

GEHENNA AGE: VAMPIRE



A world of future darkness setting for vampire: The masquerade/Requiem

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROLOGUE: DEADLY NEW WORLD	4
INTRODUCTION: THE END OF THE BEGINNING	10
CHAPTER ONE: THE AGE OF GEHENNA	13
CHAPTER TWO: BUILDING THE PERFECT BEAST	26
CHAPTER THREE: SYSTEMS OF A DARKER TIME	35
CHAPTER FOUR: STORYTELLING AND ANTAGONISTS	38
APPENDIX ONE: DEVIATIONS IN THE BLOOD	46
APPENDIX TWO: NEO ORLEANS	62
EPILOGUE: WHAT NIGHTMARES MAY COME	72

PROLOGUE: DEADLY NEW WORLD

*“There is an operation of maximum importance:
The initiation of a new aeon
When it becomes necessary to utter a word
The whole planet must be bathed in blood”
– Blood Omen: Legacy of Kain intro*

It happened sooner than we ever would have imagined. We spoke of the Final Nights and what it could mean, but we were never prepared for anything like what happened. The rising of the Antediluvians and the collapse of mortal civilization changed everything, and not only for the Kindred. Lupines, mages, Cathayans, we were all affected by it. We look back on it now and call it the Time of Judgment, since that’s what it felt like, as though we were being judged by the Antediluvians, judged by Caine and Lilith, and maybe even judged by God Himself. Not many Kindred these nights can recall the world as it was before now; the Fog of Eternity weighs down upon our minds too heavily. But my memory is all too clear of how it was before the Time of Judgment. Over a millennium ago, the world belonged to the mortals, though we often liked to believe otherwise. A typical city would house millions of people. Long concrete roadways would connect thousands of cities and billions of people. One could even get from one end of the world to another in a manner of hours. Then it was all gone in the blink of an eye once the blood gods rose from their millennia of sleep. For 120 weeks, we suffered under the Withering as the Antediluvians gathered their forces and made war upon the world. Let me illuminate you on the major events that occurred over those years, in as best a chronological order as I can place them. Back then there were no Machine extermination squads, no Souleaters, no zombies, or monsters like there are tonight. Now, the corporations, superstition, and the gun rule. This is a time of despair; it is a world of fear. It is the age of Gehenna...

* The Gangrel Noddist, Beckett, broke the seal at Kaymakli (in what was once Turkey), and freed his Nosferatu associate, Okulos. He met a vampire named Kapaneus within, who followed him out.

* The slumbering Assamite founder [Haqim] was the first Antediluvian disturbed by the ward’s discharge. He awoke somewhere in the Middle East in an underground cave. Shortly thereafter, Assamite separatists in various parts of the world began to die, being drained of their life and blood.

* Samuel/Okulos manipulated the mind of a thin-blood in Los Angeles named Jenna Cross, setting up a ploy to suggest that she may be the Last Daughter of Eve.

* The Withering began worldwide, hitting the eldest Kindred first. Sabbat and Camarilla leaders began to panic.

* A dhampir possessing the crescent mark was discovered in Chicago, flocked by a motley group of transients (seemingly human). Her name is Lyla. Tremere seers suggested that she was the focal point for great energies. A Blood Hunt was arranged, but every scourge or archon that approached her was mysteriously killed, including Ilyana Ravidovich, and Samat Ramal-Ra.

* Jenna Cross began a thin-blood revolt in Los Angeles against the resident Camarilla powers. The former anarchist, Smiling Jack, joined her cause.

* The Withering intensified. Sabbat elders, stripped of ancient power, are overthrown in major cities by younger vampires in their ranks. The sect began to collapse. The Camarilla, in

desperation, formed "detention centers" where elders could diablerize Caitiff prisoners to stave off the Withering.

- * The Black Hand, besieged by internal strife and frantic for answers, sent a detachment from Mexico City (under Henri Lavenant) to abduct Lyla. They were never heard from again.

- * Tremere around the world were summoned to the chantry in Vienna. They attempted to perform a ritual to cross the barrier between vampirism and mortality, but the ritual failed. Vicissitude poisoning (taint) began to manifest, destroying all of the clan. At the same time, a number of Tzimisce around the world began to mutate horribly or melt away, unable to control their shape.

- * The remaining Blood Brothers from around the world gathered in Guadalajara in an attempt to solidify their shape into one enormous body, a warped, subconscious reflection of the Tzimisce founder's "Azhi Dahaka." Their attempt only exacerbated the process of the Withering, leaving a huge puddle of bubbling ooze in the middle of the ritual circle.

- * Nightmares began plaguing almost every supernatural being across the planet. Rumors of Gehenna began to spread like wildfire. The Camarilla started a policy of rounding up those who were the most vocal about their fears and sending them to the detention centers in an effort to suppress the rising paranoia and keep a steady influx of prisoners to be diablerized.

- * The Inner Circle sent Jan Pieterzoon to New York to handle repeated sightings of a "monster" off the coastline. With significant help, he managed to destroy a giant creature in Manhattan, but not before the entire event was caught on the twelve o'clock news. The Camarilla worked overtime, but the Masquerade began to fall apart at its seams.

- * Pieterzoon grew disenchanted with the Camarilla's stance on the ancients. He traveled to London, where he helped form a new sect called the "Nephtali." It claimed various members from the old factions, including: Calebros, Hessa Ruhadze, and Ambrogino Giovanni, among others. The group traveled to Germany and Sweden, looking for answers regarding the End Times.

- * Prince Tara was killed by thin-bloods in Los Angeles. Emboldened by Jenna's success, oppressed thin-bloods began revolting across the world. Determined to make an example of her, Hardestadt led the Camarilla effort to re-take Los Angeles.

- * Theo Bell was sent to Europe to dispose of Beckett. He was unsuccessful. Upon his return, he became disillusioned with the Camarilla's new policy on diablerie, defected, and started a movement to free imprisoned Caitiff in cities across the United States. Lucita helped his cause, if for dubious reasons.

- * Beckett and Kapaneus traveled to Fortschritt, the Tremere Fatherhouse in Vienna, where they discovered the grim fate of the Tremere. Beckett fell into torpor for three months.

- * Volcanoes erupted violently across the Hawaiian Islands, destroying them.

- * The Lasombra founder emerged from the shadowy basement of the former Archbishop Moncada's cathedral in Madrid. Its darkness covered the city, eating the souls of its childer in the area, and caused widespread panic.

- * Mexico City fell into anarchy. Kazimir Savostin barely escaped with the Weeping Stone, fleeing south. The Sabbat sect collapsed worldwide, along with the Black Hand.

- * Members of the Giovanni clan began fleeing to Venice, gathering their numbers. A mysterious and powerful storm hit the city, destroying the Mausoleum and reducing the clan to a mere handful. Isabel Giovanni and other survivors were thereafter killed by vengeful wraiths, as the barrier between spirit and flesh weakened. A group of Harbingers of Skulls (led by Unre) helped to incite the violence, but ended up becoming victims as well.

- * The Followers of Set descended upon Haiti, disposing of the remaining elders among the Serpents of the Light. Thereafter, a call was issued for Setite members across the globe to gather at the Ombos temple in Cairo. Hoping that Set would be pleased with their efforts, they performed a mass ritual to contact him in Du'at, awaiting his "resurrection." Instead, he called his childer to join him, coercing the whole of his own clan to commit suicide.

* The remainder of the mindless, flesh-crafting manifestation under New York continued to grow, tearing the city apart as it did. Many buildings collapsed and burned, and tens of thousands of people were killed due to the monster's rampage. The U.S. government, pressed to action, carpet-bombed the city until the creature was dead (or so they had thought).

* Etrius arrived in London, having survived the ordeal at Fortschritt. He asked the Nephtali for help, claiming that the Tzimisce founder attacked the Vienna chantry. The Nephtali agreed to assist, joined by "Goratrix," as they traveled to Transylvania.

* In a rampage, the Tzimisce founder destroyed everything from Krakow to Bucharest, laying waste to the land. His remaining minions enslaved the surrounding territories. The Nephtali arrived with "Goratrix," who performed a ritual to summon Kupala from the Carpathian Mountains. The demon died in the fight, but badly wounded the Tzimisce founder. Tremere/Goratrix attempted to diablerize him, but then his own body succumbed to the Tzimisce taint. The Nephtali, taking the only chance they might have had, eliminated the vestiges of both founders (or so they had also thought).

* The Columbian government collapsed, overthrown by remnant members of the Sabbat, who now openly ruled the territory. Jerusalem suffered a different kind of chaos, as witch-hunters scourged the streets looking for prey.

* After being tipped off by Vykos in Montreal, leading them to the three survivors of the Harbingers of Skulls in Barranquilla, the Nephtali then traveled to Kaymakli. The Giovanni founder was within, hiding in a secluded crypt, having fled there to study the Apotheosis ritual. A desperate fight ensues, and Augustus falls.

* Samuel/Okulos murdered Victoria Ash in Savannah, GA, seeking to frame Beckett.

* Finally awake, Beckett traveled to Los Angeles with Kapaneus, where he met up with Lucita and Smiling Jack.

* A meeting of Camarilla leaders convened in Lille, France. Justicar Pascek suggested officially blaming the Withering on Assamite blood magic. A strange wind [Haqim] blew through the chamber moments later, slaying Pascek and his supporters, Prince Francois Villon of Paris, and Prince Voorhies of Amsterdam.

* Samuel/Okulos killed Smiling Jack in Los Angeles to keep the anarch from revealing his plans.

* Beckett travels to Qalat'at Sherqat (Iraq) to look for the Salubri ancient, Rayzeel. The Lasombra founder attacks the area, looking for Beckett. It absorbs Lucita's body, but her soul escapes. Rayzeel helps the others to find shelter, but she is later killed by Samuel/Okulos.

* Camarilla Assamite Teygrius was slain by [Haqim] in Riverside, California.

* Beckett discovers the truth about Samuel/Okulos. Okulos dies by Jenna's hand in Chicago.

* Theo Bell assassinates Hardestadt in Riverside, California. Shortly afterward, he decides to find Delphine Decourt and Itio Shima, and join the Nephtali.

* A group of surviving Sabbat cardinals and prisci gathered in Warsaw. Using the captive thin-blood prophet, Cesar Holfield, they discovered the location of a secret meeting for the Inner Circle in London. Desperate for powerful Vitae (diablerie), they gathered a battle group and launched an attack. Mistress Fanchon and Rafael de Corazon perished in the fight, along with several gathered princes, but the Inner Circle prevailed. Queen Anne and Madame Guil helped destroy Kyle Strathcona, securing for themselves membership in the Circle as replacements for their fallen Founders of the Camarilla. Velya and Polonia are the only Sabbat members to survive (flee) the battle, but as the Withering began to weaken Velya's body, he was left behind. Mithras (in the form of Monty Coven), diablerized Velya in Manchester, and so seized a chance to stave off the Withering for a time.

* Saulot approached the Nephtali with a group of the eastern Salubri, the Wu Zao, and offered assistance as they had similar causes. He insisted that a coterie accompany him to Geneva.

* Kindred blood continued to weaken worldwide. Bizarre anomalies began to appear, varying by clan. (Gehenna, p. 91)

* A group of nine ancients heeded the call of Mithras, gathering in Dublin. Among them: Kemintiri, Montano, Brunhilde, Hazimel, the Ankou, and others. The group proudly called itself “the Guided Ones,” but it only lasted for a few hours. As they began discussing plans for uniting against the Antediluvians, an argument erupted over duplicitous motivations, and violence ensued. The city rumbled and split. Only a few managed to survive, embittered and distraught as they left the area.

* The Nictuku across the world began to move as they sought to complete their mission once and for all. These include Gorgo, She Who Screams in Darkness (Brazil); Nuckalavee, the Skinless One (Australia); Vasilisa (Russia); Azazel, the Abomination (Israel); Abraxes, Lord of Mists (Scotland); and Echidna, the Mother of Foulness (Greece). Entire city warrens disappeared overnight, leaving SchreckNET with a series of “No Response” signals spreading like a wave. In London, Josef von Bauren (of the Inner Circle) disappeared. Seraph Teresita and Bishop Cicatriz, hiding out in Tijuana, also vanished.

* Giant beasts began emerging from crevices in the Earth. The Nosferatu founder [Absimiliard] led an army of creatures from the oceans as well, destroying coastal cities. San Francisco and Washington D.C. were hit the worst in the United States, but the world itself was also thrown into a full-scale melee with these strange monsters. As the struggle continued for over a week, the Camarilla power structure suffered too many losses among its high-ranking leaders. The echelons of command collapsed and the Camarilla crumbled.

* [Malkav] awakened within the Malkavian Madness Network. As his first act, he feasted on a group of Kiasyd elders that were unlucky enough to be hiding nearby. Madness began spreading across the Earth like wildfire, as Malkavians became conduits for the contagious insanity of their founder. Nuclear weapons were launched, some hitting major cities, others striking in more random places. The U.N. dissolved, having lost more than half of the world governments it represented. By this time, the rest of the Antediluvians had risen and started claiming their own territories. A second Red Star appeared in the heavens.

* The Nephtali finally arrived in Geneva, having made a dangerous trek through several ruined cities to get there. Saulot spoke with Guillaume, the prince of Switzerland (A World of Darkness First Edition, pg. 49), an affiliate of the Monitor-based Inconnu spawned from the “Cult of Enlightenment” in 510 A.D. (Elysium: The Elder Wars, pg. 79). Saulot informed Guillaume that the Cult of Enlightenment Inconnu’s leadership was corrupted long ago, reporting events of the Jyhad to Lilith. In order to defeat her, Saulot suggested gathering the remaining members that stayed true to the original cause, and preparing for an offensive. Saulot also mentioned that it was vital they obtained a certain artifact formerly possessed by the Sabbat, the so-called “Weeping Stone.” Since it contained the essence of Zillah herself, merely touching it had the ability to ward off the Withering considerably.

* Inconnu member Bartholomew was dispatched by Guillaume to find the Weeping Stone. He traveled to Mexico City briefly, and then to Bogota, Columbia, where he obtained the item after a near-fatal fight with Savostin.

* The Shaper (otherwise known as “Sarah”) attacks [Absimiliard] in Milwaukee, who was in the midst of destroying the city and causing indiscriminate carnage. Angered and seeking to regain her power, she attacked him, and the two ended up tearing apart half the metropolis thrashing and clawing about. The fight lasted for several hours, accompanied by a fierce hailstorm and chain lightning, but the Nosferatu founder was finally subdued. “Sarah” then diablerized him, and as the ancient blood surged through her body, she began using high levels of her unique Shaping power to rebuild the city, feeling a sense of peace wash over her. Then, without warning, the ground beneath her feet opened up, changed into a fanged maw and swallowed her into the Earth.

* Storms, earthquakes, and volcanic activity across the world increased tenfold. The land devoured whole buildings, leaving ominous craters in already desolate, wrecked cities. The Gangrel

founder [Ennoia] had now joined (melded) fully with the planet, venting her wrath for many additional weeks before calming down.

* The unsteady shifting of earth awakened a pair of ancients in the underground ruins of Carthage. Moloch and Troile rose from the soil, greeted by zealous infernal followers eager to usher in a new era. Demonic spies loyal to Moloch inform him of Saulot's appearance in Geneva, and his plans to thwart Lilith's scheme. Although Moloch had no love for Lilith, he recognized the opportunity to appease his demonic masters (and Namtaru) by siding with her against Caine. Forthwith, he began creating a new army.

* Guillaume began gathering loyal Inconnu members from the old network, informing them of Lilith's deception. Dondinni and Mahatma were among them, although Rebekah had not been heard from. Redeemed members of Hunedoara also joined the cause, as did the Malkavian Golcondite from Cairo, Aziz, the Dracon, and ancient members of the Salubri clan. Bartholomew brought the Weeping Stone to Geneva. Ironically, Polonia and rogue members of the Black Hand, who requested membership in the Nephtali, joined him.

* The Lasombra founder, having subsumed the remainder of his childer in Italy, sensed the auspicious energies growing in the New World. A being of hatred and loathing, lusting for blood, he moved toward the epicenter of the gathering forces, blanketing the entire world in darkness for three weeks. Only the light of the Red Stars shone through it all.

* Ur-Shulgi captured Izhim Ur-Baal in Istanbul. He used him in a ritual to break the remnants of the Baali curse on the Assamite line. Shamed in the eyes of his peers, Izhim Ur-Baal flees, eventually joining the Nephtali, and helped to convince the group to support Caine in the upcoming struggle. Fatima al-Faqadi also added herself to the Nephtali's ranks after surviving the judgment of [Haqim], having nowhere else to go.

* Lilim Apostate Ilyes, having already killed hundreds of the bastard Brujah line (including the famous Menele and Critias in Chicago, ending the Menele/Helena feud), heard of Troile's awakening in northern Africa. Although the ancient understood his duty to watch Lyla, the chance to kill his errant childe was too tempting to pass up. He was unaware that Troile had been corrupted by Moloch, and that her demonic taint might have placed her in Lilith's favor, but in his mind, it wouldn't have mattered anyway. Using the mirror-teleportation trick, he descended upon the infernal army gathering in Tripoli, ripping out the throat of his childe in the middle of a grand procession. Moloch was taken by surprise, and retaliated with a number of his followers before Ilyes could retreat. Although Moloch was quickly destroyed in the melee, the Apostate found himself trapped in the middle of a frenzied, demonic swarm. Unable to concentrate long enough to use his Temporis powers, a final howl cut loose from his lungs as he crumbled to dust.

* Kapaneus (who is actually Caine) left Beckett's side in the ruined city of Los Angeles, heading toward the Valley of Hinnom, southwest of Jerusalem.

* The reigns of each of the remaining active Antediluvians ended one by one, though we do not know the reason why. We can only guess that it was Caine himself, finally punishing his errant childer, or perhaps it was Lilith, seeking her long-awaited revenge.

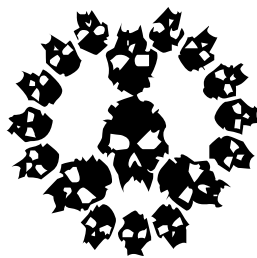
* Guillaume and Saulot secretly gathered among the ruins of Jerusalem, along with the Nephtali and other loyal followers. Upon their arrival, Lilim Apostate Lucian greeted them, announcing his defection. He explained that he discovered their plan through Rebekah, but killed the monitor before she could unwittingly report her findings to Lilith's agents. Saulot and the others were suspicious of Lucian, but reluctantly agreed that they could use his help.

* The Night of Truth... The Night of Wrath... The Feast of Undying Blood... Strange energies crackled through the windy air of the destroyed city of Jerusalem as the ancients converged. Kapaneus (Caine) arrived to see battle lines had already been drawn. On the northern side, Lilith's followers stood proud. Among them, the loyal Apostates: Erinye, Mekhet, and Ikopabe. Members of the Laibon are also present, as well as the Ahrimanes, Bahari activists, demons of all kinds, and horrendous monsters that the Damned Queen claimed as her own children. On the southern side, Lucian and Saulot stood with members of the Inconnu and Nephtali. Eickos, another Apostate, also stood on the southern side, but it is unclear if she was truly an ally or a foe.

What happened next defies description... Psychic shrieks of anger and agony resonated across the world as the battle array clashed together. The heavens roared, the ground shook, and everything in between seemed to tumble violently about. All was darkness, hatred, bloody teeth, and fleeting sanity... When the haze of dust and confusion finally began to settle, all that remained was a flattened wasteland of rubble, strewn with lumbering heaps of twisted corpses. Most of the Apostates were in torpor. Only Saulot, mortally wounded, attended by Guillaume and a handful of surviving Nephtali, remained on the southern side. Lilith looked upon the carnage wrought, shedding a silent tear of rage. Her loyal students and followers, destroyed or crippled, her children mangled beyond recognition... Lilith knew about the sevenfold curse for killing Caine, but it no longer mattered. She propelled herself like a maddened banshee toward the icon of her enduring hate, the wretched Father of All Vampires...

Caine had suffered, too, hearing the screams of his progeny fighting and dying in such heated battle. The noises continued to echo through his head and course through his immortal blood, boiling and burning. He raced into the fray, incensed with wrath and frenzy, toward the Mother of all Demons...

To quote the Book of Nod: “The Demon Queen will bite deep. The Damned King will bite deeper. We will not know the thing which will happen...”



INTRODUCTION: THE END OF THE BEGINNING

*"The zeppelins rain upon us
The guns of love disastrous
A shadow lies amongst you
To defy the future cast"*

– Smashing Pumpkins, *"The End is the Beginning is the End"*

Gehenna has come and gone, leaving its mark across the planet. In the wake of the cataclysmic event is a world left nearly destroyed, reshaped into something few would recognize from the way we knew it in 2004, but the Kindred have nevertheless persevered. Some vampires consider the possibility that Gehenna was not the End, but instead the beginning. Vampires now no longer control the cities and hoard vast amounts of influence, but instead wage war against their own kind and other beings that seek to rule over the earth as gods after the End of the World. This is a new era, one lit by the projectiles of futuristic weapons and inhabited by horrors unimaginable. The Kindred have dubbed this time the Age of Gehenna.

THEME

The primary theme of this book is alienation. This is a world completely unlike our own. Things have been changed in ways that cannot be compared to the world we live in today. The world itself is slowly but surely dying, even though there are pockets of life struggling futilely to renew. Most major cities along with society itself are in shambles, strange creatures that have never been seen before wander the wilderness, and humanity is fully aware of the supernatural monsters that walk among them.

A secondary theme of this book is irony. The characters in this time find themselves with a unique opportunity in the struggle to retain their humanity. As they fight to survive, to defend the mortals that are left, as monsters pretending to be men, are they truly any different from the creatures they destroy?

MOOD

The mood of **Gehenna Age: Vampire** is that of paranoia, fear, and desperation. In every shadow lurks some new threat, and every night is a struggle against nearly impossible odds with no end in sight, and despite their best efforts, the Kindred aren't gaining any ground over their enemies. Blood is harder to come by than ever before, with only about three billion mortals scattered across the globe. Humanity has repopulated itself somewhat, but its numbers are nowhere near what they once were. Vampires may try to protect humanity as much as possible from the creatures overwhelming the planet, or gather herds around them and rule as undead gods. Many Kindred aren't even certain if their own coterie members can be trusted to not slake their thirst at the first opportunity. Knowledge is power more than ever, and while information about the Kindred is more freely exchanged between themselves, the vampires are slowly realizing how little they know of the world around them. However, time is running out once again, and all the Kindred know it on a subconscious level. When it does, no one knows what exactly will happen, but whether it's final redemption or eternal damnation, the Kindred cannot endure another Gehenna.

How to Use This Book

Primarily designed for use with the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, **Vampire: The Requiem** and the **World of Future Darkness Rulebook**, for the sake of completion this book assumes that the reader has access to the **Vampire: The Masquerade Rulebook**, **Gehenna**, and several other books in both the

Vampire: The Masquerade, **Dark Ages: Vampire**, and **Vampire: The Requiem** lines. The intention of this book is to use **Vampire: The Requiem** as a continuation of the metaplot of **Vampire: The Masquerade** (Yes, the author is aware that the two game lines are not meant to have any connection whatsoever). If that does not appeal to your interests, then please stop reading now.

Chapter One: The Age of Gehenna is the default setting chapter for **Gehenna Age: Vampire**. This chapter details the world of **Vampire** for those Storytellers and players who would like to continue a game after the coming of Gehenna. One thousand years have passed since the Final Nights, and the World of Darkness is no longer a place we easily recognize. Most of North and South America are in shambles, while feuding corporations in the civilized areas and barbarian invaders in the wilderness control Europe. Mortals are aware of the supernatural, and have taken steps to protect themselves from it.

The setting presumes, for the most part that the **Gehenna** scenarios Fair Is Foul, Nightshade, The Crucible of God, or some combination of the three have occurred within your game. Most of the Antediluvians have been killed, though a few may remain, namely those that were hidden away with Lilith. If the end of your Chronicle has taken a subtler finale, or if you dislike crossover chronicles or the mixing of horror and sci-fi, then not all of the things suggested in this book may be for you. This chapter details what happened between Gehenna and the setting of this book, using the information presented in **Vampire: The Requiem** to fill in where necessary. It also gives information on the workings of the Nephtali, the covenant formed during Gehenna that has survived in the shadows of the larger political bodies.

Chapter Two: Building the Perfect Beast contains information on the various clans that are common in these dark times, takes you through the process of creating a character for **Gehenna Age: Vampire**, and explains how the powers of the Kindred have changed over the centuries. Included are a plethora of Devotions gathered from several books and placed here for the sake of simplicity.

Chapter Three: Systems of a Darker Time explains any rule changes to be made between those of **Vampire: The Requiem** and those of the specific setting of **Gehenna Age: Vampire**.

Chapter Four: Storytelling and Antagonists takes you through the current metaplot events and is full of ideas and suggestions to help you get started on a Chronicle of your own, while it also looks at the other things that lurk in the shadows of this world or seek to control it utterly, such as the horrific Souleaters and other beings.

Appendix One: Deviations in the Blood provide details on two of the various bloodlines that have diverged from the main clans as well as their unique Disciplines.

Appendix Two: Neo Orleans updates the information on the city given in **Vampire: The Requiem** to mesh with that which is explained in **Gehenna Age: Vampire**.

This had better be worth it. Steven Donovan thought to himself as he looked out over the grassy plain from the rock outcropping he'd hidden himself in. A faint breeze coming from the south stirred wisps of his blond hair about. The Red Stars shone down below him, casting a sinister crimson tint over the landscape and the figures that held his attention. He'd been tracking this group for the past few days since they'd left Boston and at last, he had caught up to them.

There were five of them. Four were amplified mortals, partial cyborgs with various bionic implants, but it was the fifth that was Steven was particularly interested in. The fifth was a young, attractive girl in her late teens. She was in restraints, sitting on the remains of an old tree stump. Her clothing from head to toe was black and her hazel eyes were lined with grey eyeshadow. She wore a top hat and an ankh pendant that seemed to glow a faint blue when the pathetic light the moon radiated hit it just right. She was the prize; she had the information he sought, a lead that would bring him one step closer to the item he had been seeking for almost a millennium. Heightening his sense of hearing in addition to his sight, he listened to the words the cyborgs were exchanging.

"How much you think we'll get for her?" asked a cyborg with several large bolts sticking out of his bald head.

