

Children of the Night



A gallery of characters for vampire: the masquerade™



Children
of the Night™

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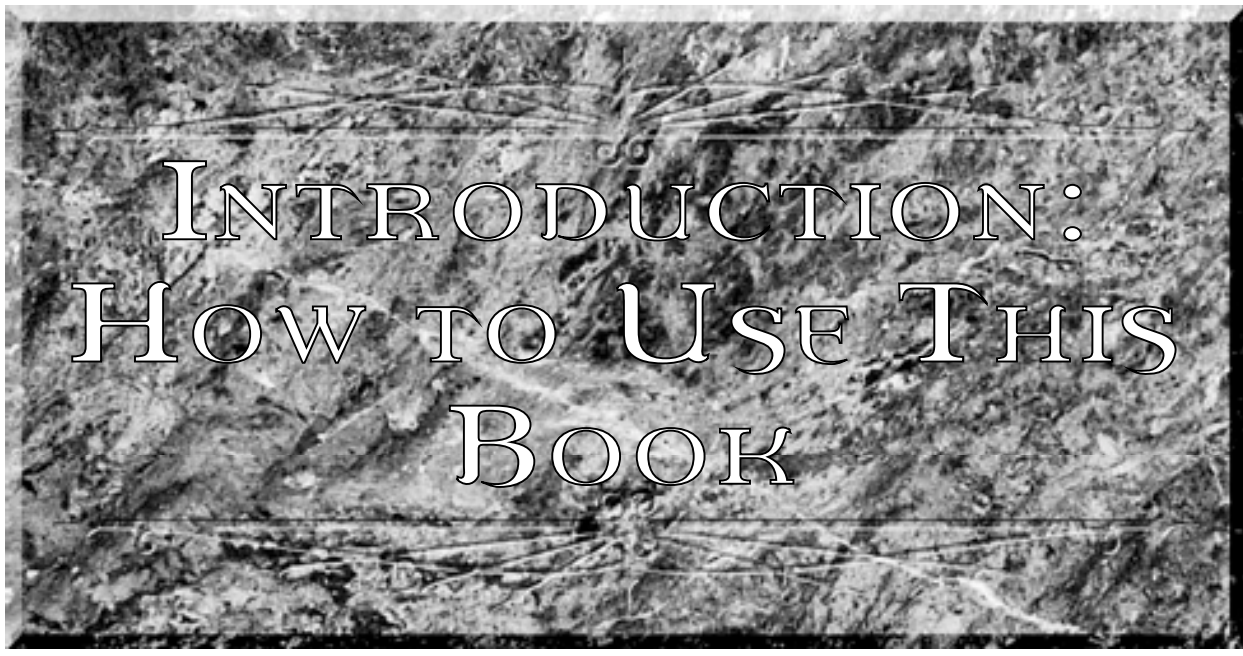


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INTRODUCTION: HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This is the kind of book that gives a game developer hives.

No two Storytellers run their **Vampire** games the same way. Far too many variables exist for every game of **Vampire** to share common styles. Some Storytellers offer more experience points to their players than others do. Some Storytellers are far more liberal in allowing strange bloodlines and Disciplines to the characters than others. Some chronicles allow horror and mystery to take a back seat to action and adventure.

Which combination is correct? None of them and all of them. In the end, **Vampire** is a game, and the only element of any import is whether or not the troupe is enjoying itself.

That's all fine and good, and quite lofty. But when it comes to a book of important characters, none of that means a damn thing. The moment this book hits shelves — the very second Archon Theo Bell makes his appearance in a game — some combat-gumby twink with eight levels of Celerity and a shotgun full of Dragonsbreath rounds is going to lay him to waste. No sooner do you detail the Traits of a Black Hand Seraph than some hyperactive knucklehead has his fourth-generation vampire space-alien character with 300 dots of Disciplines chop said Seraph to flinders with a Scottish claymore.

Stuff like that makes designers and writers wince.

Why, then, did we decide to do this book? For two reasons: People wanted it, and it needed to be done.

Of course people wanted it. Enthusiasts of the World of Darkness are some of the most loyal and clever fans alive. They enjoy seeing each new book, peeling back its layers of mystery and opening the new puzzles beneath the grim

façades. Each mystery hides two more beneath it, and players enjoy digging them up.

As for the fact that it needed to be done, we had to look no further than the books on our shelves. **Vampire** is so rich and complex that what we thought would be a simple cross-referencing of the characters in various books turned out to be a Byzantine trek through the labyrinth of our back catalog. Carlak? Who's that? When was Petrodon justicar? Why are there two different regents named? To that end, we have assembled the **Vampire** social registry. The Inner Council has selected a new cadre of justicars, who have in turn chosen elite archons. The Sabbat appoints new bishops and archbishops nightly, much to the Camarilla princes' dismay, while the independents scheme and plot away from the sects' prying eyes.

This, then, is the Roll of the Damned. Look upon the Children of the Night.

THE NUMBERS BEHIND THE FACES

How do vampires come to be? How many dots should a Sabbat priscus have? How strong is the prince? White Wolf has an established system for creating setting-specific **Vampire** Storyteller characters, and we'll let you in on the secret.

The formula, such as it is, for creating a vampire of a given age is quite simple. For Abilities, start with the standard battery of 7/5/3 dots and allocate two more dots for each century of age the vampire has achieved (between *all* Abilities, not each section). Vampires older than a few hundred years should receive only one additional dot per century after the first five or so — when you're that old, it's very hard to improve your timeless body.

Abilities should accumulate in like manner — start with the basic 13/9/5 dots and add five dots for each century of unlife the Kindred manages to survive. With Disciplines, take the square root of the time the vampire has spent undead (which again reflects the difficulty of learning new things when one has been dead for more than a millennium) and distribute that many dots wisely among the character's powers. Concerning Backgrounds, Virtues, Humanity (or Path) scores and Willpower, consider the character's role in the story. Is the character a powerful prince? Stock up on Backgrounds. Is the character an ancient wanderer? Set her Humanity very high or very low and add a significant Willpower Trait. Is the character centuries old and weary with the sins of unlife? Keep all of the aforementioned Traits low. Elder characters who might be expected to have strings of derangements may instead have none, as part of their backstories involve overcoming those dangerous mental states. (It's also worth a mention that the act of adopting a Path of Enlightenment may sometimes have the same effect as a derangement, as any Path's precepts are so radically different from the cultural norm. Who's in a more precarious mental state: the Malkavian with blackouts or the Lasombra who believes it acceptable to flay his ghouls and make them fight for their skins? This is *not* an encouragement to players to seek Paths instead of derangements; rather it is an indication that characters' psyches have far greater depth than simple lists of Traits.)

Naturally, there are exceptions to these rules of thumb. **Children of the Night** contains several characters with potential far beyond that suggested by their periods of unlife. Some archons have spent almost all of their unlives in vigorous training, whereas a given priscus may have devoted centuries toward cultivating a strong network of Backgrounds. Certain paragons of vampiric terror may have developed a fearsome array of Disciplines. That's just how it is.

How does this formula reconcile with the players' characters' power levels? Quite easily, given a bit of consideration.

First, the frenzied activities of the modern nights as Gehenna approaches is a recent development. Whereas it might be common now for a vampire to engage in a firefight or other unlife-threatening activity almost weekly, most elder vampires have led (by comparison) relatively inactive existences. Vampires who brawl nightly in the streets and set each other's havens on fire don't make it to elder status — they die amid the flames or with looks of horror on their faces as the sunlight greets them in their prison cells (explain *that* to the prince, arrogant anarchs). The wise — and old — vampire chooses his fights carefully. The static unlives that most elder vampires lead involve fairly little commotion, which means they garner experience slowly in game terms.

Second, elder vampires spend a good deal of time in torpor. Whereas a young (say, 120 years old) vampire might have learned 10 dots worth of Disciplines in a century, a slumbering Methuselah might have learned only one. This

comparison is slightly misleading, however — the Methuselah may have learned his *eighth* level of Dominate in that century, so don't take him lightly.

Third (and finally), experience becomes harder to gain and expend the older a vampire gets. A veteran of a hundred sword duels (assuming he survives them all) isn't going to learn much from those confrontations unless he continues to fight people better than him. Little insight can be gained from trouncing yet another upstart, as the vampire will have little call to test himself to his limits, which is a requisite for improvement.

As a side note, consider the function of the Storyteller "dot" system. Dots are geometric increases in the character's prowess, not arithmetic increases. Five dots is maximum human capacity for most Traits — a character with Computer 5 is literally one of the most capable computer programmers or power users *in the world*. Think about that next time someone tries to justify *another* character with Firearms 5 who "spent time in 'Nam as a sniper." Characters with scores of 4 in given Traits are rare enough, and the character with a 5 in the same Trait is far and away their superior. Strength 5 is an Olympic weightlifter; Dexterity 5 is a professional ballet dancer. Traits of this magnitude are hardly appropriate for Anonymous Shotgun-Wielding Brujah Thug Number 312. Vampires are rare. Traits above 4 are rare. Vampires with Traits above 4 are *exceedingly* rare — or they've had the time to cultivate them, which doesn't bode well for their lessers.

BACKWARD COMPATIBILITY

Every effort has been made to preserve the integrity of Traits for characters who have appeared in White Wolf books prior to **Children of the Night**. Acting, for example, translates into Performance (acting), while Torture has effectively become Interrogation. In some cases, however, changes had to be made.

Also, bear in mind that some time has elapsed between several of these characters' debuts and their treatment here. New Abilities, rearranged Disciplines, higher Attributes, etc. may show up. Merits and Flaws have been culled altogether where possible — these are primarily intended as story hooks during character creation, and they're optional anyway. (Developer's Note: And I hate them.) Finally, certain... lapses in the characters' states may have occurred. Such is the toll the Beast takes.

That said, there's nothing wrong with the players' characters having *some* significant Traits of their own — your troupe's stories should focus on those characters, so they should have some interesting and noteworthy characteristics. Just beware letting the Traits define the character. It's fine for a character to be among the strongest (smartest, most gorgeous, etc.) people in the world, but there's far more to a true character than a handful of penciled-in dots on a character sheet. Roleplaying and storytelling involve far more than enormous dice pools and godlike powers. Find the balance that fits your game and run with it!

Along those lines, Storytellers are encouraged to monkey with the numbers a bit in this book. Keeping things fresh and surprising for the characters demands that a Storyteller make each new piece of information her own — who cares what we say; we don't run your game! The Traits in this book lend themselves to the game as we see it, and if you see it differently, more power to you.

A CAVALCADE OF MONSTERS

Before we turn the Kindred loose, we caution Storytellers with one final consideration. More important than any rule, more important than any guideline, more important than any sense of what's "fair" is the story, and the story comes first.

This book contains a broad selection of the world's most noteworthy Kindred. Some are veritable gods. Others are


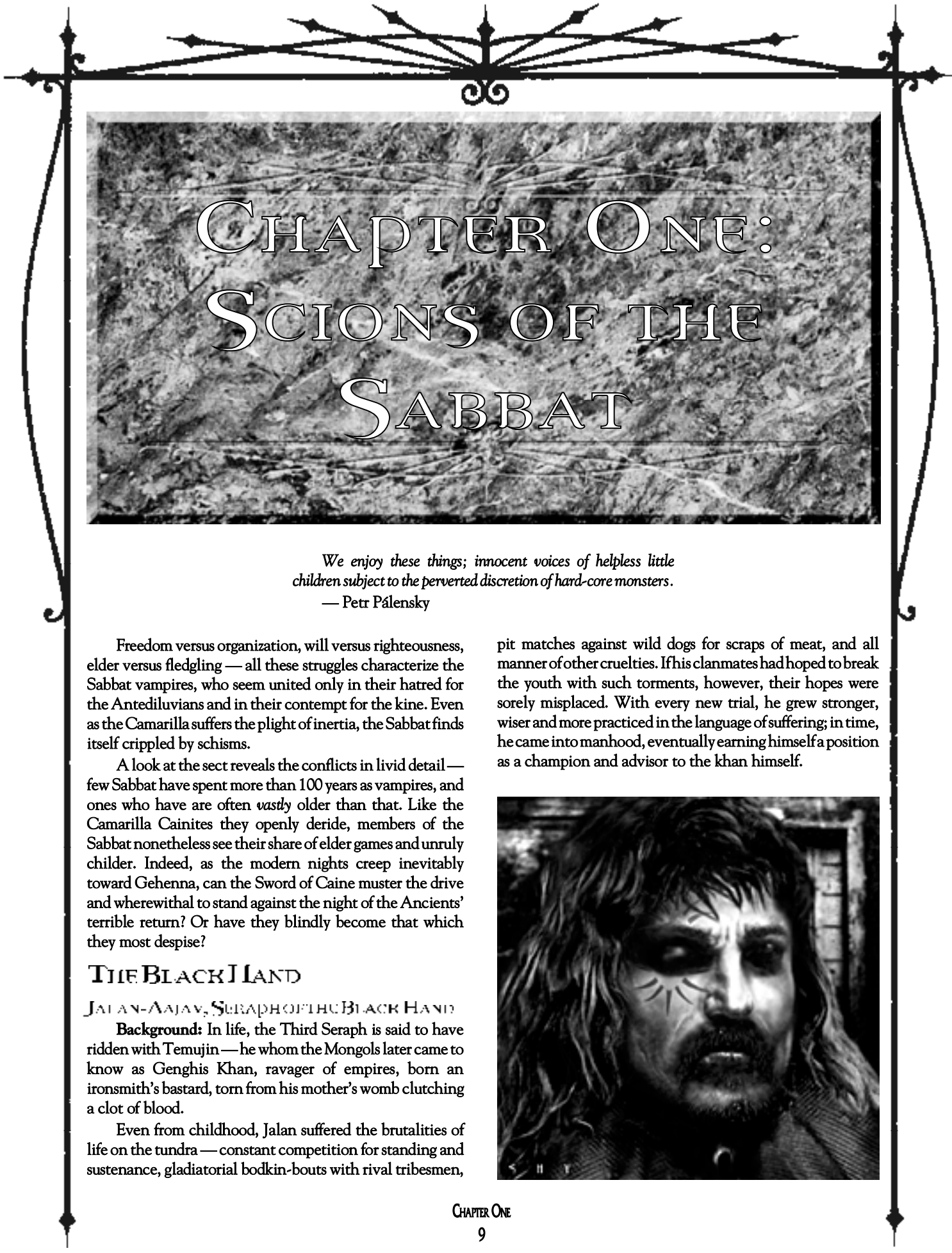
feeble wretches hidden behind paper tigers. Still others are ultimately average, having attained their power through coincidence or consequence.

This book doesn't contain all the answers, nor does it pretend to. When reading, think beyond the dots, and think even beyond the Traits and backgrounds as presented. Surely, a reason exists for the Sabbat to maintain a position of political inferiority, even though any member of the Seraphim could probably "take down" any given justicar. There must be an explanation for why the Ravnos haven't crushed or been crushed by the Kuei-jin in India, which borders the Middle Kingdom. That reason is the *story*.

Don't look for resolution to every plot thread — maybe the resolution involves your chronicle's characters. Don't bother "reasoning out" the outcomes of every conflict presented herein — too many x-factors exist to draw a reasonable conclusion. The World of Darkness is a mysterious place, and to that end, we don't want to show you Caine's Traits or how many thaumaturgical paths the Inner Council wields. The power of **Vampire** — the horror, the mystery and the brooding sense of danger and apocalypse — lies in the unknown. The monster we see is not so scary as the one we don't. Let that thought be your companion as you peruse these pages, and let it be your mantra when you play your chronicles.

Anyway, enough babble. The vampires are assembled within. Won't you meet them?





CHAPTER ONE: SCIIONS OF THE SABBAT

We enjoy these things; innocent voices of helpless little children subject to the perverted discretion of hard-core monsters.
— Petr Pálensky

Freedom versus organization, will versus righteousness, elder versus fledgling — all these struggles characterize the Sabbat vampires, who seem united only in their hatred for the Antediluvians and in their contempt for the kine. Even as the Camarilla suffers the plight of inertia, the Sabbat finds itself crippled by schisms.

A look at the sect reveals the conflicts in livid detail — few Sabbat have spent more than 100 years as vampires, and ones who have are often *vastly* older than that. Like the Camarilla Cainites they openly deride, members of the Sabbat nonetheless see their share of elder games and unruly childer. Indeed, as the modern nights creep inevitably toward Gehenna, can the Sword of Caine muster the drive and wherewithal to stand against the night of the Ancients' terrible return? Or have they blindly become that which they most despise?

THE BLACK HAND

JALAN-AAJAY, SERAPH OF THE BLACK HAND

Background: In life, the Third Seraph is said to have ridden with Temujin — he whom the Mongols later came to know as Genghis Khan, ravager of empires, born an ironsmith's bastard, torn from his mother's womb clutching a clot of blood.

Even from childhood, Janan suffered the brutalities of life on the tundra — constant competition for standing and sustenance, gladiatorial bodkin-bouts with rival tribesmen,

pit matches against wild dogs for scraps of meat, and all manner of other cruelties. If his clanmates had hoped to break the youth with such torments, however, their hopes were sorely misplaced. With every new trial, he grew stronger, wiser and more practiced in the language of suffering; in time, he came into manhood, eventually earning himself a position as a champion and advisor to the khan himself.



Status afforded Jalan opportunities of the sort he had only dreamed about previously; his attentions turned to the massacre of thousands. Gifted with wealth, women and two full score of horsemen, he and his Mongol raiders ravaged unclaimed territories. They pressed eastward, into Asia, where the forces of Chin and Kara Kitai fell like wheat before the scythe, then north, across the Burkhan, where Jalan spurred his soldiers onward into lands long laid fallow by a Russian curse....

Only to learn that his hordes were not the only monsters to call the frozen steppe home.

It is commonly accepted that, even after his farewell to light, Jalan served his khan faithfully throughout the latter's reign, then buried him in a secret place high in the Khaldun Mountains. Temujin's general himself disappeared from historical view not long thereafter, though. Doubtless, he lost himself in Muscovite upheavals over the centuries to come, hauntingly familiar reminders of the age-old cycle of ascendancy, discord and decline. Some believe his blade rode unsheathed alongside those that slit the throat of the Byzantine Empire.

What is known is that, sometime shortly after the 15th century's dawning, Jalan's westward wanderings brought him into contact with another of his kind — an ancient creature who had carefully concealed his presence during centuries of Teutonic worship, fitful in the Sleep of Ages within a newborn Orthodox cathedral, hidden in plain sight beneath a riverside hamlet that bore his very name. There, astride the banks of the wine-dark Timis in the Romanian fisherman's village of Lugo, the warrior first heard the tale of the Antediluvians. There, amidst the fire-flower dance of death, he tasted the forbidden fruit his brothers called Amaranth. And there, kneeling in homage to the priests and sorcerers of the *manus nigrum*, Jalan, onetime-terror of the East, rejoined the great game for power at any price.

Jalan ("Aajav-Khan" to his direct subordinates) is perfectly suited to the Sabbat ideals of unified force and survival of the fittest; his soul bears the heavy black veins of countless consumed lessers. He guides the Black Hand with his brother Seraphim, leading the sect in times of open Jyhad with a recklessness and savagery that inspires fear and mistrust in enemies and allies alike.

When campaigns or other duties do not require his presence elsewhere, Jalan maintains a loosely structured base of operations in Juarez, Mexico — a network of safe houses, former resistance tunnels and underworld ties supplied and maintained (albeit reluctantly) by Regent Galbraith herself. When his presence is required elsewhere on the North American continent, he travels via the Regent's personal conveyance — an armored, windowless railcar appropriated from the United States Department of Defense's Transportation Command.

Image: Lean, swift and powerfully built, Jalan prefers thick leathers, woolen overcoats, steel-shod boots and other

heavy garments reminiscent of the hide and horn of a bygone era. His hair hangs in long, matted tangles about his face; when not hidden behind sunglasses, the feral glare with which he regards the world burns with quiet genius — or genocide.

Roleplaying Hints: Impulsive and irreverent, you are like a spring wound too tightly, always scant seconds away from violent explosion. The consummate assassin, a master with any weapon or none at all, you have never met your equal, which your attitude reflects well.

Despite your headstrong manner, in battle you are a study in determination—a whirlwind, swift and sure, leaving devastation in your wake. It is at the height of such moments, however, that the familiar fury leaves your eyes, to be replaced by a serene calm... or perhaps an expectant sorrow.

Clan: Gangrel

Sire: Jalan has never spoken of him (her, it, them), and none dare ask.

Nature: Survivor

Demeanor: Monster

Generation: 5th

Embrace: The close of the 12th century (as near as anyone can tell)

Apparent Age: late 20s

Physical: Strength 8, Dexterity 7, Stamina 8

Social: Charisma 6, Manipulation 5, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 7, Intelligence 6, Wits 7

Talents: Alertness 6, Athletics 5, Brawl 7, Dodge 6, Instruction 4, Interrogation 4, Intimidation 6, Leadership 6, Streetwise 4, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Animal Ken 4, Archery 4, Demolitions 3, Drive 3, Etiquette 2, Firearms 4, Meditation 3, Melee 8, Ride 5, Stealth 4, Survival 5

Knowledges: Black Hand Lore 4, Camarilla Lore 5, Expert Knowledge: Tactics 5, Investigation 4, Linguistics (too numerous to list) 5, Medicine 3, Occult 4, Sabbat Lore 5

Disciplines: Animalism 4, Auspex 1, Celerity 7, Dominate 1, Fortitude 7, Potence 6, Presence 2, Protean 8

Backgrounds: Allies (Black Hand) 8, Black Hand Membership 5, Herd 4, Influence (terrorism) 4, Resources 5, Retainers 8, Sabbat Status 7

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

Morality: Path of the Feral Heart 6

Willpower: 9

DJUHAH, SERAPHOFTHEBLACKHAND

Background: In the turmoil of the Seljuk Turks' revolution, the fortunes of individual soldiers fell with their screaming, dying warbands. For Djulah, a young patriot enlisted in the uprising against the Byzantine oppressors, death came from the fortunes of war, though not at the point of a blade.

In 1042, the Seljuk Turks rose against the Byzantine empire, which endured for some time, though scattered groups slowly tore pieces from it for the next several decades. Thus, little distinguished one uprising, one battle, the fall of one 17-year-old man with a broken sword.

As the ebbing tides of battle carried away the conflict, Djuhah continued to breathe out his life, his body slashed and scarred with knife wounds. The late afternoon brought out scavengers, who circled among the dead in search of valuables, but the still-breathing survivor evaded them in a charnel ditch by pulling the corpses of fallen comrades over his body. The setting sun brought a different sort of predator, one that did not overlook the unusually resilient young warrior.

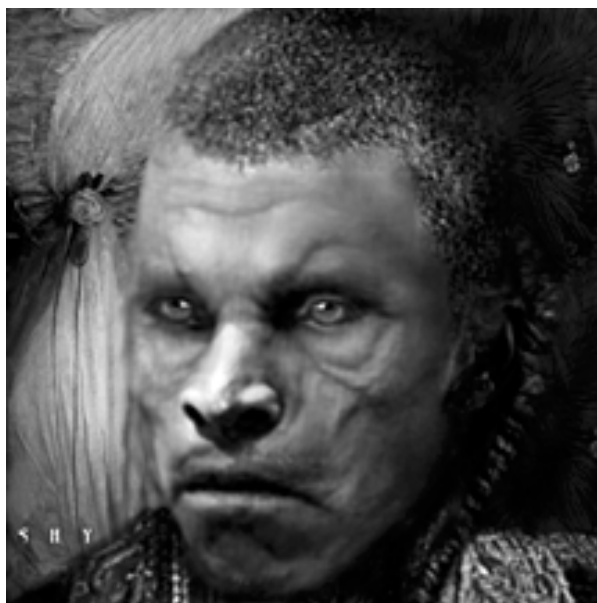
Intrigued by a mortal who survived terrible injuries and fought to live even amid a pit of corpses, Kashan watched the mauled man from a safe distance, simply squatting and testing Djuhah's responses. At first, Djuhah cursed at the old man and ordered him away; soon, though, his fading vitality left him able to gesture only feebly. Kashan inched ever closer, nimbly stepping back whenever Djuhah lashed out, and finally he came within arms' reach, grabbing Djuhah's wrist as the dying boy stabbed again with his ruined blade — and suffering the thrust of a weapon in Djuhah's other hand. Startled but not terribly injured, Kashan took it upon himself to save this curious fighter with the unquenchable soul. A few drops of vitae ensured Djuhah's survival, and a hurried escape to a more sheltered locale guaranteed his recovery — and damnation.

At first, Djuhah obviously did not understand the nature of his miraculous transformation. Faith forbade the drinking of blood, yet this stranger had restored him to health and vigor with it. Indeed, with the incredible strength lent by his mentor's vitae, Djuhah found his nascent skills rapidly exceeding any expertise he had previously thought possible. Enthralled and burning with a desire for vengeance, he became Kashan's servitor, making routine arrangements by day and honing his ghoulish prowess in the evenings.

As the Byzantine empire crumbled, Djuhah watched his former foes and oppressors die, either from age or from violence. Still, his skills at war, combined with careful training by his mentor, led him to test himself often in battle. Indeed, as his years in service grew long, he found that only by challenging other warriors could he satisfy his lust for risk, violence and excitement. Encouraged by Kashan, he mastered the use of many weapons and forms of warfare, along with skills in hunting, survival and traps.

A 14-year apprenticeship as a ghoul to Kashan brought Djuhah to the necessary edge of ability. After a journey to Alamut, he found himself accepted and Embraced into the clan of assassins.

Once released from his duty as a mere *avlia*, Djuhah turned his attention back to warfare. Disdaining the political gamesmanship of other Cainites, he instead sought out areas



of conflict, there to meet enemies directly on the fields of battle when ambushes and sieges brought conflict at night. Even this rapacity served to slake his thirst only for a short time, and at length, he turned his depredations in the direction most common for his clan — at other vampires.

As a stalker, Djuhah was nonpareil; he personally hunted and dispatched at least a dozen Cainites within the period of a century. Like most of his clan, though, he did not foresee the coming Camarilla. By the late 1300s, Djuhah had sent several powerful Mediterranean elders to their final graves and turned on the most thrilling game of all — his own clanmates. This disloyal act happened only once, as he was soundly defeated and thrashed by Izhim ur-Baal. The elder Assamite saw too much potential to waste, though, and instead of killing Djuhah, he disciplined him and brought him to heel.

Of course, the fledgling Camarilla of the late 1400s destroyed Djuhah's Assamite career. When the Camarilla Warlocks enacted their *kafir* ritual, Djuhah and his mentor both separately turned their backs and joined the anarchists who would become the nascent Sabbat. Djuhah relished the opportunity to hunt and kill an entire sect of opponents, especially the Tremere who'd cursed his brethren, and over the coming centuries, he was not disappointed: He dispatched thaumaturgists with startling abandon, rising in the Sabbat because of his combat skills, tactical experience and the loyalty and discipline imparted to him by Izhim ur-Baal.

With the formation of the Sabbat as a formal organization, Djuhah found himself in a position to manipulate and control entire packs of howling warriors ready to engage the Camarilla. At first, he unleashed his terrible temper in personal combat. As the centuries of wearing conflict passed between Camarilla and Sabbat, however, Djuhah's blood cooled to the vagaries of personal combat, and he began to appreciate the more cerebral pleasures of directing a strategic

offensive. Eventually, his leadership ability and prowess brought him to the top of the Black Hand, where he took a position at last as the newest of the current Seraphim.

Somewhere in his past, though, Djuhah stumbled across an opponent who must have cursed him—for in the past few decades, he has discovered that his once-incredible physical prowess has begun to waver at unexpected moments. Once robust and powerful, he finds his form inexplicably suffering a strange withering unlike that common to some elders. His skin dries and cracks, and when he awakens in the evening his muscles are tight with contortions. Wounds heal poorly, leaving him with crisscrossed scars until he rises the next night. Now, Djuhah finds that he must become a scholar as well as a warrior, but his patience is thin, and his knowledge limited. Without the help of Thaumaturgy or more obscure magics, the bloodthirsty warrior may find himself falling to an invisible foe.

Image: Dark-skinned, heavy-boned and stalwart, Djuhah is the image of an immovable mountain. His features are youthful, but he has a sparse black mustache and beard, which complement his flashing brown eyes. Age has hollowed his once-full face, making him appear gaunt and undernourished, though his taut muscles remain powerful, even with skin drawn tightly over them. He keeps his hair pulled back in a braided ponytail and dresses in functional, uninspired clothing. More recently, his strange degeneration has caused some parts of his flesh to dry and crack, though this change is most evident on his hands.

Roleplaying Hints: You live for conflict. Eternity bores you, and only through challenges can you feel the fiery spark of ecstasy in your blood once more. You have fought and killed legions of men, contested with the Tremere and even disputed with your own clan. You've used the Black Hand to develop your own armies, playing on the chessboard of Sabbat warfare for your own pleasure. Now, though, you face an enemy that you can't fight directly, which perplexes you. When settled and engaged in strategy, you are calm and sometimes even pleased. When your attention is drawn to other matters, though, especially your "disease," you become agitated and easily enraged.

Clan: Assamite *antitribu*

Sire: Kashan

Nature: Bravo

Demeanor: Survivor

Generation: 8th

Embrace: 1056

Apparent Age: early 20s

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 5, Athletics 4, Brawl 3, Dodge 4, Expression 1, Interrogation 4, Intimidation 4, Leadership 4, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Animal Ken 2, Etiquette 2, Firearms 2, Melee 5, Security 3, Stealth 4, Survival 5

Knowledges: Academics 2, Investigation 3, Linguistics (English, Arabic, Greek, Latin) 3, Medicine 1, Occult 3, Politics 4

Disciplines: Auspex 4, Celerity 5, Dominate 1, Fortitude 2, Obfuscate 5, Potence 2, Presence 3, Protean 2, Quietus 5

Backgrounds: Black Hand Membership 5, Contacts 3, Generation 5, Influence 1, Resources 3, Sabbat Status 4

Virtues: Conviction 3, Instinct 2, Courage 5

Morality: Path of Caine 6

Willpower: 8

Derangements: Berserk, Blood sweats

Merits/ Flaws: Ambidextrous, Flesh of the Corpse

IZHIMUH-BAAI, SERAPHOFTHEBLACK HAND

Background: Where does one begin the chronicle of a creature who has survived entire civilizations?

Izhim was born seventh son of a Babylonian sorcerer-king—prince over a fertile province in a time when empires had neither names nor boundaries. The monsters of that era still walked openly among men; the boy-prince was groomed for divinity from an early age by the Old Ones and kept alive well beyond any mortal span by nightly infusions of godhead. Riches and finery of every sort imaginable, tutelage in the mundane and mystical disciplines, sovereignty over a people who venerated him as heir to an inviolate power—all these things and more contributed to the fulfillment of Izhim Thrice-Beloved's every earthly desire.

It was a tumultuous time, however, fraught with reminders of the savagery inherent to the fledgling world.

Without warning, barbarian hordes came from the north one night. Brutal and bloodthirsty, they swept over the plains



like a merciless scourge, leaving only ashes to mark their passage. Thrust into sudden eternity by his masters in the desperate hope that some part of their legacy might survive, Izhim heeded his father and fled into the night, the flames of his former paradise lighting the way.

Izhim has since lived the lives of an Akkadian prophet, a Sufi poet, a Coptic blood-god, a Persian demonologist and a hundred others. Ultimately, ceasing his worldly wanderings, he returned to his homeland, where he rejoined his distant brethren for a time at the black citadel of Alamut until the exodus of the Unfettered. He rode with the greatest of their companies to the forgotten city of Chorazin; in time, strengthened by forbidden tutelage and the passage of centuries, he rose to rule them.

Tonight, Izhim ur-Baal ("Izhim abd'Azrael" to all but a select few) presides over the Black Hand as *shakari* First Seraph from the shattered ruins of Enoch. He rarely voices an outright opinion, as he prefers to keep his own counsel; when he does speak, however, even mad Elimelech and boisterous Jalan-Aajav stop in mid-sentence to hear his words. His exchange across the Table of Tyre with Hardestadt the Elder has become Assamite legend. Once goaded by the diplomat's deliberate provocations, the then-castellan quietly proffered, "There comes a time, Ventrue, when the game plays its players."

Recently, Izhim has ordered contingents of the Hand to action without consent or dispensation from the other Seraphim; this practice is fast proving cause for division (ranging from general distrust to overt preparations for civil war by his onetime-protégé Djuhah). His motivations in this matter and others remain a mystery — common accusations range from simple lust for power to subversive agendas to otherworldly alliances forged in his youth. But Izhim wafi abd'Azrael ur-Baal pays his accusers no mind. He simply looks up into the night sky and lets his timeless gaze play upon the cold, lightless void separating the stars.

