred between the Warrior and Sorcerer Castes during the early years of the Ashirra Sect in the twelfth century.

During the long years of the Crusades, members of the Assamite Clan ventured further north into Europe to spy on, murder, and confront their enemies in the Clans. Eventually, a group of Assamites encountered Clan Tzimisce and the revenant families who protected them. While the Warrior Caste viewed them as abominations, the Vizier Caste recognized the advantage revenants provided their masters. The Sorcerer Caste, on the other hand, were fascinated by the revenants Clan Tzimisce had created, and were curious to know how it was possible for a mortal body to naturally produce vitae.

At the behest of the Vizier Caste, who felt it was prudent to examine the revenants further, reluctant members of the Warrior Caste kidnapped a few revenants and brought them back to one of their strongholds near Alamut. It did not take long to convince a faction within the Sorcerer Caste, which was purportedly led by the mystic Sharbel and his Childe Myrsus, to begin experimenting on the Tzimisce's creations in order to unlock their physiological secrets.

Shortly after their work began, members of the Sorcerer Caste were cast out of the Persian stronghold. While the details of their exile have remained hidden, modern Children of Haqim believe it was due to the fact that the Sorcerer Caste's first attempts to reverse engineer the creation process ended in horrible disaster. Barred from Alamut, this small faction of Assamites moved near

the great city of Al-Qayrawan along with their ghouls and a group of captured revenants which included the Bratovich and the now extinct Basarab.

Early experiments resulted in then untreatable failures ranging from deformities to schizophrenia, which slowed the Sorcerer Caste's efforts considerably. In order to proceed, a few of the mystics proposed a more disciplined series of trials that included rigorous training. Revenants who had minor imperfections, they argued, could be singled out and a unique flaw could be cultivated to ensure their obedience. After several decades of trial and error, the first generation of revenants that would eventually become known as the Kairouan Brotherhood was born.

Though the Sorcerer Caste was successful, the creation of Assamite revenants spurred further conflict between the Castes. Each proposed a different use for the Brotherhood. The Sorcerer Caste felt that the Brotherhood belonged to them, and as their creators they had a right to command them as they saw fit. Several Assamite mystics thought that the revenants should act as the Clan's daytime bodyguards and assassins, while others believed that the Brotherhood should be trained as their assistants. The Vizier Caste, on the other hand, thought that the revenants made better spies than bodyguards, for they did not suffer the same restrictions as their ghouls did. At first, the Warrior Caste wanted nothing to do with the Brotherhood, for they viewed them to be abominations. Then, when they realized the revenants could not be easily wiped out, they sought to block the Sorcerer Caste's future efforts at every turn.

While the Castes argued and backstabbed each other, the Kairouan Brotherhood were largely left to their own devices. The Sorcerer Caste believed the revenants were too weak to initiate an uprising, and Bound particularly troublesome family members to further prevent the possibility of attack. Despite having

little to no direction, however, the revenants took matters into their own hands. By day, they took to their studies, and slowly integrated into the local



populace by getting involved in the affairs of church, schools, and government. By night, however, they served their masters in exchange for their protection, out of fear the brutal vampire-hunting sayyadin would wipe them out.

The combination of the rivalry between the Castes and the undue attention from vampire hunters had a significant impact on how the mystics treated their revenants. For almost eight hundred years, the Sorcerer Caste kept the Brotherhood close by. Those who remained in Tunisia's smaller cities became devout scholars and historians, while others were sent to scope out potential havens in cities such as London, Istanbul, and Munich.

Over time, however, the Brotherhood did not replenish their numbers as quickly as other revenant families did, and slowly but surely they began to diminish. Though they were created by the Sorcerer Caste, they now work more closely with the Vizier Caste out of necessity as the mystics did not operate as openly as they had in the past.

Recent generations have drifted away from their devout, religious roots and became more involved with technology, business, and tourism. In the past ten years, however, some of the more modern Warrior Caste members have reluctantly began to work with the Brotherhood. However, centuries of distrust have forced the revenants into an uncomfortable position; to integrate themselves further into the Clan, they must compete with ghouls to gain favor. Some do this for the promise of Embrace, others because they are loyal to the Clan's ideals.

Now, the Kairouan Brotherhood is smaller than it ever has been, and they have unwittingly spit off into factions. Many Assamites fear that their revenants will eventually be assimilated into other families. The thought of losing the Clan's only revenant family has forced the Castes to consider experimenting with the creation of revenants again, by stealing precious knowledge from more knowledgeable Clans such as the Tzimisce.

**Appearance:** Most, if not all, members of the Kairouan Brotherhood tend to be of Middle-Eastern descent. Though they share a common ancestry, their manner and style of dress varies widely according to their religious beliefs and willingness to adopt Western fashion and technology. Some revenants, for example, wear jeans and a tailored suit jacket while others might wear a thobe or a hijab according to custom.

**Character Creation:** Revenants within this family specialize in a broad range of duties that are often typically associated with ghouls. When selecting Talents and Skills, consider which Caste the character is working for. In general, most members of the Brotherhood do not follow a Path of Enlightenment, and encourage each other to retain their humanity for the betterment of their family.

**Disciplines:** Auspex, Celerity, Obfuscate

**Weakness:** Due to years of careful genetic manipulation, all revenants within the Kairouan Brotherhood suffer from the Slow Healing Flaw found on p. 483 of V20.

**Quote:** "We may be few, but we remain unbroken."



## Obertus, the Reclusive Scholars

Originally, the Obertus was a family of scholars, monks, and clerics who served the Tzimisce Lords Symeon and Gesu in Constantinople during the Byzantine Empire. Brothers in life and unlife, the Lords worshipped Gesu's sire, the mysterious Dracon, and passed their devotion on to their monks. After the city was sacked in a bloody siege and Gesu died, Symeon first moved the Obertus to the Clan's ancestral homelands in Eastern Europe, where he shaped them to become one of the dominant revenant families. Symeon, Dracon's grandchild, saw value in the Obertus and convinced the other Fiends to let him breed the remnants of surviving families into the clan.

Despite Symeon's reputation for being mystical and less practical than his peers, he selected the remaining Narov revenants, who were minor landholders and tax collectors, to be folded into the Obertus family. The Narov was a strategic choice, for the family did not have a powerful Clan patron as the Khavi did, and their wealth proved to be a great boon. With more resources, Obertus scholars were able to focus their efforts into expensive forms of research, focusing on the paranormal. Some vampires speculate that, thanks to the Obertus, Clan Tzimisce's knowledge of other supernatural creatures greatly increased, and this insight was used to protect the Fiends from being hunted into extinction during their many conflicts.

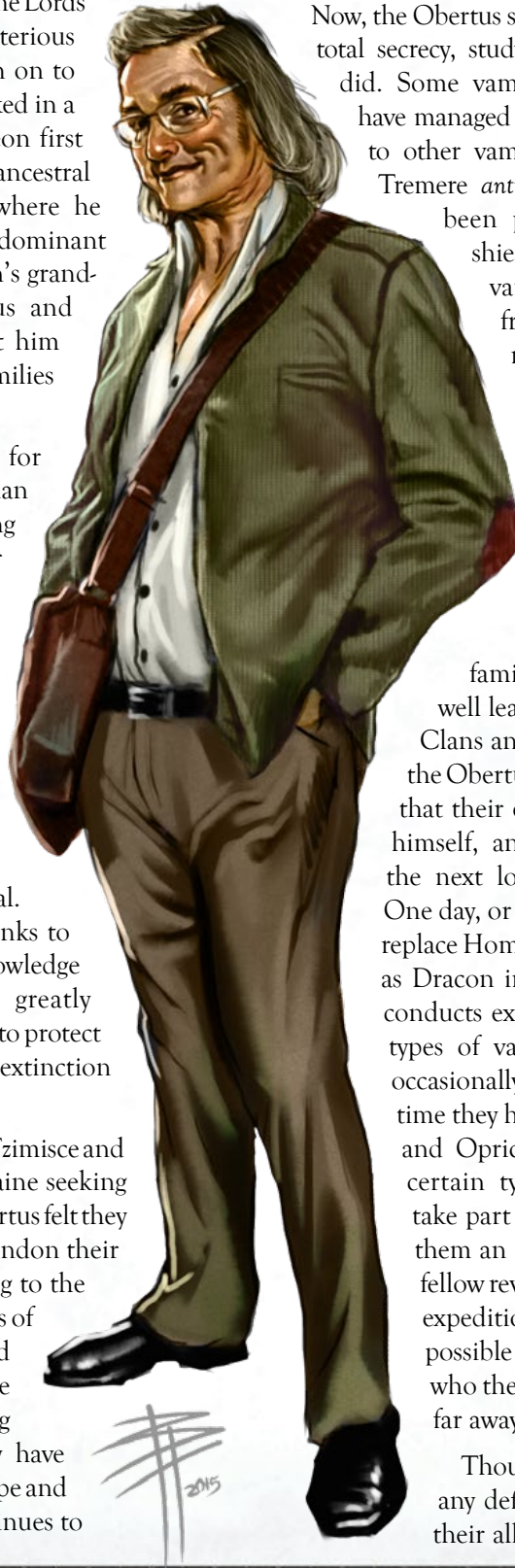
Unfortunately, with many of the Tzimisce and other members of the Sword of Caine seeking domains in the New World, the Obertus felt they had little support and chose to abandon their European strongholds. After sailing to the Americas along with other members of the Sabbat, the Obertus continued expanding their reach north to the colonies and settlements all along the eastern seaboard. While they have retained ties to their homes in Europe and the Middle East, the Obertus continues to

maintain a strong foothold in New England, Washington D.C., and New York, despite the ever growing presence of the Camarilla.

Now, the Obertus spend their days and nights in near total secrecy, studying the occult as their forbears did. Some vampires suspect that the Obertus have managed to survive by selling their services to other vampires, such as the Lasombra or Tremere *antitribu*, but this rumor has never been proven. In truth, the Obertus shies away from making pacts with vampires that are not descended from the Dracon unless absolutely necessary. However, the Obertus do sell secrets to select clientele, primarily other revenant families and ghoul organizations, such as the Oprichniki, in exchange for supernatural specimens, information, protection, and other valuable assets and services.

Like the Grimaldi, the Obertus family has secret objectives that might well lead to their destruction should the Clans and Sects discover them. Long ago, the Obertus family elders became convinced that their existence was a gift from Dracon himself, and their enhanced physiology is the next logical step in human evolution. One day, or so they claim, Homo obertus will replace Homo sapiens as the dominant species as Dracon intended. To this end, the family conducts experiments by obtaining different types of vampiric blood from willing and occasionally unwilling vampires. From time to time they have hired hunters from Bratovich and Oprichniki to collect "specimens" of certain types. Often some Obertus will take part in the extended hunt. This gives them an opportunity to also observe their fellow revenants in the wild. These hunting expeditions are an opportunity to seek out possible resting location for the Dracon, who the Obertus believe is deep in torpor far away from his wayward childer.

Though the Obertus has never achieved any definitive results, they've convinced their allies that they are close to creating



a ghoulish existence without an external source of the Blood. In truth, the Obertus has always made such claims, for they do not know when to stop unraveling an enigma, even if they know it's futile or rife with errors. For example, some Obertus revenants were shocked to learn that their trials accidentally activated the recessive genes of the Narov line. Thus, though the family's genetic stock is primarily Obertus, a small percentage has displayed Narov traits. This unfortunate circumstance, so far, has not come to the attention of Clan patrons. Yet.

Now, the Obertus scholars are beginning to splinter and leave the confines of their estates. The majority of Obertus who involve themselves with Sabbat affairs serve the Children of the Dracon faction of Tzimisce. The next largest group of Obertus are well placed among mortal libraries and universities, doing research and all manner of experiments. A minor faction has become less concerned about the pursuit of research, and more about the family's future. After witnessing the brutality of the other revenant families, they suspect the only reason why others want their secrets, is so that they could be weaponized. Though this could be true, other Obertus revenants feel that their knowledge is a small price to pay for a reunion with Dracon.

**Appearance:** The appearance of an Obertus revenant reflects the family's tendency to remain isolated. Some

might fit the Hollywood stereotype of a disheveled college professor or librarian, while others might wear styles that are considered vintage. Members who frequently travel, on the other hand, have thoroughly researched modern fashions and dress stylishly, but not ostentatiously.

**Character Creation:** Obertus revenants tend to be heavily geared toward intellectual pursuits and occult studies. They tend to be drawn to the dark and forbidden, investigating enigmas when others might turn away. Thus, many Obertus revenants are scientists, professors, archaeologists, and occultists in addition to being lorekeepers. In general, however, the family prizes keen minds over brute force, and tends to favor members who display superior mental prowess.

**Disciplines:** Auspex, Obfuscate, Vicissitude. Obertus revenants, who display signs of the Narov line, should swap Obfuscate for Dominate.

**Weakness:** Obertus revenants were bred for their intellectual prowess, and are prone to psychological disorders. The vast majority suffer from the Obsessive-Compulsive Derangement, while members from the resurging Narov line are afflicted with the Megalomania Derangement. See pp. 291-292 in V20.

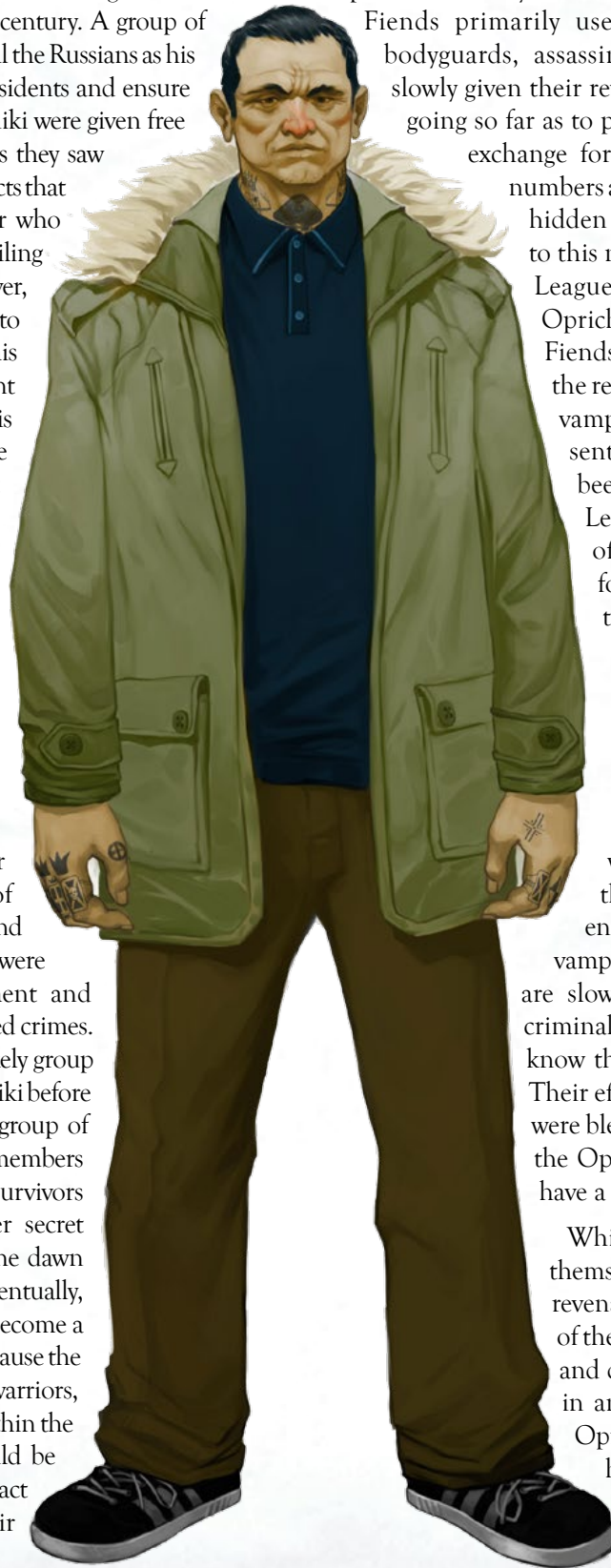
**Quote:** "I hold the keys to knowledge. I know which doors to unlock, and eventually I will open all of them."



## Oprichniki, the Greedy Mercenaries

The Oprichniki, who became the Russian vassals of Clan Tzimisce, can trace their origins to the reign of Ivan the Terrible in the mid-sixteenth century. A group of cutthroats served the Czar of all the Russians as his secret police force to hunt dissidents and ensure his right to rule. The Oprichniki were given free reign to exact punishments as they saw fit, and committed torturous acts that ranged from flaying a villager who complained too loudly to boiling a foreign assassin alive. However, whenever the Czar wished to exact his vengeance upon his own people, it was the obedient Oprichniki who carried out his orders. History may describe the late Czar as a dictator, but it was the Oprichniki who attacked cities like Novgorod, which resulted in the murder and torture of thousands of innocent civilians.

Toward the end of his life, however, the Czar paraded the Oprichniki as the true monsters of his realm, and forced them to turn on each other in a bitter battle for survival. Only the vilest of their lot was left standing, and the remaining mercenaries were threatened with imprisonment and exile for both real and imagined crimes. Betrayed but defiant, an unlikely group of saviors rescued the Oprichniki before they were to be executed. A group of Russian Tzimisce vampires, members of Oradea League, bound the survivors and commanded the former secret agents as their ghouls until the dawn of the seventeenth century. Eventually, the Oprichniki were bred to become a family of revenants, in part because the ghouls proved to be capable warriors, but also because the Elders within the Oradea League felt they would be more valuable if they could act more autonomously of their masters.



Even before the rise and fall of the Iron Curtain, the Oprichniki family was a well-kept secret. The Russian Fiends primarily used the Oprichniki as their bodyguards, assassins, and couriers, and have slowly given their revenants more freedoms, even going so far as to promise them the Embrace in exchange for their loyalty. Though their numbers are few, the Oprichniki remain hidden from the majority of the Clan to this night, still serving the Oradea League as they always have. The Oprichniki's loyalty to the defiant Fiends has not gone unnoticed by the rest of Clan Tzimisce, and some vampires believe this is a death sentence. After all, it has long been suspected that the Oradea League was isolated from the rest of the Clan as a punishment for their unwillingness to join the Sabbat.

In the modern era, rumors circulate about how the Oprichniki have become heavily involved with the Russian Mafia or Organizatsiya. Precious few revenants, along with several blood relatives, act as the Organizatsiya's bodyguards, enforcers, and scouts. While some vampires believe that the Oprichniki are slowly learning how to build a criminal organization of their own, few know the truth behind their actions. Their efforts to join the Organizatsiya were blessed by their patrons, because the Oprichniki have discovered they have a talent for hunting vampires.

While the Oradea League invests themselves in Clan politics, their revenants travel alongside members of the Russian Mafia to wreak havoc and destroy their masters' enemies in any way they can. Though the Oprichniki number less than a few hundred revenants, it is clear to their victims that this family refuses to face extinction.



Thus, for all surviving members of the Oprichniki, the family's purpose seems to either be related to hunting vampires or being groomed for the Embrace.

Unfortunately for the Oprichniki, it is more than likely that the Oradea League's Elders have guided them into this predicament, just as Ivan the Terrible did all those centuries ago. Only time will tell if this revenant family is savvy enough to survive and thrive.

**Appearance:** The Oprichniki are well-muscled and lean, and their clothes do not hide this fact. Members tend to wear their hair short, in either a military-style haircut or closely-cropped, and favor combat boots, black T-shirts, and camouflage pants. In general, the Oprichniki are found traveling together in groups of two, three, or more, and are rarely seen in public alone.

**Character Creation:** The Oprichniki tend to focus on vigorous, physical training to ensure that they are ready to fight at a moment's notice. Typically speaking,

characters share rules befitting a soldier of fortune. Physical Attributes and combat-focused Talents and Skills hold more use than social skills. Strategists do exist, however, and those revenants tend to take on a combination of Mental Attributes and Knowledges in military-and-urban related areas.

**Disciplines:** Animalism, Obfuscate, Potence

**Weakness:** Russian koldun believe the Oprichniki family is haunted by the ghosts of their victims, and all future generations have been cursed for their founders' crimes. Revenants suffer at the hands of at least one ghost as per the Haunted Flaw, found on p. 495 of **V20**. This is a permanent Flaw that cannot be resolved through the use of blood magic, Disciplines, or other means. Should any Oprichniki revenant discover a way to get rid of a specific ghost, another always takes its place.

**Quote:** "I am compelled to fight, like a moth is drawn to the flame."



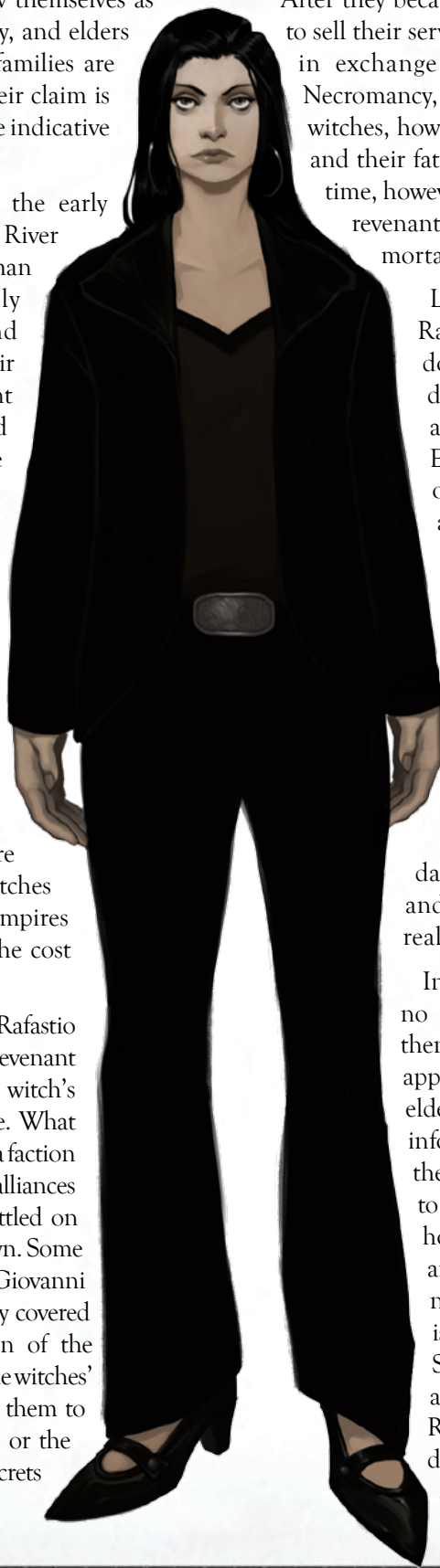
## Rafastio, the Proud Witches

The witches of the Rafastio view themselves as the oldest and first revenant family, and elders proclaim that all other revenant families are descended from them. Though their claim is likely incorrect, their bold words are indicative of their pride.

The Rafastio appeared among the early civilizations found along the Po River long before the rise of the Roman Empire. The matriarchal family began practicing witchcraft, and embraced maternal deities as their patron goddess. They had a talent for learning rituals and spells, and their reputation to heal and to curse grew over time.

Eventually, the Rafastio attracted the attention of the local vampires in the area, and grew curious about their unsettling visitors from the Tal'Mahe'Ra sometime during the Dark Ages. Recognizing that they were undead, the witches regarded vampires as damned creatures whose magical blood contained equal amounts of great power and curses. Though they were not welcome as their equals, the witches were invited to watch as the vampires empowered ordinary mortals, at the cost of eternal servitude.

The story about how some of the Rafastio became the True Black Hand's first revenant family has been retold to fit the witch's narrative of professed independence. What has been confirmed, however, is that a faction of the witches tentatively explored alliances with different patrons until they settled on the Tal'Mahe'Ra for reasons unknown. Some say that the Rafastio assisted the Giovanni with their experiments, and carefully covered their tracks during the destruction of the Cappadocian Clan. Others believe the witches' interest in vitae and Disciplines led them to work with Lasombra Abyss mystics, or the Fiends attempting to rediscover the secrets of Koldunic Sorcery.



After they became revenants, the Rafastio continued to sell their services to a mix of Clans and bloodlines in exchange for occult knowledge related to Necromancy, Thaumaturgy, and other magics. Some witches, however, worked within the Tal'Mahe'Ra, and their fate was uniquely tied to that Sect. Over time, however, though the family contained many revenants, the Rafastio expanded to include mortals and hedge witches as well.

Like other revenant families, the Rafastio were at risk of being hunted down, arrested, tortured, and killed during the early days of the Inquisition and the witch trials that plagued Europe for centuries. Unlike the others, however, the Rafastio bribed and manipulated hunters to look the other way, and may have even gone so far as to become hunters themselves. In truth, most revenant families believe the Rafastio traded their services to Clans and other families in exchange for protection, and most likely changed their surname many times over to avoid scrutiny. In truth, their unpredictable nature is part of what makes this family so dangerous; they have a tendency to lie and spin wild stories rather than face reality.

In the modern era, the Rafastio serve no one but themselves. Every now and then a Rafastio revenant makes a timely appearance, offering her services to an elder in exchange for seemingly harmless information. Most vampires think little of the Rafastio, and do not consider them to be a threat. However, it is unknown how many revenants, hedge witches, and mortals there are, and which family names are connected to the Rafastio. It is also unclear, much to the chagrin of Sect leaders, what the family's true goals are. On the surface, it appears as if the Rafastio think and scheme as vampires do, and have been working toward a specific goal ever since they first came into contact with vampires.

Though the Rafastio claim many members, it is suspected that less than a few hundred revenants have survived to present day. Some vampires believe that they have flocked to large, metropolitan areas throughout the United States and parts of eastern Europe, but there is a strong possibility the Rafastio may be found in any country, provided one knew where to look.

**Appearance:** When compared to the other revenant families, the Rafastio vary in terms of ethnicity and other traits due to their tendency to interbreed with those who have a natural affinity for magic. They seldom dress ostentatiously outside their rites, and tend to wear plain clothes in drab colors that will not attract attention.

**Character Creation:** Nature and Demeanor tend to vary wildly, but Mental Attributes and Knowledges are almost always prized. Most, if not all, Rafastio revenants have a

penchant for the occult, and all other rules should support either a specific field of study, such as thaumaturgy, or a broad range of them to include other forms of magic.

**Disciplines:** Animalism, Auspex, Thaumaturgy

**Weakness:** The Rafastio witches have suffered a curse since the earliest days of their line. During the new moon, the difficulty to use Disciplines increases by two. During waxing and waning, it increases by one; during a full moon their difficulty decreases by one.

Additionally, Rafastio blood rejects vampirism outright. Attempts to Embrace a Rafastio have always failed, and usually results in the revenant's death. The corpse retains not one drop of blood, and it decomposes so quickly it cannot be examined further.

**Quote:** "The owls hear my whispers, and the crows take to the sky. These are good omens."



## Rossellini, the “Little Brothers”

For centuries, the Giovanni Clan successfully portrayed the Rossellini as a minor family of blood relatives that had run afoul of Claudius Giovanni, a vampire rumored to be the son of the Clan’s founder Augustus, sometime in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. According to Clan archives, the Giovanni forced the Rossellini to swear fealty to them as punishment for their transgressions.

Most vampires, especially those who were focused on more pressing matters, thought very little of what had actually transpired. They were more concerned with the Ventrue Hardestadt’s bold proclamation that the Conspiracy of Isaac, a group Claudius had founded to target the Cappadocian Clan, should be investigated and its members brought to justice for exterminating one of the original thirteen Clan founders. However, Claudius was a suspected diablerist, capable necromancer, and cunning conspirator, as well as a high-ranking member of Clan Giovanni. Thus, despite rumors that the Rossellini family may have, in fact, been attempting to overthrow Claudius or thwart his plans, the Camarilla did not get involved and left the Giovanni to their own devices.

To the Rossellini, however, the Giovanni took advantage of their ancestors to supplant the Cappadocian Clan. Since the days of the Roman Empire, the Rossellini were students of the occult and, according to them, many of them became skilled necromancers who had managed to commune and control ghosts without the use of vampiric blood. According to some, it was the Rossellini family who had first attracted the attention of the Cappadocian Clan and the Giovanni, like spoiled children, grew jealous and cursed them into servitude. The Giovanni, on the other hand, claim that they were forced to punish the Rossellini after their great founder, Augustus, discovered they had been attempting to summon an ancient being from the lands of the dead.

The story as to how a family of human necromancers became revenants has been lost to time. The Rossellini believe that their forbearers had been suffering from an incurable, supernatural illness that eventually drove several of their ancestors mad with guilt for communing with the dead. In this weakened state, or so they proclaim, the Rossellini approached Claudius for help, and were initially rebuked for fornicating with corpses and damaging the family’s reputation. In fact, Claudius threatened his relatives, telling them that if they ever spoke of their suffering, he would pay hunters to put an end to their misery. Then, after many months of silence, Augustus himself approached the Rossellini family declaring that he took pity on them, and that he had discovered a sacred ritual that would restore their health.

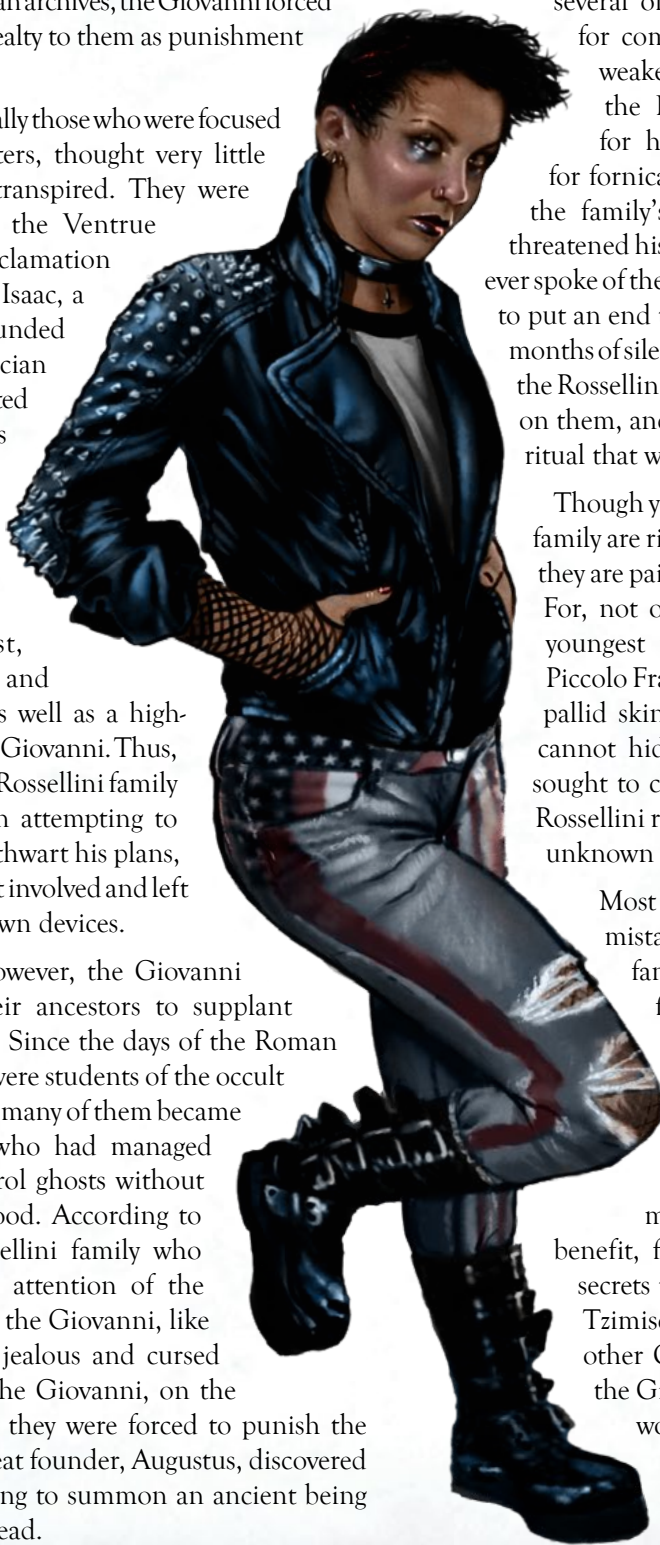
Though younger members of the Rossellini family are right to be skeptical about the past, they are painfully aware that they are unique. For, not only is the Rossellini one of the youngest revenant families, the so-called Piccolo Fratellini are unlike any other. Their pallid skin, haunted eyes, and cold touch cannot hide what the Giovanni Clan has sought to cover up for over three centuries; Rossellini revenants were created through an unknown application of necromancy.

Most vampires, ghouls, and revenants mistakenly assume that the Rossellini family is perverse because they suffer from an addiction to their art.

However, all members – even children – share the same set of unsettling characteristics, the same horrifying tendencies.

In truth, this common misconception is to the family’s benefit, for most Clans assume that the secrets to creating revenants lie with the Tzimisce Clan and no other. Should other Clans become aware of this fact, the Giovanni fear the Piccolo Fratellini would be kidnapped and dissected for further study.

In modern nights, Clan Giovanni members are tight-



lipped on the subject of revenants. Clan allies believe that the Giovanni are unreasonably paranoid, and have witnessed regnants overfeeding their thralls for fear of reprisal. Still, this does not prevent some vampires from whispering that the Rossellini will one day overthrow their masters, just as the Giovanni did centuries ago. Perhaps, it is for this reason the Clan seeks to experiment on the other branches of its family, such as the Pisanob in Central America or the Li Weng in San Francisco.