"I dunno, maybe a hundred thousand credits for one as pretty as her," said another with two oversized robotic arms.

Great, they're slavers. That's why they wanted her. Steven looked the girl over again. Even now, she was struggling against her bonds. *She's got spirit; I'll give her that. A girl like that could go for even more than a hundred grand on the Black Market. Still, I'm not going to let them sell her. I need to know what she knows.*

"Maybe we should, y'know, try her out? Have a bit of fun with her? It'd be a shame to just sell off a nice piece of ass like this and not do anything with it," suggested the third, whose entire right side of his skull and eye was replaced by cold steel and an obviously bionic eye.

"Yeah, show her that there're still some parts of us that are flesh and blood. The buyers will still pay as long as she ain't messed up too bad," leered the fourth, who had another pair of mechanical limbs attached beneath his organic ones.

The girl's eyes went wide at hearing that. "Fuck off; don't even think about touching me," she shot back. Her words were strong, but Steven could hear the trace of fear that crept into her voice.

"And just how do you plan to stop us, girlie?" inquired Four Arms, who placed each of his hands on the girl's thighs. The girl launched a kick that would have planted her foot square in her captor's groin if he hadn't managed to step back in time. The restraints slowed her down and made her efforts clumsy. They knew it as well as she did.

"Stupid bitch!" Bolthead said as he stepped forward and backhanded her. The girl's head reeled back from the impact. Her head slumped down as she slipped into unconsciousness. Steven saw a trickle of blood running from the corner of her mouth, and in the back of his mind, he could feel his Beast rising to the surface.

The one with the oversized arms grabbed Bolthead's wrist. "Cool it! Don't go fucking up the merchandise. We can all have a turn, but the buyers aren't going to pay top dollar if she's all bruised up and shit."

Damn it! If I'm going to make a move, it's going to have to be now. She's no use to me if they lose it and kill her first. There's no point in subtlety here. I might as well be direct. Besides, I could use the exercise... Steven stepped out from his vantage point and moved down the rocks toward the mortals before him. "I don't think she's your type," he called out.

The cyborgs whirled around, regarding the approaching intruder with a mix of confusion and wariness. "Who the fuck are you?" asked the one with the oversized arms.

"I'm just a concerned party. If you're smart, you'll leave the girl and get the Hell out of here. I have business of my own with her," replied Steven.

"Give us a hundred thousand credits and she's all yours," Four Arms said.

The mortal with the bionic eye stared at Steven, scanning him with the implant. "Shit! He ain't human!" he cried out.

"Last chance," Steven warned. *Why do they always have to do it the hard way?*

"Fuck that! Shoot his ass now!" commanded Bolthead, and the cyborgs began reaching for their weapons.

"Suit yourselves," Steven smiled, his fangs descending. *You know, this might actually be fun.*

CHAPTER ONE: THE AGE OF GEHENNA

*"This is not a darker age
Just the turning of the wheel
I am here to reassure
We never really had control"*
– Faith and the Muse, *"Sredni Vashtar"*

Then, just like that, it seemed that the battle was over. None of the Kindred who witnessed the event can recall what happened beyond that point. All that remained in their memories was emptiness. Those who survived gathered up the injured that could be saved and went into hiding from their enemies. In the aftermath of Gehenna, the skies were left shrouded by the dust kicked into the air from several meteor impacts and nuclear explosions. The days became bleak affairs, and only every so often can the sky be seen. The light of the twin Red Stars paints everything a baleful crimson, day or night, as they outshine the feeble illumination given by our dying sun. Yes, we're quite sure that the sun is dying. Although it has managed to sustain life for this long, those who practice the science of Astronomy foretell that it's only a matter of time before the sun shines its last. I've heard word that there are Kindred out there who actually look forward to this occurrence. What logical reason they have to anticipate this is beyond me, for as the sun sputters out, so too will all mortal life on this planet. When that happens, only starvation and madness will remain for our kind. One thousand years have passed, and most Kindred think that the Antediluvians have vanished or never existed in the first place. Now I will tell you what I know of this deadly new world we find ourselves in tonight.

It was around the time that mortals sought to rebuild what they lost after nearly two centuries, when the remaining members of the Nephtali held another gathering, now known as the Convention of Ashes, where the Nephtali was shaped into its current form. New ideas and ways of thinking were exchanged between vampires that would have normally killed each other on sight. Those vampires who chose to seek their own way left the Nephtali to form the other covenants: the Carthian Movement, the Circle of the Crone, the Invictus, the Lancea Sanctum, and the Ordo Dracul. Less importance was placed on what clan you were and more on what Kindred faction you belonged to.

As this occurred, new menaces emerged from the destruction to stake their claim on the new world that was forming. The dangers we faced became more profuse, things we had never seen or heard of before. According to some, these threats had always been present, just hidden even from our eyes as we once hid from the mortals. Regardless if they were newly created or had always been here, all now knew their presence.

The servants of the Machine began to appear in greater numbers. Each robot or cyborg was deadlier than the one before, more capable of destroying not only us, but also any other supernatural being they encountered. Where simple robots did not suffice, the entity known as the Machine had other means to create servants: Drones. These are mortals or supernatural beings taken by the Machine, and while not turned into cyborgs, they are transformed into... something else. Once largely confined to North America, they are now making headway into Europe and the rest of the world.

The Souleater Overlord appeared and began claiming territory along a large portion of the east coast. Based out of the blasted rubble of what was once New York City, the City of Flesh is the domain of this loathsome creature and its minions. The foul monster began spawning its twisted beasts in greater numbers to roam the Earth and spread its infection to anything they could. We call these creatures Souleaters, as the disease they carry seems to eat up the host from within. This disease grants them the ability to change their forms far beyond what any Gangrel can do, but at the cost of the host being consumed and replaced by the parasitic disease. These terrifying creatures infiltrate and subvert others to do their bidding or infect them to serve the larger goal of their master.

With all this going on, mortals took to arming themselves against these threats by any means they could. Some began to create weapons designed to specifically target our weaknesses, others began changing themselves to put themselves on a level equal to our own. As such, we still practice the Tradition of the Masquerade, but not to hide our existence from the mortals. That would be pointless. They already know we exist, but they do not know where we are, or whom we influence, and that is where the strength of maintaining the tattered shreds of the Masquerade lies. We do not openly reveal ourselves for our own individual protection. We must segregate ourselves away from the living world. Mortals know our weak points and they aren't afraid to use that knowledge, as they do not take kindly to being preyed upon or manipulated any longer. Of course if the Masquerade is breached, we're concerned not only about hunters but also about the Machine or the corporations sending in cybernetic assassins and targeting all of the Kindred in a city for extermination simply because one of our own broke the first Tradition.

Most Kindred in these dark times were Embraced within the last 50 years. Some Kindred may have minor cybernetics that went inactive the moment they were Embraced, like synthetic skin, color-change eye implants, tattoos, etc. These remain but become inert because they were a living part of their bodies. Other features like Neural Processors become useless because they require the bioelectric currents that only a living, breathing body can support. Kindred do not Embrace those with major cybernetic enhancements because it creates a creature that cannot survive without those implants. Imagine, a Kindred Embraces a mortal, only to find that the fledgling is a quadriplegic afterward because the fool had their organic arms and legs replaced with cybernetic limbs.

In the midst of all this is the perpetual feuding of the Kindred. With North America in chaos and Europe under the control of the corporations, only those Kindred with a mind for reigning in the anarchy and stabilizing it are gaining influence and power. While there are other cellmates in the gilded cage competing against us or seeking to destroy us, the Kindred remain caught up in their eternal machinations against one another. Clan against clan, covenant against covenant, all nothing more than steps placed in the Danse Macabre. They say the more things change, the more they stay the same. I'm sad to say I couldn't agree more.

(Vampire: The Requiem Rulebook Changes – Chapter One: Society of the Damned)

[“Clans,” p. 22. The sentence beginning “While information on the Far East...” in the first paragraph of the left column of the page should read as the following:]

While information on the Far East is fleeting, members of the five clans are known to be active in South America and much of the Middle East.

[“Daeva,” p. 22. The third paragraph in this section in the left column of the page should read as the following:]

The name “Daeva” predates the commonly accepted origin point of modern Kindred society, generally understood to parallel the Convention of Ashes. Certainly, some incarnation of the Daeva existed before then, but whether they had their own society or were merely a rabble of lust-crazed revenants is unknown. After Gehenna, the Daeva had become an inextricable part of Kindred society, and vampiric history shows that they were very active in the Camarilla, the first known social contract of the undead.

[“Gangrel,” p. 22. The sentence in the third paragraph of this section in the left column of the page that begins “As Rome’s holdings moved westward...” should be omitted entirely.]

[“Mekhet,” p. 22. The sentence in the third paragraph of this section in the right column of the page that begins “The commerce between the Egyptians...” should be replaced with this:]

The commerce between the Egyptians and Greeks, and later the Romans, corresponds with the legendary travels of members of this clan.

[“Ventrue,” p. 23. The first paragraph of this section in the left column of the page should read as the following:]

The Ventrue are regal, commanding and aristocratic. Vampires as everything from Eastern European lords on the mountain to gentrified nobles to ultramodern raiders belong to this clan.

[“Coteries,” p. 23. The first paragraph of this section in the left column of the page beginning “Decades and centuries ago...” should be replaced with this:

Decades and centuries ago, when civilization was different and mortals were not knowledgeable of the monsters among them, the Kindred could afford to remain solitary predators, moving alone through the massed ranks of humanity if they wished, secure in the Masquerade. Tonight, the world has changed. Kindred, particularly young ones with no political clout and minimal influence in the mortal world, need allies in ways their elders did not centuries ago. Combined with the lingering desire for companionship left over from their mortal days, this need inspires modern Kindred to gather in small social groups called coteries.

[“Dead Cultures,” p. 24. The first paragraph of this section in the left column beginning “Some Kindred, particularly among...” should be replaced with the following:]

Some Kindred, particularly among the neonates, believe that their society is a more recent development, at least in historical terms. They maintain that only in this era, where the Masquerade has been shattered and hiding from the kine has become truly difficult thanks to technological advancement, has Kindred isolation from humankind become complete. Only in these nights, they claim, has the need for a separate society developed.

[“The Covenants,” p. 24. The last sentence of the Invictus paragraph in the right column of the page should read as this:]

The Invictus claims to trace its roots as far back as Gehenna, if not before.

[“The Body Count,” p. 24. This entire section in the right column of the page should read as this:]

So how many Kindred are there? If they’ve got a society, they must exist in substantial numbers, yet they have managed to keep themselves more or less hidden from the majority of the mortals around them.

The truth is Kindred numbers vary from city to city. In most small cities and villages, the proportion of undead to mortals tends to be relatively low: One vampire per 100,000 or more mortals is common. In large cities, the ratio is usually nearer one vampire per 50,000 mortals.

If one were to take a worldwide average, the ratio is probably around the one-to-50,000 mark. However, it fluctuates so thoroughly from domain to domain that one should never assume that any given population corresponds to that figure.

[“Elysium,” p. 27. The second paragraph of this section in the left column of the page beginning “Most areas of Elysium...” should be omitted entirely.]

[“Deus Vult,” p. 38. This entire section should be omitted except for the following:]

Perhaps ironically, Gehenna signaled the dawn of the Danse Macabre. Factionalism spread like wildfire through the Kindred as the covenants came into power. Emerging from the wake of the events of the Final Night, the “Childer of Longinus,” as members of that covenant insist on calling their founders, were hardly content to sit huddled in their bomb shelters, speaking prayers to a God that had Damned them, while wordlessly and thoughtlessly accepting everything their sires had taught them. No, the world was changing, and with it changed the undead.

After the fires of Gehenna died down, the Kindred looked around to find that their numbers had dwindled, their fortunes had crumbled to the ground, their society had shattered and new factions rose almost nightly. When they looked upon what damage Gehenna caused, they neither learned from what they saw nor endeavored to trace the disaster’s origin back to its root. In time, they forgot what it was that had caused the damage to begin with. The Kindred all secretly blamed each other for the downfall of both mortal and vampire society, and the species as a whole turned inward. The hidden schemes and patient plans of the Kindred became less like an eternal struggle of jyhada and more like a carefully orchestrated dance, where each step was another move that involved either gaining or giving ground, politically or otherwise. The Kindred are a patient breed – when one’s mentor is undeath, patience is the first lesson one must learn – and they learned how to put that patience to use.

[“The Blood Will Tell,” p. 38. This entire section should also be omitted except for the following:]

When things calmed down, the Kindred were little more than humanoid jackals, territorial scavengers with nothing but their food and land. And at the end of the night, each vampire was a prisoner of that land, whether they called it home or not. And when faced with that realization, many vampires tried to make themselves the wardens of their prison homes, each bucking for superiority over the other inmates. Only when one was the warden could they be sure of how the prison would operate from night to night.

This notion in particular, the concept of control, is central to the Danse Macabre as it is known tonight. Through the passing of years upon years, many Kindred feel the reins of control slip ever so slowly from their clutching talons. Despite their temporal power, they must sit by, unable to build, create, or evolve as they once did, watching while the world moves on around them. So, they seek to amass as much mortal power and influence as possible in the hopes of feeling vicariously through their connections to modern reality. They vainly seek a glut of material power hoping somehow to make up for the spiritual and creative impotence of their existence.

To make matters worse, other Kindred are often the only barometers by which an out-of-touch vampire can measure their own surrogate success. If their brothers and sisters of the night do not fare very well, then logically, they must be truly successful. The entire system feeds on its own illogic until, at a certain point, only the struggle for dominance remains. Some Kindred even see this existence for what it is, claiming it's the only way their accursed kind can progress with any peace through the ages. After all, they reason, only when one has control over everything does one not need to resort to diablerie or kinslaying. The Danse Macabre, they dare claim, is actually the salvation of the Kindred race! Many vampires would disagree vehemently, but it does go to show the degree to which the undead try to rationalize what they have become.

[“*The Fog of Eternity*,” p. 39. The sentence in the first paragraph of this section in the right column of the page beginning “The shock is even greater...” should be omitted.]

[“*The Way of All Flesh*,” p. 41. The first paragraph in the left column of this page beginning “What is agreed upon...” should be replaced with the following:]

What is agreed upon, at least by those who have stopped to pay attention, is that the Danse Macabre is headed into a new era. Advancements in technology have allowed Kindred versus Kindred conflict to blossom into never-before-seen arenas. Young and savvy vampires use the Digital Web as often as they use any other tool of manipulation and deceit, and with the advent of a host of other inventions, the possibilities are endless. Never before has there been so much potential in the art of war, and despite the quiet nagging of what remains of the vampiric conscience, it all sounds good to the average vampire.

[“*Kindred Covenants*,” p. 42. The last sentence of the first paragraph of this section in the right column of the page beginning “Even those young vampires...” should be replaced with this:]

Even those young vampires who believe that Kindred society as it exists tonight is a relatively recent development admit that the covenants certainly predated the coming of Gehenna in some form or another.

[“*The Camarilla*,” p. 43. This section should be replaced with the following:]

In nights long past, all of vampiric society united under one common banner, at least as far as the Western World was concerned. This organization was known as the Camarilla, corresponding roughly to a Spanish word meaning “power group” or a cabal of confidential advisors. The Camarilla’s might was unchallenged – all Kindred were claimed as members, whether they wanted to belong or not. It is even suspected that many Kindred customs that survive to this very night had their roots in Camarilla structure, such as the notion of Princes who govern autonomous domains. While proof of pre-Gehenna vampirism is rare or incomplete, almost all Kindred accept that pre-Gehenna vampires probably existed. They are commonly understood to have been savage, monstrous, and completely disorganized. If anything, their “society” was probably little more than scattered, vague domains populated by a single vampire and any broods they chose to foster. The now-defunct Camarilla was the first successful attempt at a true Kindred society.

As mortal society collapsed with the discovery of the monsters living amongst them, so did the support structures of the Camarilla crumble. As Kindred require the blood of mortals to keep them vital, they rely on mortal society as a foundation for their own. With many of the world’s countries fragmenting

into isolated, feudal domains during the chaos after the Final Night, Kindred society had little choice but to do the same or fall entirely into the barbarism that threatened to engulf them.

The nature of the Kindred themselves hastened the ruin of the Camarilla, as well. Ever scheming and jealous, few vampires who rose to prominence in the Camarilla social order did so out of a sense of altruism or justice. The Kindred then as now craved power and influence, and such could be obtained by crippling rivals' access to the same.

It comes as no surprise, then, to see that from the remains of the shattered Camarilla came several different factions after the Convention of Ashes, each espousing a different policy or philosophy upheld by like-minded elders and charismatic demagogues. Where once a single organization had stood, a handful of distinct covenants emerged from the bleakness of the era. This development even set the standard for later covenants to distinguish themselves from established Kindred society.

Many of these covenants perished through the centuries, destroyed by opposing factions, absorbed into similar ones, rooted out as heretics or simply abandoned as invalid. Vampires cast about for covenants with which they could align themselves in hopes of achieving power, but they remained ever wary that those factions would demand too much in return or limit them too greatly with dogma.

As history progressed from the Convention of Ashes, two groups of European Kindred formed an alliance. As mortal society's strength once hailed from the twin pillars of the Church and the state, these covenants formed their own version of the balance between temporal and pious power. The Lancea Sanctum, a dire and evangelical covenant claiming a Biblical origin for vampires, rose to claim a position of prominence as the spiritual leader of the Kindred. Its counterpart, known as the Invictus (a reference to the group's Camarilla origins), positioned itself as the vampiric nobility. In domains where the alliance was powerful, the Invictus served as political ruler of the Kindred, while the Lancea Sanctum made sure residents were duly worshipful of God and mindful of a vampire's place in the world.

The alliance between the Invictus and the Lancea Sanctum was an effective model and gradually slipped beneath the layers of mortal society it emulated, despite the fact that mortals were fully aware of the existence of vampires. The underworld allegiance of these covenants experienced great success, and it soon spread across Europe not unlike the feudal model from which it drew its structures. This was capable because some parts of Europe fared better overall than other places did during Gehenna, allowing them to rebuild and progress somewhat effectively. As long as the Kindred stayed out of sight, the mortals were more concerned with restructuring their society than searching for supernatural parasites.

Not all Kindred supported the alliance's supremacy, however. Many old domains that harbored Kindred who observed pre-Christian and even older mythologies dissented. Although they never formed a unified front, given that their beliefs and geographical locations were too disparate, an undercurrent of rebellion occasionally prevented the alliance from taking hold in numerous places. Blood magic drawn from the Old Ways held the Lancea Sanctum's dark miracles at bay, and the pagans held their own in many cases. These faiths survived through the centuries to these nights as a loose collection of factions, rarely organized but definitely powerful, and with their own spheres of influence. United only by a common belief in a female progenitor or patron of the race of Kindred, the covenant known as the Circle of the Crone cultivated power through appeal to less overwhelming policies than the alliance's conquering tactics.

Another Kindred covenant eventually reared its head in Eastern Europe, fronted by an infamous and popular leader drawn from the ranks of the mortal nobility. This covenant's founder claimed to have been a warlord in life, abandoned by God and drawn into the ranks of the Damned. Teaching a philosophy of vampiric transcendence, this leader and his followers, the Ordo Dracul, upset the balance of power between the Invictus and the Lancea Sanctum and rushed in to seize what it could in the resulting instability. The idea of transcendence appealed to many Kindred, and thus the ideals of the Ordo Dracul took root and spread outward. From the covenant's foundation sometime during the 5th or 6th century after Gehenna to the nights now of the 11th, the Order of the Dragon continues to grow in power and increase in influence.

Time passes externally for the Kindred, even if their own bodies remain locked in stasis. To many vampires, the feudal model upon which the alliance had built its power was an anachronism in this new world. As the mortal world once rallied to the cause of new forms of government, many young vampires adapted new systems of politics to the society of the Damned. These Carthians don't always agree on what sort of political system is best, but they find common disillusionment with the outdated modes of governance (such as they are) to which so many other Kindred cling unquestioningly. Such philosophy finds a home especially in the Americas, whose own sovereignty was once won from the clutches of

aristocratic nations. The Carthians believe that it can be won for the vampiric order as well, leading to peaceful cohabitation between the Kindred and the mortals around them.

As these modern nights unfold, a strange state of balance exists. In Europe, many domains still honor the rule of the alliance. Here and there small pockets of resistance still cleave to the ways of the Circle of the Crone, while the Ordo Dracul still reigns in Eastern Europe. In North America, however, something much more resembling an equal footing exists. The Carthian cause attracts new followers, especially among the young, who have little use for noble rule and have no reason to suspect one exists as the world of the Kindred opens up to them. The Invictus and the Lancea Sanctum still wield power, but the alliance is far more tenuous. Individual domains often belong solely to a Lancea Sanctum Prince or an Invictus Prince, with little effort made to preserve the customary relationship that survives between the two in Europe. The Ordo Dracul and the Circle of the Crone each has no small support, too, though their North and South American incarnations are steeped less in the traditions from which they hail and more in the mindset of viable (if somewhat arcane) alternatives to the undying atavism of the crumbling alliance.

It is under these circumstances that modern vampires find themselves Embraced. Covenants that have long been allies fragment, while new alliances form nightly to oppose the existing powers that be. The Lancea Sanctum and the Invictus are strange bedfellows – except where their differences have driven them to factional war. Seemingly opposed covenants such as the Circle of the Crone and the Carthians feud over ideology – except when they bury the hatchet to face mutual oppression. The world of these vampires is truly gothic, with barbaric anachronisms still in place where they had been centuries if not millennia before. At the same time, technology and the world's cultural Zeitgeist manifests in a spirit of rebellion that offers a chance to cast the old shackles aside and replace them with new and exciting ideals. The world is at once medieval and modern in its demise, and the society of the Damned embodies every aspect of that paradox.

On occasion, a group of historians, unification-minded Kindred, or downright conspirators makes some effort at reestablishing the Camarilla as it was in the nights of old. To date these efforts have been doomed to failure, fracturing under the weight of whatever high-minded (or underhanded) politics spawned the idea. That's not to say that some future attempt at consolidation wouldn't work, just that it has yet to.

[“*The Invictus*,” p. 53. The sentence in the first paragraph of the Overview in the left column of the page beginning “It was purportedly during some stage...” should read as this:]

It was purportedly during some stage soon after the Convention of Ashes that the Invictus developed into what it is tonight; cementing a dogma that its elders claim (accurately or not) actually predates Gehenna.

[“*The Invictus*,” p. 54. The sentence in the third paragraph in the right column beginning “Those who are unwilling...” should read as this:]

Those who are unwilling to work for every scrap of power – and, perhaps more to the point, to be constantly on guard against their rivals who do the same – have no place in the courts of the First Estate.

[“*The Invictus*,” p. 55. The sentence in the right column of the page beginning “In the covenant's quest for...” under the Mortals Are Power section should be replaced with the following:]

In the covenant's quest for political dominance, it wastes no opportunity – and three billion kine represent quite an opportunity.

[“*The Lancea Sanctum*,” p. 59. The sentence beginning “The Lancea Sanctum will not...” under the Commandments and Traditions section in the right column of the page should read as this:]

The Lancea Sanctum will not, however, choose to violate the Tradition of Secrecy, at least not in the sense that it would jeopardize its own safety by letting mortals know that there are vampires nearby.

[“*The Lancea Sanctum*,” p. 60. The paragraph under Theban Sorcery in the left column of the page should read as the following:]

To hear the Sanctified tell it, its members are capable of no less than miracles themselves. In truth, the Lancea Sanctum does possess a potent form of spiritual magic, though whether it performs literal miracles is up for debate. At some point after the covenant formed – purportedly in the third century A.G. – some of its members followed a mercenary army into Thebes. There a legion of soldiers was drawn from the local ranks. When members of the covenant accompanied the Theban mercenaries on its march onward, one of their members brought with her the secrets of this magic, which she claimed to have learned from an

angel on the journey. To this night, the covenant studies and practices this sorcery, which it uses to demonstrate its power, “prove” its chosen nature, and to punish transgressors against its dictates.

[“The Ordo Dracul,” p. 62. The text of the Overview section should be replaced with the following:]

The Order’s roots are something of a matter of debate – even within the covenant itself. It is undoubtedly one of the youngest of the major Kindred factions. The Dragons, as they are fearfully (or hatefully) known, have records of apprenticeships as early as the 6th century A.G. By traveling beyond their domain of Eastern Europe, the covenant was better able to disseminate the vast amount of archaic and arcane teachings that members require in order to learn and perform their transcendental studies. The covenant experienced a sudden jump in power and membership just after their formation, then another in the late 9th century A.G., then yet another in recent decades. It is believed that the covenant grew to power in Eastern Europe, its philosophies traveling with the rebuilding of cities and as its members settled in areas farther away from their primary domain.

The Ordo Dracul reveres its founder, but in a very different way than, say, the Lancea Sanctum honors Longinus. The Dragons believe that the curse of vampirism can and should be surpassed, that the Embrace is a judgment that can be overturned and even exceeded. Nothing, *nothing*, is permanent, the Order argues, not even the lingering undeath that all Kindred experience. Of course, no known vampire has ever escaped the Requiem through the Order’s rites (at least not in a manner that others would find satisfactory; it’s quite possible to reduce oneself to a pile of ash or a torpid wretch through an ill-performed observance). Regardless, Kindred are perfectly willing to admit that such things take centuries, if not millennia. Some crucial piece of knowledge must yet be missing, and with the world growing smaller and closer to a state of perpetual war from the Machine or the corporations, that knowledge must be learned.

In that regard, the Ordo Dracul is much more comfortable with the modern world than the Invictus is, though not nearly so comfortable as the Carthians are. Technology isn’t something to be feared or reviled as a tool of the Machine, but as a means of fighting fire with fire and seeking to welcome change. Since the covenant prizes mental evolution as much as spiritual progression, elders who wish to retain their standing must shake off the inertia of years and learn how to use the weapons of the enemy against them. Hidebound traditionalists aren’t overtly snubbed (after all, they might know something useful, and it doesn’t pay to burn bridges), but they do tend to be left alone in their havens to experience the Requiem and perform their research in solitude.