And he smiles — a subtle, fanged grimace that stops just short of his eyes.

Image: The seraph, a small man whose stocky build speaks not so much of bulk as solidity, has nearly every square inch of his body covered with tattoos (antiquated Arabic script, prehistoric Mesopotamian cuneiform, and numerous ritual hieroglyphs and sigils unfamiliar to all but the most erudite scholars). Although he favors ceremonial robes and loose, flowing clothes over the form-follows-function garb common to his clan, Izhim's lineage is apparent to the practiced observer; his countenance is black as night (the mark of Haqim's eldest childer) and, when he moves, he makes no sound. Scribes of Enoch who have witnessed his comings and goings over the centuries claim he sleeps only once every three days.

Roleplaying Hints: Leave your contemporaries to their carefully couched conspiracies and petty pursuits of power; blatancy and bravado are not what have maintained your

existence throughout the millennia. Yours is an intricate game of studied supremacy. Any alliances you make are temporary at best, and they last no longer than necessary for you to obtain that which you seek. When you truly require something of importance, you do it yourself, entrusting only minor roles to your overzealous associates. The comforts of immortality are cold indeed, but you have proved colder still. Indeed, though you have never voiced your fears to anyone, you have begun to feel something stirring deep within yourself — a sinister suspicion that, piece by piece, through either the erosion of eons or otherworldly obligations long since overdue, you are changing somehow, ceding control, losing what you once were. To date, however, you have kept this struggle for control completely internalized. Neither anger nor any other emotion ever crosses your visage, only your customary thin-lipped smile.

Clan: Assamite *antitribu*

Sire: Unknown

Nature: Director

Demeanor: Autocrat

Generation: 5th

Embrace: 4800 B.C. (?)

Apparent Age: mid-40s

Physical: Strength 6, Dexterity 7, Stamina 6

Social: Charisma 5, Manipulation 6, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 7, Intelligence 7, Wits 8

Talents: Alertness 7, Athletics 5, Brawl 4, Dodge 5, Expression 4, Instruction 3, Intimidation 3, Intuition 5, Leadership 4, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Archery 3, Disguise 4, Etiquette 5, Firearms 3, Meditation 6, Melee 5, Performance (Acting) 4, Stealth 6, Survival 3

Knowledges: Black Hand Lore 5, Camarilla Lore 4, Clan Knowledge (Assamite) 5, Enigmas 6, Investigation 6, Linguistics (more than space permits) 8, Medicine 3, Occult 6, Research 5, Sabbat Lore 5, Science (alchemy) 4, Science (chemistry) 4, Science (mathematics) 4

Disciplines: Auspex 2, Celerity 5, Dominate 2, Fortitude 4, Obfuscate 7, Obtenebration 2, Potence 3, Presence 2, Quietus 7, Thaumaturgy 4

Thaumaturgical Paths: Path of Blood 4, Path of the Ailing Jackal (Father's Vengeance) 3, Path of Mars 3, Spirit Manipulation 3, Countermagic 1

Backgrounds: Allies 8, Black Hand Membership 5, Resources 5, Retainers 5, Sabbat Status 6

Virtues: Conviction 3, Self-Control 4, Courage 4

Morality: Path of Blood 3

Willpower: 9

ELIMELECH THE TWICE-DAMNED, SERAPHOT THE BLACK LAND

Background: *And Elimelech Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons.* Ruth 1:3 — as auspicious an entrance into the ranks of the eternal as any.

Elimelech of Judea never knew his sire. Was he kind? Cruel? Did he bestow the Curse of Caine upon his fledgling as a blessing? Or a punishment? Could damnation fall upon the unwitting by happenstance, or did some unseen purpose lurk behind it all? Without its head, what would become of his household in this foreign land?

After waking to find him pale, cold and unmoving, Naomi, wife of Elimelech, placed her husband in a shallow, unmarked grave. Three nights hence he summoned the strength to rise, clawing himself from the cold earth. Half-mad and possessed of a thirst no fountain on this earth would slake, the Judean made his way eastward in search of his beloved family and some form of release from the abhorrent unlife into which he had been thrust.

Elimelech's search took him months, but he found his family — in the inland country of Moab, where his sons had taken converted idolatresses as wives and started families of their own. The shock proved too much for the fledgling Cainite; morning found Mahlon and Chilion, Elimelech's sons, in a field with their throats torn out. They were unwitting victims of their father's fiendish hunger, and their deaths left Naomi, their mother, alone again. Tears of blood coursed down Elimelech's cheeks as he beheld the malignant harvest he had sown; he saw his widow (who now called herself Mara — "bitter" — for "The Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me," she said) collect her worldly possessions. From afar, he watched the angry confrontation with her inherited daughters, the heart-rending separation that followed as Orpah remained behind, unwilling to leave the life she had built in the Moabite village. Ruth, however, accompanied her mother-in-law back into the desert, penniless and pitiable.

Elimelech followed, torn between the compulsion to see right done by his children and the shameful secret that prevented his revealing himself to them. Over the years he saw his wife and daughter reduced to reaping sheaves of barley on others' estates for simple sustenance. He watched once-beautiful Ruth, grown haggard and hunched in the fields, betrothed to a miserly kinsman three decades her senior in an incestuous parody of marriage. Naomi-called-Mara settled in a household that paid her little attention face-to-face and mocked her cruelly behind her back. Even Elimelech's lands in Judea were divided and sold to thieves and slavers.

If my Lord wishes it thus, it must be so, Elimelech late of Judea told himself, trying to come to terms with his unnatural existence. He took up residence in a series of southern caves abutting the Dead Sea and fed from cattle or sleeping wanderers. He continued to watch and aid his family, and their families, to do for them what he could not for his own children — yet always from a distance and always alone, lest



he again fall prey to the madness that had stripped his sons from him. The Cainite condemned himself to an eternity of solitude for his sins, and resolutely awaited his sentence.

Generations came and went, as did the passing of the seasons to Elimelech's time-wearied eye. His immortality gave him no immunity to tragedy's bite, however. The Judean had word of his estranged child Orpah, by then an old woman, being persecuted and tortured with her daughters and granddaughters at the hands of Moabites who had no faith in her earlier religious conversion. He saw sickness come to the village of Bethlehem-at-Judea, his grandson Obed dead of plague and his wife and daughters made barren. A score of years later, the lands of Elimelech's forefathers, along with his kin who had not yet scattered to the four corners of the earth, were overrun by the Philistines and forced into slavery as he slept during the sunlit hours. Only Elimelech remained, unchanging, undying, unable to ward off any of the cruelties fate and God continued to mete out, unwilling to accept whatever wrongdoing had thrust him into this Hell on Earth or to forgive himself for the abominable crimes he had committed decades earlier. Elimelech left the smoldering ruins of his ancestral home and drifted aimlessly through the new kingdoms of that early world in search of destruction, redemption, damnation, anything.

Years later, in the valley of Ephesdammim, as a champion of Gath fell to the slung stone of a boy-king of Israel, Elimelech found an answer. There, in the muted torchlight of the stone-circled arena where David, great-grandson of Ruth, slew Goliath, great-grandson of Orpah, Elimelech realized that it would never be over — that his was a curse from which none could escape.

It was enough to sever the now-elder vampire's already tenuous hold on reality. Mad Elimelech fled that place in search of the saint or sinner who could end his unlife. He lost

himself to the Beast for a span of centuries, throwing himself to the mercy of the four winds, killing indiscriminately, neither willing nor able to separate man from monster, indulging in every excess his inhuman existence would allow. He rampaged southward to the burning sands, where the serpent-children found they had no charms to sway his savage soul. He fled east to the unexplored wastes whose forgotten secrets and sorcerers held no salvation for him. Elimelech traveled west to the water's edge, where he was burned by righteous flame and could not enter the gates of the Forbidden City, and finally north, where the death-seers of Cappadocia subjected him to the torments of their grails and grimoires. Indeed, Elimelech bled into Christ's very cup, only to realize the treachery of foul Cainites too late. Time and time again the Judean rose to cheat Final Death and remained forever barred from rejoining his family, forever caught between Heaven and Hell. And, in another mind-wrenching moment of epiphany, the son of Nahshon wondered if all this — even his name, Elimelech, "my God is king" — could have been preordained... if he was indeed the orphaned vagabond to Job's victor, impotent in the face of what he was becoming, powerless even to make a difference.

Elimelech's travels ultimately threw him in league with the Black Hand; he is too unpredictable for the Seraphim Council to trust completely, but too old and powerful for them to turn away. He has sampled every sliver of the world and slain innumerable souls over the course of millennia, during which he has been woefully conscious. To him *manus nigrum* is nothing more than a means to an end, another amusement with which to while away eternity. He plays the faction's pathetic power games and tries to forget what he once was and what he has become. In vain, he uses the Hand to distract him from the thing he feels growing slowly inside him, compelling him with increasing frequency, taking hold of his very being.

Perhaps an end is imminent; perhaps some night soon that terrible creature will rise to assume permanent control, forever eclipsing all that is Elimelech (already he has degenerated to the point where only Cainite blood, not human, quenches his dreadful thirst, a hypocrisy that unduly taps the Black Hand's already-stressed resources). In the meantime, the Seraphim accept him (tentatively) as their peer, include him in their deliberations, hear his counsel when he is himself, and send him chained and screaming to his cell when he is not. And yet the Seraphim wonder if the screams aren't really sobs. All of the vaunted elders of the Black Hand refuse to enter a room with Elimelech alone, for reasons that none of them discuss.

Image: Elimelech bears a kind face wholly inappropriate to one of the most terrible vampires in the Sabbat's Black Hand. Although his appearance is rumored to change when he keeps his own company, Elimelech typically appears as a grandfatherly man of Persian or Mesopotamian descent. He wears the same clothes as he did during the days he spent alive with Ruth in Moab: a simple linen shift and a pair of

weathered sandals. Individuals familiar with him swear that his skin has darkened with age and that he is an Assamite, but Elimelech neither confirms nor refutes these claims.

Roleplaying Hints: It is obvious to anyone who observes you for any length of time that you are dangerously close to the edge. Your periods of lucidity come less and less frequently with each passing year. When the Beast takes your reins, your ennui gives way to something diabolical and depraved — something that *likes* being one of the Damned. Something lurking just beneath the surface waits for an opportunity to rise — something lost Elimelech, God-fearing merchant and father of four, would sooner have destroyed than allowed to exist.

Clan: None (does bloodline mean *anything* to such elder creatures?)

Sire: Unknown

Nature: Monster

Demeanor: Masochist

Generation: Unknown, but attributed to any from the 2nd through 5th Generations.

Embrace: Ruth 1:3

Apparent Age: Indeterminate. Although the Seraph could not have been a night past 30 or 35 years of age at the hour of his rebirth, his weathered, age-streaked features are those of a man in his 50s.

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 7

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 5, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 8, Intelligence 9, Wits 5

Talents: Alertness 6, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 4, Empathy 5, Expression (prayer) 4, Intimidation 3, Leadership 4, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Animal Ken 2, Etiquette 2, Herbalism 4, Melee 2, Performance 5, Ride 1, Stealth 3, Survival 4

Knowledges: Academics 4, Hearth Wisdom 6, History 9, Investigation 5, Law 1, Linguistics (millennia of living and dead tongues) 8, Medicine 2, Occult 4, Science (agriculture) 5

Disciplines: Animalism 2, Auspex 8, Celerity 2, Dementation 9, Dominate 7, Fortitude 9, Necromancy 1, Obfuscate 7, Potence 3, Presence 1, Protean 3

Necromantic Paths: Sepulchre Path 1

Backgrounds: Allies 6, Black Hand Membership 5, Sabbat Status 8

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

Morality: Humanity 1

Willpower: 10

TARIQ, THE SILENT, BLACK HAND DOMINION

Background: Tariq was a soldier of Ali during the seventh Christian invasion of their homeland. He fought valiantly during the siege of Mansourah but was eventually wounded, captured and tortured. He taunted his captors

until, enraged, they tore out his tongue “to silence the *paynim*.” Bound, beaten and on the verge of death, Tariq cast his eyes skyward for what he thought would be the last time and saw that a Bedouin stood over him. The Christian soldiers seemed not to notice the man as he explained that Tariq would now be rewarded for his devotion and valor. Tariq’s Embrace by the Bedouin *shakar* was quick and reverent, and by the time his frenzy abated, the Christians lay in tatters at his feet.

Tariq soon became as devoted to his clan as he had been to the teachings of Ali. He developed a fearsome reputation as a diablerist, and committed the “Amaranth” at every turn, even if it did nothing for the potency of his own Blood. There seemed to be no stopping Tariq until the Camarilla vampires finally reigned in the Anarch Revolt to crush the anarchs and Assamites beneath their assembled heels.

With the location of their most sacred haven in jeopardy, the Assamites grudgingly negotiated a peace with the Camarilla. Because he had been the most notorious member of the clan, Tariq was chosen to be a symbolic scapegoat for the crimes of the Assamites. He was cast out to be hunted, but before he left, the Assamites secretly bound a spirit to Tariq to warn him when danger was near. Over time Tariq learned to trust this “Outer Spirit” implicitly, and it became virtually impossible to surprise him.

After his exile, Tariq became the veriest scavenger. He was hunted by the Camarilla for his head and by the Sabbat as a potential prized recruit. The Assamites also “hunted” him but were notoriously unsuccessful. Throughout it all, Tariq remained loyal to his clan, and he bore the weight of their “crimes” without resentment. Unaffected by the Tremere’s curse, he continued to hunt Kindred vitae and grow in skill, power and reputation.



In 1995 — after a half-millennium as a wanted vampire — Tariq ran out of luck. The Tremere *antitribu* finally captured him. Their plan was to improve their clan’s standing in the Sabbat by recruiting him. After years of research and the loss of several members, they had discovered the existence of Tariq’s guardian spirit. With this knowledge and the use of Spirit Manipulation they were able to neutralize the Outer Spirit. Even so, the battle was ferocious, but in the end Tariq was taken.

Tariq was soundlessly defiant. After months of trying to convert him with the most aggressive methods imaginable, the Tremere *antitribu* gave up in disgust. Instead of killing him or taking his vitae, they subjected Tariq to the ritual Quenching the Lambent Flame, which effectively reduced him to 13th generation. With the strength of a neonate and a world full of enemies, he was unceremoniously dumped in Camarilla territory. The Cainite who would not bend finally broke.

Although incredibly weakened, Tariq had five centuries of unlife experience to draw upon. He walked into the first Camarilla haven he could find and attacked the resident Kindred with suicidal abandon. The Camarilla licks recognized the Red List demon right away. Three of them fled and the fourth froze and went down without a fight. Tariq shredded his victim but did not attempt to diablerize her.

News of this and similar attacks began to spread. It was rumored that the Red Lister had gone mad and that facing his rabid assault was madness as well. The Kindred that he sought death from scattered like leaves before him. Reputation or not, it was only a matter of time before he confronted a worthy opponent, and he might have soon found the release he sought if the Assamite *antitribu* had not learned of his suffering at the hands of their sect-mates. When Djuhah, the Black Hand seraph, heard of Tariq’s plight, he sensed an opportunity.

Djuhah assigned a pack of Black Hand elite to recruit Tariq at all costs. This Black Hand pack was told to refer to Tariq as their dominion — and because his loss of generation was not common knowledge, this charade led to the impression that Tariq commanded a permanent Black Hand column. Tariq’s reputation was sufficient to give pause to most Sabbat critics of the Black Hand. This hesitation gave Djuhah the opportunity to establish other permanent Black Hand columns and gain a political foothold that may prove to be unshakable.

Until such time as the columns go unquestioned, Djuhah is prepared to take any lengths to keep Tariq undead. Djuhah is acutely aware, however, that Tariq could turn on him at any moment. For his part, Tariq is aware that his Outer Spirit has been figuratively replaced by a column of Assamite *antitribu*. If he should ever realize the bit of political maneuvering that centers on him, the consequences are sure to be devastating.

Image: Assamite skin grows darker with age, and Tariq is dark indeed. His light eyes stand out dramatically against his charcoal skin, but now stare vacantly — like those of a

broken-backed tiger resigned to its fate. Tariq's face, which remained unchanged for 500 years, has aged significantly since his encounter with the Tremere *antitribu*. Lines now trail from his mouth and eyes. His temples have spotted with gray, and the cumulative weight of his burden is now evident on his brow. Many Cainites regard these changes as curious, as such signs of aging are distinctly mortal traits.

Roleplaying Hints: You have tired of the pointless, endless struggle. You intend to continue challenging other Kindred until you are killed in righteous battle. Although you do not openly acknowledge the Black Hand column that trails you, deep down you feel a centuries-old void being filled. The company of your brothers heartens you, even from afar, and secretly you are beginning to question the wisdom of your self-destructive rampage.

Clan: Assamite

Sire: Bakr

Nature: Visionary

Demeanor: Bravo

Generation: 13th

Embrace: 1250

Apparent Age: early 40s

Physical: Strength 5, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Appearance 5

Mental: Perception 5, Intelligence 5, Wits 5

Talents: Alertness 5, Athletics 5, Brawl 5, Dodge 5, Empathy 2, Intimidation 4, Mimicry 3

Skills: Acrobatics 3, Demolitions 3, Disguise 5, Drive 2, Firearms 5, Meditation 5, Melee 5, Security 5, Stealth 5, Survival 3

Knowledges: Academics 5, Cryptography 2, Law 2, Linguistics 2, Occult 5

Disciplines: Auspex 4, Celerity 3, Fortitude 4, Obfuscate 5, Potence 3, Quietus 5, Visceratika 3

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Black Hand Membership 3

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

Morality: Path of Blood 1

Willpower: 3

THE SABBAT INQUISITION

MERCY, KNIGHT INQUISITOR

Background: Despite her name, Mercy exhibits no such trait. She earned her moniker—her birth name is Allisandra—from the pleas of her victims, and she represents a new breed of vicious, young Sabbat coming to power. As Inquisitor, her authority is unquestioned within her sect. A native of Rio de Janeiro, Mercy currently resides in Montreal, where she investigates ongoing rumors of infernalism. Were it merely a matter of righting the situation regardless of the consequences, Mercy would be a perfect candidate for the job. Unfortunately, Mercy's solutions are invariably destructive; fellow Inquisitors refer to her tactics as carpet-bombing.



In the city of Montreal, where three packs vie for power, Mercy could be the match that lights the already primed powder keg.

Before her Embrace, Allisandra was a mortal acolyte of *La Regla Lucumi*, a religion of strong ethics and responsibility stemming from the Yoruba of Africa. Following her Embrace into the Sabbat, however, she had difficulty reconciling her religion with her new status as *eggun*, a member of the dead. Her worship degraded along with her humanity, forcing her to seek religious fulfillment from *Santería* fringe cults, then finally from thinly disguised Lasombra and Setite blood cults. With each slip, her compassion and kindness fell away as well, eventually leaving behind a woman capable of unthinkable atrocities.

In Rio, Camarilla Toreador shared influence with Sabbat Lasombra in an uneasy and unlikely truce that stemmed from a mutual interest in Rio's mineral wealth. Allisandra, however, displayed a knack for destruction and mayhem that continually threatened to upset the precarious peace between the two sects. She relished her freedom and pursued her bloodlust with little care for convention. Street children vanished in increasing numbers, and authorities regularly found body parts floating in Guanabara Bay. In one incident, police discovered 11 members of a *Santería* church who'd been tortured and strung up like sides of beef in a slaughterhouse. Although the public never heard the story, both the local Sabbat and Camarilla knew of the reports and suspected Allisandra of the deed. The murdered *Santería* worshippers had been Allisandra's friends during her mortal years.

Strangely enough, it was the Lasombra who reacted to the situation and "encouraged" Allisandra to go to Mexico City. The Lasombra did not want to censure their Toreador *antitribu* sister, but they worried that her continued activities

might threaten the tenuous peace. Allisandra finally left after she found mortal members of her blood cult murdered and drained as a warning to her.

In Mexico City, Allisandra became Mercy, a nickname she earned while hosting torture parties. However, her religious practices and the ritualistic manner in which she killed attracted the attention of then Knight Inquisitor Alfred Benezri, a member of the Shepherds pack of Montreal. The Knight Inquisitor found Mercy innocent of any infernal dealings, and the two quickly formed a bizarre alliance. Alfred was curious about *Santería*, and Mercy, in turn, was interested in the Inquisition. With his help, she eventually joined the faction.

For the last four years, Mercy has served the Sabbat Inquisition as Knight Inquisitor. Despite this responsibility, she remains brutal. Her fellow Inquisitors have even accused her of destroying innocent Sabbat (if there is such a thing) and being sloppy. Her saving grace, however, is her efficiency in tracking and uncovering infernalists as well as her knowledge of *La Regla Lucumí* and *Mesa Blanca*, two religions practiced throughout the Americas. These skills have led her to Montreal, domain of now-Bishop Alfred Benezri, her ally, and home to a whirlpool of heresy. Due to the strength of the region's Sabbat and the recurring problem of infernalism, the Inquisition keeps Mercy and her pack in the area to prevent future heresies. Mercy, however, sees corruption everywhere. She watches everyone from afar, allowing her presence to do her work for her, and regularly interrogates local Cainites.

Image: Mercy is as far from pretty as she is from the quality of her namesake. Her facial features are compact and squat, though she has a proportionate build for her height. Her mannerisms are brutish and she wears revealing clothing, despite her lack of a beautiful body. Some wonder why the Toreador ever Embraced her to begin with, not realizing South American Toreador are heavily involved in the region's legitimate religions.

Roleplaying Hints: You are a Cainite, and you revel in that power. As Inquisitor, you are a hunter among predators, and there is no thrill quite equal to that one. You are also a malicious being, interchanging the role of hunter and tormentor easily. Whether it's making people squirm in your presence or cutting them to hear them scream for... *mercy*... you like having influence over others.

Clan: Toreador *antitribu*

Sire: Dominique Santo Paulo

Nature: Deviant

Demeanor: Monster

Generation: 10th

Embrace: 1899

Apparent Age: early 20s

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 5

Talents: Alertness 1, Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Interrogation 5, Intimidation 4, Leadership 2, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 2, Throwing 3

Skills: Animal Ken 2, Drive 2, Firearms 4, Melee 3, Security 2, Stealth 2, Survival 2

Knowledges: Area Knowledge (Mexico City) 5, Area Knowledge (Montreal) 2, Camarilla Lore 2, City Secrets (Montreal) 1, Linguistics (English, Spanish) 2, Medicine 2, Occult 3, Sabbat Lore 4

Disciplines: Auspex 3, Celerity 2, Dominate 3, Fortitude 2, Presence 2, Thaumaturgy 2

Thaumaturgical Paths: Path of Blood 3

Backgrounds: Mentor 2, Sabbat Status 3

Virtues: Conviction 4, Instinct 2, Courage 3

Morality: Path of Cathari 6

Willpower: 7

BLACK WALLACE, THE RIGHTEOUS

Background: Black Wallace could not have asked for more from his life or death.

The inheritor of an of earldom, Wallace took his seat in the House of Lords at the age of 28. Well known for his excesses, he frequented a London brothel that catered to "unusual and egregious needs." Rumor had it that his father spent an enormous sum to quiet a certain baronet whose daughter had suffered some great indignity during a dalliance with Wallace.

In spite of his indiscretions, Wallace carried himself with aristocratic flair and learned the workings of Parliament quickly. He always argued vigorously for his concerns, and he made strong allies. The House of Lords came to know him as a man of conviction and determination instead of as the bully and sadist he truly was.

In the early 1640s, Wallace became enamored with Oliver Cromwell's crusade against the Anglican Church. During the English Civil War, he led one of Cromwell's most notorious terror mobs. Normally, a man of his station would merely orchestrate such acts of violence — Wallace, however, relished leading his men. Cromwell once remarked that Wallace might be taking *too* much pleasure from these excursions, but it was also noted that the earl's particular appetites did not dull his leadership ability.

When England entered the Thirty Years' War against Spain, Wallace immediately involved himself. His leadership was superlative, and he was able to negotiate substantial holdings in Spain from the Peace of the Pyrenees. In 1659, during a tour of his Spanish concerns, he arranged a sitting with the master painter, Diego Velazquez. Although aging, Velazquez created a forgiving and exquisitely crafted portrait of Wallace.

While showing this portrait to Wallace's associates from the Spanish court, the young servant handling the painting let its corner drop to the floor, thus cracking the frame. The

hosts apologized profusely, but Wallace made light of it. A week later, he arranged to have the boy moved to his own estate. That night, Wallace had the painting displayed in his chambers. He escorted the frightened boy in and smoothly slid a wooden shard from the frame into the child's eye.

Wallace stood basking in the moment — simultaneously aware of his fabulous power and his license to explore the darkest urges of his soul — when a voice drifted to him from the shadows of the room. It spoke slowly as one does when reaching a long-considered decision.

“Yes, yes — they are right, of course. But better I take you now than one night face you as one of Mithras' Ventrue....” Then the darkest corners of the room closed on Wallace. Black tendrils held him fast and pinched off the air from his throat. Enraged, terrified and helpless, he watched as a swarthy man pulled himself free of the shadows. The man considered him for a moment, then slowly forced Wallace's face into contact with the portrait.

“In the centuries to come, as you lose the memory of your face, you will cherish this painting above all else — if you survive.” Then the man dragged him out the window and into the night.

If the Embrace of “Black Wallace” had been indecisive — if the clan had questioned his potential — all such concerns soon vanished. He relished the power of his vampiric form, and he took immediately to the aristocratic structure of Clan Lasombra. More than anything else, he appreciated the illicit opportunities that Sabbat membership presented to him.

Initially, his low standing in the clan was of great concern to him, but Wallace was nothing if not politically adroit. He soon deduced that he could gain power more quickly by revealing treachery within the sect than by fighting the Camarilla. His chance to test this theory came sooner he could have hoped — in fact, it was *because* he was a neonate that the opportunity came to him at all.

A stranger approached Wallace one night mere minutes before the break of dawn. He commanded Wallace to bring his sire, Lord Vauxhall, to the stables the following evening. The man wove a hurried tale of intrigue and promised that Lord Vauxhall would reward Wallace richly for following these instructions and would surely kill him should he fail to do so. Most importantly, the stranger explained that Wallace should say nothing of this meeting, for there were spies everywhere. Then the stranger vanished, leaving Wallace to flee from the approaching daylight and with no time to consider the conversation.

The stranger played his part well, and almost any fledgling would have been cowed into doing exactly as directed. Wallace, however, had staged more than one coup in his mortal life and recognized a set-up when he saw one. He burst into his chambers and had just enough time to bark out a command before he fell into his daytime slumber.



When the sun left the sky the next evening, the stranger erupted from the soil beneath the stable. Immediately, a dozen Lasombra ghouls burst out of hiding and set upon him. They held him fast until Wallace arose, groomed and fed, then made his way into stable.

Both history and Wallace have forgotten why this Gangrel *antitribu* assassin sought Lord Vauxhall. It is remembered, however, that Wallace tore the secrets from him by slicing the plotter's body lengthwise to the bone, laying knotted lengths of rope in the wounds, then letting them heal over. Hitching horses to the ends of the ropes, Wallace drove them away in opposite directions. After his third evisceration, the man spoke freely.

Soundly praised and rewarded for his acts, Wallace used the momentum of this event to begin a relentless crusade against “enemies from within.” Whether his true motivation was genuine concern, political gain or the opportunity to torture is unclear. Each motive grew to feed the others and, within a century of his Embrace, Wallace had become a vampire possessed by his own passions. He sliced apart the traitorous, the impure and the suspect. Few dared to challenge him, and all grew to fear him.

Black Wallace became an Inquisitor in 1780 — both to focus his energies and to keep him tempered by the company of other Inquisitors. Now known as the most impassioned and feared of his kind, he sometimes lingers weeks behind his fellows to consummate a punishment that his companions “gave up on too early.”

Image: Perhaps predictably, Black Wallace has dark brown eyes and jet black hair. He instructs his ghouls to groom his beard and mustache to match his treasured portrait. His teeth are quite bad by 20th-century standards, and when he extends his fangs they come out a bit askew.

Roleplaying Hints: You are an infernalist's worst nightmare, and often that of the "innocent" as well. You particularly enjoy tormenting the weak and feeble but occasionally show mercy to any who share your disposition, in hopes of nurturing their appetites. Even your fellow Inquisitors hesitate to challenge your authority.

Clan: Lasombra

Sire: Lord Vauxhall

Nature: Sadist

Demeanor: Bon Vivant

Generation: 8th

Embrace: 1659

Apparent Age: early 40s

Physical: Strength 5, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 5, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 1, Dodge 4, Interrogation 5, Intimidation 5, Leadership 3, Style 2, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Crafts 2, Etiquette 3, Firearms 3, Melee 4, Ride 4

Knowledges: Academics 2, Bureaucracy 2, Investigation 5, Law 4, Linguistics 2, Occult 3, Politics 4, Sabbat Lore 3

Disciplines: Auspex 2, Dominate 4, Obtenebration 3, Potence 4, Thaumaturgy 4

Thaumaturgical Paths: Spirit Manipulation 4

Backgrounds: Contacts 5, Influence 6, Resources 6, Sabbat Status 5

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

Morality: Path of Honorable Accord 4

Derangements: Fugue, Hysteria

Willpower: 6

CARDINALS

KYLE STRATHCONA, CARDINAL OF CANADA

Background: Kyle Strathcona represents a near-extinct breed within the Sabbat. He remembers when his sect stood for independence. The new Sabbat, however, uses the banner of freedom for its own ends, fracturing the sect by supporting the results of the Anarch Revolt rather than the cause. Having betrayed the Camarilla, Kyle, now Cardinal of Canada, finds himself growing increasingly unhappy. Although his position and popularity are stronger than ever, he feels the world he once envisioned falling away like leaves in autumn. The Sabbat no longer possesses the adversity-forged comradeship that encouraged him to leave the Camarilla. Kyle, however, is not a man to wallow in memories. He is ready to fight and reclaim what is lost.

Early in the 16th century, France and Scotland were war allies. During this period, Kyle Strathcona was a Scottish soldier fighting the English, Spanish and Papal armies of the Holy League. During Scotland's loss at Flodden Field, however, Kyle impressed several English pro-Camarilla observers



while rallying his kinsmen in battle. His natural skills as a leader were not lost on the Ventrue. When the Holy League emerged victorious and the French-Scottish alliance dissolved with the Peace of London accord in 1513, the Ventrue claimed Kyle.

The Embrace was not easy on Kyle. Although the Ventrue eventually returned him to his home in Edinburgh, he knew it was to suit their purposes and not his. Edinburgh, then capital of Scotland, was a Toreador stronghold. The Ventrue fought for control of the Scottish city and desperately needed someone familiar with the surroundings. Kyle, being native to Edinburgh, a war hero and a natural leader, seemed the perfect emissary. This notion proved partially correct as Kyle played intermediary between the two clans. Unfortunately, he also existed for 50 years isolated from Scottish Cainites because they believed he was a spy, and removed from England's Ventrue because he was Scottish. Kyle grew bitter over those years and dreamed of the day he could turn the tables on his supposed clan. He thought of nothing but revenge and honed his swordsmanship by training with his only companions, his ghoul retainers. With experience and longevity as tools, Kyle exercised patience and waited for events to turn to his advantage.

Little changed for Kyle during this period, even after the Toreador of Edinburgh supported James I's bid for the English throne and drove the Ventrue from power. Kyle continued dwelling in Edinburgh, slowly gaining Toreador trust through sheer charisma while supposedly helping the Ventrue fortify a small clan presence. Eventually, Kyle saw his chance to betray the Ventrue when his clan seized power in England and forced Scotland to join under the Act of Union. In the interest of peace, the Toreador and Ventrue came to an understanding: Several Toreador would remain in London as "guests" while a handful of Ventrue — including Kyle —

stayed in Edinburgh for the same reason. In essence, they were hostages to guarantee the truce. Kyle, however, convinced several gullible Toreador that the Ventrue had betrayed them. Kyle's ruse reached fruition during the 1715 Scottish uprising when Edinburgh Toreador destroyed several local Ventrue, many of whom Kyle set up as targets. Kyle survived, due to his invaluable assistance to Toreador allies who ensured his safety. Not surprisingly, the Ventrue of London never avenged the massacre in Edinburgh or even discovered Kyle's involvement in the matter.