For now, the Rossellini dedicate their long nights to their occult studies and practices. They crave solitude, and often react poorly when forced into a crowded room. It has long been suspected that the family has a library of books that rivals the tomes found in any Tremere chantry, and that they constantly seek new additions to their growing collection. Those who do not share a passion for commanding ghosts, however, tend to pursue other branches of occult knowledge such as alchemy or thaumaturgy.

Most, if not all, Rossellini revenants are also treated as vassals, and are often tasked with carrying out orders for their domitors. Thus, it is not uncommon to find a Piccolo Fratellino cowering in a corner during Clan meetings, spying on enemies, or delivering messages.

**Appearance:** Members of the Rossellini family are, like the Giovanni Clan, primarily of Italian descent. Due to select intermarriages with other Giovanni minor families, however, the Rossellini do not share uniform traits such as skin, hair, or eye color. In general, their appearance reflects

the toll their family's weakness has on them. Their skin tends to be sallow, their hands shake, and their eyes are red. Despite the family's reputation for lurking in dusty catacombs and sleeping in occupied coffins, Rossellini revenants are usually dressed impeccably, which only makes them more unsettling.

**Character Creation:** Though they tend to be more intellectual than social, the Rossellini tend to be loners trapped by their family's weakness. As such, many members follow a Path of Enlightenment and tend to avoid contact with others. Enigma, Conformist, Child, Trickster, and Masochist are all appropriate Archetypes to choose from. The Rossellini does have some Contacts among the members of the occult community, and may have a mentor within the Giovanni or any of its lesser families. Lastly, all revenants who serve the Giovanni benefit from additional Resources.

**Disciplines:** Dominate, Fortitude, Necromancy

**Weakness:** All Rossellini revenants, regardless of age, suffer from the Deathstight Flaw found on p. 494 in V20. They are at a -2 difficulty to resist all rolls based on Appearance, but are at a +2 difficulty on any Perception roll. Social interactions are a challenge, and members suffer a +1 difficult on Social rolls. Due to the belief that they are living in a nightmarish landscape filled with death and decay, some revenants may develop further Flaws at the Storyteller's discretion.

**Quote:** "It does not matter what you devise, you cannot escape death."



## Servants of Anushin-Rawan, the Chosen

Centuries ago, a Ventrue elder named Anushin-Rawan chose the arid island of Yiaros in the Aegean Sea as the site for an island-wide Elysium for the Camarilla. While it was believed to be unpopulated, a number of humans do live there and serve Anushin-Rawan as assistants, gardeners, builders, workers, concubines, assistants, and anything else that is needed. These servants, who have been referred to as the Chosen, seem to have an eye for what their Kindred guests need most. While they go unnoticed by some visitors, other Kindred notice how pliable and polite they are. The Chosen obey without being needlessly obsequious like most Bound ghouls, and they are seldom underfoot.

Only a handful of Kindred, who are all high-ranking members of the Ventrue Clan, know that the Chosen are actually revenants. Most Kindred have assumed the Chosen were ghouls or mortal servants, and have never suspected that Anushin-Rawan engineered this unique family. According to legend, Anushin-Rawan created the Chosen many centuries ago by bringing pirates and concubines to Yiaros. The uninhabited island was an ideal setting for Elysium, as it was also rumored to be imbued with fae magic.

Anushin-Rawan has publicly claimed the island's mystical properties naturally created a family of revenants after centuries of creating ghouls among members of the same population. This, however, is an unprovable lie. Though any vampire might suspect that this is not how the Chosen were created, Anushin-Rawan is one of the most highly-respected, high status members of the Ventrue in the world. No one would dare to run afoul of the vampire who dedicated her life to an Elysium so many have enjoyed, not even if they had heard rumors from the infernalist Valerius Maior.

In truth, Anushin-Rawan was not the first vampire to walk on Yiaros. Once long ago, the Baali Clan established a temple on the island, dedicated to their powerful leader Nergal, and their infernal rites tainted the land. The magic lay fallow until Anushin-Rawan

arrived on the island, to create her family of revenants, and even she is not aware if she accidentally discovered the island or was unwittingly manipulated to visit it. Regardless, the end result of her efforts turned an island once used by infernalists into a Kindred paradise.

Over time, Anushin-Rawan has entertained many loyal Kindred and unusual guests on her island, ranging from the Ventrue Justicar Lucinde to the Rafastio witches, and the Chosen have served them all. This oasis has not gone unnoticed by other Sects, however, and despite their attempts to infiltrate Yiaros they were quickly ushered off the island unharmed. In truth, Anushin-Rawan's hospitality was legendary. Occasionally, the Ventrue Methuselah would present one of the Chosen as a gift to a high-ranking member of her Clan, with the recommendation that they should be placed in positions to help protect the Masquerade. In exchange, she received valuable information related to the inner workings of her Clan and Sect, and offers to visit Ventrue domains around the world.

While most vampires are suspicious of Anushin-Rawan's altruistic tendencies, they do not view her or the Chosen as a threat. The Methuselah has used that perception to set up training facilities in well-populated areas with the blessing of her Clanmates. These buildings have traditionally been used to screen and instruct candidates for Ventrue ghoulhood, and new holdings are being established in Las Vegas and Seattle. These so-called ghouls academies, which have existed for centuries, have also produced new servants for Anushin-Rawan. Most, if not all, Ventrue believe that they are providing her with future ghouls, and are not aware that she is using them to reinvigorate the Chosen's bloodline and ensure the health of her revenant family.

Within the last ten years, however, more Chosen have slowly been leaving the island for



reasons unknown. Not only has Anushin-Rawan has been presenting her revenants as gifts to high-ranking Ventrue in greater frequency, her revenants have also been helping her Clanmates secure havens in contested cities as well. Thus far, Anushin-Rawan's legendary island has protected her and her Chosen from further scrutiny, and only time will tell when and how the Ventrue Methuselah's myth will unravel.

**Appearance:** The Chosen hail from all ethnicities and backgrounds, and dress impeccably according to the wishes of Anushin-Rawan. Occasionally, she will ask her servants to wear outfits that fit a mythological theme to impress her guests. While often dressed well, they wear clothing suited to their tasks.

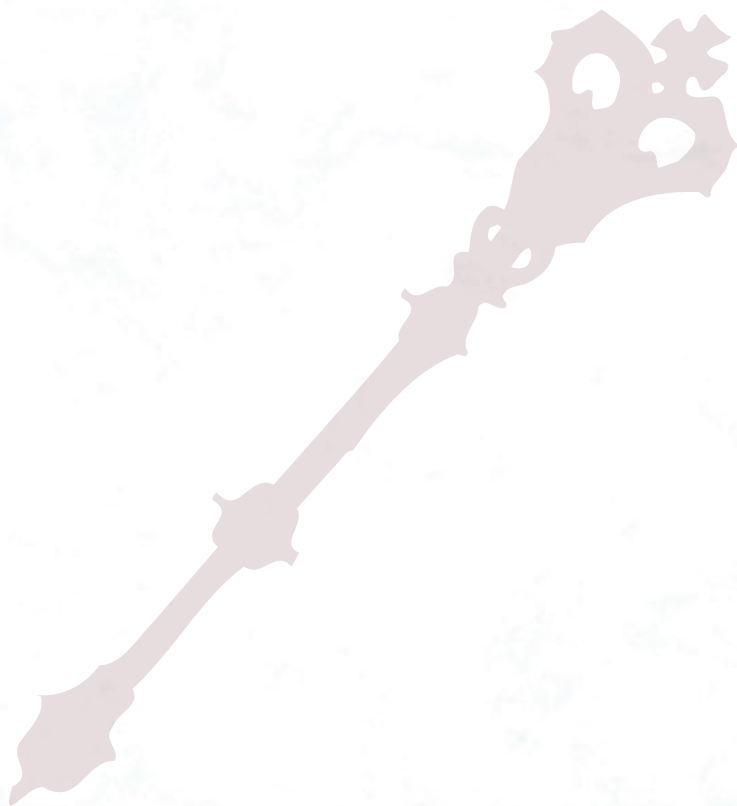
**Character Creation:** The Servants of Anushin-Rawan have been hand-picked and nurtured similarly to candidates selected to become devoted Ventrue ghouls. Thus, unlike other revenant families, the Chosen tend to represent Clan Ventrue's ideals. Despite their propensity for servitude, revenants are often trained to fit the role they were designed for. For example, a Chosen bodyguard would take more

physical traits than a Chosen majordomo. The Chosen are expected to follow the Traditions, and maintain a strong grip on their Humanity.

**Disciplines:** Auspex, Obfuscate, Presence

**Weakness:** The Servants of Anushin-Rawan have been bred to obey her without question or complaint. This servitude is mystically tied to her blood. Thus, whenever her revenants are in the presence of a vampire descended from her, regardless of Generation, they are compelled to protect that Ventrue as if they were suffering the effects of the blood bond. A revenant may only be mystically obsessed to one, unique descendant at any given time; if there are two or more vampires in the same vicinity, the revenant will be compelled to protect the first descendant she encounters. These effects are temporary, however, and last for 10 nights minus the character's Willpower rating. This obsession may cause the revenant to blow their cover or otherwise forget about other duties.

**Quote:** "Of course, my lord. Whatever you need. She will be pleased, I'm sure."



## Zantosa, the Petty Hedonists

On the surface, the Zantosa family doesn't seem to have a purpose or provide any benefit to the Sabbat, other than the occasional entertainment they provide for the Toreador *antitribu*, Serpents of the Light, and Tzimisce Clan. In fact, if the average Cainite was asked for her opinion, assuming she had heard of revenants, she would likely reply with a blank look. By all accounts, the Zantosa family appears to have outlived its usefulness shortly after their creation. Those who knew of the Zantosa during the height of their power believe it is a miracle that they've survived to present day given their hedonistic, decadent lifestyles.

The Zantosa were originally known as the Szantovich, and were one of the original revenant families engineered by the Tzimisce Clan. Well regarded, the family was not only known for its abundance of wealth and cruel inclinations, but for their trustworthiness as well. While no Cainite would take a Zantosa revenant seriously in the modern era, this wasn't always the case. During the Grimaldi family's meteoric rise to power, for example, the Zantosa expressed their disdain for them, and managed to thwart the Grimaldi's efforts to intermarry with other revenant families in Eastern Europe.

For many years, the Zantosa family enjoyed the heights of power, and held this position until the decline of their patrol Clan. Following the devastation during the Anarch Revolt, the Zantosa revenants withdrew into their chambers, forsaking long term sociopolitical schemes for short-term gratification. Their vices soon became legendary, for they ranged from alcoholism and drug abuse to rare forms of kink and self-mutilation.

Laughed off as an embarrassment to the Clan, the Zantosa family has largely been left to their own devices for centuries. The revenants have fallen so far from their former glory that they are often met with disdain until they introduce a new drug or suggest an experimental way to drink the Blood. This, however, has given the Zantosa revenants an advantage no other family has, for there is not a single ghoul,

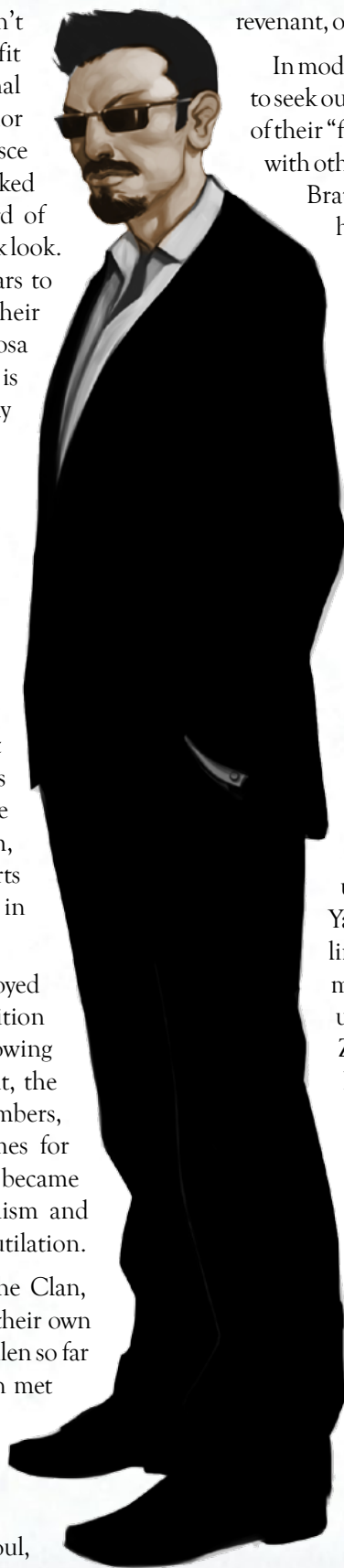
revenant, or vampire who believes them to be a threat.

In modern nights, the Zantosa revenants continue to seek out new thrills and pleasures in the company of their "friends". While they may have once feuded with other revenant families, such as the depraved Bratovich and the resurging Grimaldi, they have set their differences aside in favor of a new goal: making allies. It seems that, for whatever reason, the Zantosa revenants are wining and dining other revenants and their patrons in exotic locales and among the social elite. To most Cainites, however, the Zantosa family is an unpredictable lot, and sudden changes in their behavior are not a cause for concern. Zantosa revenants not only encourage this view, they continue to play the fool while trading arms with the Oprichniki or asking for handouts from the Grimaldi to entertain Sabbat leaders.

Despite their addictive tendencies, the Zantosa are aware that they cannot survive for much longer in their current state. Recently, they've been intermarrying with families connected to the criminal underground, such as the Yakuza's Yamaguchi clan, to continue the Zantosa line and impress the Sabbat. Though they may remain unnoticed and, in many cases, unwanted by the Sect, a growing faction of Zantosa revenants desperately pins their hopes on retaining the status and position they once held.

**Appearance:** The Zantosa bear the signs of their addiction. Their skin is often dull, their eyes rimmed with red, and their hair tends to be stringy. While they refuse to let themselves slide into depravity, their clothes are often wrinkled and unkempt. Many Zantosa revenants fit the stereotype of an addict, and intentionally dress to play the part to put their powerful guests at ease.

**Character Creation:** Of all the revenant families, the Zantosa boasts the





widest variety of characters, though many of them cannot hold down a job. They tend to have charming personalities, and often work in fields related to entertainment as opposed to scholarly or more athletic positions. Those who cannot hold down a job tend to be con artists and thieves, fleecing off of mortals to fund their habits. The only aspects that all Zantosa revenants share are related to their addictive tendencies.

**Disciplines:** Auspex, Presence, Vicissitude

**Weakness:** Zantosa revenants have a challenging time resisting temptation. Whenever a Zantosa revenant is exposed to a particularly pleasurable experience, she must make a Willpower roll. The difficulty is determined by

the Storyteller, depending on the experience in question. Failure indicates that the Zantosa is now obsessed with or addicted to that particular sensation. This might relate to doing a new drug, performing a particular sexual position, enjoying a sumptuous wine, or being fed upon. Obsessed, the revenant will do almost anything to experience that sensation again.

Zantosa revenants are also unable to spend Willpower to resist any supernatural power that entices them to indulge in a new source of pleasure, no matter how dangerous. Many have met untimely ends at the hands of vampires, fae, and stranger creatures.

**Quote:** "If I can snort it, I will. If I can't, I'll try anyway."



## Other Families

The once-proud *Marijava* lineage has fractured into two major family lines. Some members serve the Tal'Mahe'Ra as spies and assassins, while others serve Ravnos and Setite masters as their guardians. A few, however, serve as cult leaders for enterprising Setites as well. Much of the family is of Indian descent and has estates near Mumbai and New Delhi in India, as well as Kabul in Afghanistan. Once one of the largest revenant families, the *Marijava* have suffered major attrition over the decades being on the front lines of a number of conflicts, including battles for ideology and territory between the Ravnos and the mysterious undead of the East.

*Marijava* are quite susceptible to the blood bond and become Bound to a vampire with only one drink. Thus, they often travel in pairs and keep a close watch over the undead – even those they serve – hoping to avoid being enslaved.

The *Keskinen* serve the mad ancient called Louhi. It is unknown how or when the mystic acquired this family, or if she created the lineage herself with stolen rituals. The *Keskinen* are a very small, tight-knit family, who are even more unfathomable than their Methuselah master. They travel throughout Europe acquiring alchemical materials, and occasionally trade for lore with *Tzimisce* kolduns or mortal mystics. They practice old, mostly forgotten magics, powered in part by their twisted blood and traditions passed down through many years.

Most vampires did not even know of their existence until Louhi's very recent alliance with the Anarch Movement in Scandinavia (see page 59 of *Anarchs Unbound*). Even now, most vampires think of them as eccentric ghouls

in service to the Methuselah. All *Keskinen* share their patrons' obsession with ushering in an eternal night by blotting out the sun. This Derangement manifests in a number of different ways throughout the family.

The *Katayama* family is the youngest revenant family, having only recently reached a third generation of revenants who've been bred true. So far, there are less than a dozen *Katayamas* in all, including mortal and revenant members. Their development is being carefully monitored under strictly controlled conditions by Dr. Douglas Netchurch and, more recently, by his child Dr. Nancy Reage.

Though the Malkavian scientists had been trying to experiment with ghouls and revenants for some time, the real breakthrough in their research came when they were "loaned" a Ducheski assistant by a distant colleague of theirs, Dr. Mortius, a Tremere scholar in Milwaukee. The Ducheski revenant was interviewed first, examined thoroughly, and then added to the revenants' eugenics program. Dr. Netchurch claims that revenants are an enhanced species, and refuses to believe that so-called blood magic had anything to do with his ability to create them.

Two of the *Katayamas* have recently been sent to London to work with yet another college of Netchurch's, Dr. Willum Timothy, a well-respected Malkavian advisor to Queen Anne. The psychologist has pledged to monitor the development of his new charges as they assist him in his own experiments regarding the Kindred psyche. Additionally, Dr. Reage is hoping to eventually cross-breed the *Katayamas* with the Ducheski and the Servants of Anushin-Rawan.

As much interest as the Doctor has in the revenant condition, she feels that only the families which serve her fellow Kindred are worth considering as viable for this next stage of experimentation.



# Chapter Five: Character Creation

*"Loyalty can be forced with the Blood...but Trust must be earned in the darkest of nights."*

Mark Decker, Prince of Milwaukee

To become a ghoul, you'll abandon the trappings of a boring, mundane life to adopt a new one. Your upcoming days will be filled with lies and deceit, as you scurry to fulfill the wishes of your master while maintaining a tenuous tie to the world you once knew. Your nights, on the other hand, are less predictable in your domitor's hands, but you're not sure you care—provided you get to taste that sweet, sweet blood one more time.

Though no two ghouls or domitors are alike, there are some story-based elements that all players need before building a character. Unlike a neonate who wakes up not knowing who or where her sire is, a ghoul is typically aware of the identity of his domitor.

When creating a ghoul character, it is strongly recommended to devote more time to your character concept than you might if you were a vampire, simply because the identity and the nature of your domitor will have a profound impact on your experience. You do not necessarily need to know, however, which Clan your master belongs to, what Sect is which, or who your domitor's enemies are. In fact, any ghoul's knowledge of the innermost workings of his master's unlife is not a requirement to become one. These details might be revealed over many nights, if at all, and impact a ghoul in unforeseen ways as he struggles to cope with what he learns, sees, and experiences.

Both ghouls and revenants have a unique perspective that does not require prior setting knowledge of **Vampire: the Masquerade**. In general, however, knowledge is gained through experience. For this reason, revenants from established families, independent ghouls, and elder ghouls tend to be more familiar with vampire society than new or younger ghouls.

Please note that the rules for character creation in **Ghouls & Revenants** have been updated to reflect changes to ensure that ghouls and revenants can play a more significant role in your V20 chronicle. These rules, however, are designed for starting characters. Thus, if you wish to play an elder ghoul, you'll need to discuss your concept with your Storyteller prior to creating a character.

## Character Creation Process

### Step One: Character Concept

Your character concept includes your physical description, Nature and Demeanor, and the details of who you were before you became a ghoul. Generally speaking,

# Character Creation Process

## Step One: Character Concept

Choose concept, Nature, and Demeanor. Then, choose whether or not your character is a vassal, independent ghoul, or revenant.

## Step Two: Select Attributes

Prioritize the three categories: Physical, Social, Mental (6/4/3). Your character automatically has one dot in each Attribute.

Rate Physical Traits: Strength, Dexterity, Stamina

Rate Social Traits: Charisma, Manipulation, Appearance

Rate Mental Traits: Perception, Intelligence, Wits

## Step Three: Select Abilities

Prioritize the three categories: Talents, Skills, Knowledges (11/7/4).

Choose Talents, Skills, Knowledges

No Ability should be higher than a 3 at this stage.

## Step Four: Select Advantages

Choose Disciplines. Vassals may assign one dot in a Discipline that makes sense for their characters to have. Independent ghouls may select one dot in any Discipline, at the Storyteller's discretion. Revenants may spend a

dot to add a Discipline that is commonly used by their families. All ghouls and revenants also obtain 1 dot in Potence, regardless.

Choose Backgrounds (5) and rate Virtues (5 for revenants and Sabbat ghouls, and 7 for all other vassals and independent ghouls). All characters automatically gain one dot in each Virtue.

## Step Five: Finishing Touches

Calculate and record Humanity. Add Conscience and Self-Control.

Record Willpower, which is equal to Courage, and Blood Point (1) regardless of age. Ghouls may not take a Path of Enlightenment during character creation without express permission of the Storyteller. Revenants may opt to take one, however, instead of Humanity.

Spend Freebie points (21).

*Optional:* Choose Merits and Flaws. The sum of your Merits and Flaws cannot exceed 7 points.

## Freebie Points

Trait	Cost
Attribute	5 per dot
Ability	2 per dot
Discipline	10 per dot
Background	1 per dot
Virtue	2 per dot
Humanity	1 per dot
Willpower	1 per dot

your character will likely be a vassal that has a domitor, a member of a revenant family, or an independent ghoul with a means of obtaining vampiric blood.

As you think about your character concept, ask yourself questions like these to help flesh out your ghoul:

- **In General:** What city do you live in? What's your day job? Now that you've become a ghoul, are you experiencing any issues at work? What problems do you have with the people in your everyday life — your boss, your former significant other, or relatives you've since been forced to abandon or remain in limited contact with? Do you know that other ghouls exist? If so, how do you feel about them? Do you feel happier since you've become a ghoul? Or do you suspect something is terribly wrong? Would you let one of your loved ones become a ghoul, or would you try to prevent that from happening? Now that you know vampires exist, what questions do you have? What does the Blood mean to you, and what does it taste like? Do you want to become a vampire one day?
- **Domitor:** If you are a ghoul, what is your domitor's name? What has your domitor promised you? What does she look like? How do you think your domitor feels about you? Does your domitor treat you like a trusted servant or an afterthought? How much has your domitor told you about her Clan, Sect, rivals, or enemies? Are you the only ghoul your domitor maintains, or does she have more than one? What kinds of tasks does your domitor ask you to perform? What Clan is your master, and what role does she play in vampiric society?
- **Vassal:** What sort of person were you before you became a ghoul? How have you felt your personality change since you began your service? Do you define yourself solely in terms of your relation to your master? Why were you chosen; what do you have to offer your domitor? Were you tricked into becoming a ghoul, or did you go willingly? Where do you serve your master? Have you met other vampires or ghouls, or are you being kept in the dark? Did you know about vampires before you became a ghoul, and has your opinion of them since changed?
- **Revenant:** What family do you belong to? How strong is your family loyalty? Do you have any sibling rivalries? Are you aware that other revenant families exist? How well versed are you in Sect politics? Do you know there are many different kinds of vampires, and how many have you met? Have you

ever frenzied before, and did you know that was because of the blood you produce in your veins? Have you questioned where your family's wealth comes from? Are you comfortable with the depths of depravity your family has been rumored to sink into?

- **Independent:** How did you become a ghoul? Did you escape from a master, or were you freed? How do you maintain your regular feedings? Do you interact with vampires on their own terms, or do you deliberately avoid becoming entangled in their schemes? Do you know anything about the different Clans? Are you an escaped ghoul? If so, why did you leave your master's side? Have you been contacted by the Unmastered? Do you want to become a vampire, or do you desperately want to break free from your addiction to the Blood? Do you know you're being watched or hunted? How do you defend yourself, and where do you hide? Who are your allies?

## Sample Character Concept

Bill has decided he wants to create a Bratovich revenant named Marc. His concept is a vicious young man who's recently cleaned himself up. Unaware of Clan or Sect politics, Marc has been granted permission to leave the family estate in Idaho to attend a university and increase the family's connections in the mortal world. While he's away from home, he's been encouraged to give people a better impression of what it means to be a Bratovich. His brothers and sisters have also told him not to get caught doing anything stupid, because outsiders would throw them all behind bars if they knew what they've done.

Bill determines that Marc Bratovich is a scion of this revenant family. While he does serve the Sabbat, Marc does not fall prey to many of the depraved acts his family is known for. He grew rapidly, reaching a height of six feet by age ten, and has brown hair and green eyes. Marc is also athletic, and participated in his first manhunt at age twelve. He was awarded one of the victims' eyeteeth as a trophy for his fearlessness, and now wears the tooth on a chain around his neck as a reminder of his family's voracity.

Despite his propensity for brutality, Marco is surprisingly intelligent and sociable. He seems to have a sixth sense about people, unlike his brothers and sisters, and often tells people what they want to hear. For the most part, his silver tongue has served him well.

Marc's nature is a Visionary, because he wishes to modernize his family members by reintroducing them into a society that will accept them. His demeanor is Judge, for while it's clear he knows the rules his family are supposed

to abide by, his face to the world is a person who constantly seeks to improve those laws, supposedly for the better.

## Step Two: Select Attributes

Mortals begin play with less raw potential than vampire characters do. A ghoul has fewer dots to divide among her Attributes, as her capabilities are more mundane – at the start. You begin play with one free dot in each Attribute, of course. After prioritizing your Attributes, you may then spend six dots among your primary Attributes, four among your secondary, and three among your tertiary.

### Sample Character Attributes

Though Marc is intelligent, he can blend into society and fit in. This trait is rarely found among the Bratovich revenants, and makes his character unique. His physical prowess is important, too, but not as much of a priority as his ability to plan ahead. Thus, his Attributes are rated according to how important those traits are to his over concept, rather than a specific stat.

His Attributes rated in order of priority, after adding the free dot in each Attribute, would be:

**Physical Traits (3):** Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

**Social Traits (6):** Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2

**Mental Traits (4):** Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 2

## Step Three: Select Abilities

After prioritizing Talents, Skills, and Knowledges, you will have 11 dots to spend on your primary Abilities, 7 on the second, and 4 on the third. You may not spend more than three dots in any Ability during this stage of character creation.

### Sample Character Abilities

Marc Bratovich has some natural skill as an athlete, but he's also a revenant who has a duplicitous nature. He may pretend to be likeable, but he does so as a means to an end. Thus, his Abilities are rated to flesh out his character as a college student, as a family spokesperson who's recruiting allies, and as a capable fighter.

**Talents (7):** Athletics 2, Empathy 3, Leadership 2

**Skills (11):** Drive 1, Etiquette 2, Firearms 2, Melee 2, Stealth 2, Survival 2

**Knowledges (4):** Academics 2, Computer 1, Politics 1

Other ghouls, on the other hand, might get good use out of the new Professional Skill (V20, p. 107) and Expert Knowledge (V20, p. 110) listed here.

### New Professional Skill: Veil of the Blood

Most vampires understand how powerful feigning mortality can be, and know how to use the Blush of Health Merit to their advantage. The Veil of Blood allows a ghoul to train herself to mimic the appearance of a vampire, in order to navigate vampire society, intimidate curious passersby, or even perform certain tasks for an insistent master. The ghoul cannot significantly alter her physical appearance to resemble a vampire of a specific Clan or bloodline. She can, however, master the ability to drain the blood from the surface of her skin and all but silence her heartbeat.

While it does not make sense for most ghouls who operate in the service of a master to pretend to be a vampire, learning this Professional Skill is valuable for ghouls who need to remain hidden among *other* vampires. Certain domitors, for example, may call upon their ghouls to indulge in a little espionage or be present at a vampires-only meeting. Independent ghouls, on the other hand, may find that posing as a vampire can lengthen their lives, and will often learn this Ability after they escape their domitor's scrutiny.

Both elder and ancient ghouls also tend to have Veil of the Blood, and ancient ghouls are masters of it. Having the ability to feign the appearance of a vampire acts as a means of self-protection for these long-lived ghouls who, despite all their years, are still mortal.

The only ghouls who may not purchase this at character creation are revenants and Sabbat ghouls. They can, however, train to learn how to use the Veil of the Blood over time, provided they have the means and the privacy to do so.

• Novice	"Ruddy? Oh, I fed recently. That must be it."
• • Practiced	Other ghouls and mortals would recognize you as a vampire.
• • • Competent	You can safely walk among higher Generation vampires.
• • • • Expert	You can fool most vampires at first glance without the use of Disciplines.
• • • • • Master	You can mingle at Elysium without raising suspicion.

**Possessed by:** independent ghouls, elder and ancient ghouls, some revenants

## New Expert Knowledge: Custodian

Most ghouls are lured into their domitor's world because they have proven themselves to be valuable in some fashion. In exchange for blood and dark promises, the vast majority of ghouls are destined to live out their days and nights in eternal servitude. Some ghouls have first-hand knowledge running a complex organization or have experience managing a household for their domitor. The ghoul who has this Expert Knowledge is well on her way to mastering the requirements needed to maintain her master's haven.

This Ability assumes that the ghoul is adept as a chief steward, driver, and watchdog for her domitor, and her competency has not gone unnoticed by her master. Unlike other ghouls or revenants, those who possess the Custodian Expert Knowledge have already proven themselves to their domitors, and are often left alone to do what needs to be done. At higher levels, a ghoul has proven to be so masterful at running her domitor's household that she is drawn further into her master's world.

• Amateur	You can keep your apartment in order.
•• Apprentice	You are new to managing a haven, but you have demonstrated a talent for the job.
••• Professional	You keep the manor running so smoothly that you receive compliments from your master and his guests.
•••• Adept	You know what needs to be done before your master issues an order, and send invitations and messages to other vampires on behalf of your domitor.
••••• Savant	You are so skilled at managing your domitor's affairs that other ghouls have heard of your services, and your master listens to your observations and advice.

Possessed by: Camarilla ghouls, some revenants

## Step Four: Select Advantages

Now that you've got a basic template for your character, you'll flesh out your ghoul further by giving her Disciplines, Backgrounds, and Virtues.

### Disciplines

While there are many Disciplines, ghouls are more limited in their ability to learn and use them. Both revenants

and ghouls begin with one dot of Potence. Potence is the only Discipline that is instinctively learned, either after a revenant has been born, or following a ghoul's third sip of the Blood, regardless of which vampire they're drinking from.

During character creation, a ghoul may also add one dot in another Discipline. This secondary Discipline should be chosen based on the identity of your family, domitor, or "donor". In the vast majority of cases, a ghoul's capacity to learn a Discipline originates from the blood she initially drinks. However, your Discipline choices should make sense for your character. A Sabbat ghoul, for example, may drink from a Lasombra vampire who has high levels of Obtenebration, but that doesn't mean that ghoul will automatically learn Shadow Play.

The basic guidelines for using and acquiring Disciplines presented here builds off of page 500 in **V20**.

- **Vassals:** If you are playing a vassal ghoul, you must pick a common Discipline that your domitor uses. You may also check with your Storyteller for guidance, especially if you've decided that your ghoul is not sure which Clan your domitor belongs to. In general, however, you would likely choose a dot in one of the more common Disciplines — unless your domitor is a member of the Tremere or Gangrel Clans. Protean and Thaumaturgy are only available to Gangrel and Tremere ghouls, respectively, and at a Storyteller's discretion.
- **Revenants:** If you are playing a revenant, you should select your second Discipline from the traditional Disciplines that are commonly used by your family. Revenant family Disciplines are found in their respective write-ups in Chapter 3 beginning on **page 89**. However, if you have a vampire as your guide or mentor, you may select an appropriate Discipline at your Storyteller's discretion.
- **Independents:** While independent ghouls may not have a domitor, they do need a donor who is willing to provide them with vampiric blood. Thus, though independent ghouls may not seem to have any restrictions, they are limited to acquiring new Disciplines depending upon who is sustaining their reliance on the Blood. To assess which Discipline makes sense for your character, it is strongly recommended that you select a commonly found Discipline like Celerity or Fortitude. Alternatively, you might choose a specific Discipline, such as Animalism, from a Clan that you've been exchanging favors with.





## Revised Discipline Limits

Both ghouls and revenants are typically limited to the use of a Discipline's first power. However, they might exceed this limit by consuming blood from more powerful vampires. The potency of the Blood is directly connected to the donor's Generation. Thus, the lower a vampire's Generation, the more powers in a specific Discipline a ghoul may learn.

Learning higher levels in any Discipline comes with time, however, and this is reflected through the experience points your character earns in your chronicle. Your ghoul or revenant must drink enough blood from an appropriate character over the course of many nights to gain the experience points required. Drinking blood, however, is not a guarantee that your ghouls or revenant will automatically gain a Discipline, nor will you know how to use it. You still need to study with a willing teacher, and your ability to learn Disciplines will vary based on your connections and relationships in your chronicle, as well as your sponsor's Generation.