The search for knowledge is a commonly stated goal of the order, but it’s deliberately vague. Members of the Ordo Dracul are interested in knowledge, true, but that has more to do with the kind of personality the covenant attracts than with its actual goals. The Dragons seek information about the truth of the vampiric condition, and to that end, they enjoy talking to other Kindred about their experiences, their feelings upon receiving the Embrace, how their bodies have changed, and how their attitudes toward morals have progressed. (The Gangrel in particular interest the Order, and those Savages who join the covenant quickly become some of their most respected members.) The Dragons seek to establish patterns in God’s plan, in the curse of undeath, and in any other facet of the Requiem that will lead them to the answer they seek – how to transcend the limits of vampirism.

The Ordo Dracul has a hierarchical structure unique to it, known internally as the Dragon’s Tongue. The Order involves numerous rites and initiations, the completion of which symbolizes the member’s passage from one “circle of mystery” or level of achievement to the next. Progression through the hierarchy seems to correspond to mastery of the Coils of the Dragon, but whether this is true or simply a non-member’s misunderstanding remains uncertain. This structure also serves to protect the covenant’s secrets. The Ordo Dracul is loath to let anyone, even low-ranking members, leave the faction. The higher one’s rank in the covenant the more they have invested and accomplished and, thus, the more reluctant they will (theoretically) be to leave. Still, defections and renunciations do occur, and with more frequency than the Order would have outsiders believe.

[“The Ordo Dracul,” p. 65-66. The complete text of the following entries needs to be relocated under the “Rituals and Observances” text that’s there now:]

- **The Coils of the Dragon**
- **Finding the Wyrms’ Nests**
- **Following the Dragon’s Tail**

- **Honoring the Mentor**

[“Kindred Mythology,” p. 72. The last paragraph of this section in the right column of the page should be replaced with the following:]

Thus are the majority of Kindred divided into distinct camps. The Lancea Sanctum and its long-time partner in the post-Gehenna alliance, the Invictus, believe that *The Testament of Longinus* represents the truth, or at least a good approximation of it and the Sanctified modify their behavior and religious beliefs accordingly. (It must be said, however, that the Invictus pays these beliefs lip service at best when they come into conflict with members’ own interests. Most of the time Invictus Kindred seem not to care at all.) The Ordo Dracul has its own writ, *Rites of the Dragon*, which, while it doesn’t rule out the possibility of the Longinus theory, certainly doesn’t require it to make its own position valid. The Circle of the Crone rarely bothers with formal works of vampiric origin, relying instead on oral traditions far older than either the Sanctified’s or the Dragons’. Others reject such meaningless fiction or propaganda penned by manipulative elders for their own inscrutable purposes. Very few vampires fall into the middle ground. As a whole, Kindred tend to either believe strongly in one myth or none at all.

[“Prophets and Oracles,” p. 74. The sentence beginning “It is said that the Moirai...” in the sidebar in the right column of the page should read as the following:]

It is said that the Moirai have found some way to resist the dreams of torpor and have maintained their memories of ages past.

[“The First Tradition,” p. 75. This section should be replaced with the following:]

Arguably, the most important aspect of Kindred society worldwide is the first Tradition: that of the Masquerade. Although it has been shattered from its previous incarnation, it is still practiced by the Kindred as a means to keep mortals from locating and destroying them. Given Kindred feeding habits, the world of mortals would never understand or permit their continued presence. Mortals know the undead exist, and seek to destroy them wherever they are found. The Kindred know that the powers of unity and faith are a match for even them.

Before the dawn of the modern era, this Tradition was significantly less enforced, and in some cases, even scoffed at by the more haughty (and foolish) among the undead. Vampires of old could freely roam their demesnes, flaunting their damnation before the terrified mortals who huddled in the dark at their feet. Few phones existed with which the kine could call for help, with nobody to call even if there were. For a brief time, the Damned were truly lords of the night once more.

But it is a different time now, a different world, at least in Europe. Mortals could not run in fear of the predators among them forever. As the living world grew and advanced, the world of the undead shrank. Tonight, it is a small world, indeed, for the Damned – but only from the outside. Although the planet itself is largely changed, the mortals that live upon it are as smart and advanced as they’ve ever been, and more numerous than the Kindred even after Gehenna. The Damned, as powerful as they are, have never been so exposed or vulnerable.

Given this precarious state of affairs, breaching the Masquerade is usually viewed as one of the most grievous transgressions one of the Kindred can commit. Depending on the Prince, more damaging breaches can be viewed as grounds for the Final Death of the transgressor, and a number of Princes have amassed no small amount of notoriety for their unwavering enforcement of this rule. This, then, has become a source of heated debate in Kindred circles, due to the subjective nature of such determinations. Some Princes are not above using the Masquerade as justification for the removal of political opponents, and those who displease a Prince must be careful about how they act in public and what company they keep.

[“The Damnable Hunt,” p. 82. This section should be replaced with the following:]

As powerful as they are, the Kindred play a most dangerous game. It is their lot to hunt among the kine, to prey on and feed from the mortal world. Yet they must also realize that they are not always as wolves among a flock of sheep, but are often as jackals among a pack of wild dogs. The individual dog is (usually) no match for the scavenging jackal, but should the entire pack turn its attentions toward the predator in its midst...

Such is the case with the Kindred among the kine. If the eye of man were to turn its baleful attention fully upon the Kindred instead of all the other monsters skulking in the shadows, the resulting pogrom would very likely wipe the Damned from the face of the Earth. Therefore, in this most dangerous game, the most powerful assets in Kindred hands are the complimentary tools known as misdirection and secrecy. These weapons do more to keep vampires safe than any combination of unholy powers ever could.

In the world of the kine, misdirection and obscurity are things that confuse and impede. In the world of the Kindred, they are power. The bid to keep humanity at large unaware of vampires that may be among them is known as the First Tradition, the Masquerade. The Kindred condition mandates that this must be the single most important goal of the race, lest discovery bring hunters armed with fire and the stake upon the Kindred in the area. Whoever created vampires clearly intended for the Damned to be a part of the world, but that entity also clearly intended for them to remain forever separate from those upon whom they prey. Such is the nature of the Requiem. And so, each scion of the Kindred line endeavors to make sure that mortal misdirection remains a top priority of unlife.

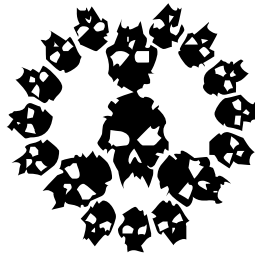
Despite these brilliant campaigns, however, despite all the considerable resources devoted to maintaining the tattered threads of the Masquerade in their domains, mistakes happen. Even vampires get sloppy on occasion, and when they do, the results are nasty. Sometimes it's a careless feeding error; a slip of the mind, where a vampire forgets to lick a wound they made, thereby beginning the chain reaction of curiosity leading to investigation leading to action. These occasions, while certainly not desirable, are often at least manageable given the resources of many Kindred domains. But sometimes a careless error leaves witnesses – mortal witnesses – and in almost every case, it leaves such witnesses with two of the most damning banes of the undead: hatred and awareness of the presence of the Kindred.

Arising from “mistakes” such as these is the phenomenon known as witch-hunters. Whether by accident, Kindred error, or simple mortal moxie, these ordinary (and sometimes augmented) men and women take up the struggle to beat back the darkness to which their minds have been exposed. For whatever reason, they're onto the Kindred and they mean business.

These individuals, often known simply as “hunters,” are often more dangerous to the undead than anything else. As mortals in a mortal world, they're under no compunction to remain hidden themselves (most authorities even welcome their presence). Unlike werewolves or other supernatural creatures, hunters need be concerned only with the hunt, and that gives them a distinct advantage in a shadow conflict such as this. In addition, hunters can move by day, and they aren't nearly so restricted in their activity cycles as are the creatures they hunt.

As might be expected, the Kindred don't take too kindly to finding themselves on the reverse end of the predator-prey scenario. Most are taken by surprise, as they have grown accustomed to being the ones to startle mortal prey with savage revelations before the moment of consummation. Indeed, some vampires are so taken aback that they never have a chance to recover from the shock – all it takes is one well-aimed strike, even against a vampire. Those who survive their initial encounter with a hunter (or group of hunters) often descend into panic, unless they've experienced such a situation before. The first thought to race into a vampire's head is “Do they know the location of my haven?” Until there is a satisfactory answer, that question continues to occupy their mind, while awake and asleep.

The other danger that hunters pose is that they can organize, often in a disturbingly short amount of time. A single hunter created after one encounter with the Damned might lead an entire cell of well-informed, well-equipped vampire-hunters after six months. To the Kindred mind, which remains static and patient as the years wear on, this nearly ant-like level of cooperation and efficiency is startling.



THE NEPHTALI

Conducting the movements of the Danse Macabre are vampires so ancient, they predate the Great Flood that God sent to cleanse the earth of sin millennia ago. Even now these undead demigods plot and scheme against each other, directing the actions of younger vampires to set events into motion that will allow them to control everything that lay before them. Those with the courage and the will to oppose these shadowy manipulators seek to avert this from happening. These Kindred call themselves the Nephtali.

Regarded as little more than a doomsday cult, despite being possibly the oldest of the covenants in existence, the Nephtali's central belief is that the vampires who founded the clans are not destroyed or in torpor. This covenant of scholars, warriors, and researchers are determined to avert another Gehenna that they believe is surely coming. According to their teachings, what everyone thinks was Gehenna was simply a Time of Judgment, not the true ascension of the "Antediluvians," a term the Nephtali uses to describe these ancient vampires. The real Gehenna hasn't arrived yet they claim; it was slowed but not stopped by the previous actions of this covenant, and make no mistake about it, this true Final Night is coming inevitably. The Nephtali hope to avert this cataclysmic event any way they can and the ends justify the means when it comes to stopping the Antediluvians.

OVERVIEW

Formed during the Convention of Fire in London in 2004 B.G. near the start of Gehenna by a Ventrue named Jan Pieterzoon and a gathering of other vampires from various clans and bloodlines, the Nephtali are opposed to the rule of the Antediluvians. These Kindred seek to protect both the supernatural and the mortal worlds. This is not necessarily out of a sense of altruism, but simply a matter of practicality. If the mortals around them suffer and die, the Kindred have no food supply, and they too will inevitably perish. If the mortals are prosperous and healthy, then there is more blood for the Kindred to nourish themselves on. Humans are considered to be beneath vampires, who are the superior species, but the kine must be shepherded for the benefit of both.



MEMBERS

In these nights, this covenant has fallen by the wayside, as many of their initial members left to form the other covenants after the Convention of Ashes. Final Death has also caused a decline in the Nephtali's numbers over the centuries. Those rare Kindred belonging to the Nephtali are either very old themselves or the childer of members already in the covenant. New converts occasionally join, but they are few and far between, as not many Kindred are willing to accept that the long forgotten founders of the clans are the ultimate conductors of the Danse Macabre. Overall, the Nephtali is one of the easiest covenants to join. It is an open society, and any vampire may pledge himself or herself, regardless of lineage. The ranks of the Nephtali are too slim for its members to be picky. Roughly 200 vampires claim membership within the covenant.

PHILOSOPHY

The word Nephtali has Biblical significance, literally meaning "the highest point" or "no further," used in prohibiting an advance or encroachment, and is a reference to how Gehenna shall be stopped and allowed no further by these Kindred. Some Kindred seek information regarding the plans of the Antediluvians, while others attempt to uncover their locations, looking to bring the fight to avert another Gehenna right to the Antediluvian's doorstep. Despite the Biblical name, the covenant itself is not overtly religious, as is the Lancea Sanctum. Interestingly enough, however, the two both claim a Biblical origin; except that the Nephtali believes they are descended from Caine, the First Murderer, who was cursed by God with vampirism for his crime.

The Antediluvians Must Be Stopped

The Nephtali rival the Ordo Dracul in the amount of occult knowledge they possess, but the difference lies in what they do with the knowledge. The Nephtali use the information they discover to further their attempts to stop the plans of the Antediluvians from coming to fruition. How they embark upon this task depends on the vampire in question. Some are passive in their approach, while others are manically ruthless and let nothing stand

in their way from achieving success in their mission.

Mortals Must be Protected

This tenet is different from the Carthian Movement's view on mortal/Kindred interaction. Mortals must certainly be looked after, but that does not mean the Nephtali entertains dreams of a night when the two species will exist side by side. The Nephtali are as serious about the preservation of the Masquerade as any other Kindred, and they see little use in becoming friends with one's food supply. Despite all appearances, this line of thought has little to do with cruelty and more to do with pragmatism, as the Nephtali feel nothing good can come from associating with the kine on a personal level.

RITUALS AND OBSERVANCES

The Nephtali as a whole has little use for formal rituals, although individual members and coteries may have their own particular customs and observances. The covenant does acknowledge one social custom, however, that has endured since the covenant's creation. This is a gathering of the entire Nephtali known as a Conclave.

Conclaves

Conclaves are one of the greatest events in Nephtali politics. A Conclave serves as the highest court of Nephtali Kindred, a legislative session for considering and deciding future Nephtali policy and a reaffirmation of the Nephtali as the guiding force behind bringing the plans of the Antediluvians to a halt. All Nephtali are welcome to attend the Conclave. These events can last anywhere from a few hours to several weeks. Naturally, Conclaves are perilous undertakings; so many vampires (many of them potent-blooded elders) in a single location present a tempting target for diablerists. Many attendees might not know where the Conclave will be held until a few nights before the event itself. Only Justicars may call Conclaves, and they do so only when needed, due to the logistical concerns involved.

The Conclave is usually held in the geographic region most concerned with the issue at hand, or more centrally if the problem is widespread. The Kindred who attend the Conclave are referred to as the assembly, and any may speak, provided they are supported by at least two other members. Each member of the assembly receives a single vote regarding the issue. Conclaves are typically called with regard to powerful information, or serious breaches of the Traditions. Any Nephtali may bring a grievance to the Conclave and expect to have it addressed. Any

actions that would result in a serious breach of the Traditions must be discussed and agreed upon by the Conclave to avoid punishment in the future. The Conclave interprets the Traditions and may add amendments or enact precedents. A Nephtali on trial at a Conclave may challenge the ruling by requesting an ordeal. These ordeals can be quite literally almost any exacting task or quest, with a time limit for completion. If the ordeal is not completed to satisfaction, the Justicar may impose any penalty. Should the crime be considered too heinous to allow the accused an ordeal, she may be challenged to ritual combat by one of her accusers. As with the ordeal, almost anything can happen: ritual weapons, both opponents being blindfolded, forbiddance of Disciplines, etc. After a Conclave, elders often reward those who voted in their favor and punish those who did not. Others take the opportunity to curry as much favor as possible, hoping that their "loyalty" will be rewarded.

Not every Conclave called is an emergency meeting. Some Justicars arrange for annual Conclaves allowing all active Nephtali who choose to attend an opportunity to meet and talk over the year's business. For the past decade, the Daeva Justicar has called a Conclave on the weekend closest to Halloween, while another takes place in Neo Orleans every three years. These are opportunities for Nephtali vampires to discuss covenant business, to fraternize with others of their station and clan, and simply to socialize with new faces and old acquaintances.

TITLES AND DUTIES

The Cabal

The leadership of the Nephtali, known as the Cabal, are a group of Kindred that meet in London (the location of the Nephtali headquarters) once every century or so to plan the business and direction of the covenant – as much as any group can presume to dictate the doings of a race of immortal predators, or attempt to second guess the plans of beings that are almost as old as time itself. As many of these Kindred are so potent in the blood to spend much of their time in torpor, the meetings are not always precisely held at the same time. These meetings also serve as a means of catching up with current events within the covenant. Each clan or bloodline claiming membership is permitted one representative in the Cabal, usually the eldest member, as only the eldest may cast the clan or bloodline's vote. Others may be brought to the meeting and allowed to speak, but in the end, only the Cabal itself may vote. The Cabal is also responsible for appointing Justicars, a

task done by whoever is active when the time comes for the choice to be made.

The current representatives for each of the clans are: Delphine Decourt (Daeva), Beckett (Gangrel), Adriana Decari (Mekhet), Calebros (Nosferatu), and Jan Pieterzoon (Ventruue). Three of these Kindred have been members of the Cabal since the covenant was founded, while Delphine joined around the 4th century A.G. Adriana was inducted around the middle of the 5th century A.G. when Mekhet were finally allowed into the Cabal and has held the position since. Representatives of bloodlines in the Cabal fluctuate often, and as such are typically not worthy of mention with two exceptions, the progenitors of each of their respective bloodlines: Steven Donovan, of the curious bloodline referred to as the Infiores, and Carolina Velez of the Khaibit bloodline.

Justicars

These five mighty vampires are the judges appointed to be the Nephtali's eyes, hands and, if

necessary, fists. Justicars have the only true authority across the Nephtali, with the exception of the leadership of the covenant. They alone have the ultimate power to adjudicate matters regarding the Traditions. No one is considered to be above them in this. Justicars decide the punishment for those who violate the Traditions on a widespread level; the one being judged may not expect mercy. Justicars are supposed to call for a Conclave when they wish to pass judgment, but over the years, this lapsed as they grew in power. Justicars have the authority to call a Conclave at any time, either to confirm a ruling or to make certain decisions that one Justicar alone does not wish to burden themselves with. A Justicar serves for 13 years, and only another Justicar or the Cabal itself may challenge their actions. If things grow heated, a Conclave may be called by the combatants or by another Justicar to resolve the dispute. When rival Justicars decide to start battling it out, few Kindred are safe from being used and abused in the ensuing struggle.

CARTHIANs – Misguided idealists

CIRCLE OF THE CRONE – Lilith worshippers and warlocks

INVICTUS – A false Camarilla

LANCEA SANCTUM – Religious zealots

ORDO DRACUL – Suspicious and untrustworthy

UNALIGNED – Anarchs and potential recruits

“Hey! Over here!” *That got their attention.*

Fully aware of the danger she just put herself in, she took a moment to contemplate her tenuous predicament. The intelligence she had gotten from her source was correct. This cave in the depths of these desolate woods had been turned into a Souleater hive. Now all she had to do was lure them out and survive long enough to lead them into the trap prepared for them. Then the other Kindred lying in wait would destroy these aberrations, and her own retainers would enter the hive to clean out any remaining traces of the invaders. But she was getting way ahead of herself.

A horde of Souleater Horrid Form warriors turned toward the sound of her voice, where they instantly spotted her at the mouth of the cave. With thick, sticky strands of saliva dripping from their slavering jaws, the group of them began running toward her position as one, and Adriana Decari turned and immediately took off as the creatures began rushing out of the Souleater hive toward her.

She slid down the hill the cave was located on until she reached the bottom, where she jumped to her feet and headed deeper into the forest. She dodged behind a tree, a fleshy tentacle striking deep into the wood where she was only a second ago, followed by another and another. Calling upon the energies of her Vitae, she increased her speed supernaturally, a common Discipline of the Mekhet clan, weaving between trees as her enemies pursued her through the darkened woods. *Come on Adriana, you can do this. It's just a little farther ahead. Put a little distance between them and you and you're home free.*

Up ahead, a deserted church loomed in the midst of the woods. Weeds and ivy had taken over, encasing the structure in a shell of strangling greenery. A large tree had grown through the foundation and what remained of the roof. The tree left large exposed sections, through which light from the Red Stars filtered down through the branches into the church. The illumination shone back out through the broken stained glass windows, casting an unholy scarlet aura about the building. Despite the foreboding appearance, Adriana knew it was her best hope to survive this ordeal.

Desperately trying to increase the space between the fiends chasing after her and herself, Adriana dared a glance behind her as she made for the building. A Horrid Form warrior leaped onto a tree and rebounded off it to pounce on her. She ducked to the right, narrowly avoiding the creature as it crashed into the ground and came to a skidding halt in the dirt. Another rushed forward, lashing out with its tongue to trip its prey. Adriana put on another burst of speed, carrying her just out of range of the appendage before it could wrap around her leg.

At last, she reached the church. She didn't think about stopping or trying to find any opening other than the one most obvious to her. At this point, she wasn't thinking about much of anything besides escaping. Adriana jumped through the broken remains of a stained glass window and landed on the wooden floor of the interior, taking only a second to get her bearings. It was more time than she could afford to spend. She could hear the Souleaters scrambling over each other to be the first one to sink its claws and fangs into her and tear her apart.

The inside of the church had not fared any better than the exterior in the years that had passed since mortals last used it for worship. Shards of the broken stained glass crunched under her feet and decorated the span of the floor. Mildew and slime covered the altar, which had been turned over on its side. Pieces of a stone crucifix lay scattered about; smashed so badly it was hardly recognizable. Pews laid everywhere, their wood rotten and pulpy from years of exposure to the elements. Twisted limbs of the tree that had grown through the foundation stretched in every direction, like gnarled hands waiting to catch the unwary. A hallway lay just ahead, to the left side of the tree. Realizing that was her way out, she pulled her energy pistol out and ran toward the opening. She barely made it into the passage as her pursuers bounded through the same opening she came in, and then began scuttling after her.

Adriana Decari raised her weapon and fired off a few shots down the corridor as the Horrid Form warriors advanced. That stopped a few of them, their wretched lives abruptly ended, but more rushed forward over the charred remains of their dead, ducking and weaving the blasts that cut through the charnel air. One creature leapt forward to sink its teeth into her flesh, but another shot from her gun punched through its skull, acidic blood spilling as the monster dropped onto the floor, convulsed, and died.

“One down,” she said to herself as she ejected the empty magazine and slid a fresh clip into the gun, falling back down the corridor from the horde closing in upon her. “Only about a million more to go.”

CHAPTER TWO: BUILDING THE PERFECT BEAST

*“And she says,
‘Pray for daylight, pray for morning
Pray for an end to our deception’”
– The Cruxshadows, “Deception”*

Where it is rumored there were once thirteen great clans and many bloodlines, now the Kindred find that only five clans exist, their numbers thinned out by the hunger of their ancestors. Some clans and bloodlines (Baali, Blood Brothers, Followers of Set, Harbingers of Skulls, Kiasyd, Malkavian, Ravnos, Salubri, Tremere, True Brujah, and Tzimisce) were completely lost during Gehenna, while others (the *antitribu* of the clans, Assamites, Daughters of Cacophony, Gargoyles, Giovanni, Nagaraja, Samedi, and Toreador) were subsumed into another clan. The Baali were exterminated once and for all by the Assamites, the last one dying by the hand of the Brujah Antediluvian. The Setites committed suicide one and all in the name of a god that refused to acknowledge them. The Harbingers of Skulls attacked the Giovanni for unknown reasons before themselves disappearing.

No one knows the true fate of the Kiasyd, but they are presumed gone, as no one has found a trace of them since Gehenna. The Malkavians drowned within the madness of their progenitor and what few may exist are beyond any sort of coherent thought or logic, and are considered extremely dangerous. Any Ravnos remaining after their Antediluvian was annihilated were picked off one by one by their enemies, most of whom were the servants of other Antediluvians. What few remaining Salubri and their *antitribu* that weathered the Tremere purge of previous ages turned to cannibalizing each other when Saulot perished at the Feast of Undying Blood. As for the Toreador clan, they fell under the sway of their progenitor and perished either at the hands of the Daughters of Cacophony or devoured themselves when the Toreador Antediluvian was destroyed. The casting of a ritual intended to restore them to mortality destroyed the Tremere. Lastly, the Tzimisce and the Blood Brothers were consumed, absorbed, and reshaped into the beings known as Souleaters.

Due to the Fog of Eternity, this information is lost to the majority of Kindred, who believe that the five clans are all that have ever existed. While there are some elders who indeed remember there were once thirteen clans, their recollections are hazy at best. Over time, most of the evidence in this matter has vanished or been destroyed, leaving little concrete proof to dissuade the Kindred from their current worldview. Some Kindred seek out the few remaining artifacts, wherever they may be. One book in particular, the *Encyclopaedia Vampirica*, is highly sought after by those who wish to learn about the past of the Kindred. Only five copies of this tome are known to exist. Two are in the possession of Kindred elders, while the other three are said to be lost throughout the world.

This chapter presents the five clans that have endured after the collapse of the world into total chaos. Lineage is still important to the Damned even after Gehenna. Players may select any of the following clans for their characters, or may choose a bloodline allowed by the Storyteller. Bloodlines are typically descended from a particular clan, although some such as the Khaibit and the Infiores do not have direct blood ties with any of the five clans. Information on available bloodlines is covered in Appendix One or in the books **Bloodlines: The Hidden** and **Bloodlines: The Legendary**. This chapter points out the few distinctions needed to create a character for **Gehenna Age: Vampire**. Character generation proceeds almost exactly as in **Vampire: The Requiem** with a few exceptions, which are detailed below.

(Vampire: The Requiem Rulebook Changes – Chapter Two: Character)

[“Step Five: Add Vampire Template,” p. 91. Under the Covenant section in the right column of the page, for players who wish their characters to be members of the Nephtali, the covenant’s advantage is the following:]

*** The Nephtali:** Members of the Nephtali may purchase the Allies, Contacts, Herd, and Mentor Merits at half the normal experience-point costs (rounding up). This cost break does not apply to purchases of these Merits during character creation.

[“New Advantage: Blood Potency,” p. 99. As this writer feels that the rules for Blood Potency and its reduction through torpor are a bit harsh, as presented in the sixth paragraph in the right column of the page, the following is proposed:]

Blood Potency and other traits that are increased simply by age rather than by spending experience are the only traits permanently lost whenever Blood Potency decreases (through torpor, for example). Traits bought with experience that exceed the character’s current maximum once they awaken from torpor disappear until the character’s Blood Potency reaches the appropriate level by any means. Blood Potency increased through experience that is lost due to torpor returns within a number of months equal to the Blood Potency rating.

Example: Angelique of Clan Ventrue has raised her Blood Potency to 8. Six levels were reached through player experience expenditure and the other two levels were gained from age. Her Manipulation is now 7 through Angelique’s player spending experience. Unable to find any Kindred to feed from, she slips into torpor for a period of 80 years. In this time, Angelique’s Blood Potency drops three dots (one for every 25 years in torpor) to five.

When she wakes, her Manipulation is reduced to five, the trait maximum for a Blood Potency of 5. After six months, her Blood Potency rating is automatically restored to 6, the rating that had been bought with experience. Angelique’s Manipulation rating is automatically boosted to 6 as well; when her Blood Potency raises to 7, either through age or by her player spending experience, then her Manipulation will again automatically increase to 7 also.

[“Status,” p. 103. Replace the first paragraph following the Status example (near the top of the right column) with the following paragraph (“Dread Gaze” has been replaced with “Mesmerize” in this paragraph):]

Status does not add to dice pools predicated on supernatural powers. For example, a Prince’s City Status is not added to a dice pool for use of his Mesmerize power.