Matters took an unforeseen turn when the British Empire took control of France's Canadian assets following the Treaty of Paris. In the Cainite world of the Americas, power shifted from the French Toreador to British Ventrue. Again, Kyle seized the opportunity and left for Montreal, where he stepped into the vacant position of prince with little difficulty. Known as the City of Black Miracles, Montreal was a French enclave and formally influenced by the Toreador. Kyle knew as much and played on lingering French-Scottish sympathies to cement his position with the French locals. The Ventrue Prince Mithras recognized Kyle's claim because Mithras believed Kyle would make an excellent puppet-leader for the London Ventrue to control.

Unbeknownst to either Kyle or the Ventrue, Montreal was a Sabbat domain ready to declare independence. Kyle's presence only added fuel to the fire. A local Sabbat pack known as the Shepherds sensed Prince Strathcona's hatred of his own sect and eventually encouraged him to defect. In turn, Kyle realized the Camarilla lacked the Sabbat sense of community and the willingness to fight and die for a cause. When Kyle Strathcona defected, he handed the British Ventrue their greatest defeat since the Toreador had gained the English throne. From that moment on, the Blue Bloods marked him for Final Death. Under the sponsorship of the Shepherds, however, Kyle excelled within the Sabbat.

From his illustrious turn as Archbishop of Montreal, then as Cardinal of Canada, Kyle is now one of the highest-ranking Sabbat members not Embraced by the sect or originally part of it. Sadly, despite his efficient and unquestioned work, he finds himself questioning the new Sabbat. He sees them as rogue childer and hypocritical elders whose activities threaten to tear the sect asunder. The strength of community is gone. A sense of accomplishment no longer exists for the Sabbat as a whole, only for individual packs seeking private glory. The only things separating them from anarchs are the *Vaulderie* and Sabbat heritage kept active through the *ritae*; even then, the younger generations treat the rituals like chores.

Although it pains him to do so, Kyle plots a great betrayal once more. He feels he must do something to galvanize his brethren. He believes that if a Sabbat city is in danger of falling to the Camarilla, the sect might band together to stop the coup. He knows it is a risky gambit, but he can see no alternative. To this end, Cardinal Strathcona plans to allow information about Montreal, including some weaknesses, to

reach the new Tremere Justicar Anastasz di Zagreb. From the archbishop's struggle that unravels the city's power structure to the existence of a library of hidden ledgers, the cardinal is releasing enough information to pose a threat to Montreal. Kyle chose Zagreb because he believes the justicar is young and inexperienced enough to fall for the bait. Kyle only hopes the Sabbat can stop any potential coup before it gets too far.

Image: Kyle Strathcona is a distinguished gentleman in contemporary clothing. He dresses in formal attire and looks too prim to be stereotypical Sabbat. His hair is white and he keeps his goatee trimmed short. Strathcona stands straight and proud, as though to dismiss the air of sorrow that drapes his shoulders like a cloak. His gaze is ever distant.

Roleplaying Hints: You have no regrets about your existence, but you still can't help thinking about the past. In the last few years, you've become philosophical and remote. Others who have mistaken your silence for weakness, however, swiftly learn the folly of their ways at the end of your blade. Philosophical or not, you've also become impatient with the stupidity of young Sabbat. You'll never curtail their freedom, but you do punish any who endanger the sect through recklessness. You maintain respect forcefully, but quietly.

Clan: Ventrue *antitribu*

Sire: Collinsworth

Nature: Martyr

Demeanor: Judge

Generation: 8th

Embrace: 1514

Apparent Age: early 40s

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 3, Brawl 2, Diplomacy 3, Dodge 4, Empathy 2, Interrogation 2, Intimidation 4, Intrigue 2, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Drive 2, Etiquette 3, Firearms 3, Fire Dancing 4, Melee (short sword) 5, Performance 3, Stealth 3, Survival 2

Knowledges: Academics 1, Area Knowledge (Edinburgh) 3, Area Knowledge (Montreal) 5, Area Knowledge (Toronto) 4, Bureaucracy 4, Camarilla Lore 3, City Secrets (Montreal) 3, Clan Knowledge (Ventrue) 3, Finance 4, Investigation 2, Law 2, Occult 1, Politics 5, Sabbat Lore 4

Disciplines: Auspex 4, Celerity 2, Dominate 3, Fortitude 2, Potence 4, Presence 5, Protean 2

Backgrounds: Contacts 3, Resources 4, Retainers 2, Sabbat Status 5

Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 4, Courage 5

Morality: Humanity 4

Willpower: 9

VELYA THE VIVISECTIONIST AND ELAINE
CASSIDY, CARDINAL OF THE LAND BEYOND
THE FOREST

Background: He is legend even among the Fiends, and few have seen him or spoken with him. Along with Lugoj, *Voivode of Voivodes*, it was he who freed the childer from their elders' sanguinary shackles. His mastery of blood sorcery is rivaled only by the Inner Council of the Tremere. Sabbat younglings dub him "the Flayer," "the Vivisectionist" and a host of other sobriquets, but elders among the Sabbat Fiends know him simply as Velya.

A founder of the Sabbat, Velya now serves it as a cardinal, overseeing the sect's reconquest of the Tzimisce Old Country. As such, he orchestrates ethnic hatreds, channels terrorist purges and gently rakes the former Iron Curtain into a rubble of broken states and shattered peoples. Mostly, though, he prepares and implements mighty *koldunic* rituals, seeking to tap the spirits of the ancient land and turn them against the hated Tremere in nearby Vienna. He has taken such an openly political position only reluctantly, for he is old and more interested in the ways of Metamorphosis than anything so ephemeral as the Jihad. Nonetheless, he recognizes the necessity of what he does, and so he performs his duties with the meticulous devotion to honor that only an old and malignant Fiend can display.

Or so Velya would have one believe. In truth, Velya is in the grip of a terrible and self-inflicted predicament, one that may soon bring him low where millennia of enemies and perils have failed to do so. For Velya's greatest delight is also his greatest despair.

A century ago, Velya fell in love with and "wed" one Elaine Cassidy, a 10-year-old Boston socialite. He watched from afar as Elaine meticulously spidered her way into a dominant position within her neurotic family by reducing her mother to catatonia, contriving her sister's untimely demise and cleverly manipulating her sensitive elder brother into a madhouse. Velya was entranced. Aiding little Elaine's schemes from a distance, Velya ensured the girl's inheritance of the entire Cassidy fortune. The young and impressionable Elaine, for her part, was quickly taken with the wise and Mephistophelean vampire noble upon meeting him, and the two monsters joined in a sanguine union.

Alas, over the centuries Velya had grown so divorced from human cares that he was unmindful of Elaine's essential fragility. While little Elaine was the liveliest monster among her kind, her 10-year-old psyche was scarcely strong enough to cope with the horrors of nightly unlife among the Sabbat. Insufficiently determined to learn even the rudiments of the Path of Metamorphosis, Elaine spiraled out of control, and her soul was lost to the Beast in the mid-20th century. Realizing what had happened but unwilling to terminate the unlife of his childer and "wife," Velya used his arts to graft his beloved to him until such time as he could "fix" her.



Of course, no vampire, once gripped by the Beast, can be "fixed," not even by one as clever as Velya. Furthermore, the linkage has fused together Velya's and Elaine's veins and arteries, so that blood from the one flows into the body of the other. While this arrangement has the beneficial effect of forever reinforcing the couple's blood bond, it also allows Elaine's rampant Beast to goad Velya's own.

As such, for the first time in centuries, the Methuselah finds himself close to losing control. Already, Velya's minions have begun to whisper of failed experiments, neglected tasks and bizarre lapses of personality. Velya's hold on himself — and on Elaine — slips by the night. And if Velya falls, the clan's reconquest of the Old Country may come to naught.

Image: Individually, both Velya and Elaine are handsome creatures — the former well proportioned and neatly dressed, with a mane of flowing silver hair; the latter a perversely breathtaking Nabokovian nymphet in fashionable yet conservative frocks. Of course, the fact that the two vampires are grafted together, Elaine's leg-stumps to Velya's spine, makes the composite being grotesque indeed. Although Velya does his best to keep his "wife" distracted and docile, at times the Beast overtakes her; during these fits, Elaine's perfect child-face contorts into a twitching pudding of flesh, and obscenities fly from her distended mouth.

Roleplaying Hints: As Velya, you are almost too methodical and detached, as you frantically compensate for the madness that washes over you from Elaine's bloodstream. Indeed, you spend so much time lashing your Beast into obedience that you have neglected the basic tenets of the Path of Metamorphosis, thus leading to a downward spiral of spiritual malaise. As Elaine, you spend much of your time in a dreamy and only semi-aware state, kept that way courtesy of Velya's blood-sorcery. Occasionally, you break free from the spell, though, and during those times you combine the

cunning and caprice of a mad child with the shrieking frenzy of an insane Cainite. You are in love with your “husband,” but seek only to drag him into a union of bestiality with you.

Note that Elaine’s Traits follow the slashes.

Clan: Tzimisce

Sire: Unknown

Nature: Architect/ Deviant

Demeanor: Traditionalist/ Child

Generation: 5th

Embrace: Unknown/ 1890s

Apparent Age: mid-40s/ 10

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 7

Social: Charisma 6, Manipulation 6, Appearance 3/ 7

Mental: Perception 8, Intelligence 8/ 4, Wits 6

Talents: Alertness 6, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Subterfuge 5

Skills: Body Crafts 6, Etiquette 5, Melee 4, Stealth 4

Knowledges: Academics 5, Linguistics (numerous European languages and several forgotten tongues of the Old World) 6, Occult 8, Science 7

Disciplines: Animalism 8, Auspex 8, Dominate 5, Fortitude 4, Koldunic Sorcery 8, Presence 5, Vicissitude 7

Koldunic Paths: Blood Ways 5, Fire Ways 5, Spirit Ways 5

Backgrounds: Resources 5, Retainers 5, Sabbat Status 5

Virtues: Conviction 2 (formerly 5)/ Conscience 0, Instinct 4/ Self-Control 0, Courage 2/ Courage 2

Morality: Path of Metamorphosis 4 (formerly 9)/ Humanity 0

Willpower: 5 (formerly 10)

FRANCISCO DOMINGO DE POLONIA, CARDINAL OF THE EASTERN AMERICAN TERRITORIES

Background: Born in Spain but eager for adventure (and profit), Polonia volunteered for military duty in the New World. The only son of a minor — and impoverished — noble family, Francisco spent the last of his inheritance to secure an officer’s commission before boarding ship, and he arrived in Mexico a captain.

While Mexico itself didn’t offer much in the way of opportunity for an ambitious young man, the various expeditions heading north to find treasure and territory did. Polonia attached himself to de Onate’s expedition, which had as its goal the foundation of a permanent outpost in what is now New Mexico. The expedition was a failure, but one officer in particular distinguished himself by his conduct: Polonia. Such bravery and competence drew attention from several of the Lasombra elders already established on the continent, and the young captain was rewarded for his efforts with the Embrace — and a new assignment.

Officially, Polonia’s orders were to march north again with de Peralta in an attempt to succeed where de Onate failed. Unofficially, Polonia was to serve as a stalking horse. His presence in the unspoiled lands to the north would be sure

to draw whatever enemies lurked there — particularly the region’s savage Lupines — into the open. Polonia himself probably wouldn’t survive the assault. Then again, he wasn’t supposed to.

It took until 1680 for Francisco to accomplish what he unwittingly set out to do. In that year, the local werewolves and their Pueblo kinfolk burned de Peralta’s settlement of Santa Fe to the ground. Polonia was one of the few survivors, and he made his way back south with a full report of enemy strength, tactics and resources. Salvaging such useful information from utter defeat impressed even more of Polonia’s superiors, and they took an interest in training him properly for use in the long nights ahead.

The next three centuries were a whirlwind of espionage, murder and subversion. Under the tutelage of no less a personage than the legendary Medina, Polonia learned tactics and strategies, then put them to use in the field. He operated primarily on the North American continent, and went whither his superiors ordered him to work their will with impressive efficiency.

As the centuries have passed, he has risen in both rank and generation — through merit in the former instance and through skillful application of the Lasombra Courts of Blood in the latter. At this point, Polonia has earned command over all of the Sabbat’s operations on the East Coast. Of course, success only rarely meets with approval, while failure earns vast attention; the loss of New York City to the Camarilla’s desperate counteroffensive tends to overshadow the fact that Polonia has managed to acquire control over Atlanta, northern Florida, the Carolinas and indeed, most of the Mid-Atlantic seaboard. Still, New York is the richest prize of all, and until Polonia can retake it — assuming he is allowed time and resources with which to do so — there will be whispers in the shadows about him.



Image: Polonia is exceedingly tall for a Cainite of his years. He stands more than six feet in height, with ramrod-straight carriage and large hands that look equally at home grasping a sword or a firearm. He has a black, neatly trimmed beard that matches his short black hair and dark eyes. Perhaps for the sake of contrast, Polonia often dresses in white or gray, though in the field he's more comfortable in fatigues. Unlike many of his venerable peers, Polonia's personal style has adapted to the times. His one concession to his age is a silver crucifix necklace that he has worn unceasingly for over three centuries. It was given to Polonia by his mother, and he treasures it above all things. The only flaw in Polonia's image as the perfect soldier is a cosmetic, yet maddeningly embarrassing one: He was Embraced while suffering from a severe sunburn. While Polonia keeps a rigid rein on his temper at most times, commenting on his reddened countenance or even staring at it is the one surefire way to break this iron control.

Roleplaying Hints: Always keep your calm; it's the key to victory. Analyze situations before acting; take advice into account but don't follow it slavishly. Your own instincts and talents have gotten you this far, and it would be foolish to stop trusting them now. Most successes and defeats roll off you like water from a duck's back; it's always on to the next objective. The loss of New York rankles badly, however, and you are painfully aware of the second-guessers who are attempting to remove you from your power. You prefer, however, to cut the ground from beneath those jackals by succeeding, rather than to waste your energy dealing with them one by one.

Clan: Lasombra

Sire: Antón de Concepción

Nature: Architect

Demeanor: Survivor

Generation: 7th

Embrace: 1600

Apparent Age: early 30s

Physical: Strength 5, Dexterity 6, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 5, Manipulation 6, Appearance 4 (when groomed; 2 when his affliction is obvious)

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 5, Wits 6

Talents: Alertness 4, Brawl 5, Dodge 6, Empathy 2, Interrogation 3, Intimidation 4, Leadership 2, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Animal Ken 2, Drive 2, Etiquette 3, Firearms 5, Melee 5, Stealth 3, Survival 2

Knowledges: Academics 2, Computer 1, Finance 3, Linguistics (Arabic, English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Latin, Portuguese) 4, Occult 1, Politics 4

Disciplines: Animalism 1, Auspex 2, Celerity 2, Dominate 5, Fortitude 1, Obtenebration 6, Potence 5, Presence 5, Protean 4

Backgrounds: Contacts 5, Herd 3, Influence 4, Resources 5, Sabbat Status 4

Virtues: Conviction 5, Instinct 4, Courage 4

Morality: Path of Power and the Inner Voice 7

Willpower: 8

THE PRISCI

SASCHA VYKOS, CAINU'S ANGEL

Background: Androgynous Sascha Vykos — Noddist scholar, Tzimisce scientist and Cainite monster — has long been a staunch supporter of Sabbat freedom. It is Hell's chief torturer and a musician with a scalpel. Sascha understands the nuances of every physical sensation and the nerves best suited to receive its ministrations. It is also a creature of learning, with a collection of books and artifacts to humble the halls of all academia. Sascha's enemies, including the Gangrel Beckett and the Malkavian Anatole, believe it holds cult-status within the Sabbat, wherein sect members emulate its actions. In truth, however, Sascha is a monster beyond its own years. Few could ever understand the grand schemes of the Sabbat's ronin priscus.

Sascha Vykos, named Myca Vykos in the years before its self-inflicted castration, lived an enviable existence in the glorious Byzantine Empire. Born to royalty in the Carpathians before the turn of the first millennium, Myca seemed destined for greatness from a young age. As a child, his fits and visions brought him to the attention of House Tremere within the Order of Hermes. He learned the basics of spellcraft and proved such an adept student that he inspired jealousy in the magus Goratrix. Goratrix's later attempt to betray Myca to Tzimisce Cainites backfired, and the young boy found himself among the Fiends.

Eventually, Myca came to hate his clan and fled to Constantinople with the aid of his sire, Symeon, a Tzimisce renegade. The great books of Alexandria became Myca's silent teachers while the political juggernauts within the Byzantine courts taught him the subtleties of influence. Like the other Cainites of the city, however, Myca became enamored with the Toreador Michael and the Methuselah's delusions of divinity. Alas, neither Constantinople nor Michael lasted. When the Fourth Crusade destroyed the city, both Myca and his sire fled to the Balkan strongholds of their Tzimisce brethren. Although they left Michael's legacy behind, his reach would greatly affect Myca even after the Methuselah's Final Death.

During Myca's years in Constantinople, Michael encouraged Myca's thirst for knowledge. It was his intent to make the young Tzimisce a walking record of Constantinople, Michael's vision of Heaven on Earth. Unbeknownst to Myca, the Toreador Methuselah instilled him with this vision and with a need to preserve Constantinople's legacy. Myca became Michael's architect, building a new kingdom without the mistakes of the past. Myca carried out Michael's dreams by crafting a living empire of flesh rather than stone. His city was to be a community of Cainites founded on pillars of blood

and bone. His participation in the Sabbat's formation was the first step toward that goal.

During the *antitribu* uprising, better known as the Anarch Revolt, the anarchs attacked the elders' strongholds to destroy everything associated with their former masters. Myca, on the other hand, played the monster while torturing Symeon — repeatedly absorbing and regurgitating his sire before the final act of diablerie — but also took the role of scholar when he saved books at risk to his own existence. During the uprising, Myca aided his allies, Lugo and Velya, and proved pivotal aid to the nascent Sabbat movement as priscus.

Over the centuries, Sascha — for that is what Myca renamed itself shortly after leading an assault on the village of Thorns — has served its sect as scholar and warrior. In both roles, it acts as wandering priscus, though its manner of advising regional cardinals seems more akin to making strong “suggestions” than polite recommendations. As scholar, it maintains ancient libraries and repositories across the Balkan states. In this role, Sascha is an ally to the old-guard Sabbat who appreciate the strength of knowledge. As warrior, however, Sascha is also a frightening tool of retribution. With mastery over Vicissitude and Thaumaturgy, it can best most adversaries. Generally, though, it prefers to capture foes rather than kill them. Many of Sascha's prisoners have endured sessions of alternating torture and ecstatic pleasure that last for decades. Its victims are often unsure whether they are undergoing torture or rape.

In this violent facet, Sascha appeals to the younger Sabbat. Collectively, in turn, the Sabbat is a weapon for Sascha, a living battlement against the rapacious Antediluvians — the adversaries in Sascha's morality play. Every death it inflicts strengthens the Sabbat's position; every splatter of blood is part of God's portrait; every agonizing cry is a nail in Heaven's unliving city. That is why it knows how each nerve screams, how much blood flows from specific wounds and how much fat it can rob from a mortal body before death.

Image: Sascha is an alien beauty. Its limbs are long, slender and graceful, but it moves with power. Its face is like a work by Michelangelo, perfect and flawless in form. Not even the master artist could capture Sascha's cruel countenance, however. The network of scars, tattoos and piercings that cover its androgynous form only add to Sascha's enigmatic beauty. What appear to be thin, black tattoos on its body are skin clefts that open like a babe's toothless mouth. Sascha's skill with Vicissitude allows it to speak through these mouths as well, creating a chorus of its voice to unnerve even the most strong-willed opponent. Sascha displays these marks like trophies, sometimes stroking them with tenderness. Sascha's most compelling feature, however, is its eyes. It watches everything around it the way a coroner dissects a cadaver. It never blinks or looks away; it simply stares.



Roleplaying Hints: You look at people the same way mortals study a goldfish: with detached interest. You've already decided how to kill them; it isn't a matter of whether someone should live or die, but when you plan to dispose of them. It all depends on how long they prove useful to you. Your mindset is no psychotic fantasy, however, but a pure, analytical observation. You are a scientist at heart: practical, thorough and detached.

Clan: Tzimisce

Sire: Symeon

Nature: Monster

Demeanor: Visionary

Generation: 6th

Embrace: 1002

Apparent Age: Indistinguishable

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 6, Manipulation 4, Appearance 7

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 5, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 3, Brawl 4, Dodge 5, Empathy 1, Interrogation 7, Intimidation 5, Intrigue 4, Leadership 3, Style 6, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Animal Ken 2, Archery 2, Body Crafts 6, Etiquette 3, Herbalism 3, Melee (knife) 4, Performance 2, Ride 3, Stealth 2, Survival 3

Knowledges: Academics 4, Area Knowledge (Europe) 6, Camarilla Lore 4, Finance 2, Hearth Wisdom 2, History 6, Investigation 3, Law 1, Linguistics (a litany of contemporary, ancient, Asian and Romance languages) 6, Medicine 5, Occult 5, Politics 4, Research 5, Sabbat Lore 6

Disciplines: Animalism 4, Auspex 4, Celerity 2, Dominate 5, Fortitude 3, Presence 4, Thaumaturgy 5, Vicissitude 7

Thaumaturgical Paths: Path of Blood 5, Lure of Flames 5, Movement of the Mind 2

Backgrounds: Allies 3, Contacts 3, Herd 5, Resources 5, Retainers 6, Rituals 5, Sabbat Status 5

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

Morality: Path of Death and the Soul 9

Willpower: 8

LEILA MONROE, SABBAT CRUSADER

Background: Leila Monroe clawed her way through a brutal Creation Rite and stepped naked from the earth with the precepts of the Sabbat etched in her heart. She saw her holy mission was to share with the City of Angels the dark nightmare that is life under Sabbat rule.

Leila served as a ghoul under a Lasombra archbishop in southern California and endured beatings and humiliation as the virtual slave of this twisted monster. She lived through more than 15 years of training and indoctrination before her Embrace. Her sire saw Los Angeles as a rotten plum ready for plucking by the Sabbat's talons. The anarch free state was nothing but a loose collection of coteries, and the Camarilla presence was negligible. Leila was to be the instrument that brought L.A. to heel.

Embraced in the early 1940s, Leila, a stunning beauty, moved into L.A. society and cut through the crowds like a knife. She turned down numerous offers of screen tests and studio contracts while drawing many film executives into her web. She established her base of operations within the studio system, and she had a string of horror films made in the early 1960s that clearly broke the Masquerade, including *The Vampire Prince* and the horror classic *They Are Among You*.

In the late '60s, she extended her feelers into the anarch and independent spheres. Finding the vampires of L.A. to be an undisciplined bunch, she easily used her charm and poise



to bring coteries under her influence and remold them into Sabbat packs — at first. By acting as an egalitarian, accepting Cainites of every type including Caitiff, she was able to secure the nominal support of the lawless vampires. This openness made it even easier to attract the outsiders to her call.

Leila encountered problems when she tried to exert some control over the vicious anarch packs in the inner cities during the early '70s. These packs were gangbangers Embraced as muscle, and they had only slightly more respect for the Sabbat than they did for the Camarilla. Leila's packs lost numerous skirmishes. The failure to consolidate the inner city cost Leila the Bishopric of Los Angeles. She had to simmer quietly as the title was given to a Pander who was held up as a symbol of the Sabbat's acceptance of all Kindred. Leila smiled during the ceremony, as a bloody bile rose in her throat. She decided then and there that, titles and honors be damned, her influence would still be what got things done in Los Angeles.

Leila spent the rest of the '70s and early '80s consolidating her interests in the B-movie and adult-film industries, and she began to move into illicit drug activities and other areas. It was during a heroin deal gone bad that Leila's sphere of influence first brushed against with what she would eventually refer to as "those Eastern bastards." A group of buyers vanished from a dock in the harbor and wasn't heard from again. When Leila investigated, the only clue she discovered was a six-inch talon.

Although Leila never paid much attention to L.A.'s large Asian population, except as a source of drugs, this new development prompted her to look more closely. Unfortunately, every tentacle of influence she attempted to extend into Chinatown returned as a bloody stump. The consistent co-option or outright vanishing of her agents sent Leila into a panic. Was this a new Camarilla incursion? Or perhaps something more sinister?

Her questions were answered when a wizened Asian man arrived and claimed to be an emissary from a group of vampires known as the Kuei-jin. All that is known of the meeting is that at its end a trembling and pale Leila and the old man left the room together. She has received orders which forbid interference in Chinatown and which make it clear that Cainites are welcome for two hours after dusk only, no feeding allowed. Westerners who break these rules are typically never heard from again.

Currently, Leila is playing a waiting game. The bishop is making angry noises that are being met with disapproval by some of his superiors, and Leila has brazenly claimed the title of priscus for herself, to the bishop's consternation. Her biggest active concerns are the rumors that the Kuei-jin are moving out of the Asian neighborhoods and are beginning to stake new territories in areas controlled by her sect's packs. Continual agitation by the anarchists and Camarilla agents keeps Leila busy putting out brushfires before the bishop can take action of his own. She remains certain that she can

eventually claim the entire city for the Sabbat — and prove her claim to pricus — but under all the mounting pressures, her devotion to the precepts of the Sabbat is becoming shrill and unsteady of late.

Image: Leila is a beautiful woman who has finely sculpted features framed with honey-blond hair. She has pale blue eyes and is always dressed to kill, either figuratively or literally.

Roleplaying Hints: If only you could tip the balance in L.A. to the Sabbat, you would achieve all your dreams. You are driven and fanatically devoted to the principles of your sect, and you enjoy long, rambling discourses on its benefits. You are disgusted by the political maneuverings you witness, but you know that they are necessary to your success. Your claim of title is not vanity, but rather destiny — so earn it.

Clan: Lasombra

Sire: The Caballero

Nature: Bravo

Demeanor: Fanatic

Generation: 10th

Embrace: 1942

Apparent Age: late 20s

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 5

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 2

Talents: Alertness 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Grace 1, Intimidation 3, Leadership 2, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Etiquette 2, Firearms 2, Performance 4, Security 3, Stealth 2

Knowledges: Academics 1, Bureaucracy 3, Finance 1, Law 3, Linguistics (Spanish) 1, Politics 3

Disciplines: Dominate 3, Obtenebration 2, Potence 2, Presence 2

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Contacts 3, Fame 1, Influence (movies) 3, Resources 3

Virtues: Conviction 4, Instinct 2, Courage 5

Morality: Path of Power and the Inner Voice 6

Derangements: Megalomania

Willpower: 5

THE ARCHBISHOPS

ARCHBISHOP AMBROSIO LUIS MONÇADA,
PLENIPOTENTIARY AND RULER OF THE FAITH

Background: Little is known about Monçada's early life; the best guesses posit him entering Madrid with Alfonso VII's repopulation efforts as a priest assigned to the city's central church (formerly a mosque). Monçada apparently was a man of ambition, talent and faith, according to scattered documents from the period that detail his rapid ascent in the Church hierarchy. He eventually gained the rank of archbishop, but was prevented by politics from ever attaining the



Papacy; even with the proliferation of popes and anti-popes, there was no place for an outsider whose agenda lacked the support of powerful patrons. So, Monçada found himself and his ambition restricted to Iberia. The tide of the *Reconquista* had turned irrevocably in favor of Christianity at this point, and serving as a pillar of the Church during a religious war could be an advantageous position indeed.

To no one's amazement, Monçada made the most of his position. To the surprise of many, however, he did so while holding himself to a strict monasticism. Not for Monçada were the hunts, lavish banquets and lascivious pursuits beloved by so many clergymen of the time. Rather, he was absolute in his faith, unshakable in his conviction and resolute in his use of power for what he considered to be Heaven's causes. During an age when the corrupt clergyman became a stock character, Monçada was a towering anomaly on the ecclesiastical landscape, and an intriguing conundrum to certain Lasombra who had a vested interest in the *Reconquista*.

The Embrace changed Monçada less than one might suppose. Many of his compatriots in the Blood were regular visitors to his confessional; others were patrons of priests Monçada knew or had ordained himself. Within a matter of weeks, the archbishop had become acclimated enough in his new status to renew his quest for power. This time, however, he sought dominion not over the puppets but over the puppetmasters. Nothing less than a position of supremacy among the Lasombra would satisfy the freshly Embraced Monçada—but his reasons for seeking power had not changed. It was not for the glory of Monçada (that poor fleshly shell), but rather for the glory of God. Clearly, the Embrace had been God's will, and through the instrument of the Curse of Cainé, Monçada had all eternity to do the Lord's work.

The best laid plans of mice, men and priests sometimes change, however. Monçada's influence rapidly expanded throughout both mortal and immortal society. The network of royal confessors and simple parish priests raised under his tutelage allowed him communication and persuasion that few other Cainites could match. Churches and cathedrals rose, and many found their genesis deep in the heart of Monçada's fortress like monastery. As for the *Reconquista*, with the weight of the priesthood brought firmly to bear on Lasombra internal politicking, the clan's support went fully over to the Christian side, and events rolled on.

As centuries passed, however, something happened to the archbishop's faith. It never wavered, but it has evolved into something dark and terrible, an unshakable belief in Monçada's own damnation and a determination to earn that fate. The archbishop still believes, with a perfect faith, in redemption and the Resurrection. He simply knows, with an abiding resignation, that there is no salvation for him or his kind, and as God has seen fit to damn him thus, it is his duty to earn that damnation as best he might. Indeed, many Cainite scholars lay the development of the Path of Night squarely at Monçada's feet, a tribute to both his faith and his influence over others of his clan. At this conclusion, Monçada merely sneers, however, for his own reasons.

Monçada's position within the Sabbat and his standing in the clan have consolidated, rather than expanded, over the many nights since his Embrace. He is the spiritual anchor for many of his clanmates, and confession with the archbishop (for those Lasombra who remain Catholic) is a coveted distinction. His influence on broad policy is waning, however — some Sabbat mutter that he spends too much time on spiritual affairs and not enough on temporal ones, or that he consorts with strange and unsettling beings in his quest to serve God's will.

In recent nights, Monçada has essentially confined himself to his haven, his chambers protected by a maze of corridors and shrines to saints that overflow with True Faith. When the world wants Monçada's advice, it comes to him; he has no interest in leaving his home, and so long as there is no pressing need for him to do so, he remains the spider in a blasphemous web.

Image: Monçada is immensely fat, almost repulsively so. He moves with a grace and a silence remarkable for a man of his size, however; intruders in his maze never hear his approach. The archbishop wears robes appropriate to his station, circa 12th century; he considers such attire to be appropriate, and propriety still means a great deal to him.

Roleplaying Hints: Bear in mind your position and your mandate from Heaven. Damnation is your birthright, but by accepting it you serve the cause of Grace. Thus, you strive with all your might to accomplish the mission God has bestowed upon you. You play on the grander chessboard of souls; lives are of less consequence to you than one might suppose. Cainites without faith disturb you, but in truth, they

are just further obstacles in the way of your great works. Despite the concerns of your great-grandchilder and their callow friends, you are still among the canniest manipulators the Sabbat possesses. You simply put your talents to use slightly differently than they would, and any upstarts who pit their wills against yours you crush almost reflexively. Ants who pester a colossus should expect no less, after all.

Clan: Lasombra

Sire: Silvester de Ruiz

Nature: Director

Demeanor: Judge

Generation: 6th

Embrace: 1153

Apparent Age: mid-50s

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 6, Manipulation 6, Appearance 1

Mental: Perception 5, Intelligence 5, Wits 6

Talents: Alertness 4, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Empathy 5, Expression 5, Grace 4, Intimidation 5, Leadership 4, Subterfuge 5

Skills: Crafts 1, Etiquette 5, Melee 3, Performance 2, Stealth 5, Survival 2

Knowledges: Academics (theology) 4, Finance 3, Law 4, Linguistics (virtually all European languages and dialects) 7, Medicine 2, Occult 5, Politics 4

Disciplines: Auspex 4, Dominate 7, Fortitude 3, Obfuscate 1, Obtenebration 6, Potence 5, Presence 5

Backgrounds: Allies 4, Contacts 5, Herd 5, Influence 3, Resources 5, Retainers 7, Sabbat Status 4

Virtues: Conviction 5, Instinct 4, Courage 5

Morality: Path of Power and the Inner Voice 9

Willpower: 9

Merits/ Flaws: Enchanting Voice, True Faith 3, Dark Fate

FABRIZIA CONTURAZ, CONQUISTADORA

Background: Third-World Mexico has no appropriate method for dealing with the uncontrollably insane. If a family cannot care for its own, there is little recourse besides pleading for a monastery's mercies or stoning. Treatment of the imbalanced is unheard of, and they most often end up in prisons or dead. From a certain point of view, then, Fabrizia was lucky to get shelter within the walls of Reclusorio Oriente Penitentiary. With heavy hearts — for they knew she would only suffer unknown horrors with her fellow inmates — Fabrizia's family left her on the steps of the prison and never looked back.