The correlation between your ghoul's ability to progress in a Discipline and your sponsor's Generation was initially provided on page 499 of *V20*. This revised chart provides a new, optional rate of progression for ghouls and revenants who wish to learn more Disciplines. While this chart does not apply to starting characters, it may help shape your

character's goals and, alternatively, help your domitor fulfill her promises to you over the course of your chronicle.

Before you decide you'd like to learn Disciplines using the revised chart, be sure to check with your Storyteller first. Ghouls and revenants who acquire better knowledge of Disciplines will shift the status quo, and your Storyteller will help shape what this means in your story.

Sponsor's Generation	Maximum Discipline Level
Thirteenth to Eleventh	1
Tenth or Ninth	2
Eighth or Seventh	3
Sixth or Fifth	4
Fourth	5

## Optional Discipline Package: In the Master's Footsteps

You might want your ghoul to follow a path that's more closely tuned to her master's. Your reasons might range from a desire to be groomed for an eventual Embrace to an unusually close relationship with your domitor. Both you and your Storyteller should be in agreement that this alternate

method will be used, as this choice will affect your story in addition to your ghoul's character sheet. Adding more Disciplines to your character might sound like a fantastic idea, but remember that nothing in V20 is free. The more Disciplines and powers you have, the deeper your ghoul — a mortal — will be drawn deeper into the treacherous, blood-filled nights of your domitor or sponsor.

The one Discipline all ghouls learn, regardless of the identity of their domitor or sponsor, is Potence. The current rules suggest, however, that if your ghoul's domitor doesn't have access to Potence, it naturally follows that your ghoul wouldn't know that Discipline either. It can be easily argued that the Potence of any ghoul, limited as it is in most cases to only one dot, is caused by a chemical reaction to the Blood coursing through your veins.

In the Master's Footsteps allows you to alter your starting Discipline by forgoing Potence. In this option, you may select two Disciplines for your ghoul as you normally would. However, both must be from among the Disciplines your domitor possesses, and at least one must be selected from the domitor's Clan Disciplines.

Your Storyteller may choose to limit your choices to reflect the more widely used eight Disciplines: Animalism, Auspex, Celerity, Dominate, Fortitude, Obfuscate, Potence, and Presence. Rare or Clan-specific Disciplines, such as Vicissitude, Chimestry, and Quietus, are not freely taught to any vampire who wishes to learn it, so it follows that ghouls would not normally have access to learning them, either. If they did, there would have to be a compelling reason for that character that goes beyond the ability to use those Disciplines. If you would like your ghoul to learn a rare Discipline, be sure to address your goals with your Storyteller.

Characters whose concept similarly demonstrates a particular affinity for one of their domitor's Disciplines should be allowed to purchase a starting Discipline as a substitution for Potence at a slightly reduced cost (-3 points) to emphasize that character's affinity for the Discipline and familiarity with the basic underlying concepts of its use. Once initial character creation is complete, learning the first dot in any new Disciplines will cost 10 experience points per the chart found on [page 140](#).

Note that this alternate Discipline selection method is employed only at the character's creation; once characters are maneuvering within the confines of the game setting, they are still free to learn any Disciplines for which they can find a teacher, provided they also have the requisite number of experience point available to purchase the new Discipline.

If a ghoul should happen to change masters, their knowledge of Disciplines learned under their prior domitor

are not immediately lost. As long as a continuous supply is maintained, that blood will fuel the use of any and all Disciplines a ghoul possesses.

## Revenants and Family Disciplines

If you are playing a revenant and wish to swap Potence for another Discipline using this alternate method, you may choose two alternate Disciplines based on which ones your family uses.

Unlike ghouls, you do not necessarily need to ask a domitor to teach you how to use your Disciplines, but you will need a willing instructor. The ability to learn Disciplines does not guarantee that you will gain access to them, so be sure to check with your Storyteller to figure out what makes sense for your character.

### Sample Character Concept

For example, Marc Bratovich would normally have one dot in Potence, and access to Fortitude, Vicissitude, and Animalism. If Marc did not want Potence, he might take a dot in Fortitude and Animalism instead. He would then say that his aunt, Shelly Bratovich, is teaching him Animalism to get better use of the animals in his environment. However, since Marc's character concept as a college student doesn't fit with the use of Animalism, he would likely keep a dot in Potence and take Fortitude as his second Discipline instead.

## Backgrounds

You may choose many of the same Backgrounds as a vampire might for your ghoul, but there are some marked exceptions. Your ghoul cannot have a Generation, for example, and has no need of Herd. Additionally, the Mentor Background does not make sense for younger ghouls or revenants to have, as it wouldn't make sense for those characters. Finally, all ghouls, regardless of age or domitor, cannot hold Status, even though they might earn a vampire's marginal respect over time.

Like Disciplines, the thing to keep in mind when selecting a Background is that it should make sense for your ghoul or revenant to have. In most cases, for example, your domitor would probably not allow you to have Retainers, but as an independent ghoul you might need them to survive. If you're not sure what Backgrounds are appropriate, check with your Storyteller to review your options.

In addition to the Backgrounds found in V20 beginning on page 111, these new Backgrounds are offered as options for ghouls and revenants.

## Domitor

You are already Bound to a vampire and have been her ghoul for a time. While the influence of the blood bond makes it challenging for you to tell the difference between love, loyalty, and feigned interest, you suspect your master is concerned about your continued well-being and safety.

This Background introduces tiers that reflect the power of your domitor, which influences the resources you have access to and the number of Disciplines your ghoul might learn. The more ancient and powerful your master is, the less likely he is to care about your welfare. Conversely, higher Generation vampires might take better care of you, because they are more tied to their humanity than an elder vampire. Thus, the more dots you take in the Domitor Background, the more powerful you can become, but the less cared for you'll be. Due to the effects of the blood bond, however, you might not realize how your master feels about you – until it is too late.

**Used by:** Camarilla ghouls. Independent ghouls, some Sabbat ghouls, and most revenants would not benefit as much from Domitor Background.

- Your domitor is Eleventh Generation or higher, and considers you a valued confidant.
- Your master is Ninth or Tenth Generation, and has a passing fondness for you.
- Your domitor is Eighth Generation, and will sometimes let you get a word in edgewise.
- Your domitor is Seventh Generation, and expects you to do your job – nothing more.
- Your master is Sixth Generation, and remarkably has not yet grown sick of the sight of your face.

## Double Life

Some ghouls walk a tightrope between maintaining a tenuous connection to the world of mortals and serving their domitor to the exclusion of everyone and everything else. Not all ghouls are able to handle the effort required, and those who do find their charade exhausting and more complicated than they initially expected. Very few ghouls can maintain both positions perfectly, and usually it is the role of the ghoul's former self that suffers the most.

Typically, Camarilla domitors wish for their ghouls to maintain a Double Life, because it helps ensure that the Masquerade is protected. Ghouls who retain strong ties to their former selves could be spies or sleeper agents, provided they are aware of what they have become. In order for the

Double Life to be useful to your ghoul, you should have the awareness required to flip between your job as a mortal and your designated position as a ghoul for your domitor.

This Background pairs well with Alternate Identity. They are different due to the fact that Double Life requires less subterfuge. Your job interferes with your life more than other folks, though doctors, police officers, and other on-call professionals would certainly sympathize with your situation. Complications might arise when other Kindred domitors or ghouls learn of the people involved in your character's life, because they could use these innocents as pawns or hostages. After all, any personal connections your ghoul has is a potential weakness that can be exploited and used against you or your master.

The advantages to having a Double Life will vary depending upon your character's concept. Your family, friends, co-workers, and existing contacts might be a powerful, positive force in your ghoul's life, but they might also ask questions you struggle to answer. By choosing this Background, you gain the benefits and drawbacks from being allowed to maintain your life as it was before you became a ghoul, at your Storyteller's discretion. Unlike other ghouls, you'll need to further flesh out who your character was prior to becoming a ghoul if you take this Background.

**Used by:** The majority of new, Camarilla ghouls tend to have a tenuous tie to their former lives. This Background ensures that their connection to their former selves, along with their relationships, remains intact.

Most independent ghouls, Sabbat ghouls, and revenants would not use this Background. Should you decide to select this Background for your character, talk to your Storyteller about your character concept. You'll want to address how you envision your ghoul or revenant will be able to maintain a Double Life, and how you feel your role will benefit your character.

The dots in Double Life reflect how closely-tied you are to your life before you became a ghoul. They do not, however, represent how much other people know about your new role or your connection to vampires.

## Family Elder

The Family Elder Background refers to your revenant's role as a leader in your family. Becoming a Family Elder not only affords you added respect and perks, it may also signal additional responsibilities your revenant is assumed to have. Your reputation, however, is often limited to your family. Outsiders may not know or care that you are a Family Elder, while your immediate family treats you differently than your relatives.

## Double Life

- **Keeping up Appearances:** You keep in contact with people you once knew, but you keep yourself distanced from them unless you need to ask someone you know for a favor. You might need to keep up appearances because your master ordered you to, or you might have done so naturally to help keep you sane.
- **Maintaining Friendships:** You are part of a group of friends who meets every so often for dinner, coffee, or a movie. You might get together once a month to celebrate a birthday, or you might throw a big dinner party for them to show them how great your new “job” is. While you might not ask them for a favor related to your job, you know you can call on them in an emergency situation.
- **Keeping a Lover:** You are in love with another person, and your master has allowed you to maintain this relationship in exchange for your service. You would do anything for each other, and your master knows it, too.
- **Staying Close to Your Family:** Your master has granted you permission to remain a member of your family, and has helped you devise a cover so your activities are not suspicious. In exchange for your service, you may maintain your connection to your family, but you may not be allowed to live with them. While some domitors might use your family as leverage to get them to do their bidding, others want you to feign a sense of normalcy.
- **Possessing a Mortal Life:** Though you’ve become a ghoul, your master has decreed that you may keep your job, your relationships, and your apartment. From an observer’s perspective, you may seem smitten with a new love interest or stressed about your new high-powered job.

Revenant Family Elders are trusted individuals who tend to make decisions on behalf of the family. A Family Elder might broker a deal with a Clan, ranking members of a Sect, or other revenant families. Elders might assign one or more family members to a given task, and may receive gifts, boons, or favors to distribute them as they see fit.

Elders might often be directly responsible for, or consulted frequently, on matters pertaining to the education and guidance of younger family members.

The requirements of being a Family Elder are not standardized. A Family Elder has the power to address and nurture their charges as they see fit, and often do in

## Family Elder

- **Big Sister/Brother:** You keep your younger brothers and sisters in line, and pass along orders from higher-ups. You are the most likely candidate to be sent on errands or missions for the family.
- **Aunt/Uncle:** You supervise the Brothers and Sisters, and check in with them from time to time. If your family is attacking or defending itself, or is ordered to carry out a mission, you will be asked to lead your charges.
- **Mother/Father:** You are an advisor who passes along advice and guidance to younger family members, and help shape your charges’ futures. You are empowered to intervene in matters pertaining to the health and strength of your family, and while you are aware of missions and errands you do not directly intervene unless there are problems.
- **Grandmother/Grandfather:** You stick close to the family estate, and you are charged with overseeing the other Family Elders to report to your Matriarch or Patriarch. While you might leave the grounds, your responsibility is to keep things running smoothly on the family compound. This might include dealing with visitors and intruders, but it also may involve smoothing other small disagreements, managing resources, or currying favor from potential allies.
- **Matriarch/Patriarch:** You are the head of your estate, and the primarily representative of your revenant family. You decide what orders to give, who to give them to, and when they make sense to be carried out. You immerse yourself in politics and strategic maneuvers for the benefit of your revenant family, and are well-versed in knowing the identity of your rivals, allies, and enemies. As the ultimate arbiter, you are also recognized by your family’s Clan sponsor as the only spokesperson and legitimate authority.

accordance with their hopes and dreams for the future of their family. Because of their rank, however, they are often drawn into political matters and deadly rivalries involving other revenant families or Clans. While only the family's Matriarch or Patriarch may make final decisions, other Family Elders may offer their opinions for consideration.

Due to the size of most revenant families, each is likely to have multiple Family Elders which are often tied to a specific location, such as an estate, or based on the number of charges involved in multiple locations. For example, a revenant family might have so many children running about, that it's impossible to have "a" Big Sister or Brother, so multiple revenants in that role share the burden of responsibility. In most cases, however, the requirements of what a Family Elder does, and how those actions are carried out, will be specific to the needs of a particular revenant family. After all, what is best for the Bratovich family, is not necessarily the same as what's best for the Grimaldi clan.

Just as the term "Uncle" is used as a title of respect for friends of a mortal family, the titles in the Family Elder Background do not necessarily imply a direct blood tie or connection to those in the revenant's care. Given the fact that many revenant families are close-knit and tend to dissuade outsiders from interfering in their business, however, it is likely that the revenant would be a blood relative of their charges.

**Used by:** Revenants

## **Majordomo**

A Majordomo is a special role designed for a ghoul who typically serves his domitor as the chief steward of her estates and affairs. The Majordomo will do his master's bidding by doling out assignments and orders ranging from hiring outside services to keeping other ghouls in line. Even among Camarilla domitors, the Majordomo is a rare type of ghoul, because he's earned enough trust or respect to be able to conduct her affairs by having Retainers of his own. Ghouls with the Majordomo Background often hire, screen, and maintain these Retainers, so that they never meet their masters and remain unaware of who it is they're working for.

The Majordomo will have his master's ear, and may recommend rewards, punishments, and tasks that need to be done. While the master will choose to act as she sees fit, the position of this ghoul means that she's not as paranoid about her servant as she might otherwise be. Instead, she might even rely on the Majordomo for news and rumors, expecting to hear tidbits that might be of use to her.

In any household that contains a Majordomo, it is made clear to other ghouls that this servant, favored and

trusted above all others, speaks for his domitor when she is not present. As long as instructions are carried out and orders are followed, few masters care about the details. It is the Majordomo's role to manage the people required to maintain his master's domicile, as well as oversee any tasks necessitated by the upkeep of his master's estate.

The benefits of taking a Majordomo Background are due to the fact that such a ghoul offers a domitor the freedom to allow her servant to do as he wishes. Thus, if the Majordomo arranges for a specific person to be hired or fired, his master can reasonably claim to know nothing about how her ghoul conducts his affairs. Because of a Majordomo's greater responsibility, these ghouls are also given greater latitude than any other servants. This translates to a different type of relationship between master and servant than most other ghouls experience.

Though the Majordomo is a lofty position in any domitor's household, if that ghoul's loyalty is in question, this ghoul is not immune to punishment or harsh treatment. Because of their connections, a domitor will probably not remove or replace this ghoul without significant forethought and prior arrangements to insure a seamless transition from one to the other. However, the Majordomo is not immune to his master's desires and wishes, for despite all of the freedom he's given, he's still in the service to a vampire and addicted to the Blood.

A Majordomo is a Background that benefits both the ghoul and the domitor, because the burden of maintaining a complex household falls on the Majordomo's shoulders. Thus, your ghoul will be caught up in the night-to-night requirements of your vampire in a more authoritative way than other ghouls. The use of such a ghoul greatly depends upon the personality, Clan or bloodline, and Sect of your domitor.

**Used by:** A Majordomo is far more common among Camarilla domitors and ghouls than they are in the Sabbat. Among Cainites, a Majordomo may not be as valued or treated as well, but will be held responsible for any missteps. The role of a Majordomo is unheard of among revenant families, unless that revenant has voluntarily resigned herself to a life of serving her family. For independent ghouls, becoming a Majordomo is an impossible feat, for no vampire would trust a ghoul that could not be subjected to the blood bond.

The Majordomo Background is a variant of the Retainers Background found on page 116 of *V20*. Dots in Majordomo reflect the power and influence you have in your master's household over other servants.

After selecting this Background, work with your Storyteller to identify which characters you may command on behalf of your master and what their role is. A servant may either be a ghoul or a mortal, and the term does not reflect that character's specialty or profession.

- One Servant
- Two Servants
- Three Servants
- Four Servants
- Five Servants

## Virtues

All ghouls and revenants begin with one free dot in each Virtue. Then, you'll assign five dots to Virtues if you are a Sabbat ghoul or a revenant, and seven if you are not. Though you are technically still mortal, it is assumed that you will begin your chronicle as a ghoul. You may, at your Storyteller's discretion, alter your Virtues to better fit your character concept.

When you select Virtues, remember that your ghoul or revenant is also influenced by which Path of Enlightenment she follows. Revenants and Sabbat ghouls, typically those who are being groomed for the Embrace, are the only characters that follow a Path. Those who do will likely have trouble navigating the world by day, for these characters will forsake their Humanity. All other ghouls do not, and should distribute their dots among the various Virtues as they see fit.

Some of the revenant families teach their members a Path of Enlightenment as part of their values, especially as that revenant pass beyond a normal mortal lifespan. Though every Sabbat ghoul has the potential to follow a Path, only those who are being groomed for an Embrace would be instructed in such a manner. Even this is quite rare, for as most members of the Sabbat might see it, teaching a mortal a vampire's philosophy is a waste of time.

If you follow a Path of Enlightenment, you may decide to alter your choices according to the rules found on page 315 of **V20**. No ghoul or revenant may begin the game with a Path of Enlightenment rating above 5.

## Sample Character Advantages

To reflect his physical nature, Marc's bonus Discipline is Fortitude, which complements his default dot in Potence. Marc has decided that his teacher is his cousin, Amanda, who trains hellhounds.

**Disciplines:** Potence 1, Fortitude 1

For Backgrounds, Bill wants to ensure that Marc has social ties, both to his family and to other people on campus. Allies and Contacts are meant to convey Marc's solid – if dysfunctional – relationship with members of his family and friends. To ensure that Marc's character concept blends well with his Storyteller's chronicle, Bill will discuss possibilities for Allies and Contacts that may be introduced over the course of the game.

**Backgrounds:** Allies 3, Contacts 2

Because Marc is a member of the Bratovich family, he may follow a Path of Enlightenment. The vast majority of the Bratovich family follows the Path of the Feral Heart. However, taking a Path requires Marc to give up his Humanity, and Bill decides that doesn't fit for his character.

Thus, Marc's starting Virtues are Conscience 1, Self-Control 1, and Courage 1. Because Marc is a revenant, there are five points left to spend on these Virtues.

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

**Path:** None

## Step Five: Finishing Touches

Now, it's time to calculate your Willpower and Humanity ratings. Your beginning Willpower rating equals your Courage. Your Humanity is equal to the sum of your Conscience + Self-Control ratings, unless you are a revenant following a Path of Enlightenment. In that case, your Humanity will equal the sum of your alternate Virtues, such as Conviction + Instinct.

Once you have these scores, you may assign your freebie points. Both ghouls and revenants are afforded 21 freebie points. You may use these points to raise any Trait you like, or to purchase Merits and Flaws. Remember to add your character's Flaws from your freebie point total.

To review the finishing touches made to Marc Bratovich's character sheet, turn to **page 139** at the end of this chapter.

## New Merits and Flaws

The following Merits and Flaws are designed and customized to be used for ghouls or revenants only. Should a Merit or Flaw resemble one found in **V20**, assume that the rules presented here take precedence. Some of these Merits and Flaws may only be used by a certain type of ghoul or a revenant, and have been clearly marked.

Merits and Flaws can add a distinct dimension to your character. Merits are special advantages unique to the character, while Flaws are liabilities or disadvantages that create challenges to the character's activities.




## Existing Merits and Flaws

V20 provides numerous Merits and Flaws for vampires. Despite this comprehensive list, not all of them are appropriate for ghouls or revenants. The Storyteller is free to override this list if she sees fit, but should make exceptions for good reason.

The following Merits and Flaws are *recommended* for ghouls and revenants:

- **Physical:** Acute Sense, Ambidextrous, Bruiser, Catlike Balance, Friendly Face, Daredevil, Hard of Hearing, Short, Tic/Twitch, Bad Sight, Disfigured, One Eye, Addiction, Deformity, Lamé, Lazy, Slow Healing, Disease Carrier, Deaf, Mute, Blind
- **Mental:** Coldly Logical, Common Sense, Concentration, Introspection, Language, Time Sense, Useful Knowledge, Eidetic Memory, Calm Heart, Iron Will, Precocious, Impatient, Shy, Soft-Hearted, Speech Impediment, Amnesia, Lunacy, Phobia, Short Fuse, Weak-Willed
- **Social:** Expendable, Incomplete Understanding, Mistaken Identity, Sympathizer, Uppity, Narc, Laughingstock
- **Supernatural:** Magic Resistance, Light-Sensitive, Lucky, Cursed, Oracular Ability

These Merits and Flaws are *disallowed* for use when creating a ghoul or revenant:

- **Physical:** Blush of Health, Efficient Digestion, Fourteenth Generation, Fifteenth Generation, Dulled Bite, Infectious Bite, Glowing Eyes, Monstrous, Permanent Fangs, Permanent Wound, Thin Blood, Flesh of the Corpse, Infertile Vitae
  - **Mental:** Prey Exclusion
  - **Social:** Former Ghoul, Prestigious Sire, Clan Friendship, Primogen/Bishop Friendship, Former Prince, Escaped Target
  - **Supernatural:** Additional Discipline, Hidden Diablerie, Cold Breeze, Touch of Frost, Eerie Presence, Lord of the Flies, Grip of the Damned
- 

For a core list and description of Merits and Flaws, refer to V20 beginning on p. 479.

### Mental

#### Loyalty (5pt. Merit)

Though revenants are the tools of the Kindred, they aren't known for their unshakable loyalty to a particular vampire or Clan. When a member of a revenant family does display such loyalty, it's noteworthy. Word of that revenant's

actions will spread quickly among other members of the Clan or Sect the family serves.

Most revenant families might welcome a patron vampire for one of their members. The family would likely be suspicious of placing their trust in a specific vampire or Clan, and would probably take steps to avoid becoming too dependent on a single domitor.

The character can expect occasional favors from the vampire Clan that controls the revenant's family. They may also be given considerable latitude to explore their

own special interests, since the vampires “trust” that the character is furthering the Clan’s goals. Loyalty is also a good Merit to choose if the character is being groomed for the Embrace, especially if that revenant knows her future sire.

**Used by:** Ducheski, Rossellini, Kairouan Brotherhood, and Servants of Anushin-Rawan

### **Black and White (1pt. Flaw)**

The World of Darkness is complex, both morally and spiritually, but your character doesn’t see it that way. To her, every situation can be summed up as black or white. Your ghoul thinks simply, and believes her allies and enemies are either for or against her, hot or cold, good or evil, easy or impossible, stupid or genius.

After being subjected to the blood bond, its influence can complicate your ghoul’s natural outlook on life. Under its influence, the blood bond may force your ghoul to view what your domitor says or does through a rosy, positive filter at all times. Alternatively, any character who does not agree or side with your master is, according to you, an enemy worthy of your contempt and deserves to be hurt.

This Flaw is particularly prominent among the Giovanni, Assamite, Ravnos, and Ventrue Clans, along with the Followers of Set and many revenant families. A closed mindset can cost your character dearly as your perspective may result in your bad judgment, missed opportunities, and misunderstandings that might escalate.

In social situations where your character’s perspective comes to bear, the difficulties of associated rolls increase by one.

**Used by:** All ghouls and revenants

### **Fixation (2, 4, or 6pt. Flaw)**

The Blood is exhilarating, but when the feeling wears off, you want another high, another “fix” to add to that heady rush. Your Fixation might involve substances designed to alter your brain’s chemistry and processing ability, or it could be all about your thrill-seeking, heart-thumping compulsion to live on the edge and get high off the adrenaline or dopamine naturally produced in your body.

With this Flaw, you are forced to turn to outside activities or substances in your free time to get a fix that doesn’t come from the Blood. While the fulfillment of your Fixation may be temporary, you know that any satisfaction you feel is a pale imitation of the high you get from the Blood. The stronger your Fixation, the more likely you won’t be able to hide it from the other characters around you. Since this is a Flaw that cannot be “healed” by any physical, mental, or social means,

your Fixation may cause unforeseen consequences for your character over time.

To start, you’ll pick a type of Fixation your character is likely to have: chemical, psychological, or physical. Unlike an addiction to cocaine or drag racing, your overall Fixation is more generic than that. Essentially, you are deciding what category your fix falls in, and you’ll figure out how to satisfy it over the course of your chronicle. At your Storyteller’s discretion, you may make a stamina check during your downtime to avoid succumbing to your desires. The more points you take in this Flaw, the more likely it is your Storyteller might require more checks or raise the difficulty. If your ghoul fails, you will feel a compulsion to get a fix, and will need to act on that.

At two points of addiction, your character is still in control. Your ghoul may show up fog-headed, but she will attempt to carry out her domitor’s wishes to the best of her ability. At four points, your Fixation is so strong that you are more likely to forget a crucial errand, miss an appointment, or doze off spying on a rival. At six points, however, your ghoul is deep in the throes of terminal addiction. You may also decide, at your Storyteller’s discretion, that adding more points to this Flaw will cause greater and more violent consequences to the fulfillment of your desires. For example, a murderous revenant with a six-point Fixation might get a thrill from desecrating churches. As another, an independent ghoul who escaped from a brutal pack might get a rush from “curing” another ghoul of the blood bond.

Failing to master your Fixation will likely be viewed unfavorably by most of your peers or your domitor, because your inability to control yourself is viewed as a weakness. Servants that run off and base jump off the top of a skyscraper at every opportunity are not as useful as the meek from a master’s point of view. Over time, a domitor might even make a troubled ghoul’s death look like an accident before replacing him. However, the stronger your Fixation is, the more chaotic and rebellious your ghoul will likely act as you take pleasure wherever you can find it. Thus, it is not uncommon to find independent ghouls or revenants with higher levels of Fixation, especially if they have a loose leash to satisfy their darker needs.

You may attempt to deny your Fixation, but to do so requires you to spend a Willpower point to temporarily bypass it for a round. Then, you must roll to make a Frenzy check. Should you fail that roll, your Fixation will continue to build and may overwhelm you at the most inopportune time. In other words, a failure to master your Fixation doesn’t mean you’ll automatically fly off into a rage on your schedule. Your bitterness and resentment may boil





beneath a thin veneer of control until you're forced to wait too long at a store, you're cut off at a traffic light, or another ghoul gets rewarded instead of you.

With any botch on a Stamina check, your character's Fixation will increase by two points. If your character has already attained the six-point version of this Flaw and rolls a botch on his Stamina check, the effects will be severe. You may overdose and die without immediate medical attention. Your car may have crashed and you're now unconscious because you couldn't maintain control of the wheel.

To remove points in your Fixation Flaw, or to get rid of it entirely, your character must pledge and endure a program to remove that compulsion. Your Storyteller may allow the circumstances and requirements of your chronicle to shape your domitor's reaction to your admitted weakness. Independent ghouls, Sabbat ghouls, and revenants may not have the ability to reduce the influence of this Flaw, nor may they be able to remove it without help due to the nature of their nightly activities.

Please note that while Fixation is similar to the Addiction Flaw for vampires, the results of this Flaw are felt more acutely in a mortal body. A Fixation Flaw is likely to develop more often in ghouls than revenants, simply because revenants produce vitae naturally in their blood.

**Used by:** All ghouls, some revenants

### **Duplicitous (3pt. Flaw)**

Ghouls and revenants with this Flaw have an underhanded reputation based on their previous actions. In the past, you've probably lied, cheated, or played both sides against the middle during a deal that went south. The nature of your underhanded actions, as well as your intended target, has not been the same every time. A ghoul might, for example, go to her domitor and inform him of a transgression, real or imagined, and then suggest an appropriate punishment for her target. That same ghoul might turn around and fabricate stories that show how well-meaning she was to stand up for her fellow ghoul in front of her master.

While you can be duplicitous as a character, when you take this Flaw, it impacts your relationships and dealings with other characters. You probably don't seek to take the upper hand in every situation, but other characters expect you to. Your allies and enemies are on edge around you, because they're not sure when and if you'll ever treat them fairly. They may even backstab or try to undercut you, too, because they expect *you* to.

The influence of the blood bond does impact most ghouls with this Flaw in subtle ways. While your domitor

would know you are Duplicitous, you would not act out in a direct way against your master. Instead, you might backstab or double-cross your allies to curry favor and obtain rewards from him. Your domitor may also point you at a dangerous target, too, to use you as bait or to draw out his enemies, to taking advantage of your reputation.

**Used by:** All ghouls and revenants

## Social

### **Benevolent Domitor (3pt. Merit)**

For reasons unbeknownst to you, your domitor is fond of you. Perhaps your service has been exemplary, or you simply remind your master of a past love. Given the alien nature of a vampire's mind, you may never know for sure, but you do not begrudge the benefits you've gained from your master's feelings toward you.

You feel safe in your master's care, and do not dread spending night after night fulfilling your duties. Your domitor treats you with a measure of faux compassion, and does not casually endanger your life. Unlike the relationship between other masters and their ghouls, this Merit does not represent a temporary phase. You have already proven yourself to your master. Thus, your relationship is akin to a friendship between a great boss and his employee.

Though this Merit shapes how your domitor treats you, it does not guarantee that you will never run afoul of your master. You may, at your Storyteller's discretion, lose the right to keep this Merit should your actions necessitate such a decision over time.

**Prerequisite:** Domitor Background

**Used by:** Camarilla ghouls, some Sabbat ghouls

### **Groomed for Embrace (5pt. Merit)**

Your character has been deemed worthy of the Embrace, and is being prepared for the eventuality through careful, directed training by your future sire. While this Merit does not guarantee when you will be Embraced, your character is aware that you will become a vampire, and you know the identity of your future sire.

The benefits of being Groomed for Embrace are related to your current role as a ghoul, and your future position as a vampire within a specific Clan or bloodline. As such, your role among the ghouls of your domitor's house will be elevated to that of a valued apprentice as opposed to a disposable servant. Some Clans, like the Tremere or the Tzimisce, might track your progress through your academic study of lore, Disciplines, or thaumaturgical rituals. You might not be able

to use Vicissitude, for example, but you may be permitted to assist your domitor at her laboratory table. Other vampires might be more careful, and may prepare you to be evaluated by the local prince before proceeding further.

There may be a few drawbacks that your character might encounter over the course of your chronicle. Because you have achieved the dream of many ghouls, you may be subjected to fits of jealous rage or harm by other ghouls. Your domitor might even be aware of this fact, and may have encouraged these feelings to test you to see if you're worthy of becoming a vampire.

Additionally, should this fact become known, you may garner unwanted attention from your future sire's enemies. Since it is most likely your future sire will also be your domitor, you may be kidnapped, spied upon, or pumped for information about your domitor's haven, holdings, and schemes. However, many vampires do not reveal that their ghouls and revenants are being Groomed for Embrace, and keep their intentions secret.

Should you decide to purchase the Groomed for Embrace Merit, you may purchase Benevolent Domitor at a cost of one point, provided you have taken the prerequisite Domitor Background. In this circumstance, you are signaling your Storyteller that your domitor has pledged to become your future sire. You may also, at your Storyteller's discretion, learn one dot in a third Discipline known to your future sire or follow a Path after abandoning your Humanity.

**Used by:** Camarilla and Sabbat ghouls, as well as some revenants. Independent ghouls may be Embraced, but they would not be Groomed for Embrace due to their status as a pariah among ghouls.

### **Isolated Upbringing (1pt. Flaw)**

You are a revenant who was raised by your family away from prying eyes. When you were growing up, your entire world was based on what your family taught you. For many years, your knowledge was limited to your family's habits, customs, and politics. Consequently, you have a limited understanding of the outside world that impacts how you interact with other people.

At your Storyteller's discretion, whenever you are in an uncomfortable social situation outside of your family's estates, subtract one die from your Social dice pool. This penalty does not apply evenly across all situations, because your interactions with the world will vary depending upon your particular family and your character concept.

Revenants from the Obertus, Bratovich, and Ducheski families are good candidates for this Flaw, as are ghouls

from the Giovanni Clan and the Kairouan Brotherhood. Independent ghouls, who have little to no memory of their life before they became a ghoul, may also choose this Flaw to reflect the fact that they were isolated from humanity and have forgotten how to interact with people.

**Used by:** Revenants

### **Obsession (1, 2, or 5pt. Flaw)**

Even ghouls who lead relatively uneventful lives can become obsessed with a persistent idea, image, set of circumstances, or unshakable feeling. Many obsessions are so minor they would not be noticed by a casual observer, while others may become so powerful they'll prevent a ghoul from performing the simplest of tasks.

At one point, your ghoul's Obsession is minor. For example, your character may prefer a particular brand of beverage, pair of jeans, etc., and may refuse to eat, wear, or use a replacement. Your minor Obsession will probably cause you to seek a replacement for an "inferior" item with your preferred one at the earliest opportunity.

At two points, your Obsession threatens to consume you. If the focus of your insatiable desire is a person, you would likely have an image of that person in your possession at all times, or you will stop what you are doing to obtain one. If your Obsession involves an object or totem, like a lucky rabbit's foot or a small statuette, you will need to have it within your reach. You might even grow more upset over time if it's not nearby.

At five points, your Obsession consumes you, and may bring others to harm. Your character might kidnap a local celebrity you're obsessed with, and will likely go to unreasonable lengths to keep him under your direct control. Similarly, any object that you're consumed with creates tremendous need at this level. If your lucky rabbit's foot is misplaced or lost outright, you might not be able to function as you normally would, and may be prone to fits of destructive rage. Depending upon the severity of your Obsession, you could enter a near-catatonic state until the object is found or a suitable replacement is obtained. You would probably act in a similar fashion if the person you're obsessed with is rescued or escapes.