[“Daeva,” p. 105. The sentence under the Bloodlines section about Toreador should be omitted.]

[“Gangrel,” p. 106. In clarifying a sentence for the sake of Masquerade players making assumptions about the new game, in the paragraph marked “Appearance,” make the following change to the sentence beginning “Due to...” *Appear* becomes *seem*.]

Due to their clan weakness, they must always be wary of just how bestial they seem to others, and some especially old (or angry) Gangrel learn some amount of Obfuscate to avoid potentially disastrous situations.

[“Gangrel,” p. 107. The sentence under the Bloodlines section about Bruja should be omitted.]

[“Nosferatu,” p. 110. The sentence that begins “Still others prefer...” in the third paragraph in the left column of the page should read as the following:]

Still others prefer abandoned homes, often giving rise to neighborhood urban legends of haunted houses.

[“Nosferatu,” p. 111. The sentences under the Bloodlines section about the Noctuku and the Burakumin should be omitted.]

[“Ventrue,” p. 113. The sentence under the Bloodlines section about Malkovians should be omitted.]

[***“Animalism: Feral Whispers,”*** p. 115. The third paragraph in the right column of the page under this power beginning “Note that while Feral Whispers...” should be replaced:]

As originally written per **Vampire: The Masquerade**, Feral Whispers can compel animals to obey commands as written below.

[***“Animalism: Obedience,”*** p. 116.]

As originally per **Vampire: The Masquerade**, the effect of this power is added into the first level of Animalism, Feral Whispers. The compulsion does not cease at dawn as written in **Vampire: The Requiem**, but instead lasts until the animal has completed its task under a success, up to a period of several weeks if needed before the compulsion wears off. An exceptional success indicates that the orders are followed for several months.

Using Feral Whispers to issue a command also requires a contested roll if the animal is already under the control of another Kindred with this power (in which case the successes achieved must exceed those rolled for the original vampire). The Suggested Modifiers chart for Obedience is to be consulted when issuing orders through Feral Whispers.

[***“Animalism: Call of the Wild,”*** p. 117.]

This power is moved to the second level of Animalism, and does *not* cost a Vitae point as described in **Vampire: The Requiem**. Nothing further is changed with this power.

[***“Animalism,”*** p. 115.]

*** Quell the Beast

Per Animalism level three in **Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 147, minus the reference to how Tzimisce use the power in the third paragraph.

[***“Animalism: Subsume the Lesser Spirit,”*** p. 117.]

This power does *not* cost a Vitae point as described in **Vampire: The Requiem**. Nothing further is changed with this power.

[***“Animalism: Leashing the Beast,”*** p. 118.]

This power does *not* cost a Vitae point as described in **Vampire: The Requiem**. Nothing further is changed with this power.

[***“Auspex: Aura Perception,”*** p. 120. Replace the entry under the Dice Pool in the left column of this power with the following (the phrase “+ Blood Potency” is added):]

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Empathy + Auspex is rolled versus the subject’s Composure + Blood Potency in a contested action.

[***“Auspex: Twilight Projection,”*** p. 123.]

The vampire’s psyche is tethered to their material form by a silver cord. The first and third paragraphs in the left column of the page under this power are to be replaced with the information found in the fifth and sixth paragraphs of the System section under Psychic Projection from **Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 152.

[***“Dominate: The Forgetful Mind,”*** p. 127. The Dice Pool needs to be changed for this power. Replace what’s there with the following:]

Dice Pool: Wits + Persuasion + Dominate – Resolve + Blood Potency

[***“Dominate: Possession,”*** p. 128. Remove the last sentence of the “Possession” entry, just above “Majesty,” which reads:]

If this power is turned on a vampire with whom the user has a blood tie (see p. 162), a +2 bonus applies.

[***“Majesty: Revelation,”*** p. 129.]

This power does *not* cost a Vitae point as written under the Majesty Discipline.

[“Majesty: Summoning,” p. 131.]

This power does *not* cost a Vitae point as written under the Majesty Discipline.

[“Nightmare: Mortal Fear,” p. 135. The Dice Pool needs to be changed for Mortal Fear. Replace what’s there with the following:]

Dice Pool: Presence + Intimidation + Nightmare – subject’s Composure (The Nosferatu clan weakness does not apply to the Discipline user’s roll.)

[“Protean: Shape of the Beast,” p. 139. The last sentence of the power description beginning “With time and experience...” in the right column of the page should be replaced with the following:]

With time and experience, the character can learn to adopt other forms.

[“Protean: Shape of the Beast,” p. 139-140. In clarifying the Shape of the Beast power, replace the paragraph running from page 139 to 140 with the following:]

While they are in animal form, a vampire can use any Discipline in their repertoire except for Theban Sorcery, Cruac, and Dominate (which becomes impossible when one is trying to bark and yip commands). Each form conveys a separate host of benefits due to its form: As a wolf, the vampire’s claws and teeth inflict lethal damage and add a +1 bonus to attack pools, Speed is doubled, Size becomes 4, and two bonus dice are added to any Wits + Composure rolls to be aware of events that happen in the wolf’s environment. As a bat, the vampire’s Strength and Size become 1, but they can fly at a Speed of 20 (plus five more per dot of Vigor activated), three dice are added to all hearing-based rolls and Defense increases by two. Adjust the vampire’s Health to reflect the Size of the new form.

[“Protean: Shape of the Beast,” p. 140. Per Vampire: The Masquerade, the character gains *both* wolf and bat form when this power is first acquired, not one and then the other. The first sentence of the third paragraph in the left column beginning “When this power...” should be changed to the following:]

When this power is first acquired, only bat and wolf forms are available. With Storyteller permission, every three experience points spent allows a character access to an altogether different predatory animal, usually a mammal, although it’s rumored that Kindred in far-flung lands can assume the forms of predatory and scavenger birds.

[“Resilience,” p. 141. The Action section should be replaced with the following:]

Action: Reflexive

[“Vigor,” p. 142. The Action section should be replaced with the following:]

Action: Reflexive

[“Cruac,” p. 142. The sentence in the first paragraph in the left column of the page beginning “A type of ritual magic...” should be replaced with the following:]

A type of ritual magic, Cruac, meaning “Crescent,” is a mixture of pagan magic from across the globe whose only common element is a reliance on blood sacrifice.

[“Cruac,” p. 142. The sentence in the second paragraph in the right column of the page beginning “Thus, the level-one ritual...” should be replaced with the following:]

Thus, the level-one ritual Pangs of Proserpina may be known as the Appetite of Limba in Neo Orleans or the Curse of Tawrich in Tehran.

[“Theban Sorcery,” p. 145. The sentence in the first paragraph in the right column of the page beginning “The practice is said to...” should be replaced with the following:]

The practice is said to have been received when early members visited Thebias in northern Egypt with a contingent of mercenaries after the worst effects of Gehenna had vanished from the world.

[“Theban Sorcery: Vitae Reliquary,” p. 146. The last paragraph of the “Vitae Reliquary” ritual is changed. Replace what is there with the following:]

Offering: The vessel of infusion itself is the offering, and must be something the caster can lift with one hand. The offering crumbles to dust after the last Vitae is removed. Prior to that point, the item functions as it normally would (a knife may still be used to attack, a book may still be read).

NECROMANCY

Necromancy is a school of magical learning; dedicated toward mastery of the souls of the dead and the realm they dwell in. Like Cruac or Theban Sorcery, Necromancy is a collection of rituals that fall under one general purview. Dedicated and mighty vampiric necromancers can raise zombies, banish or steal souls, and even transplant souls from one body to another. The study of this Discipline is not common among the Kindred, and those who practice it are often spurned or disregarded by the rest of Kindred society. These Kindred are usually members of specific bloodlines, but any vampire with a tutor is capable of learning Necromancy. Rituals may have different names depending on location and the views of the practitioner, the same as with Cruac.

System: Necromantic rituals always cost either a Vitae or a Willpower point and may have material components. Necromantic rituals are found in **Blood Magic: Secrets of Thaumaturgy**, p. 105–106, and 111–113, **Blood Sacrifice – The Thaumaturgy Companion**, p. 85, **Clanbook: Giovanni**, p. 44, and 71–77, **Dark Ages: Vampire**, p. 197–203, **Guide to the Sabbat**, p. 110, and **Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 161–165.

DEVOTIONS

THE BADGER'S HIDE

(PROTEAN **, RESILIENCE *)**

As might be suspected, a Gangrel developed this Protean-based combination power. When a Kindred uses this power, their skin becomes tough and leathery to the touch. As a badger's hide repels the stings of bees while it takes their honey, so does the vampire's skin repel attacks that would pierce their flesh.

System: This Devotion is mechanically detailed in **Guide to the Anarchs**, p. 158 for **Vampire: The Masquerade**.

BRACE FOR IMPACT

(RESILIENCE **, VIGOR **)**

A Kindred who possesses both the unnatural strength of Vigor and the supernatural toughness of Resilience can learn to apply that strength to resisting some forms of damage. The power does not help against normal combat damage such as fists, bullets, or blades. It does not grant extra protection against fire, electricity, sunlight, or other energy-based sources of damage. The power only helps the character soak physical impacts that affect the entire body: falling damage, car crashes, explosions, or being struck with very large objects. The character must also expect the impact, so they can brace against it.

System: This Devotion is mechanically detailed in **Mexico City By Night**, p. 115 for **Vampire: The Masquerade**.

CALL UPON THE BLOOD

(ANIMALISM *, AUSPEX ***)**

Used to scout out the strongholds of hated enemies, this power allows the Kindred to “feel” for the Beast in the immediate vicinity. The Animalism aspect of this power attunes the Kindred to any creature that harbors a Beast, and the Auspex element allows them to interpret it and extend their senses beyond their normal limits. Doing so allows the scout to know approximately how many Kindred are in the area.

System: This Devotion is mechanically detailed in **Guide to the Anarchs**, p. 159 for **Vampire: The Masquerade**.

FERAL IMBUING

(ANIMALISM **, VIGOR **)**

With this power, a vampire may share their preternatural strength with a beast in their line of sight. Nosferatu use this power more than any other clan, though the Gangrel know it as well. Few sights are as disturbing as a bloated rat chewing tunnels through solid stone.

System: This Devotion is mechanically detailed in the **Players Guide to Low Clans**, p. 161 for **Dark Ages: Vampire**.

GIVE 'EM HELL

(MAJESTY *, RESILIENCE * OR VIGOR *)**

Champions among the Kindred have the power to motivate their fellows when push comes to shove and the only choice left is violent action. This power allows a Kindred to stir their allies with valor and courage in the most desperate of situations, rallying them to the fight. The vampire stands and cuts an imposing figure on the battlefield and bolsters the bravery of those following them.

System: This Devotion is mechanically detailed in **Guide to the Anarchs**, p. 159 for **Vampire: The Masquerade**.

KING OF THE HILL

(RESILIENCE **, VIGOR **)

A character that possesses this power cannot be knocked off their feet. Even if a stampeding animal charges them or a car runs them over, the Kindred remains rooted to the spot, adamantly refusing to yield their posture. Unfortunately, for the Kindred, King of the Hill doesn't confer any extra resistance to damage; it merely prevents the Kindred from being knocked aside or to the ground.

System: This Devotion is mechanically detailed in **Guide to the Anarchs**, p. 160 for **Vampire: The Masquerade**.

LOKI'S GIFT

(ANIMALISM **, PROTEAN ****)**

With this power, a vampire may assume the form of the last living thing they fed on, be it human or animal. The vampire doesn't gain any of the prey's knowledge or powers (if any), but the imitation is physically flawless.

System: This Devotion is mechanically detailed in the **Players Guide to Low Clans**, p. 162 for **Dark Ages: Vampire**.

MEASURE THE WILL

(AUSPEX **, DOMINATE **)

A vampire with this power may gauge the strength of a target's resolve and identity, often as an exploratory prelude to shattering and reshaping that mind.

System: This Devotion is mechanically detailed in the **Players Guide to High Clans**, p. 168 for **Dark Ages: Vampire**.

MEMORY RIFT

(MAJESTY **, OBFUSCATE *)**

Invoking this power causes a single subject to forget the user's presence during a single scene or specific event. The Kindred merely invokes their mystic ability to vanish from the mind's eye and then convinces the subject through force of charisma that they were never even there in the first place. The subject's memory of the Kindred's attendance at the event in question fades like a fog at morning's light.

System: This Devotion is mechanically detailed in **Guide to the Anarchs**, p. 161 for **Vampire: The Masquerade**.

MIND'S EYE

(AUSPEX **, DOMINATE ***)**

With this power, a vampire can actually experience a memory belonging to someone else. Sight, sound, scent, and other details – all are potentially just as intense as they were for the subject when they

first occurred. While Mind's Eye can be used on a cooperative subject who simply wishes to provide the most accurate report possible, it is often used as a form of interrogation and intelligence gathering.

System: This Devotion is mechanically detailed in **Archons and Templars**, p. 143 for **Vampire: The Masquerade**.

QUICKENED INSTINCTS **(AUSPEX *, CELERITY **)**

With this power, a vampire hones their senses to detect the sudden motion of ambushes and reacts with inhuman grace to evade or parry the attack.

System: This Devotion is mechanically detailed in the **Players Guide to Low Clans**, p. 163 for **Dark Ages: Vampire**.

SHATTERED FOG **(AUSPEX *, PROTEAN *****, OR AUSPEX *, VICISSITUDE *****)**

Gangrel know that guile can sometimes serve where brute strength fails. With this combination Discipline, a vampire may rapidly dissolve their form into fog. Swords and bullets pass harmlessly through their ethereal flesh, leaving opponents confused and off-balance when the vampire solidifies a moment later and strikes. While some scorn such underhanded tactics, pragmatic vampires wisely cultivate every edge to assure their survival. Some Souleaters know a version of this power that uses Vicissitude 5 instead of Protean, allowing them to rapidly transmute their bodies into blood.

System: This Devotion is mechanically detailed in the **Players Guide to Low Clans**, p. 166 for **Dark Ages: Vampire**.

SMILING JACK'S TRICK **(DOMINATE ***, OBFUSCATE ****)**

Attributed to the rogue anarch Smiling Jack, this power causes a Kindred to confuse one Kindred with another. For a brief period, the subject consistently mistakes the user of this gift with another Kindred in the immediate vicinity. According to the story, Jack found himself caught by a scourge and his lieutenant. Invoking this power, Jack made the scourge believe that his lieutenant was actually the anarch and vice versa. As the scourge turned his attentions to the lieutenant, Jack escaped into the night, cackling all the while.

System: This Devotion is mechanically detailed in **Guide to the Anarchs**, p. 161 for **Vampire: The Masquerade**.

STUNNING AWE **(DOMINATE **, NIGHTMARE *)**

This power allows a vampire to slow a victim with a mixture of terror and mystical compulsion. They need only lock gazes with the target and unleash their monstrous will to stun them.

System: This Devotion is mechanically detailed in the **Players Guide to High Clans**, p. 169 for **Dark Ages: Vampire**.

SUCK IT UP **(ANIMALISM *, PROTEAN **)**

The sites of conflicts are no strangers to spilled blood, and even the side that arguably wins the conflict is probably a bit thirsty after calling upon the gifts of undeath. This power allows the Kindred to simply touch a pool of blood and draw it into themselves. In these nights, when blood is often hard to come by, this power can mean all the difference between being sated and standing on the verge of hunger frenzy. Waste not; want not, as the saying goes.

System: This Devotion is mechanically detailed in **Guide to the Anarchs**, p. 162 for **Vampire: The Masquerade**.

THE SEVENTH CHINESE BROTHER **(CELERITY **, RESILIENCE *****)**

According to a folk tale, there were once seven Chinese brothers, each of whom was possessed of a unique mystical ability. One of these brothers' blessings was bone of iron, which he used to prevent his head from being chopped off. This power emulates that folk tale, allowing the Kindred to harden a part of their body and speed the recuperative powers of their blood to it, making it impossible to sever a limb. Those practicing this power intimated that they have most often had to protect their own heads from being severed, but that it works equally well in situations that would result in the loss of a hand, arm, leg, et cetera.

System: This Devotion is mechanically detailed in **Guide to the Anarchs**, p. 161 for **Vampire: The Masquerade**.

[***“Devotions: Veridical Tongue,”*** p. 153. **The Dice Pool needs to be changed under Veridical Tongue. Replace what's there with the following:**

Dice Pool: Presence + Subterfuge + Majesty – subject's Composure



The cyborgs were fast, but Steven Donovan was faster. As the first one pulled a semi-automatic pistol on him, Steven called upon the unnatural powers of his Vitae, channeling them into inhuman celerity and resilience. Before the first bullet cleared the barrel, he *moved*. His form blurred as he easily dodged the shots taken at him by all four of his adversaries. In the blink of an eye, Steven dashed forward, his ankh daggers unsheathed and slicing through both of Bolthead's wrists. A yowl of pain rose past the mortal's lips as he gawked at the bloody stumps.

The cyborg with the bionic eye fired a thin laser from his implant. Steven brought the ankh dagger in his left hand up and deflected the ray, causing it to singe a nearby patch of earth. The other two cyborgs continued to shoot, but their efforts were futile. Their target was simply too fast for them to draw a bead long enough to make a shot connect. Steven sheathed his daggers and grabbed for Four Arm's left robotic limb, twisting it in his grip. Calling upon his Vitae again to channel necromantic energies through his touch, the metal of the arm began to corrode and rust.

Four Arms elbowed Steven in the stomach with both his right arms, pushing the vampire away. Steven used the momentum as he was shoved backward to wrench the robotic limb from its weakened housing. Caught off guard as he was, the Kindred had no chance to dodge as the bullets slammed into his chest. As effective as mosquito bites however, the bullets flattened against the elder's skin. He laughed as though they were tickling him.

Steven tossed the severed arm at the cyborg with the bionic eye, where it smashed into his implant. The mortal dropped to his knees, clutching his wounded face as crimson rivulets ran between his fingers. The cyborg with the oversized arms smashed a fist into the earth, sending a shockwave of energy along the ground that erupted under Steven, knocking him into the air. Four Arms grabbed the Kindred's ankle and spun, smashing him against a tree.

After falling to the ground unfazed, Steven rolled over and willed Vitae into his legs, kicking up into the cyborg's kneecaps. Bone crunched under vampiric strength, and Four Arms fell to his ruined knees with a cry of anguish. A small explosive device launched from the massive left forearm of the remaining cyborg toward the Kindred, but he scrambled out of the way, the explosion pushing him forward on his feet.

Enough playing around, it's time to end this. Steven whirled to face his attacker, baring his fangs and releasing a monstrous hiss. A look of terror washed over the face of the cyborg and he turned and fled, leaving his injured companions behind. With his assailants dispatched, Steven walked over to where the body of the girl lay.

She was still unconscious, a trickle of blood oozing from a cut on her lip, but was otherwise unharmed. Steven picked the girl up cautiously. He knew his close proximity to her was only harming her further. Before he could even realize it, he was licking the blood that came from her lip, inadvertently kissing her.

He pulled back quickly as she began to stir, forcing his fangs to retract. He adjusted his hold on her so she fit more comfortably in his arms. *What am I doing? Just my being near her is killing her. I've got to get her someplace safe.*

"Who are you?" the girl groggily asked.

"Long story short, I'm the one that just got you away from those raiders. I need to ask you some questions about an antique your parents may have had in their possession. Are you okay to walk?"

"I-I think so," she said as Steven gently set her down. He pulled out an ankh dagger and sliced through the locks of her restraints. She quickly set about removing them. "But I'm afraid that my parents aren't going to be able to tell you much."

"Why is that?"

"Because they're dead, they were murdered by others who came looking for them."

Fuck. This just got complicated. "I'm sorry for your loss. Perhaps you can help me then."

"I'm not sure I understand, but I'll help you however I can. It's the least I can do."

There was a rumble through the air. Steven recognized it all too well. It was the sound of Machine sky-cycles. "We have to get moving. We're going to have unwanted company very soon."

"Halt Reality Deviants!" a mechanical voice called out. "Surrender or be terminated!"

Wait; did it just say "Deviants," as in more than one? Steven looked the girl over again, taking particular note of the ankh pendant dangling from her neck, realization dawning within his mind. *Of course, the buyers were so interested in the girl. She's probably a mage.* He was angry with himself for not realizing it sooner. *This was all a trap.*

CHAPTER THREE: SYSTEMS OF A DARKER TIME

*"Great that we pretend that we are all that
We enjoy ourselves
Should we get some help?
We have always failed yet there is no doubt
Can't go wrong from here
We are down and out"
– KMFD, "Down and Out"*

(Vampire: The Requiem Rulebook Changes – Chapter Three: Special Rules and Systems)

[“Blood Supply,” p. 165. The text of the second paragraph in the left column (above the sidebar) is changed. Here’s the paragraph in its entirety:]

In most cases, the vessel doesn’t resist, as the ecstasy of the Kiss overwhelms the shock the Kindred places on the mortal’s system. This depends on the environment, however. A vessel seduced or even surprised and subjected to the Kiss may lose themselves in it, while a foe bitten in combat (or even one who feels threatened or otherwise at risk) does not yield to pleasure just because the Kiss feels good. Players of mortals and other living victims who wish to resist the Kiss must succeed on a Resolve + Composure roll, with a –5 dice penalty imposed by the supernatural power of the Kiss. Vampires are immune to the Kiss of other Kindred, know exactly what’s going on and can fight back.

[“The Vampire’s Bite,” p. 165. Replace the second paragraph of the sidebar with the following:]

If a vampire wishes to feed from a foe in combat, they go about the procedure as normal, except a vampire’s bite causes lethal damage, not bashing. Instead of biting to inflict damage, however, a vampire may choose to consume Vitae that turn. In this case, the vampire inflicts harm through blood loss: one point of lethal damage.

[“Blood Supply,” p. 165. The 80 percent figure is incorrect. Replace the sentence in the middle of the third paragraph in the right column of the page beginning “For example, a Kindred would have to consume...” with the following:]

For example, a Kindred would have to consume an amount roughly equal to 86 percent of the blood in a human body to glean a single point of Vitae if the blood in question was stored.

[“The Traditions,” p. 169. The first sentence of this section beginning “According to numerous...” should be replaced with the following:]

According to numerous Kindred legends, three laws have governed the Damned: that they should hide from mortals, that they should not sire any childer, and that they should not slay each other to consume the souls of the fallen.

[“Sunlight,” p. 172. Start this section with the following paragraph:]

Although the sun is dying, it still burns the Kindred with its utmost ferocity. The specific reasons for this are unclear, given that the illumination given by the Red Stars outshines the sun and the moon at any given time, and many places are still overcast with dust and pollution. The pious among the Damned

(particularly among the Lancea Sanctum) suggest that God is waiting to cleanse this world once and for all, and that it's His wrath that makes the sun burn so fiercely, even in this time of despair. Other Kindred roll their eyes and scoff at such nonsense, but often secretly wonder if it might in fact be true.

[“Recovering from Damage,” p. 173.]

The third paragraph on the right column of the page should be replaced with the second paragraph of the section titled “*Aggravated Damage*” on p. 218 of **Vampire: The Masquerade**, replacing the word Fortitude with Resilience.

[“Recovering from Damage,” p. 173. The first sentence of the seventh paragraph in the right column of the page beginning “Now, let’s say you…” should be replaced with the following:]

Now, let’s say you spend five Vitae for your character to recover from one aggravated wound.

[“Disease and the Kindred,” p. 175. The second paragraph of the sidebar in the left column of the page should be omitted.]

[“Voluntary Torpor,” p. 176. The rules for voluntary torpor have changed a bit. Replace the second and third paragraphs in the right column of the page with those below:]

Voluntary torpor lasts at least as long as the base duration set by the character’s Humanity. At the end of that time, the character can choose to wake up with a successful Resolve + Composure roll. The player may choose not to make the roll at all and let the character continue to sleep for another increment of time. If the player fails the roll, the character remains in torpor for another increment, and so on.

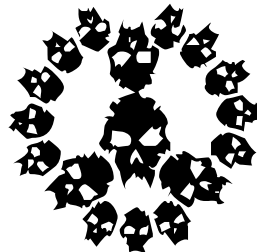
Example: *Scratch finds himself on Prince Maxwell's shit list and decides to lay low for a while, seeking refuge in voluntary torpor. His Humanity is 4, so he spends at least one year in torpor. After that first year, Scratch's player decides not to make the roll to awaken, so Scratch lays torpid for another year. After the second year, Scratch's player rolls Resolve + Composure but fails to achieve any successes. Scratch remains torpid for another year, at which point the player succeeds on the roll and Scratch is free to rise.*

[“Staking,” p. 176-177. The staking rules have changed. The following paragraph replaces the last paragraph in the right column of page 176 and continuing onto 177:]

Driving a stake through a vampire’s heart is extraordinarily difficult. The feat requires a melee or ranged attack with the stake. In combat, the attacker suffers a –3 dice penalty to strike so precisely and an exceptional success is required to actually thrust through the vampire’s body and into the heart. The staked vampire immediately collapses into torpor; appearing stone dead for all that a mortal can tell.

[“The Covenants on Golconda,” p. 192. Include this entry in the sidebar on that page:]

The Nephtali: Utter foolishness. Who has time for such drivel when the Antediluvians could make their move at any moment?



Aravenos sat at his desk, going through the credits his deputies had collected. This was a comfortable position he'd secured for himself. All he had to do was collect the taxes from the nearby town, a task he rarely had to do himself. Once that was done, all he really had to do was check the numbers before presenting the total sum to Carlton, the town's champion. It was a simple job, but it kept him busy. It kept his mind occupied. The best part of this job was that it allowed him to forget. As long as he kept his mind on his work, he could block out the memories of the past.

Five years ago, he had been in charge of a group of hunters. Ruthless bastards, they were the best in this region. Vampire, witch, demon, no matter what it was, they had faced it and destroyed it. That all came to a bloody end one night when they faced something like nothing any of them had ever seen.

Five years had passed since the night he'd seen the monster tear his men apart, ripping them into pieces like paper, twisting their flesh and bone into horrible, unnatural shapes. Aravenos wanted to stay and fight, stay and maybe save his men. He couldn't do it. Panic and fear took over his mind, making him a slave to their desires and he ran. He could still hear the monster's inhuman laugh mocking him as he fled. It spoke to him in his mind. It said it would find him one night, no matter where he was. In one way or another, he'd been running ever since that night. Only recently, when he got this position did he finally settle himself in and start to let the past drift away. There was no way in Hell that... thing could find him here, if it even intended to make good on its threat.