In 1984, Mexican Sabbat consolidated their forces and sought out new recruits for a prolonged skirmish with Camarilla-dominated Houston. At that time, Licero Blanco led a pack of his cronies to the prison where Fabrizia happened to be held. Licero selected the strongest and seemingly most violent for recruitment. He personally Embraced Fabrizia, as her lack of control was, to him, a strength. Although the

other Embraced inmates proved to be⁹ flawed at best, Fabrizia's mind cleared for the first time in many years. The curse of Malkav that had worked so many tricks on neonates throughout the millennia focused her thoughts and brought her back to reality. Licero, both amazed and disappointed by his new childe, escaped into the night with his progeny, leaving the prison littered with broken bodies of guards and inmates.

Licero considered himself an asset to the Sabbat, and few in his corner of the world disagreed. He led his pack with strength and conviction, dealing swiftly with dissenters. Any who supported him earned his favor, and Fabrizia was his most loyal member and confidante. Over the next several years, the two fought the Camarilla off and on, and they explored each other's madness (or apparent lack thereof) intimately. While other vampires formed their own packs or died in the continuing struggle with Houston's "Kindred," Licero and Fabrizia grew ever closer.

Constantly overlooked as Licero's pet, it was not widely known that Fabrizia played a key role in many of his victories. As Licero aged, his insanity became more distracting. Only Fabrizia's sharp wits kept him focused on the goals at hand. When fate finally separated the two, it meant Licero's destruction and began Fabrizia's own rise to power.

Fabrizia's heart shattered when the news arrived that Licero had been lost in the Miami siege. Although no one could confirm his final destruction, she sensed that after so many nights with her mad lover, she was finally alone in the world.

Regent Galbraith hated Fabrizia for distracting Licero and considered her a poorly chosen result of Licero's de-ranked libido. She didn't realize Fabrizia's true role in Licero's success and saw her only as a liability. Despite the perception that Fabrizia was Licero's servant, she still maintained the support of her sire's pack, and even became a ductus after Licero's departure. Galbraith wanted to remove Fabrizia but could hardly justify wasting time on such a minor Cainite. Publicly and openly attacking her would only bring ill will upon the regent, and might have easily made her a laughing-stock. Instead, Regent Galbraith named Fabrizia archbishop *pro tempore* of Miami in Licero's place, with hopes that the Malkavian would fail miserably and be replaced by someone less despicable.

Fabrizia surprised everyone by quickly and efficiently organizing the forces under her command. Miami became a strict, almost military, city with no quarter given to anyone who stepped out of line. So far, under her direction, the Sabbat has retaken several small cities from the Camarilla along the East Coast.

The new archbishop's strategies showed patience and careful planing. Fabrizia slowly introduced single members of the sect into Camarilla cities to search for the weak links and learn the inner politics. With few vampires to protect these areas, coups were simple for an organized force with inside knowledge. She introduced covert vampires into Atlanta,



Columbia, Jacksonville, New Haven and Baltimore — and coordinated her spies with previous Sabbat activity in these cities.

Regent Galbraith is simultaneously pleased and upset by Fabrizia's success. On one hand, the regent must appreciate the victories the archbishop has won. On the other hand, she cannot believe the Malkavian duped her.

To Fabrizia, the victories mean nothing. She continues her assault on the Camarilla, not for freedom or power, but simply for revenge. She was quite content to follow Licero until the end of time, politics be damned. Camarilla vampires took that option from her; she intends to take *everything* from them in exchange.

Image: Fabrizia Conteraz is a Mexican woman with a dark complexion and long hair. Her no-nonsense attitude contradicts her friendly appearance. Fabrizia's calculating stare unnerves even the most hardened Brujah.

Roleplaying Hints: For your entire unlife, you focused on one thing: loving Licero. He was everything to you, and now he is gone. Your focus has shifted as a result of his disappearance, and the Camarilla will regret its involvement. Now, your preternaturally fierce obsession demands the sect's ultimate destruction. Nothing else matters.

Clan: Malkavian *antitribu*

Sire: Licero Blanco

Nature: Perfectionist

Demeanor: Director

Generation: 10th

Embrace: 1984

Apparent Age: late 20s

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 3
Talents: Alertness 3, Brawl 2, Expression 2, Intimidation 1, Leadership 5, Subterfuge 3
Skills: Drive 2, Etiquette 3, Firearms 3, Fire Dancing 2, Security 3, Stealth 2, Survival 2, Vamp 3
Knowledges: Academics 1, Computer 2, Expert Knowledge: Strategy 3, Investigation 2, Linguistics (English, Latin) 2, Occult 3, Politics 4, Sabbat Lore 3
Disciplines: Dementation 3, Fortitude 1, Potence 2
Backgrounds: Allies 4, Contacts 3, Influence 2, Resources 2, Sabbat Status 1
Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 0, Courage 4
Morality: Humanity 2
Derangements: Obsessive/Compulsive (avenge Licero's fall)
Willpower: 4

MARK, BISHOP OF TORRANCE

Background: Military life is a procession of order, a chain of hierarchy and command; few soldiers must show any combination of loyalty and personal initiative. Mark was one of those few — infiltrating enemy units, attending foreign political events, bribing enemy troops and stealing military secrets were his duties. Of course, in the late 19th century, there was no real classification for military intelligence work, but that didn't stop Mark from doing an exceptional job of sabotage and subversion.

The United States Civil War provided a cloak of disorder for clandestine activity. Underground railroads, deserting soldiers, carpetbagging politicians — with a quick cover, a fast-talking subversive could go undetected just about anywhere in the country. With a few drinks and a silver tongue, such operatives could buy the right secrets: military movements, supply trains and political agendas. With only a short trip back across the border, such secrets could easily become real gold. Even in the postwar United States, with Ulysses S. Grant as the new president, political manipulation brought wealth and prestige. Secrets financed Mark's lifestyle and status. They also brought about his unlife.

Political rallies and meetings were nothing new to Mark; he'd been spying on various groups for the better part of a decade when he made his way into a rather select salon in Charleston. The political gamesmanship and hushed speech were nothing new to him, but the vampires were. Once he figured out that the aperitif of choice was human blood, he quickly exited the disturbing evening social, all the while playing the part of a servant. Highly intrigued and secretly terrified, he made his way back north to sell some of his other gains — and, in New England, his knowledge of the peculiar gathering drew the attention of another political party. Military background, high intelligence, no known links to the schemes of vampires — all in all, Mark was a perfect candidate for the experimentation that led to the Blood Brothers.



A little mind-bending brought Mark to the appropriate locale, where he waited, caged, with a half-dozen others, as the Sabbat sorcerers carefully selected the group that would be transformed. Even held in a foul warehouse, he was kept clean and well-fed; after all, the Cainites had no desire to use substandard test subjects. They entranced him with the rest of the herd, until he was finally strapped into a chair and subjected to the twisting rituals that bend flesh together into an amalgam. His tormentors were vaguely impressed that he had the strength to keep screaming for three nights, long after the other subjects had died, fallen unconscious, or succumbed to gibbering madness.

When Mark and his circle finally awoke from the ritual, they were quickly indoctrinated into the Sabbat. The haze of transformation and the ravening hungers of the Beast left Mark little choice but to capitulate; the brood of eight (with the failures destroyed) underwent collective training to serve as front-line fighters for the sect. Two died in their first encounter with Camarilla combatants; the rest watched, fought and learned.

As the decades wore on, Mark learned as much as possible about his new condition and his place in the Sabbat. Originally built to be subservient and expendable, he brought his knowledge of military structure and intelligence operations to the circle; with his initiative and loyalty to the sect, he rapidly became the leading voice for the circle. By World War I (during which the brood lost another member in the fight for influence in heavy industry), Mark was the undisputed leader of the group, but he wanted more.

Such initiative was unheard-of among the Blood Brothers. Because he always recognized the power of communication and information, Mark was quick to realize the value of the emerging technologies such as radio and television that followed the World Wars. Adopting personal communica-

tions allowed his circle to improve its efficiency in combat. Mark's true interest was piqued, however, with the emergence of the personal computer in the '70s. Foreseeing the potential of devices that could store and categorize tremendous amounts of data, he and his circle moved to California, there to watch the developments at the cutting edge of technology. The anarchists of the free state proved no difficulty — any who bothered to check into his business generally didn't believe in the "myths" about the Blood Brothers, and nosy individual anarchists proved susceptible to the coordinated attacks of the pack.

Armed with a keen intellect and the savings of money gathered from continued political dabbling, Mark invested in the development of computer technologies on the West Coast. As one of the few successful Sabbat operatives there, he rose in standing among his peers. Finally, when it became clear that the fractious vampires of California would not or could not effectively challenge his position, he quietly let the Sabbat know that he had claimed Torrance for the sect, which raised him at last to the position of bishop. With his bald-headed circle mates (Jack, Truman, Karl and Ilse, sometimes facetiously called "Matthew, Luke, John and Mary"), he enjoys free run of Torrance. Having become part of the political game on which he once spied, he has discovered a liking for power, and he encourages young and reckless Sabbat in his domain to travel outward to neighboring cities, there to cause trouble or to expand Sabbat influence. Now firmly and quietly entrenched, he spreads the sect's influence slowly outward with tools that the elders do not understand. While the Blood Brothers may be little more than a legend to most Cainites, Mark's slowly expanding grip has begun to excite whispers and rumors — most of them making the Camarilla even more reluctant to send its agents to the erstwhile free state.

Image: Head and eyebrows shaved bald for the ritual "Embrace" of the Blood Brothers, Mark has a stern but nondescript face. His dark grayish-blue eyes are deeply set, which gives him an intimidating stare. He is not particularly muscular or large; at 5 feet, 10 inches, he isn't very imposing, but he has a definite force of personality. Mark capitalizes on image, so when he wants to look intimidating, he dons military garb with skinhead overtones; in more urbane settings, he may don a hat or even use makeup to conceal his otherwise unnervingly hairless face. He rarely smiles. His broodmates have appearances similar, but not identical, to his; dressed identically and with a little makeup, any of his circle could probably pass as him.

Roleplaying Hints: You can be a good soldier, but you are far too cunning to limit yourself. You're all seriousness; in social situations, you can feign laughter and jocularly, but your mind always calculates how you can profit. Despite your penchant for discipline and your liking of power, you do not act overtly when opposing your enemies, unless a public display of force could benefit your image. Rather, you simply

make a few arrangements and have the offending individual... *removed*. The Sabbat has your loyalty, but mostly because you see the organization as a tool for your own prominence. Besides, in Torrance, you are often left to your own devices. Ultimately, it all comes down to one thing: How can you get what you want?

Clan: Blood Brothers

Sire: None

Nature: Conniver

Demeanor: Follower

Generation: 9th

Embrace: 1872

Apparent Age: between 20 and 40; indeterminate

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 5

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Empathy 3, Expression 4, Intimidation 2, Leadership 3, Streetwise 4, Subterfuge 5

Skills: Drive 2, Etiquette 2, Firearms 3, Melee 2, Performance 3, Security 4, Stealth 4

Knowledges: Academics 1, Computer 4, Investigation 3, Law 1, Linguistics (Spanish, French) 2, Occult 1, Politics 2

Disciplines: Dominate 1, Fortitude 2, Obfuscate 2, Potence 2, Sanguinus 4

Backgrounds: Allies 3, Contacts 5, Generation 4, Herd 1, Influence 3, Resources 3, Retainers 2, Sabbat Status 3

Virtues: Conviction 4, Instinct 3, Courage 3

Morality: Path of Power and the Inner Voice 6

Willpower: 6

CICATRIZ, BISHOP OF TIJUANA

Background: Even the refuse of society shunned Cicatriz during his breathing days, which of course only gave him even more reason to hate everyone. He may not have mattered much in life as just another squatter in the sprawling slums of Mexico City, but he had one thing going for him: an implacable drive to survive. His own brother died at Cicatriz's hands in the scrabble for sustenance, and the mazelike trash-heaps of the Hungry Coyote slum honed and punished uncaringly. Thus it was that he endured his Embrace into the Sabbat and became a new member of a nomadic pack headed to the border for war.

Chosen by a Nosferatu for his resilience, Cicatriz possessed a merciless intensity even as his skin bubbled with the power of the disfiguring Change. Wailing, hungry and desperate, he immediately set upon a weak Cainite of the pack and drained his precious vitae, to the ecstatic amazement of the onlooking Sabbat. Even after being struck with a length of lead pipe (by a vampire straining to keep up the appearance of pack solidarity), he continued to struggle, and only a brutal beating from his pack-leader-to-be rendered him uncon-



scious. When he awoke, the taste of vitae still in his mouth, he learned what he had become — and laughed.

As a raw recruit in a pack coming back up to strength, Cicatriz found himself once again the outcast and expendable. Quickly learning the ropes, he took it upon himself to increase his personal power by whatever means necessary. After a brief clash with the anarchists of San Diego, Cicatriz's pack headed south again for easier pickings. Along the way, Cicatriz moved up in the ranks and esteem of his fellows, carefully choosing his targets of Monomacy as he focused on his strengths. He painfully earned a functional education and developed the skills necessary to work with his comrades. His unrelenting nature drove him to master his fears, his weaknesses and his fellows.

By the time the pack settled in Oaxatl a decade later, Cicatriz had assumed the position of pack priest (the previous priest, conveniently, had no warning when a marauding group of Lupines "discovered" him hunting alone). Following mysterious leads gleaned from a lone Country Gangrel, the pack set about searching for lost artifacts of the native cultures of central Mexico. It met with more success than expected — meeting a band of Native American vampires, the pack discovered the machinations of an ancient who rested beneath the Mexican desert.

A few Amaranths and five years of studying Mayan texts later, Cicatriz believed that he had uncovered the resting place of a great pre-Columbian vampire. Inciting his packmates with fabulous promises of lost lore and ancient vitae, Cicatriz convinced them to travel into the uncontested jungles of South America. What they found in the ruined temples there, few know; Cicatriz and the other two survivors of his pack apparently did not sup upon the blood of an ancient that time. They did, however, return with bags full of rubbings

from various ancient tablets, plus gold and silver trinkets that exhibit an eerie sort of resonance when subjected to supernatural scrutiny. Cicatriz penetrated the tomb and survived, in part because of his utter willingness to sacrifice his packmates in order to proceed, even despite the Vaulderie.

Lacking several members and without a coherent direction, Cicatriz's pack parted ways. The errant Nosferatu went back to Mexico and settled again in the slums where he had been born. There, he set about the work of translating the materials that he had stolen from the ancient's tomb.

Cicatriz did not (and does not) divulge what he discovered in the translations of the old Mayan texts. Instead, he simply gathered all of his belongings one night and headed to Tijuana, there to settle at the border. With his breadth of knowledge and ruthless ways, he quickly seized the title of bishop of the filth-infested city, and he took it upon himself to bring the holy war back to the Jihad. Whatever had been written in the steaming jungles, it transformed a realist into a true believer. Shifting his allegiance and beliefs from the Path of Power and the Inner Voice to the Path of Caine, Cicatriz took it upon himself to educate his fellow Cainites in the lost lore of Nod, and to assume a responsibility for the spiritual and historical side of the Sabbat.

With the recent formal takeover of San Diego by the Camarilla, Cicatriz has increased his fervor in his demand for a crusade. Citing dubious texts and claiming that the Final Nights are near, he has a constant tension with Tara, Prince of San Diego; the two engage in nightly political maneuvering for control of the border area. For his part, Cicatriz does not explain why he is so ardent in his desire to capture the city; he simply notes cryptically that "the western pinnacle is the key to the clanless," and goes about planning more infiltrations. The other Bishops of Tijuana, of course, have no problems with such enthusiasm... especially when it isn't directed toward climbing the Sabbat hierarchy.

Few doubt that Cicatriz keeps many dark secrets. The Sabbat Inquisition has had cause to investigate him on several occasions, but he has always emerged unscathed. Now a formidable commander of Sabbat ideology and morale, he is never without some fateful prognostication. A few Noddist scholars have had the pleasure of discoursing with him in regard to his passion — Gehenna — and they invariably leave with the impression that he knows more than he says. If he is correct, if his interpretations of Noddist scripture and ancient Mayan are accurate, he may indeed know something that no other vampire knows — when.

Image: Cicatriz has a large hump behind his left shoulder. Although it gives him a crooked posture, it by no means impairs his walking or his strength. His face is spotted with scabrous, scaly material, though his intense brown eyes gleam unhindered from deep-set sockets. His lipless mouth is ragged and torn from knifelike teeth that jut in every direction. No hair graces his head; a pair of bony ridges instead make their way back across his skull to the nape of his neck. His hands

have two thumbs each, with the second thumbs emerging just below the normal ones, and his digits have no nails.

Roleplaying Hints: Once, you were just a punk and a beast. You're better than that now: You're a true monster, and a thinking one, too. You've overcome adversity and diablerized your way into a position of prominence, but nothing can make you forget what you learned in those jungles in South America. You know the Sabbat's Crusade is wholly just and necessary, and that the end times are here. You can't let out too much; if other vampires knew what you'd discovered, it would trickle back to the Ancients and change their plans. You're on a timetable now, and you need California so that you can control one of the linchpins of Gehenna: the advance of the Demon People, the Cathayans who are coming to prominence on the West Coast. If you can manage that, you can bend the prophecies to your timing, and you'll be ready when it all comes down. Everything else is trivial.

Clan: Nosferatu *antitribu*

Sire: Humo

Nature: Survivor

Demeanor: Sadist

Generation: 9th

Embrace: 1944

Apparent Age: Indeterminate

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 0

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Talents: Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 4, Intimidation 3, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Animal Ken 1, Crafts 2, Drive 1, Firearms 2, Melee 2, Stealth 2, Survival 5

Knowledges: Academics 1, Investigation 4, Linguistics (English, Mayan) 2, Occult 5, Politics 3, Science 1

Disciplines: Animalism 3, Fortitude 1, Necromancy 1, Obfuscate 2, Potence 3

Necromancy Paths: Sepulchre Path 1

Backgrounds: Contacts 3, Influence 1, Resources 2, Rituals 4, Sabbat Status 3

Virtues: Conviction 3, Instinct 4, Courage 4

Morality: Path of Caine 6

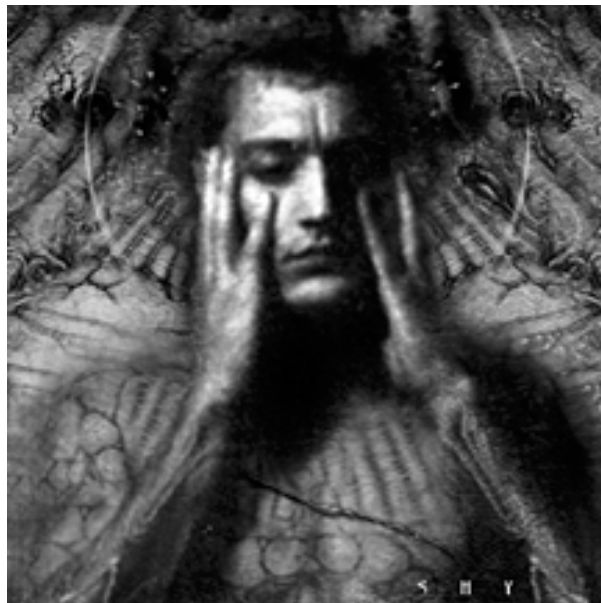
Derangements: Gluttony

Willpower: 7

OTHER SABBAT CAINTES OF NOTE

VINCENT DAY, PALADIN AND PARAGON

Background: The third son of an English lord, Vincent Day seemed destined for service to the Church. Upon Vincent's coming of age, his father sent him to Canterbury Cathedral to join the clergy. Having no interest in the priesthood, Vincent ran away and went to France. He used



his title to gain entrance into the Templars, and was soon on his way to the Levant.

Vincent's disillusionment grew as he discovered that the Christians were losing ground. The Crusades were a stalemate, seemingly fought for nothing. The bloodshed and atrocities shattered his idealism, and he returned to Europe as the Templars retreated. Upon returning to France, Vincent undertook a pilgrimage to Rome to restore his lost faith.

Italy invigorated his faith, but not in the Church. With its impressive architecture and emphasis on learning and culture, Italy seemed a far cry from rural England. While Vincent was in Italy, King Philip IV of France, in the name of the Inquisition, tried the Templars for heresy. On hearing the news, Vincent vowed to return to England and make a life for himself there, abandoning the order.

Vincent returned as the prodigal son and was welcomed back into his father's manor. His newfound idealism didn't last long. Although England had formed a parliament, nothing had really changed. He fell into a depression and fueled it with liquor.

Leander Phipps changed all that with a vicious Embrace. Leander opened Vincent's eyes to who really held the reigns of power: Cainites. As a vampire, Vincent thought he possessed the power to change the world, and he soon found out how wrong he was. Vampiric society was even more autocratic than mortal society. A few moldering elders held all the power, and treated their childer as nothing more than tools or cannon fodder. Leander proved to be no different than any of the other elders. Vincent suffered in silence, biding his time until he could rise against his sire.

Vampiric society finally reached a boiling point. Working with like-minded others, Vincent fought in the Anarch Revolt to throw off the yoke of the elders. With a single swing of his sword, Vincent removed both his sire's head and the

“shackles of slavery” Leander had imposed on him. Vincent took the news of the Convention of Thorns and the founding of the Camarilla as a personal insult. After all he’d fought for, nothing had changed. The elders still lorded over younger vampires.

The Sabbat finally gave Vincent the focus and goals of which he’d always dreamed. Eventually, he left England for the New World as a member of the fledgling Sabbat. He incorporated his beliefs from his Templar days into the ideals of the sect and helped found the Path of Honorable Accord. He worked his way up the ranks, and again became a templar, but for a more unwholesome patron this time. His exemplary performance gained the attention of the Inquisitor General, who retained his services.

He now serves as bodyguard, emissary and enforcer to the Inquisition, though he refuses to become a full-fledged member, seeing it as a conflict of interests to put a faction before his duty to the sect. When Vincent Day shows up in a city, the normally unruly Sabbat not only listen but obey, for his reputation precedes him.

Image: A tall, lean build coupled with angular, aristocratic features only enhance Vincent’s regal bearing. His dark hair is meticulously groomed, and his gray eyes cast a withering glare. Vincent carries himself with an air of authority and dignity that few in the modern world can match. The scar that crosses his body serves only to enhance his aura of experience.

Roleplaying Hints: Be always dignified, noble, and honorable. Whereas many in the Sabbat participate in base pleasures, hold yourself above them. Many in the Sabbat succumb to those pleasures, which can lead only to infernalism. You fight for a higher purpose. Think of yourself as a dark knight. God may have abandoned you, but great evils do exist and should be fought. The Antediluvians are real, and Gehenna is coming; be ready. Watch everything, and be aware of the effects your environment may bring about.

Clan: Ventrue *antitribu*

Sire: Leander Phipps

Nature: Fanatic

Demeanor: Cavalier

Generation: 9th

Embrace: 1327

Apparent Age: mid-30s

Physical: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 2, Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Interrogation 3, Intimidation 3, Leadership 4

Skills: Fire Dancing 3, Drive 2, Etiquette 4, Firearms 2, Melee 4, Ride 3, Stealth 1

Knowledges: Academics 2, Black Hand Lore 2, Bureaucracy 4, Camarilla Lore 2, Clan Knowledge (Ventrue) 3, Finance

1, Investigation 2, Medicine 1, Occult 4, Politics 3, Sabbat Lore 4

Disciplines: Auspex 2, Dominate 2, Fortitude 3, Potence 3, Presence 2, Thaumaturgy 3

Thaumaturgical Paths: Path of Blood 3, Gift of Morpheus 2, Spirit Manipulation 2

Backgrounds: Resources 3, Sabbat Status 4

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

Morality: Path of Honorable Accord 9

Willpower: 9

MONTGOMERY (MONTY) COVEN, THE ONCE AND FOREVER FRIEND

Background: Growing up isn’t easy for anyone in London’s Hammersmith ghetto. Born there by chance or brought there by fate, the residents survive by whatever means necessary. Montgomery Coven was one such unfortunate, an heir to a life of poverty and crime.

Life on the streets agreed with Monty’s temperament if not his inclination. As a child, Monty desired an affluent lifestyle for which his disposition was most certainly not suited. He grew to resent anyone who possessed the life he wanted to live but could not have. Far beyond simple envy, Monty blamed everyone around him for his station in life. His perception drove him to acts of rebellion and crime. He took those things he craved by force, usually leaving the original owner crippled or even dead.

Despite a mediocre education, he quickly asserted himself over his peers with his keen intellect and sharp wit. A natural leader, Monty called all the shots for his gang of friends. Although still not satisfied, he was at least in charge of his life, until fate stepped in. His outstanding leadership qualities, along with his penchant for miscreant behavior, made him a prime candidate for indoctrination into the Sabbat.

After the Embrace, Monty once again became a cog in the machine. Despite the promises of immortal freedom, he



found himself at the end of a leash tighter than his childhood poverty. No longer master of his own destiny, Monty resented for the Sabbat leaders more each time they pulled his reins. While effective as a pack member, he bore his leaders no love and patiently waited the proper time to throw off their yoke.

Fate again intervened to assure Monty's freedom just as it assured his further damnation. He happened across the Methuselah Mithras, who was slaughtering a pack of werewolves but was in turn laid low by them. As Monty approached the notorious ancient's broken form, Mithras could only stare in horror. Laughing at his luck, Monty realized he'd found the opportunity to beat his Sabbat masters at their own game by outstripping their potency tenfold. In his weakened state, Mithras could not prevent the act of diablerie, and his body died the Final Death. Yet, unbeknownst to Monty, something of Mithras survived the encounter—something that would prove far too powerful for the opportunistic neonate.

The bounds of the Vaulderie shattered in an instant as Mithras' potent vitae flowed through Monty's veins. The combined pain and ecstasy drove Monty into a fit of rage that lasted for three nights. After the third night, he arose from the London sewers where he had found himself and gazed upon the city with a whole new outlook—an outlook that was not entirely Montgomery Coven's.

While the old Monty could think only of revenging himself on his Sabbat masters, the new Monty began to calculate the steps necessary to topple the Camarilla in London and seize power for himself.

Under the sway of Mithras' blood, Monty once again sought out his Sabbat comrades. Almost immediately, he challenged the leader—his sire, Garson—to a duel. Monty won easily, and he assumed leadership even as he consumed the last drop of Garson's blood. The evening's Vaulderie assured Monty of his pack's continued loyalty as Mithras' vitae, even diluted, overpowered the simple neonates.

Monty hasn't been himself lately. He finds his own lifestyle growing more alien by the night. He has abandoned his packmates and severed all ties with his past. His personal tastes have changed, including his preference for sharp clothing and London whores. Monty stares incredulously in the mirror at the man he no longer recognizes. He even doubts his own thoughts at times. Within Monty's mind, hazy memories of Roman campaigns clash with those of gang fights on the streets of modern London.

It is only a matter of time until Mithras again rises to prominence in the body of Monty Coven. Soon, every remnant of the young vampire's psyche will be erased and the old prince will walk again.

Image: Monty's light-brown skin has grown darker since the diablerie. Although embraced in his early 20s, his eyes betray an ancient, haunted mind. He has given up his polished shoes and expensive wardrobe for simple, loose-fitting garments.

Roleplaying Hints: Never one to bend to the will of another, you find yourself in a bizarre predicament. Does

another soul control your actions and even your very mind? Mithras' vitae has cleansed your body of any loyalty to the Sabbat, but have you exchanged one pair of shackles for another? Although you have gained power and knowledge from the ancient vampire, you are beginning to worry about the changes the diablerie has wrought.

Clan: Assamite *antitribu*

Sire: Garson the Knife

Nature: Conniver (Autocrat)

Demeanor: Rebel

Generation: Monty was Embraced as 11th generation. After the diablerie of Mithras, he has effectively become 6th generation. Monty can barely control the Methuselah's powerful vitae, however, leading to wild fluctuations in ability for the nascent elder.

Embrace: 1990

Apparent Age: early 20s

Physical: Strength 5, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 6, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 6

Talents: Alertness 4, Brawl 5, Dodge 5, Intimidation 6, Leadership 4, Streetwise 4, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Drive 1, Etiquette 2, Firearms 5, Melee 6, Security 3, Stealth 4

Knowledges: Academics 1, Area Knowledge (London) 7, Expert Knowledge: Military Science 6, Finance 4, Linguistics 4, Politics 2

Disciplines: Dominate 4, Celerity 5, Fortitude 4, Obfuscate 5, Potence 4, Presence 4, Quietus 4

Backgrounds: Contacts 4, Herd 2, Resources 3, Retainers 3

Virtues: Conviction 3, Instinct 3, Morale 4

Morality: Path of Power and the Inner Voice 4

Willpower: 6

ANKA, PRIESTESS OF THORNS

Background: Anka turned 10 years old in 1910, at the end of the new Mexican Golden Age. Thirty-four years of economic growth came to an end as one rebellion followed another. As always, the peasants suffered. And as always, they found ways to survive.

Anka's mother made a coarse living for her family by whoring for a gang of *banditos*. They lived on a small compound the outlaws used as a staging point for raids. The men of the compound saw hints of Anka's future beauty and teased her or fawned over her. When her mother saw this behavior, she beat Anka—not to keep her from following in her own footsteps, but from jealousy of her daughter's youth and beauty.

During a drunken Cinco de Mayo celebration in 1914, Anka's life changed. Around midnight, Rego, the closest thing that the *banditos* had to a leader, took Anka to his room "to make a woman of her." Anka's mother burst in a few minutes later. Screaming, she grabbed her half-naked daughter by the

hair and dragged her into the road, kicking her as they went. For the first time — and to the absolute delight of the gawking *banditos* — Anka fought back against her mother. She managed to grab up a clay jug and use it to beat the older woman to the ground. Anka literally kicked her mother until the older woman was off the premises, then promised to kill her if she ever came back. That was the last Anka ever saw of her mother.

The closest thing to a display of affection that Anka had ever known was the pawing of dirty, callused hands, so she took to prostitution easily. To the bitter disappointment of the other men, she spent most of her time with Rego — unless she needed something from one of them. Eventually, her bedroom advice grew to guide Rego's decisions and slowly she acquired influence in the compound through him. Several of the *banditos* muttered angrily that no *puta* had the right to tell them what to do, but none of them dared challenge Rego — at least not to his face.

Two years after Anka's "rise to power," the other *banditos* killed Rego. Even as he lay in the dust, tugging at the pitchfork in his throat, his assailants turned their attention to Anka. They beat her and raped her repeatedly. She was informed that her position within the compound had changed; after many hours they left her semi-conscious on the floor.

At four o'clock that morning, Anka set fire to the bunkhouse. Strong hands pounded the door, but a carefully placed wagon kept it from opening. The men's curses turned to pleading, then screams, which finally stopped when the blazing ceiling caved in. Once the searing heat subsided, Anka counted the bodies in the rubble then fell to the ground as if dead.

When Anka awoke again, it was night. By the light of the moon, she saw that her head rested in the lap of an Indian woman. The woman stroked her hair and laughed and chattered, apparently to herself. Oddly, Anka was not afraid of the woman or concerned about the charred bodies nearby. She



felt detached and calm, like she did when she drank just the right amount of tequila.

The woman's name was Yalonda. She said that she was proud of Anka's actions, and that she had watched her over the years in hopes that Anka might reach this point. Yalonda kissed Anka's cheek and neck, a cold affection unlike Rego's passionate, if selfish, motions. Anka felt no pain, but she was soon overwhelmed and swooned from the woman's Embrace.

Anka acclimated to the unlife of a Ravnos *antitribu* very quickly. Her damnation troubled her little. Her mother had assured her from earliest childhood that an unchristened bastard-child like herself would certainly burn in Hell, so she had accepted that fate long ago. With *this* damnation, however, came power. For that she was grateful. As a mere child plying sexual wiles, she'd done well. With the supernatural ability to confuse and control minds, she saw no limits to her potential.

For years, Anka used her Cainite gifts to collect estates. She cajoled elderly rich men into disowning their heirs and making her their beneficiary. The owners usually died shortly thereafter. Once she took possession of a property, she would abandon the place, letting it fall into ruin, and move on to new conquests. Despite owning these fine estates, once she learned to meld with the earth she slept in the desert — a quirk that saved her from Final Death.