There may be times, however, when you cannot find a suitable replacement for an object or a person to satisfy your Obsession. In those instances, your character will need to succeed a Willpower check. The difficulty rating is your Willpower minus the number of dots in your Obsession Flaw to "snap out of it." Should you fail, you may become so distressed that you will require medical attention.

**Used by:** All ghouls and revenants

### **Squeamish (1 or 3pt. Flaw)**

Your ghoul or revenant might talk a good game, but you've never been around real violence before. When you're confronted with the sight of blood, you probably won't respond well, and may faint, panic, or run away.

In situations that involve gunfire, bloody combat, or an aggressive use of Disciplines, roll Willpower (difficulty 7). If this roll fails, your character either freezes in place (if her Courage is higher than her Self-Control) or flees the area (if her Self-Control is higher than her Courage).

At your Storyteller's discretion, you may be forced to make a Willpower check once per relevant scene. Your character does not need to be directly involved in the fight; she may simply be a witness to a stabbing. When you accumulate five successes in a single session, no further rolls need be made for that night of game time. A gory show of violence might necessitate another roll, however, at your Storyteller's discretion.

Should you botch a Willpower check, your ghoul is so unnerved by the gruesomeness you've encountered you cannot act for the rest of that scene. Your ghoul is frozen from shock, and may soil herself or puke in response to your fear or revulsion.

**Used by:** All ghouls and revenants

### **Domitor Pariah (2pt. Flaw)**

Your master is a vampire who, for whatever reason, is unwelcome among or even hated by other members of his Clan, bloodline, or Sect. Without allies, your domitor may struggle to retain her status and will likely rely on ghouls, like yourself, to fulfill her basic needs. You may be given additional responsibilities, or you might be manipulated into spying, attacking, defending, or stealing for your domitor.

Should you take the Domitor Pariah as a Flaw, keep in mind that should other vampires discover whom you serve, your life might well be in danger. The events that led to your domitor's downfall may be kept hidden from you, at your Storyteller's discretion, or you might stumble upon your master's secrets accidentally.

Once a ghoul understands how challenging life may be with a Domitor Pariah, you might sow the seeds of rebellion despite the strength of your blood bond.

**Used by:** Camarilla ghouls, some Sabbat ghouls

### **Under Surveillance (2, 4, or 6pt. Flaw)**

Your ghoul's activities are being monitored by members of law enforcement or government agencies. You might be Under

Surveillance because you are suspect in a crime, or because you've been spotted associating with other criminals or suspects.

The points you take in this Flaw represent the level of scrutiny your character is under. At two points, only local authorities are watching your ghoul's activities. At four points, both city officials and state authorities are involved. At six points, local, state, and national law enforcement agents are coordinating efforts to analyze your movements, and they may share their concerns with foreign agencies should you travel outside the country.

The effects of this Flaw vary, depending upon your circumstances, and you may not always be aware of them. For example, among Camarilla ghouls, any ghoul Under Surveillance will risk a Masquerade breach. Some vampires might decide that your character is too dangerous to live, and may take an opportunity to end your life at the hands of your associates or domitor. Other Kindred might take a different, more devious approach. They might use you as bait, create a body double, or plant false information.

Generally speaking, Under Surveillance is less dangerous than the Fugitive Flaw, because your character is a person of interest as opposed to a wanted criminal. Thus, this

Flaw, at your Storyteller's discretion, may be reduced in points or regulated to a cold file with time and effort. Ghouls and revenants, however, might be given a limited number of opportunities to correct the situation before their domitors or families lose patience and turn on them.

Independent ghouls might have a much harder time ditching nosy officers. Though their first instinct might be to run to the cops and confess, keep in mind that no agency is immune from the reach of a Clan, bloodline, or Sect. Thus, some independent ghouls who take this Flaw might suspect that their former domitor has engineered their situation, and they are now Under Surveillance as punishment for abandoning them.

**Used by:** All ghouls and revenants

### **Loose Lips (3pt. Flaw)**

Ghouls are often privy to a great deal of sensitive information in the night-to-night dealings with their domitors, and some cannot resist the urge to divulge (or sell) these secrets. In general, ghouls and revenants who cannot keep secrets tend not to live very long.

When you take the Loose Lips Flaw, you might be known as a gossip. In fact, this weakness may be the reason why



any ghoul might become independent. It's possible that the ghoul's master felt that withholding feedings for the rest of his vassal's pitiful life would be suitable punishment, and might still be keeping tabs on his former ghoul.

Ghouls with this Flaw tend to not be trusted with jobs involving secrets, so their usefulness to higher-ranking vampires is limited. On the other hand, they make perfect tools for spreading false information, which can often be far more useful. Unfortunately, you may not know whether you're spewing fact or fiction until it's too late.

**Used by:** All ghouls and revenants

### **Self-Preservation (3pt. Flaw)**

For whatever reason, your character refuses to carry out orders that you feel will threaten your safety and put your life at risk. For ghouls, the Self-Preservation Flaw defeats the purpose of serving a vampire. If you cannot defend your domitor, then your worth decreases considerably. However, a Bound ghoul who can refuse to carry out an order bears close watching. This Flaw is also one of the most common reasons why a ghoul leaves his master's service to operate as an independent.

Revenants who have a sense of Self-Preservation may feel the effects of this Flaw in a different way. Your loyalty to your family may be questioned, for you might sacrifice another family member or ally when the time is right. Should you, too, be subjected to the blood bond, your inability to fully "commit" to a vampire's orders may result in unforeseen consequences ranging from experimentation to further scrutiny.

Mechanically-speaking, any time your domitor or master gives you an order that threatens your life, your character gets a check against Willpower at +2 difficulty. If successful, your ghoul or revenant may refuse to carry out the order. Should you refuse to carry out such a command in front of your master, you may expect to be punished severely.

Clever ghouls and revenants will attempt to manipulate this Flaw to their advantage. They might attempt to carry out a life-threatening command while ensuring they do not come to harm, though this isn't always possible.

**Used by:** All ghouls and revenants

### **Turncoat (4pt. Flaw)**

The Turncoat is more than just a traitor. Revenants that take the Turncoat Flaw have betrayed more than the bonds of friendship, but also those of their familial connection and duty. Typically, a revenant that takes this Flaw has decided he is more interested in serving her family's enemies, and has taken the requisite steps to do so.

Most revenants with the Turncoat Flaw understand the ramifications of their actions. They understand that this Flaw requires them to protect themselves and hide from her former colleagues; they might even expect their families to hunt them down for their treachery. Depending on the nature and depth of the betrayal, allied vampires may decide to render their assistance to the hunt as well.

A Turncoat revenant will have likely earned the trust of her new friends by killing a former ally, friend, or relative, or by turning over sensitive information, such as the haven of a (formerly) allied vampire or the passwords to access her family's finances or accounts.

Despite being protected by a powerful vampire, Clan, members of a local Sect, or revenant family, characters who take this Flaw know their problems are far from over. The Turncoat's new allies will probably be skeptical of this character, and may not divulge anything other than minor details. After all, if the Turncoat betrayed her own family or a master while under the influence of the blood bond, she could do so again.

In general, this Flaw is best used by characters who are embroiled in the politics of a larger organization. The ramifications of a revenant's betrayal, such as a Grimaldi revenant divulging secrets pertaining to his family's desire to leave the Sabbat, are often far-reaching and significant. Thus, independent ghouls may also select this Flaw when and if it makes sense for them to do so. However, an independent ghoul might struggle to find the allies required to help ensure their survival, since most vampires may seek a blood bond with the traitor.

**Used by:** Revenants, some independent ghouls

### **Blood Feud (5pt. Flaw)**

The hostility between revenant families such as the Grimaldi and Zantosa is well known throughout the Sabbat. Rivalries between the Brujah and the Ventrue occasionally bleed into the behavior of their ghouls throughout Camarilla-held cities. Fights between revenant families are all too common, and these feuds have been going on for so long that some family members may have forgotten how an argument first started. A Blood Feud might be a recent development, but more than likely a deadly rivalry has probably been smoldering for decades, if not centuries.

Not all disagreements and rivalries between families or factions, however, are considered to be Blood Feuds. A Blood Feud is what occurs after a slight or injury has been escalated to impossible heights, and the initial cause of the argument can now only be rectified when both debts are settled, often violently. Other family members will

even go so far as to swear a revenge-filled oath to harm the rival family at the first opportunity. Like the nature of the feud, the violence both families cause may range from slashing tires to slitting throats.

While Blood Feud is particularly applicable to members of certain revenant families, this Flaw may also apply to rival Clans in a given city. Loyal ghouls might take offense at a misstep or take up vengeance for a slight against their Domitor, and their feelings could escalate into hatred and a desire to kill. A Gangrel ghoul might be involved in a bitter dispute over territory or domain with the servants of a Toreador Primogen. Enough betrayal and insults could be hurled over the course of the conflict that tense discussions erupt into bitter arguments. Usually, however, for a Blood Feud to exist there must be more than a simple rivalry between the two parties. In a Blood Feud, several members of each side should be willing to battle over the insult or slight. The hatred between the two sides has escalated over time, and calls for vengeance carry weight.

When confronted with the possibility that your rival is nearby, your character must make a Frenzy check at a -2 difficulty. If successful, your character is able to control the blind fury caused by your thirst for revenge.

If your character fails the check, you will feel compelled to act on your obsession for vengeance. You might seek out and confront your rival. You might attack someone who looks like her, or sabotage her car or attack her girlfriend. You might even rile up the other people around you to join the fight, too. How you act on your hatred is up to you, but a failure will guarantee that the Blood Feud is renewed.

You may choose to spend a Willpower point to delay your moment of frenzy for one round. However, the longer you delay acting on your thirst for revenge, the greater the chances are that your rival will act upon hers.

**Used by:** Revenants who have a clear rivalry with another family, or by ghouls from warring Clans, bloodlines, or Sects.

To take this Flaw, you must work with the Storyteller to name which family (or Clan) the Blood Feud is with, and how much the player character knows about its cause. You must also select a specific rival from the opposing side who is heavily involved with the feud or its cause.

### **Hunted (5pt. Flaw)**

You have unwittingly crossed paths with a hunter, who has identified you as a supernatural creature that must be destroyed. You may be a revenant who accidentally attacked a hunter's ally, or you might be a ghoul who

dated a hunter before you fell under the influence of the Blood Bond.

Hunted represents a serious threat to all vampires, regardless of Sect, and all revenant families. The consequences of a hunter stumbling into a revenant family's compound or a vampire's haven would be so severe, your domitor or family might feel compelled to sacrifice you to prevent a future catastrophe.

While you may not have intentionally drawn the ire of a hunter, your grievous error will not go unpunished, nor will it be forgiven easily by your domitor or family. Consequences may range from ordering you to capture the hunter first to seeking allegiances with your enemies.

You may take steps to eliminate this Flaw in the way that makes sense for your character. However, unless your Storyteller tells you that you are in no danger of being hunted for the foreseeable future, you will always run the risk of being targeted by a hunter more easily than other characters who do not have this Flaw.

Because Hunted represents a dramatic turn of events that could impact your chronicle in any number of ways, check with your Storyteller before taking this Flaw.

**Used by:** All ghouls and revenants

### **Problem with Authority (5pt. Flaw)**

Problem with Authority is unhealthy for ghouls or revenants who are expected to serve without question. It is especially problematic for ghouls who have violent or unpredictable masters, and may spur a ghoul to leave her domitor's side. Many independent ghouls suffer from this Flaw, and continue to feel the effects of their disobedience.

When taken to its extreme, your ghoul will become argumentative and unruly, and may take an issue with the simplest instructions. While you might argue with lesser authority figures in your ghoul's life, like the police, your combative words are less likely to get you killed, but may result in being arrested or fired.

**Used by:** All ghouls and revenants

### **Fugitive (6pt. Flaw)**

You are wanted by the authorities. You may be a suspect in a case, or might have been charged and convicted with a serious crime. Your ghoul or revenant may have even gone so far as to escape a high security prison or mental health facility. You may have, on the other hand, run afoul of a Sect and are now being hunted by its members, whether they be Kindred, Cainite, Anarchs, etc.

When you take the Fugitive Flaw, you are admitting that you have either committed (or have been framed

for) a transgression that is so severe, agents who uphold the law, be they vampire or mortal, have ordered your capture. Any and all persons found in your company may immediately become suspect as well, and could be charged with additional crimes.

A Fugitive is rarely hunted without good cause, and often those who seek to bring you in will have a personal reason for doing so. An officer might track you down because her negligence allowed you to escape. A rival ghoul, who managed to uncover how you were attempting to thwart your domitor, might want to prove his worth to your former domitor. A Sabbat pack may be hard on your heels, because they feel your escape is an embarrassment to them. These are all examples of characters who would probably pursue you at great personal cost in an attempt to recapture or even murder you.

To the Camarilla, a ghoul or revenant Fugitive represents a serious threat to the Masquerade, regardless of who may be after you. While it is possible you may have been carrying out orders under the influence of the Blood Bond or Disciplines like Dominate, Kindred authorities cannot turn a blind eye to a desperate ghoul or revenant who's on the run. To the Sabbat, on the other hand, a Fugitive may be hunted for other reasons, ranging from a sense of pride to a fear that you'll run to the Camarilla and divulge secrets that must be kept buried.

Though you are a Fugitive, you may have Allies, Contacts, or have clearly identified a place to hide for a time. Your domitor or revenant family, for example, might often you a place to stay for a few nights, but doing so puts them at risk. Safe houses may be arranged to ensure your survival, with the understanding that you are expected to curry favors or perform services that will help your benefactors. You may even be asked to follow a strict code of conduct to avoid exposing your accomplices.

**Used by:** All ghouls and some revenants. This Flaw is particularly appropriate for independent ghouls who are on the run from their domitors.

## Physical

### Albino (1pt. Flaw)

Albinism occurs when a group of normally recessive genes become prominent, leading to a lack of pigmentation of the skin. While generally harmless, the appearance of an albino individual can be startling, particularly to others who are unfamiliar with the condition. The condition is marked by extremely pale skin and red irises.

Albinism was viewed with great suspicion in most early cultures, such that even today people with albinism

are shunned and ostracized, and considered to be an ill-omen in many parts of the world. While this condition is harmless from a physiological standpoint, it does cause afflicted individuals to stand out. This may reduce a ghoul's capacity to blend into a crowd, without the help of a disguise. However, those who suffer from the Albino Flaw can also turn other people's fear into a source of intimidation, particularly if your ghoul or revenant has a reputation that cannot be ignored.

When you take the Albino Flaw, keep in mind that your skin is highly susceptible to sunburn, having little or no pigmentation to reflect the sun's harmful UV rays.

**Used by:** All ghouls and revenants

### Vicissitude Modifications (1-7pt. Merit)

You are a ghoul or revenant whose body has been hideously modified through the use of the Vicissitude Discipline. You, yourself, might not be gifted in this area, but your flesh and bones have been reshaped into a nightmare designed to be useful in war. Thus, while your Modifications may provide you with a mechanical benefit, you are considered a monster even though, technically, you are still mortal.

The alterations made to your body are permanent unless shaped by further uses of Vicissitude. Although your Vicissitude Modifications can be dangerous, your body still sustains damage normally. Despite your horrid appearance, you are still flesh and bone.

Vicissitude Modifications requires you to take the Monstrous Flaw, which is found on page 482 of V20. Regardless of how many alterations you choose, you have an Appearance of 0. At your Storyteller's discretion, you may also be required to take a Mental Flaw, penalty to Social rolls, or a Derangement due to the horrors you're experiencing.

Generally speaking, this Merit may only be used by characters that are either Bound to, or are sponsored by, a vampire or Clan that has the use of Vicissitude. Revenants that are modified in this way are often subjected to the Blood Bond to ensure their loyalty.

- **Circular Vision (1pt.):** One of your eyes has been moved to the back of your head, granting you the ability to see at a wider angle. You may gain a bonus to Perception, especially in cases when a character is attempting to sneak up on you. Additionally, your depth perception is poor at any angle, and you suffer a two die penalty to any rolls that involve gauging distance, including the use of projectile weapons.

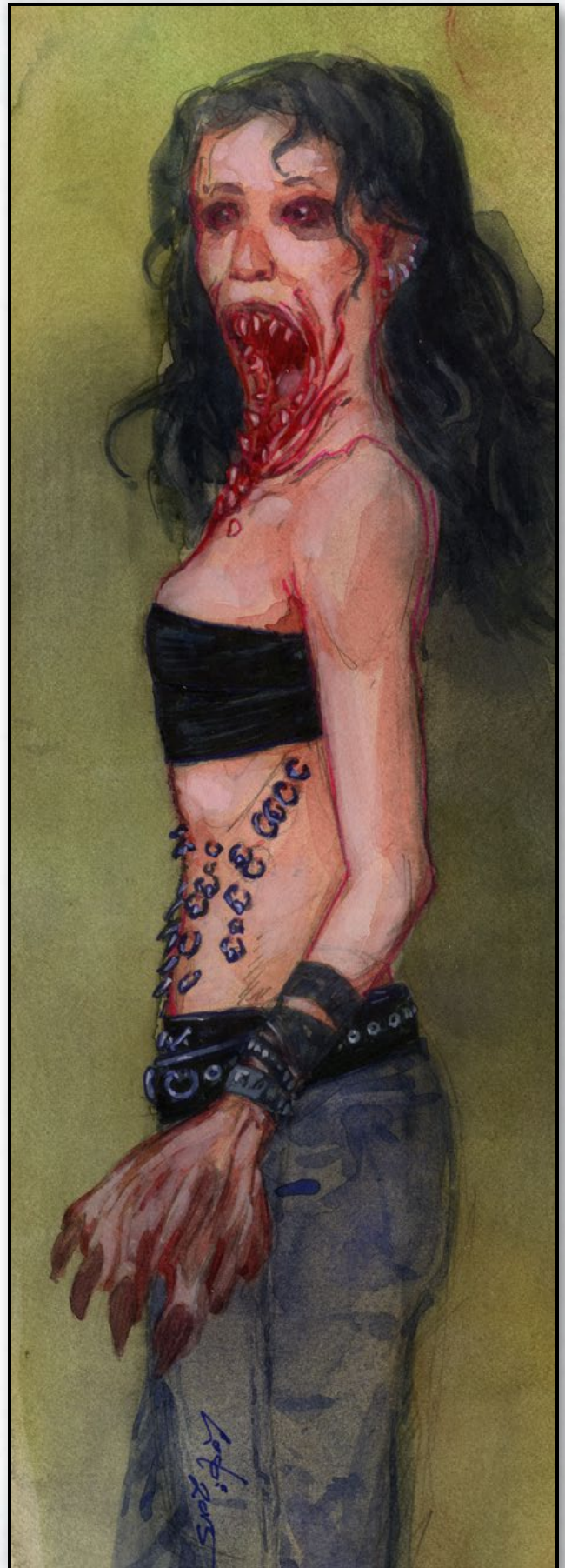
- **Fangs (1pt.):** Your teeth have been lengthened and sharpened; your smile may resemble a tiger's or a shark's, or it may be unlike anything found in nature. You may attack using Bite, which is found on page 276 of V20. Due to your monstrous appearance, you will lose two dice in pools involving your Manipulation Attribute, unless you are trying to intimidate or scare your target.
- **Iron Stomach (2pts.):** You are able to digest any organic material that you can break up, chew, and swallow. On Stamina rolls, you gain a +2 when you need to resist ingested poisons or other types of stomach-based illnesses. This digestive modification is often paired with Fangs.
- **Spurs (2pts.):** Sharp, pointed bone spurs protrude from your forearms, spine, or calves. You may slash with your Spurs for Str + 2 damage. However, Spurs are hard to conceal and may limit your mobility in some instances.
- **Carapace (3pts.):** You are covered with bony or spiky plates that protect you from being attacked. You may add two soak dice to your pool when you are defending yourself from harm.
- **Patagia (4pts.):** Your bones have been hollowed and flaps of foreign skin have been grafted onto your arms and wrists to form membranes. While you cannot fly, you may use these bat-like wings to glide from one higher position to another, or to the ground. Subtract one die from all soak pools to resist strikes from fists and blunt weapons, or any other forms of concussive damage that might damage your bones.

Ghouls and revenants may never heal a damaged Vicissitude Modification, not even with the Blood. In this respect, both are as helpless as their unmodified counterparts. However, should a ghoul or revenant possess enough levels in Vicissitude, that character may heal themselves or remove the Vicissitude Modification altogether. To do so, the character must have a level of Vicissitude superior to that of the vampire who inflicted the mutilation in the first place.

**Used by:** Due to the complexity of this Merit, check with your Storyteller before spending points on Vicissitude Modifications.

### **Light Sensitive (2, 4, or 6pt. Flaw)**

Your ghoul has discovered, much to her chagrin, that she is growing more sensitive to bright light thanks to the





transformative powers of the vampiric blood she ingests. During daylight hours, she might require strong, prescription sunglasses, and bright flashes such as a camera flash or lightning may require a Frenzy check. Among ghouls of certain Clans and bloodlines, like the Followers of Set, this Flaw can worsen over long periods of time at the Storyteller's discretion.

The point value for the Light Sensitive Flaw reflects an increasing sensitivity to artificial and natural light. A 2-point Flaw means your ghoul retreats from harsh, bright sunlight and will react more quickly than most mortals. At 4 points, your ghoul is incapable of functioning normally in bright sunlight, and may develop painful skin rashes and/or sunburn after exposure.

At 6 points, the ghoul finds any bright light nearly paralyzing, and will go to whatever lengths required to avoid such bright conditions. Bad sunburn will result from only a minute or two in full sunlight, and will become bashing damage at a rate of one point of damage per fifteen minutes' worth of exposure. A ghoul with this level of the Flaw will therefore receive four points of bashing damage per hour of contact with full sunlight or its equivalent. Such damage may be healed normally, as per V20 on pp. 282-286.

**Used by:** All ghouls and revenants

### **Cannibal (3pt. Flaw)**

Though the Bratovich family of revenants is known for their depravity, the desire to consume human flesh is not limited to them alone. Historically, mortals have resorted to acts of cannibalism during times of war or starvation, but they have also eaten the flesh of the dead as part of a religious ceremony to honor the fallen, too. The vast majority of cultures, however, consider the practice barbaric and unnatural.

To become a Cannibal, is to put your character at risk of ostracization and death. There are several physical disorders that can be transmitted through the consumption of infected flesh or organs. For the most part, such an infection is undetectable through normal, non-medical means. Should you eat human flesh as a ghoul, the vitae you've already ingested is likely strong enough to negate the effects in most cases. Should your ghoul be denied future feedings, however, the infection will take hold as your body returns to its natural state and age.

A character with the Cannibal Flaw will generally only feed on the flesh of the living or the dead in privacy. Most cannibals are not rabid animals, and are cunning and highly intelligent. They are aware that modern society frowns on cannibalism, but they feel compelled to do it anyway. Thus, they are often careful to act on their Flaw in places and at times where they and their victims cannot

be easily discovered. Missing corpses or well-loved people, for example, are likely to be searched for. If there are witnesses who spotted the cannibal and victim together, it might lead to further complications a Cannibal is not prepared to deal with. A Willpower roll may be called for to determine if the cannibal can exercise sufficient control and discretion to avoid leaving clues behind.

The Cannibal Flaw may be selected by any ghoul, or may be bestowed upon a character by the Storyteller as a result of acquiring a Derangement. Though this Flaw is far more common among revenant families, it is not exclusively available to them. Because of the dramatic impact the Cannibal Flaw has on ghouls in modern society, Camarilla ghouls are discouraged from taking this Flaw.

**Used by:** Revenants, some Sabbat and independent ghouls

### **Hemophiliac (3pt. Flaw)**

Your character suffers from hemophilia. If your ghoul's skin is cut, you will not stop bleeding without medical assistance. The Blood does not have any effect on a ghoul or revenant Hemophiliac.

If your character suffers lethal or aggravated damage, he suffers an additional level of bashing damage every five minutes until his wound has been dressed to stop the bleeding. Any vampire who bites a Hemophiliac may "dress" such wounds. By licking the injury after biting the ghoul, the vampire will put a stop to any future bashing damage.

**Used by:** All ghouls and revenants

### **Seizures (3pt. Flaw)**

Seizures tend to occur during moments of duress, and few mortals have a more stressful or terrifying existence than ghouls. The affliction of the Seizures Flaw can also be more pronounced in revenant families whose members suffer from a limited genetic pool. Many types of seizures can be controlled or mitigated with medication following thorough medical tests or examinations. However, some ghouls and revenants aren't willing to risk their lives by seeking the advice of a doctor, and these Seizures are often not related to a diagnosed illness. This Flaw is a side effect of the many horrors ghouls and revenants witness over the course of their lives.

Seizures can potentially be disastrous, especially if they occur in the presence of a vampire or at an inopportune moment. Under any stressful circumstances related to combat, physical or verbal threats, or witnessing a terrifying, bloody sight the character with this Flaw will need to make a Frenzy roll. A success means a seizure was not triggered, and you've managed to regain control.

Failure indicates your body was not able to cope with the stress and something has happened. If you roll a critical failure, your character suffers a full-blown grand mal seizure. You will have fallen to the ground and will thrash uncontrollably for a number of minutes equal to the number of 1s rolled on the Frenzy check. Your actions may wind up getting yourself, or others, hurt as your finger might accidentally pull the trigger, or you may slip and fall. A less than critical failure may likely result in your character blacking out until the next round. Depending on the needs of your story, your ghoul may pass out and drop to the ground, your vision might turn black for a few seconds, or your arm might tremble and you cannot regain control.

**Used by:** All ghouls and revenants

## **Supernatural**

### **Pale Aura (2pt. Merit)**

Due to some quirk of fate or your reaction to the Blood, your aura is naturally pale. Any color your character's aura takes has a pale cast to it, as if you were a vampire and not a ghoul.

Vampires reading your aura with the use of the Auspex Discipline may assume you are a vampire unless they gain five or more successes on an Aura Perception roll, or have strong reason to suspect otherwise.

This Merit can be of great use if you wish to impersonate a vampire for a time, but can also cause a dangerous misunderstanding or lead to your capture for further scrutiny.

**Used by:** All ghouls and revenants

### **Clear-Sighted (4pt. Merit)**

Your ghoul is not easily fooled by illusions and tricks of the light. Whether you were born lucky, have supernatural assistance, or proper training to brush aside such influences, your character has a knack for overcoming the phantasms, shadows, and mirages others create through the use of thaumaturgical rituals and Disciplines.

This Merit is only applicable for visible tricks of deceit caused by the use of Disciplines. When faced with a supernatural illusion caused by the use of Disciplines such as Obfuscate and Chimestry, your ghoul may make a Perception + Alertness roll (difficulty equal to your opponent's power's level + 3). If successful, your character sees right through the effect. If you fail, you might suspect the illusion is a trick, but you cannot prove your suspicions are correct.

**Used by:** All ghouls and revenants

### **Blood Flaw Immunity (5pt. Merit)**

You have discovered that you are resistant to the Clan or bloodline flaws present in the blood you drink. Your domitor might be a lower Generation Nosferatu, who lives in the sewers because her appearance is so hideous, and yet your appearance will not change. Should members of the Tremere or Tzimisce Clans learn of your Blood Flaw Immunity, you may be sought after for further study. After all, if a ghoul's biology is such that you do not suffer as much as your domitor, surely there's a "cure" for the flaws present in every Clan's or bloodline's blood.

This Merit no longer applies if your ghoul or revenant is Embraced.

**Used by:** All ghouls and revenants

### **Poisonous Blood (5pt. Merit)**

Due to mysterious circumstances, your character's blood is poisonous to vampires. Should any vampire drink from you, every blood point imbibed causes one health level of bashing damage.

Vampires naturally resent mortals known to possess this blessing and may well seek their destruction. Ghouls or revenants with this Merit may expect a similar reaction, since blood does not have any impact on Poisonous Blood. Other times, a scheming vampire might capture the character and use her as bait to physically harm a rival or enemy. This Merit is also recommended for independent ghouls or revenants who wish to remain free from vampiric influence.

Storytellers are encouraged to have an explanation for Poisonous Blood in their chronicles, though the player (and likely character) may not be immediately privy to such knowledge. Some examples include: holy protection from a higher power, a rare ritual of protection, or a genetic abnormality.

**Used by:** All ghouls and revenants

### **Unbondable (6pt. Merit)**

You cannot be Bound to a vampire, no matter how often you drink blood from the regnant's veins. The Unbondable Merit is useful for characters that do not wish to suffer the effects of the blood bond. Thus, its cost is accordingly high for ghouls and revenants.

The Unbondable Merit is particularly appropriate for independent ghouls, and would go far to explain how they were able to break free. To the vast majority of vampires, however, any character that is Unbondable can never be trusted.

This Merit, while it may seem ideal at first glance, would mean your ghoul's life would be difficult and probably short-lived. Vampires from the Tremere and Tzimisce Clans might even

go so far as to wipe out or experiment on you and your family with this Merit, while other Clans and bloodlines may want to drain you of blood to replicate its properties for their use.

Such a powerful Merit is extremely rare. Before selecting this Merit, check with your Storyteller to see if this is viable for your chronicle.

**Used by:** All ghouls and revenants

### **Virulent Strike (7pt. Merit)**

Through strange thaumaturgical sorcery, unknown rituals, or even an odd quirk of your physiology, your blood has been imbued with the power of the supernatural. You can cause Aggravated Damage to supernatural creatures by striking them, biting them, or raking them with bonecrafted spurs. This is considered standard Brawl Damage against mortals, and should normally apply to only one attack form (bite, bone claws, etc.).

You should work with the Storyteller to find an explanation for this Merit, and the Storyteller may disallow this Merit entirely if she so chooses.

**Used by:** All ghouls and revenants

### **Finicky Palate (1pt. Flaw)**

Your ghoul must choose a Clan or bloodline, other than your domitor's, whose blood causes you an allergic reaction when present in your bloodstream. Any time your ghoul ingests blood from a vampire of that selected Clan, either intentionally or forcibly, you must make a Stamina check to avoid vomiting it up. If you are successful, the blood remains in your system and all rolls involving Disciplines will be at +1 difficulty until either the offensive blood is burned off, or you consume new blood from a different Clan, whichever comes first.

For most Camarilla ghouls, this Flaw represents little threat. In the unlikely event that a ghoul consumes the blood of a Kindred other than his domitor, it won't take long for that ghoul to find the blood he does need. For an independent ghoul or a Clan-sponsored revenant family, on the other hand, this Flaw could represent a dire problem.

**Used by:** All ghouls and revenants

### **Artificially Aged (2pt. Flaw)**

You are an underage ghoul or revenant that has been fleshcrafted to look like an older, mature adult. Your true maturity is still far off in your future, but you appear to be a decade or two older than your actual age. As long as you remain a ghoul, your body will not age.

Due to the terrors inflicted on your young body and mind, your character may never reconcile what has

happened to you. Physically, you might pass for a much older person, but mentally and emotionally you are still a child. Thus, you will likely encounter challenges in most social situations, and your Storyteller may require you to subtract one or more dice from rolls involving your Social dice pools.

**Used by:** Like the Vicissitude Modification Merit, this Flaw may only be added at your Storyteller's discretion.

### **Offensive to Animals (2pt. Flaw)**

Ghouls and revenants who take the Offensive to Animals Flaw will have difficulty in their encounters with animals. Dogs, wolves, bats, birds, and other creatures will act hostile toward the character whenever she's around, and will likely attack the closer the character gets. Much like the vampiric Flaw of the same name, a ghoul or revenant who is Offensive to Animals may find it challenging to walk freely in certain areas.

Animals will bark, howl, whine, and make noise when the character approaches them. They may not directly attack the ghoul unless provoked, but they will clearly be aggressive or, alternatively, might flee from the area.

This Flaw is not recommended for ghouls or revenants who either plan on using the Animalism Discipline or come into contact with characters that do.

**Used by:** All ghouls and revenants

### **Romantic Notions (2pt. Flaw)**

You believe your entire existence as a ghoul is a marked improvement over your previous life, and you are convinced you owe it all to your domitor. You feel your domitor needs you, you'd die without her, and that every feeding is an act of pure love.

When your domitor attempts to use either Dominate or Presence on your character, your Willpower is at -2. This Flaw is in effect regardless of how you react to the blood bond, and while under its influence you may feel an even stronger sense of artificial love toward your domitor.

This Flaw does not affect revenants, who were born with their condition, in the same way as it does ghouls. At the Storyteller's discretion, only a revenant who feels romantically inclined toward a specific vampire who has the use of Dominate and Presence may take this Flaw. Independent ghouls may not purchase this Flaw, as it does not make sense narratively for them to be romantically inclined toward a specific vampire.

**Used by:** All ghouls, except for independent ghouls, and revenants in rare cases.

## Vitae Sink (3pt. Flaw)

For whatever reason, your ghoul or revenant metabolizes vitae more quickly than others do. You must be fed every two weeks, rather than once every month, or risk losing all supernatural Traits and will revert to your natural state. Few ghouls with this Flaw last beyond their natural life spans, unless their domitors are especially devoted to them. At this increased rate, however, it is likely that missed feedings might happen, which is why this Flaw is deadly to independent ghouls.

Revenants who suffer from Vitae Sink replenish their natural vitae at half the rate they normally might.