He was pulled from his memories of the past back into the present when one of the guards knocked at the entrance to his quarters. Shaking his head to clear away the traumatic images, he addressed his visitor. "Yes?"

"Sir, we seem to have an intruder," the guard said stoically.

Panic stabbed Aravenos in the belly, making him queasy and churning his guts. *No, it couldn't be.* Inwardly he laughed. *No, that was impossible.* It was probably a thief or a lost traveler seeking shelter for the night. Even if the monster did find him here, he'd hired the best guards he could find. Surely, he would be safe behind these walls.

"Show me," Aravenos said.

The guard led Aravenos to the security room, where he pointed a finger at the monitor. True enough; a lone figure was approaching the compound. Through the monitor, Aravenos watched the first of the guards raise a hand and call for the stranger to halt. The stranger didn't respond or acknowledge that the guard had spoken to him. He only kept moving forward. The guards called out once more for him to stop, and when he ignored their request, the guards drew their rifles and pointed them at him.

Not bothering to waste any time, the first guard took aim and fired. The shots hit their mark but the figure didn't as much as flinch from the impact of the bullets. Instead, he kept walking forward slowly until he was upon the guard, when he then seized the guard by the throat and lifted him into the air. An audible crack came from the guard's neck, and the stranger tossed the body aside like it was a rag doll. The second guard tried to run, but before he could get anywhere, the stranger shoved his hand through the guard's back. The guard's spinal column lengthened and burst through his anus and skull, skewering him to the ground. His body jerked and convulsed for several minutes before he died painfully. The stranger watched all of this impassively before moving toward the gates of the compound, smashing the surveillance camera along his way.

Static filled the monitor Aravenos was watching and his eyes went wide. *No, it couldn't be!* He broke into a run from the security room, heading toward his room, where he kept the shotgun that until five years ago had served him so well. *Got to get a weapon, something to protect myself!* As he dashed down the corridors, the alarms went off indicating a security breach. *He's already inside!* Guards began rushing through the corridors in search of the disturbance. Aravenos raced to his quarters, but there in his path was a large puddle of blood before him.

The puddle of blood coalesced into a humanoid figure and solidified, becoming the stranger from outside. Aravenos could only stare in horror once more as the stranger's flesh rippled like water, his body growing and changing form. His skin hardened into bony plates, fingers, toes fusing together, and becoming cloven. A crown of horns sprouted from his brow while a cruel smile played out across its face. Aravenos recognized the monster from years past, the monster that had slaughtered his men.

"And now, mortal," Laszlo Malakar said, "Your time has come."

Aravenos' scream echoed through the compound, and was then abruptly silenced.

CHAPTER FOUR: STORYTELLING AND ANTAGONISTS

*"I want to war with the gods
I want exaltation
I want to feel the last beat of your heart"*
– The Mission U.K., *"Last Beat of Your Heart"*

Antediluvians

Although the eldest of the Kindred are said to have been destroyed during Gehenna, it is thought by some vampires (mostly those among the Nephtali) that not all of the Antediluvians perished during that epic clash; that some merely slipped into torpor to heal their wounds and wait for another time. Those that survived mainly seem to be those Ancients that stood behind Lilith, whose final order to them was to eliminate the last vestiges of the Kindred from this world. Others are waiting for their chance to seize control over the planet and become invulnerable gods even among the Kindred. Kindred who delve into these matters have uncovered several of their names, or at least the names that these creatures go by: Ennoia, Lucian, Erinye, Mekhet, Ikopabe, Lasombra, Malkav, and Malakai. Some wonder if the Souleater Overlord may number among these beings, but most figure the creature is far too removed from the Kindred to share any similarities. Whether or not these vampires actually exist is a topic spoken of only in private quarters in hushed tones. Whatever the truth is, it matters little, as few Kindred remember that such beings ever existed in the first place.

Cathayans

Kindred have spread across the world, but they find themselves unwelcome in the Far East by the mysterious Cathayans, non-Kindred vampires indigenous to the Orient. The Cathayans, or Kindred of the East, seem to have little in common with their Western brethren. Rumors of demonic powers surround these Asian denizens, and their enigmatic behavior and foreign mindset leave many Western Kindred ill at ease. Thankfully, most of them are engaged in a conflict against the demonic masters of their Eastern domains, and are not often seen in Europe or the Americas. More information about the Cathayans can be found in the books **Kindred of the East**, the **Kindred of the East Companion**, **World of Darkness: Time of Judgment**, and the **World of Future Darkness Rulebook**.

Vampire Drones

A vampire who's been reworked into a Drone is a strange beast indeed. Obviously, any powers of Protean or Vicissitude are lost to them; change is not something encouraged by their new Machine half. But even more peculiar is the change in the Blood. Apparently the Machine defines vampirism as the need to consume blood to survive – but does not acknowledge the mysterious powers of Vitae. The Clarification changes all the Vitae in the Kindred's body to inert, dead blood – the animating power of the Blood itself is lost, while the Machine half continues to animate the body and soul of the host.

Naturally, this causes several complications. The vampire's body still requires one Vitae per night; the imbedded essence of the Machine apparently metabolizes this into animating force. However, since the vampire's body no longer produces Vitae, the vampire no longer has "Vitae points" worth speaking of. They cannot spend Vitae to increase their Physical Attributes or to fuel blood-powered Disciplines, so Celerity and the like are no longer possible. They cannot heal wounds by spending Vitae (although the

Drone power of Regeneration more than makes up for this). And of course, they can no longer Blood Bond others, ghoul mortals, or sire offspring.

There are benefits to becoming a Drone, however – over and above the special powers granted. The vampire becomes immune to frenzy, and no longer needs to worry about losing Humanity. They become invisible and immune to Animalism or any powers that sense or provoke the Beast, as it has been permanently quelled by the Clarification. In fact, in many ways the process of becoming a Drone is tantamount to the long-sought state of Golconda – if not for the loss of one’s free will.

SOULEATERS

The being known as the Souleater Overlord has but one goal: to incorporate and become one with every living thing on the planet by infecting them with the disease known as Vicissitude. To this end, the being has created what have come to be known as the Souleaters, a general term used to describe all the creatures tainted by Vicissitude to the point where they become alien beings controlled by the Overlord itself. These creatures are slowly overwhelming the physical realm by either absorbing or infecting everything in their path.

“The disease of Vicissitude can infect anyone and anything, living or undead. It can even infect plants and insects, but seldom does so, as it can only gain sentience if the host is sentient. There are no cures available. It is impossible to remove the infection, as doing so would kill the host.

The infection grows over time and can prevail in as little as a day or as long as a millennium, but eventually all succumb, and the thing inside attains awareness. The Souleater slowly and subtly weaves itself into the mind and anatomy of the host, wrapping its tendrils around the veins and heart of the victim, extending its mouth and eyestalks up into the skull of the host and attaching to the backs of the host’s eyes. The Souleater gnaws away the rotting flesh inside the host and excretes its own anatomy to fill the body, allowing the host to reshape their bones and flesh at will.

Small, needle-like hooks infiltrate the mind and form parasitic synapses within the brain that allow the host to use Vicissitude, but they also consume memories and thought patterns. The host never realizes they are being taken over. The host and Souleater become integrated, and the Souleater takes full control. The Souleater maintains access to the host’s personality, memories, powers, and abilities. The Souleaters can continue to pretend they are the host, but often little signs of their alienness give them away, such as eating their own flesh and then growing it back.

Most Souleaters continue using the appearance of the host, though some simply turn into big globs of flesh and ooze about. There are even cases where several Souleaters have joined the fleshy-stuff of their bodies together to form horrifying things best left to the imaginations of the insane.

The hosts’ soul also serves as nourishment and helps the creature grow. The Souleater eventually craves more spirit energy and will begin slaying small children and animals just to eat their spirits. The Souleater consumes the spirit by causing a tube-like projection with a small gaping maw ringed with needle-like teeth to emerge from its eye or mouth. The tube-like structure can penetrate flesh as if it was a knife, and it is usually inserted into the eye, ear, mouth, or throat of the victim.

It takes only a couple of minutes for the Souleater to consume the spirits. Victims always die from the experience, and even those who are saved before a Souleater can finish its meal are never the same again. Souleaters seldom feed, but when they do, they go on eating binges – killing five or more people in the process.

A Souleater has the same basic qualities of its host. A Souleater of a mortal requires food, water, oxygen, and has all the weaknesses of humans. A Souleater of a Lupine is alive, has some Lupine powers, and can be harmed by silver. In addition, these Souleaters have life spans similar to those of their hosts. A Souleater of a vampire remains undead, has Disciplines, must feed upon blood, and can be harmed by sunlight and fire.”¹

There are many varieties of Souleaters, all with the same basic Attributes, Skills, and supernatural powers and weaknesses of their hosts. The Souleaters can take over any creature, including Lupines, mages, and mortals, so long as the victim has become infected with Vicissitude. While vampiric Souleaters do not lose any of their hosts’ vampiric Disciplines, Souleaters of other creatures usually lose the Gifts, Spheres, and Numina belonging to their hosts. Souleaters gain great mastery over their own forms through

¹ **Dirty Secrets of the Black Hand**, p. 31

Vicissitude. Their ratings in it range from one to seven, depending on the individual Souleater, but most Souleaters have a slightly higher rating than the former host had.

Note that the fourth level Vicissitude power “Horrid Form” is believed to be the natural form of the Souleater. However, some Souleaters are not powerful enough to take on the Horrid Form. All Souleaters can use Vicissitude without any cost whatsoever. However, vampire Souleaters must expend Vitae to use their other vampiric powers. The system for using this disease can be found on p. 124 of the **Guide to the Sabbat for Vampire: The Masquerade**. Once an infected character acquires five Derangements due to Vicissitude taint, they become a complete Souleater under the sway of their Overlord and are no longer playable.

Fleshy Collectives

“These wretched creatures are basically huge sentient blobs of oozing flesh, tissue, and muscle that squish about. They are constantly hunting, looking to absorb anything they can into themselves, living or undead. Those who are absorbed into the collective do not completely die, but their flesh joins with the bodies of previous victims, where they retain just enough consciousness to feel extreme pain, but not to have any control over their own actions. Thus, the collective will try to absorb even its loved ones into the flesh. Thankfully, the absorption process is slow enough that someone nearby can attempt a rescue, however, once completely consumed there is no known way to retrieve a victim. Each victim added to the creature’s mass adds to its size and power. The largest of these Souleaters is more than a match for an entire coterie of Kindred.”²

Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 5, Resolve 2, Strength 5–9, Dexterity 1–2, Stamina 5–9, Presence 0, Manipulation 0, Composure 2

Skills: Brawl 3–5

Merits: None

Willpower: 4

Initiative: 3–4

Defense: 1–2

Speed: 11–16

Size: 5–9

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Dice Pool
Absorption	1 (A)*	8–14

* Special: Grapple (See the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 157.)

Health: 10–18

Equivalent Disciplines: Resilience 2–4, Sanguinus 5, Vicissitude 3, Vigor 2–4

Notes: Fleshy Collectives are immune to bashing damage. On the turn following a successful Clinch maneuver, the Fleshy Collective may begin to absorb its victim, who takes an unsoakable level of aggravated damage each turn. If the victim cannot break free before running out of Health, they are incorporated into the creature.

Ghastly Babies

“At first glance, these creatures resemble human infants. Their bodies and proportions are nearly the same, but those who glimpse their faces know the truth of their horrifying existence – they are Souleaters who crawled from their host before their hosts fully developed. In most cases, their host was killed before they finished taking it over.

Their faces are disgustingly inhuman. Their heads are almost rectangular, they have two little black orbs for eyes, and their mouths are down-turned maws with vaguely formed lips. They have two runny, blackish-red holes where their noses would be. They are pale, hairless little creatures.

They are incapable of changing form at first. They must kill and consume fresh flesh in order to continue their development. While they always leave a bloody trail of chopped up, half-consumed bodies, they have an instinctive self-defense mechanism and incredible powers of stealth, allowing them to stalk their prey with ease.

² **Dirty Secrets of the Black Hand**, p. 126

They usually try to stake resting vampires during the day. They'll attack mortals and vampires with stakes, knives, straight razors, and whatever else they can find.

It takes anywhere from 5 and 10 human-sized victims for the Ghastly Baby to develop into a full Souleater. If it succeeds, it can assume any human form through Vicissitude, but especially loves the forms of its victims.”³

Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 3, Strength 1, Dexterity 1, Stamina 5, Presence 0, Manipulation 0, Composure 2

Skills: Brawl 3, Stealth 5

Merits: None

Willpower: 5

Initiative: 3

Defense: 1

Speed: 7

Size: 3

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Size	Special	Dice Pool
Knife	1 (L)	1		1

Health: 8

Vitae/per turn: 2/1 (Vicissitude tainted)

Equivalent Disciplines: Celerity 1, Obfuscate 3, Resilience 2

Infectors

These scuttling creatures appear either to be a mixture of both crab and spider, with eight multi-jointed legs and a long prehensile tail, or as long slithering worms with barbed tails. They stalk their prey from the shadows, leaping forward into the air with frightening speed to coil their tails around a victim's throat so they can latch onto the victim's face. Once attached, Infectors use their powers of Vicissitude, molding the flesh and bone of the victim's head so it snugly fits their grip. Once attached, the Infector extends a proboscis into the victim's throat, which spurts Vicissitude-tainted Vitae into the victim. Once the attachment has been made, the Souleater is nearly impossible to remove without seriously harming its victim.

After the Infector has deposited its diseased load into its victim, it then retreats into a secluded place until it can regenerate the tainted Vitae. This process usually takes about three days, after which it can then find a new victim to infect.

Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 4, Resolve 3, Strength 1, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2, Presence 0, Manipulation 0, Composure 2

Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 2 (Infectors may only grapple), Stealth 4

Merits: None

Willpower: 5

Initiative: 6

Defense: 4

Speed: 10

Size: 1

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Dice Pool
Infection	3 (L)*	3

* Special: Grapple (See the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 157.)

Health: 3

Vitae/per turn: 3/1 (Vicissitude tainted)

Equivalent Disciplines: Celerity 1, Resilience 2, Vicissitude 3

Notes: Attachment takes one turn to complete. It takes five successes on a Strength roll (difficulty 8) to remove an Infector from the face of its victim. The number of successes rolled by the would-be rescuer is the number of levels of aggravated damage that the victim takes, as the flesh and bones of the skull are torn away along with the Infector. It is just as likely to kill the victim as it is to save them, although which fate is worse is highly debatable.

³ **Dirty Secrets of the Black Hand**, p. 126

Mindless

“The Mindless are mortals whose Souleaters did not develop properly. These creatures were unable to attain full control of the host’s brain before the host died, and the Souleater now has trouble maintaining its form.

The creatures resemble mortals with melting skin, which constantly jiggles and swishes about on its own. Occasionally new heads, tentacles, arms, and less-identifiable appendages emerge from the body. They remain for a while before being re-absorbed back into the flesh.

Mindless do not seem to be able to speak, but few have ever tried to talk to them. Despite their powers, the Mindless cannot take a coherent form. They always travel in packs of 3 to 10.”⁴

Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 1, Resolve 3, Strength 2–5, Dexterity 2, Stamina 5, Presence 0, Manipulation 0, Composure 2

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 3, Stealth 2

Merits: Allies (other Mindless) 5

Willpower: 5

Initiative: 6

Defense: 1

Speed: 9–12

Size: 5

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Dice Pool
Tentacle/Limb Slap	3–6 (B)*	5–8

* Special: Knockdown (See the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 168.)

Health: 10

Vitae/per turn: 10/1 (Vicissitude tainted)

Equivalent Disciplines: Resilience 2–4, Vicissitude 3, Vigor 2–4

Horrid Form Warriors

Nightmares given substance, these creatures form the frontline of the Souleater Overlord’s struggle to become one with every being on the planet. Perfectly capable of mimicking any mortal or supernatural being, it’s only when they enter into their Horrid Forms that their true selves are revealed. Hideous to behold, these monstrosities grow to stand eight feet in height, shifting into a mixture of ape, insect, and man. Their skin is a sickly greenish-gray or black chitinous exoskeleton, covered in a nauseating greasy film. Tendrils emerge from various body crevices, the nipples, or even the tongue itself, which extend to become whip-like weapons to draw prey in closer.

Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 4, Resolve 4, Strength 4–9, Dexterity 4–9, Stamina 4–9, Presence 0, Manipulation 0, Composure 4

Skills: Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Intimidation 5, Stealth 4, Survival 3

Merits: Fast Reflexes 2

Willpower: 8

Initiative: 10–15

Defense: 4

Speed: 13–24

Size: 6

Weapons/Attacks:

Type	Damage	Dice Pool
Acidic Spit*	1 (A)	8–13
Bite	1 (L)	8–13
Claw	1 (L)	8–13
Tendrils	0 (B)	8–13

Health: 10–15

Vitae/per turn: 10/1 (Vicissitude tainted)

Equivalent Disciplines: Auspex 1, Celerity 2, Resilience 2, Vicissitude 6, Vigor 2

⁴ **Dirty Secrets of the Black Hand**, p. 127

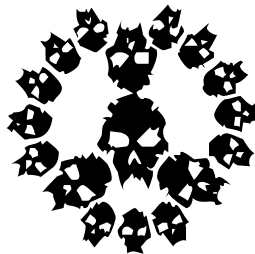
Notes: By spending a Vitae as a reflexive action, the Souleater's blood is instantly transmuted into a potent acid capable of burning flesh, bone, metal, and stone with aggravated damage. The Horrid Form warrior may spit this acid at an attacker with a successful roll of Dexterity + Brawl. Successful close combat attacks against the Souleater cause attackers to suffer one point of aggravated damage from blood spatter. Any attempt to consume blood from the Souleater while this power is active inflicts one point of aggravated damage on the drinker for each Vitae taken from the Souleater. The Souleater's blood becomes inert shortly after leaving its body; spilled blood is dangerous only in the turn when it is shed. This power persists for the rest of the scene, unless the Souleater chooses to return its blood to its inert state prematurely.

(Vampire: The Requiem Rulebook Changes – Chapter Four: Storytelling and Antagonists)

[“*Storytelling and Antagonists*,” p. 198–224. The information in this section is excellent in detailing how to run a chronicle. However, some of the statements and examples clash with the information presented in this book and in the World of Future Darkness Rulebook. For instance, there are very few flying modes of transportation outside of Europe, and even those are rare. Use common sense and replace any references to things that might not exist anymore (like the FBI) with things that in your imagination would be more appropriate to the setting (such as a Corporation soldier).]

[“*Gargoyle*,” p. 226. Insert this section after the third paragraph in the Description:]

Some Gargoyles state that they were once a bloodline of vampires that was created through sorcery, but has now evolved beyond undeath and into living stone. Many Kindred scholars regard this as a joke, particularly between the Ordo Dracul. However, rumors tell of Gargoyles that were not created through magic, but that hatched within vast chambers where the creatures reproduce. The existence of rookeries where Gargoyle eggs are stored has not been confirmed by anyone, but neither have these strange creatures denied it.



Steven Donovan scooped the girl up into his arms and burned more Vitae to augment his supernatural speed as gunfire tore through the plain. She squealed in surprise but he ignored it, focusing instead on zigzagging to throw off the aim of the Drone piloting the sky-cycle. He decided to head back to the cover of the rock outcropping, where he could make his escape. Once behind the rocks, he knew he only had a few moments before a mini-missile would destroy both his cover and his newfound charge. He reached into the back pocket of his leather pants, pulling out a piece of chalk and quickly began drawing a doorway upon the surface of the rock itself.

"What are you doing?" she asked.

"I'm crafting an exit for us, if I can make this work. It's risky, but it might be the only way out of here," Steven replied, his hand adding a few last details to the archway.

This was a dangerous practice, activating this gateway, especially under such harrowing circumstances as these. Steven knew it demanded a tremendous toll on the one invoking this power and it didn't always work. At best, he'd be temporarily weakened, but he and the girl could escape. At worst, he'd be weakened with a Drone assault team bearing down on the two of them. Steven channeled more Vitae and through sheer force of will, reached out and grasped the rock, tearing open the chalk doorway by creating a portal between this world and the next. He turned back and extended a hand to the girl. "Do you trust me?"

She stared at him uncomprehendingly, and only when he repeated the question did she place her hand in his, allowing him to pull her through with him, and not a moment too soon. Just as she stepped through after him, an explosion knocked both of them to the ground. Before the gateway vanished, she saw the rock outcropping shattering into a mass of fire and stony shrapnel.

She looked around, and found herself in a vast barren desert of dry brown sand and black ash. The Red Stars were still present, but dimmer in this place. Purple lightning flashed along the horizon as she pushed herself off the ground. Her rescuer lay on his back. She had a moment to collect her thoughts and her eyes narrowed; nothing human could move that fast, and no mage she'd ever seen had displayed that kind of power. She saw the bloodless pallor of his skin, and she knew him for what he was: the same kind of monster that was responsible for killing her parents.

Steven Donovan picked himself up from the ground, and scanned his surroundings, noting the storm on the horizon. He had gotten them away from the Machine squad, but they were far from safe. Spectres and worse things made the Wastelands their home, and while he was quite familiar with his surroundings, the girl more than likely was not. Therefore, it was his intention to get himself and the girl out of there and someplace safe, so he could question her properly about the *Sargon Fragment*, if her parents even knew anything about it. Something about her made him uneasy as well. She reminded him of someone but he couldn't place who it was. Anger was washing over her features as he looked over at her. *What in all of the Hells is her problem? Mortals are so... unstable.*

The girl's voice became low and harsh. "Did they send you after me to finish the job?"

"Are you insane? Why would I bother rescuing you if I wanted to kill you?"

"Maybe you're taking me back to the suck-heads that murdered my parents."

"I assure you, I mean you no harm. When we have a chance, we're going to sit down and sort this all out. If Kindred murdered your parents, then I may be able to find out who is responsible. Besides, if I wanted you dead, all I'd have to do is look at you."

That made her pause. She didn't know if it was true, but she decided not to chance it. He started walking off and she followed. After a few minutes of silence, she spoke again, "I've killed your kind before, you know."

"Congratulations. Would you like a medal?"

She sighed, willing to put her reservations aside for the moment. "Look, I'm sorry. I'm being a bitch. Thank you for getting me out of there." He only nodded in return, to which she added, "You wanna tell me your name."

"Steven Donovan. And yours?"

"Kathryn."

"Well, Kathryn, if my estimation is correct, we have about 16 miles of Wasteland left to go before we reach somewhere that I cross us back over, and Midian is too far of a journey to make on foot. So I suggest we start moving a little faster before that storm catches up to us."

He looked back at her, and her eyes met his. Then it hit him like a lead weight, deep in his chest, as sharp and painful as any wooden stake. He realized who she reminded him of; someone from his past. She reminded him of Arianna...

APPENDIX ONE: DEVIATIONS IN THE BLOOD

*"They cut the bloodline in the center
And injected this hated strain
They cut the bloodline
They left it wanting"*
– The Cruxshadows, *"Bloodline"*

With Gehenna having passed, there have been more changes in the Blood than ever before. Bloodlines have become more prevalent, as the curse of undeath warps itself to fit the individual. Upon reaching Blood Potency 6, a Kindred may warp their Vitae to suit their own personalities if they so choose, deviating from their parent clan. Other factors may come into play and cause the Blood to change in the Kindred, which are detailed in the Bloodlines and Unique Disciplines chapter of **Vampire: The Requiem**. These changes may or may not be passed along to their childer, but if they do, the new childer may find themselves among the hidden, the legendary, the forgotten, or any of the other adjectives used to refer to bloodlines as a whole. Some former clans became bloodlines while some bloodlines active before Gehenna joined clans to gain support and renew their numbers.

Presented here are two bloodlines with histories that tie them to before the Time of Judgment. The first is the Infiores, a bloodline of necromancers opposed to the Sangiovanni while pursuing their own mysterious agenda. The second is the Khaibit, a bloodline of shadow warriors that are dedicated to keeping an immensely powerful being of primordial darkness from escaping its prison. Players may select any of these bloodlines for their characters with Storyteller approval.

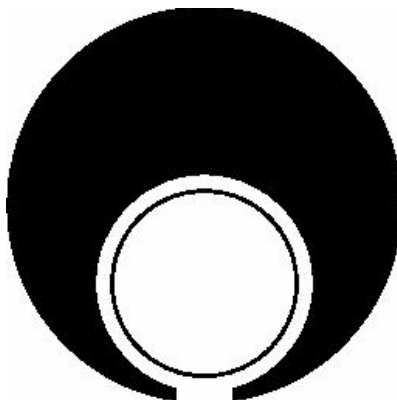
INFITIORES

THIS IS THE WAY, STEP INSIDE. I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT WAS AND WILL BE...

Living is merely the act of dying one moment at a time, and none know this as well as the Infittiores. While the world crumbles about them, these Kindred revel in morbid reflections and introspective contemplation. To them, unlife is both a black celebration and a great responsibility. Unlike most other vampires, who often act without regard for the lives of the mortals about them, the Infittiores rebel against their Damned state, using the power granted by the Embrace to help and defend those in need from the depredations of other denizens of the World of Darkness.

Perhaps one of the oldest bloodlines to appear since Gehenna, the Infittiores emerged about 150 years after the chaos of the Final Night, and since then their numbers have grown rapidly. Their origins are mostly unknown, but rumors circulate that this bloodline has ties to the Sangiovanni as well as a fractious collection of mages called Hollow Ones. It's said the founder of the bloodline was once a member of these magi before being Embraced, and that sometime afterward, he was cursed by an infernalist, causing him to become a black hole of sorts, constantly sucking in the life energy of all living beings around him. This curse later extended to his childer after he began to Embrace others. Infittiores are even more separated from the living than other Kindred, forever destined to surround themselves with death, for any mortals in close proximity are doomed to a slow demise.

Necromancers without equal, the Infittiore's influence has accumulated over the past few centuries with the help of their wraith allies, but even with this aid, the bloodline is fractured and divided for two reasons. The first is that the founder of the Infittiores disappears for great lengths of time, leaving the bloodline without unified direction or guidance. The second reason lies with current events within the realm of the dead. This other plane, called the Wastelands, is the location of the bloodline's stronghold. Here the Infittiores find themselves engaged in a desperate battle against the Spectres and other inhabitants of this place, such as the Aralu, which are said to be the ghosts of long dead Antediluvians consumed and reshaped by a



malevolent force identified only in fearful whispers as "Grandmother."