In 1961, all of Anka's homes burned to the ground during a single day. Anka went berserk with rage when she awoke the next night. She didn't care about the houses themselves, but someone was striking at her and that could not go unpunished. It took her many months to find out what had happened: Apparently, one of her estate acquisitions damaged the business dealings of a certain well-heeled Lasombra. His reaction had been intended to destroy her.

This news made Anka smile just a little. The humans she manipulated no longer offered her a challenge. She had grown restless without realizing it. It was time to spread her wings, and sparring with a vastly more powerful vampire appealed to her. Anka spent a decade gathering a small pack of Mexican Sabbath and training them to suit her needs.

The pack now resides in Mexico City. Here, slums filled with the most wretched kine imaginable surround skyscrapers that house fabulous wealth. Hundreds of vampires subsist on more than 20 million vessels. Here, it is impossible to find a savvy vampire who does not wish to be found.

Anka relishes the games she plays with her unknowing Lasombra rival. Once a year, her pack infiltrates one of his critical business concerns. They study its weaknesses and plan an attack. They then burn, break or murder until they are satisfied, and then they slink back to the slums to feast on the destitute. The Lasombra foe has no idea of his torturer's identity. Eventually, either he will discover Anka and kill her, or she will grow bored, decide the game is won and move on to another.

Image: Anka's brown eyes peer from beneath shoulder-length locks of wavy black hair. Her petite frame is eternally

on the budding edge of womanhood, but scars on her shoulders and back are sobering to admirers. When she is enraged, almost 100 years of ill-focused anger shows on her brow, however, and few can face her in this state.

Roleplaying Hints: You once thought that you sought power, but your real goal is winning. If an object or a kine strikes your fancy, you come to possess it—or destroy it if you can't own it. Once possessed, the item is worthless—unless someone else wants it more than you do. If you are slighted, you seek revenge, though not heedlessly, and you do not fight with claws if you can win through deceit and manipulation.

Clan: Ravnos *antitribu*

Sire: Yalonda

Nature: Architect

Demeanor: Celebrant

Generation: 10th

Embrace: 1916

Apparent Age: mid-teens

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 2

Talents: Alertness 2, Brawl 1, Dodge 4, Intimidation 2, Streetwise 4, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Acrobatics 3, Firearms 1, Melee 2, Performance 4, Security 2, Stealth 2, Survival 4, Vamp 4

Knowledges: Finance 2, Law 2, Linguistics 2, Occult 1

Disciplines: Animalism 3, Chimerstry 3, Protean 3

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Resources 3

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

Morality: Humanity 4

Derangements: Nymphomania

Willpower: 6

JAYNE JONESTOWN, THE CULUBBITY

Background: Life should have held nothing remarkable for the Midwestern white trash who would later become one of the world's most celebrated (and reviled) musicians. After a dozen years of poor parenting, BB-gun duels and frog baseball, "Jayne's" family relocated to Florida, to eke out the rest of their cockroach-like existences amid double-wide trailers and Pontiac Firebirds mounted perennially upon cinder blocks.

In the throes of adolescent alienation, "Jayne" turned to rebellion, Satanism and roleplaying games. Ignored by his parents, tormented by school bullies and addled by narcotics, he created a dark world of imagination into which he could retreat when the real world overwhelmed him. "Jayne's" schoolwork suffered, though he became adept at writing provocative short stories and poems. In time, even these outlets displayed more and more morbidity, and "Jayne's" life continued to spiral into the dumpster.

And then things changed. "Jayne" met a fellow outcast at a dismal goth club, and the two immediately embarked on a musical career. Naming their band Jayne Jonestown and the

Graveyard Skullfuckers, the pair acquired no small degree of local infamy. Their music consisted primarily of industrial and death-metal-influenced juvenalia, but the sheer shock value of their shows—women in cages, coprophagia, overt sex acts and the like—earned the band the admiration of other "freaks," which delighted Jayne (who had legally changed his name) to no end. Having outgrown his own teenage depression, he saw a vast, untapped market looking for an antihero to cling to, and he determined to be that very antihero. The band hired two more musicians and hit the road on a tour of Florida.

Jayne would have likely remained a shock act in backwater Florida until the band covered David Bowie's classic "Heroes" in its trademark, overwrought and cinematically spooky style. The cover received national airplay in heavy rotation. Before long, the emotionally isolated youth of America had rallied to Jayne Jonestown's banner, driving their parents berserk with his music and wearing T-shirts festooned with slogans such as "Eat Your Parents" and "My Evil Knows No Bounds." Jayne Jonestown concerts even attracted their fair share of vampires, who either missed the joke and took it seriously or appreciated the lampooning of the mortal society in which they lurked. In fact, a Sabbat Brujah took Jayne's joke one step further—he Embraced the star after the band's concert was shut down by police in Miami.

After his Embrace, Jayne's interest in the morbid renewed, and the band recorded a magnum opus of an album. The hit, *Satanophile*, was an operatic paean to the "dark side" of the unexamined life, but another example of Jayne's cunning lay beneath all the bombast and irony. Since becoming a Cainite, he managed to ingratiate himself with certain members of the Inquisition, who had no idea of the performer's true nature. They regarded his ever-stranger appearance as a bizarre stigmata, and he was able to convince them that his music served to "flush out" unholy elements such as vampires, cultists and other unsavory individuals. To this night, Jayne wields his



minor influence in the Society of Leopold as a weapon against those vampires to whom he takes a dislike — with the Inquisition's blessing. Indeed, Jayne wonders if the Society would even mind the fact that he is a vampire, as he is one of their greatest tools in destroying so many others of the Damned.

Jayne's latest album, *The Soul Menagerie*, explores the themes of excess and the media, and several of the songs make blatant references to vampires and the society of the undead. Needless to say, this cavalier openness has almost assured him a place on the Camarilla's Red List, but the glam treatment of the new album leaves listeners knowing that the "vampire" angle is simply the star's depiction of the music industry and press. Not that Jayne would care either way — he's in this for the thrill.

That being the case, much of Jayne's unlife consists of touring, doing the radio circuits (usually by phone), imbibing drug-laced blood, acting promiscuously ("for appearance's sake") and generally scaring the hell out of people he meets face-to-face. Many young vampires from the Camarilla and Sabbat alike even consider themselves fans of Jayne's music, seeing rebellion in it — however empty — against the established pillars of vampire society. Exactly how long the star will be able to balance on the razor's edge between his vampiric condition, the perils of celebrity and the torches of the Inquisition remains to be seen.

Image: Jayne has a freakish yet contrived look, too polished to truly represent the depravity in which he claims to partake. His distorted eyes are the product of contact lenses, his "hair" is a collection of wigs donned for certain occasions and his clothes bear the quality and calculated excess of expensive designer labels. His favorite outfit suggests a puritan origin, which works both ironically and earnestly in the context of Jayne's relation to the Society of Leopold.

Roleplaying Hints: You are the ultimate rock star, stringing people along, indulging in high-profile excess, making intentionally puerile music for the sole intent of angering parents — whose children then rush out to buy your albums. Nothing is too extreme for you to take part in, as long as someone's watching. Away from the glitter and lights, you maintain a fairly pedestrian unlife, most of which involves recuperating from your escapades of violence and debauchery. Preen and posture for the public, and maybe have your entourage rough up anyone who gives you any trouble — oh, and maybe this "Sabbat" thing needs some attention, too....

Clan: Brujah *antitribu*

Sire: Warren Bryant

Nature: Masochist

Demeanor: Creep Show

Generation: 12th

Embrace: 1993

Apparent Age: late 20s

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 1

Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Talents: Brawl 1, Dodge 2, Empathy 1, Expression 3, Leadership 1, Masquerade 2, Streetwise 2

Skills: Drive 1, Firearms 1, Performance (over-the-top pop-star music) 4, Security 1

Knowledges: Academics 2, Computer 2, Expert Knowledge: Suburban Angst 4, Finance 2, Investigation 2, Law 1, Occult 2, Politics 1

Disciplines: Presence 4

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Contacts 3, Fame 4, Herd 3, Influence 1, Resources 4, Retainers 5, Rituals 1, Sabbat Status 1

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

Morality: Humanity 6

Derangements: Satyriasis

Willpower: 4

UNRE, KEEPER OF GOTHGOLHA

Background: For centuries, the Harbingers of Skulls seethed in impotent rage, trapped beyond the wall of death. Only the *nigromancies* of the Capuchin and Unre, each working from opposite sides of the Shroud, managed to open a portal that allowed the Harbingers to once again join the realm of the living.

And what a joining it was.

Enraged by her bloodline's containment beyond the Shroud, Unre had nearly two centuries in which to sink into madness. When she returned, it was as if every ounce of hate and spite the Underworld possessed was visited upon the lands of the living. She had watched the Camarilla stand by in the early nights as a rogue necromancer drained her grandsire of his precious vitae. She had endured three centuries of persecution at the hands of that necromancer's family. She had suffered a final, painful banishment to the realm of the dead and the collapse of the bloodline she once held dear.

But Unre was not one to wallow in the tragedies of the past. Subsisting on the only vitae she could find in the Shadowlands — that of her fellow trapped Cainites — Unre learned the potent abilities of death-magic. So prodigious were her abilities that she was able to contact her sire across the veil of death and inform him of the plight of his childer.

At first, Japheth resisted, claiming that the events to which Fate had led the Brood of Ashur should not be reversed. As he dealt more and more with the Giovanni family, however, a great chancre grew in his soul and he began to see that their prominence was a debt the necromancers owed him. Striking a tenuous agreement with Unre, Japheth agreed to help her perform the ritual that would free them from their unholy entrapment, but only if she agreed to play out the hand he had set. Unre agreed reluctantly, with the fervid hatred burning in her undead veins, and the Harbingers returned.

Since that time, Japheth (among his many guises) has influenced the bloodline to join the Sabbat — an unpopular decision among the 25 or so remaining Harbingers. To that end, however, they have led the Sword of Caine into believing that they wield immense power, and they have accumulated much clout within the sect.

Until the time is right for their inscrutable, vengeful masterstroke, the Harbingers play the elders' game, guiding the Sabbat toward their own ends in every way they can. Unre herself is a master at the ruse, even going so far as to trap her rivals' souls in their own bones or ash-heaps after they have met the Final Death so that she may continue to use them. Fearsome rumors spread through the sect of her prowess, and many Cainites of the Black Hand beseech her favor. Like a witch-woman of medieval nights, she helps them for a fee, even as they deride her once safely out of earshot. Unre finds such double-dealing familiar, however, and she pays no heed to the others' ignorant prattling. After all, once the time is right, she will be mistress over all of them. That is, once she and her sire attain the status of gods....

Fortunately for Unre, she has managed to parlay her extensive necromantic abilities into a web of favors owed by many, many vampires — Sabbat and otherwise. In her few short years among the Cainites of the Black Hand, she has amassed the level of respect commanded by only the most august prisci and archbishops. Indeed, many of the powerful elders of the Sabbat see her as a potent threat. She seems to have some unknown rivalry with Sascha Vykos as well — one that stems from the events of years prior — but none among the Sabbat have been foolhardy enough to question her on the matter. That way lies ruin, certainly.

In the modern nights, Unre makes her haven beneath the swirling sands of Egypt. A vast, sprawling affair, the haven has earned the name Golgotha, as it is festooned with corpses and *zombu* in various states of decomposition. Unre conducts grim rituals, vivisections and experiments there, in the deepest bowels of what amounts to a personal underground city. Even eldritch Istvan Zantosa finds the place uncomfortable, "littered as it is with the skulls, teeth and less wholesome remains of those who stood against her."



Image: As a Harbinger of Skulls, Unre's face resembles nothing so much as a grinning rictus with glowing eyespots. She wears a tattered body wrap made from the cured flesh of young virgins. Perhaps the most striking feature Unre displays, however, is her mask. While many Harbingers wear masks to hide their hideous skull-heads, Unre takes the opposite approach. Her mask, carved from the head of a massive bull, wears a crown of disturbingly small human skulls. Her movements are slow and balletic, suggesting a grim reaper from a baroque play.

Roleplaying Hints: You are turbulent and violent, unless a radical mood swing or fugue state dominates your presence of mind. The Sabbat is merely a tool for directing your vengeance on your enemies, and you treat all of its young members with withering disdain. Even the elders of the sect — particularly the treacherous Sascha Vykos — have earned your derision. In your opinion, they have settled into a comfortable hypocrisy, content to while away their nights in petty games. You have no hatred so great as that which you harbor for the Giovanni, however. They have robbed you repeatedly over the course of centuries — first of your grandsire's lofty goals, most recently of the *Sargon Fragment* and the *Anexhexeton* and numerous times in between. All others are puppets in your rancorous play — of which you have every intent of writing the final act.

Clan: Harbingers of Skulls

Sire: Japheth

Nature: Conniver

Demeanor: Guru

Generation: 5th

Embrace: Unknown

Apparent Age: Indeterminate

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 6

Social: Charisma 1, Manipulation 6, Appearance 0

Mental: Perception 8, Intelligence 4, Wits 5

Talents: Alertness 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Empathy 4, Expression 4, Grace 4, Intimidation 5, Intuition 3, Leadership 1, Subterfuge 5

Skills: Crafts 4, Etiquette 1, Herbalism 6, Melee 2, Performance 3, Survival 7

Knowledges: Academics 8, Enigmas 6, Finance 2, Investigation 3, Linguistics (English, French, Arabic, Latin) 3, Occult 6, Research 5, Sabbat Lore 2

Disciplines: Auspex 6, Chimerstry 1, Dominate 5, Fortitude 8, Necromancy 8, Obfuscate 3, Serpents 3, Thanatosis 4

Necromantic Paths: Ash Path 5, Bone Path 5, Mortuus Path 5, Sepulchre Path 5

Backgrounds: Contacts 5, Resources 4, Retainers 4, Sabbat Status 5

Virtues: Conviction 3, Self-Control 3, Courage 2

Morality: Path of the Bones

Derangements: Paranoia, Fugue

Willpower: 6



JEFF JAMES



CHAPTER TWO: PILLARS OF THE CAMARILLA

*Tell me why your conscience lies
And all your guilt is gone
Don't you feel you ever could be wrong?*
— Godhead, "Suffer"

The Camarilla: the ivory tower.

Since its inception, the Camarilla has suffered the ire of its opponents and enjoyed the opulence of its noble origins. At once the corrupt aristocracy and the righteous shepherd of predators, the Camarilla nears the edge more and more each night. As it tightens its grip ever increasingly, vampires slip through like grains of sand. The Gangrel have gone, the Sabbat has seized the East Coast, and the alien Cathayans surge into the anarch free state like the proverbial barbarians at the gate. How much more can the Camarilla lose before the ivory tower becomes a charred ruin?

As headstrong as it is, however, the Camarilla is neither stupid nor complacent. At a recent meeting of the Inner Council at Ghent (notable in its change from the traditional location in Venice), the most exalted Kindred of the sect reached a landmark decision. At last putting their petty games of Jyhad and one-upmanship behind, the sect's leaders acknowledged the crumbling state of affairs as Gehenna draws nigh. By electing the most capable group of justicars in any of the assembled vampires' long memories, the Camarilla has risen to the challenge posed by the modern fulfillment of apocalyptic prophecies. As the Sabbat rises, as the previously ridiculed Time of Thin Blood has inexorably arrived, and as an ominous red star has revealed itself in the night sky, the six mighty clans have accepted the mantle of responsibility with their undeath.

Only time will tell if they are to succeed.

THE JUSTICARS

JAROSLAV PASCEK, BRUJAH JUSTICAR

Background: Born to a Slavic man and an itinerant Gypsy woman, Jaroslav was left for dead by his mother near the border of what would eventually be modern Germany. A Franciscan friar rescued him from death and brought the boy to a monastery, where the churchmen raised him as a "collective son". The brothers nurtured the boy and ground into him a fierce devotion to God and the certain knowledge that he was the product of sin, that he was part-devil due to his Gypsy heritage. The beatings he endured and the lessons he studied left Jaroslav with a towering fury he channeled into his views of God and Man.

At age 18, Jaroslav found himself adrift in a crisis of faith. His personal vision of the unity between Man and God, with the Church as compassionate and pure link, was constantly being exposed as a lie. Every time the young monk saw the lay clergy indulge in worldly sin or vice, he became that much more convinced of the need to cleanse the Church.

Soon, Jaroslav convinced himself that he was God's chosen instrument of cleansing. A full century-and-a-half before Martin Luther, Jaroslav began his own Reformation. He swept through the rural northern areas of the Holy Roman Empire to preach his doctrine of purity and holiness. Jaroslav soon realized that preaching itself had little effect.

He and the small group of followers he had assembled added direct action to their words. As they moved through the countryside, they undertook a campaign of terror. They murdered churchmen they judged as impious, they destroyed false relics and continued to preach against the vice of the Church.

Jaroslav's crusade might have started the Reformation a century early had it not been for a quirk of fate bringing him into the world of the undead.

During a nighttime rally that culminated in the fiery destruction of a cathedral, a crazed Jaroslav stood in front of the burning building and exhorted the mob to purify the corruption all around. But eyes that glittered with something besides fanaticism also watched him from the darkness. Others saw the strength and ferocity in the young man, and they wanted to use him for their own purposes.

A week later, two shadowy figures offered Brother Jaroslav a way to gain great power for his crusade. They spoke with magnetism and persuasiveness, and they radiated an aura of power. Jaroslav took these eerie, otherworldly visitors to be agents of God and agreed to join their cause.

The Embrace changed Jaroslav's faith in God. No longer did he walk in God's light, for the Lord had forsaken him to the darkness. Jaroslav felt he had given his soul so that he might more easily purify others. The tenuous grip he had on reality faltered, and he threw himself fully into the world of the undead.

His new "parish," a coterie of Brujah who hunted in the city of Munich, convinced Jaroslav that the vampiric world was as full of corruption as the Church was. In fact, many undead supposedly masqueraded as clerics.

These Brujah allowed Jaroslav to destroy vampires they demonstrated to be agents of Satan. Often, these targets were simply enemies of Jaroslav's coterie and sire, but soon Jaroslav



branched out independently to ones who meddled in the spiritual realm, and he destroyed Cainites whom he believed to be taking advantage of gullible mortals.

The coterie had no lack of enemies to persecute, and Jaroslav's first century passed in a haze of blood and gore.

Those carmine nights ended with the founding of the Camarilla. After the Convention of Thorns, a tired Jaroslav decided to leave the ken of the world and trust this new sect to curb the excesses of the undead. He hoped that hiding among humankind would put an end to those Kindred posing as angels or spirits. Upon finding an ancient Roman crypt, Jaroslav entered torpor.

Jaroslav rose again in the mid-17th century. The Camarilla was still strong, but during Jaroslav's long sleep the Sabbat had attained some prominence. Jaroslav saw fighting these Kindred as his new calling, perceiving in them every trait and evil that he had railed against centuries before. Gathering a coterie of other vampires, he established himself as the scourge of the wicked Sabbat to strike fear into even the most secure of cardinals.

For the next 200 years, Jaroslav continued his crusade, and for his efforts was officially made an archon in 1834. Jaroslav served nominally under the old Brujah justicar, Carlak (who served multiple terms as justicar), but the archon often acted alone. With a diligence and directness that bordered on obsession, he and his agents rooted out Sabbat or anarchs who ignored the Traditions. By the mid-20th century, Jaroslav had come full circle. He stood at the vanguard of an institution as calcified and corrupt as the Church had been in his youth.

Jaroslav's election to the post of justicar is a move to add some experience and drive to the new corps of Camarilla enforcers. He has many tried and true methods of investigation, judgment and punishment. Most of these techniques are quite severe, if not vicious, in their execution, involving mutilation, coerced "confessions" and worse. Indeed, Jaroslav seems to have taken his cues from the Inquisitors of yore. Some other archons and justicars, notably the Tremere, Anastasz di Zagreb, have noted that Jaroslav's edicts and actions have lately become bloodier and swifter.

Recently, Jaroslav has received intelligence from agents in and around Montreal, which has prompted him to set up an intelligence center in Ottawa. He plans to topple the oldest North American Sabbat stronghold as a message to all Kindred and a personal jab in the eye of the powerful Cardinal Strathcona.

Image: Jaroslav has simple tastes. When he is on "official business," he wears a conservative suit cut in English fashion, with a single white orchid in his lapel. When moving in on a target, he strikes and is gone so quickly, no one can tell what he is wearing. Jaroslav has sandy hair and piercing hazel eyes. He stands at just over five feet and has surprisingly delicate hands.

Roleplaying Hints: You have been chosen by God and the Camarilla to flay the Sabbat from the earth. The Sabbat are soulless beasts to be annihilated before they destroy all Kindred. Others who break the Traditions are obvious traitors to the principles of the Camarilla and not much better. You see yourself as fair and just, but you lost any sense of mercy years ago. Although you maintain a veneer of Old World charm, the Beast claws at you, which makes you erratic at times (most often when you come close to making a judgment). To discover the truth, no technique or method is too extreme. Once you've made your judgment, your sentence is swift and severe.

Clan: Brujah

Sire: Jann Berger

Nature: Judge

Demeanor: Bravo

Generation: 7th

Embrace: 1371

Apparent Age: late 20s

Physical: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 6

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 4, Diplomacy 2, Intimidation 4, Leadership 3, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 5

Skills: Etiquette 3, Firearms 4, Melee 5 (cudgel), Security 4, Stealth 4, Survival 2

Knowledges: Academics 2, Bureaucracy 4, Camarilla Lore 4, Investigation 6, Law 4, Linguistics (a breadth of European languages) 4, Occult 3, Politics 3, Sabbat Lore 3, Science 2

Disciplines: Auspex 2, Celerity 5, Dominate 2, Fortitude 3, Potence 5, Presence 3, Obfuscate 3

Backgrounds: Allies 4, Contacts 4, Influence 2, Resources 4, Retainers 2, Status 5

Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 4, Courage 5

Morality: Humanity 4

Derangements: Sanguinary animism

Willpower: 6

MARIS STRUCK, MALIKAVIAN JUSTICAR

Background: As the child of a merchant family fallen on difficult times, Maris grew up in hardship and poverty. Once she entered her teens, she developed a taste for burglary and managed to attain quite an impressive skill at invading others' homes. She likewise developed a keen sense for finding hidden valuables. Her career might have continued indefinitely had she not been caught in one Lutz von Hohenzollern's home in the dead of night. He was reputed to be very eccentric, as he kept lamps burning late into the night, and only his servants would come out by day. None in Hohenzollern had ever seen him. This ignited her curiosity.

Lutz detected Maris as she stealthily entered his manor through a side door. He chose to stalk her rather than eject



her. He inflicted visions upon her and enhanced her paranoia to a fever pitch. At the moment she finally broke, he gave her the Embrace and locked her away while she suffered the ravages of the change and dying.

Malkav's blood taught Maris a very important lesson: Crime demands justice, and the strong must enforce it over the weak of heart. She understood that she had committed wrongs against destiny when she committed the sin of stealing, and that this living death was her punishment.

Maris learned everything Lutz had to teach her about the Curse, her new power and the madness suffusing her blood. She was uncertain whether Lutz should suffer for killing her, or if he had only acted as an instrument of fate. This dilemma tormented her for decades. His choice of entertainment only complicated the matter, as he would select mortals from influential families, or even the childer of other Kindred, and force them to act out twisted passion plays of his own devising. These events invariably ended with the death or torture of at least some of the participants. Maris might have tried to stop this activity had Lutz not convinced her that his victims deserved the punishments to which he subjected them.

Maris would only drink the blood of criminals or the insane, never that of the innocent. An avenging angel, she felt, even a fallen one, should never strike the pure of heart. She learned how to use her undead proclivities to find those truly deserving of damnation and send them screaming into their own personal hells. The murderer might relive his crime from the vantage of his victims over and over again, or the liar might be compelled to admit the truth to individuals she had wronged — or Maris might simply kill them.

Ultimately, Maris came to see Lutz for the unjust monster he was, that the torment he inflicted on others was purely

for his own amusement. She decided to inform the families of his latest round of victims and allow them to decide his punishment. She left his manor but stayed in Hohenzollern long enough to see what the townspeople decided to do about his crimes. Some of the bereaved needed a little extra incentive to convince them — modified memories here, a little insanity there, and they were ready to accept Lutz's responsibility for the disappearances.

She left for Munich the night after he was dragged from his manor into the daylight.

Maris served the Prince of Munich for a time as an investigator before moving on. She learned everything she could about each vampire she found and kept notes in her own personal shorthand for later use. None were safe from temptation, she decided; all Kindred eventually fell to damnation. Then, and only then, would she bring justice to them. Even so, she served the prince well and aided him many times. By the mid-20th century, she was known across Europe for her competence.

Maris worked freelance for any prince who could meet her price. For one, she might work simply for access to a herd. From another, she might request some of his holdings. She developed an extensive network of contacts and a support base through which to manage them across Europe and parts of America. By means of mortal resources as well as boons accumulated from a hundred years of work for various princes, she developed a superior intelligence network. Her primary contacts came to include high-ranking members of national and international police agencies. Among the Kindred, she maintained lines of communication to (and a sympathetic ear for) neonates and ancillae, if only for the information they could provide.

Maris was affected little by the wave of madness that swept across the Camarilla Malkavians in 1997. However, she developed an ambition and sense of purpose that required she go to the very top of Camarilla society. When the 1998 conclave approached, Maris called in boons from several of her most influential clients: Francois Villon, Toreador Prince of Paris, Queen Anne of London and others supported her nomination as justicar for the Malkavian clan.

The Inner Circle confirmed her nomination and selected her to serve — her influence within the European community, her reputation as a thorough investigator and her determination to seek justice served her well. Maris selected most of her archons from those ancillae she'd courted as informants.

Only one thing disturbs Maris: When the Inner Circle called her in, she saw that Lutz represented the Malkavian Clan. When she looked again, another's face was there, but she is uncertain....

Image: Maris is a slight, short woman with a youthful appearance. She carries little of the exuberance of youth, however. She prefers instead to maintain a quiet, stern façade. She prefers dark clothing appropriate to the German upper class of the 1800s, preferably with as much skin coverage as possible.

Roleplaying Hints: You believe fate has chosen you to find persons who commit wrongdoing and punish them. You are not as concerned with mortals as with Kindred, whose greater excesses and more serious crimes merit a sterner response. Individual vampires may not be of import to you, but the continued existence of Camarilla society holds significance. You value individuals whom you see as innocent and strive to protect them in any way possible. Innocence is a rare and valuable treasure, and you wish to prevent the touch of corrupting influences. You do not realize that your own actions may taint others' innocence, and you act with blind disregard for anything but your own vision. You believe in the strict interpretation of Lextalionis and the Traditions, and you prefer to encourage the princes to enforce them after you present evidence of wrongdoing. Use your archons to dig up what you need, put it into a package and give it to the prince. If the prince refuses to handle the problem, call a conclave. If the transgressor is truly guilty, he will be punished, and you may then deal with the lax prince. You prefer to make the punishment fit the crime, so you do not always order an execution.

Clan: Malkavian

Sire: Lutz von Hohenzollern

Nature: Traditionalist

Demeanor: Judge

Generation: 8th

Embrace: 1762

Apparent Age: mid-20s

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 5, Manipulation 4, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 5, Brawl 3, Dodge 4, Empathy 3, Expression 4, Intimidation 4, Leadership 5, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Animal Ken 2, Crafts 2, Etiquette 5, Security 4, Stealth 5, Survival 3

Knowledges: Academics 3, Computer 1, Finance 3, Investigation 5, Law 5, Linguistics 3, Medicine 1, Occult 3, Politics 4

Disciplines: Animalism 2, Auspex 5, Dominate 4, Obfuscate 5

Backgrounds: Contacts 4, Herd 4, Influence 3, Resources 3, Retainers 3, Status 5

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

Morality: Humanity 6

Derangements: Prey exclusion: "the innocent," Megalomania, Hallucinations (Maris sometimes perceives reality differently from what it truly is, whether seeing objects that aren't really there or remembering events that never happened.)

Willpower: 8

Note: Maris never "caught" Dementation as it swept over the Malkavians; her clan Disciplines are still Auspex, Dominate and Obfuscate.

COCK ROBIN, NOSFERATU JUSTICAR

Background: “Robin” was a skilled but otherwise unremarkable silversmith’s apprentice who struggled to survive poverty in the dying days of Colonial American monarchy. He was brought into darkness at the whim of an elder power in the third year of the French-English crusade for the continent; his sire abandoned him to the less-than-tender mercies of the New World toward the close of the British occupation. The hapless neonate was left only with the admonition that the price of immortality was an account sire and childe would settle in due time.

The American Colonies represented a difficult time and place for wayward fledglings, the strife-torn New England coast in particular; many with whom Robin first established contact did not survive the dawning of the 19th century. The neonate’s dogged survivalist instinct, however, coupled with his tendency to go to ground at the first sign of trouble, saw him through an endless series of tight spots, trials and tribulations. He ultimately found himself in early industrial Rhode Island; there, secreted away from the mainland hostilities with a handful of other stragglers beneath Governor Fenner’s newly constructed piers, he witnessed the midnight arrival of a black-sailed galleon, unmarked and unchallenged, and the carrier of a foul blackguard whose machinations quickly pervaded the nascent nation’s every pore.

The ship’s captain called himself Warwick, Prince *pro tempore* of Providence, and the reign of terror that followed in his wake made the region’s previous infighting seem tame in comparison. His colleagues effortlessly broke all initial resistance, aided as they were by Brujah brutes from the north and an uneasy Tremere-Ventrue alliance from the south. Warwick’s right hand, a ruthless murderer named Roman Pendragon, conscripted hundreds of redcoat soldiers and loyalists as ghouled shock troops. The insurrectionists declared blood-ransoms on prominent American Kindred for anarchists, insurgents and diablerists alike. Key Ventrue power-players starved, deprived of sustenance by surgical strikes targeting their chosen vessels. Entire councils of primogen disappeared overnight. And Robin and his clansmen became unwitting agents of Warwick’s web — an intercontinental information network suspected to be spearheaded by European Methuselahs.

It was more than 100 years later, in the darkest hour of Warwick’s tyranny, that Robin’s sire resurfaced, sending word to his childe through underground resistance leader Prudence Stone (see *Clanbook: Nosferatu*). Robin and a handful of his compatriots had been introduced as seeming innocents into the web, yet primed to strike when the time was right — and that time had come. Guided by carefully orchestrated leaks and snares, an unprecedented 1990 Camarilla-Sabbat offensive carried the fight back to the elder’s unseen armies and crushed the bulk of Warwick’s forces at Bloods Brook, New Hampshire, where it had all begun decades earlier. (Warwick, however, escaped the rap-



idly closing nets; his whereabouts remain a mystery to this night.) And Cock Robin, sole survivor among the web counterinsurgents, emerged as an unsung hero recognized by few — but forgotten by none among the topmost tiers of the Camarilla.

Some rumors have it that Robin’s sire was none other than Petrodon, Count of Seville, who served as justicar until his untimely destruction. (That would certainly explain a great deal — Robin’s unusual selection as successor, his fervent devotion to the Camarilla cause, even the passing physical resemblance, if such can be said to exist with Nosferatu, between the two.) Others suppress these allegations almost as quickly as they surface; their potential repercussions (evidence of nepotism within the Inner Circle, or, worse still, vendetta-driven, justicar-sponsored inquests and inquisitions) would be devastating to the Camarilla infrastructure.

Image: Robin wears the body of a gangly teen, limbs and features stretched and twisted into disproportionate mockeries by the Curse of Caine. His elongated scarecrow’s frame, a collection of jackstraws put together at odd angles, moves awkwardly, without deftness or grace. These afflictions pale, however, before the deformity that earned him his sobriquet; the Nosferatu’s elongated head, puckered lower lip, and distended chin give him a grotesque avian appearance. (This beaklike malformation makes drinking from the jugular impossible for him; on those rare occasions when Robin succumbs to his Beast, or when vermin do not slake his inhuman thirst, he “feeds” through his victims’ eyes, a grisly practice which gives both mortal and Kindred authorities cause for consternation.) Although a master of the Obfuscate Discipline, he rarely assumes any face but his own.

Roleplaying Hints: You are still a child in many ways, in spite of the centuries you have had to learn and grow. An

incorrigible tinker, you love machines of all sorts, as your gadget-strewn subterranean haven readily attests; more than one Sabbat haven has met with a fiery end thanks to your carefully placed, matchlock-triggered black powder charges.