**Used by:** Most ghouls and revenants

## Asset

### Occult Library (2 or 4pt. Merit)

Your character owns a valuable collection of books and ancient tomes about the arcane. Whenever your ghoul accesses your library, you may lower the difficulty of Intelligence, Occult, or research-related rolls by 1 in relevant circumstances. You might be attempting to find out more information about a thaumaturgical ritual, or you might be trying to identify a strange symbol.

Having this library doesn't automatically mean your ghoul is an occult expert, nor does it reflect your ability to decipher, understand, or read the texts you've collected. Your library is stocked with recorded knowledge you can conveniently refer to. If you have purchased the 4-point version of this Merit, your character also has access to an Occult Laboratory stocked with rare, mysterious ingredients needed to perform the rituals described in your books.

Ghouls in service to the Tremere, Followers of Set, or Assamite Clans, in addition to revenants from the Obertus or Ducheski families, are good candidates to acquire this Asset.

**Used by:** All ghouls or revenants

### Sample Character Finishing Touches

Bill reviews Marc's starting rules, and notices that his character's Willpower and Humanity ratings are not at a high enough level for his character to socialize in the mortal world. Currently, he has a Willpower rating of 2, which reflects his Courage, and a Humanity rating of 6. Using the Freebie Points chart on [page 116](#), Bill spends five of his 21 points to bump up his Willpower rating from 2 to 7, and another point to nudge his Humanity to 7. He then decides to spend an additional two points

among his Virtues to bring his new ratings to Conscience 3, Self-Control 3, Courage 3.

So far, Bill has spent eight freebie points, and has an additional 13 left to distribute for his character. He knows he'll need some Merits to help ease his character's interactions. So, he spends a point on the Friendly Face Merit on page 480 of **V20**. He then decides to spend one point on the Common Sense Merit, and another on the Natural Leader Merit on pp. 484 and 487 of **V20**.

After spending three points on Merits, Bill has 10 points left. Before he considers his Flaws, he reviews Marc's other stats, with an eye on areas that might help his character while he's at university. Instead of raising Marc's Attributes, he decides to make better use out of his Abilities. To complement his Friendly Face Merit, he spends two points to raise his Empathy Trait, and then spends the remaining eight on Athletics, Leadership, Stealth, and Computer.

Once he's done assigning those points, Bill reviews his character and realizes that he will need some Flaws to flesh out his Bratovich revenant. Thus, he chooses the Isolated Upbringing Flaw for 1 point, and the Recruitment Target for another point. He decides against the Cannibalism Flaw that runs rampant through his family, and justifies his lack of this Flaw with his Storyteller. After all, a Bratovich revenant out in public – at a university no less – would not normally go unnoticed by the local authorities or the Camarilla.

Now that he's taken two Flaws, Bill gets an additional two points to spend on his character sheet. He decides to bump up his Contacts Background from 2 to 3.

Here are the finished rules for Marc's character concept using the steps in this chapter.

**Name:** Marc Bratovich

**Nature:** Visionary

**Demeanor:** Judge

**Physical Traits:** Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

**Social Traits:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2

**Mental Traits:** Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 2

**Talents:** Athletics 3, Empathy 4, Leadership 3

**Skills:** Drive 1, Etiquette 2, Firearms 2, Melee 2, Stealth 3, Survival 2

**Knowledges:** Academics 2, Computer 2, Politics 1

**Disciplines:** Potence 1, Fortitude 1

**Willpower:** 6

## Humanity: 7

**Blood Pool:** Max 10, Starting Pool 1. As a revenant, Marc's vitae will replenish naturally at a rate of 1 blood point per night.

**Backgrounds:** Allies 3, Contacts 3

**Virtues:** Conviction 3, Instinct 3, Courage 3

**Path:** None

**Merits:** Friendly Face 1, Common Sense 1, Natural Leader 1

**Flaws:** Isolated Upbringing 1, Recruitment Drive 1

## Ghoul Blood Pools

Your beginning blood pool is calculated by rolling a die to determine how many blood points you possess. Storytellers may allow you to reroll a result of a "1," as your character should typically begin play with a decent supply of blood. Independent ghouls, on the other hand, must halve the result. They will begin play with one to five blood points.

Most ghouls have limited capability of storing vampiric blood within their bodies. Because they require their own blood to survive, there just isn't enough room for more than two points of vitae. As they age and their bodies grow used to the extra blood in their systems, they gain a greater capacity for storage. Unfortunately, this process is slow. For every two hundred years a ghoul has been regularly accepting vitae, their blood pool expands by one point. Thus, a starting ghoul only has a blood pool of 2, but a ghoul in service for 400 years has a potential blood pool of 4 points.

Despite these limitations, it is possible for a ghoul to have a larger blood pool. The most useful method of increasing your ghoul's blood pool involves nightly feeding. Overfeeding can also add more vitae to your ghoul's system, but this method is practically useless as the engorged ghoul will act like someone who's had a feast. That character will feel bloated, lethargic, and unable to function normally. Thus, the excess blood in a ghoul's system from overfeeding is useless and has no impact on that character's rules.

A ghoul who can somehow convince her domitor to feed her nightly will find her entire natural blood capacity will eventually convert to vitae. Because of the vast amount of blood needed, this is difficult to maintain, but it may be feasible short-term for planned actions (raids, assassination attempts, Lupine hunts) that will require more extended access to Disciplines and healing. A domitor who feels

## Experience Costs

Trait	Cost
New Ability	3
New Thaumaturgy Path	20 (Tremere ghouls only)
New Discipline	20
Willpower	current rating
Humanity	current rating x 2
Virtue	current rating x 2
Ability	current rating x 2
Attribute	current rating x 5
Thaumaturgy Path	current level x 15
Clan/Family Discipline*	current level x 15*
Other Discipline**	current level x 25**

\* As a general rule, a ghoul attains a cost break to learn the Disciplines of her sponsor's Clan. A revenant, on the other hand, earns a cost break on her family's Disciplines.

\*\* It is much more difficult for independent ghouls to learn Disciplines than any other ghoul or revenant, and this is reflected in the cost required.

the need to offer so much vampiric blood to her servants must feel truly desperate to risk spoiling her servants in such a frivolous manner.

Once nightly feeding subsides, the body will continue to produce blood cells to replace normal losses, and eventually the body's blood supply will revert to normal, human blood.

It can be frustrating to have so little vampiric powers at the disposal of a ghoul character, but that's the point: ghouls are still mortal, and while they may possess some supernatural abilities, their resources to maintain those powers are very limited. Thus, all ghoul characters will need to manage their blood resources carefully and wisely.

## Optional Blood Point Rules

The following rules for blood intake add a highly desirable degree of realism to the process of ghoul creation. Because these rules are more complex, they will require more bookkeeping. These rules are recommended for chronicles in which most, if not all, of the players are ghouls, or in chronicles in which ghouls play important roles.

A ghoulish has a potential blood pool of 10, just like a human or Thirteenth Generation vampire, but this is normally presumed to be filled with human blood. A ghoulish can't simply ingest five blood points in a single sitting. A ghoulish may comfortably drink two blood points of vitae, as this is the amount that fits in the digestive tract. This stomach-borne vitae suffices to empower the ghoulish, but only two blood points may be absorbed through the stomach lining in this fashion. Further drinking does no good unless the ghoulish wishes to risk an overdose.

If a ghoulish wants to store more blood immediately, she must give up some blood from her circulatory system. Usually the domitor drains the ghoulish appropriately (an automatic feat); independent ghoulish may need to make a trip to a local blood bank or do it themselves at home (Intelligence + Medicine, difficulty 6). A successful roll allows the ghoulish to drain her blood and replace it with the domitor's blood in such a manner that she loses no Health Levels from the process; failure indicates that the ghoulish loses one to three Health Levels, at the Storyteller's discretion, from blood loss before the transfer is complete.





# Chapter Six: Storytelling

*“There is no death, only a change of worlds.”*

– Chief Seattle

Introducing a ghoul or revenant into a V20 chronicle shifts its tone, depth, and perspective, because it adds layers of perspective that many vampires take for granted. Together, both you and your players will explore the power struggles between the damned lords of the night and the ignorant masses they manipulate and feed upon through the eyes of ghouls and revenants.

Ghouls also allow the scope of your chronicle to widen into daylight hours. Loyal vassals might spread their domitors’ influence among unsuspecting mortals, carry out simple errands, or might even infiltrate and spy on other ghouls. Revenants, on the other hand, who often have more autonomy than a Bound ghoul, might be drawn deeper into Clan and revenant family politics.

## Getting Started

This chapter contains numerous plot devices, storytelling seeds, and techniques designed to help Storytellers create and run chronicles featuring ghouls or revenants as player characters. The sections are structured based on the role of the characters involved. Thus, some sections will focus more heavily on the composition of your player characters than the Storyteller characters. You are encouraged to

leverage what advice works best for your chronicle and discard the rest if it does not apply to your style of play or your group.

Additionally, this chapter contains advice for creating a chronicle synopsis with the guidance of your players. Because ghouls and revenants are both mortal, your player characters will react to violent, bloody, and traumatic experiences differently than they would if they were vampires. Using a synopsis may help set expectations about the scope, themes, and limitations of your chronicle before play, so your players are fully vested in each session. Furthermore, this toolkit is designed to help you address the horrors ghouls and revenants often face before you introduce adult themes and problematic material. The step-by-step guide, which begins on **page 159**, will help you design your chronicle to address the needs of your players by encouraging an open dialog as you design the plot.

## Themes and Mood

Thematically, ghouls may seem like they are demigods, even though they are clearly not. The Hero’s Journey, devised by Joseph Campbell, describes how the purpose of a hero is to cross the threshold of the world, to travel beyond the boundaries



of where mortals dare to venture, to look death in the eye in order to gain wisdom and salvation. World myths often feature brave, charismatic heroes and heroines who fight the gods and monsters on behalf of humanity. While it might seem like ghouls gain the benefits of vampiric blood without any of its drawbacks, they are Damned along with their masters. Or rather, ghouls are not heroes, no matter how powerful they might feel.

In order to understand the thematic representation of a ghoul, consider what their masters are. Though many vampires wear the mask of an ordinary person, much like the gods wore the faces of mortals, they are not gods and they are not immortal. Damned for eternity, vampires are monsters forced to feed on human blood to survive. While their humanity slowly erodes, they spend their days plotting and scheming from the shadows. Many vampires, however, find that they cannot live out their endless nights without help, so they turn to ghouls and revenants to do their bidding. Thus, ghouls and revenants are an extension of their masters. Some ghouls may fall into depravity and lose their sense of self, while others may struggle to retain their humanity as best they can. Regardless, to be in the service of a vampire is to work for the Damned. Though individual characters might desperately seek freedom, the fate of most ghouls is decided by their masters.

The role of a ghoul in V20 can be a challenge to manage, because the power dynamic between ghouls, revenants, vampires, and mortals are just as nuanced as the political struggles between Clans, bloodlines, or Sects. Many ghouls serve as a bridge between the ignorant herd and the secretive world of vampires. Thus, while a vampire might worry about the Sabbat infiltrating a Camarilla-held city, a ghoul is more concerned about finding allies in the local coroner's office or finding out who tripped the silent alarm. Unlike vampires, however, the vast majority of ghouls and revenants are used as tools and pawns despite any autonomy they might have. Even during the day, when ghouls might stand head and shoulders above other mortals, they fulfill their domitors' wishes out of fear, a need for vitae, the effects of the blood bond, etc.

Both ghouls and revenants are arguably on the bottom rung of vampire society because they can never hold status like their masters do. In truth, some ghouls might never realize their master belongs to a Clan, or that they're helping to protect the Masquerade. While they are pledged to live out their days and nights in eternal servitude, ghouls are still mortal and suffer greatly. Ghouls might keep their masters' affairs in order and outlive their natural life spans, but they still feed on the Blood and risk the ire of their masters.

Thus, the themes in your chronicle might explore the nature of the relationship between regnant and thrall,

domitor and ghoul, sire and future neonate. Often, the extent to which you can delve into themes such as loyalty, addiction, unrequited love, and free will depends upon the focal point of your chronicle and the composition of your player characters. One ghoul might not necessitate an entire chronicle devoted to the empty promises her domitor makes, for example, while an entire group of ghouls who are being trained for an eventual Embrace certainly would.

The mood, on the other hand, might depend upon how many ghouls and revenants you have among your player characters. Moods can also, however, depend upon what your players' comfort level with the topics you wish to explore. Personal horror, in the form of physical or psychological abuse, might be part and parcel to moods involving obsession and guilt, but your players might not feel comfortable with a chronicle that requires you to manage characters who hurt them week after week.

Unlike vampires, both ghouls and revenants—even when Bound—have a conscious and are impacted differently by what they see and experience *because* they are mortal. A player character who believed she was stepping into the role of a simple vassal, for example, may not be comfortable disposing of a corpse that was slaughtered right in front of her. While the influence of the blood bond does force a player character to do a regnant's bidding, be careful when exercising this option just to fit a specific theme or mood.

## Managing Ghouls

By far, the most common type of ghoul in V20 is that of a vassal or servant. These characters can either be ghouls or revenants, and are typically Bound out of fear or paranoia. Under the influence of the blood bond, rivalries between ghouls and revenants are sure to flourish. This potential for conflict gives you more options to introduce subplots and new Storyteller characters to flesh out your player characters' experiences.

While there are many different configurations of ghouls serving vampires in your group, these are some of the more common combinations of player characters:

- Camarilla ghouls serving different domitors who are ordered to follow the instructions of the local Sheriff, Archon, Alastor, or Justicar.
- Ghouls serving the same lower Generation vampire, who has the capacity to sustain multiple servants.
- Ghouls and revenants who serve the same Clan or Sect for a specific purpose such as obtaining rare resources or helping with experiments.

- Ghouls who serve different Clans within a Sect. These ghouls might coordinate their efforts for a common cause or need such as war with another Clan or the investigation of a theft.
- Revenants from the same family directed to carry out a Clan or specific vampire's wishes.
- Revenants who have left the safety of their family to spy on, or attack, their enemies.
- Independent ghouls who have banded together for survival in a specific city.
- Independent ghouls who belong to a ghoulish organization.
- Independent ghouls who have turned into vampire hunters or ghoulish liberators.
- Mistreated ghouls or revenants belonging to an abusive domitor, Clan, or Sect that are plotting their escape.

While there are a number of different ways vassals may play together in a chronicle, there are a few common techniques you can use to get the most out of your story.

## Customize Antagonists

The antagonists that you use in a chronicle involving ghouls and revenants may be different than the threats in a typical V20 chronicle. While vampires can and are antagonists, many ghouls — especially those who are mere servants — will have a challenging time bringing one down.

To address this conundrum, you might design a number of different, mortal Storyteller characters that will serve as antagonists before your chronicle begins. Then, assign these antagonists to various locations around the city your player characters are active in. Before you give them motivations, determine how much your Storyteller characters know about vampires, and let that be your guide to help shape their actions. For example, a rival ghoulish might be carrying out orders to spy on the player characters for information about their domitors. As another, an occult bookstore owner might become obsessed with the transactions the player characters are conducting, and might use that knowledge to follow or sabotage them.

If your antagonists don't know anything about the supernatural, then they might react poorly to certain types of encounters or scenes. If your characters are superstitious or have had dealings with ghouls or vampires before, then they might have deeper, long term goals.

## Encourage Cooperation

Often, one of the best ways to enhance your story is to rely on your players to help drive the plot. To do this, you might give your players a taste of what's to come before your session begins. This is especially useful if you expect to introduce mature or problematic scenes.

Briefing your players ahead of time allows you to concentrate on the big picture and trust that they're on board with your story. You might even want to consider asking your players to step into the role of an antagonist if they're not meant to be present at your scene. For example, if most of your player characters are defending themselves in a complex legal battle against a rival corporation, consider asking one of the non-starring players to guest star as a hostile witness or rival ghoulish. Conversely, if a few of the ghouls might be required to attend an intense inquiry between themselves and their domitors, you might consider asking one of your players who is not supposed to be in the scene to take on the role of the angry domitor for added flair.

### For the Storyteller: Balancing Player Characters

Inserting one or two servant ghouls into a mixed chronicle along with vampires would be challenging because of the way that vampires treat and view their thralls. Thus, if it is easier for a vampire to achieve his goals during the day through Allies, Contacts, or the use of Disciplines, then the need for a vassal to remain by that character's side decreases significantly.

Also, a mixed chronicle in which ghouls and vampires are present means that it will likely be difficult to ensure that both types of player characters receive equal time in the spotlight. In any scene, a vampire might give a ghoulish instructions to carry out a task that are then carried out in the domitor's absence. Thus, this type of configuration risks unbalancing the flow and pacing of your chronicle.

Regardless of how you might proceed, giving the players another face to confront can build the tension or conflict in your scenes. This will require you to devote more time to planning your chronicles, but provided you have a clear plan forward, this technique could allow for powerful moments that ensure everyone has a chance to shine.

## Use Downtime

Because ghouls are often acting under orders, the limits to their autonomy might prevent player characters from acting together. Though Bound ghouls deal with the effects of the blood bond, they still require agency to participate in a chronicle. This means you will likely need to give them opportunities to act of their own volition. Encouraging actions that take place during downtime facilitates the unique relationship between a domitor and a ghoul, and also removes some of the minutia in your game. If your player characters are having trouble figuring out their ghouls, you can also use downtime to help them individually and as a group, too.

If the story requires that your ghouls engage in Clan politics or need to thwart a police inquiry into their domitor's background, one way to increase dramatic tension would be to run a mini-session or two before introducing a major confrontation. By allowing for downtime, simple scenes such as interrogating a witness or routine check-ins might also happen off screen. This allows you to balance your player characters' screen time better, because the scenes they do appear in will require their full attention.

## Try Foreshadowing

Foreshadowing is a trope often used in film to show the danger to the audience before the characters actually understand what is happening. Often, foreshadowing highlights a looming threat such as a ticking bomb, an assassin hiding in the shadows, or a carefully laid trap. In your chronicle, foreshadowing can be used as a narrative technique to leverage the players' expectations in a current session to ratchet up the tension for a future scene.

One way to use foreshadowing would be to introduce key items or antagonists in a scene that will matter later. Alternatively, you might narrate a cycle of flashback scenes that takes place during downtime or over the course of a two-to-three session chronicle. In a shortened chronicle, you might set the events of those sessions long before the climax you're building toward. You might even go back to the beginning of one of your player characters' stories, to delve into the reasons why he chose to become a ghoul.

While your instincts might be to dictate how and when your players take action in a flashback, encourage your

players' investment in these crucial moments and let them drive the plot to influence the future. In this way, your climax will be more powerful and better customized to suit your players' needs. A recurring antagonist who first appears in a flashback scene, for example, becomes a character that's easier for your player characters to recognize in the future, since they would have prior experiences to draw upon.

In general, while it might seem managing flashbacks is complex, it doesn't have to be provided you communicate with your players what you plan to do ahead of time and, more importantly, *why*. By telling your players that a mini-session will help build to a more compelling climax in a story arc, you can use their feedback to plot out when you're running these sessions to avoid breaks in the tension.

## Storytelling Seeds

Designing a chronicle using a ghoul or revenant in the position of a servant is, perhaps, the easiest type of story to run. When you think about what kind of a story you want to introduce, keep in mind that your chronicle will suffer if there isn't any conflict in the form of antagonists or unforeseen complications as they go about their day. Mundane errands, such as feeding, shipping and receiving packages, withdrawing funds, etc. aren't compelling enough to sustain an entire session, let alone a chronicle. Thus, when determining the core of your story, assess pressure points where the player characters might meet an antagonist or run into challenges as they attempt to complete their goals.

Here are some examples of storytelling seeds that draw upon ghouls and revenants who serve their domitors in the capacity of an aide or assistant:

- **Protect the Unknown:** Deliveries of foreign and expensive packages rarely happen at night, and customs regulations can be a nightmare. This can be problematic for vampires that are expecting rare and valuable items from remote locations around the world. For example, if a Tzimisce domitor has acquired illegal copies of rare and blasphemous tablets describing an ancient use of Vicissitude from an overseas archeological site, he might use misdirection and a little trickery to ensure that document falls into the hands of his Bound ghouls or revenants. Though it's risky, the domitor knows that it's far better to sacrifice a ghoul than risk being attacked himself. What happens when the local Tremere learn that such a package is going to be delivered? How will this ghoul, and others like her, respond to inquiries from the local authorities investigating the theft of ancient artifacts? What

happens when the package is stolen from them before they can deliver it to its true owner?

- **Covering Up Blood:** One of the best ways to protect a vampire's haven, is to ensure that there is little to no reason to suspect anything unusual about it. In this scenario, a domitor's neighbors suspect something is wrong and have noticed strange visitors entering — but never leaving — at all hours of the night. A few nosy neighbors have threatened to go to the police, and are convinced there might even be a dead body or two lying around, due to the strange smells and blood seen dripping from their ceilings. While the mess has been cleaned up, the local authorities have been alerted to watch the haven and its occupants closely. The domitor has no choice but to fire her current ghoul, find a new one, and move her haven to a more secure location. Before she can do that, however, she asks her remaining Bound ghouls to help find a solution to her problem. What happens when one of your fellow ghouls turns out to be a spy who's attempting to sabotage your domitor in the eyes of her Clan? How will you convince these neighbors there's nothing sinister going on? What happens when your domitor is forced to flee and cannot return to feed you? How will you deal with the fresh round of accusations directed toward you that result from her disappearance?
- **Moving Numbers:** Many vampires and ghouls outlast a human lifespan, but their assets, debts, and holdings remain unless they access them via a new identity. Most Clans, such as the Giovanni, Ventrue, Nosferatu, and Ravnos, have skirted around the issue for years, by rerouting transactions through phantom accounts and false identities. Now, a global push to reduce the threat of terrorist and criminal acts have led to a high-profile investigation into questionable financial activities and suspicious accounts. Some vampires have been assigned to shadow and deal with the investigators, while their ghouls and revenants have been tasked with covering their tracks. Some vassals are pretending to be the fictitious owner of foreign holdings to draw attention away from their domitors. What part will the ghouls play in a scheme designed to protect their masters? What happens when the ghouls are arrested under suspicion of fraud? Will rival ghouls, working for domitors from separate Clans, sabotage one another? Would the ghouls or revenants, given the opportunity, be able to resist the temptation to become independent now that they're managing thousands of dollars?

- **Curiosity Kills:** The darkest mysteries often require dedicated, trained individuals to perform extensive research using their expertise. When combined with forbidden knowledge, like the pursuit of Noddist lore, this combination can be deadly for both domitor and ghoul. In this scenario, a desperate group of Noddist vampires from different Clans are pooling together their resources to translate rare texts written in an obscure dialect. To achieve their goals, they have created ghouls that share a common set of academic skills. Now, these ghouls and revenants are working together in an underground laboratory to unlock the secrets of these scrolls for their domitor. To ensure they are well provided for, their masters subsist on the help of independent ghouls to acquire basic necessities such as food and water for their charges. What happens when the independent ghouls attempt to break the academics free? Will the ghouls attempt to steal or sell the scrolls in exchange for their lives? How will they protect themselves after they've escaped? What happens if they reveal the true meaning of the blasphemous passages?

## Ghouls as Defenders

Not every ghoul or revenant will step into the shoes of a servant. Many vampires, especially those of a lower Generation or higher status, create multiple ghouls to protect themselves, their havens, and their holdings. Ghouls and revenants assigned to defend their masters may be focused on a specific role, such as that of a guard, body double, or short-lived pawn. More often than not, ghouls who defend their masters are trained to perform additional services. For example, a guard might also be a diplomat or an agent, too.

Ghouls may risk life and limb for their domitors due to the strong influence of the blood bond, but a secure bond is not a guarantee that player characters have the skills required for such a task. The Blood does not imbue characters with an automatic proficiency in hand-to-hand combat, and Storytellers would do well to remember this when plotting sessions. Often, domitors select candidates based on their natural talents with the understanding they cannot predict how they'll perform as ghouls or react to being Bound. Thus, while your instincts may be to run active sessions for your player characters, run a session or two to test the limits of their abilities to ensure they're capable of dealing with larger threats.

Similar to vassals, characters who are trained in the art of defense should be expected to perform their duties. Standing



guard night after night, however, is not enough to sustain an entire plot or sub-plot for your chronicle. The physical capabilities of a ghoul or revenant should come secondary to an action-centric plot, because a chronicle based on what physical feats your player characters can perform isn't as compelling as the reason why they're fighting. Thus, the backdrop for your story might be related to moving from one haven to another, guarding a domitor during a crucial meeting, or providing security at a Clan or Sect event. You might also try engaging the player characters in several nights of combat, only to reveal in a later session the reason why they're being subjected to increasing amounts of violence.

## Fueled by Plot Hooks

Combat driven by a darker purpose can be a fantastic way to ensure that a hint of mystery remains. While the characters might be focused on defending a haven or attacking a rival, the reason why they've been backed into a corner can lead to a more compelling storyline should they take the bait.

In this type of chronicle, you are using what the player characters don't know about vampires and vampire society against them, but not in a punitive manner. No master

is required to explain *why* her ghouls must go on the offensive, after all, just that her life is in danger. Though they might rush to her side, what happens when they stop to think about what's really going on?

Should you desire a chronicle that balances action with plot, here are a few reasons why the ghouls and revenants might be forced to fight or flee for their lives:

- One of the ghouls' domitors has been caught making deals with a known traitor to the Sect, such as an Anathema, Clan *antitribu*, diablerist, or the target of a blood hunt or inquiry.
- An independent ghoul or organization is attacking one of the domitors for past transgressions.
- Someone has killed or severely injured one of the ghouls' domitors, and is now targeting them.
- One or more of the ghouls has made enemies with the wrong sort, or has run afoul of a rival Clan, bloodline, or revenant family.
- One or more of the ghouls has accidentally witnessed something they should not have, and they must die for that knowledge.

- The ghouls are unwittingly caught up in a war between Sects on the eve of battle.
- The ghouls are being framed for someone else's crime.
- The domitor is testing the limits of his bodyguards, and wants to see what they're made of.

Keep in mind that action-centric chronicles don't necessarily have to be focused on the defense of a domitor or his haven, either. Physical ghouls might be working deep under cover as police officers, or they might be used to infiltrate enemy territories to spy on rivals or suspects. For example, a few revenants might be charged to serve as mediators on behalf of their masters. These characters travel to different parts of the city to negotiate complex treaties with rival vampires and factions. Some ghouls might be charged with cleaning out a few opponents standing in the way of a tenuous truce. Other times, revenants might be sent in a domitor's stead, because that vampire feels its too risky for him to be seen in person.

Whatever you decide, remember that no matter how intense your chronicle becomes, your characters are still ghouls that are, most likely, Bound. Should their domitors become hurt or injured, the player characters will have a lot more to deal with than protecting themselves from harm.

## Ghouls as Candidates for Embrace

For some ghouls and revenants, becoming a vampire is the reason why they agreed to blindly follow their domitors' wishes. The decision to Embrace is a crucial one, however, and some masters may never fulfill their promises. For vampires, there's a difference between choosing a candidate to become a ghoul, versus identifying who might make a good vampire. Thus, it is to be expected that most vampires will explore the benefits and drawbacks of each before damning their servants for all eternity. When and if a ghoul is Embraced, after all, her relationship with her sire changes even if she's Bound, because she is worth more as a vampire than a mortal. Now, this neonate is part of vampire society, may hold status, and could maintain her own ghouls, too.

The chronicles you might design that involving grooming one or more ghouls for an eventual Embrace will likely be as unique as their future sires. The decision to Embrace in a typical V20 game is influenced by factors that are related to vampire's status, location, Clan, bloodline,

### For the Storyteller: Limits of Being Bound

All ghouls are required to feed on vampiric blood at least once a month in order to remain a ghoul. Bound ghouls, on the other hand, must be fed blood from the same master to maintain the strength of the blood bond. This can limit their ability to travel far from the side of their domitors. Since most vampires are an untrustworthy lot, it's unlikely that they would allow their bodyguards and protectors to roam freely, regardless. Thus, you might need to integrate their domitors into the plot in a way that doesn't steal the spotlight from your player characters.

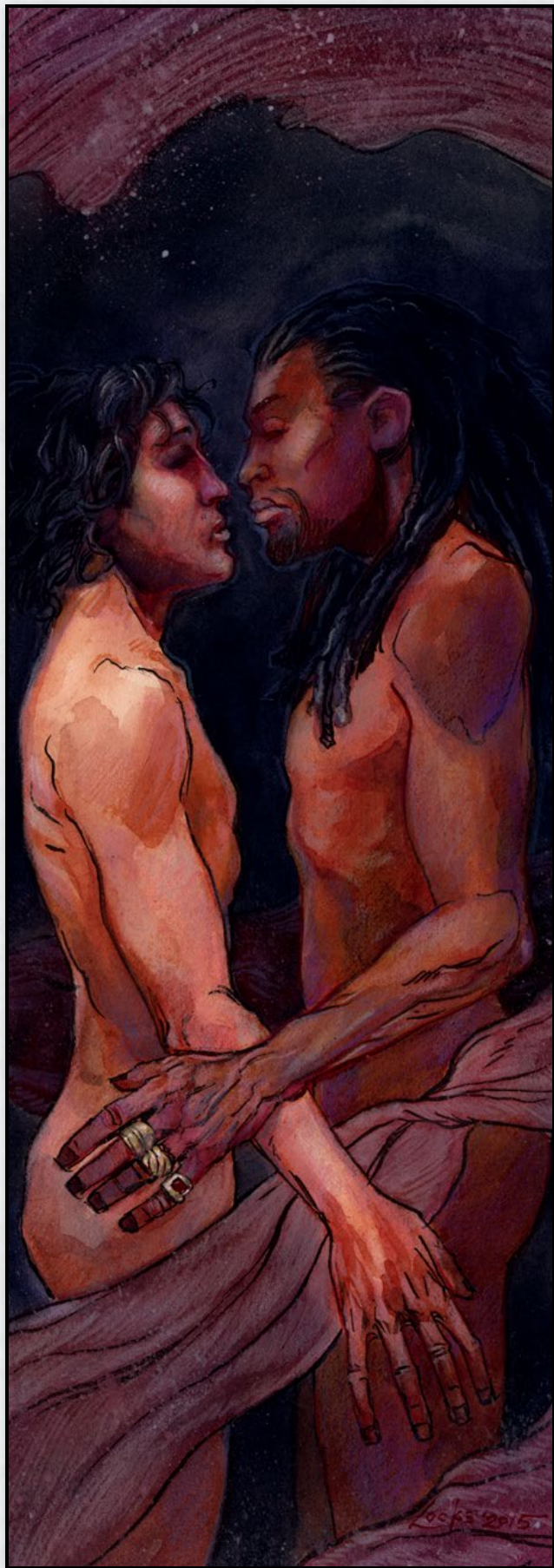
and Sect, not to mention a sire's personal reasons and desire to do so. Many vampires promise the Embrace as a motivational tool in order to ensure their ghouls remain dedicated to their work. Still, there are some vampires who create ghouls to test them, to see if they are truly worthy of becoming a vampire.

In ghoul chronicles, however, the decision to Embrace should be a collaborative effort between the Storyteller and the players, even in cases involving domitors who are unwilling to adhere to the rules in vampire society.

### Overcoming Obstacles

Chronicles involving ghouls who are being groomed for the Embrace can be challenging to manage if this goal is not shared by all involved. You run the risk of fixating on one player character, because any domitor who's serious about such a promise will likely treat that character differently than the rest of the group.

There are a few ways to get around this roadblock. First, you could explore this idea as a major story arc if all of the player characters are being groomed for Embrace by the same domitor, Clan, bloodline, or Sect. Keep in mind, however, that your player characters don't necessarily have to know the specific details leading up to that moment. While you do want to have a conversation with your players about their goals before your chronicle begins, the conflict between the desires of a vampire and his ghouls is another



tool in your toolkit you can use to make your story more compelling. For this type of chronicle, you might even encourage a little friendly competition between ghouls or revenants to see who is granted the Embrace first. Competition brings out the best (and worst) in people, so whenever your players perceive there's a "race" to the finish line, there will be conflict you can use to drive your plot.

Second, you could allow your player characters to be more autonomous for this type of story, and remove their domitors from the chronicle for a few sessions. After all, ghouls who fight well and serve a Clan, bloodline, or Sect are sometimes awarded the choice to be Embraced. You might point the player characters at a goal, and then step back and allow them to finish it on their own terms. This type of story might originate from their cooperation to take down independent ghouls in a city, their participation in a blood hunt, or their willingness to investigate an Anathema sighting. While attacking or capturing a vampire is extremely difficult for a ghoul, tracking down other ghouls is not impossible and, given the right circumstances, might even be encouraged.

Lastly, this type of story is one of the few ghoul-specific chronicles that makes sense to run in a mixed group of player characters where both vampires and ghouls are present. While ghouls do not hold status, characters that are being groomed for the Embrace will likely have more autonomy and agency than a mere vassal does, which means these characters can share the spotlight alongside their domitors. Despite the fact that the Embrace is an important part of your story, however, you will still need to ask your players what their common goal is. Why are vampires and ghouls, who are being groomed for an Embrace, working together? Are they allied to the same Clan, Sect, or revenant family? How will the Embrace help them achieve their goals? Then, pull each player aside and ask them questions related to the type of story you are hoping to narrate. For example, if you are thinking about a tense, political chronicle, focus on what the vampires are hoping to accomplish for their Clan or Sect by creating these ghouls. If it's action-based, on the other hand, pinpoint why your ghouls want to become vampires and reinforce the cost of losing their humanity.