Despite their tendency to fraternize with the dead, the Infittiores do spend a portion of their time among the living, being found in the places where those with no hope and nothing to lose gather. Numerous tales exist of the exploits of these vampires and the ways they've interacted with mortals. Stories spread of the shadowy figure

warning a young drifter that he's approaching a Machine assault squad; a pale stranger clad in black that seemingly comes from nowhere to defend a young mother from a ravenous mutant; or the runaway saved from resorting to a life of prostitution by a mysterious benefactor. What exactly motivates these Kindred to such seemingly altruistic aims is unrevealed, but it's suspected that they seek some form of redemption, such as Golconda or some other exalted state. Even so, the Dark Angels make no qualms about their true nature. The mortals in these tales that cross paths with these enigmatic vampires often walk away showing signs of blood loss.

Recently some Infittiores have started seeking out information regarding an artifact lost in the Wastelands before the Final Night, some sort of fragment that the Sangiovanni are also searching for. This has led to hostilities between the two bloodlines flaring into a vicious enmity between the Deathers and the Sangiovanni, as they compete with each other to locate this legendary item. Whatever this item is, only time can reveal the reasons for this new endeavor, for the Infittiores have their lips tightly sealed, holding their secrets.

Parent Clan: Unknown, presumed Daeva, Mekhet, or even Nosferatu

Nickname: A collection of titles, including Dark Angels, Deathers, or Sponges. Primarily those who view the Infittiores with disdain use the latter term. Those referring to Infittiores as Sponges within earshot discover it's a quick way to bring injury upon themselves.

Covenant: Most of the Infittiores find themselves among the unaligned. Those that choose to join covenants pledge allegiance to the Nephtali (with whom their founder is allied), Carthians, or

the Ordo Dracul. While there are Infittiores between the Lancea Sanctum and Invictus, they are quite rare.

Appearance: Like the Hollow Ones from which they descended, the Infittiores tend to dress similar to the retro manner of the Gothic subculture that existed long ago, heavily mixed with elements of fetish and cyber garb. This is not always the case, however, and depends upon the individual tastes of the vampire. They are typically very alluring and pale (even for Kindred), often with a slightly androgynous look to them.

Haven: Infittiores tend to take shelter wherever they can find it. Places long forsaken such as abandoned buildings or mausoleums are typical havens for these Kindred. Others make their havens in places of ill repute in the few remaining civilized areas, or even in vehicles they may own. The only requirements for them are that the places they live in must be relatively safe, hidden, and away from others: the better to practice their necromantic skills in peace.

Background: Many members of this bloodline led harsh existences as mortals. Even though mortals everywhere live desperate lives, coping daily with torment and heartbreak, these



Kindred far surpassed their peers while they still drew breath. The childer of the Infittiores come from the likes of those who can survive in the face of incredible odds, such as blood slaves, rebels, criminals, wanderers, or prostitutes. As these people have a unique perspective from their

bleak ways of life, they seem to more easily integrate themselves into their new unlives. Oddly enough, no Infittiore will ever Embrace a mortal mage, Hollow Ones in particular.

Character Creation: Infittiores usually have loner or outsider concepts, in addition to a high Willpower to match the demands of their former lives. Social or Mental Attributes are typically primary, but there are a fair share of fighters among the Deathers also. Mental and Social Skills are prevalent, especially Empathy, Streetwise, Occult, and Academics. Merits most ordinarily seen include Allies, Contacts, Herd, Mentor, and Retainers, but any can be appropriate.

A character of this bloodline must also purchase a second dot of Blood Potency.

Bloodline Disciplines: Auspex, Nihilistics, Obfuscate, Resilience

Weaknesses: Due to the unusual nature of the curse laid upon the bloodline's founder, Infittiores uncontrollably drain the life energy of all living things around them in addition to their lust for blood, as they exude the spiritual blight of death. Small plants and insects rapidly die within a foot of their presence, and even large trees take on blight in the places they touch. Larger animals and mortals suffer one health level of lethal damage for each hour spent in close proximity with a Dark Angel as the vampire gradually siphons away their life force. Such damage has no apparent indication, manifesting as inexplicable weakness. Those already injured will not heal while in the company of these vampires. Kindred and other undead are immune to this effect, while ghouls and other living supernaturals may make a Stamina roll once per hour to resist.

Additionally, Infittiores bear the pale stamp of death upon their complexions, revealing the truth of their undead nature for all to see. They are unable to spend Vitae to flush their features with life, as can other vampires. Their connection to Oblivion and their deathly pallor also make mortals uneasy, adding a -2 modifier to all Social rolls not involving Intimidation.

Organization: To those outside of the Deathers, there doesn't seem to be any sort of organization at all, although the truth is that some form of hierarchy exists, loose as it may be. Dark Angels show respect toward those of great achievement or age, but are by no means submissive to their elders. While great amounts of the Infittiores lead solitary unlives, the neonates and ancilla of the Dark Angels often gather into small groups that they refer to as Cliques. Cliques have a tendency to be rather competitive, spiteful, and jealous when it comes to social matters such as

status and prestige. However, an amazing solidarity can be seen, as the Cliques within an area will cast aside differences and unify should some outside force pose a significant threat.

Concepts: Covenant diplomat, drag racing messenger, prostitute, Souleater hunter, street urchin, village defender, thanatologist

Stereotypes

Covenants: Flawed to be sure, but they remain our best hope at restoring any kind of balance to the world. If we are not united, then our enemies will crush all of us. So far, the covenants have managed not to become too decadent over the centuries by placing far too much importance on empty power plays and games of status. As long as they learn to change with the world and keep their eyes open, they can avoid crumbling beneath the corruption of their ideals.

Souleaters: We must fight these accursed beings with every ounce of force we have. Only when they are truly destroyed will we have any measure of true freedom in our actions. It is unfathomable to think that these debased creatures were once as mortal as us. They serve as a fitting reminder of the true horror that awaits each of us as one of the Damned.

The View From Without

The Covenants

Although these angst-ridden childer have proven useful by cavorting with the dead, I find they spend too much time wallowing in misery and self-loathing. Their efforts at protecting the kine are indeed noble, and they have prevented some serious damage from being done. However, I fear that when it comes down to it their loyalty lies not with their covenant, but to their bloodline and they may have to be taken back into the fold, by force if necessary.

- Augusto Vidal, Prince of Neo Orleans

The Machine

They're just a bunch of wannabe Daeva that do nothing but bitch about how life sucks so much. "Oh, the angst, the tragedy, the cruelty of this wretched world weighs me down so! Oh, woe is I!" Give me a fucking break. Most of them aren't even worth Clarification and should be exterminated.

- Devotchka, Infitiore Drone

The Souleaters

Assimilate and conquer them just like the rest of their kind. The Eldest has little to fear from the likes of these foolish upstarts. However, their leader and I have crossed paths multiple times and while they pose little threat to our plans now, they may prove troublesome in the future. They should be monitored and wiped out if they show even the slightest trace of interfering with our goals. Until then, let them conjure their spells and traipse about their graveyards. We have other accomplishments to be concerned with.

- Laszlo Malakar, independent servant of the Souleater Overlord

NIHILISTICS

This Discipline is thought to be an aftereffect of the curse cast by the diabolist mage upon the bloodline founder. Passed down to the vampire's childer, this Discipline has become exclusively known to the Infiores, and is a closely guarded secret. It's whispered among other necromancers that Nihilistics gives the vampire control over the dark energies of Oblivion, allowing them to use their Vitae as a conduit for entropy itself to power these effects.

* VISION THING

Negative energy permeates the Wastelands and clings to everything it touches. The primary ability of Nihilistics grants the Infiores the power of Death sight, allowing the Kindred to see the energies of death flowing through everyone and everything, just as wraiths can. The taint of Oblivion can be seen as a malignant resonance – a stain of blackness and decay that emanates from the source of the entropy. By looking at the entropic markings on a person's body, the necromancer can even gain rough knowledge of how far that person is from death, how soon that person is likely to die, and even what the cause of their death might be. This is not an exact science, by any means, but the power is extremely useful to give the Infiores an edge over those they scrutinize.

Cost: –

Dice Pool: Wits + Investigation + Nihilistics

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The vampire becomes effectively blind for the rest of the scene, as their vision flickers constantly back and forth between the realms.

Failure: The Infiores cannot activate Vision Thing this turn, but may try again after spending another turn in concentration.

Success: The Infiores may see the world with the eyes of the dead.

Exceptional Success: An exceptional success yields no additional benefit beyond clarifying the information gained through using Vision Thing.

By concentrating for a turn, the vampire may see with the eyes of the dead. This effect is often disorienting, and at the Storyteller's discretion, can cause the necromancer to suffer a -4 modifier when attempting to perform any action other than observation. Trying to discern the patterns of death on a person allows the character to estimate how long the target has to live and what the probable source of demise will be, as the entropic markings clearly show the wounds that

will someday exist on that person. This power lasts for one scene, though the Infiores may choose to prematurely draw their perceptions back to their normal sight (thereby ending the power), and can only be used to read the fate of one target at a time.

This power cannot be used in the Wastelands, as doing so overwhelms the vampire's mind and drives them into sensory overload.

** DEAD SOULS

Wraiths seem to possess a Beast, much like vampires, though their "Shadows" are often less brutish. By using Dead Souls, the necromancer determines whether the wraith is currently influenced by their darker passions. That knowledge can be very useful, as many Infiores prefer to barter with apparitions rather than merely force the wraiths into subservience. Knowing the aspect of a wraith with which the vampire is dealing means knowing whether to discuss matters of importance with the wraith at that time. Some Infiores take this affair one step further, dealing with the Shadow and the normal wraith in separate matters and never letting on to either just what the other half is doing. Since the wraith's higher self usually has no idea of what its Shadow is doing (although the converse is not necessarily true), the Infiores can conceal their dealings by working with the wraith's dark nature.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Wits + Empathy + Nihilistics

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Infiores receives dangerously wrong information about the nature of the ghost they are dealing with.

Failure: The Infiores is unsure of the nature of the ghost that they are dealing with.

Success: The Infiores can determine whether the higher self or the Shadow normally dominates the ghost; wraiths routinely dominated by their Shadows are known as Spectres and are exceedingly dangerous.

Exceptional Success: As per a success, except that the Infiores can deal with both natures of the ghost at the same time without either knowing.

*** DISINTEGRATION

All things decay with time, but an Infiores who has reached this level of Nihilistics understands the intricacies of the process of deterioration and its relation to the flow of entropic energy. By focusing Oblivion into the physical form of an inanimate object, the Infiores may accelerate the normal rate of decay. Metal will rust

and flake away, wood will rot and crumble, glass will sag and distort, and even synthetic materials like plastic will become brittle and fragile.

Disintegration can also be used on ectoplasm in the Wastelands, if the Infitiore is capable of touching ghostly plasm. Only inanimate ectoplasm can be decayed, such as objects that have been soulforged, or the relics of objects that have crossed over the Stormwall. Such items dissipate rapidly when touched by Disintegration.

Cost: 1 Vitae

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Crafts + Nihilistics

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Infitiore is unable to use this power for the rest of the night.

Failure: The power is not activated, and the Vitae point is lost. Another attempt to use the power may be made the following turn.

Success: For the next 3 turns a dark cloud of entropic energy, visible only to those who can see ghostly manifestations (such as with Vision Thing or similar powers), surrounds the vampire's hand.

Exceptional Success: As per a success, except the entropic touch lasts for an entire scene.

Any object that the Infitiore touches will be infused with the essence of decay. Wood and other formerly organic materials (including corpses) will rapidly putrefy, generally decaying within one turn for every 20 pounds of matter, while more resilient substances will take longer to deteriorate. A square foot of metal (up to an inch deep) slowly rusts for each turn that the Infitiore continues to touch it with Disintegration. After three turns of focusing Oblivion upon the same square foot of metal, the Kindred may erode an opening roughly a foot in diameter into the material.

Objects in the Wastelands can be affected through Necromancy or if the vampire is within the Underworld. A single turn destroys most ordinary ghostly objects.

****** BURNING INSIDE**

At this level of Nihilistics, the Infitiore can conjure fiery bolts filled with the touch of Oblivion. This energy is deep blue in color and roils rapidly about the vampire's hands when summoned, drifting into the air in white wisps until released. Those struck with this power report that the fire is cold rather than hot, though it burns nonetheless, accompanied by the terrifying sensation of their bodies coming apart at the molecular level. Wraiths refer to the substance invoked as barrow-flame and seem to fear it greatly, for they understand its danger.

Cost: 1 Vitae

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Occult + Nihilistics

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Infitiore must check for Rotschreck, as their own power is turned against them.

Failure: The ghostly fire is not conjured, but the vampire may try again next turn with Vitae expenditure.

Success: The victim takes a number of health levels of lethal damage equal to the number of successes rolled, and may have to roll to resist Rotschreck if applicable.

Exceptional Success: As per a success, except the barrow-flame bypasses the victim's flesh and directly hits their soul, inflicting aggravated damage instead of lethal.

The ghostly fire will not ignite flammable materials and dissipates at the end of the turn. The flesh insulates the soul from the flames of Oblivion, so Burning Inside is much more effective on naked ectoplasm, where it then causes aggravated damage. Of course, a victim whose soul is removed from their body does not have such protection...

******* DEATH WISH**

Mastery of Nihilistics allows a vampire to destroy the soul of another being by gazing into the eyes of a victim and speaking a proclamation of their hatred. The afflicted victim then feels the full power of Oblivion slamming through them. Used only by the Infitiore in times of great danger or loathing, Death Wish remains the most feared of their abilities. Mortals whom this power is used upon die instantly, their bodies unable to withstand the sudden spiritual trauma, while Kindred drop immediately into torpor.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Occult + Nihilistics versus Resolve + Blood Potency

Action: Contested; resistance is reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The attempt is over and the Infitiore immediately drops into torpor.

Failure: The character loses or ties the contested roll and the power fails. The Infitiore may try again, if they get the chance.

Success: The character wins the contested roll by getting the most successes, and the victim dies (if mortal) or enters torpor (if Kindred).

Exceptional Success: The character wins the contested roll with five or more successes, and cost the victim a Willpower *dot* (if Kindred).

The vampire locks eyes with the victim, and speaks a simple sentence, such as "I wish you

were dead!" or "Drop dead!" or "Fuck off and die!"
So long as the words carry sufficient spite and
express how much the vampire wants the victim

dead, almost any message will do, but the victim
must be looking into the Infitiore's eyes and be able
to hear the words spoken.

KHAIBIT

DO NOT THREATEN ME WHELP. YOU RULE FROM THE SHADOWS. I AM THE SHADOWS.

The ancient Khaibit bloodline is dying out. It seems to have lost many of its numbers through attrition over the centuries. Traditionally, members of the lineage have served as guardians against creatures from the Abyss, another plane of existence where light has never existed, and the rogue Khaibit who summon these beings in the hopes of bringing back a primordial being of

sentient shadow. By releasing creatures of living shadow into the world, the barriers between this realm and the Abyss will weaken and eventually collapse. The existing Khaibit have managed to preserve the bloodline's ancient duty as the world's guardians. Some of these Asps tend the last, long-hidden shrines to Set, or guard weak points in reality where Things From Beyond can break through. A few other Khaibit keep watch over places where ghosts, demons, and stranger things once erupted into the world, and where they might break through again. Khaibit guards make sure no one else foolishly dares these portals, and watch for dark things that slip through.

When necessary, a Khaibit also serves as a bodyguard, thief, or even assassin. A Khaibit's favored Disciplines make them excellent guards: Celerity to react quickly, Dominate to subjugate potential threats, and Vigor to strike hard. Khaibit also carry an aptitude for a rare Discipline, generally believed to be the line's invention long, long ago. Other Kindred may call the Mekhet "Shadows," but the Khaibit can develop actual power over darkness. Indeed, their power to evoke, shape, and *become* darkness led to the bloodline's current name – the ancient Egyptian word for "shadow."

Very few neonates ever learn their bloodline's true past. Then again, few elders remember it, either. The Khaibit emerged from the night so long ago that history has passed into legend, and few now remember even the legend. Asps who want to hear stories about their bloodline's origins must seek the most erudite



loremasters of the undead, or find one of the tiny, long-isolated Khaibit coterie that still guard a site of mystic power. The lineage's true history is hidden by time and geography, as long ago, the Khaibit's ancestors were divided into two factions when Gehenna arrived. On one side were those who were opposed to the Antediluvians, shocked but not necessarily surprised that

their supposedly dead founder had survived; on the other were those Kindred who had always worshipped the darkness that was their progenitor. The Khaibit progenitor, a Kindred by the name of Carolina Valez, after losing her principality in the chaos of the Final Night, led a coterie to Egypt, where they stumbled across the relics of a clan of Kindred that led a secret cult dedicated to Set, the Egyptian god of war, desert, chaos, and darkness. The teachings of the warriors among these Kindred were incorporated into Valez's own leadership, and so the Khaibit were formed.

Most of the Cult of Set's so-called fanes are located in Egypt, but a few secret shrines exist in Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa. These temples hold the cult's records, written on papyrus and parchment scrolls, or inscribed on the walls in classic Egyptian fashion. Anyone who finds one of these shrines learns a great deal about the Kindred of the ancient world. How much of what they learn is true is open to conjecture. Members of the Cult of Set were just as likely as any modern Kindred to misremember the past after a long torpor, and to rewrite history to serve their own interests. More importantly, fanes are often treasure-troves of elder magic. The Cult of Set practiced a form of Cruac based on Egyptian ritual magic, concentrating on the use of wax or clay images, hieroglyphic inscriptions, blood offerings, and invocations to Egyptian gods. Typically, a small group of Khaibit guards each post. Some members lie in torpor while others remain active. If a member suffers Final Death, the others look for a mortal they can Embrace and train to join them. On

occasion, Khaibit risk their unlives on quests to retrieve mystic artifacts or to stop spiritual invasions. These Asps seek relics of the Cult of Set for practical and cultural reasons.

The Kindred who did not join with Valez's faction became known as Abyss Mystics. To this night, the two groups of Kindred have warred against each other, as the Asps seek to keep this eldest darkness from returning. Who is winning is anyone's guess now. For every plan and attempt at summoning the being known only as "Lasombra" that's foiled, there appear to be two more in the making. None have apparently succeeded so far, but it's only a matter of time before everything properly aligns, and the Abyss Mystics see that the world is shrouded in smothering shadows once and for all.

Parent Clan: Unknown, presumed Mekhet or Ventrue

Nickname: Keepers (ancient), Asps (modern)

Covenant: In the last thousand years, the Khaibit have served the Nephtali and the Circle of the Crone almost exclusively. More than half of the bloodline sticks by this old bond. Indeed, some Asps have become competent blood magicians in their own right. In the last four centuries, some Asps took service among the Invictus, the Ordo Dracul, or to a lesser degree the Lancea Sanctum and Carthians. Now, Khaibit who don't care about tradition join whatever covenant suits their personalities or goals.

Appearance: There is no such thing as a typical Khaibit, as they run the gamut of cultures and ethnicities, age, and gender. A common feature among them is that they are reasonably attractive, with well-bred, aristocratic features. Asps dress to blend in with the kine around them, and often prefer their clothes either loose-fitting or carefully tailored to hide protective armor or amulets. Their outfits are often dark in hue, the better to blend into the shadows they command.

Haven: Asps keep their havens well hidden, and often underground. These dwellings tend to be small and bare, since a line member may need to abandon it if it's compromised. The Khaibit who protect the Cult of Set's long-hidden fanes in Egypt dwell in cabal temples. These magnificent subterranean complexes include shrines, dormitories for Asps' mortal servants and vessels, training arenas, libraries of ancient lore, and vaults of salvaged artifacts of the Cult of Set.

Background: The Khaibit look for potential childer who share their ethos of respect and support. Tradition holds that a prospective Asp should first honor their sire as a ghoul, learning the

skills needed to serve and protect. Modern Khaibit often forego this custom, siring whoever is useful. Asps who carry on the ancient duty of guarding the world from ghosts, demons, and worse things were often mortals who fought the supernatural, or who were victimized by it. The Khaibit do not always ask such a prospective childer's permission before Embracing them. When a neonate is simply taken, a sire spends at least seven years training and indoctrinating the childer.

Character Creation: The majority of line members who serve as mercenaries or agents to other vampires typically offer a forte that's most useful to their employer. A Kindred who seeks a bodyguard and protector typically needs an Asp with primarily Physical traits. Someone who needs an assistant or proxy makes Mental or Social traits a criterion. A character's relative strengths and weaknesses can therefore suggest the type of role they might play as an agent-for-hire. Appropriate Physical, Mental, and Social Merits only further specialize a Khaibit's appointed role. Expertise in fighting styles, sense for the supernatural, or relationships in mortal affairs makes a servant all the more useful in a particular regard.

A Khaibit Embraced to the world's

defenders ultimately seeks as much balance as possible among Attributes and Skills. While Physical Attributes might be primary at character creation, Physical Skills might be tertiary, for example. Such well-rounded capabilities are called for since no



supernatural being that threatens to invade the world can be defeated in only one way. It takes all of a defender's faculties to prevail.

If a character is initiated directly into the line shortly after the Embrace, an extra dot of Blood Potency is required.

Bloodline Disciplines: Celerity, Dominate, Obtenebration, Vigor

Weakness: Khaibit vampires cast no reflections. They cannot be seen in mirrors, bodies of water, reflective windows, polished metals, photographs, and security cameras, etc. This curious anomaly even extends to the clothes and objects they carry, and cannot be overcome with the expenditure of Willpower under any circumstances. Many Kindred believe that the Khaibit have been

cursed in this regard for their vanity. Additionally, due to their penchant for darkness in a similar fashion as the Mekhet, Khaibit take one additional level of aggravated damage from sunlight (but not fire), and are -1 to all dice pools while in overly bright lights (spotlights, magnesium flares, etc.).

Organization: Asps who protect the relics of Set's cult and who hunt other monsters form tiny, cult-like, militant coteries that protect torpid members, record their rule, and preserve their traditions through the centuries. Most Khaibit, however, never meet any other Asps other than their own sires and broodmates.

Concepts: Bodyguard, valet, detective, assassin, modern knight, Hound, business manager, vengeful ronin, Lupine-hunter

OBTENEBRATION

The Khaibit trademark Discipline deals with darkness and shadow, the natural habitat of creatures slain by sunlight. Obtenebration draws its power from the Abyss itself, though none but the eldest of the bloodline are truly aware of this fact. As such, the precise nature of the “darkness” invoked is a matter of debate among the Khaibit who choose to ponder the question. Some believe it to be shadows, while others, perhaps more correctly, believe the power allows a vampire to draw forth their own corrupted soul and wield it as a weapon. Obtenebration enables its possessor to act more easily in darkness, alter and generate shadows, and to even become a shadow themselves.

Obtenebration is as old as the Khaibit themselves. Over the centuries, plenty of Kindred have had opportunity to learn it. The Discipline remains largely confined to the Khaibit, however, since most Kindred don’t see much use for Obtenebration’s basic powers. It’s easier to hire a Khaibit spy who can turn into a shadow than to spend years mastering the Discipline so you can turn into a shadow yourself.

Note: Khaibit vampires can see through the darkness they control, though other Khaibit cannot. Dreadful tales of Khaibit and Abyss Mystics struggling to blind and smother each other with the same wisps of darkness circulate among young members of the bloodline, though no elders have come forth to substantiate such claims.

* SHADOW PLAY

The user can manipulate shadows that already exist. They can grow, shrink, fade, or intensify, change shape, or even detach from the objects that cast them and move about. In dark surroundings, the vampire can create whatever shadowy images they want. A person who can see clearly could never mistake figures created through Shadow Play for anything solid or real. (Although, seeing one’s own shadow reach out to strangle the shadow of another person could prove quite disturbing.)

Once a Khaibit takes control of darkness or shadow, it gains a mystical tangibility while under the vampire’s manipulation. By varying accounts cold or hellishly hot and cloying, the darkness may be used to aggravate, distract, or disorient victims.

Cost: 1 Vitae

Dice Pool: This power involves no roll

Action: Instant

The character can alter shadows cast in a 25-square-yard area, but they may locate that area

anywhere within line of sight. The zone of Shadow Play can itself be moved as a reflexive action, if the user so desires. Khaibit cloaking themselves in shadow gain an extra die to all Stealth dice pools, while attackers using ranged weapon attacks on the Khaibit subtract one die from their dice pools. Khaibit who use the darkness to make themselves more terrifying add an additional die to Intimidation dice pools.

Shadows can be manipulated for the remainder of the scene, their activities or behavior being modified by the user as a reflexive action. No more than one use of the power may be active at a time. Thus, shadows in two separate areas cannot be affected simultaneously. The user may leave the shadows alone whenever they desire. They return to normal if the user is sent into torpor, destroyed, leaves them alone, or if the user loses direct line of sight to the area of effect.

The unnatural appearance of this power proves extremely disconcerting to mortals and animals (and, at the Storyteller’s discretion, Kindred who have never seen it before). Whenever this power is invoked within a mortal’s vicinity, that individual must make a Resolve + Composure roll or suffer a -1 penalty to all dice pools for the remainder of the scene, due to fear of the monstrous shadows.

** SHROUD OF NIGHT

As a student of Obtenebration gains skill, the vampire can generate their own inky darkness to conceal their deeds, to frighten or blind victims, or to animate through Shadow Play. Shroud of Night swallows and suppresses light and even muffles sound to some extent. Those who have been trapped within it (and survived) describe the cloud as viscous and unnerving. This physical manifestation lends credence to the claim that the darkness summoned with this Discipline is more than mere shadow. The tenebrous cloud may even move, if the creating vampire so wishes, though willing this requires complete concentration. Shroud of Night provides no protection against sunlight. The daystar’s direct light instantly burns away such eldritch shadows.

Cost: 1 Vitae

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Crafts + Obtenebration

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character fails to create shadow and cannot use this power again until the next sunset.

Failure: The character is unable to manipulate shadows with this attempt, but a successive attempt may be made if another Vitae is spent.

Success: The character can darken an area of about 16-square yards (a room) for a scene.

Exceptional Success: As per a normal success, except each success at five and over multiplies the maximum possible area by three. So, five successes darken a 48-square-yard area (3 x 16), and seven successes affect a 112-square-yard area (7 x 16).