Sadly, your fierce intellect and cunning are easy to misinterpret; an insurmountable speech impediment caused by your misshapen head makes conversation difficult, and the company of others makes you nervous. You still cannot abide your own reflection — but nothing sends you flying into a rage faster than the pity-filled glances of others.

Clan: Nosferatu

Sire: Alonso Cristo Petrodon de Seville

Nature: Architect

Demeanor: Conformist

Generation: 7th

Embrace: 1757

Apparent Age: Indeterminate

Physical: Strength 6, Dexterity 2, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 0

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 6

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Empathy 1, Intimidation 1, Leadership 1, Scrounging 3, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Animal Ken 2, Crafts (jeweler/silversmith) 3, Demolitions 2, Etiquette 1, Firearms 2, Melee 3, Performance (woodwinds) 3, Stealth 4, Survival 3, Traps 3

Knowledges: Academics 2, Camarilla Lore 5, Clan Knowledge (Nosferatu) 4, Computer 2, Investigation 5, Linguistics 1, Medicine 1, Occult 2, Sabbat Lore 3, Science (metallurgy) 4, Sewer Lore 5

Disciplines: Animalism 6, Auspex 2, Fortitude 3, Obfuscate 5, Potence 2

Backgrounds: Herd (vermin) 6, Mentor (Inner Circle) 6, Resources 4, Retainers (spy network) 5, Status 5

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

Morality: Humanity 5

Willpower: 7

MADAME GUIL, TOREADOR JUSTICAR

Background: The only justicar to retain her position in these turbulent nights, the Toreador's Madame Guil is considered a necessary evil — very necessary, and very evil — by the Inner Circle. Even among the ranks of the justicars, Guil is noted for a decided lack of mercy; her skill at uncovering traitors and criminals in the halls of power is the subject of many dreadful tales.

The girl who would become Madame Guil was born in France, amid the squalor of the peasantry. Poor and usually hungry, she nonetheless blossomed into a creature of surpassing beauty. At the age of 16, she was betrothed to one Luc, a young wainwright from a neighboring village, with whom she had flirted at the previous spring's fair.

And then the cold talon of the Baron Vollgirre dashed her life asunder. Vollgirre, the old and spiteful Kindred lord of the entire province, noticed the young bride-to-be as she danced at the harvest festival. Her beauty stirred something in his turbid blood, and so he had her summoned to his estate in the distant hills.

Apprehension at her fate quickly turned to horror, as the baron revealed his true nature to her and drained her of blood. She rose again, Embraced as Vollgirre's concubine, but the color had drained out of her body and soul alike, leaving only a bleached and miserable thing.

To Vollgirre, his newest prize was but a peasant girl for his entertainment tonight and dinner tomorrow. Accordingly, it was a great shock to him when he awoke one eve with a stake in his heart and his castle in flames about him. Thus did Vollgirre, and his victim, pass from history.

The courts of Renaissance France were in many ways the apex of Kindred culture in the region, and vampires came from all over Europe to laugh, to dance, and to ignore the twin firestorms of the Reformation and the Sabbat. It was, thus, not so very remarkable to meet another immortal amid the pageantry and throngs, even one as delightful as Mme. Gilles. Mme. Gilles' natural charm and grace easily overcame manners that a few overly cynical Kindred might have dubbed "unpolished," and the young Toreador was nothing if not a quick study. Soon, she lacked little in the way of mortal or undead company — and if one, or even more, of her *vampyr* acquaintances were to disappear from time to time, why, the dread Sabbat and dire werewolves were on the roads at night, and Kindred took their chances beyond the city walls. Mme. Gilles took pains to insinuate herself on the very periphery of undead society — always noticed, never overly noticeable.

It was in the early 17th century that she met her Luc once more. When Mme. Gilles first saw him, at a courtiers' ball, she nearly fainted, thinking him a specter or at the very least a distant descendant of her old love. In truth, he was neither; upon hearing of her summons to Vollgirre's court so long ago, Luc had left his village in grief and had struck out along the lonely roads. There, by night, he had been ambushed by a ragtag band of monsters, a remnant of the mobs that had terrorized the nights of the Anarch Revolt. Neither wholly anarch nor wholly committed to the then-nascent Sabbat, the band of *vampyrs* led debauched unives of murder and robbery. They had attacked Luc to slay him for his blood, but Luc's heedless, valorous struggle had impressed them, and so one among the group's number had cursed him with the Embrace. Luc traveled with the band for a while, but most of its members were destroyed by a Sabbat pack, and the survivors had gone their own ways. Since then, Luc had existed much as Mme. Gilles had, living on the fringes of Kindred society and conducting himself quietly.

They laughed, as they had done at the spring fair so long ago, and drank of one another several times. Mme. Gilles told Luc of how she had found power in the blood of old and



wicked Kindred, and Luc listened with interest as she described her habit of stalking and slaying what monsters she could. The lovers made a vow to rid the world of the Damned who had destroyed their mortal happiness, and for a time Luc and Mme. Gilles were the most monstrous diablerists in France.

Their crimes came to an abrupt end when the pair stalked and attempted to slay one of the childer of Francois Villon himself. The deed went horribly awry; Luc drew the brunt of the ensuing blood hunt upon himself, while the grieving Mme. Gilles fled into the wastes and once again passed from history.

In truth, Mme. Gilles disappeared into the underground world of the anarchists. Consumed with rage for the murder of Luc, she quickly became a monster among the outcast Kindred. When the Revolution sent France's mortal and Kindred aristocracy to the guillotine, Mme. Gilles was in the bloodiest thick of the Terror.

As history would have it, the Revolution quickly blossomed out of control, and Mme. Gilles herself was nearly executed, surviving only through the sacrifice of many important pawns. Her allies were not so fortunate, and Mme. Gilles — now calling herself Madame Guil out of irony — allied herself with the venerable, venal Kindred she most despised, Francois Villon. Latching herself to his power base and taking pains to hide her identity, Guil proved valuable in the rebuilding of France, and soon she was safely ensconced amid the institution she hated more than anything in the world.

Over the next two centuries, Guil played the hand she had been dealt, and rose to the rank of justicar. In this role, she has proved frightfully effective, and none are so expert at rooting out corruption amid the Camarilla's roots as she. She channels her rage into exposing and destroying the sect's

elders, and nothing gives her more pleasure than slowly putting to death an old and heretofore untouchable Cainite.

Three years ago, on a routine investigation into the doings of a particularly effective Sabbat assassin, the jaded Madame Guil was taken aback once again by a specter from her past. Tracking the assassin to his lair, Guil discovered none other than Luc, who had escaped the wrath of the centuries-past blood hunt. To do so, though, he had been forced to throw himself on the mercy of the Black Hand. Luc was now a templar in the service of the dread Sabbat, a veteran of centuries of war.

The two Cainites, their blood singing, clasped one another in a sanguine embrace, vowing nevermore to be parted. Although their union was forbidden by both sects, thus far the pair has found means of making assignations through the years. Now, though, Guil walks the narrowest of ledges between her rediscovered love and her unlife. She has neither given nor demanded secrets of her lover, but her duties as justicar must doubtless be compromised before too many nights pass.

Image: A Kindred poet once called Guil "Mistress of Tears," and it seems as though tears indeed follow her everywhere — tears of suffering and tears of awe at her overwhelming beauty. Guil appears as the freshest of young maidens, flawlessly formed and in the bloom of youth. Still, something about her gaze causes most humans to find her off-putting or even repulsive — though her high-divine loveliness overcomes even this most primal of danger instincts, and her victims hurl themselves at her like lemmings.

Roleplaying Hints: You appear to be many things — committed anarchist, traitor, judge and executioner. In truth, you have not known who you were since the night you became Damned. In modern terminology, you are what is known as a codependent personality — dependent on causes, on Luc, on control. You latch onto one role or another in an attempt to stabilize yourself, but the strain is starting to wear through your defenses. Now, with nothing more than a wretched coterie of archons led by the effete Vidal Jarbeaux, you crave your lost — forbidden! — paramour more than ever before. And it disgusts you.

Clan: Toreador

Sire: Baron Philippe Vollgirre

Nature: Monster

Demeanor: Bravo

Generation: 6th

Embrace: 1579

Apparent Age: 16

Physical: Strength 5, Dexterity 7, Stamina 6

Social: Charisma 5, Manipulation 7, Appearance 6

Mental: Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 5

Talents: Alertness 4, Brawl 5, Dodge 4, Empathy 2, Expression 2, Grace 5, Intimidation 7, Leadership 4, Style 4, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Etiquette 4, Firearms 4, Melee 5 (fencing), Performance 4, Stealth 2

Knowledges: Academics 1, Camarilla Lore 5, Investigation 6, Law 4, Linguistics 6, Occult 3, Politics 5, Sabbat Lore 5

Disciplines: Auspex 6, Celerity 5, Fortitude 4, Potence 4, Presence 7, Protean 2, Serpents 3, Thaumaturgy 3

Thaumaturgical Paths: Path of Blood 3, Spirit Manipulation 1

Backgrounds: Allies 3, Contacts 7, Herd 3, Influence 6, Resources 6, Retainers 7, Status 7

Virtues: Conscience 1, Self-Control 3, Courage 5

Morality: Humanity 2

Derangements: Megalomania

Willpower: 8

ANASTASZ DI ZAGRUB, DRUTENDUR AND TRUMERU JUSTICAR

Background: Anastasz was born the son of a wealthy textile importer in Slavonia during the late 1840s and raised with all the comforts of money and prestige. As a young boy, Anastasz found himself fascinated by the strange and supernatural. His governess told him stories of the *zhulo* that would come in the night and terrorize villages, and the hobgoblins and *sluagh* that would steal his voice if he were bad. Far from being frightened, the fact that the world contained such wonders thrilled the young Anastasz. He decided that when he was older he would see and speak with them for himself.

Anastasz's father, a solid, practical man felt that his son's flights of fancy were detrimental to the boy's development and sent the governess away. Taking charge of the boy's education, he sent Anastasz to England and enrolled him in the best schools.

Anastasz left home filled with the tales his governess had told him. As his world of magic and wonder fell victim to the world of geometry and economic theory, Anastasz quietly became the staid young man of whom his father would have approved.

In his first year at Oxford, Anastasz encountered a retired stage magician at a local pub. The man's ability to create illusion was astounding, and learning the art of sleight of hand obsessed Anastasz. Practicing his new skills constantly for most of his school year, Anastasz almost failed his courses, but nevertheless became quite proficient at legerdemain. Soon he was performing at small venues and billing himself as "The Imperial Magus."

After gaining his bachelor's degree at Oxford, he attended the prestigious London School of Economics. During the day, he discussed theories and economic models. At night, he joined a society calling itself the Magic Ring and traded secrets in the craft of illusion.

It was Anastasz's quest for a flashy new trick that brought him into the clutches of the world he had left behind in his youth. Investigating a back alley in search of an obscure bookseller, he happened upon a man who seemed to be biting another. With horror, Anastasz saw a rivulet of blood trickle from the man's mouth. The attacker, noticing Anastasz,

dropped his victim, and in the gaslight, the young man could see bloodstained fangs protruding from the attacker's mouth. Anastasz quickly reached into his pocket and pulled out the packet of flash powder he always carried. With a swift motion, he used his ring-igniter and threw the tiny pouch at the monster. The powder ignited with a bright flash, and the monster hissed and recoiled. Before it could recover, Anastasz fled, terrified.

The next evening, Anastasz recounted his adventure to the other members of the Magic Ring, and they scoffed at his tale, suggesting that he have it published in a penny dreadful. Dejected, Anastasz returned to his flat.

Upon entering his home, Anastasz found a man seated in a wait for him. Chilled, he realized that the intruder was the creature he had seen the previous night. With a gesture, the creature made the door close of its own volition. Anastasz wanted to flee but could not; he had been transfixed by the creature's eyes.

The vampire, for that is what he was, spent the night explaining to Anastasz the truth about real magic — blood magic — and how a noble group similar to Anastasz's Magic Ring decided to become true sorcerers and found a way to trade their mortal shells for immortality. As the vampire talked, Anastasz realized that the creature was offering him a chance at real magic. Without hesitation, he agreed.

Anastasz spent the next 25 years in Vienna at the Tremere chantry, there learning the realities of his new existence and discovering his incredible, unnatural aptitude at Thaumaturgy. Completely devoted to his new clan, he became an accomplished researcher and powerful *magus* in an astonishingly short time.

When a new Tremere justicar was chosen early in the 1900s, he chose Anastasz as one of his archons. His skill as a *magus* made him a useful agent. He saw horrible things, includ-



ing many of the mythical creatures his governess has once told him about. Anastasz became known as an authority on the occult, and his open, friendly demeanor and willingness to help made him a catspaw in Tremere interclan politics.

In 1998, when the time was nigh to choose a new justicar, the Tremere found themselves split over several candidates. Jean St. Frederique, a very powerful Tremere presiding over a large chantry in France, put forth Anastasz as a candidate. Assuming he could control the ancilla, St. Frederique used his influence to swing just enough votes to clinch the election for Anastasz.

Thrust into a position for which he is not truly ready, Anastasz has become zealous in his attempts to prove his worth as a justicar. He has offended many of his colleagues, including the new Brujah justicar, Jaroslav Pascek. As a result, Pascek has set up an operation to teach the young Tremere a lesson. Anastasz is planning to take back Montreal from the Sabbat. Should Anastasz succeed, Pascek plans to reveal that he was the source of the intelligence essential to the operation and take the credit.

Anastasz knows that many members of the Camarilla and his own clan see him as too inexperienced and weak, and he is determined to show everyone that he does know how to be a justicar. He relies on his mentor, St. Frederique, for advice, and the older vampire is glad to give it. Although Anastasz's skills are improving, it may be decades until he properly fits the role of justicar.

Image: Anastasz is a tall man and presents the impression that he is frail, but he also radiates a fierce energy. His eyes are an electric green, and his hair is the color of straw. He finds himself drawn to the styles of the 1930s and '40s; often he wears hats, spats and double-breasted suits and carries a walking stick.

Roleplaying Hints: You intend to root out every bit of opposition to the Camarilla and prove to all your critics that you are a competent and able justicar. Devoted as you are to the cause, you can still be distracted by a new and interesting supernatural phenomenon. You wish you had enough confidence to act on your own, but still you feel the need to consult with your patron. If you are forced to make a decision on your own, it tends to be extremely harsh.

Clan: Tremere

Sire: Claas Drescher

Nature: Competitor

Demeanor: Traditionalist

Generation: 9th

Embrace: 1867

Apparent Age: early 20s

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 5, Intelligence 5, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 4, Brawl 2, Dodge 1, Empathy 3, Expression 1, Interrogation 4, Intimidation 4, Intuition 2, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Etiquette 3, Firearms 2, Melee 3, Security 3, Sleight of Hand 4, Stealth 4, Survival 2

Knowledges: Academics 4, Camarilla Lore 4, Enigmas 2, Finance 2, Investigation 4, Law 4, Linguistics 3, Medicine 3, Occult 5, Politics 3, Research 4, Science 3

Disciplines: Auspex 3, Dominate 3, Fortitude 2, Thaumaturgy 5

Thaumaturgical Paths: Path of Blood 5, Lure of Flames 4, Movement of the Mind 3, Spirit Manipulation 2

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Contacts 2, Influence 2, Mentor 4, Resources 4, Retainers 2, Status 5

Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 4, Courage 5

Morality: Humanity 5

Willpower: 6

LUCINDE, VENTRUE JUSTICAR AND ALASTOR

Background: Lucinde remembers nothing of her life before her Embrace at the fangs of Severus, then the Ventrue justicar. He chose her as his archon; she rapidly absorbed his lessons and quickly honed her intuition to razor sharpness.

Lucinde has served nearly every Ventrue justicar since — often at their request, sometimes at her petition. She enforces the Traditions with a frightening dedication.

Lucinde arose from torpor in the 1930s to find that Michaelis, a former lover, was justicar for the Ventrue. She sought him out — only to be enslaved by blood bond to the Setite Kemintiri. When the Tremere discovered this calamity, they brought her before a conclave in Munich. The conclave declared global Lextalionis against Kemintiri and created the Red List, the Camarilla's Most Wanted. Lucinde, named as first alastor (an agent who hunts those Kindred on the Red List), set out to find anathema — all except the Setite Methuselah, whom she was expressly forbidden to stalk.

Nevertheless, Lucinde hunted Kemintiri unsuccessfully for many years with the secret intent of offering her devotion. She caught and destroyed many enemies of the Camarilla — but the Setite continued to elude her. She gradually realized that Kemintiri saw her as nothing more than a convenient tool, and that she'd been tossed aside once there was no further use for her. The insight only strengthened her resolve. She developed a burning hatred to match her former love for the snake. Even so, it took years and much of her energy to break the bond, and may have kept her from finding Kemintiri. When she was finally free, the investment left her too weary to continue. Lucinde fell into torpor for several years.

In the autumn of 1994, Lucinde rose from torpor to find the first sign of Kemintiri she had seen since being blood bound: a letter to an anathema. It named several other anathema and described an attempt to form an alliance composed of Red List targets.

Disturbed by the implications but loath to relinquish this trace of her quarry, Lucinde decided not to give the letter to



the justicars or the Inner Circle. She chose instead to follow the leads herself. Unfortunately, each path had gone cold, leaving behind nothing but rapidly abandoned havens, destroyed contacts and impressively violent distractions.

At last, tired and frustrated, she presented her findings to the Inner Circle at the Venice Conclave. They questioned her at length about her conclusions regarding the missive: Might it be possibly a hoax, laid as a false trail for the alastors, or some deeper conspiracy linking the anathema to the Sabbat leadership? The elders dismissed her to discuss the matter privately after her testimony

Nobody was more surprised than Lucinde when the conclave went on to name her justicar for the Ventrue. Her sense of duty led her to accept this opportunity despite initial misgivings. Even so, Lucinde has concerns about the reasons for her appointment — she believes she was chosen for some special purpose, perhaps to hunt vampires on the Red List. Certainly, she knew more about these criminals than any other elder did. She also believed that her investigations might have touched upon something deeper than she'd considered before — signs of the Antediluvians waking or hints to the final nights. Whatever it may be, Lucinde strongly desires further answers.

Lucinde appointed several archons before the conclave's end. She and they vanished immediately afterward. The first rumors began only a few months later. Whispered from elder to elder in the salons of North America, they told of spies in the justicar's service sent to watch the princes for disloyalty to the Camarilla.

The first and only tangible sign of Lucinde's activities was a vicious battle at Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, amongst three Kindred and some kind of monstrous creature. Lucinde and her archons had tracked the child-Samedi Genina to this mist-enshrouded place. This anathema was a

dangerous serial killer who endangered the Masquerade through poems she left at the scene of her crimes. The battle waged for the better part of an hour before the archons staked and subdued Genina. Lucinde presented Genina to the Inner Circle a month later, only to vanish on some other search.

Image: Lucinde looks like an innocent young woman, at least until one peers into her eyes. Within them, one might see an uncomfortable and monstrous intensity that promises death for any who gaze too long. She dresses appropriately for the 20th century, but prefers conservative styles such as business suits and casual eveningwear. She always wears gloves to conceal the “mark of the beast,” a trophy sigil given to alastors.

Roleplaying Hints: You are determined to fulfill your duties, most especially to destroy Kemintiri. Take control of every situation and don't give anyone else a chance to question you or your judgment. You feel you owe the Tremere some degree of consideration; after all, they forced you to acknowledge your slavery to Kemintiri. Nevertheless, you refuse to defer to them.

You hold a burning hatred for the one responsible for your servitude and the mysterious death of Michaelis. You long to see the night when Kemintiri is staked out for the sun. Should anyone offer you information or aid that you are certain can lead you to Kemintiri, you accept it.

Clan: Ventrue

Sire: Severus

Nature: Architect

Demeanor: Traditionalist

Generation: 6th

Embrace: 1656

Apparent Age: late teens

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 4, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Expression 2, Grace 3, Intimidation 4, Leadership 5, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Archery 3, Drive 2, Etiquette 4, Melee 5, Performance 2

Knowledges: Academics 3, Bureaucracy 3, Camarilla Lore 4, Investigation 5, Linguistics 4, Medicine 2, Occult 3, Politics 5

Disciplines: Auspex 2, Dominate 3, Fortitude 3, Obfuscate 2, Potence 2, Presence 5, Thaumaturgy 3

Thaumaturgical Paths: Path of Blood 3

Backgrounds: Influence 4, Resources 4, Retainers 4, Status 6, Clan Prestige 6

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

Morality: Humanity 5

Derangements: Fugue

Willpower: 8

THE ARCHONS

THEO BELL

Background: As the Camarilla's first line of defense in times of crisis, those Kindred appointed to the post of archon have a deserved reputation for cruelty and mercilessness. And among the currently active archons, few inspire such dread in foes as does Theo Bell, childe of the mighty Don Cerro. In his tenure as archon, Bell has won the Inner Circle's personal accolades no fewer than seven times, an unprecedented feat in the sect's history. Even the war packs walk warily when Bell is near, and the anarchs of a hundred cities curse the name of the "Killa-B."

Ironic, then, that this avenging demon should arise from such humble origins, and that the Camarilla's master gaoler should be so intimate with shackles. Born into a family of slaves on an antebellum plantation in the nascent state of Mississippi, young Theophilus (as a slave, he had no last name) worked with his father, mother and many siblings in the cotton fields. Although the work was grueling and the overseer brutal, Theophilus had as happy a childhood as could be expected under the circumstances. His father, in particular — a huge and gentle man whose laughter was like distant thunder — saw to it that evenings in their tiny shack were peaceable and provided what sparse amenities he could.

Thus, it was a cruel blow to Theophilus when, soon after his fifth birthday, the family was split up. About half the clan, including his father, remained with the original master, while the remainder, including Theo and his mother, were sold to the distant Bell plantation. Theo was already strong for his age, and it took a grown man to pry the child from around his father's legs. It was, Theo believes, the last time he ever cried, and the first time his father wept. That tear-stained image is his last memory of his father.

Theo's mother was still a handsome woman in spite of her many hardships, and his remaining sisters grew up strong and tall. Their appearance did not go unnoticed by Master Bell, who occasionally descended by night upon the slave quarters, that he might "better the line by pumping some white blood" into as many of Theo's female relatives as he could. The separation from his father and his impotence in the face of his family's violation killed something in Theo. He also grew up strong and tall, and soon enough gained his father's height and impressive build, but never found his father's laugh or smile. A sullen field hand, young Theo often tasted the overseer's whip, and his fingers sometimes twitched atop his pallet as he strangled Master Bell in his dreams.

Theo had an even stronger dream than murder, though, and upon his mother's untimely death from illness (given to her, Theo believed, by the master), he implemented it. His sisters had been bent into docile house slaves; he was sorry for them, but they would hinder him. "Following the drinking gourd" of the Big Dipper, Theo slipped from the Bell planta-



tion by night, striking down an overseer who sought to stop him, and ran for the North.

The way was long and perilous, but Theo was crafty and strong enough to strangle, single-handed, one of the bloodhounds sent after him. Some months later, Theo found himself in Ohio and a member of the Underground Railroad. During the next several years, Theo made many trips into the Deep South to rescue such slaves as he deemed worth saving, and posters throughout Dixie trumpeted a reward for the renegade's death or capture.

Theo never found his father, but was otherwise very successful in his endeavors. However, his caution waned as his zeal increased. One night, Theo lay panting in a pine forest. He was wounded and facing capture after a failed mission. As the dogs howled in the distance, Theo bent to drink from a stream — and, when he looked up, saw a grinning stranger not three feet from him. Seeing that the stranger was white, and obviously composed, Theo made a desperate lunge at the man. To Theo's dismay, the stranger sidestepped his attack, then plucked him from the air in a grasp that proved inescapable.

Holding Theo immobile, the stranger bade him be at peace. He was not one of Theo's hunters, nor was he there to enslave him once more — at least not to any master Theo might recognize, the stranger added. His name, he said, was Don Cerro, and he had been watching Theo's exploits for years. Theo had impressed him as a man, and now, Cerro continued, he wished to make Theo into something more.

Theo felt the stranger's icy flesh against his own, and half-remembered snatches of old slave tales pierced his brain like freezing talons. But these tales were dispersed by a vision, an image of his family's violator bent and broken at Theo's hands. Theo relaxed, Cerro smiled, and a bargain was made.

One condition only did Theo ask — that he be allowed to return to the Bell plantation.

So Theo gave up the sun and learned of the gifts of his kind, and of the great thirst. This thirst drove him inexorably toward the Bell estate. One moonless night, he crept into the master's house, a strange excitement upon him and a great blacksnake whip in his hand. He stood over the bed where fat old Bell lay, and he brought the whip up and down, up and down, harder than any mortal could crack it, and then there was only Bell's screaming, and his bulging eyes, and a pounding in Theo's skull that grew louder and louder and....

There was red everywhere, and then he realized that the master's house was aflame, and he was in a ruin that had been the slave quarters. Bodies — some white, most black — lay scattered across the grounds, limbs contorted like storm-tossed willows. Familiar faces — including his younger brother's and three of his sisters' — were among the corpses. Theo sank to his knees, but he was dead and could not weep. But, as he ran from that place, he determined that he would take the surname of his erstwhile master, to remind himself that though he now had the power of the overseer, the yoke of the slave would forever burn in his lifeless heart.

During the following years and through the Civil War, Don Cerro took it upon himself to educate his progeny, instructing the newly dubbed Theo Bell in letters, history and philosophy, as well as matters exclusive to the Kindred. Theo proved an apt pupil — the embodiment of the warrior-scholar the old Idealist wanted — but additionally honed his Kindred gifts through emancipatory missions and, later, raids on Confederate supply depots, all in frantic efforts to erase the memory of his murdered family.

After the war's end, sire and childe embarked on a tour of Europe, during which an entire nocturnal world opened itself to the fledgling's eyes. The princes and primogen, for their part, enjoyed a patronizing titillation at the idea of "Cerro's colored progeny" — precious few black Kindred existed among the Camarilla vampires of those generations still active in politicking, and nearly none had been Embraced from the New World slave populace. Indeed, Bell was a prodigy. Status-conscious harpies tripped over themselves to invite the taciturn Brujah to soirees, and several attempted to entice Bell into illicit blood-drinking liaisons ("Is it true what they say about a Negro's vitae?"). Bell, for his part, quickly grew disgusted with the decadence and debauchery of Europe's Elysiums — all too similar to Master Bell's indolent parties — but he soaked in the culture and customs of the mortals around him. He and Cerro became close — as close as father and son — and as Cerro's sway in the sect rose, Bell was reluctantly carried along with it, shouldering burdensome responsibilities for his sire's sake.

The 20th century was as turbulent for the Kindred as it was for the kine. Back in America, Bell was dismayed at Reconstruction's failure, though his mortal cares grew increasingly distant to him. In Harlem during the Jazz Age, Bell

found himself and his mortal kin at the center of a Sabbat riptide; additionally, he made frequent trips to his old Southern haunts, doing what (little) he could to stem the tide of Jim Crow. In the '50s, seeing a useful pawn to infiltrate civil-rights circles and confront anarchists on their own turf, the Inner Circle appointed Cerro justicar, knowing that Bell would become archon. Bell, for his part, was well aware, and resentful, of the politics behind his appointment; as well, he harbored no small amount of sympathy for the anarchists. His feelings did not stop him from performing his duties to the letter, and by the '90s Bell was the most respected — and feared — archon in the United States. Such was his renown that the newly appointed justicar, Jaroslav Pascek, retained Bell in his subordinate post, even though the two Kindred despised each other.

In these nights, Theo Bell may well prove to be a cornerstone of the besieged Camarilla. He has traveled much more extensively than most Kindred; even werewolves give him little pause, and he knows most cities in North America and many in Europe. Over the years, Bell has painstakingly tracked down what members of his father's family he could; he watches his kin from afar or occasionally intervenes in their behalf. As such, he has more contact with the sunlit world than most Kindred his age, a trait that serves him well in his duties. The Inner Circle believes that Bell's knowledge of New York City, particularly the Harlem-Washington Heights area, can prove vital in scourging the Manhattan Sabbat.

Image: Tall, dark and, yeah, handsome, Bell cuts a dashing, albeit forbidding, figure. Scars across his shoulders and back, souvenirs from the overseer's lash, are the only legacies of his slave days. Typically sporting a neatly trimmed mustache (and sometimes a bit of beard), Bell dresses well when at peace and efficiently when doing battle. A New York Yankees baseball cap, reflective police-style sunglasses and a Dragonsbreath-loaded shotgun are Bell's trademarks; anarchists and Sabbat alike know his visage and fear it. As an ironic mockery of his unliving condition, Bell occasionally plasters a Breathe-Rite™ strip across his nose, particularly when engaged on a mission of war.

Roleplaying Hints: On the surface, you are the stoic, emotionless authority figure, efficiently polite to all and close to none. This is, of course, a mask for the indecision that grips you nightly. You watch the masters of the Camarilla administer their mortal plantation, cracking the whip of government and media to make the kine go this way and that, and the sight makes you shake with fury. Yet you can't condone the capricious short-sightedness of the anarchists, and you've seen the Sabbat too up-close and personal to harbor any romantic illusions about its agenda. Nor can you go autarkis without bringing shame on the head of the only father you've truly known; the Embrace is a hard thing, but Cerro gave you a way out of your helplessness, and for that you are bound to him with your unlife. Perhaps, then, despite all your power and all

your years, you are a slave still and forever. That being the case, you reckon, you might as well be a “good” one for now, until you can decide how to get free once and for all.

Clan: Brujah

Sire: Don Cerro

Nature: Rebel

Demeanor: Judge

Generation: 9th

Embrace: 1857

Apparent Age: early 30s

Physical: Strength 5, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 5

Talents: Alertness 5, Brawl 5, Dodge 5, Empathy 1, Expression 2, Intimidation 5, Leadership 4, Streetwise 4

Skills: Crafts (mechanics) 1, Demolitions 3, Drive 3, Etiquette 3, Firearms (shotguns) 5, Melee 5, Performance 2, Stealth 5, Survival 4

Knowledges: Academics 2, Finance 1, Investigation 4, Law 3, Linguistics 2, Occult 3, Politics 3, Science 1

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

Backgrounds: Allies 5 (mortal family), Contacts 5, Mentor 4, Resources 3, Status 4

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

Morality: Humanity 6

Derangements: Berserk

Willpower: 10

FEDERICO DI DADUA, THE RIGHT HAND OF THE CAMARILLA

Background: Federico tells anyone who asks that his life has been like any other. From the heights of glory and hope to the pits of terror and pain, he has clung to his beliefs and pursuits despite the capriciousness of fate. Now sometimes referred to as “the Right Hand” of the Camarilla — because his centuries of service in the role of archon are beyond reproach and without equal (What other Cainite, at least one who operates in the plan view of others, has managed to hold such a position within the Camarilla for so long?) — Federico works diligently to ease the tensions in the Camarilla’s ivory tower. He reminds Kindred now in power of the nights when they were weak, and he suggests to those who are weak now that they might one night wield power and that they must not perpetuate the abuses heaped upon them.

Born in Italy, Federico grew to become a veteran mercenary much prized for his ability to organize impetuous youths. In the course of those many years, he fought across all the lands of Europe, during which time he knew many masters, saw many treacheries and learned lessons that have shaped his immortal existence for five centuries.

Federico’s Embrace was a brutal one, and it continues to affect him to this day, though not in a cyclical fashion — he

does not dispense justice harshly, nor does he abuse his power. Instead, from the very first nights of the Camarilla, Federico fashioned his own agenda by not kneeling to the whims or expectations of the individuals he has served. Such self-determination was easy during the years when his adopted sire, the co-founder of the Camarilla, Josef von Bauren, was justicar, but not so with several of the seven justicars under whom he’s served.

Federico always weighs the information and evidence he gathers or receives with a mind toward fairness. Frankly, he’s as surprised as his most ardent detractors that he has held his post for so long and through so many transitions. This surprise, though, arises solely from his resistance to manipulation, and he hopes that he has maintained his position because of his results. However, it has not escaped his notice that he has never been offered the position of justicar. He’s too valuable in the field, he’s told, even though he never asks the question. In the end, he accepts that as answer enough, because he doesn’t allow anything to weigh too heavily upon him except the decisions of unlife and death he makes regarding others.

Nevertheless, over the centuries, Federico has become known as an ardent supporter of the Camarilla. At first, he felt the organization was merely the best solution available. Although he has surely seen the sect struggle at times, the Camarilla inevitably rights itself and travels a path that he sees as just.