## Ghouls, Etiquette, and Status

Vampires and ghouls might live in the same world, but they are often thought to inhabit very distant and distinct sections of it, even though this is not always the

case. Ghouls and revenants might be tolerated in places like Elysium, but as they hold no status or “weight” in vampire society, they do not have the ability to speak their minds or address other vampires unless prompted. Often, ghouls and revenants meet and swap stories during the day to help ease the burden of servitude.

The etiquette and social mores that govern ghouls, revenants, and vampires are often complex. With respect to ghouls, their behavior is often shaped by the expectations of their domitors. Revenants, on the other hand, are heavily influenced by other family members and, in some cases, their patron Clan or Sect. For these reasons, it is not uncommon for ghouls to be mentored by an older, more experienced ghoul to help them avoid a faux pas that will result in a severe punishment. This, however, is not always the case. Some ghouls, regardless of what they do or say, will be treated harshly because of their position in vampire society.

Though they are people, ghouls and revenants are considered property of a domitor, Clan, bloodline or, in extreme cases, a Sect. Their behavior might directly reflect upon their masters, but this is not always the case. Often, ghouls and revenants are thought of as disposable, expendable assets — because they can easily be replaced. Some ghouls might be treated as employees or subcontractors, while others could be regarded as playthings, pets, or *worse*.

## Designing Protocols

The protocols surrounding what a ghoul can and cannot do in various situations might ensure a player character’s survival. However, while the knowledge of proper etiquette is essential, there is no standard set of rules governing their behavior or treatment.

This generic list of suggestions is designed to help you brainstorm what, if any, rules for etiquette you might implement for your chronicle. To further customize these ideas, be sure to draw inspiration from the Clan, bloodline, or Sect of the masters involved. Also, please note that while this list reinforces ghoul etiquette, these same concepts might be applied to revenants as well.

- A ghoul should always stand when a vampire is present unless commanded to do otherwise.
- A ghoul must never drink more blood than her master is willing to give.
- A ghoul should never speak directly to a vampire without first being acknowledged or otherwise given tacit approval to speak in her presence.

- To show respect, a ghoul must never look a vampire directly in the eye.
- When approaching a vampire, a dutiful ghoul shall keep her hands in front of her, with her palms facing the ceiling, as a sign of trust.
- No ghoul is allowed to maintain relationships with other mortals or ghouls.
- It is forbidden for a ghoul to frenzy in the presence of another ghoul or vampire.
- In order to attend an important meeting among members of a Clan, bloodline, or Sect, a ghoul must be granted permission by her domitor beforehand.

In addition to these suggestions, it is generally believed that a ghoul must be careful to avoid insulting or interrupting any vampire. Thus, a petty ghoul might attempt to provoke her rival, while her rival might be forced to perform extra services for the vampire he’s insulted. Generally speaking, any act that

Other vampires believe that ghouls should be seen and heard only when needed. Regardless of whether or not they are Bound, however, all ghouls have the capacity to think for themselves. Thus, wiser vassals tend to listen for any secret or clue that might advance her domitor’s cause. However, missteps here are also possible, as a ghoul’s advice may not be warranted or, as is likely the case, may reflect an overly eager ghoul who’s desperate for more blood.

## Handling Abuse

In any story, the safety and comfort level of your players should come before the needs of your story. It may be true to the setting that a particularly nasty Sabbat pack physically and verbally abuses their ghouls, but it is possible to get that point across without making your players so uncomfortable they don’t want to play anymore. Often, chronicles featuring ghouls and revenants as player characters shifts the perspective from abuser to the abused, and this change requires a higher level of sensitivity on the part of the Storyteller to ensure your players are still invested in having a good time.

As a general rule, it’s always a great idea to talk to your players to find out where the boundaries of their comfort level begins and ends. If a player has no interest in being experimented upon by a Fiend, for example, then either avoid pursuing a storyline that preys upon this fear or, alternatively, ask your player a follow-up question. Sometimes, a player might be interested a challenging or



frightening scene if given the opportunity to escape, exact revenge, or destroy their domitor.

Regardless, it's likely you may have players in your group who possess different comfort levels with mature topics that are felt differently by ghouls, who are mortals, than by vampires, who are not. For this reason, you might explore unspoken methods of communication you and your players can use during a session to clearly signal that moment when a scene is becoming too intense. As one example, you might identify a specific hand gesture or hand out a pack of colored sticky notes your players can write symbols on. As another, you might create additional Storyteller characters that are in a position to help or rescue your player characters should you perceive uncomfortable levels of tension.

Another way of dealing with problematic materials in your game, is to try and avoid introducing abusive characters or scenes simply because you're interested in them. One way to keep the focus on the players, is to decide what the repercussions from these scenes might be. If the player characters or the plot does not benefit from such scenes, then consider an alternative method of achieving your goals. Should you decide that abuse is necessary, use downtime to talk to your players and show why it's important. Alternatively, you might find that the scene you wish to run doesn't have to involve every player. In that case, you could avoid narrating the specifics of the abuse. Instead, you might collaborate with your player to talk about what led to that act, and when it might be best to reveal what happened to the other players. Then, step back and allow your player to narrate their experience to the rest of the group.

Keep in mind that the mistreatment of a ghoul or revenant should have ramifications depending upon the characters and politics involved. A vampire who abuses another Kindred's ghoul, for example, might result in a punishment of some sort, because that domitor would be upset his property was "damaged" in some fashion. On the other hand, the rules governing the etiquette of a ghoul's treatment are different in a Sabbat pack, in part because a ghoul might belong to multiple vampires as opposed to a single master. However, even among members of that Sect, rivalries are so common ghouls often get caught up in the crossfire.

One final word of caution on this subject: please avoid, under any circumstance, taking advantage of the fact that your player characters are Bound. While the influence of the blood bond dulls their senses and creates a supernatural devotion to their domitors, the player characters are still

acutely aware of what's happening to them. No matter your reasoning, this is a line that should not be crossed. With respect to serious, mature topics like abuse, it is highly recommended that you communicate with your players to respect their boundaries.

## Introducing Body Horror

Ghouls and revenants, despite the vampiric blood in their veins, are mortal. Though their age, injury, or disease might be held in check with regular feedings, ghouls are not immune to mental illness. Thus, while a ghoul's body doesn't age, her mind still does. As time passes, a ghoul might feel conflicted in her attempts to reconcile what she *thinks* should happen to her body versus what she's *actually* seeing. Other ghouls subjected to the use of Vicissitude, on the other hand, suffer more acutely as they watch their skin being remolded into impossible shapes.

A number of deep-seated psychoses stem from a primal fear of the loss of agency over the body. To trigger psychological horror, Storytellers should expose player characters to common psychological and emotional vulnerabilities. Chronicles that focus on body horror might include graphic destruction or degeneration of the body, but it might also be introduced through a sense of wonder as a hurt ghoul learns to heal their bodies with the Blood. This type of horror is flexible, however, because it could also involve the effects of a specific Clan's curse such as the Nosferatu or the Setite weaknesses. On the other hand, body horror can also be explored through the contrast between a ghoul's body and the untainted mortals surrounding him.

Body horror can be extremely difficult to sustain as the major focal point of a chronicle, however, if the player characters need to be hurt or affected for extended periods of time. Outside of Clan weaknesses and aging, Vicissitude modifications would likely be performed by a Storyteller character, which shifts the focus off of the players. Due to the nature of the blood bond, Bound characters are at risk of being abused as well. Thus, should any Storyteller wish to leverage body horror in a chronicle, it is important to talk to your players ahead of time to address their concerns.

Though communication is important, you might also want to test the player characters' reactions to body horror during a scene. This technique primarily works best for ghouls who are new or for those player characters who suffer from a Clan weakness for the first time. For example, during the start of your chronicle, you might provide a scenario where one of the ghouls accidentally reveals her strength in front of innocent bystanders. She might push

someone out of the way and find she's stronger than she was, or she might be horrified to watch shadows lean toward her and wonder what's wrong. By concentrating on the difference between a ghoul's physiology and an unaltered mortal's, you'll allow the players to draw themselves deeper into the uniqueness of their characters.

Alternatively, you might have a character that had a terminal illness before he became a ghoul. How does a cancer patient feel now that he's got vampiric blood in his system? Storyteller characters might comment on how much better he looks or be impressed by a noticeable increase in his vitality. Then, when your player character is feeling comfortable in his renewed body, you might slowly reveal the price for this "gift" of the Blood.

## Using Vicissitude

The use of Vicissitude and its effects on the characters in your ghoul-centric chronicle is a matter of perspective. After all, there is a difference between a vampire using this horrific power and a player character feeling its effects. Regardless, there is a reason why this Discipline is not commonly taught among all Clans and bloodlines, and why it is considered to be one of the most terrifying.

Victims of Vicissitude are often, if not always, driven mad by the experience of watching their bodies being remolded into hideous shapes. Player characters may lose the ability to speak or form coherent thoughts during the process, and become so paralyzed with fear they cease to function normally afterward. In extreme cases, the victim is no longer recognizable and barely retains control over their mental faculties. Two such victims are the szlatcha and the vozhd. Designed for combat by the Tzimisce Clan, neither war ghoul can be considered human any longer, and both are so monstrous they tend to act on instinct.

However, there are revenants such as those within the Bratovich family who use this Discipline on animals. While the use of Vicissitude might be a player character's goal, it is not enough to sustain a plot for multiple sessions without any conflict. Instead of focusing on fleshcrafting as the focal point for your chronicle, then, learn to plot ahead. Think about what might happen after a flesh-crafted horror is created and unleashed. The terrifying sight of a Bratovich hellhound in a city like Chicago, for example, would likely not go unnoticed. You might hint that the local sheriff has launched an investigation, or that a group of ghouls has been tasked with capturing the hound. Thus, both the Storyteller and player characters benefit from the use of this Discipline. The player characters are able to pursue their use and knowledge of Vicissitude, while the Storyteller is able to incorporate their goal into the overall plot.

## Revenants and the Blood Bond

Revenants are not unusually Bound, because they naturally produce their own vitae. Thus, they don't require regular feedings in order to preserve their physical state of being. Vampires view revenants to be an asset for this reason, because while they don't require their blood, they are still pledged to serve them. However, some vampires are so paranoid they may forcibly forge a blood bond with multiple family members to ensure their loyalty. Storytellers can leverage this detail as the basis for a chronicle.

For example, you might decide that the Salamanca branch of the Grimaldi revenant family has spent the last several decades working to free themselves from the Sabbat in Mexico. Behind their false smiles and subservience, the head of their family, Pablo Salamanca y Grimaldi, has been slowly sabotaging the Sword of Caine and looking for ways to disentangle his brood from the Sect. Unfortunately, local members of the Sabbat have become so suspicious, they've begun to forge the blood bond with as many members of the revenant family as they can. However, Pablo is aware his family is being infiltrated, and might task the player characters with discovering a way to break those bonds or determine which family members are worth saving.

## Blood Bonds and Disciplines

Both the nature of the blood bond and the use of Disciplines present an interesting conundrum for Storytellers who run a ghoul-centric chronicle. How can player characters maintain a sense of free will and agency while staying true to the setting constraints? For games involving independent ghouls or revenants who are not Bound, this isn't as much of an issue. But for Bound ghouls and revenants, on the other hand, the blood bond greatly influences their feelings and their freedom to make decisions.

While the blood bond is powerful, it does not have the same effect on every character. Some vampires might view the blood bond as a gross and fundamental violation of the thrall's agency. In some cases, it might be assumed that all ghouls must be subjected to the blood bond before being brought back to their master's haven. Bound ghouls often quickly come to "love" their regnant, and forsake the lives they once knew to serve and protect their domitors. However, the blood bond is not a substitute for a player character's motivation, nor does it irrevocably alter that ghoul's personality.

Player characters are encouraged to choose their domitors prior to the start of the chronicle. By giving your players control over how they became Bound, it will greatly reduce the feeling that they are powerless under the blood bond's influence. As Storyteller, your role is to introduce situations that allow your player characters to take action independently of their masters. To do this, a domitor might give an order that requires them to investigate a new area of the city. Storytellers are also encouraged to present opportunities for ghouls to embrace the quiet moments where the characters take time for themselves away from their masters, especially during the day. How Bound ghouls elect to spend their downtime can give the appearance of agency, since their masters cannot physically be present.

In addition to ensuring your player characters have agency, Storytellers should monitor moments when the influence of the blood bond might be weakened. Prolonged cruelty, or the use of thaumaturgical rituals designed to decrease the bond's effects, may introduce a window of opportunity for the player character to temporarily break free. Regardless, it is exceedingly difficult to break a blood bond, and this fact should be reinforced prior to the start of your chronicle.

The blood bond is not the only factor that impacts the free will of a ghoul. A number of Disciplines also possess the ability to strip away a character's agency. For example, the use of Dominate and Presence could force the player characters to act according to the wishes of your Storyteller characters. While you may feel inclined to rely on Disciplines, you can still reinforce how scary vampires are without forcibly removing the player characters' freedom of choice.

You might also consider interesting uses of Disciplines to enhance your plot. For example, if one of your player characters is a sleeper agent, the use of Dominate will allow you to hide memories in the ghoul's mind. Maybe the ghoul finds random charges on her credit cards or discovers scratches on her vehicle. Maybe a revenant cannot recall the past twelve hours, and he's horrified to

discover he's been robbed blind — or has he? By tapping into your player character's paranoia over the loss of their memories, you can hook her on a mystery. Does she keep a journal detailing her real memories? How will she enlist help from her fellow ghouls? Do they set up cameras to record what happens to her?

## Independent Ghouls

Given enough time, motivation, and will, however, a ghoul could rebel against the blood bond in subtle and overt ways. This type of rebellion fuels a chronicle involving independent ghouls. In some ways, designing a chronicle involving independent ghouls is easier than managing Bound ghouls because they have more autonomy and their immediate concern is for their survival. Most independent ghouls, and those rare revenants who've gone rogue, might even be hunted by one or more Storyteller characters. Should they wish to remain a ghoul, however, the player characters are often forced to make desperate decisions to obtain more blood.

A few independent ghouls might choose to undermine their masters instead of going on the run. They may begin to take steps to weaken their master politically while remaining hidden in the shadows, or they might reveal a key weakness to a bloodthirsty enemy. Alternatively, an independent ghoul might seek to network with other ghouls, or she might build more contacts and allies as a means of protecting herself. After all, a lone ghoul who's recently shattered the influence of the blood bond will likely not last as long as a group of ghouls who have united for a common purpose.

The player characters, however, might not be familiar with the opportunities you're presenting to help them navigate this new aspect of your chronicle. Here, too, you will want to balance the concerns of your players against what your Storyteller characters are doing to help or hinder them.

## Ghouls Hunting Masters

Most vampires are afraid that their ghouls will one day rise up and turn against them. Often, sires warn their neonates of this fact, and these rumors are not entirely unfounded. Though it's possible that Bound ghouls would hunt vampires, it is a challenge due to the influence of the blood bond. Independent ghouls, on the other hand, often hunt vampires for their blood. Some rogue ghouls band together in groups such as the Unmastered, which is described on [page 82](#), to pool their resources and hunt

more effectively. This, however, often introduces moral dilemmas as independent ghouls may also have to fight off ghouls or other mortals, too.

Independent ghouls are often paranoid as well, and most are afraid of being Bound again. While their fears can impact how they hunt vampires, they can also help flesh out their motivations and interactions with other ghouls and innocent bystanders. Some might pledge to liberate as many Bound ghouls as they can, while others might decide to expose the truth about vampire society. For these reasons, Storytellers should consider introducing independent ghouls as antagonists if the characters are Bound.

Take for example the independent ghoul, Caiaphas Smith, who has been attacking vampires for 200 years. Motivated by his faith, the Puritan is driven to murder all vampires, even though he needs their blood to continue prolonging his death. Smith is a great example of a character that might be introduced as an antagonist acting against both vampires and ghouls, because he has clear motivations that surpass an addiction to the Blood. Ghouls who cross paths with Smith could run afoul of this character in multiple ways, ranging from a desire to protect their masters to resisting his religious zealotry. They might, however, also be motivated to capture Smith if their masters promise them a reward.

Revenants also hunt vampires, but their reasons for doing so vary widely. For example, the Bratovich family of revenants has been encouraged by the Sabbat to hunt Gangrel vampires and their ghouls. It's also highly likely that a group of revenants might plot to attack a rival Clan or Sect for hurting members of their family.

## **Ghouls as Antagonists**

Antagonists in a ghoul-centric chronicle range from the mundane to the profane, from the overzealous phlebotomist to the vampire seeking vengeance. When ghouls and revenants become the antagonists, however, their actions are often dictated by a few, important aspects of their character. Of these, whether or not the character is Bound is an important detail that will likely shape a Storyteller character's actions.

When a ghoul or revenant is freed from the effects of the blood bond, the dynamic between ghoul vs. ghoul, ghoul vs. mortal, and ghoul vs. vampire shifts significantly because that character's mind is unclouded by its influence. Storyteller characters who remain Bound, however, may

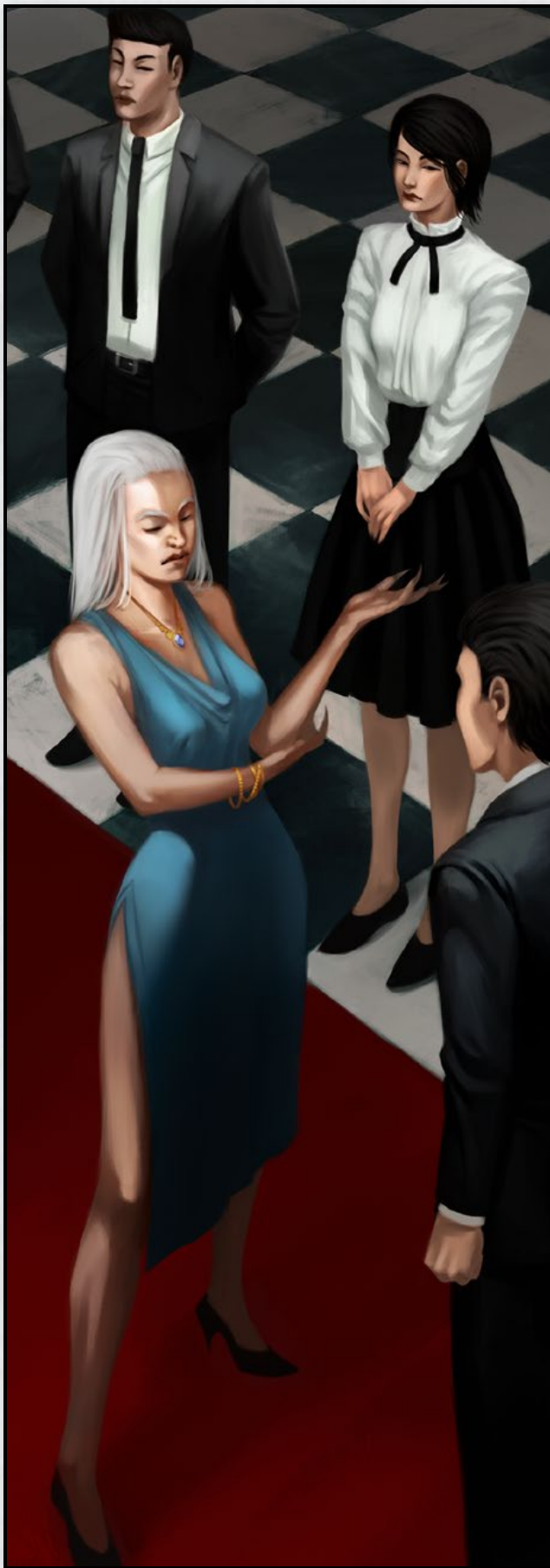
also be introduced as antagonists. A domitor might instruct a Bound ghoul to spy on the player characters, while a Bound elder ghoul might destroy young ghouls she perceives as threats to her position.

Storytellers should also consider the difference between how revenants and ghouls obtain blood. Technically, though revenants are ghouls, the fact that they naturally produce vitae in their system gives them an edge. This means that revenants can develop a wider range of goals than independent ghouls, because they are not necessarily addicted to the Blood. Though they hold no status, revenants are often part of a larger, more intricate web of lies and often have more connections than the average ghoul. Combined, these factors allow Storytellers to design a variety of antagonists that pit revenants against Bound or independent ghouls.

Another factor Storytellers can leverage is to decide how much an antagonist knows about vampires and vampire society versus what the player characters know. If there are differences, this can twist and turn the plot in an unexpected direction. A Storyteller character, for example, might have encountered members from five or six Clans, while the player characters may not realize that Clans exist. Other ghouls might cross paths with the Enrathi family, and may leap to the assumption that they are actually vampires from a never-before-seen Clan.

Antagonists might also be motivated by what they don't know. For example, Storyteller characters could attempt to accumulate more knowledge of Disciplines or thaumaturgical rituals. Given the pursuit of this knowledge is forbidden and dangerous, any ghoul or revenant who gets swept up in a chronicle could be directed to intercept them. Bound ghouls might be used as pawns, guards, or spies, while revenants and independent ghouls could be encouraged to capture or set a trap for the antagonist. Additionally, the pursuit of secrets works well for well-equipped groups or ghoul organizations, too. Forbidden lore might be used, taught to other ghouls, or sold to the highest bidder.

Finally, there is one last type of antagonist that might be deployed: Storyteller characters who are not aware they are being used by cunning vampires. A sleeper agent, for example, might be manipulating into destroying a master's haven from the inside out or as part of a larger, grander scheme. Some vampires might create a ghoul for this purpose, while others could use Disciplines on unsuspecting victims. Regardless, Storytellers should connect this type of antagonist to a larger, more powerful threat.



## Types of Chronicles

One of the easiest ways to run a ghoul-centric chronicle, is to design a plot for ghouls or revenants from the same Clan, bloodline, Sect, family, or organization. While the players may have varying degrees of knowledge about their origins, Storytellers are not limited in this fashion. Thus, running multiplesessions for a group of Assamite ghouls, for example, will shape the options a Storyteller explores, and lure the player characters deeper into the World of Darkness.

### Camarilla

Chronicles involving Camarilla ghouls may mirror the Storytelling Seeds found on [page 146](#) designed for vassals, or they might be more political in nature. Other ideas include:

- **Masks and Masquerade:** The player characters are ghouls acting as agents for the local prince or other high-ranking Kindred in the city. These ghouls are charged with maintaining the Masquerade through a variety of methods ranging from surveillance to misdirection. The ghouls are encouraged to devise methods that allow them to monitor media reports, police alerts, and general gossip that may be related to vampire activity in order to discredit witnesses or plant false evidence. This type of chronicle will tap into the player characters' investigative skills, but it could force them to make questionable decisions. What happens when one of the vampiric spies turns out to be a family member or former lover? What decisions will the ghouls make when they find they're being impersonated by rivals hoping to frame them for a Masquerade breach?
- **Vigilant by Day:** During the day, ghouls who act as bodyguards are the Kindred's front line of defense. These ghouls maintain a close watch on potential threats such as Sabbat ghouls or revenants, mortal hunters, Lupines, nosy reporters, or cops. When these threats get too close, the player characters must take action to defend Kindred havens from attack. In an ever-changing world, how will the ghouls keep abreast of technological changes without attracting suspicion? What happens if the ghouls make the wrong decision when defending their masters' havens? Will the ghouls be punished if their domitors find out they've been fed misinformation that's led to the death of their allies? Or, will the ghouls accidentally cause a Masquerade breach and invoke their master's wrath?

- **Secrets of the Occult:** In this type of chronicle, it is likely that the player characters were chosen to procure occult secrets because of their keen, analytical minds or their specialized fields of knowledge. In a mixed group comprised of ghouls from different Clans, tensions may flare as the player characters race to unlock secrets hidden for their masters. If they belong to the same Clan, however, the player characters might have additional goals they want to pursue in order to prove themselves worthy. Perhaps several Tremere domitors have each pledged a ghoul to form a unique group of researchers. Together, the player characters will decipher texts about a sunken city, find lore regarding a supposedly haunted location, or follow up on rumors related to a forgotten Methuselah kept secure in a hidden vault. A temporary alliance like this creates opportunities for conflict that Storytellers might draw upon, and offer the ghouls a chance to forge bonds with each other.

## Sabbat

Chronicles involving Sabbat ghouls will most likely deal with an attack upon the Camarilla, discord within the Sect, or a plot to overthrow a particularly cruel Sabbat pack.

- **Recon and Report:** A large team of ghouls and revenants is sent into a Camarilla-held city, such as Chicago, to identify havens and meeting places for known Kindred in preparation for a siege. Though the player characters are one cog in a larger wheel, they are given the option of picking which task they want to perform while another group might attempt to infiltrate the city in a different area. Using false identities, the group would be free to serve their masters however they see fit, provided they report what they've learned during their monthly feedings. Should they be successful, the group might also be expected to set up temporary havens and acquire weapons for the assault. Adding a second group of Sabbat ghouls could present opportunities for betrayal and backstabbing, or these Storyteller characters may serve as allies in hostile territory.
- **Silence is Necessary:** While the Sabbat doesn't follow the Traditions, many elders are smart enough to know that attracting undue amounts of attention from mortals could result in disaster. A group of ghouls and revenants might be tasked with keeping a lid on Sabbat activities in a city or town. Their tactics are likely crueller than their Camarilla ghoul counterparts, but it's likely that they'd still need to build local contacts and gain influence

in order to keep the Sabbat's presence hidden. In this type of chronicle, conflict might erupt if a group of Camarilla ghouls and Sabbat ghouls are both racing to cover up the same murder or find a witness. Depending upon which city the chronicle takes place in, there could be further complications related to territorial or political disputes.

- **Ready, Set, Track:** In this high stakes chronicle, a group of Sabbat ghouls or revenants are ordered to track down a high profile target. For example, the Talons of the Black Rage or members of the Bratovich family might be tasked with monitoring an Alastor spotted in New Orleans. How does the team prepare for this dangerous mission? What tactics do they use? Which allies will they work with to obtain resources and information? If the player characters are ghouls, how will they continue their regular feedings should they be forced to go deeper undercover?
- **A Bitter Feud:** Family, Clan, or pack rivalries can ignite bitter feuds that last for decades or even centuries. The involvement of the player characters will depend upon who they are and who their master is. For example, the group might be comprised of members of the same revenant family or Clan, or they might be rivals forced to work together for the Sabbat. Rivalries can also erupt for a variety of reasons such as a perceived slight or an ancient grudge. The player characters might be tasked with finding a resolution or, alternatively, could be encouraged to sabotage, kidnap, or even assassinate their rivals. Since this type of chronicle has the tendency to be more personal, there are many different directions the plot could go in.

## Anarchs

Though members of the Anarch Movement might profess their disdain for the blood bond and ghouls in principle, there are some vampires who find them useful. Chronicles involving Anarch ghouls might range from wreaking havoc to attacking their enemies.

- **Crime Pays:** A group of ghouls is tasked with managing a smuggling, drug, or other illicit operation for their Anarch masters. Not only are they expected to serve the needs of the Movement, they also have to be on the lookout for mortal law enforcement and rival criminal organizations who don't like newcomers muscling in on their turf. Depending upon how long they're separated from their masters, Anarch ghouls run the risk of not getting their monthly feeding. Do

the ghouls try to procure blood from another source? Or do they search for their masters and abandon their budding operation?

- **Principal Raid:** The Anarchs are getting ready to overthrow the local prince by attacking his haven. They believe their ghouls are key to disabling the Camarilla ghouls guarding him. How do the ghouls prepare for this daytime battle? Will they be able to murder other ghouls knowing they may be Bound? What happens when they learn the prince isn't at that location?

## Revenants and Their Families

Unlike ghouls, revenants do not require a regnant, but they may be subjected to the blood bond. All revenants, however, are part of a family that typically has ties to a Clan or bloodline. Chronicles involving revenants not only take these details into account, they also incorporate Clan or Sect politics on a deeper level than if the player characters were just ghouls.

- **Establish an Estate:** A revenant family's founders have decided to expand their reach into a new city. They have tasked the player characters with securing a new compound located far from their current home. To help, the revenants have been entrusted with valuable assets to purchase land and prepare for the arrival of other family members. Additionally, the revenants are also expected to survey the area to assess supernatural activities and make contact with known allies. How do the player characters' goals and motivations intersect with their family obligations? If their vampire masters are not affiliate with a Sect, such as the Giovanni or the Assamite Clans, do they bother making their presence known the Camarilla or Sabbat? Is this family expansion a secret?
- **Seeds of Rebellion:** A faction within the revenant family has made the bold decision to secede from the vampire Clan that holds dominance over them. This type of chronicle requires that the player characters are members of the same family. Many years ago, for example, the Ducheski managed to escape Clan Tzimisce and join forces with Clan Tremere. Now, another family (or even the Ducheski themselves) is plotting to do the same. In this plot, the player characters are co-conspirators. They will need to spend their days seeking favors from vampires outside their sponsored Clan, collecting valuable resources, allies, and contacts until they are ready to make their move.

Unfortunately, not everyone in the family agrees that such a move is warranted, and this creates a lot of opportunity for conflict, internal strife, and intrigue.

## Ghoul Organizations

Ghouls are rarely encouraged to organize, out of fear they'll be better equipped to resist the influence of the blood bond and escape to freedom. Thus, unless a ghoule organization is tied to a specific Clan or bloodline, members would typically be comprised of independent ghouls. Examples of ghoule organizations, such as the Sanguinaries, can be found beginning on [page 82](#).

- **Safe as Houses:** Members of a ghoule organization, such as the Unmastered or the Disciples of Set, are tasked with infiltrating a vampire-controlled city. Once they've established a foothold, the ghouls are asked to set up a safe house for the organization. The ghouls have free range to lay the groundwork however they see fit. What business front will they use to hide their true agenda? How will they procure the weapons, allies, and resources they require? How will they thwart nosy mortals, ghouls, and vampires while taking over a section of the city?
- **Research Disciplines:** A ghoule organization has directed its members to find additional methods of learning Disciplines. The player characters might trade their services to a vampire in exchange for the pursuit of Discipline knowledge, or they might target, kidnap, and interrogate a vampire to extract the information from him. This type of chronicle will likely attract the attention of a Clan, bloodline, or Sect, because increasing any ghoule's knowledge of Disciplines will not go unnoticed for long. It may, however, also generate new rivals or allies as this information is also extremely valuable.

## Troubleshooting

Ghoule-centric chronicles require Storytellers to use different narrative techniques than plots involving vampires for several reasons. Not only are the antagonists likely different, the stakes are much higher in a ghoule-centric chronicle due to the fact that ghouls and revenants are both mortal who serve vampires to varying degrees. With so much at risk, Storytellers have more opportunity to narrate horrific scenes that have an uncertain or potentially gruesome outcome for all involved. These factors can make a ghoule-centric chronicle problematic to run, because while *V20* is a horror game, the needs of any plot should never outweigh the players' comfort level.

When running a ghoulish-centric chronicle, try to:

- Keep the focus on ghouls by giving them opportunities to act, despite the fact that vampires are more powerful.
- Remember that ghouls, despite being mortals, are servants to the Damned.
- Determine how the blood bond affects each character narratively, as opposed to hyper-fixating on the rules.
- Let the player characters have some input as to how it affects and influences their behavior.
- Avoid setting aside the player characters' morality; it should impact their actions even when Bound.
- Leverage what the player characters do and do not know about the World of Darkness.

While communication can be helpful and ensure that your players are on board with your story, this can also bog down sessions. If pacing is crucial to your style of storytelling, consider using a chronicle guide as a way to draw your players into your plot.

## Using Chronicle Guides

To sidestep any potential issues you might encounter over the course of your chronicle, consider designing a synopsis guide to map out a few sessions for your players. Unlike a linear plot, in which the players are expected to precisely follow the beats of a story, a synopsis guide acts as the framework for your chronicle without dictating what *will* happen. Instead, the guide is designed to present possibilities as to what *might* happen, so your players can offer feedback on how they'd like to steer the chronicle.

For example, imagine that you are managing three player characters, all of whom are Camarilla ghouls belonging to different Clans. If the fourth player creates a Grimaldi revenant, the chronicle might be disrupted as you scramble to figure out a central plot that encompasses all of your player characters. In other words, ghoulish-centric chronicles can be easier to run when your player characters' motivations as a group are clear. In many cases, however, this may not be the case as one player might find stepping into the shoes of a Tremere ghoulish is infinitely more interesting than that of a Brujah ghoulish or Enrathi revenant.

A synopsis guide will help coordinate the player characters' goals to quickly establish a common context. While there are many different ways to devise a chronicle synopsis, the following steps will help Storytellers and players lay the foundation for a fun and compelling ghoulish-centric game. Please note that the introduction of a chronicle synopsis should take place before your players build their characters using the rules beginning on [page 115](#).

## Step One: Choose a Theme and Mood

Prior to writing down the seeds of your plot, determine the theme and mood for your proposed chronicle. You might draw ideas from [V20](#) on pp. 14-15, or you might take inspiration from the suggestions on [page 143](#) in this chapter.

By determining the theme and mood, you are establishing the framework for your story.