Darkness persists until the remainder of the scene, unless the effect is dispelled early. The user may dispel the darkness whenever they desire, and it fades completely if they are sent into torpor or destroyed. The tarry mass actually extinguishes light sources it engulfs (with the exception of fire), and warps and distorts sounds to the point that they cannot be distinguished from each other. Those within the darkness lose all sense of sight and feel as though they've been immersed in pitch. Even those Kindred who possess the Auspex power of Heightened Senses suffer a -2 penalty for most actions. Only one area may be affected by darkness at a time. The user need not be in the area affected. They can dim an area at a range as long as they have direct line of sight to that area. If line of sight is ever broken, normal light returns.

Mortals and animals surrounded by the Shroud of Night must make Resolve + Composure rolls per Shadow Play, above, or panic and flee.

Suggested Modifiers

Situation	Modifier
Moonlight or poorly lit street	+2
Twilight or well-lit city street	+1
Poorly lit room	—
Well-lit room	-1
Bright as day (but not real sunlight)	-3

***** PERAMBULAM IN TENEBRIS**

At this level of Obtenebration, a practitioner of the Discipline can step into one shadow and step out of another instantly. This power enables a character to travel very quickly, but only for limited distances.

Cost: 1 Vitae

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Occult + Obtenebration

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character is trapped between shadows in the Abyss realm (fiendish Storytellers should have a heyday with this).

Failure: The character is unable to step through the shadow-realm this turn, but a successive attempt may be made again with another expenditure of Vitae and another activation roll.

Success: The character successfully steps into one shadow and emerge from another of their choice.

Exceptional Success: As per a normal success, except that the Khaibit may bring along one other person.

The character merely needs to see the shadow where they want to emerge. (Direct line of sight is required; seeing the spot on TV does not qualify.) The distance between shadows does not count toward the distance the character can move in a turn based on their Speed. So, if they travel their Speed to enter a shadow and dedicate the turn's action to using this power, they emerge in the other shadow all in the same action.

Clothes and objects that can be carried in one hand can travel with a vampire, but objects that require two hands cannot.

Suggested Modifiers

Situation	Modifier
Moonlight or poorly lit city street	+2
Twilight or well-lit city street	+1
Poorly lit room	—
Well-lit room	-1
Bright as day (but not real sunlight)	-3

****** BLACK METAMORPHOSIS**

The Khaibit calls upon their inner darkness and infuses their self with it, becoming a monstrous hybrid of matter and shadow. Their body becomes mottled with spots of tenebrous shade, and wispy tentacles extrude from their torso and abdomen. Though still humanoid, the Khaibit takes on an almost demonic appearance, as the darkness within them bubbles to the surface.

Cost: 1 Vitae

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Intimidation + Obtenebration

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Darkness ravages the Khaibit's undead body, and they take two points of lethal damage.

Failure: The vampire cannot undergo the Black Metamorphosis this turn, but a successive attempt may be made with another activation roll and expenditure of Vitae.

Success: The Khaibit successfully invokes the Black Metamorphosis, with all the advantages and drawbacks that come with it.

Exceptional Success: The Khaibit becomes so completely connected with the darkness inside them that an additional attack may be made each round with the tentacles emerging from their body without penalty (two attacks total, not one additional attack per tentacle).

While under the effects of the Black Metamorphosis, the vampire possesses four prehensile tentacles (whose Strength and Dexterity ratings are equal to the vampire's own Attributes) capable of independent movement, and can sense their surroundings fully even in pitch darkness,

either natural or that which has been summoned with other powers of Obtenebration.

The vampire's head and other extremities sometimes appear to fade away into nothingness, while at other times they seem swathed in otherworldly darkness. This, combined with the wriggling tentacles writhing from their body, creates an unsettling sight. Mortals, animals, and other creatures not accustomed to this sort of display must make Resolve + Composure rolls or surrender to a panic that amounts to Rotschreck (though it is inspired by the darkness rather than fire). Many Khaibit cultivate this devilish aspect, and the Black Metamorphosis gives a +3 modifier to the invoking Khaibit's Intimidation dice pools.

***** SHADOW FORM

A master of Obtenebration can literally become a shadow. In this form, a character can slide across walls, through a crack, under a door, or through a window without breaking the glass. No physical force can harm them because they aren't solid. They look just like a shadow of themselves (and can use Shadow Play separately to make them even harder to recognize). The character can also "peel" themselves off the floor, wall, or ceiling to assume a three-dimensional form of semi-transparent darkness, but doing so requires great concentration.

Cost: 1 Vitae

Dice Pool: Wits + Subterfuge + Obtenebration

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character does not become a shadow of their self, but rather "roots" their shadow self to some object in their vicinity, becoming its "shadow" until the scene ends or until a Willpower point is spent as a reflexive action to free themselves. Shadow Play can still be used in "trapped" shadow form.

Failure: The character is unable to transubstantiate into shadow, but another attempt may be made in a subsequent turn if another Vitae is spent.

Success: The character becomes a shadow-like form, with all of the benefits and only some of the drawbacks.

Exceptional Success: As per a standard success, plus a three-dimensional form can be assumed with a Willpower cost.

The character becomes a two-dimensional shadow, can move at normal or running Speed, and can defy gravity, but must always move across a surface such as the ground, a wall, or a ceiling. They can pass through any object that a shadow could be cast through, such as a window, a paper

wall, or a mesh screen. They cannot exist as a freestanding, two-dimensional shadow.

The character is a shadow-like ephemeral form, existing in the material world but intangible. This state is not unlike that of a ghost anchored to the physical world (a state called "Twilight") – in fact, a character in Twilight can interact normally only with other creatures in Twilight, such as Abyss monsters. They cannot speak or affect anything physically. Punches, bullets, mundane fire and other material attacks cannot harm the shadow-like form of the vampire any more than they could damage a normal shadow. Sunlight, however, remains deadly.

If an exceptional success is rolled when the power is activated, the character can choose to become a free-standing, three-dimensional figure of darkness with visible eyes (whether they appear as flesh, as pinpricks of light or as holes in the shadow is up to the character), but doing so requires significant concentration. (One Willpower point must be spent as a reflexive action; it does not confer a +3 bonus to any roll.) In this form, the character can speak normally into the material world and make use of their other Obtenebration powers. They are still considered an ephemeral form in the state of Twilight, however, and cannot otherwise interact with material things. A vampire in either kind of Shadow Form cannot use *any* other Disciplines against material targets. They can, however, use Disciplines against ephemeral targets, such as another vampire in Shadow Form or against an Abyss creature, ghost or spirit.

Surrounding a character in Shadow Form with light, so that no shadows can exist, forces the vampire to resume corporeal form.

KHAIBIT DEVOTIONS

ARMORY OF THE ABYSS

(OBTENEBRATION ***, RESILIENCE *** OR VIGOR ***)

One of the few arts created by Abyss Mystics that have spread throughout the Asps, Armory of the Abyss allows a vampire to fashion weapons and armor from shadows. Summoned items extrude from every orifice and pore, quickly hardening from darkened phantasm to black crystal even as they assume the desired form.

System: This Devotion is mechanically detailed in the **Players Guide to High Clans**, p. 163 for **Dark Ages: Vampire**.

ECHO OF THE SUBTLE VIZIER

(DOMINATE **, OBTENEBRATION **)

A Khaibit with this power may silently whisper commands to a target's shadow without

ever making a sound. The commands remain silent until the desired duration passes, at which time the victim finally hears the vampire's words and faces the Dominate power employed in the command.

System: This Devotion is mechanically detailed in the **Players Guide to Low Clans**, p. 165 for **Dark Ages: Vampire**.

EMINENCE OF SHADE CONQUERING BLOOD

(DOMINATE *****, OBTENEBRATION *****, OR DOMINATE *****, VICISSITUDE *****)

This power allows a vampire (or Souleater!) to become insubstantial and physically enter a host, controlling them from within like an obscene marionette.

System: This Devotion is mechanically detailed in the **Players Guide to High Clans**, p. 166 for **Dark Ages: Vampire**

(Vampire: The Requiem Rulebook Changes – Appendix One: Bloodlines and Unique Disciplines)

[*“Appendix One: Bloodlines and Unique Disciplines,”* p. 234–261. The Burakumin, Bruja, Malkovian, and Toreador bloodlines have been removed entirely. Omit any mention of these bloodlines throughout this chapter, and indeed the entire book of *Vampire: The Requiem*.]

[*“Morbus,”* p. 244. The sentences in the second paragraph of the Morbus description in the left column of the page beginning “In fact, the name...,” “Less solvent data...,” and “Nonetheless, it might have...” respectively should be replaced with the following:]

...In fact, the name Morbus comes from a Latin root meaning “diseased,” which was ascribed to afflicted Mekhet by non-afflicted ones in the sixth century A.G.

...Less solvent data has linked named Morbus with Mekhet who were active as far back as 430 A.G., a year in which plague was said to have struck Europe.

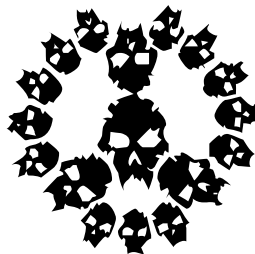
...Nonetheless, it might have been possible for the Kindred to accept the Morbus condition as just a peculiar feeding preference if it were not for records recovered dating back to A.G. 334.

[*“Cachexy: Contaminate,”* p. 249. The dice pool of the Contaminate power is changed. Replace the first sentence of that paragraph with the following:]

Dice Pool: No roll is required to activate this power, but a roll may be necessary to touch the target (see p. 157 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**).

[*“Cachexy: Inflammation,”* p. 250. The following sentence must be added to the end of the last paragraph of this power:]

The range of this power is 10 yards per dot of the Morbus' Stamina. Victims who escape the range continue to suffer for the remainder of the power's established duration.



Neo Orleans is a dangerous place.

Words of caution given to her by her lover, the words stuck in her mind like a shard of glass as lightning flashed and thunder boomed throughout the sky. The rain began to pour through the humid Neo Orleans night. Despite what relief it may have brought from the summer heat, Elise quickly sought shelter. She knew the rain could burn you sometimes; acid rain was a very valid concern, as rare as it was. Fortunately, this thunderstorm was not caustic, since her hair and clothes were already soaked, and finding shelter in the thunderstorm would prove to be a task in and of itself. She looked for higher ground, as flooding was a very common occurrence when it rained here in the Big Easy. The Red Stars gave some meager illumination as she moved through the shadows.

Puddles splashed as she ran through the back alleys, broken glass crunching under her boots. At last she was in her place, a ruined hovel only a little larger than a walk-in closet with what few meager possessions she had, among them an old mattress that smelled of leather and cigarettes. It smelled of *him*. She hadn't seen Jeremy since he had joined the assassins' guild five weeks ago. That was when he held her and whispered promises of his return and the better life they would both have. She curled herself into a ball and watched the rain come down, shivering from a number of causes. She missed Jeremy terribly, she was now drenched and cold, but perhaps the most important was the fact that she hadn't had her monthly dose from her domitor just yet. It was approaching soon; the bulk of her trembling came now more from that eagerness to indulge her fix rather than from the damp and cold seeping into her bones or the anticipation of seeing her lover again.

A sudden movement in the shadows outside caught her attention, and she sat up, wary of intruders upon her only shelter from the outside world. Neo Orleans was rife with dangers both mortal and supernatural. At best, it was only someone trying to get out of the rain. In that case, fuck them. This was her space, and she didn't really feel like sharing. At worst, it would be a vampire or something else that she would be helpless against, and then she'd make her stand and die trying. Or it could be a member of the thieves' guild coming to enact revenge on Jeremy through her. But a familiar voice at the entrance of her home instantly quelled her fears.

"Elise?" It was Jeremy. The guild must have finished his training, and so soon!

"Jeremy? Is that you?" she responded.

The silence was crushing the very life out of her; more so than her master could hope to, until at last came a reply. "Yes, Elise, it's me."

Elise sprang to her feet and threw herself onto him, wrapping her arms around him and kissing him deeply. Still, sadness obscured his features, making him seem not at all like himself.

"Jeremy, what's wrong? Aren't you happy to see me?" she asked.

He turned his head to the side, unable to look her in the eye as he spoke. "Elise, I know about your addiction, about the vampire you've been seeing. He's been feeding you his blood in exchange for information. The guild sent me back, as a test of my faith and devotion to them."

Horror twisted her face, as she understood now what he was saying, and she stammered out, "You don't have to kill him. Jeremy, please don't do this. I love you. I can stop. I won't go to see him anymore."

Jeremy shook his head. "We both know it's not that simple. You have to understand, this isn't easy for me. I love you too, Elise. That's why I'm going to release you from this. No vampire will ever have power over you again. The assassins' guild didn't send me to kill him, that's already been taken care of. They followed you to him the last time you went to see him. They sent me to take care of you."

"No..." Elise couldn't comprehend the words she was hearing. This was madness, a cruel prank of some kind.

"Go in peace, my love," Jeremy said, sliding forth a large knife from its holster at his hip, his eyes hard and resolute in their duty.

He'd never hurt me. Elise thought to herself as she backed away slowly, or at least that's what she thought until the blade entered her belly, hot and cold at the same time. Jeremy swiftly removed the knife. She went down onto her knees, blood spilling from her abdomen across the floor. She felt his hand taking hold of her hair tightly and pulling her head back. The knife ran across her throat, more blood came forth, and Elise fell forward onto the floor, her life pouring out. She tried to tell him that she still loved him, but the words only came out as a wet gurgle, and then there was only the final thought she had to cross her mind before the darkness closed itself around her forever.

Neo Orleans is a dangerous place.

APPENDIX TWO: NEO ORLEANS

*"I've got the ways and the means
to New Orleans I'm going
down by the river
where it's warm and green
I'm gonna have a drink, and walk around
I've got a lot to think about oh yeah"*
– Concrete Blonde, *"Bloodletting (The Vampire Song)"*

(Vampire: The Requiem Rulebook Changes – Appendix Two: New Orleans)

[*"New Orleans,"* p. 267–294. Simply replace the words New Orleans with "Neo Orleans" throughout this chapter.]

[*"A Historical Overview,"* p. 268–271. Replace this section entirely with the following:]

- **719 A.G.:** The first evidence of Kindred presence in Neo Orleans since its reconstruction dates to this time, as found in legends of the local population. The formation of the thieves' and assassins' guilds also dates to around this time.
- **721 A.G.:** Antoine Savoy claims to have arrived around this time, but no evidence of his presence can be found before the late 9th century A.G.
- **727 A.G.:** Pearl Chastain arrives in Neo Orleans in the midst of group of refugees.
- **757 A.G.:** Pearl Chastain begins to make a name for herself in and around the city. Although she does not claim the title of Prince, she is the closest thing the Kindred of the city have to such an authority.
- **769 A.G.:** Augusto Vidal arrives. Intended to oversee Ventrue interests in the region, Vidal swiftly determines to rise out of his sire's shadow and bring order to the anarchic Kindred of the region.
- **770 A.G.:** Vidal formally stakes a claim to the Princedom of the area. Using his influence, he uses available soldiers to eliminate or drive out most Kindred who would challenge his rule. Chastain wisely offers Vidal her support.

Over the next several years, Vidal is first exposed to voodoo, the faith espoused by many of the Haitian and Caribbean residents. Due to both his upper-class breeding and severely Catholic faith, Vidal takes an instant dislike to the religion and discourages its practice among the Kindred.

- **779 A.G.:** The remaining Kindred who oppose Vidal's reign launch a guerrilla war against his supporters.
- **782 A.G.:** Elisabetta Putanesca of the Sangiovanni bloodline and wielder of powerful influence within the growing Warehouse District becomes a powerful ally of the new Prince. Her support inspires many of the "rebel" Kindred to accept Vidal's rule.
- **788 A.G.:** Fire destroys nearly every building in Neo Orleans.
- **794 A.G.:** New fires destroy 200 buildings. These fires also destroy many of the havens of the remaining rebels. The survivors, led by the Mekhet Francois Nicholas du Valle, believe the fires to have been a deliberate attack. They redouble their efforts against Vidal.
- **795 A.G.:** Vidal Embraces Emmanuel Costa.
- **799 A.G.:** Baron Cimitiere first arrives in Neo Orleans, along with a population of Haitian refugees.
- **805 A.G.:** Neo Orleans is considered an independent city-state.

- **814 A.G.:** Under cover of the guild battles, du Valle begins a rebellion against Vidal's rule. The first members of the Infiores bloodline take havens in Neo Orleans.
- **815 A.G.:** Du Valle attempts an assassination of Vidal, aided by the Prince's own childe, but the attempt is thwarted by the efforts of Putanesca and Vidal's ally and Seneschal from Spain, Philip Maldonato. Both du Valle and Costa are put to Final Death. To this night, Vidal has never taken another childe due, some say, to the shame of Costa's betrayal.
- **835 A.G.:** Vidal begins parceling out various neighborhoods and areas to his allies, granting them their own territorial rights.
- **862 A.G.:** Roger Halliburton, a northern Gangrel, arrives and attempts to establish a power base in the city. He woos both Baron Cimitiere, who has attained a sizable following between the vodouisants population, and Miss Opal, the Nosferatu Priscus, but both are wise enough to remain neutral.
- **865 A.G.:** Putanesca steps down from Primogen council and becomes the first holder of the French Quarter.
- **877 A.G.:** Vidal stops opposing the entry of certain elders to the Primogen based on clan; Miss Opal declines to become the first Nosferatu Primogen of Neo Orleans so that she may carry on her (self-imposed) duties as Priscus.

Vidal increases his efforts against voodoo practitioners and against those Kindred forming a power base among them. This includes Baron Cimitiere on both counts. Cimitiere finally begins negotiations to ally with Halliburton.

- **894-95 A.G.:** Both Roger Halliburton and Elisabetta Putanesca are destroyed – the Gangrel at the hands of a crowd of vodouisants angered at his predilection for preying on their children; the Sangiovanni by assailants unknown.
- **896 A.G.:** Antoine Savoy steps in as Putanesca's "heir," becoming lord of the French Quarter. He claims to be a close compatriot of Putanesca's and has sufficient access to her knowledge and political allies that Vidal is unwilling to challenge his claim to the Quarter.
- **897-913 A.G.:** Vidal and Savoy clash frequently as the Lord of the French Quarter expands his influence into other neighborhoods and builds a substantial power base among Neo Orleans' disenfranchised. The city develops the three-way stalemate between Vidal, Savoy, and Cimitiere, which persists to this night.
- **914 A.G.:** Rumors spread that Vidal and Cimitiere hold a series of meetings. Most local Kindred dismiss these rumors as highly improbable, given the hatred between the two Kindred.
- **915 A.G.:** A rash of killings takes place in the city's poorest districts. Both Cimitiere and Savoy investigate the possibility of Kindred or occult influence, but if either party finds anything, they do not make their knowledge public.
- **925 A.G.:** The Nosferatu known as Sundown opens his first Kindred-friendly club in Neo Orleans. Vidal and Savoy begin jockeying for Sundown's support, but he remains neutral.
- **949 A.G.:** Miss Opal disappears, leaving power among the local Nosferatu in the hands of several hand-selected proxies.
- **975 A.G.:** Miss Opal returns from torpor. This time, in hopes of improving her clan's standing from within Vidal's government, she claims a seat on Vidal's council of elders when it is offered.
- **992 A.G.:** Coco Duquette is invited to join Vidal's Primogen, to the surprise of many.

[“New Orleans Tonight,” p. 271. The first paragraph of this section in the left column of the page should be replaced with the following:]

Remarkably, little has changed among Neo Orleans Kindred since the 970s. The city has continued to slowly expand, drawing an ever-larger population of vampires to the domain. The Masquerade is relatively easy to maintain here, but the reasons for it are doubly important. The French Quarter in particular and many other neighborhoods as well, boast an astonishingly high crime rate. The thieves' guild, assassins' guild, Machine servants, and the constant influx of smugglers and drifters, especially during Mardi Gras, represent a very dangerous and enticing situation for the Damned. Given the city's occult reputation, it is very easy for witnesses to dismiss what they see, turning away and regarding it as simply none of their business. All of these factors, as well as the presence of three separate Kindred factions all seeking support and alliances against the others, combine to create a city with a Kindred population vastly unlike anywhere else in the world.

[“*The Invictus*,” p. 275. The first paragraph of this section in the left column of the page should read as the following:]

The Neo Orleans Invictus bitterly resent the dominance that the Sanctified exert over the city. Neo Orleans has passed through the hands of multiple rulers during its history, any one of which could have provided the occasion for a change of power among the Kindred as well. Further, while no records survive to prove any such thing, most local Kindred believe that the first Kindred to arrive, in the nights before the coming of Prince Vidal, were Invictus. A great many members of the First Estate in this city honestly believe that Neo Orleans is rightfully theirs. Of course, Invictus Kindred tend to believe that every domain is rightfully theirs, but in this instance they feel particularly strongly about it.

[“*Pierpont McGinn, Ventrue Member of the Inner Circle*,” p. 275. The first sentence of this section beginning, “McGinn, who was born during...” in the right column of the page should be replaced with the following:]

McGinn is the absolute epitome of the archetypal Southern businessman.

[“*The Circle of the Crone*,” p. 276. The second and third paragraphs in the right column of the page beginning “Baron Cimitiere espouses a belief...” should be replaced with the following:]

Baron Cimitiere espouses a belief that the voodoo loa are the source of the Kindred race – that each clan, and indeed each distinct bloodline, is the scion of a different spirit. This belief directly flouts the precepts supported by the Lancea Sanctum. So long as the Sanctified dominate Neo Orleans, Baron Cimitiere’s struggles will continue. They will never leave him or his followers to go their own way. On the other hand, Cimitiere’s enormous sway over a specific group of the city’s mortal residents makes him a force to be reckoned with. More than once Cimitiere has subtly urged the local voodooists to activity, whether gathering on the steps of the local government to oppose an unpopular decree or rising to near-riotous fervor after an unfair court verdict. Such demonstrations come and go in the eyes of the mortal populace, but among the Damned, the message is clear: Baron Cimitiere can crush any single Kindred in town by focusing mortal attention on them. Neither Vidal nor Savoy can move overtly against him out of fear of being snuffed out in a single act of reciprocity, so they must move subtly. Indeed, word has spread among Kindred loyal to neither Savoy nor Vidal that the Baron could be Prince if he so chose, claiming the title by denying the ability to make any move to his rivals. Whether this is true – and whether the Baron acts upon it – remains to be seen.

Baron Cimitiere, Samedi *houngan* and Regent

Perhaps the most enigmatic figure in Neo Orleans, Baron Cimitiere is a savior to some, a threat to others, and a mystery to all. This strange Kindred arrived in Neo Orleans in 799 A.G., having left the Caribbean during revolts and witch-hunts against the Kindred. Of his days before, he speaks little, even to his most trusted followers. None know if he was native to Haiti or traveled there at some point from elsewhere. He says only that he faced Final Death in Haiti and was restored to his current incarnation through the aid of the great loa Baron Samedi. Whether he speaks metaphorically or literally is another detail of which he does not speak, but he ascribes his devotion to voodoo to that event. Cimitiere claims to have no fear at all of Final Death, if by that death he can accomplish his goals. To hear him tell it, he has faced death once already and Baron Samedi returned him to the world. If his task is incomplete, he has no doubt that the Baron will do so again – though it should be pointed out that he is in no rush to test this belief. Baron Cimitiere is therefore unwilling to back down from his principles, even well past the point where other Kindred might do so. This, more than anything else, makes him a threat to both Vidal and Savoy, and a frustration to the unaligned.

[“*The Unaligned*,” p. 278-279. In the section about Sundown in the right column of the page, the first paragraph should be replaced with the following:]

Since the restoration of the city, at least one of Neo Orleans’ Kindred has managed to not only survive but to come into his own without involving himself in the numerous political or philosophical factions. With the rise of the city back to a functioning society came the reemergence of nightclubs and the Nosferatu known as Sundown took advantage of the opportunity. He began with a single establishment, a club that happened to be Kindred-hospitable, with private rooms (even made available as emergency havens for the right fee) and a rather unusual selection of beverages in the “members only” section. Sundown not only thrived during the city’s reconstruction, opening several additional establishments, but his focus on Kindred customers allowed him to make it through with no loss of income or prestige. In fact,

as both Vidal and Savoy became regular patrons of his establishment, the apolitical Sundown found himself wielding more potential influence than he ever wanted. Tonight, he has the ear of nearly every powerful Kindred in the city, and a powerful bargaining chip – that is, the use of his establishments – to boot. So far, he has rarely taken advantage of that position, but should he ever side specifically with one of Neo Orleans’ three factions, that support could tip the balance of power.

[“*The Crescent City*,” p. 279-280. The third paragraph of this section in the right column should be omitted.]

[“*Neo Orleans at a Glance*,” p. 280. The following information in the sidebar should be replaced with the following:]

Curfew: Technically, no person is allowed on the streets after 11:00 PM. However, the actual enforcement of this edict depends entirely on the district of the city that one is in, as well as the capricious nature of the thieves’ and assassins’ guilds, not to mention the Kindred.

Economy: Neo Orleans remains the poorest of all remaining settlements in North America. Technology levels are low, and the city itself has progressed little since Gehenna.

Government: Neo Orleans has an elected mayor and a city council, though these are largely figureheads to cover the maneuverings of the two guilds, who are in essence the true rulers of the city when it comes to mortal affairs.

Population: Just over 750,000 in the city, but those numbers increase greatly depending on the time of year and with the number of smugglers and transporters passing through the city.

Religion: Roman Catholicism predominates even in these nights, though voodoo and a number of other religious beliefs are common enough.

[“*Mardi Gras*,” p. 280-281. The second paragraph in the right column of the page should be replaced with the following:]

For as long as it lasts, Carnival practically turns the city inside out. Massive swaths of town, including the French Quarter, become congested knots. Any semblance of order is tossed aside as thousands pour out onto the streets wearing their favorite faces, ready to unburden their spirits with a little good-natured debauchery. Every year, on the day before Mardi Gras, the mayor of the city steps down so that Rex, the King of Carnival, may rule Neo Orleans for 24 hours. This transfer of power is merely symbolic, but it does accurately represent the regard in which the city holds its favored holiday.