Federico’s cynical streak still shows itself sometimes, but that’s because he knows the Camarilla is not perfect. He particularly reviles the blindness the organization perpetuates. The best decisions are made when the most evidence is available, and the Camarilla too often closes its eyes on matters of grave concern and terrible consequence, such as the existence of Antediluvians. As an individual, though,



Federico can take these nameless fears into account as he dispenses justice in the name of the sect.

Recent years have found Federico in the United States. Several months of fruitless and dogged investigation turned up little regarding the assassination of Justicar Petrodon in Chicago. Now, Cock Robin is the Nosferatu justicar, and Federico expects good things from this Kindred. Cock Robin is committed to the Camarilla, but more importantly, he also fights the willful blindness of the sect in his constant attempts to draw attention to its fading power along the East Coast of the United States.

Regardless, whether he knows it in his dead heart or not, Federico will never entirely feel certain of the Camarilla and its ability to shape Kindred politics and schemes until he is elevated to justicar. Ironically, it is a position he would refuse, for he knows he is indeed more valuable in the field. Thus, this litmus test of his devotion to and hope for the Camarilla may never occur.

Image: Federico finds that a lack of appearance serves him best as he moves about invisibly in his investigations and informational pursuits. His obfuscated visage suits him personally as well, for despite his 500-plus years as a Kindred, he retains a disgust for his hairless, revoltingly ugly form. In mortal life, Federico was a handsome — though unexceptionally so — man of rugged appearance and strong frame. Now, his body is covered by sores that have festered for centuries without respite, and the hook of his long nose is accentuated by the stoop in his shoulders, though his clear, brown eyes gleam with an intelligence and passion undiminished by time.

Roleplaying Hints: You are the epitome of a mentor. Many are the young students and soldiers who have sought your counsel. You are confident, but you realize that confidence results from your good luck and hard work. Too many times you've seen the winds of fate change directions and ruin a person, and you know it could happen to you, too. You never rely solely upon your status within the Camarilla to achieve your ends and instead continue to earn the trust of others based on your vision and wisdom.

Clan: Nosferatu

Sire: Marienna ("adopted" by Josef von Bauren)

Nature: Judge

Demeanor: Architect

Generation: 7th

Embrace: 1444

Apparent Age: difficult to determine; sometimes appears as mid-30s

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 6

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 0

Mental: Perception 5, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 5, Brawl 5, Dodge 3, Intimidation 4, Leadership 3, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Archery 3, Melee 5, Ride 4, Stealth 5, Survival 4

Knowledges: Academics 2, Finance 2, Investigation 4, Linguistics (English, French, Hungarian, Russian) 3, Occult 4, Politics 7

Disciplines: Animalism 3, Auspex 4, Celerity 1, Fortitude 2, Obfuscate 6, Potence 5

Backgrounds: Contacts 4, Mentor 4, Resources 4, Status 4

Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 3, Courage 4

Morality: Humanity 6

Willpower: 6

LITERAC, THE ALIGNED INDEPENDENT

Background: Sam Mayberry was born in a New Jersey suburb to an all-American family. He had a typical suburban middle-class upbringing, went to Rutgers and eventually on to medical school. Due to a nervous shake in his hands, Sam realized that his dream of being a surgeon would never come true. He decided to pursue pathology instead, where the nervous shake wouldn't really matter. An easygoing young man, Sam never let the morbidity of being around dead bodies all the time bother him. Indeed, they never judged him or doubted his twitching hands.

Sam became a coroner, and had an intense interest in using his medical expertise to help solve crimes. He married his high-school sweetheart, who bore their twin daughters. His dreams of a quiet, normal life ended with World War II, however. Sam dutifully enlisted and found himself on the European front during the later stages of the war. As one of the first U.S. servicemen into Auschwitz, he changed forever after seeing the horrors of that place. The atrocities committed there shattered his faith in the goodness of humanity. Once he'd served the rest of his tour, Sam returned home to the love and normalcy of his family and tried to shake off the memories of what he had experienced.

That normalcy lasted little more than a year. A series of exceptionally disturbing murders tested his expertise and brought back memories of the war. Horribly mutilated, bloodless bodies began appearing, several at a time, all over the area. Some of the bodies displayed seemingly impossible traumas, such as one woman whose ribcage looked as if it had straightened and thrust itself out of her chest. The investigating detectives believed the crimes were simply the work of a madman. Sam tried to convince the police that something was wrong, but they tried to cover up the whole mess. Finally, he went to the press. That night, he came home to find that his wife and daughters had become the latest victims.

Later that night, as he wandered around in a drunken stupor, Sam discovered exactly how unnatural those murders really were. George Frederick, a pro-Camarilla Samedi, was in town spying on the increasing Sabbat activities. Sam's interest in the murders had caught both Frederick's and the Sabbat's attention. Frederick witnessed the murder of Sam's family and knew that the Sabbat would find Sam eventually.



Frederick saved Sam from a gruesome death by damning him to an even more horrifying existence.

Sam took the news with the morbid fascination that remains the hallmark of his personality to this night. He decided to turn all his knowledge and expertise into something positive, now that he could study death in ways he'd never before dreamed. Frederick proved an excellent teacher and mentor. Upon release from his sire's grotesque tutelage, Sam renamed himself Lithrac, after a monster in a childhood story he remembered, as a sign of his new existence.

Frederick owed a boon to Clan Nosferatu, and then-justicar Petrodon in particular. Petrodon had harbored political ambitions for centuries, and asked Frederick to train for him a silent and deadly weapon as a repayment. Lithrac became that weapon.

Lithrac has proved his worth by sending key Sabbat members to their Final Deaths. He takes no pleasure in killing but sees the Sabbat as an abomination and an affront to the humanity left in him. He sees working for his new patrons, Cock Robin and the Camarilla, as just a job. Much like being a coroner, it is morbid but makes the world a better place in the end. Lithrac still enjoys many of the things he did in life. In fact, he prefers to spend his time restoring vintage '50s cars, his favorite hobby.

Robin rewarded Lithrac's exceptional service by making him one of his archons. Lithrac has performed above expectation, and Robin has never been sorry for his decision.

Image: Lithrac looks like an unwrapped mummy, with dry, thin, parchment-colored skin stretched over his bones. When he moves quickly, large flakes of dry skin drop off, leaving a trail that he is careful to clean up. Wisps of brown hair still cling to his head from place to place. He has no lips left, and his fingers are almost devoid of skin, giving him a

clawed appearance. Surprisingly, his bright blue eyes remain clear and look alive. He typically wears dark suits, with a black overcoat and fedora to help conceal his appearance.

Roleplaying Hints: You are absolutely meticulous. Any assignment for Justicar Robin is a job to be completed, and jobs should be done right. Keep a detached, scientific attitude about your work and in the presence of strangers. Always cling to the shadows and be ready to act when necessity dictates. You don't really get into the "Romantic" idea of being a vampire, though you don't deny the fact that you are a monster. You see it as a change in what you are rather than who you are. When around proven acquaintances you are downright jovial, though you do have a morbid sense of humor.

Clan: Samedi

Sire: George Frederick

Nature: Loner

Demeanor: Curmudgeon

Generation: 9th

Embrace: 1950

Apparent Age: indeterminate

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 0

Mental: Perception 5, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Intimidation 1, Leadership 1, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Drive 2, Etiquette 1, Firearms 3, Melee 1, Security 4, Stealth 5, Survival 1

Knowledges: Academics 2, Bureaucracy 2, Camarilla Lore 4, Computer 1, Expert Knowledge: Criminology 2, Expert Knowledge: Toxicology 4, Investigation 4, Law 1, Medicine 4, Occult 1, Politics 2, Sabbat Lore 2, Science 3

Disciplines: Celerity 1, Fortitude 2, Obfuscate 4, Thanatosis 3

Backgrounds: Contacts (Clan Nosferatu) 3, Mentor 3, Resources 2, Status 4

Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 4, Courage 4

Morality: Humanity 7

Willpower: 7

VIDAL JARBEAUX, MADAME GUIL'S HONARD

Background: Charming, suave, good-humored, always ready with a right word, endearing, sexy, genuine, a bit of a rascal but never malicious; Kindred often use such terms to describe Vidal Jarbeaux, Toreador archon to Justicar Guil. Such praise is well-deserved, however, for Vidal is the Camarilla's most capable confidence artist. Skilled as an actor and orator, comfortable on a variety of topics, a master of puzzles, a sharp wit and cunningly creative, this Toreador archon is happiest when playing "the game." With these strengths, he is an excellent addition to Madame Guil's otherwise vicious entourage. Unfortunately, Madame Guil happens to be Vidal's current mark.

Vidal lived in 18th-century Paris as a man of moderate means. Even then, however, his talents as a scoundrel were impressive. Born to a middle-class family, Vidal used his charms and grace to woo money from the French aristocracy. He played the social game perfectly, fooling many into believing he was a man of station. He hosted guests at his supposed summer villa when the true owners were still in Paris, courted several women at once while juggling his liaisons skillfully, and ran the Spanish Prisoner's gambit often and well enough to feed him for a lifetime. While mortals fell for Vidal's ploys, the Toreador of Paris knew better. They allowed him to ply his skills, however, because he was so good at it and damn entertaining. It even became briefly fashionable for Cainites to participate in Vidal's games, often playing the roles of dupes or witnesses. Whenever Vidal succeeded at one conquest, the Toreador would raise the ante by presenting him with harder social obstacles. Vidal always rose to their challenges, however, and for his skill, they cursed him with the Embrace.

Once the Toreador had Embraced Vidal, they grew bored with him and claimed he had somehow lost that special touch. Although Vidal denied it publicly, the truth was he felt that creative spark had died alongside his heart. Desperate to revive his passion for... *unlife*, he sought newer games in which the stakes were higher. Higher stakes meant greater danger, and greater danger meant bigger challenges. By winning, Vidal could lie to himself and say that nothing had changed, but after two centuries of trying he has yet to find a challenge to thrill him like the ones of his mortal years.

With a new world to explore and new abilities to complement his skills, Vidal left Paris to see the rest of Europe. His timing was impeccable. The French Revolution swept through France shortly after Vidal's departure, destroying many of the Kindred who knew him. For more than a



century, Vidal conned the elite of society. From colonial Lebanon and Egypt to the London courts of Queen Anne, Vidal assumed dozens of personalities, disguises and roles. He claimed membership in every clan and possessed the skill to carry off each claim. He was the archeologist seeking funds for trips into Egypt; he was the explorer launching expeditions into the Amazon; he was Freud's assistant; he was the Lindbergh baby; he was whoever he wanted to be. Unfortunately, his luck was bound to run out. Vidal unknowingly attracted the attention of Justicar Montecalme, who then spent the better part of a decade trying to capture the talented, but enigmatic, con-artist. Never a man to waste good skills, however, the justicar took Vidal under his wing after finding him, and he used Vidal for special assignments. Vidal became the confidence man for Montecalme's stings. Only the justicar, his archons and the Inner Circle knew about Vidal.

Recently, Montecalme finished his term of duty and stepped down from his position as justicar in a bit of controversy. The Inner Circle made Vidal archon — an uncommon appointment, as justicars usually select their own retinues — and assigned him to Toreador Justicar Guil. Officially, Vidal is intermediary and diplomat for the short-tempered and often confrontational Madame Guil. Secretly, however, someone within the Inner Circle has suspicions about the good justicar and is using Vidal as a spy. Vidal suspects as much, and even harbors his own doubts about Madame Guil. She claims she was part of French aristocracy before the revolution, but Vidal knows better, having been Embraced then. Still, the assignment is tough, and Guil is a cagey opponent. She trusts no one and has allowed little to slip. Vidal, however, hopes the game will be the challenge he so desperately seeks.

Image: Vidal turns heads wherever he goes. A well-dressed and dapper individual, Vidal wears nothing but the best in clothing: suits from Paris, gold cufflinks from Monaco, London sweaters, German ties, Italian trousers and shoes, and a Swiss gold watch. His tight frame speaks of a well-defined body, but he carries himself like a gentleman. He wears a smile to disarm the suspicious and a rose to catch the wary off-guard. His sword-cane is for the unappreciative.

Roleplaying Hints: You play your parts well. You smile easily and seemingly without a shred of malice, but it has taken decades of practice to hide your predatory nature. You even speak as though the world's best dramatists had scripted your dialogue. Words are like silk on your silvered tongue, and you never talk down to others. It is your ability to make them feel equal in a conversation that often wins your arguments for you. Despite your cultivated appearance, you are a gambler. You can spot the odds in a situation, and you can always play them to your favor. Gentleman and rogue, that's what you are.

Clan: Toreador

Sire: Baroness Margaret d'Hautmont

Nature: Gallant

Demeanor: Bon Vivant
Generation: 7th
Embrace: 1768
Apparent Age: early 20s
Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3
Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 5, Appearance 5
Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4
Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Diplomacy 5, Dodge 4, Empathy 4, Grace 4, Hagglng 4, Interrogation 3, Intimidation 3, Intrigue 4, Masquerade 2, Mimicry 4, Search 2, Streetwise 2, Style 4, Subterfuge 4
Skills: Disguise 4, Drive 3, Etiquette 5, Firearms 4, Lip Reading 2, Melee (sword-cane) 4, Sleight of Hand 4, Stealth 3
Knowledges: Academics 2, Bureaucracy 5, Camarilla Lore 3, Computer 2, Finance 2, History 2, Investigation 2, Law 3, Linguistics 5, Medicine 1, Occult 3, Politics 3, Sabbat Lore 2
Disciplines: Auspex 3, Celerity 3, Fortitude 2, Obfuscate 3, Potence 2, Presence 5
Backgrounds: Contacts 5, Herd 4, Resources 3, Retainers 1, Status 3
Virtues: Conscience 4, Self-Control 3, Courage 5
Morality: Humanity 5
Willpower: 8

Ilyana Ravidovich, Witness to Disaster

Background: Frankly, Ilyana Ravidovich doesn't know why she was selected for the position of archon. Nothing escapes her detection for long, though, so she has no doubt she'll know soon. This talent of Ilyana's may save her, but it has likely doomed her as well, for she suspects it's the reason she's still in Russia. The riddles of Russia have teased and stumped the Camarilla for decades. Ilyana, a former chess champion with a brilliant mind and the mental prowess to crack the most complicated of codes, is perhaps the one to finally pierce the fog of Baba Yaga and grasp the plans of the mad geomancer Zelios.

Ilyana's childhood in Belgrade was dominated by chess play and tournaments. Her father was a frustrated amateur, and though he often spoke of his wish for a son instead of the daughter he received, he was eventually delighted to discover Ilyana's tremendous aptitude for the game. As with many child prodigies, though, Ilyana became bored with her excellence and, after failing to receive parental permission to leave the game, she rebelled and eventually fell in with Gavrilo Princip in the days prior to the Great War.

Although she failed to understand the implications of this high school student's ambitions, she acted as a co-conspirator of Princip's in Sarajevo when the young man killed Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the shot that set off World War I. Thereafter, still naïve of worldly ways after so many sheltered years, Ilyana was swept into the ranks who supported the Russian Revolution, and after the end of the revolt in 1920, she accepted Soviet citizenship. Finally settling

down after years of turmoil, Ilyana returned to her chess, and once her prodigious skill was discovered, she was recruited to teach the game to young Soviets.

This appointment began the series of events that brought her to the attention of an ambitious Ventrue in Moscow. Her production of junior chess champions led to her appointment with a code-breaking department of the Soviet military, which led to her Embrace. Her Ventrue sire had copies of communications between a rival and members of the Brujah clan that she hoped were incriminating, but they were so obscurely coded as to prove unbreakable.

Only a ghoul for the several weeks the code required of her, Ilyana so delighted her domitor that the vampire decided to Embrace her. Since that time, Ilyana has served Clan Ventrue well, and her apparent reward was her recent promotion to archon. She accepted the position because she fights positional battles very well, and she believes she can do her job and survive to reap even more rewards.

A pall descended on Ilyana's service as archon, however, when she discovered the gravity of the Baba Yaga situation. What she had once thought was merely (!) an elder vampire with vast influence instead turned out to be a veritable god, and Ilyana's trained eyes soon saw the marks of the Hag's passage everywhere. This realization, combined with a curious assembly of Eastern European castles along obscure magical ley lines revealed much to Ilyana. These activities were no petty, chesslike game of move and countermove. Rather, they bespoke Jyhad on a global scale. Ilyana discovered the geomantic web had been laid by an ancient Nosferatu named Zelios, presumably with the intent of trapping Baba Yaga. The final piece of the puzzle, a geomantic glyph inscribed in 1998, led to a crumbling Russian castle that had been reconstructed to house a Soviet missile silo 20 years ago. Since the end of Soviet Communism, Russia had balkanized, and no



government agency retained any record of the silo or its deadly contents. To this night, Ilyana keeps a watchful eye on the missile and remains ever mindful of those who would use it and their role in Baba Yaga's Jyhad.

Image: Ilyana is dark-complexioned and could be pretty if she wasn't so obviously introverted and conservative. Her long black hair is usually tied in a bun, and her choice of dress lacks any presumption of style. She denies it, but she probably has some Afghani ancestry. Her gaze is withering, and though her body scarcely moves and she uses absolutely no hand gestures when speaking, her eyes are like hummingbirds — they dart back and forth, never focusing anywhere for long.

Roleplaying Hints: You are always in control of yourself. That is your defining characteristic. You know the same cannot be said about anything else around you, but you steadfastly refuse to be coerced or connived. You make up your mind in your own time. Fortunately, it usually doesn't take you long to see through anything. Your mind is very sharp and very fast, and you have the ability to carry on several conversations at once. You trust your first instincts, but you are not stubborn at all — if new data is presented, you can change your mind. Persons who interact with you feel as if you see right through them. Often you do. Underneath your veneer, however, you are truly scared, not only for your own well-being, but for that of the world as well, for the Hag does not sleep easily.

Clan: Ventrue

Nature: Pedagogue

Demeanor: Plotter

Generation: 10th

Embrace: 1931

Apparent Age: mid-30s

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 5, Intelligence 5, Wits 2

Talents: Alertness 4, Empathy 2, Hobby Talent: Chess 5, Instruction 2, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Etiquette 3, Firearms 3, Lip Reading 3, Performance 3, Security 2, Stealth 2

Knowledges: Academics 3, Area Knowledge (Eastern Europe, Russia) 3, Computer 3, Cryptography 5, Enigmas 3, Law 4, Occult 3, Politics 2, Research 4

Disciplines: Auspex 2, Dominate 3, Fortitude 1, Potence 1, Presence 1

Backgrounds: Contacts 3, Resources 3, Status 4

Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 5, Courage 4

Morality: Humanity 7

Willpower: 6

NOTEWORTHY PRINCES AND PRIMOGEN

LADY ANNE BOWESLEY, QUEEN OF LONDON

Background: Lady Anne Bowesley, now Queen (Prince) of London, learned from her father at an early age that life gives you only what you squeeze out when you take it by the throat. Her father failed in his bid to throttle life when Oliver Cromwell died, but Anne was influencing Parliament a mere hundred years later.

Anne's father, one of the most prominent men in Warwickshire in the early 17th Century, not only bequeathed his attitude to Anne, but as importantly, he arranged a fine marriage for her. The arranged union was passionless, as such affairs tended to be, but Anne's husband received a well-bred wife, and Anne received a wider circle of contacts and continued access to wealth.

After the death of her husband, Anne fell in with a group of noblemen who dreamed the same kind of dreams as her father. However, instead of seeking someone strong enough to make himself king and then hold the position (as was Cromwell's aim), the group merely sought a king who would submit to the control of Parliament. Anne's work was critical to the execution of the plan, and it was this time spent with Parliamentarians which sowed the seed for her continued reliance on that malleable institution.

In 1688, Anne's life changed. Her group's plan succeeded, for William of Orange invaded England, wrested control of the throne and married the king's daughter so as to produce an heir with indisputable divine right; of greater personal impact, though, was another kingmaker, the Ventrue Valerius. He played the role of a noble in the secretive group Anne joined, and he was very impressed with her. After Embracing her, he brought her to the attention of the Ventrue Prince of London, the powerful Mithras.

After proving herself to Mithras on a number of lesser maneuvers, Anne accrued a significant influence over Parliament. She wielded it to superb effect for two-plus centuries until the onslaught of the Great War. By then, Parliament was everything the Ventrue required. For years, the clan placed its stock in the monarchy, but the rise of the middle class and coincidental losses to the English Ventrue's political enemies, the Tremere, forced them to change tactics. Anne fashioned Parliament into the ruling force of England, which dealt a serious blow to the Tremere, but also served to make her prince and her fief the strongest on the Sceptered Isle.

The years between the World Wars were ones of great danger and little gain. The Ventrue held their superior position, but did not strengthen it. Then, as the bombs rained upon London during German raids in World War II, Anne found an opening she seized at once. Mithras' haven was struck repeatedly one night, gravely injuring the Methuselah. Anne was one of the faithful Ventrue who carried Mithras

from the remnants of his devastated haven that night in 1941, and after the prince, deep in the clutches of torpor, was tucked safely away, Anne proclaimed herself Queen of London.

Anne took the title of queen because she disliked the masculine sound of “prince,” even though numerous other female princes around the world have accepted this Kindred custom of titles. The reasons for this decision are twofold. Anne is approaching 500 years of age, which makes her old enough to have a substantial appreciation for the monarchy and its dressing despite her reliance on Parliament. More importantly, she believes this demand of hers is viewed as a sign of weakness by others. It reminds Kindred that she is a woman, and despite the change she wrought in 1918 when women gained the right to vote in England, Kindred old and young still view women as a secondary species.

But she likes to make clear to anyone who broaches this subject to her face: Mithras is dead, and she is queen. Who is the impotent one?

Anne did not make this brazen claim until very recently, however, after suspicions of Mithras’ Final Death became common knowledge. For years, no one but London’s Ventrue elite knew the fate of Mithras. Some thought the incendiaries had destroyed him that night in 1941. Others, particularly the Tremere who found themselves too often outsmarted by the wily prince, insisted that he was playing dead and that his faked death was merely an invitation for them to reveal themselves and their schemes.

As recently as a few years ago, Queen Anne’s position was tenuous. Despite decades of nominal prominence in London, Anne was unable to deal decisively with the Tremere threat. So, in the end, it was Anne herself who, through various agents, caused the Final Death of Mithras to become general knowledge among Kindred. Then the Tremere did



exactly what they had so patiently forestalled for 50 years: They acted quickly, believing that Anne’s control was teetering.

But Anne’s understanding of Kindred politics and power plays had grown dramatically, and the Tremere fell directly into her trap. For the first time, Anne did not rely on her knowledge of kine institutions to make her bid for power. Her plans and traps and counterattacks played out exclusively behind the veil of the Masquerade, which — much to the relief of the Camarilla — has been strengthened in recent years after wearing thin for so many years of vulgar Kindred manipulation of English politics.

Now, Anne is Queen Anne, undisputed Prince of London. Only she seems to know her next moves.

Image: Anne is a petite woman, but her five-foot-two stature seems dauntingly energetic. She still dresses in the power suits of the 1980s, but she operates like an empowered 1990s woman at her peak, so though her actions may be controlled, her explosive emotions radiate intensely nonetheless.

Roleplaying Hints: Your power base is more secure than ever, so you don’t need to show your control as openly as you once did, but it’s in your nature to be demonstrative. You do not hesitate to cut people off in mid-sentence if you don’t like what they are saying or if they bore you. Of course, you don’t do so to anyone of higher station than yourself, but that group has diminished since you gained a better hold of your London prize in recent years. Beyond this show of power, your position has not gone to your head. You know you do not possess the personal power of Mithras, and an organized attempt to overthrow you could certainly succeed. And so you watch over your fief like a hawk....

Clan: Ventrue

Sire: Valerius

Nature: Director

Demeanor: Survivor

Generation: 6th

Embrace: 1688

Apparent Age: early 50s

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 6, Stamina 6

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 7, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 6, Intelligence 5, Wits 6

Talents: Alertness 6, Brawl 3, Dodge 6, Grace 3, Intimidation 4, Leadership 6, Masquerade 5, Style 2, Subterfuge 7

Skills: Drive 3, Etiquette 5, Meditation 2, Melee 2, Performance 4, Stealth 4

Knowledges: Academics 3, Area Knowledge (London) 7, Bureaucracy 6, City Secrets (London) 5, Finance 5, Investigation 4, Law 6, Linguistics (numerous) 4, Occult 3, Politics 7

Disciplines: Auspex 4, Dominate 6, Fortitude 4, Presence 7

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Contacts 5, Herd, 5, Influence 5, Resources 5, Retainers 5, Status 3

Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 4, Courage 4
Morality: Humanity 6
Willpower: 9

TARA, PRINCE OF SAN DIEGO

Background: Settlers of the Western frontier traveled in groups and died in droves; despite courage and tenacity, the uneducated, poverty-stricken family of Tara joined the other unfortunates, one by one, at the bottoms of shallow Texan graves. Unable to fight cholera, starvation, political unrest and outlaw assaults, Tara buried her children, her husband, and her hopes in the desert sands.

Perhaps it was pity that moved Tara's sire; perhaps it was the passion with which she decried an uncaring existence. Whatever the cause, she was Embraced by a Brujah revolutionary on the border of Texas and trained to fight against "injustice." Border skirmishes held no interest for Tara, though; parting ways with her sire, she set out to form a new family of her own, one that would not fall prey to the ravages of the frontier.

Surrounding herself with a small coven of fledglings, Tara established a small domain in Texas, near what is now El Paso; she fought to give her haven the security that she'd never had in life. When the Civil War came, she and her brood defended their territory fiercely, but many of her childer left — Tara had no interest in taking sides, but many of the younger Brujah felt the fiery need to become involved in the war, or to see their side or their families victorious. Unable to convince them to stay, Tara again watched her family drift apart.

Without a stable family, Tara set about expanding her control of her holdings. The end of the Civil War, though, paved the way for a slowing economy. Despite learning to exert her personality and charisma, Tara failed to adapt to changing fortunes, and her havens and towns dried up like desert weeds. Within a decade of the war's end, Tara lost most of her money and her property and had to move to Dallas in search of better fortunes.

Dallas was not kind to Tara: The primogen of the city considered her young and unworthy of position, but potentially dangerous enough (due to her potent blood) to bear watching. Under their scrutiny, she was forced to develop her financial skills, covertly managing her own operations in order to support herself. Drawing on her still-growing leadership capabilities, she managed to improve her fortunes despite a lack of much influence in the city's policies.

The American Anarch Revolt was just the break Tara needed. She gathered her revolutionary brood from the Civil War years and traveled west to San Diego. Once in the midst of the revolt, she and her childer provided much-needed support and combat experience to the anarchs. The former Don of San Diego had already been killed by the time of her arrival. With little opposition and her group of loyal, experienced fighters, Tara found claiming San Diego as her domain

to be a simple task. The provisional council of the anarchs didn't have the time or resources to oppose her land grab; besides, they needed the support of her warband. The city of San Diego became Tara's barony.

For several decades, Tara "ruled" distantly over San Diego. Her education in finance, politics and deal-making had been finely honed, and her fighting skills compared to those of combat veterans. Planting loyal agents in city police and financing pet projects in the government allowed Tara to nudge the city along her own desired paths. For the most part, the anarchs of the city begrudgingly abided her rule, as she remained undemanding. As long as nothing threatened San Diego's growth and her control, Tara allowed the city and its Kindred to do as they pleased.

By the mid-1990s, San Diego had grown from a sleepy little town into a prosperous west coast city with a military presence, a famous zoo and parks, border trade and international celebrations. Seen as a jewel perched on the edge of the United States, San Diego became a lucrative opportunity for many Kindred hoping to expand their prestige and influence. A careful strike by rival anarchs decimated some of Tara's followers and resources in the city proper, forcing her to retreat to Oceanside (an hour's drive north of the city). From there, she watched as anarchs set up new "baronies" in an attempt to jump-start their own status.

Having learned to let her enemies exhaust themselves in combat with one another, Tara waited for the inevitable bloody clashes of power in San Diego. Sure enough, no single individual proved equal to the task of maintaining the city. A succession of petty rulers ensued, each one ousted by anarchs or would-be heirs to the city. Once the most dangerous and powerful Kindred had wasted their efforts, Tara swept in with her ghouls and experience to take the reins of a tired city. Many of the Kindred had grown weary of the constant



turmoil and fighting; sentiment leaned toward the peaceful organization of the Camarilla, and Tara at last declared herself prince in full. With the Camarilla's tacit approval (and a visit from Federico di Padua), she set about sweeping up the remaining opposition and appointing the officers of her reign.

Tara's heavy-handed swiftness in claiming San Diego as her Camarilla fiefdom startled some anarchs and enraged others; nevertheless, she cemented her hold quickly. However, sand leaks through even the firmest grasp; shortly after her ascension, Tara found many of her contacts in the underworld and border control compromised. Key mortals suddenly knew of their vampiric masters; gangs and police alike balked at vampiric interference, forcing a series of cover-up murders. At first blaming anarchs, Tara soon realized that the disorganized neonates of the city could not orchestrate such a coup. From rumors and tales pieced together by terrified Nosferatu and Caitiff, she discovered that her city is threatened from the shadows by the eastern Cathayans. Tara, able to sway people to her side with her forceful leadership, competent in battle and skilled in politics and intrigue, has yet to learn the full measure of a war of espionage and subversion — and so, once again, her dominion slowly crumbles as its foundations erode.

Image: Tara is an average-looking woman of modest height (5 feet, 6 inches), just a tad on the heavy side. She has neatly-trimmed, slightly curly blond hair and expressive blue eyes. Her gaze is striking; while she is not what most would consider attractive, her force of personality is nearly overwhelming.

Roleplaying Hints: You know how people work, and you've used that knowledge to carefully orchestrate your position as the Prince of San Diego. People who work with you find you caring, thoughtful and witty; your opponents quickly discover just how many people *do* work with you. You have finally risen to prominence through your own merits, and San Diego is your child. Through your care and influence, you help the city thrive. You refuse to let another disaster befall your beloved family — you intend to control all of the variables and make sure that San Diego grows and prospers, despite the interference of anarchs, Sabbat or Cathayans.

Clan: Brujah

Sire: Justin Davies

Nature: Director

Demeanor: Caregiver

Generation: 9th

Embrace: 1822

Apparent Age: late 20s

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 5, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Intimidation 3, Leadership 4, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Animal Ken 3, Drive 3, Firearms 3, Melee 3, Stealth 3

Knowledges: Academics 1, Finance 2, Law 2, Linguistics (Spanish) 1, Politics 3

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

Thaumaturgical Paths: Path of Blood 1

Backgrounds: Allies 3, Contacts 4, Herd 3, Influence 3, Resources 3, Retainers 4, Status 4

Virtues: Conscience 1, Self-Control 3, Courage 4

Morality: Humanity 4

Willpower: 4

CARLAK, USURPER [PRINCE OF] DRAGU

Background: In his mortal days, Carlak was the third son of a Bohemian count. Knowing he would not inherit the title and uninterested in a life in the Church, he chose (against the wishes of his father) to enter Charles University to study history, philosophy and science. He would have been forcibly returned to his father's estates before finishing his first year had it not been for the intervention of Dmitra Ilyanova, a Ukrainian noblewoman who patronized the university.

Dmitra saw potential in Carlak. She often invited him (and other students) to her estate to meet with foreign visitors and engage in philosophical debate throughout the night. Often, he returned to his humble apartments only after the sun had cleared the horizon, yet his enthusiasm never waned. These weekly events sharpened his intellect and performance at the university, even as he fought the strange exhaustion that overtook him after the discourses.

Shortly after his graduation, Dmitra invited Carlak and others from his class for a special celebration. The high point of the evening would be a debate, Dmitra said, on the relativity of good and evil. She also said that he who argued his position most eloquently would be handsomely rewarded. Through the night, they discussed the issues and debated with ferocity inspired only by Dmitra's urging to excel.

When the debate ended, Dmitra declared Carlak the victor for his sharp wit, his informed arguments and his apparent conviction in his support for moral absolutism. His "reward" was the Embrace, his first meal his classmates.

In truth, Dmitra had expected Carlak to succeed, and she'd had no particular use for the others. After giving him time to adjust to his new state, she took him on a tour of Europe, introduced him to other elders of the Brujah clan and indoctrinated him in its ways. She taught him to now think only for himself. Instructors, family, Church and king no longer ruled him. He had to give heed only to his intellect, thirst for knowledge and blood now and forever. He needed also to answer to Dmitra, who demanded that he hone his mind, expand his experiences and acknowledge no limits.



One night she would take him to a gathering of Brujah to debate the nature of God; the next, they'd hunt the kine and drain them unto death. Dmitra saw unlife as an adventure of epic proportions.