**Example:** *Sarah wants to run an action-based plot for a group of ghouls. To give her player characters the agency they require, she chooses Moral Dilemma as her chronicle's theme. In this way, Sarah feels she can reinforce their fragility and humanity while exploring their addiction to the Blood. However, Sarah also doesn't want to limit the types of moral dilemmas her player characters encounter; she may introduce victims they'll be forced to fight, kill, or save. Thus, Sarah decides that Dangerous would work best as a mood, because it complements Moral Dilemma and reinforces the high stakes in her chronicle.*

Once you have decided on your chronicle's theme and mood, then you're ready to brainstorm the specifics for your plot.

## Step Two: Devise a Chronicle Summary and Title

Next, write a paragraph or two that summarizes the plot of your chronicle. Try to avoid spoiling the plot by divulging who your antagonists are or what threats the player characters will face. The purpose of your chronicle summary is twofold. First, your short summary acts as a sales pitch to hook your players' interest. If they are excited, then they're much more likely to play through problematic scenes. If they are not, on the other hand, you might propose a different type of story using the same theme and mood, or try something else that takes their feedback into account.

The second purpose of a summary is to set your players' expectations. Your goal is to frame the chronicle to show



how the player characters can become invested in the plot. Thus, you might want to spend the second part of your synopsis proposing questions that may be answered over the course of multiple sessions. Then, once your finished summarizing your chronicle, give it a title and propose the idea to your players.

If you're having trouble coming up with a plot, you might draw inspiration from the Storyteller Seeds scattered throughout this chapter. The following Anarch Movement chronicle synopsis is one such example. The title of the chronicle is Crime Pays.

**Example:** *A group of ghouls is tasked with managing a smuggling, drug, or other illicit operation for their Anarch masters. Not only are they expected to serve the needs of the Movement, they also have to be on the lookout for mortal law enforcement and rival criminal organizations who don't like newcomers muscling in on their turf. Depending upon how long they're separated from their masters, Anarch ghouls run the risk of not getting their monthly feeding. Do the ghouls try to procure blood from another source? Or do they search for their masters and abandon their budding operation??*

### **Step Three: Identify Character Concepts**

Following your players' acceptance of your chronicle synopsis, you will then quickly outline the types of characters that best fit your proposed theme, mood, and plot. This step, along with Step Four, is best completed with player participation. Though your instincts might force you to dictate the type of player characters you want involved in your plot, keep in mind that your players will likely have an idea of which ghoul or revenant they want to play. During this step, you should also prompt your players to think about how they're obtaining blood and who their domitor is.

In addition to identifying player character options, you might consider writing down notes for possible Storyteller characters and locations during this step as well.

**Example:** *Sarah reaches out to her group to decide what types of ghouls, revenants, and domitors would best fit her chronicle. First, she mentions that this type of game is not exclusive to ghouls from a specific Clan or bloodline, but it may be difficult for a revenant to participate without just cause. Then, she tells the group that their domitors should be members of the Anarch movement located in a major city. She'll also remind them that it's far better to choose domitors from one of the more common Clans in the Movement to ensure they can feed on the same Clan's blood every month. She also reinforces the fact that this*

*chronicle might force the characters to seek vitae from other vampires, depending upon how far their domitors stray from the group. Most of the players agree to this, and select their domitors' Clan accordingly.*

*Brian, on the other hand, pulls Sarah aside and tells her that he wishes to play a loyal Camarilla ghoul. He's wondering how his player character might fit in her story. Sarah notes that he could play a Ventrue ghoul who's attempting to infiltrate the Anarch Movement at the behest of his master, but this path would likely be dangerous for his character to follow. The rewards would be great, but the punishment for betraying the other player characters equally so. Brian concedes that this type of story is more than what he expected, but he's willing to try provided Sarah can assist his character's goals in his downtime.*

### **Step Four: Establish Goals and Motivations**

Once the players have identified which types of ghouls or revenants they are playing, they should then determine their goals and motivations. Goals could be as simple as wanting to be Embraced, or as complex as exacting revenge on a former domitor or rival ghoul. Additionally, the players should spend some time determining what their focus is as a group. This should happen independently of the Storyteller's involvement at first, especially if the player characters hail from widely different backgrounds.

Please note that even though players determine the identity of their domitors, Storytellers should flesh them out further as if they were Storyteller characters acting of their own volition. The relationship of a master and her ghoul can deepen your player characters' experiences, especially if they do not share the same goals.

**Example:** *Sarah's group of player characters includes four ghouls from the Brujah, Ventrue, Malkavian, and Toreador Clans. As a group, they have decided to establish a crime ring that'll carry out illicit activities on behalf of their domitors. The Brujah ghoul's goal does not interfere with the plot; Matt wishes to one day become a vampire, and believes the best way to do that is to obey his domitor. The Ventrue ghoul lies to the group, and says that his goal is to raise funds for weapons. However, the Ventrue ghoul has a secret goal: to spy on the local Anarchs and report back to his master for further instruction. Both goals tie into the chronicle in a significant way. The Malkavian ghoul's goal also intersects with the plot, but doesn't shift if the story changes. Meredith wishes to free other ghouls from being Bound. Lastly, the Toreador ghoul's goal is to increase her domitor's holdings by whatever means possible, which fits the narrative and allows Becky to ally herself with Matt's Brujah ghoul.*

## Step Five: Determine Limitations

Storytellers might wish to impose limitations on certain character concepts or rules that don't fit the proposed chronicle. Many concerns would likely be addressed once a player chooses his ghoul's Clan, bloodline, and Sect, or revenant's family. However, there may be some instances where players might anticipate the needs of the story once the chronicle summary is revealed.

For these reasons, Storytellers might prompt players to consider additional goals that are not related to their characters' role in the chronicle. By doing so, players can broaden their character concepts.

**Example:** Sarah proposes that the players should avoid creating independent ghouls. Since she plans to run an action-centric game, she also feels that anything related to the maintenance of a household, like the Major-Domo Merit, would be difficult to incorporate into the game. She'll suggest that bodyguards, security operatives, drivers, etc. are a better fit. Since regular feedings are not guaranteed, she also tells the players up front that they can choose vitae-related Merits and Flaws. She will also reinforce that Paths of Enlightenment are off-limits at the start of the game.

Though Storytellers have the final say on a character's rules, this is also a good opportunity for players to address their concerns as well.

**Example:** Brian mentioned that he wished to play a loyal Ventrue ghoul. He might communicate to his Storyteller that though his ghoul might be caught betraying the group, he prefers to avoid graphic scenes of torture and violence for extended periods of time. As another, Meredith might tell the Storyteller she's aware of the Malkavian's reputation for treating their ghouls poorly, and she's okay with playing through troublesome scenes provided it doesn't last for an entire session, and that she wishes to use that experience as fuel for becoming independent.

Matt, on the other hand, tells the Storyteller that his ghoul wants to one day become a vampire, so he's on board making difficult choices that might further risk his Humanity. Finally, Becky confesses that she wants to explore the nature of the blood bond, by falling "in love" with her domitor. However, her limitation is that she'd prefer to avoid taking up too much screen time during the main plot, and asks if this subplot can be handled during her downtime.

Following the conclusion of Step Five, players should proceed immediately to character creation and choose relevant rules. Storytellers, on the other hand, may begin plotting their first session using the information summarized throughout these steps.



# Appendix I: Gallery of Ghouls

*“He who is not a good servant will not be a good master.”*

– Plato

Just as no two vampires are alike, no two ghouls or revenants are, either. Though a shared Clan, bloodline, or family might shape their philosophies and beliefs, each ghoul and revenant is unique.

The characters presented in this chapter range from independent ghouls to revenants who are representative of their families. They are introduced as templates that can be used for Storyteller characters, or as inspiration for player-characters.

## Fixer

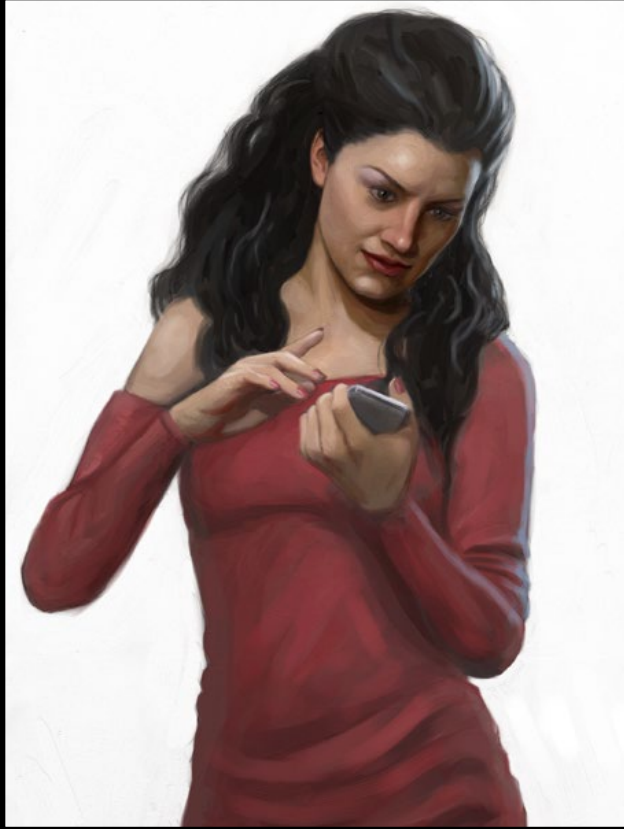
**Background:** You spent several years as a ghoul, doing as you were told and learning all you could. The horrors of your new life were difficult, but in time you came to view them with detached interest. Soon you were running your master’s household and his businesses, while keeping in touch with a few other ghouls in similar positions to trade information and useful tips.

When your master’s rivals finally got the drop on him, you were away securing a contract with the mayor at a dinner party. You instinctively knew the moment your master met the Final Death and quickly gathered your things, leaving with a sizable amount of cash, valuables, and your secret address book. The fire you set later that night destroyed everything else.

Through your contacts, you’ve been able to slowly build your own business and provide services in exchange for vampiric blood. Your newfound success has earned you a small measure of respect from the Damned, though you know too well you’re only one mistake away from taking the long nap, so you play your hand carefully. After all, there’s no telling what might happen if your master’s rivals catch up with you and extract the secrets you hold.

**Image:** A high-end fashionista from Rio de Janeiro in her early 30s. She’s of Puerto Rican descent and has naturally curly hair. She favors red lipstick, asymmetrical dresses, high heels, and little jewelry. She is rarely seen without a piece of the latest technology, even if it’s untested or experimental, to ensure her bodyguards are only a phone call away.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are highly adaptable and have managed to overcome many challenges. Though your greatest assets are the numerous boons owed to you by a wide variety of vampires and ghouls alike, you know better than to press your advantage. While your newfound success comes with a price, your business has also ensured you’ll never run out of blood. You know, in the back of your mind, your luck might change one fateful night, but for now you’re living the good life.



**Concept:** Information Broker

**Nature:** Rogue

**Demeanor:** Capitalist

**Physical:** Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

**Social:** Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2

**Mental:** Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

**Talents:** Expression 1, Intimidation 2, Leadership 1, Subterfuge 3

**Skills:** Drive 1, Etiquette 4, Security 1, Stealth 2

**Knowledges:** Bureaucracy 2, Computer 2, Investigation 3, Occult 3, Technology 2

**Disciplines:** Potence 1, Auspex 1

**Backgrounds:** Allies 3, Contacts 4, Resources 3

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

**Merits/Flaws:** Coldly Logical (1pt. Merit)

**Humanity:** 7

**Willpower:** 3

## Bookstore Proprietor

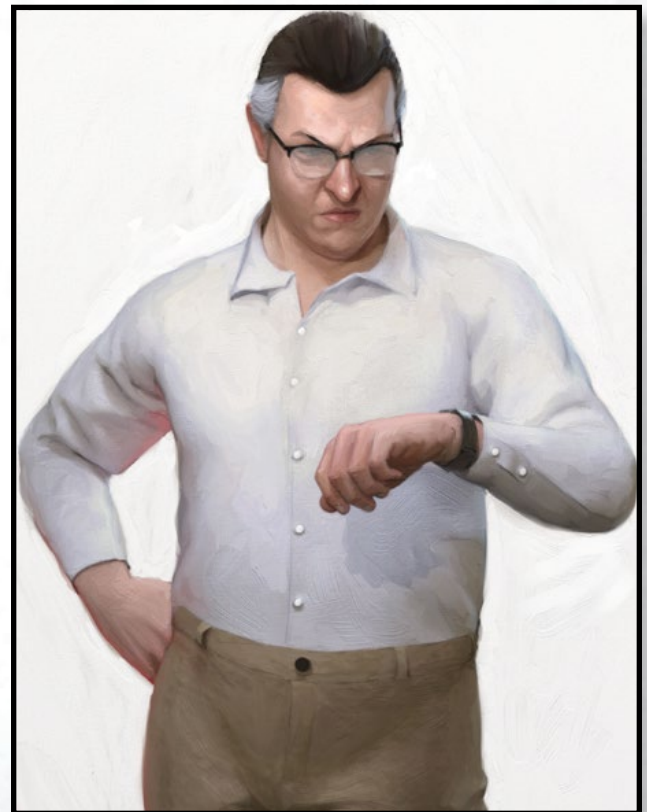
A few years ago, you were approached by a lady with deep pockets to search and acquire ancient books that are older than the tomes you lovingly care for in your shop in London. With your new investor's support, you were able to scavenge estate sales and private auctions

to enhance your inventory. Once a week, your investor would drop by with a coffee in hand and a large check. Your cappuccino was strong and tasted a little off, but you never questioned the motives of your benefactor, not even after you became her ghoul.

You work exclusively for your domitor now, to find unusual books from all corners of the globe. Your contact list has grown exponentially in a short time, and it now includes mysterious and enigmatic individuals who will only communicate through the exchange of handwritten letters. The longer you work for your mistress, the more you believe she'll reveal her darkest secrets. Over time, you hope that she'll one day trust you to perform the rituals she deciphers from the strange and obscure texts you've procured for her. After all, your mistress seems lonely, for she certainly doesn't seem to put her faith in anybody else. Why wouldn't she share all that she has with you?

**Image:** A portly British business owner in his early 40s, originally from Brighton. His body is beginning to show signs of age, and he wears corrective lenses to account for his bad eyesight. His short hair is beginning to gray at the temples, and his skin is pasty white. Instead of suits and ties, he wears khaki pants and oxford shirts with comfortable shoes.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You were once a bibliophile with a passion for learning. Now, your desires are more refined and focused, according to the tastes of your domitor. You



know that she's not telling you everything and, for all you know, *you* might be a secret she's keeping from everybody else, too. Despite your curiosity and your adoration for her, you're beginning to wonder if there are some puzzles that shouldn't be solved. Instead of analyzing your conflicted emotions, you do what you've always done: when the going gets tough, you bury your nose in a book.

**Clan/Family:** Tremere

**Nature:** Loner

**Demeanor:** Scientist

**Concept:** Studious Bookworm

**Physical:** Strength 1, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

**Social:** Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3

**Mental:** Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

**Talents:** Acting 1, Alertness 2, Dodge 1, Empathy 2, Subterfuge 2

**Skills:** Drive 1, Firearms 1, Repair 1, Stealth 1

**Knowledges:** Academics 2, Bureaucracy 2, Computer 1, Investigation 3, Linguistics 3, Occult 3, Politics 1, Science 1

**Disciplines:** Auspex 1, Thaumaturgy 1

**Backgrounds:** Contacts 5, Domitor 3, Resources 2

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

**Merits/Flaws:** Language (Latin), (1 pt. Merit)

**Humanity:** 8

**Willpower:** 2

## Serial Killer

By day, you worked in a call center, selling aluminum siding to suburbanites. Bored out of your mind, you pretended to be kind and charming while you secretly imagined what it would be like to stab your annoying co-workers. The thought of murdering your first victim didn't scare you, it excited you. For weeks you became increasingly obsessed with the idea, plotting what you would need to commit the perfect crime. When you were ready, you stalked, kidnapped, and killed your first victim in an abandoned rail yard. What's more, you managed to dispose of the body without anyone discovering it, too — or so you thought.

You didn't realize it at the time, but that fateful night changed your life, dramatically and forever. Despite your precautions, despite your careful planning, you had an audience. After you were finished, your admirer stepped out of the shadows. You are a true artist, he said, and all artists need patrons if they are to fully blossom into masters of their art.

The stranger's face was a nightmare filled with promises and threats, his smile cold but not unpleasant. You suspected he was dangerous, but didn't fear him when he picked up

one of your tools. Slicing open his wrist, he bid you to drink, to take in his power. The taste of his blood was tinged with a sweetness that made your soul ache. Just when you were about to bite down, to drink more of his intoxicating blood, your benefactor withdrew his wrist. In order to get more blood, he said you needed to earn each drink: one act of murder per month, in exchange for a single taste.

After you quit your job the next morning, you packed a bag and prepared to go on the run. You know your new life will be dangerous, but you aren't worried. Not only have you finally found your true calling, you have someone to share your passions with, too.

**Image:** He is a blonde, trim man of Danish descent in his late 20s. He came from a middle class family, and grew up in the countryside. Though he has dark circles under his eyes and a crazed look, his features are otherwise plain, ordinary, and forgettable. He walks with a slight limp, and likes to wear striped polo shirts, jeans, and tennis shoes during the day. At night, however, he often dresses in black to hide the bloodstains.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You spend your daytime hours stalking your new subjects, recording details about their lives, studying multiple candidates. After you make your decision, you track your prey, waiting for the perfect opportunity to lure them back to your apartment. Not every subject is challenging to catch, but that's not how you pick your victims. You base your decision on who you feel might best please your master.



After you've exhausted all your options, after you've fed, you and your master move on to the next town or city to start the cycle of killing and feeding all over again.

**Clan/Family:** Toreador antitribu

**Nature:** Sociopath

**Demeanor:** Conformist

**Concept:** Monster in Training

**Physical:** Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2

**Social:** Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2

**Mental:** Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

**Talents:** Acting 2, Awareness 1, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Intimidation 2, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 1

**Skills:** Larceny 2, Melee 3, Stealth 2, Survival 1, Torture 3

**Knowledges:** Investigation 1, Medicine (Anatomy) 3

**Disciplines:** Celerity 1, Presence 1

**Backgrounds:** Alternate Identity 2, Contacts 1, Domitor 2

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

**Merits/Flaws:** Benevolent Domitor (3 pt. Merit)

**Humanity:** 6

**Willpower:** 4

## Lure

Your mistress didn't kidnap you, she saved you from a life spent traipsing across county fair stages scattered throughout Louisiana. Sure you now stay in cheap, roadside motels, but your new job isn't all that bad. You drive around in your van on lonely highways, picking up hitchhikers and lonely travelers. Once they're in your truck, you slip them a mickey and bring them back to your mistress. When they're out cold, your mistress takes a sip or two of their blood, and they're none the wiser.

After she's fed, you usher your "guests" back to the lobby with enough money for a good meal and a ride to somewhere. By the time you wander back to your room, your bags would already be packed and you're ready to move on. On those rare occasions when your mistress loses control, you'll load the body in the back of the van, and dump it in a place where you're sure it won't be found.

Your mistress treats you well, and you get along okay with the friends you meet up with from time to time. The nights are beginning to blend together, and you look forward to the small breaks in your routine. When your mistress is in a good mood, she'll teach you how to run simple cons when the money gets tight, or you'll stop at remote storage lockers to raid them for supplies. In the back of your mind, you wonder if this new life is



better than your old one, but every time you start asking questions, you get a little more of your mistress's blood.

**Image:** She is a natural beauty of Creole descent whose appearance is only enhanced by makeup. When she's on the road, she likes to have a couple of outfits and wigs on hand just in case she needs to look like someone else in a pinch. When she's not out on the hunt for an unsuspecting mark, however, she likes to go au naturel. Those times, she'll wear one of her many sundresses and takes off her wig to reveal closely-cropped, chocolate brown hair.

**Roleplaying Hints:** The living out of a suitcase thing sucks, but at least you can say you're getting to see the world. You admit that your life is far less complicated than it was in your pageant days, but you have burning questions that never seem to be answered. For one, your mistress doesn't seem to be hurting for money, which seems weird to you. For two, you've done some pretty gruesome things, and you know you should feel a lot worse about it than you do. Maybe one day you'll figure out how to get the answers you need, but for now you do as you're told. For now.

**Clan/Family:** Ravnos

**Nature:** Survivor

**Demeanor:** Thrill-Seeker

**Concept:** Corrupted Beauty Queen

**Physical:** Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 4

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

**Talents:** Acting 2, Athletics 2, Dodge 1, Empathy 1, Intimidation 1, Leadership 2, Subterfuge 1

**Skills:** Drive 2, Etiquette 1, Larceny 2, Music 2, Performance 2, Survival 3

**Knowledges:** Bureaucracy 1, Computer 1, Politics 1, Science 1

**Disciplines:** Potence 1, Fortitude 1

**Backgrounds:** Allies 1, Alternate Identity 1, Domitor 2, Fame 1

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

**Merits/Flaws:** Luck (3 pt. Merit), Pale Aura (2 pt. Merit)

**Humanity:** 8

**Willpower:** 2

## Free Agent

You were building a stable practice as a private detective, when some creepy dude busted you up on your latest stakeout and threw you into the trunk of his car. Literally. When the trunk opened a few hours later, your broken ribs and collarbone were so painful you passed out twice. The creepy dude gingerly lifted you out of the trunk, and said he could make things right if you worked for him exclusively. Then, he forced open your jaws and bled into your mouth. The pain you felt was eclipsed by the taste of his blood. You hungered for more, desperate for that sweet drink, despite knowing this was an act of evil, of your damnation.

Turns out, the creepy guy had enemies. Some even creepier dudes were after him, and he was trying to defend himself any way he could. That's why he needed you. You did what you could to help your master in exchange for his blood, which was a lot — until he was staked right in front of your eyes. Then, against all reason...they didn't kill you. Instead, they confirmed what you had long suspected: that your "friend" was a vampire. Then, your mysterious rescuers set you free, warning you to leave town and keep a low profile.

Ever since that fateful night, however, you could not forget the taste of vampiric blood. You ignored the advice of your unlikely saviors, and you stalked the streets at night, searching for evidence of vampires — any vampires — until you found one feeding off a vagrant in an alleyway. Instead of running away or calling the police, you waited until she was fed and promised to run errands for her in exchange for her blood and a little cash. You told her your terms, that you didn't want to be loyal to anyone in particular, and prayed she wouldn't kill you. To your surprise, she didn't. Now, you have a list of clients you serve.

Of course, you realize all too well the kind of line you're walking. If you know too little, you're no good to anybody,



and your clients will dry right up. If you know too much, on the other hand, this crazy new life you're enjoying might end quicker than you think.

**Image:** He is a trim, black man in his mid-20s who lives in Munich. He does his best to avoid looking like a detective to blend in with other folk, because it puts people at ease. He'll often wear a pair of jeans and a T-shirt; nobody thinks twice about a college kid, anyway. He carries a fancy smartphone, notebook, and camera with him wherever he goes. He has a few outfits he stashes in the trunk of his car. After all, he never knows when he'll need to blend into the crowd or, on occasion, stand out and impress his clients.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You know you're into something deep, dark, and dangerous, something that'll get you killed if you're not careful. So, you're *always* careful. You've got the right tools, connections, and backup plans just in case your life takes a disastrous turn. You do your best to be prepared for anything, but the crowd you run with now is way, way out of your league and you know it. You have an apartment, but you live out of your car most nights. When you're not investigating a case, you spend your time on the internet. Though half the time, you can't remember why...

**Clan/Family:** None

**Nature:** Conniver

**Demeanor:** Soldier

**Concept:** Private Eye

**Physical:** Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4  
**Social:** Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2  
**Mental:** Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 3  
**Talents:** Awareness 1, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Intimidation 1, Streetwise 1  
**Skills:** Drive 2, Firearms 2, Melee 2, Security 2, Stealth 2, Survival 1  
**Knowledges:** Bureaucracy 1, Computer 2, Investigation 4, Law 1, Medicine 1, Occult 1  
**Disciplines:** Potence 1, Fortitude 1  
**Backgrounds:** Allies 1, Contacts 3, Status 1  
**Virtues:** Conscience 2, Self-Control 4, Courage 4  
**Humanity:** 6  
**Willpower:** 4

## Messenger

You come from a revenant family that has served the Tzimisce Clan since the days of Ivan the Terrible, and that protection is all that stands between them and the abyss. You know how to take an order, which is why your first few nights as the Great Lady's attaché went better than expected. Bound by contract and the Blood, you now spend a life of servitude in exchange for extra insurance your family members will be well taken care of.

You perform many different services for the Great Lady; you are her personal messenger and her eyes and ears in the mortal world. You spend your time listening in on other people's conversations, making deals on your mistress's behalf, and scour the news and the rumor mills for evidence of potential threats. Besides running errands outside the castle, you also assist the Great Lady from time to time in her grisly experiments, but are quietly grateful when you do. After all, your family of mercenaries has a reputation for being warmongers and illicit weapons dealers, and you used to be one of them. In your mistress's service, you still look over your shoulder, but not as much as you once did.

Though serving a Fiend is not the life you may have wanted, you know your duty to your family is more important than your desires. You hear many things and, despite the horrible secrets you've acquired, you are utterly devoted to the Great Lady. Maybe one night, you might even earn the right to become like her, a Lord. Maybe then you will finally stop being afraid.

**Image:** He is dark-haired, rail-thin, and pale. He wears glasses and a suit that's been provided to him by his mistress, as he is not allowed to choose his own clothes. He is moderately attractive, decidedly Russian, and wholly pledged to protecting the Great Lady and her estates in Bulgaria.



**Roleplaying Hints:** You are given a great deal of latitude when you travel outside of the castle walls, but inside you are expected to do exactly and only what you're told. Some tasks force you to stay awake and vigilant for hours on end, while others require no thinking at all. If the Great Lady would like some company for the evening, you are obligated to provide what she needs or find someone who will. You struggle to subvert your desire to become a vampire like your mistress, but you cling to that hope desperately. Though you would defend the Great Lady and your other family members at the cost of your own life, you cannot ignore your wish to join the powerful Fiends who control your family.

**Clan/Family:** Oprichniki

**Nature:** Soldier

**Demeanor:** Conformist

**Concept:** Helping Hands

**Physical:** Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 1, Appearance 2

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

**Talents:** Alertness 1, Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Dodge 1, Intimidation 2, Subterfuge 1

**Skills:** Animal Ken 2, Crafts 2, Etiquette 1, Melee 1, Drive 2, Repair 2

**Knowledges:** Medicine 2, Occult 1, Science 1

**Disciplines:** Potence 1, Vicissitude 1



**Backgrounds:** Allies 1, Domitor 4

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

**Merits/Flaws:** Eidetic Memory (2pt. Merit), Haunted (3pt. Flaw)

**Humanity:** 7

**Willpower:** 4

## Trust Fund Manager

Born into wealth and privilege, you never struggled or wanted for anything. Your revenant family, the Grimaldi, saw to it that you had the best of everything: schools, cars, even boyfriends. You were coddled and spoiled for a reason, however, to serve as a respected go-between for the Sabbat in their necessary dealings with mortals. Before you were born, you were assigned a domitor, one who only cared about fulfilling his duty to his Sect. You have yet to meet him, in part because you have done everything you can to prove your loyalty. You know what the Blood could do to your wits, and you would rather become a vampire than be Bound into service.

Despite a fantastic career in finance, a great family, and more money than you'd ever need, you've begun to grow increasingly weary of your obligations. You've come to realize that your family has trapped you into a corner, and you can't leave Rome without just cause. Now that you've gained control of your own allies and resources, you've realized you don't need to listen to your family any longer. In fact, you're in the perfect position to stage a coup.

Of course, a betrayal of this magnitude would not be taken lightly, and you'll need more allies if you're going to convince other family members to help. Unfortunately, you can't ignore the nagging feeling that you're being manipulated, which is why you've hired a few spies to find out what the rest of the Grimaldi family is really up to. Worse, you fear you've pretend to be a Sabbat loyalist a little too well, and the vampires are secretly pulling your strings.

**Image:** She is an attractive, black-haired Italian woman in her early 30s who takes pride in dressing well, if not a little conservatively. She has a personal stylist and only wears designer label clothes. She's curvy and athletic, but doesn't flaunt her appearance.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are gifted with financial matters and now manage investments for your ever-growing family. Though you have an office in your family estates, you prefer to travel frequently on business for yourself, your family, and the Sabbat. You know how to say the right thing at the right time, and stick to casual subjects when you're outside of your family's holdings. Despite all outward appearances, you are searching for an escape... even if it's a temporary one. You do have a plan to unseat your family's founders, but you will



bide your time and tread carefully. You may not be aware of how powerful the Sabbat is yet, but you have an idea they could ruin you any time they wished. Deep down, you curse the day your family were pledged into their service.

**Clan/Family:** Grimaldi

**Nature:** Sadist

**Demeanor:** Autocrat

**Concept:** Spoiled Child

**Physical:** Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3

**Mental:** Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

**Talents:** Awareness 2, Expression 1, Intimidation 2, Leadership 1

**Skills:** Animal Ken 1, Etiquette 2, Firearms 2, Melee 2, Survival 1

**Knowledges:** Academics 1, Computer 1, Medicine 3, Occult 3, Politics 2, Science 2, Technology 2

**Disciplines:** Fortitude 1, Dominate 1

**Backgrounds:** Allies 2, Influence 1, Resources 2

**Virtues:** Conviction 3, Instinct 2, Courage 3

**Merits/Flaws:** Isolated Upbringing (1pt. Flaw), Vengeful (2pt. Flaw)

**Path of Enlightenment:** The Path of Power and the Inner Voice 4

**Willpower:** 3

# Appendix II: Animal Ghouls and Monstrous Creations

*“Some animals are cunning and evil-disposed, as the fox; others, as the dog, are fierce, friendly, and fawning. Some are gentle and easily tamed, as the elephant; some are susceptible of shame, and watchful, as the goose. Some are jealous and fond of ornament, as the peacock.”*

— Aristotle’s History of Animals: In Ten Books

The animal kingdom offers a wide range of ghoulish companions for vampires who spend a lot of time traveling between cities, or in low-populated areas such as vast wildernesses, jungles, and deserts. City-dwelling vampires might use animal ghouls as guardians during the day as well, for animals can perform a dizzying array of simple tasks such as spying, defending a haven, or carrying messages. Often, a vampire will either select an animal based on its physical abilities or its capacity to fulfill a specific need. Occasionally, the selection process might extend to where the animal is commonly located and how easy it can access its food source as well. An alligator ghoulish, for example, could be an intimidating guard, but it will definitely stand out in a city park. However, that same ghoulish is a better choice if the vampire has a haven in Louisiana or in the labyrinthine sewers below the city of Prague. Examples of animal ghouls, like the alligator, begin on [page 172](#).

Though animal ghouls and their usage vary greatly by Clan and by Sect, among members of the Camarilla they are believed to be less of a Masquerade risk than human ghouls. Animal ghouls share some commonalities with their human counterparts: they may be Bound, they may have a limited use of Disciplines, and they also defend their masters to the death. However, animal ghouls cannot speak, which leads many Camarilla vampires to believe they are

the better choice. Should an animal ghoulish be captured, for example, it could not unwittingly or willingly share secrets unless its body was dissected. Even so, the likelihood of an animal ghoulish being identified, captured, and examined by a mortal scientist is thought to be considerably low.

Certain Clans, such as the Gangrel and Nosferatu, are often assumed to be accompanied by animal ghouls because they possess the Animalism Discipline. While knowledge and use of Animalism is not a requirement, in this case the stereotype tends to hold true. It is easier for a vampire who possesses the use of Animalism to create and maintain an animal ghoulish than it is for a vampire who has no complementary Discipline at all. Thus, Clans that commonly use animal ghouls include the Gangrel, Nosferatu, Ravnos, and Tzimisce Clans. Occasionally, some Ventrue, Lasombra, Setite, or Assamite Clan members may also selectively use animal ghouls when it suits them.

Typically, vampires who wish to master animal ghouls must have at least three dots in the Animal Ken Skill in addition to the requirements for Animalism. While Animal Ken grants a domitor knowledge of an animal’s habits and preferences, it may also help her calm or enrage her ghoulish. However, even beyond this knowledge, the ability to *train* animals also increases with each dot. For example, at five

dots a domitor is granted the ability to tame beasts in the wilderness without the use of Disciplines or thaumaturgical rituals. Even more importantly, Animal Ken may also assist a master when her animal ghoul is in a state of frenzy. Thus, while Animal Ken is not a replacement for Animalism, it is highly recommended should a player character wish to maintain animal ghouls.

## Animalism Usage and Ghouls

The Animalism Discipline allows vampires to utilize members of the animal kingdom for a short period of time, while giving vampiric blood to a selected animal produces a loyal servant. Thus, the combination of the blood bond and Animalism grants the domitor the kind of mastery over his ghoul that cannot be replaced by any amount of animal training.

Some domitors may avoid the use of Animalism in this instance, because they worry that relying on the Discipline will bring them closer to their bestial nature. Also, there are vampires that actively detest the use of Animalism, because they feel it negatively impacts a vampire's Humanity and her social skills. Occasionally, this stigma can extend to the ownership of animal ghouls as well despite the fact that most, if not all, vampires understand the difference between Beast and beast.

In most cases, however, vampires who already possess the Animalism Discipline will likely have more than a passing familiarity with certain types of animals. Combined, these factors enable vampires to select and maintain animal ghouls.