Despite the joyous nature of the festival, it tends to be anything but a completely happy time. The days following Mardi Gras are often somber affairs, as a violent city becomes ever more turbulent. Murder, rape, and every form of sin increase ten-fold during Carnival, as the citizens let loose their darker natures, pent-up frustrations, and inhibitions upon each other. The Kindred feed wantonly, the guilds war openly, and when it is over, the survivors are left to pick up the pieces.

[“*Mardi Gras*,” p. 281. The last paragraph of this section in the left column of the page should be omitted.]

[“*The Lay of the Land*,” p. 281. This section should be replaced with the following:]

Neo Orleans sits at the southern end of the broad Mississippi flood plain, bisected to the south by the river. It occupies roughly seven miles by eight miles in area. The city itself, although lifted above its pre-Gehenna local height of the water table by tectonic shifting, is still slowly but steadily sinking into the ocean due to the power of the river and the looseness of the region’s soil. Erosion cuts away nearly 40 square miles of coastal march annually, advancing the gulf northward at a rate of 12.5 miles every year.

The following represents only a broad overview of the city’s prominent districts, with some discussion of a few important highlights therein. Storytellers are encouraged to fill in the details as needed.

[“*Central Business District*,” p. 281. This section should be replaced with the following:]

The commercial sector of Neo Orleans (along with its sub-district, the Warehouse District), this area of the city is where the city’s business transactions, both legal and illicit take place. Canal Street marks the boundary between Downtown and Uptown, as well as the dividing line between the assassins’ guild and thieves’ guild, respectively. Prince Vidal has spared little expense in bringing more desirable elements to the fore in this, “his” district, while sparing an equally small amount of expense in the crushing of those

intrusions he would not tolerate. To wit, most of this area was once an extension of the seedy red-light district. Over time, Vidal and his mortal cohorts (both known and unknown) pushed, bought, and maneuvered their vision into reality. Tonight, the CBD is the site of several important structures, including City Hall, though the indistinct boundaries of the red-light district still overlap with this area.

The CBD's sub-district, the Warehouse District, was once the hub of much city activity and it still is, though for the more unsavory characters frequenting the city. Commonly referred to as "the Slums," the Warehouse District, despite being the location of many living spaces for the poor of the city, is not a safe place for anyone to roam after dark. Only the brave and desperate roam the streets here after sunset, unless they have business with the disreputable elements that this area attracts. A number of small bars and whorehouses provide the area with meager forms of entertainment for those willing to venture there.

On a political level, the Prince likes to use the district as a bargaining chip with those who entreat him for acknowledgement in the city. Kindred know that the Prince could make their unives difficult simply by carving up an established resident's domain on their behalf, so many new arrivals request space in the only area that has not been claimed by another Kindred (or krewe of Kindred, as certain coteries call themselves). In this way, the Prince extorts favors (and often credits or negotiable influences) from those whom he would set up with "low-cost Kindred housing." His strategy has worked, for the most part, and the CBD is now full of Kindred who owe the Prince a debt. Prince Vidal takes no haven for himself in this characterless district, of course.

[*"Lower Garden District,"* p. 281-283. This section should be replaced with the following:]

Bordering the CBD to the southwest is the Lower Garden District, the old and faded sibling to the younger Garden District. The streets are named after Greek gods – including a series of intersecting blocks named after the Muses, but the district's glory days are long gone. The same wealthy elite that had supported the growth and reconstruction of the area moved uptown to the newer Garden District, where all the real action was. Many of the beautiful homes left behind have since become decrepit, eroding the area's former charm. There are those who wish to restore the area, but it is an uphill battle, to say the least.

For decades upon decades, the Lower Garden District has been the home of the eldest member of Prince Vidal's Primogen council, the Daeva Pearl Chastain. She claims to be instrumental in the current plans to redevelop the district. Should her plan succeed, she can bask in the appreciation of both herself and her kind. Among the Kindred, Pearl has come to be synonymous with the Lower Garden District, and many believe that nothing and no one could ever get her to abandon it now.

[*"Garden District,"* p. 283. This section should be replaced with the following:]

Perhaps the largest, most obvious contrast in the Crescent City is the style and appearance of the area known as Uptown as compared to the French Quarter to the east. The Garden District (and Uptown to its west) is a spacious and clean architectural marvel. In addition to the commercial and residential developments, Uptown is also the location of the thieves' guild headquarters. The area is sometimes referred to as the Thieves' District.

Again, the parallels provide juxtaposition. Despite their obvious differences, Garden District shares much in common with the Quarter. While the French Quarter is given much more credit for being dangerous at night, certain sections of Garden District are just as unsafe after dark, if not more so. Prince Vidal, who maintains several havens in the area, would be quick to dispute that claim, but the facts remain, and anyone wise enough to pay attention to them sees the truth of it.

Garden District is not particularly large on its own (not taking into account the rest of Uptown). In fact, it is smaller than the French Quarter and the Lower Garden District, stretching only from St. Charles Avenue to Magazine Street, between Jackson and Louisiana Avenues. The area is primarily residential, and many of its prominent residences are either extant personal homes or former personal residences. Garden District is also home to Lafayette Cemetery, which is one of the city's most fascinating visual treats.

[*"Mid-City,"* p. 283. This section should be replaced with the following:]

The part of Neo Orleans that is considered the most "urban" and the least historic is the district known as Mid-City. Easily the largest district in town, Mid-City is a general catchall term for what most people consider the north part of downtown Neo Orleans. It runs roughly from North Claiborne Avenue in the south to City Park Avenue in the north, with its northern border defined by the remains of the Neo Orleans Country Club to the west and the City Park to the east. Amid the high-rises of this ultramodern district is the headquarters of the assassins' guild.

Mid-City is the least characteristically defined of Neo Orleans' districts, and the greatest mix of cultures and ethnicities can be found here. The majorities of the city's Asian and Hispanic immigrants live and work in Mid-City, and few sites of any import or interest to either Kindred or kine are located here. The district has seen extensive development in recent years, but the work has been hyper-localized, without any broader sense of urban planning, and the area has suffered as a result. The district is riddled with crime of all varieties, making feeding that much easier. Given its age and condition, Mid-City is home to a number of young Kindred who could not hope for feeding rights in better parts of town. Still, the young Mekhet Primogen Coco Duquette has roots here, and she still strives to represent the Kindred of Mid-City as though she were their agent.

[“Esplanade Ridge,” p. 283-284. This section should be replaced with the following:]

Like St. Charles Avenue in Uptown, Esplanade Avenue is a beautiful residential area, dotted with lovely homes and shaded by a continuous oak canopy running up and down its length. Set against the side of the city's biggest park, Esplanade Ridge boasts a number of interesting features, including its own pleasant bayou and a massive horse racetrack, which attracts a number of the more wealthy citizens of the city, where they place wagers on more things than simply the outcome of a race. The homes here are less extravagant than those Uptown, lending the area a quiet dignity lacking in the former area. The ridge itself is a strip of high ground extending from the Quarter to Bayou St. John, the ridge's sub-district and the oldest part of Neo Orleans. Settlers recognized the advantages of erecting homes up here, away from the ravages of the seasonal floods. Aside from the homes, the only notable landmarks in this area are City Park and Bayou St. John. The City Park is impressive. At 1,500 acres, it is the country's fifth-largest urban park. It boasts bayou lagoons and live oaks draped in Spanish moss. The Interstate 610 goes through the park, but it is hardly drivable except with only the sturdiest vehicles, as the park has claimed much of its lost territory back.

Bayou St. John, the old sub-district to the west of the ridge, abuts Mid-City to the south, the park to the north and the bayou itself to the east. Some years back, the Prince forbade any Kindred from settling or feeding in Bayou St. John, but has not to this night explained the reason for the edict. This stony silence only furthers rumors about Vidal.

[“Treme District,” p. 284. This section should be replaced with the following:]

Traditionally populated by black Creoles, this small district bears the distinction of being Neo Orleans first true suburb. Situated lakeside of the French Quarter's old walls, now North Rampart Street, this mostly poor neighborhood is but a shadow of the quaint area it once was. The rundown (and often derelict) condition of many of the district's once beautiful buildings has caused some residents to rally of late, in an attempt to revive the area, which is often subject to rampant flooding with every heavy thunderstorm. Progress is slow, much as it is in the Lower Garden District, for many consider the Treme nothing but a lost cause.

Still, a number of important sites are located here, amid and beneath all the crime and grime. One of the most wondrous churches in the region, St. Augustine's, is located here. Although the tectonic shifting has left it a little the worse for wear, the fact that it still stands is a marvel in itself. Down the road sits Louis Armstrong Park, the place commemorating the legendary jazz cornetist and singer. Tonight, there's even a radio station that broadcasts from the park itself.

Treme District is known for being a gathering place of Kindred at certain times of the year. Many believe that some kind of a vampiric system of barter or debate has arisen between the various Kindred krewes in the city, while others think it is nothing more than a convenient, out-of-the-way spot for hip neonates to congregate in relative peace. Whatever the truth, the activities of these Kindred don't cause enough of a problem to draw the Prince's attention... yet.

[“The Vieux Carre,” p. 284. The first paragraph of this section should be replaced with the following:]

The jewel in the crown of the Big Easy, this relatively small section of Neo Orleans has risen to surpass all others in popularity and renown. The Vieux Carre, meaning the “old quarter,” measures only six blocks by 13 blocks, yet it is one of the most densely packed districts of any city. The French Quarter, as it has come to be known, claims many of Neo Orleans' entertainment spots and places of interest, all within walking distance of one another. Called simply the Quarter by the locals, the district is centered on Jackson Square and abuts the river to the east, the Faubourg Marigny to the north and the Warehouse District to the

south. It claims less than 15,000 permanent residents in even the busiest months, but each of them is a potential vessel for its lord, Antoine Savoy.

[“*The Vieux Carre*,” p. 284. The sentence in the second paragraph of this section in the right column of the page beginning “When Savoy grew clever...” should be replaced with the following:]

When Savoy grew clever and worked toward making the French Quarter a place to lure visitors of the city, the Prince responded by fighting fire with fire, declaring a great many buildings in the Vieux Carre to be Elysium.

[“*Augusto Vidal, Prince of Neo Orleans*,” p. 285-286. Prince Vidal’s date of Embrace, the first, second, and fourth paragraphs of his description beginning respectively “Among the Kindred...,” “Valencian by birth and...,” and “The last and greatest of these tests...” in the right column of the page on p. 285, and the sentence beginning “He speaks with the sharp...” in the third paragraph in the left column of p. 286 should be replaced with the following:]

Embrace: 701 A.G.

Among the Kindred, the name of Augusto Vidal has come to be synonymous with two things: the city of Neo Orleans and the determination of Ventrué superiority. Few cities in North America can claim so many trials and tribulations as can Neo Orleans, and yet through it all, Vidal has endured. He is the first and only Prince the region has recognized, and as a result, he has come to be seen as something of an icon among young clan members across North America and beyond. Sadly, few realize the toll that unceasing dominion has taken on Vidal.

Valencian by birth and Cordoban by marriage, Augusto Vidal was a petty Spanish noble who believed that his only hope for greatness was to earn it politically. He entered the Armatech Corporation’s ranks and aspired to attain the rank of CEO, hoping that he might eventually amass enough power to sway national politics. Yet, his corporate successes, while consistently solid, came few and far between. Therefore, in an ironic twist, Vidal was ultimately Paired to a land-owning Andalusian noblewoman whose father sought to legitimize her through marriage.

...The last and greatest of these tests came during several bloody skirmishes with Souleaters, when Vidal’s sire bade him to take a direct role in commanding the forces designated in ferreting out the insidious creatures. Largely successful, Vidal’s sire asked that he goes and represent his interests in the city of Neo Orleans. Vidal saw his one chance at freedom and accepted, knowing that it would mean an end to both the Vinculum and the infuriating tether that kept him tied to his sire. The sense of duty he’d shown his sire, however, would be replaced by a sense of duty to his clan and the Catholic faith.

...He speaks with the sharp, authoritative staccato that characterizes his countrymen, and even after so many decades in North America, has never shed his thick accent... or even cared to.

[“*Antoine Savoy, Lord of the French Quarter*,” p. 286-287. Antoine’s date of Embrace, and the first and second paragraphs of his description beginning respectively “Antoine Savoy claims to have...” in the right column of p. 286 and “Ever since the Quarter...” in the right column of p. 286 continuing on to p. 287 should be replaced with the following:]

Embrace: Savoy claims his Embrace was in the early 700’s. Neo Orleans Kindred who have reason to believe otherwise suspect that it was closer to 840 A.G.

Antoine Savoy claims to have been an established elder in Neo Orleans since 762 A.G. He also claims to have been a companion and ally of the former French Quarter lord, Elisabetta Putanesca of the Sangiovanni bloodline, until her disappearance in the late 800s. In neither case has anyone found evidence to back his claims. He appears in no records, nor in the memories of any elder Kindred – including those who knew Elisabetta well – before 848. Even after Savoy’s first noted appearance, none of Elisabetta’s allies recall that they had any substantial contact. Regardless, Antoine Savoy succeeded in exerting dominion over Neo Orleans’ French Quarter not long after Elisabetta vanished, partially because he did indeed seem to have access to her knowledge and the backing of many of her most potent allies. He maintains that his apparent nonexistence before 848 is simply a testament to his ability to keep his activities secret.

Ever since the Quarter developed into the attraction that it is tonight, Savoy has used his dominance over it to expand his influence. Engaged in a constant, bitter struggle with Prince Vidal, who refuses to recognize his legitimacy to grant territory and feeding rights, Savoy has actually used the cold war as a means of cementing his own authority. A native Creole (or so he appears), he plays upon the

concerns of the locals. Savoy portrays himself as Catholic, but he is accepting of the precepts of voodoo. He even incorporates voodoo practices into his Catholic rites, a melding uncommon but not unheard of in Neo Orleans. In so doing, he increases the enmity of Prince Vidal (for “polluting” the faith) and Baron Cimitiere (who believes that Savoy uses voodoo purely as a tool to gain support among its followers).

[“*Baron Cimitiere*,” p. 287. Baron Cimitiere’s clan, Humanity, and the first paragraph of his description beginning “Perhaps the most enigmatic...” should be replaced with the following:]

Clan: Nosferatu (Samedi)

Humanity: 5

Perhaps the most enigmatic figure in Neo Orleans, Baron Cimitiere is a savior to some, a threat to others, and a mystery to all. This strange Kindred arrived in the city in 799, having left Haiti after joining an even stranger bloodline of Nosferatu. Of his time before, he speaks little, even to his most trusted followers. No one knows if he was native to Haiti or he traveled there at some point from elsewhere. He says only that he faced Final Death in Haiti and was restored to his current incarnation through the aid of the great loa Baron Samedi. Whether he speaks metaphorically or literally is another detail that he does not speak, but he attributes his devotion to voodoo to that event.

[“*Philip Maldonato, Advisor and Priscus*,” p. 288. Philip’s date of Embrace and complete description should be replaced with the following:]

Embrace: 752 A.G.

In the year 602 A.G., the Armatech Corporation embarked on a crusade to weed out Spain of the noxious presence of “undesirables,” namely those who had differing ideologies with the corporation. Although many wanted the subversive elements to be removed, few wished for their complete elimination. One Muslim Mekhet going by the moniker Al-Mohager found the actions of the corporation striking. As a scholar and peaceful libertarian, Al-Mohager could not understand whence such hatred and intolerance could come and he found the entire affair morbidly fascinating. He’d never been a particularly rebellious or confrontational man in life. In death, he was even less so. Therefore, when the Armatech Corporation began their purge, forcing those not in their employ to work or die, he voluntarily went into torpor.

A century-and-a-half later, Al-Mohager awoke to find his home much changed. The Armatech Corporation had followed through on its threats, and millions had been forcibly evicted during his long rest. The Armatech Corporation had grown both fat and overambitious and had made numerous enemies through other corporations. With a possibly hostile takeover on the verge of happening any night, Al-Mohager decided that it was time to pass the torch. He could no longer deal with the place his own home had become, but with so much at stake, he needed to ensure his legacy’s survival. And so, he took a child – an honorable corporate soldier by the name of Philip Maldonato.

One of Al-Mohager’s former allies, a Cordoban Ventrue of considerable honor and traditional ethics, was delighted to see that his colleague had finally taken a child. Cordoba’s star was no longer the brightest in the Spanish crown, now that the corporation’s were the order of the day, and many Spanish Ventrue found themselves caught up in the frenzy surrounding the Armatech Corporation’s ambitions. The Ventrue asked if Philip would watch over his own child, a corporate man named Vidal, in whom he had placed much of his hopes. Philip was eager to oblige, and all throughout the Souleater incursions, Philip remained at Vidal’s side, eager to advise and protect.

After the skirmishes, Vidal was sent to administrate the city of Neo Orleans, and although his official duty had been fulfilled, Philip, who had developed a fondness for the Spaniard, decided to accompany Vidal to Neo Orleans to continue in his capacity as advisor. The Mekhet would never again leave Vidal’s side.

Philip Maldonato is a very tall fellow. His skin is dusky and smooth, with only the merest hint of the wrinkles of age around his deep-set eyes, which sparkle faintly whenever he thinks hard on something. He favors hand-tailored business suits (black and gray, mostly) when seen in public or by the Prince’s side. In private, Philip occasionally indulges the static habits of times before his Requiem, wearing anachronistic clothing and collecting fine furniture that are now considered “antique.”

[“*Pearl Chastain, Primogen*,” p. 289-290. Pearl’s date of Embrace, and the sentences referring to quantities of time in the second and third paragraphs of her description beginning respectively “During the city’s...” in the right column of p. 289 and “Come the 21st century...” in the left column of p. 290 should be replaced with the following:]

Embrace: 726 A.G.

...During the city's booming period just centuries previous, Pearl was one of the most active and influential Kindred in the city.

...Currently, Pearl is but an echo of her former self, bereft of vibrancy or even motivation.

[“Miss Opal, Primogen,” p. 290. Miss Opal’s date of Embrace and the first paragraph of her description in the right column of p. 290 beginning “Miss Opal – she goes by...” should be replaced with the following:]

Embrace: 848 A.G.

Miss Opal – she goes by no other name – is the self-appointed conscience of Prince Vidal’s court. The child and childe of former blood slaves, she first gained real status when she led a campaign to make sure that the Nosferatu had a place in the new order of the city. The clan’s Priscus for many years, she disappeared into torpor during the middle decades of the last century. Reemerging around 978, she has spent the years since attempting to both regain her previous status – in which she has largely been successful, due to the efforts of many Nosferatu who remember her from before – and sway the direction of Prince Vidal’s political alignment. She is one of the eldest of the city’s Primogen, as well as a constant irritant to the Prince. She recently turned down the honor of becoming Priscus for the Nosferatu once more, determining that another title, even an informal one, might interfere with her duties and efforts as Primogen.

[“Coco Duquette, Primogen,” p. 291. Coco’s date of Embrace, and the first and third paragraph of her description in the right column of p. 291 beginning “Although Coco Duquette was born...” should be replaced with the following:]

Embrace: 892

Although Coco Duquette was born nearly two centuries ago, she considers herself a child of the modern era. An elderly gentleman who seemed to want nothing more than the pleasure of her company rescued her from a life of prostitution. Given the fate of some other prostitutes of the day, Coco was more than a little apprehensive when the man offered her his hand, but something in his demeanor put her at ease and she found herself stepping happily into his carriage and out of her former life.

...Once the protégé had once again reached her sire’s predetermined level of wisdom and preparedness, he released her from her tutelage and left her to pursue her dream. Toward the end of the last century, Coco made her way onto the Prince’s Primogen council by proving her worthiness as one who not only knew the hopes and dreams of the city’s neonates, but as one who would always provide honest counterpoints at the debate table. Coco has never been pleased by the fact that the eldest of her clan is largely apolitical, but she respects his power, and more importantly, his importance to the Prince. She knows that she is no match for the Priscus, neither physically nor politically, but she hopes that by making herself nearly as indispensable to the Prince as is her rival, she might be able to have more of an impact on the city’s power structure once he is asleep. If this is the game, then Coco Duquette intends to play it well.

[“Sundown, the Afterhours King,” p. 292. Sundown’s date of Embrace should be replaced with the following:]

Embrace: 915

[“Lidia Kendall,” p. 293. Lidia’s date of Embrace and the first paragraph of her description in the right column of p. 291 beginning “Born in 1869...” should be replaced with the following:]

Embrace: 869

Born in 853, Lidia was the product of the rape of a young white woman by a black worker employed by her uncle. Her mother treated her as a burden and a mark of shame, and Lidia grew up with a neurotic mixture of hatred and fascination for those who had been abused. Hers would likely have been a short and inconsequential life had the child not caught the eye of Roger Halliburton, a northern Gangrel who arrived in Neo Orleans in May of 862 A.G. A pedophile since before he was a vampire, Halliburton intended to keep Lidia as a ghoul and vessel, but when she was trampled by a maddened horse in 869, her patron – in a paroxysm of what he thought was love – chose to Embrace her.

[“Natasha Preston,” p. 294. Natasha’s clan, date of Embrace, bloodline derangement, the first paragraph of her description in the left column beginning “A relative newcomer...” and the sentence

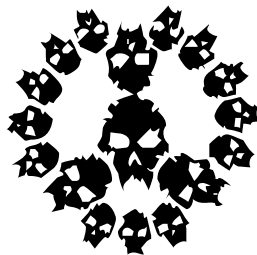
in the second paragraph of her description in the right column beginning “Whatever happened, she left...” should be replaced with the following:]

Clan: Ventrue

Embrace: 967

A relative newcomer to both Neo Orleans and the world of the Kindred in general, Natasha Preston was a typical daughter of wealth in corporate London. Her family sent all their children to corporate tutelage in the hopes that they would rise up and become leading figures of authority. Natasha, who had a mind and fascination for business and politics, mastered those fields and found herself on the fast track to corporate success, given her combination of skills, education, and absolutely merciless and cutthroat practices. At least, she was until she and her employer found themselves caught up with the sorts of “businessmen” who take rather more direct action than litigation when they believe they’ve been cheated. It was then, as the life ebbed from her, that Preston met one of her employer’s other illicit patrons – a Ventrue named Constance. First as a simple pawn, then as a ghoul, and finally as a childe, Preston served her sire as a liaison to the world of corporate structure, something she understood far better than a vampire whose Requiem began before the nights of corporate rule.

... Whatever happened, she left (or was dismissed from) Constance’s service, and somehow convinced Antoine Savoy to take her on in a similar capacity, despite her unfamiliarity with Neo Orleans and her relative youth.



Epilogue: WHAT NIGHTMARES MAY COME

*"Sometimes I'm dreaming
She hopes to open shadowed eyes
On a different world"
- The Cure, "Charlotte Sometimes"*

Kassandra, prophetess of the Infiores, for the first time since she had been turned from the daystar, closed her eyes and let the visions come willingly. Normally she fought against the visions her mind showed to her with all her being. Lately, they had been coming stronger and more often than she could ever remember. Her daysleep over the past few days had been restless, and more than once she had woken up from nightmares covered in blood sweat. This disturbed her greatly; as always, she had thought about clawing her eyes from their sockets, but doubted this would actually help in ceasing the disturbing images.

And disturbing these images were, as Kassandra saw events from the distant past and the coming future unfold before her. For years she had sought to harness this curse, to make sense of the things she witnessed. Now, as she opened herself up fully to her oracular ability for the first time in her unlife, allowing her essence to subsume itself within the particular quirk her Embrace had afflicted her with, it hit her with all the force of a raging hurricane. Her body convulsed furiously as her mind was ravaged with information. For a brief moment, she had an idea of what her grandsire must have endured when she struggled with this affliction.

The origins of the curse of vampirism were revealed to her, and she felt as if a spike had pierced her breast, inflicted by an invisible murderer.

She saw the formation of the clans, not as they are now, but as they once were. Thirteen were reduced to five, with the myriad bloodlines splintering off.

She saw the rise and fall of the Camarilla, and how it lied and misdirected to discredit its rival faction.

She witnessed the events of Gehenna, and learned the truth about what had occurred then.

She saw the covenants coming forth to change vampiric society forevermore.

She was shown the Souleater Overlord spreading to consume the entire globe.

She observed the founder of her bloodline fulfilling his destiny, one that had begun hundreds of years before his mortal birth, all orchestrated and designed by her grandsire and her allies.

She saw the Requiem of every Kindred ending in one final decision.

She perceived the end of the daystar and with it all life on this planet.

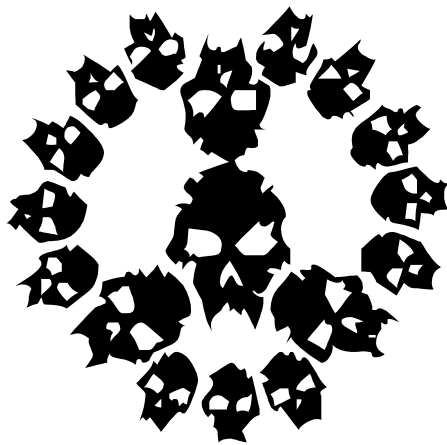
Kassandra cried out in agony and terror, her scream echoing throughout the corridors of Midian. She clenched her jaw closed and inadvertently drove her fangs into her lower lip. At last, the visions subsided, and her body came to rest. Kassandra wept at it all, tears of blood flowing down her ashen cheeks, knowing there was nothing she could do to stop any of this. All she could do is warn those who might listen, and like her mythological namesake, she knew that no one would heed her warnings. Even now, the knowledge she had was fading from her conscious mind, only to be dredged up when the appropriate moment came. Yet, one piece of information remained, one undeniable fact that Kassandra deeply wished she could forget out of everything she had seen this night. Despite everything that had happened, all the bloodshed, sorrow, and pain that had occurred since the Final Night so long ago, she knew the horrible truth.

The worst was yet to come.

AFTER THE JUDGMENT...

This is not
 the world that was,
nor is it
 the land that was promised.
This is the world as it is,
 the world that will be.
The Camarilla is gone,
 but the covenants remain.
Civilization lies in ruins,
 and the Masquerade is shattered and destroyed.
Here we remain,
 trapped in the middle;
 between redemption and damnation,
 between the agony and the ecstasy,
 between our survival and our destruction.
This is our Requiem for an eternal existence of undeath,
 trapped upon a planet waiting for its death knell.
Tell me, my love,
 would you care to dance with the dead?
 - Natalie Campbell, Invictus elder

A SOLEMN DIRGE FOR A BROKEN WORLD



For use with the **World of Future Darkness Rulebook**