### Choosing Powers

The broad range of powers found within the Animalism Discipline gives every vampire more options to control, command, and connect with his animal ghoul. This is important due to the natural aggressive nature of beasts such as large dogs, wolves, big cats, and crocodilians. A vampire may find that maintaining control of the creature under an extended period of duress can be challenging without the use of these powers.

Beckoning might be used to draw potential candidates to the domitor's side, but it might also be used to hide an animal ghoul in a flock, swarm, or herd of creatures. One bird acting erratically is easy enough to spot, but it's much harder to find that same bird in a murder of crows. On the other hand, Quell the Beast can also be

used during stressful moments to calm an animal ghoul and avoid further scrutiny.

Larger animal ghouls used as guardians, companions, and mounts often necessitate more control. The use of Feral Whispers, in addition to the effects of the blood bond, can all but guarantee a command is carried out to the best of that animal's ability. When a vampire uses Subsume the Spirit, however, he can use the animal's body to carry out missions too complex (or too subtle) for the animal to complete on its own. Since this power is not detectable with the use of Auspex, this grants a domitor the ability to move unseen. The domitor, in the body of the animal ghoul, could act during daylight hours without fear, as her host body would likely be stored safely in her haven during that time.

Regardless of how Animalism is used, the Discipline offers a lot of benefits for masters who utilize animal ghouls as part of their strategy to defend themselves and their havens.

### Blood Pools

Animal ghouls may hold a maximum of 10 blood points in their systems. While a human-sized (or larger) ghoul can hold 10 blood points, smaller animals contain considerably less. In general, the amount of blood an animal contains in its body is based on its size.

It can be safely assumed that a large dog could hold six blood points, a cat-sized creature holds four, and a rat-sized critter holds two. These estimates assume that the vampire has gone through the trouble of "bleeding" the ghoul to replace its natural blood with vitae. However, draining a creature of its blood can be risky, for if a domitor accidentally bleeds an animal too quickly before he's had the chance to replace it with her own, that animal would die.

Should a vampire simply let the animal feed on vampiric blood, the maximum Blood Pools are halved to reflect the fact that its blood has not been drained. Thus, an alligator that could hold five blood points when its body has been drained, would only be able to hold two and a half blood points if it hasn't been.

The rules for the blood bond, which were covered in Chapter 2 on [page 35](#), apply to animal ghouls as they would to humans.

### Managing Swarms

While many vampires tend to be careful with the number of animal ghouls they maintain, others see the power in manipulating a swarm, flock, or horde. For example, members of Clan Nosferatu have been known to use lesser

## Animal Ghoul Systems

Please note that the rules for maintaining animal ghouls and using them in your game are updated from what was presented in V20 on pp. 388-391. This update assumes that animal ghouls will be used either regularly or more frequently in your game, and have been adjusted accordingly.

creatures, like the bat, rat, or snake, as a group to defend themselves from attack or ward off curious onlookers. These animals might be incentivized to act through the use of Animalism, but they also might be Bound or fed vampiric blood.

For lesser creatures, their size precludes them from being fed upon or having a lot of blood in their bodies. Thus, a rat has 1/4 of a blood point. This means that four rats may all be maintained as ghouls with a single blood point. Eight, then, would be maintained with two, twelve with three, and so on. For animals smaller than a rat or a bat, the amount of blood that creature contains is at the discretion of the Storyteller.

Narrating and managing eight, individual rats during an attack, however, is not only cumbersome, it breaks the tension of the scene. Thus, when managing a swarm, Storytellers should treat the swarm as if it was its own character. When the swarm attacks, roll once to see if that action is successful (difficulty 6). If it is, follow the chart for guidelines to assess damage. If the animal is rabid or venomous, add an additional level of damage.

Please note that bugs, stray cats, and small dogs are included in the chart instead of the ghoulish bestiary which begins on the next page. These animals are rarely maintained as ghouls over longer periods of time, and are more effective when used as a group.

If the character dodges, however, then the Storyteller should narrate what happens based on what is appropriate for the animals involved. A swarm of rats, for example, wouldn't necessarily reduce an antagonist's visibility, but they would probably slow that character down. Thus, Storytellers should increase the difficulty of the player character's next roll. To determine the outcome and nature of the attack, remember that the environment is also an important factor in the scene. Don't be afraid to use all elements in the player character's surroundings, because even the most innocuous pieces, like a manhole cover or a fallen tree limb, can be used in creative ways. A colony of bats might bar the player character's exit from a sewer or a cave, but that same colony might not fly around the player character in a tight cluster if they're out in a field.

To successfully disperse a pack or swarm, the character must fight back against its health level noted in the table. If a character attacks the swarm and achieves two levels higher than its health level, then the animals or insects die. Both Storyteller and player characters may attack the swarm at a rating of one health level per strike, regardless of how many successes were rolled. Small melee weapons, like a pocket knife, would damage an individual insect or animal, whereas large melee weapons would remove a health level of the entire swarm. Combining the use of Disciplines like Celerity, on the other hand, with a small melee weapon would increase the damage to that of a large melee weapon in addition to large, area attacks.

Swarms and packs may attack more than one character if present in the scene, and all characters affected may fight back or attempt to outrun the horde. Unlike an individual animal, however, swarms cannot soak damage.

## Swarms

Animal	Damage	Health Levels	Initiative
Small bugs ( <i>fleas, ants</i> )	1 bashing	5	2
Large bugs ( <i>beetles, worms</i> )	2 bashing	7	3
Flying bugs ( <i>hornets, mosquitoes</i> )	2 lethal	6	4
Birds or bats ( <i>small</i> )	4 bashing	9	5
Rats ( <i>small</i> )	3 bashing	7	3
Feral cats ( <i>with claws</i> )	5 lethal	8	6
Wild dogs	6 lethal	12	5

Additionally, certain types of animals such as birds, feral cats, and wild dogs cannot be chased and caught without the use of Disciplines or Animal Ken.

## Ghoul Bestiary

### Alligator or Crocodile

These apex predators live in tropical regions and swamps near bodies of water. Thus, alligators and crocodiles tend to make ideal guardians for havens located near their natural habitats or moist, damp areas underground. Many members of the Nosferatu Clan are thought to maintain such ghouls in their sewer lairs for just such a purpose. Additionally, while alligators and crocodiles tend to be hard to control even when Bound, they are well-suited for getting rid of dead bodies. Due to their slow metabolisms, a master should only feed its ghoul one body at a time.

Even with the blood bond in place, a crocodile's reptilian brain might have a difficult time making a clear distinction between its master and its prey, since they cannot be tamed. Animalism can help ensure the ghoul's cooperation, but even then it's not an ironclad guarantee that the animal would not snap its jaws at its master.

**Attributes:** Strength 6, Dexterity 3, Stamina 6, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

**Abilities:** Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Stealth 3

**Disciplines:** Fortitude 1 or Potence 1

**Willpower:** 5

**Health Levels:** OK, OK, OK, -1, -1, -1, -2, -5, Incapacitated

**Armor rating:** 1 (seven soak dice, total)

**Attack:** Bite for seven dice; tail slap for six dice

**Blood Pool:** 5

### Ape or Gorilla

Intelligent and strong, apes could make useful ghoul servants if it weren't for the effects of vampiric blood on these creatures. While they are capable of performing many actions and may respond to simple commands, these animals are terrifying if and when they succumb to frenzy, as they are already powerful without the Blood. Apes and gorillas also are subject to mood swings in captivity if they are isolated, too, which makes it challenging for a master who sustains a single ghoul. Most vampires use these primates as ghouls provided they have the use of Disciplines and Skills that can keep them in check or, alternatively, if they only need them for a shorter period of time.

Most apes are well suited to climbing, and a trained ghoul could make an excellent spy or cat burglar. Despite their reputation in the wild, apes can be remarkably quiet when approaching a predator, which also makes them ideal to use as sentries in wilderness settings. They might also be used as guards, too, should they have proper care.

**Attributes:** Strength 6, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

**Abilities:** Alertness 3, Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Stealth 5

**Disciplines:** Celerity 1 or Potence 1

**Willpower:** 7

**Health Levels:** OK, OK, -1, -1, -1, -1, -3, -5, Incapacitated

**Armor rating:** 1 (five soak dice, total)

**Attack:** Bite for four dice; rend for six dice (all lethal)

**Blood Pool:** 7

### Bats

A favorite pet of many Old World vampires, bats are useful for gathering information. They might also be commanded to steal (or plant) small items because they do not draw attention to themselves, and can fit through small holes to enter or leave a building. Bats are a widely varied family of creatures, with the largest generally subsisting on a diet of fruit in tropical regions. The smaller versions voraciously eat insects, and the infamous vampire bat will nick larger animals — typically cows or bulls — with their razor-sharp teeth, feeding off the resulting trickle of blood. Surprisingly, vampire bats tend to attack from the ground, and fly only to find victims and to travel to and from its daytime roost.

Bats are highly social animals, practicing mutual grooming and roosting in colonies of up to a million individuals. The stats below represent common varieties of insectivores. Nearly all Clans have numerous examples of bat ghouls kept as servants or pets. Like rats, they are seldom noticed by casual observers, and their ability to fly allows them to travel significant distances to deliver messages or to follow a target.

The other, and perhaps most significant, reason why bats are widely used, is because they don't require a lot of vampiric blood to maintain. Thus, if the master doesn't have Animalism, she might create more than one bat to perform a specific task or duty to increase her chances of success.

**Attributes:** Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 1, Wits 2

**Abilities:** Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Stealth 2

**Disciplines:** Celerity 1

**Willpower:** 2

**Health Levels:** OK, -1, -3, Incapacitated

**Armor rating:** 0 (three soak dice, total)

**Attack:** Bite for one die

**Blood Pool:** 1/4 (1 blood point is equal to four bats)

## Bear

While a bear ghoul may be an uncommon choice for anyone who lives near a city, it is a likely choice for the Gangrel Clan and its various bloodlines. Powerful and, at times, unpredictable, bears are thought to have excellent hearing and can see as well as any human. In addition to their massive size, however, their keen sense of smell — which is seven times greater than that of a blood hound — grants them the ability to sense predators before they're well within range to attack. Bears can also be trained to perform tricks with careful time and attention, provided they've already fed before instruction begins. The amount of food required to sustain this animal, coupled with their need to go into hibernation, is the reason why many vampires use bear ghouls sparingly.

Those who do rely on bear ghouls for guards reap the benefits of having such an impressive creature to stand by their haven. These vampires tend to select their ghouls by breed, for the more aggressive grizzly and polar bears are likely to regard their domitors as food — or territorial rivals — unless they've been hand-raised from birth.

**Attributes:** Strength 7, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4, Perception 5, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

**Abilities:** Alertness 5, Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Awareness 4, Intimidation 3

**Disciplines:** Fortitude 1 or Potence 1

**Willpower:** 4

**Health Levels:** OK, OK, OK, -1, -1, -1, -3, -3, -5, Incapacitated

**Armor rating:** 1 (one soak dice, total)

**Attack:** Claw for seven dice; bite for five dice (all lethal)

**Blood Pool:** 8

## Big Cats

Large, wild cats such as tigers, cougars, and panthers are extremely dangerous under any circumstances, let alone as ghouls. Powerful and unpredictable, they can injure or kill even those they are friendly with — including trainers — entirely by accident. Adapted to hunting and killing, big cats make excellent guardians and hunters, though not all species do well outside of their native habitats.

Some vampires utilize lions and tigers because they're found near their havens. Members of Clan Ravnos, Gangrel, and Nosferatu in India, for example, have become masters of tiger ghouls and use them for protection, while other vampires throughout Africa maintain lions because of their powerful, symbolic presence as the rulers of the animal kingdom.

Leopards, jaguars, panthers, and cougars are also expert hunters and trackers, and use stealth to ambush prey that could otherwise outrun them. They are often favored as pets because of their grace and striking appearance but, similar to lions and tigers, they are still extremely dangerous.

Despite their usefulness as both hunter and guard, however, their dietary demands and large size mean big cats are not always practical as ghouls.

## Lion or Tiger

**Attributes:** Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

**Abilities:** Alertness 3, Athletics 4, Awareness 2, Brawl 3, Empathy 3, Intimidation 5, Stealth 3

**Disciplines:** Potence 1

**Willpower:** 4

**Health Levels:** OK, OK, -1, -1, -2, -2, -5, -5, Incapacitated

**Armor rating:** 1 (five soak dice, total)

**Attack:** Bite for seven dice; claw for six dice (all lethal)

**Blood Pool:** 5

## Leopard, Jaguar, Panther, or Cougar

**Attributes:** Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

**Abilities:** Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 3, Empathy 2, Intimidation 2, Stealth 4

**Disciplines:** Celerity 1

**Willpower:** 4

**Health Levels:** OK, OK, -1, -1, -2, -2, -5, -5, Incapacitated

**Armor rating:** 0 (three soak dice, total)

**Attack:** Bite for five dice; claw for five dice (all lethal)

**Blood Pool:** 4

## Birds

Most birds of prey have remarkable eyesight, and their fast speeds make them excellent hunters. Their long claws and beaks, which are designed for tearing flesh, also make them intimidating guardians. Since large raptors are more comfortable outside of larger cities, they're often kept by

Gangrel, Lasombra, and other Clans that roam outside of municipal areas. Despite this limitation, most birds of prey can fare well enough in metropolises with large parks or nature preserves where they can hunt small mammals. They can also be trained and, given enough room to fly, can be formidable, powerful allies.

While each type of bird has its benefits, some species are harder to maintain as ghouls than others. Vultures, for example, can be harder to keep because of their feeding habits. Six wild vultures can strip the flesh from a fully-grown deer in an hour or two; should a vulture ghoul frenzy it's likely that bird would not regain control. Owls, on the other hand, might be easier to keep as a ghoul, for they tend to live in most major cities, and go largely unnoticed because of their nocturnal habits.

Smaller predatory birds are easier to manage, however, especially in well-populated areas. Crows are practically ubiquitous in urban settings, and they are highly intelligent, symbolic messengers. Hawks and falcons are frequently spotted in cities as well, so their presence would not be unusual if noticed by a mortal.

Ownership of bird ghouls varies by Clan, for their uses are broad and they can be found, trained, and kept in most environments. Members of the Ventrue Clan, for example, might train and keep falcon ghouls as pets, as a reference to their ownership and training by royalty in centuries past. Members of Clan Tremere, as well as the Kiasyd and True Brujah bloodlines, may keep owl ghouls as messengers, because of its association with wisdom and hidden knowledge.

Whatever the reason, bird ghouls are typically selected based on the proximity to their natural habitat and the resources necessary to ensure they can find food.

### **Bird, Substantial (Hawk, Raven, Owl, etc.)**

**Attributes:** Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

**Abilities:** Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Awareness 3, Brawl 2, Intimidation 2

**Disciplines:** Celerity 1

**Willpower:** 3

**Health Levels:** OK, -1, -1, -2, -5, Incapacitated

**Armor rating:** 0 (two soak dice, total)

**Attack:** Claw for two dice (bashing); bite for one die (only in desperation)

**Blood Pool:** 3

### **Bird, Large (Eagle, Condor, Vulture, etc.)**

**Attributes:** Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

**Abilities:** Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Intimidation 2

**Disciplines:** Celerity 1

**Willpower:** 3

**Health Levels:** OK, OK, -1, -1, -2, -2, -5, Incapacitated

**Armor rating:** 0 (three soak dice, total)

**Attack:** Wings for four dice (bashing); claw for four dice (bashing); bite for two dice (lethal)

**Blood Pool:** 4

### **Hounds**

Dogs have been domesticated by humans for tens of thousands of years and, by far, are one of the most common types of animal ghouls. Easily trained, dogs are a favorite among many vampires because they don't stand out among other members of the animal kingdom. They are also an attractive choice because it allows vampires to blend in with other mortals in heavily populated areas. After all, no one questions someone walking a dog in the dead of night, but might think twice about crossing paths with a loner wandering the streets.

A canine's keen sense of smell and excellent hearing turns a dog into a perfect sentry, and its appetite is sufficient enough to help dispose of unwanted meat and bones over the course of a few days. While Gangrel tend to favor hardier breeds, the built-in loyalty of a domesticated dog makes large dogs a great choice for animal ghouls. Vampires around the world tend to keep a dog ghoul around their haven as an insurance policy against daytime intrusions and some, like members of Clan Ventrue, prefer to maintain prize-winning breeds and purebreds as a sign of their social status or wealth.

Other vampires modify dog ghouls through the use of Disciplines like Vicissitude. The Bratovich family of revenants, for example, are well-known for painstakingly breeding dogs and transforming the adults into monstrous creatures called hellhounds. Though it is highly unusual for any master to own a Bratovich hellhound without high levels in Animalism as well as Vicissitude, hellhound ghouls are highly-prized guard animals for those who can acquire them. The Bratovich are loathe to part with these ghouls, however, so the price to obtain one will be extremely high.

## Large Dog

**Attributes:** Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

**Abilities:** Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 3, Empathy 2, Intimidation 2, Stealth 2, Survival (Tracking) 4

**Disciplines:** Potence 1

**Willpower:** 3

**Health Levels:** OK, -1, -1, -2, -2, -5, Incapacitated

**Armor rating:** 0 (three soak dice, total)

**Attack:** Bite for five dice (lethal); claw for three dice (bashing)

**Blood Pool:** 3

## Bratovich Hellhound

The rules that follow reflect the stats for an average Bratovich hellhound. Some Bratovich hellhounds may have specific Vicissitude modifications that could alter their base stats. For example, bone armor may give the hellhound an Armor Rating of 2, while extra teeth and claws might give them more damage capabilities. In general, additional rule modifications should be left to the Storyteller's discretion.

**Attributes:** Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

**Abilities:** Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Awareness 3, Brawl 4, Empathy 2, Intimidation 4, Survival (Tracking) 4

**Disciplines:** Potence 1, Celerity 1

**Willpower:** 3

**Health Levels:** OK, -1, -1, -2, -2, -5, Incapacitated

**Armor rating:** 0 (three soak dice, total)

**Attack:** Bite for five dice (lethal); claw for three dice (bashing)

**Blood Pool:** 3

## Rats

When used for the right purpose, rats can make excellent animal ghouls. Able to fit through small spaces, rats are also strong swimmers and can hold their breath for up to eight minutes. Rats may also carry out simple, information-gathering tasks due to their high intelligence. For example, rats might serve as excellent spies, thieves, and infiltrators for they are capable of stealing small objects, planting incriminating evidence, or even delivering small doses of lethal poisons without detection. They also go hand-in-paw with modern civilization, for wherever there are cities and towns, you can be sure to find rats.

Members of the Nosferatu Clan, along with the Ravnos, Baali, Harbingers of Skulls, Samedi Clans and bloodlines,

have used rat ghouls extensively over millennia. Often, vampires will either train rats and keep them in cages, or they'll manipulate a swarm of them.

**Attributes:** Strength 1, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 2

**Abilities:** Alertness 2, Athletics 3, Stealth 3

**Disciplines:** Celerity 1

**Willpower:** 3

**Health Levels:** OK, -1, -5, Incapacitated

**Armor rating:** 0 (one soak dice, total)

**Attack:** Bite for one die

**Blood Pool:** 1/4 (1 blood point is equal to four rats)

## Snakes

Snakes, like birds, cats, and dogs, come in a variety of sizes and species ranging from the harmless garden snake to the life-threatening boa constrictor. Constrictors tend to be larger than most varieties of snakes in girth and length, while some venomous snakes can reach lengths exceeding ten feet. Even though many snakes are kept as pets, they are rarely kept as animal ghouls for long periods of time due to their speed and unpredictability.

While no one knows for certain, it is commonly believed that Setites are the only Clan that frequently seeks, maintains, and trains larger varieties of snakes. Members of the Nosferatu and Malkavian Clans, however, are thought to keep smaller-sized snakes as pets. Generally, however, vampires will choose species that are either available or indigenous to their area. For example, if a Setite crossed paths with a poisonous Egyptian asp, she would likely consider the animal to be a gift from Set Himself.

The stats for snakes will vary based on their size and species. Most breeds do not grow, even in captivity, beyond a certain length. A snake's blood points are calculated at a rate of 1/4 blood point per foot in length. Thus, a twelve-foot-long boa constrictor would contain three blood points. A common garden snake, that's less than a foot long, would have 1/4 blood point, while a four-foot-long king snake would have one.

## Constrictor Snakes

**Attributes:** Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 2

**Abilities:** Alertness 2, Athletics 3, Stealth 3

**Disciplines:** Fortitude 1

**Willpower:** 4

**Health Levels:** OK, -1, -1, -2, -5, Incapacitated

**Armor rating:** 1 (three soak dice, total)



**Attack:** Constrict for four dice per turn (Incapacitate)

**Blood Pool:** 3 (1/4 per foot in length)

## Poisonous Snake

**Attributes:** Strength 1, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 2

**Abilities:** Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Stealth 3

**Disciplines:** Celerity 1

**Willpower:** 4

**Health Levels:** OK, -1, -2, -5, Incapacitated

**Armor rating:** 1 (three soak dice, total)

**Attack:** Bite for two dice (poison)

**Blood Pool:** 3 (1/4 per foot in length)

## Wolf

While wolves were once a classic and optimal choice for an animal ghoul, their popularity among vampires has since fallen due to their dwindling numbers. Found all over the world, wolves come in a variety of colors and have been known to interbreed with dogs. They are, however, rarely selected to be maintained as a ghoul in modern nights, especially in urban areas due to their endangered status and pack mentality.

Some vampires might adopt a wolf as an animal ghoul in its natural environment simply because it preys upon other animals. For example, vampires who prefer to go on the offensive might send their wolf ghouls to attack other animal ghouls to help even the odds in a fight, or may simply inspire them to howl and intimidate their attackers. Their symbolic nature and their telltale howl, however, does inspire some members of the Sabbat to seek them out. After all, there is no other ghoul, save the bat or the rat, that screams “vampire” more than a wolf.

**Attributes:** Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3

**Abilities:** Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Awareness 2, Brawl 3, Empathy 2, Intimidation 3, Stealth 2, Survival (Tracking) 4

**Disciplines:** Celerity 1

**Willpower:** 3

**Health Levels:** OK, -1, -5, Incapacitated

**Armor rating:** 0 (three soak dice, total)

**Attack:** Bite for four dice (lethal); claw for three dice (bashing)

**Blood Pool:** 2

## Monstrous Creations

Among the Fiends, some fleshshapers have used Vicissitude to twist mortals into terrifying new shapes as a testament to their skill. Occasionally, their efforts result in the creation of an abomination that requires vampiric blood to maintain. Both the szlachta and the vozhd are two such types of ghouls designed by the Tzimisce. These ghouls have succumbed to months, if not years, of torture as their flesh was molded and their bones reformed. Thus, unlike any other ghoul, neither type has retained their sanity or their Humanity. They are, for all intents and purposes, monsters that typically act on instinct. As such, both the szlachta and the vozhd should be used sparingly if at all, and should only be introduced as Storyteller characters.

Both types of ghouls were first introduced in V20 on page 503, and Vicissitude can be found beginning on page 241. The rules presented in this book were designed with the assumption that a Storyteller might use either ghoul in a siege or battle.

## Szlachta

Fleshcrafted beyond recognition of their original form or purpose, the szlachta are ghouls that have been transformed into battle-ready soldiers replete with armored carapaces, deadly spines, and horrific bone-blades that erupt from their forearms. Named after the Polish word for “nobility”, the szlachta were initially meant to be wielded as fleshcrafted weapons or shields in combat to protect their Lords. Though they were commonly used in centuries past on bloody battlefields, the Fiends rarely fight in open combat in the modern era. Thus, many of the szlachta are now used as guards and sentries for the Fiends’ havens and strongholds, hidden from the public eye, but omnipresent and ready to be used at a moment’s notice. Many Fiends also use them as a testament to their use of Vicissitude and to ward off rivals.

The szlachta are created from a painstaking process that involves starving and torturing a ghoul in order to ensure the victim is more compliant. Most, if not all, of the szlachta do not emerge from this process unscathed. They are barely lucid, have little to no will of their own, and are not expected to have a long lifespan.

Their hideous, inhuman appearances are thought to serve a dual purpose, even beyond their ability to attack and defend their masters. First, each szlachta is a clear sign of the Tzimisce Clan’s mastery of Vicissitude, and the sight of a single war ghoul is enough to give most vampires pause. Second, it is suspected that each Fiend “marks” his creations in a specific fashion, as a way to note ownership and mastery

over that ghoul. Thus, while most szlachta carry the same types of attributes, each individual ghoul is unique. Most Fiends consider their signature to be a mark of their pride and talents.

In addition to being used as sentries and guards, a Tzimisce master of Vicissitude might stockpile a unit of

szlachta soldiers on the eve of a planned, major conflict. Should there be a battle for territory in Los Angeles, Paris, or Vienna, for example, a Fiend might prepare an army of szlachta for months, if not years, in anticipation of an upcoming siege. The demands of maintaining such a horde are not inconsequential, which is why some Fiends opt to share blood to ensure the survival of their war ghouls. Other vampires might donate ghouls or vitae to help bolster the supply of pre-fleshcrafted szlachta, and will wait to repossess their charges until after the spurs, spines, and armored bone plates are added. Most vampires understand that flesh-and-bone



crafting takes time, so building up and maintaining a sizable force of szlachta is a challenge at the best of times.

Like other ghouls, the szlachta may be punished by their domitors. Often, war ghouls are at risk of succumbing to frenzy, and their eroded Humanity can result in other problems. To upset a Fiend, however, is to invite the worst kind of punishment. Some Tzimisce masters continue to fleshcraft their war ghouls as a warning to show what happens when any ghoul run afoul of his domitor. One transgressor might be fleshcrafted into a veiny, wingback chair, while another war ghoul might be reformed into a skeletal coat rack. Any szlachta ghoul that has been fleshcrafted into furniture, clothing, or other inanimate objects loses all stats with the exception of Stamina, Perception, and Intelligence.

**Attributes:** Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Charisma 1, Manipulation 3, Appearance 0, Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

**Abilities:** Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 3

**Disciplines:** Potence 1 or Fortitude 1

**Willpower:** 4

**Health Levels:** OK, -1, -1, -2, -2, -5, Incapacitated

**Armor rating:** 4 (eight soak dice, total, no armor rating penalty)

**Attack:** Bonecrafted weapon for two dice (lethal or bashing); bite for four dice (lethal)

**Blood Pool:** 10



## Vozhd

A single vozhd is the amalgamation of nightmarish ghouls that were grafted together through the use of Vicissitude and Koldunic sorcery. Like the szlachta, the vozhd's existence is a breach of the Masquerade and were commonly used in the Dark Ages. Due to their massive size and terrifying construction, however, most Fiends have long since abandoned using and constructing them. However, some Fiends theorize that they should adapt their techniques for modern warfare. Instead of fleshcrafting a many-limbed mythic creature like the Hecantoncheires or an architectural terror like a cathedral, for example, modern Tzimisce feel it might be best to render a vozhd as close to the human form as possible. Thus, it's rumored that *if* and *when* a vozhd appears, it would likely be a single, gigantic humanoid monster.

In form and purpose, the vozhd is the ultimate killing machine, a juggernaut of destruction designed to consume everything in its path — humans, animals, ghouls, and vampires alike. Though they have not been seen for centuries, the creation of the vozhd is cause for rumor and speculation. These monstrous leviathans are composed of multiple ghouls that are fused together into a single, fleshcrafted creation. Then, each ghoul is believed to be fed a potion containing the blood of all ghouls destined to be part of the new vozhd. Afterward, the caster continuously chants while sculpting the ghouls together, melding and shaping the individuals into a single, massive entity. If the practitioner of Vicissitude is skilled enough, the vozhd may have any number of arms, legs, or mouths between one and the total number it began with. The ghouls

condemned to become part of a vozhd, however, lose their minds from sheer terror.

Their immense size incurs a heavy cost, however, for the vozhd require vampiric blood just like any other ghoul, at a rate of five to ten blood points a month depending upon the vozhd's physical height and width. Thus, most modern Fiends find it much simpler to simply create a



vozhd if and when the need arises, for many feel they are a waste of the Blood if they cannot be put to good use. In truth, there are very few practical applications for a vozhd in the modern era – even in the heat of battle. Additionally, the knowledge and experience to create one is rare and unlikely to be shared with other Clans or sorcerers.

In modern nights, it is hard to say how many vozhd remain; their sightings are thought to be nothing more than the frightened whispers of younger vampires who have heard of rumors of their existence. Even in ages past, when the Lords ruled over their native lands, the decision to unleash a vozhd was not taken lightly due to the destruction they cause. While the Fiends and their allies may sneer and scoff at the Camarilla, even they fear the chaos a vozhd would cause if one was unleashed.

**Attributes:** Strength 8, Dexterity 2, Stamina 6

**Abilities:** Alertness 4, Brawl 2, Intimidation 5

**Disciplines:** Potence 6, Fortitude 4

**Willpower:** 5

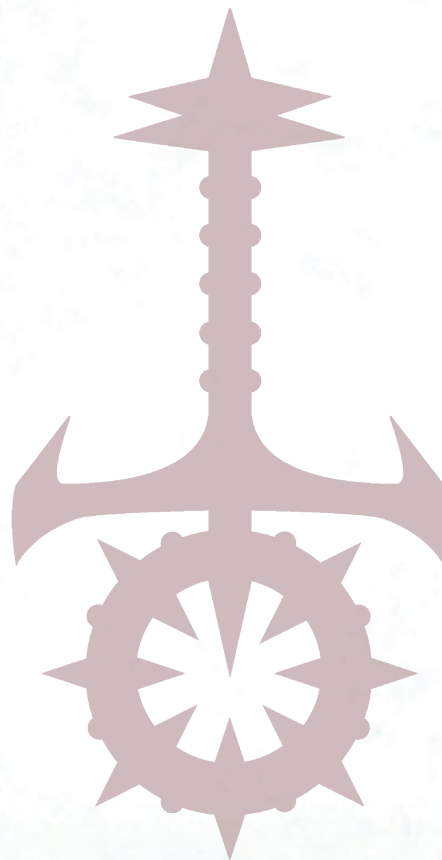
**Health Levels:** OK, OK, OK, OK, -1, -1, -1, -1, -3, -3, -3, -3, Incapacitated

**Armor rating:** 5 (nineteen soak dice, total)

**Attack:** Strike for eight dice + Potence (bashing); constrict for six dice + Potence (lethal); bite for eight dice (lethal). Due to its many limbs, the vozhd is granted multiple attacks and gains five additional dice to spread between these attacks. No single attack may have a higher dice pool than the ghoul's Dexterity + Brawl, regardless of size or number of limbs.

**Blood Pool:** 20

**Notes:** Because the vozhd are designed to be fleshcrafted from multiple ghouls, the rules for a single vozhd will vary depending upon the number of ghouls that were fleshcrafted to create this monstrosity. The stats here are provided for a single vozhd created from four ghouls. Many fiends use fifteen or more ghouls to when fleshcrafting a vozhd for their purposes. Storytellers should adjust the rules accordingly and the blood points required to maintain them.



# Ghouls & Revenants

**Name:**

**Nature:**

**Clan/Family:**

**Player:**

**Demeanor:**

**Age:**

**Chronicle:**

**Concept:**

**Domitor:**

## Attributes

### Physical

Strength \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Dexterity \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Stamina \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO

### Social

Charisma \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Manipulation \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Appearance \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO

### Mental

Perception \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Intelligence \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Wits \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO

## Abilities

### Talents

Alertness \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Athletics \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Awareness \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Brawl \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Empathy \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Expression \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Intimidation \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Leadership \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Streetwise \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Subterfuge \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO

### Skills

Animal Ken \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Crafts \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Drive \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Etiquette \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Firearms \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Larceny \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Melee \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Performance \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Stealth \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Survival \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO

### Knowledges

Academics \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Computer \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Finance \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Investigation \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Law \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Medicine \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Occult \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Politics \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Science \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
 Technology \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
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## Advantages

### Disciplines

Curret Max Level    □□□□□  
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### Backgrounds

\_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
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 \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO  
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### Virtues

Conscience/Conviction\_\_ OOOOO  
 Self-Control/Instinct\_\_ OOOOO  
 Courage \_\_\_\_\_ OOOOO

### Merits & Flaws

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### Humanity/Path

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 Bearing: \_\_\_\_\_ ( )

### Willpower

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### Blood Pool

□□□□□□□□□□  
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Overdosing?

### Health

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

### Blood Bond

### Experience

Attributes: 6/4/3 • Abilities:11/7/4 • Disciplines:1 • Backgrounds:5 • Virtues:7 • Freebie Points:15 (7/5/2/1)

# Ghouls & Revenants

## By Blood It Is Done

Bound by their masters' blood, ghouls serve the undead and fight their battles in the shadows. Dragged, seduced, or forced into the night, ghouls live at the whims of their masters—for better or for worse.

## By Blood It Is Made Anew

Revenants are twisted and unique. They have vampiric powers and extended life, as well as a form of the Beast all their own. Crafted by blending ghouls with dark magic, Revenants have become something else altogether.

### Ghouls & Revenants includes:

- Expanded and revised character creation for ghoul and revenant player-characters
- Clan and Sect write-ups for ghouls who serve them
- New revenant families including the Rossellini, Kairouan Brotherhood, and more.
- New rules for ghouls and revenants including new Merits & Flaws, Backgrounds, Discipline Packages, etc.
- A Storyteller chapter for advice on running ghoul-or-revenant focused chronicles.
- ...and more!