Within 10 short years, Dmitra began stalking another young man, and time between her liaisons with Carlak stretched from a few nights, to weeks, to months. Carlak spent several decades in Prague, finding his own way between increasingly infrequent visits from his sire.

He visited America during the 19th century but found that the Brujah there were too uncouth and uneducated for his taste. He returned a few years before the Russian Revolution and the formation of the Brujah Council. He assisted in the revolution, only to see the council fall to the same hubris as the Czars. He left, disgusted with the Brujah (again). During a brief stop in Prague, he received a letter from Dmitra inviting him to join her at the Grand Conclave. She confessed that she had missed his conversation and desired his company once again. At the conclave, Dmitra was appointed as justicar and given the duty to monitor unrest in Europe. She asked Carlak to serve as one of her archons.

Dmitra asked that he monitor the situation in the newly evolving Soviet Union. She specifically wanted him to watch the council's actions. The Inner Circle feared that they would foolishly attempt to re-create Carthage and reveal themselves to mortals.

The Brujah Council was distrustful of Carlak's return to Moscow, given the circumstances of his earlier departure. Even so, he managed to find a few within its ranks who would speak with him. He worked his way into their operations only to find an organization hamstrung by personal vendettas.

In 1946, Petrodon offered Carlak a position among his archons, which the Brujah accepted. He spent the next two decades in America, where he worked with Petrodon to bring

anarchs back under the Camarilla's aegis. Carlak worked as an infiltrator of sorts — he wormed his way into the confidence of a group of anarchists, learned all he could about them and reported back to Petrodon any planned attempts to break the Traditions, or actual breaches in some cases. Carlak's time in Russia served him well, as his participation in the revolution and with the council gave him a certain cachet.

In 1972, Petrodon recommended that the Inner Circle accept Carlak as the next Brujah justicar. Dmitra's removal from the office opened a rift between sire and childe that persists to this night.

Carlak spent the following 26 years coordinating with Petrodon to curtail the anarchist threat to the Camarilla. Despite all efforts, they made little progress.

Petrodon called Carlak for assistance late in 1997. He suspected the anarchists were about to make a major strike against several Camarilla domains. Carlak was en route to America when Petrodon's assassins struck.

When the Inner Circle met in 1998, Carlak resigned. He returned to his old home to re-establish a permanent haven.

The Toreador Vasily, Prince of Prague, strongly suspicious of all Brujah thanks to the repeated revolutions and uprisings of the past five decades, demanded that Carlak depart and never return. He accused Carlak of seeking his position and possibly even his destruction.

Carlak, still frustrated over his failure with Petrodon, flew into a rage and, barehanded, beat Vasily into torpor. He then summoned the primogen to extract promises of support from them. Relations remain tense and probably will for some time due to the sudden nature of this praxis seizure. Carlak keeps Vasily locked in the tightest, most secure casket he could find, chained multiple times and bricked up in the lower levels of Castle Prague.

With his position as prince somewhat secure, Carlak now seeks to solidify his influence within the mortal world. He uses his contacts across Eastern Europe to gain access to governmental and diplomatic functions, to meet influential mortals and to establish relationships with them.

Image: Carlak is relatively short for the 20th century, standing just over five feet in height. However, his slender frame radiates power and authority out of proportion with his size. He keeps his shoulder-length blond hair tied back in a ponytail and is well groomed at all times. Carlak prefers to wear perfectly tailored outfits reminiscent of his mortal days but still somewhat modern.

Roleplaying Hints: You must not show any sign of weakness for the primogen to exploit. You regret the loss of Petrodon, who was a valued teacher and comrade. Brook no threat or insult to your position; the right of princes to rule extends only as far as they may defend themselves from any who might challenge them. Thus, you have proven superior to the fool Vasily, and you maintain an anachronistic joy in being the modern enlightened despot.

Clan: Brujah
Sire: Dmitra Ilyanova
Nature: Competitor
Demeanor: Director
Generation: 8th
Embrace: 1730
Apparent Age: late 20s
Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3
Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3
Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 4, Wits 5
Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Intimidation 4, Leadership 5, Style 2, Subterfuge 3
Skills: Animal Ken 3, Debate 4, Drive 2, Etiquette 5, Firearms 3, Melee 4, Performance 2, Stealth 3
Knowledges: Academics 4, Bureaucracy 3, Camarilla Lore 4, Investigation 6, Law 3, Linguistics 4, Occult 2, Politics 4, Science 3
Disciplines: Celerity 3, Dominate 3, Fortitude 2, Potence 3, Presence 5
Backgrounds: Contacts 5, Herd 3, Influence 4, Mentor 4, Resources 5, Retainers 2, Status 4
Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 4, Courage 3
Morality: Humanity 6
Derangements: Paranoia
Willpower: 7

GIANGALEAZZO, TRAITOR | PRINCE OF MILAN

Background: Giangaleazzo was present at almost every important historical event in Kindred society for the last five centuries. Present when the Convention of Thorns was called and the Camarilla began, he participated in the Anarch Revolt and was a signatory to the Code of Milan as that city's Archbishop. At the signing, Giangaleazzo had the honor of being the guardian of the original manuscript. During his swift, decisive and bloody defection to the Camarilla, he set what he claims to be the original draft of the Code aflame and threw it into the assembled ranks of the Milanese Sabbat, thus proclaiming his new allegiance. This act of defiance has made him one of the highest priority targets for the European Sabbat.

A Lasombra called Fray Diego, who was a wealthy patron of a Milanese order of monks, sired Giangaleazzo in the early 1400s. Diego chose him from a crop of novitiates when he saw how many older monks came to this young man for advice, and then how he used these elder clerics to ensure his promotion and eventual primacy at the monastery. Diego felt this fellow would make a fine addition to the clan, an opinion that was confirmed upon his discovery of Giangaleazzo's secret sojourns away from the monastery to nights filled with women, wine and song.

Giangaleazzo took to his new nature immediately and reveled in becoming one of the self-styled dark lords of

creation. The monastery had been a means for the young man to be comfortable in the world, and eternal existence as a vampire provided even more and different opportunities. Who needed wine when vitae flowed hot and sweet?

Fray Diego brought his fledgling to the council, where the terms of the Camarilla were hammered out alongside a quiet, young vampire named Maltheas. Diego supported the Camarilla's proposed move toward secrecy after a fanatical member of the Inquisition uncovered him feeding, nearly ended his unlife and left his face a burned ruin in the process, thanks to a flaming brand. Giangaleazzo was uncertain of the new sect's viability, but out of respect for his master said nothing.

The Anarch Revolt ended, but from its ashes rose the Sabbat. Giangaleazzo, by now Prince of Milan in all but name, continued to play both sides of the fence, officially condemning the anarchs but allowing them sanctuary within his city.

Rapidly, Giangaleazzo realized that Fray Diego had been wrong in throwing his support behind the Camarilla and provided the opportunity for the other members of his clan to destroy his foolish sire. Once assured of his power, he threw his lot in officially with his clan and the Sabbat, inviting the leaders to write their manifesto within his city.

Milan became a European Mecca for the Sabbat. Deep within Camarilla territory, and only a stone's throw from the Inner Circle's meeting place in Venice, the Sabbat often used the heavily defended city as a staging ground for assaults and harassment tactics. Giangaleazzo debauched himself in the bloody freedom of the Sabbat, and he sincerely believed in its mission to allow Cainites their freedom as the ultimate predators and rulers of the night.

As the 20th century dawned, Giangaleazzo began to grow disillusioned with the world as he saw it around him. His



Sabbat, with its lofty goals of freedom for all Cainites, had devolved into nothing but a squabbling and bloodthirsty rabble, intent on nothing but a reign of carnage and hedonism. Although Archbishop Giangaleazzo could remember when he, too, felt that way, he missed the stately progressions of his past, and the Machiavellian complexity of the old times. Growing up in the days of the Medici princes and vast trading empires of Renaissance Italy gave Giangaleazzo a fine appreciation of style. Having served as the abbot of a large monastery and then as the protégé of Diego, he'd often come in contact with the nobility and shrewd trader-princes.

The events returning Milan to the Camarilla began when an emissary from a consortium of Italian princes approached the archbishop. Fearing a front united against him, Giangaleazzo decided to hear what this emissary had to say. The princes had done their research well and knew the ennui that afflicted the archbishop. The emissary described a new Camarilla that had moved with the times, that was prepared for every eventuality, that was open to new ideas and concepts. The archbishop listened to these words eagerly, and, intrigued, he agreed to speak further with this emissary.

Over the next few months a dialogue began, and Giangaleazzo became more and more disgusted by the excesses of the Sabbat all around him, seeing the carnage and brutal waste in the name of freedom as nothing but mindless viciousness. Finally, he agreed to a stunning treachery against the Sabbat that would deliver the vampires of Milan into the hands of the Camarilla.

The Night of Bloody Terrors took place on a warm March night in 1997. The archbishop invited the Sabbat Cainites of his city to a wild *ritus* in his palace. There, with all the Sabbat gathered in the courtyard, the archbishop, clad in ceremonial robes, strode onto his balcony and surveyed the monsters below him. He unrolled the Code of Milan and held the yellowed parchment aloft. In a solemn voice he declared that Milan swore allegiance to the Camarilla and that hereafter he would be known as prince. Lighting the document amidst bestial howls, he threw it to the flagstones below. The sound of the mighty courtyard doors being closed and bolted reverberated throughout the palace, and as Giangaleazzo left his home, it exploded into flames, engulfing the Cainites within.

For several weeks, an extended Lextalionis hunted down the straggling remnants of the Sabbat, and at the end of the year, Milan was under the influence of the Camarilla. Supported by coterie of enforcers lent from the other Italian princes, Giangaleazzo, Prince of Milan, has begun to build his city into a shining example of what a Camarilla city can be.

Image: Giangaleazzo appears as a dapper Italian aristocrat with very fine features. He generally dresses in conservatively cut suits of the most expensive fabrics. He always wears a ring with a large onyx stone set in a gold band.

Roleplaying Hints: You have thrown your lot in with the Camarilla and damned the Sabbat to Hell. Be proud and

forthright, but always with exquisite manners. It is only a naked display of the Beast that may get you angry, enflaming your own Beast into action. Refinement, manners, exquisite taste and poise should be your hallmarks.

Clan: Lasombra (now *antitribu* by dint of allegiance rather than Embrace)

Sire: Fray Diego

Nature: Architect

Demeanor: Bon Vivant

Generation: 7th

Embrace: 1402

Apparent Age: early 30s

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 5, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 2, Dodge 3, Empathy 2, Expression 3, Grace 2, Intuition 2, Leadership 3, Style 3, Subterfuge 5

Skills: Animal Ken 2, Etiquette 4, Firearms 2, Melee 3, Performance 3, Security 2, Survival 2

Knowledges: Academics 3, Bureaucracy 3, Finance 2, Investigation 3, Law 3, Linguistics (a wide selection of continental languages and dialects) 4, Occult 2, Politics 5, Science 3

Disciplines: Dominate 3, Obfuscate 3, Obtenebration 4, Potence 4, Presence 4, Quietus 2

Backgrounds: Allies 3, Contacts 3, Influence 4, Resources 4, Status 4

Virtues: Conviction 3, Instinct 5, Courage 4

Morality: Path of Power and the Inner Voice 6

Willpower: 5

RUTH MCGINLEY, THE VAGABOND
DRIMOCKEN

Background: The daughter of Irish farmers, Ruth McGinley was raised to be a subservient wife who would produce a brood of healthy children. Her family fell upon hard times and married her off at the age of 15 to have one less mouth to feed. Her husband was an abusive drunk who took out all his frustration at his family's poverty on Ruth.

One day, after years of abuse, Ruth snapped. Her husband came home drunk, intent on dealing Ruth her daily drubbing. This time, she fought back and cracked open his skull with a rolling pin. She'd never meant to kill him, and her grief and fear led her to run away to England. After several months on the streets of London, she mugged a wealthy solicitor and bought passage to America with the money.

Determined to start a new life on her own terms, Ruth landed in Virginia, penniless and with nowhere to go. She hired herself out doing menial housework, but her refusal to submit to the drudgery of daily life got the best of her. After a passing insult from her employer at dinner one night, she dumped a tureen of hot soup in his lap. Her employer's dinner guest found this amusing to no end; little did she know that the guest was a Malkavian who saw her act as a moment of

brilliance. The estate's master had Ruth arrested, but before she went to trial the guest appeared and took her away from both jail and her life.

Ruth traveled with her sire for several years until she succumbed to the lure of the American frontier. She moved westward with the Manifest Destiny, always looking for a place where she could continue her unlife as she wished. Eventually, she ended up in Texas and established a haven.

Ruth realized she needed a cover for her nocturnal existence. She found being an outlaw was both a dangerous thrill and a disguise. The unlife of a gunslinger suited Ruth perfectly. Her vampiric powers made her one of the deadliest, and due to her gender, people constantly underestimated her. She could fight, curse and gamble with the best of them. Eventually, however, she found herself on the wrong end of a pack of Lupines, and it landed her in torpor.

When she awakened in the 1920s, the world was a vastly different place. The Texas oil boom was in full swing, and the old frontier was gone. Again, Ruth made the best of it. She saw the young prospectors and oil barons as the new generation of hustlers and gamblers, and she attached herself to several of them. In a series of guises, she became the "other woman" of some of Texas' most influential oil magnates as well as a governor or two. Even the coming of greater numbers of Kindred didn't seem to bother her.

Ruth entrenched herself in Texas politics not because of a lust for power, but because of an absolute need to control her destiny. She undermined anything or anyone who sought to control her, turning the law or the Church on anybody who crossed her. She became known among Dallas' Kindred, and eventually became a primogen by sheer age and formidability.

The ever-present encroachment of the Sabbat from Mexico worries Ruth. She sees them as a threat to her control. Determined to turn the mongrels back to their covens, she



occasionally even gets out her old pistols and leads hunting parties across northern Texas. Ruth doesn't particularly care about the Camarilla, though she believes it to be a damn sight better than finding ignominious Final Death among the brutish packs of the Sabbat.

Image: Long, fiery red hair and green eyes mark Ruth's Irish heritage. She has even retained her freckles in unlife. Among mortals, she wears fashionable, if conservative, dresses. When she travels outside the city or on Kindred business, she wears jeans, loose shirts, cowboy boots, a black duster and a cowboy hat. No matter what Ruth wears, however, her matched pair of vintage Colt Peacemakers are never far from her grasp.

Roleplaying Hints: Don't walk, swagger. You strut around with a confidence that is infectious. You do whatever you feel needs to be done, come Hell or high water. People get out of your way, and, dammit, they should respect you. Even when you're not wearing guns, act like you are. Always act like you are in control of any situation. Living as an outlaw, you picked up the habit of constantly looking over your shoulder. Assume there is somebody out there who wants to get back at you for some reason or another. You possess a touch of paranoia that something you did will come back to haunt you.

Clan: Malkavian

Sire: Billy Dexler

Nature: Survivor

Demeanor: Bravo

Generation: 9th

Embrace: 1769

Apparent Age: late 20s

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 1, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Empathy 2, Hagglng 2, Intimidation 3, Leadership 2, Scrounging 1, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Animal Ken 3, Etiquette 2, Firearms 4, Melee 1, Repair 2, Ride 3, Stealth 2, Survival 3

Knowledges: Academics 1, Bureaucracy 2, Camarilla Lore 3, Finance 1, Investigation 1, Linguistics (English, Spanish) 2, Medicine 2, Occult 2, Politics 3

Disciplines: Auspex 3, Celerity 3, Dementation 3, Dominate 1, Fortitude 1, Obfuscate 2

Backgrounds: Herd 2, Status 3

Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 2, Courage 4

Morality: Humanity 5

Derangements: Hysteria, Paranoia, Obsession (Ruth never spends two nights in a row at the same haven. She believes her foes could easily destroy her during daylight if they could track her patterns.)

Willpower: 7

LILLE HAAKE, TREMERE PRIMOGEN OF AMSTERDAM

Background: Lille Haake was raised by her father, an instructor with the University of Amsterdam. He taught philosophy in his home, and Lille became known for interrupting classes and lording over her permissive father. The university students took to calling her “Mrs. Haake” — a nickname that she adored without understanding the Electra complex that fueled her feelings.

After her father died on her 13th birthday, another university family took “Mrs. Haake” in. Although still frightfully headstrong, she withdrew into the school’s library. When she came across *An Essay on Witchcraft*, Lille was instantly taken with the notion of controlling the forces of nature. More specifically, she was obsessed with contacting and raising the dead.

For the next 32 years, Lille dedicated herself to the study of the mystic arts. When the speculative tomes in the universities of Groningen and Leiden and Utrecht could no longer satisfy her, she spent time with a Huguenot refugee who knew things at which her books only hinted. As her network of associates grew, she moved beyond common magical notions of black cats and stillborn calves and learned a little about the true supernatural creatures of the world. One night in 1779, she knocked on the door of Amsterdam’s only chantry and informed Thorbecke, the Tremere Regent, that she was ready to become like him.

To say that Thorbecke was surprised would be an understatement. A kine — a *female* kine — had discovered his chantry and knew something of the nature of the Kindred. Admiring her resourcefulness and directness, he decided not to kill her right away. After several years of interviews and several more years of consideration, Thorbecke finally agreed to make her “become like him.”

Lille was a quick study. Although she always did the bidding of her sire, she generally divorced herself from the nightly events of Kindred society. She buried herself in her studies, and it took Thorbecke’s death at the claws of the wretched Sabbat in 1989 to make her face the world.

Lille had felt a great deal of respect for her sire and knew that there had been much left to learn from him. She found having him taken from her to be completely unacceptable and resolved to punish the offenders severely. At the same time, the Tremere High Regent of the Low Countries decided Lille should take control of the Amsterdam Chantry and assume Thorbecke’s position as primogen. She developed contacts among the Kindred and littered Amsterdam with magical surveillance automatons to gather information. She spent nearly a decade learning the secrets of the city and its Kindred; the results shocked her.

The princes of Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg had long been united in a group called the Consortium. The Prince of Amsterdam, a Consortium member named Arjan Voorhies, had been steadily losing face because of his

inability to deal with the encroachment by the loathsome Beryn family of Giovanni vampires. Recently, however, the fortunes of Prince Voorhies had changed. He enlisted the assistance of Luxembourg “free agent” Hendrik Van Dyck, who led an independent strike force against the Giovanni concerns in the city. By all accounts, the action was a success, but while the Consortium congratulated Voorhies, Lille made her shocking discovery. She uncovered evidence — not *proof*, but compelling leads — that Van Dyck was a leader in the Sabbat. It seemed that Van Dyck’s move against the Giovanni had been designed to draw attention away from Sabbat activities in Amsterdam — activities that included the assassination of her sire.

Enraged, Lille confronted Voorhies and demanded a blood hunt be called on Van Dyck. Had she been more politically savvy, she would have approached the matter more tactfully. As it stood, the prince was riding the wave of success following his pogrom. Should it be revealed that he had been duped by the Sabbat, his position in the Consortium would become tenuous at best. Voorhies opted to ignore the matter and threatened to decry Lille as a hysterical renegade if she approached the other princes about the matter. After weeks of arguing, Lille came to a decision that would forever change her place in Kindred society.

She went to the Giovanni.

Lille secretly struck a deal with the Beryn family of the Necromancers. She agreed to apprise them of any actions that Voorhies planned against their interests. In return, they would support her vendetta against the Sabbat. If the relationship worked well, Lille explained that she might require one other favor of them.

Soon all of Kindred society was abuzz. It was said that Lille Haake had uncovered a major Sabbat coven. She had single-handedly burned them out and sent several to Final Death. Prince Voorhies publicly applauded her, but secretly cursed her for undermining his authority. He also doubted that she could have accomplished this act on her own, and he set about learning the truth of the matter.

Now, Lille is at the center of an intense four-way stand-off. She, Voorhies, the Beryn and the Van Dyck Sabbat all hold cards that — when put into play — are sure to yield spectacular success for some and Final Death for the rest. Lille is determined to emerge from the game having learned the ways of Giovanni *nigromancy*, and not staked out for the sun. She suspects however, that either eventuality may take her one step closer to the dead father whom she has been chasing since childhood.

Image: Lille Haake has graying brown hair that she always wears pulled back. She is rather tall, large-boned and has a squarish face. She usually dresses in a simple black cotton dress and plain, comfortable shoes, which ironically makes her stand out among the fashion-conscious Kindred of the Low Countries.



Roleplaying Hints: You are blunt and brutally direct. You have no concern for political tact or diplomacy. Rising in the ranks of the Camarilla means little to you, except in that it gives you more opportunities learn the skills you require. Everything you do serves your long-term goal of reuniting with the soul of your mortal father.

Clan: Tremere

Sire: William Thorbecke

Nature: Child

Demeanor: Director

Generation: 6th

Embrace: 1784

Apparent Age: early 50s

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 6, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 4, Empathy 4, Intimidation 1, Intuition 3, Leadership 2, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Crafts 3, Herbalism (alchemical theory) 4, Performance 3, Pilot (Boat) 3

Knowledges: Academics 4, Investigation 4, Linguistics 2, Occult 6, Research 6

Disciplines: Auspex 4, Dominate 3, Presence 1, Thaumaturgy 5

Thaumaturgical Paths: Path of Blood 5, Spirit Manipulation 5, Weather Control 4, Conjuring 3, Countermagic 3

Backgrounds: Allies 4, Resources 2, Retainers 2, Status 4

Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 5, Courage 4

Morality: Humanity 4

Willpower: 7

OTHER KINDRED OF NOTE

HASSAN, WARLORD OF THE CAMARILLA

Background: Much as they might wish it otherwise, the Camarilla has its monsters.

The first and only postulant to hold the title of warlord rarely speaks of his past. From what little can be pieced together, he is believed to be the Seljuk Hassan al-Samhir, conqueror of Manzikert, greatest of generals, who served two sultans of the fledgling Ottoman Empire, he whom the Turks exalted in the verse “Samhir, great Samhir, inexorable Samhir, mightiest of warriors beneath the ancient blue sky.”

Although undefeated and unswervingly faithful, Hassan’s pride was his single, unforgivable shortcoming. His heroic standing among the people, coupled with his lust for battle, earned him the mistrust of Murad, his second lord, who was not half the man his predecessor had been. This friction, fueled by the general’s incessant protests against the corruption for which the sultan’s reign became known, ultimately exploded into enmity — Hassan was branded a traitor, sentenced to death, and forced to stand before the empire he once protected for confession and eventual execution.

But the warrior did not die easily. Calling upon Allah to defend his innocence, Hassan met the sultan’s torturous trials. Stoned, subjected to single combat, even pitted against the fangs and talons of animals — all these tests and more he endured in the name of Murad’s “justice.” At length the ruler, who could no longer continue his persecution against a hero of the Turkish nation, condemned his once-enforcer as “no man, but a savage creature wearing flesh as does a man, lean and hungry as are the beasts of the wild for the blood of children and innocents.” With this final curse, Hassan al-Samhir was exiled, left without shelter or sustenance in the great erg, there to find his death.



Death found him first.

Virtually nothing is known of the fledgling's whereabouts or activities in those early nights. Some believe he simply wandered for a time, grappling with the uncertainties of his new existence and brethren; others point to Eastern accounts of a semi-mythical figure called the *Khayyim*, a war-born creature roaming the desert sands in search of the adversary who could end its unnatural existence. Still other sources maintain it was none other than Hassan, riding westward by night with the Tatar hordes, whose hand rose to crush his once-beloved homeland decades later.

Speculation aside, Cainite historians tell tales of an auspicious meeting immediately preceding the close of the 15th century between undead hand and unbroken will. It was there that Hassan al-Samhir pledged eternal fealty to an immortal calling himself Hardestadt of Ventrue, leader of men and monsters, a being whose words swayed nations — and bearer of an uncanny intellect, who knew words would not always be enough.

Thus was the Warlord of the Camarilla born.

Tonight, Karsh presides over a dedicated body of rapid-response teams from a decommissioned military fortress in a North American mountain range as guardian of Raphael de Corazon's dream. Although dismissed by allies and enemies alike as a dangerous, mindless juggernaut, he is cognizant of the fact that war must be fought on many fronts and strives to keep abreast of the tactics and technologies of this century. Unbeknownst to all but a select few, the Warlord has retaken more than one Sabbat-held city through covert political and paramilitary methods, rather than the brute force for which he is typically known; he is possessed of and equally proficient with a wide variety of weapons, ranging from traditional counter-guerrilla warfare to contained "industrial accidents," inner-city police death squads, and quarantines fronted by the Fort Collins Center for Disease Control.

Image: A towering mass of strength and sinew — a lion-maned colossus, broad-featured, dusky-skinned, crisscrossed from head to toe with the scars of a thousand battles.

Roleplaying Hints: You are brooding and silent, due to either the ennui of immortality or the sheer self-assurance cultivated through centuries of solitude. It suits your purposes to be perceived as simple; when you speak, however, your words are curt and carefully chosen. The stoic silence into which you retreat is interrupted only by the killing machine you let loose whenever you take the field. This bloodthirsty side, unconquered and uncontrolled, leads many to whisper that you are becoming that which you most despise.

Clan: Gangrel

Sire: Unknown — in his more loquacious moods, Karsh occasionally makes reference to Arabic legends concerning packs of ancient wolf-djinn hunting the wilderness of the Near East.

Nature: Survivor

Demeanor: Fanatic

Generation: 5th

Embrace: Early 13th century (judging from historical cues)

Apparent Age: indeterminate (perhaps a haggard, weathered 30)

Physical: Karsh swings his sword and enemies fall; persons who have touched him claim his skin has acquired the strength of diamonds.

Social: Charisma 6, Manipulation 5, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 7, Intelligence 6, Wits 7

Talents: Alertness 6, Athletics 5, Brawl 7, Dodge 6, Instruction 4, Interrogation 4, Intimidation 6, Leadership 6, Streetwise 4, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Animal Ken 4, Archery 4, Demolitions 3, Drive 3, Etiquette 2, Firearms 4, Meditation 3, Melee 8, Ride 5, Stealth 4, Survival 5

Knowledges: Black Hand Lore 4, Camarilla Lore 5, Expert Knowledge: Tactics 5, Investigation 4, Linguistics (a broad selection of languages both spoken and dead) 5, Medicine 3, Occult 4, Sabbat Lore 5

Disciplines: Animalism 4, Auspex 1, Celerity 7, Dominate 1, Fortitude 7, Potence 6, Presence 2, Protean 8

Backgrounds: Allies (Inner Circle) 8, Herd 4, Influence (Military) 4, Resources 5, Retainers 8, Status 7

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

Morality: Path of the Feral Heart 6

Derangements: Gluttony

Willpower: 9

AISLING STUBBRIDGE, HIGH REGENT OF THE CHANTRY OF THE FIVE BOROUGHES

Background: Aisling was born in 1890 in upstate New York to a banker and his wife. Her mother died when Aisling was two, and her father chose to let his daughter run wild like a hoyden with her brothers rather than endure his wife's meddling relations' attempts to raise her. During this long period of freedom, Aisling gravitated toward mysticism through her Catholic upbringing and studied whatever she believed would be necessary to learn more. She taught herself Latin and Greek to read occult texts from the church library (she persuaded her elder brother to borrow books for her). Aside from reading, she attended seances and corresponded with a number of occultists, many of whom had little idea they were communicating with a teenaged girl. When her mother's family finally got wind that Aisling was accepting an invitation into an "Enlightened Society" or somesuch, they put their collective foot down and ordered her to finishing school. Aisling instead took her trust fund and abandoned Victorian America for the decadence of London.

In turn-of-the-century London, Aisling inserted herself into the occult scene, and her remarkable scholarship attracted many eyes, including those of Aleister Crowley. Her brilliance did not go unnoticed by others; her sire-to-be,

Lucien de Maupassant, met her during a *séance salon*, and the two became close confidants. In 1910, Crowley, apparently embittered that a girl so many years his junior was outstripping him in the Hermetic mysteries and attracting far more attention by her scholarship, requested that Aisling become his next Scarlet Woman. In essence, it was a demand that she submit to rape. Lucien, already considering Aisling as potential progeny, took her away from London and Crowley's grasp, and on an extended tour of Europe and the Middle East to secretly test her fitness as a Tremere. When he was satisfied, he brought her to Vienna for the Embrace and to meet the rest of the clan.

For the next 30 years or so, the pair served as free agents, delivering messages between chantries, building chantry libraries and investigating on Inner Council orders. World War II separated them for long periods as Aisling tended the chantries in Nuremberg, Warsaw, Krakow and Dresden. Her friends in high places often could not decide what to do with her; on one hand, her questioning of the Tremere's role with the Nazi regime was intolerable to her superiors, but on the other, her work during air raids to preserve the treasures of embattled chantries was faultless.

In 1948, her sire and longtime companion abruptly went missing during an assignment supposedly given him by the Inner Council. According to certain upper-level gossips, it was Meerlinda who turned the young woman's talents to America, with hopes that it might distract her. Aisling's commentaries on the McCarthy hearings and the Age of Aquarius remain among the definitive studies on the periods, both in and out of clan. Certain that she would have felt or heard of Lucien's destruction, she continues to search for word of him even now.

Aisling's last city of residence was Atlanta, where she served the regent as his assistant before she was abruptly called to New York. She was field-promoted to her current position after someone spread her predecessor's ashes across Sheepshead Bay (see *A World of Darkness Second Edition*). As lieutenant, and by popular accord, she ascended to the Regency in November of 1996.

Aisling is eminently qualified to serve in New York for a number of reasons. Her intense study of the Tzimisce, time spent in Eastern Europe, and fluent command of Hungarian make her an excellent foil against the Fiends. Her years in Europe during WW II proved that she can handle herself under fire and that she is resourceful. She is young enough to be expendable to the upper echelons, but old enough to be taken seriously by the rank and file. Unlike most of her contemporaries, she does not mindlessly despise the Sabbat; she has a specific list of crimes that she holds against them and fights them for. She is well aware of the old saw that persons who hate their enemies without reason become like their enemies, and she watches herself carefully to avoid that path.

Recently, some of the higher ranks have begun to watch her with growing concern. She is one of the most dynamic



and popular regents, and she has a number of high-placed friends in and out of the clan. She has shown no qualms about deal-making with other Kindred for assistance, eschewing much of the traditional Tremere insularity. And so far, she has managed to avoid becoming completely blood bound to the Council (some fear that her early Embrace ties have seriously atrophied due to her long time as a free agent). Were she to win the war with the Sabbat, these tradition-minded Tremere fear she might be named lord, something they hope to prevent at any cost — perhaps even the war's outcome.

Image: Aisling has medium-to-dark brown shoulder-length hair, always pulled away from her face. Her deep-set eyes are a startling storm-gray hue. She has always taken pains to hide her more feminine aspects and prefers men's clothing tailored to accommodate the Kevlar vest she wears in the field; recently, though, a few of her apprentices have begun to encourage her toward a more Agent Scully-ish look. On evenings "out," she wears a flak jacket over her regular clothes. When studying, she wears round, antique magnifying spectacles. Her hands are nearly always gloved, and on her left ring finger, she wears an antique gold band engraved with the word "Faith."

Roleplaying Hints: Assume nothing. You have others you trust, but you trust them only so far. You wield an inquisitive mind that takes nothing for granted, even the "truth" given to you by your superiors. You work any task you set yourself until it is done to *your* satisfaction, by whatever means necessary. You take something from *every* task you have, be it information, an out-of-clan alliance or simply experience. You are well aware that you're being watched by others who fear your methods, and you're always ready with justification. Every barrier you encounter to your work is

either something to be hammered at or sneaked around, never a deterrent. Pursue any word about Lucien to its end.

Clan: Tremere

Sire: Lucien de Maupassant

Nature: Deviant

Demeanor: Traditionalist

Generation: 10th

Embrace: 1911

Apparent Age: mid-20s

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 3, Dodge 5, Empathy 2, Intimidation 2, Leadership 3, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Disguise 3, Drive 1, Etiquette 3, Firearms 3, Melee 2, Security 1, Stealth 3, Survival 1

Knowledges: Academics 4, Bureaucracy 2, Camarilla Lore 3, Clan Knowledge (Tremere) 3, Computer 1, History 3, Investigation 4, Law 1, Linguistics (Arabic, Cantonese, Dutch, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hungarian, Japanese, Latin, Mandarin, Portuguese, Romany, Sanskrit, Spanish, Yiddish) 5, Occult 5, Politics 2, Sabbat Lore 3, Science 2

Disciplines: Auspex 5, Celerity 2, Dominate 3, Fortitude 2, Obfuscate 2, Thaumaturgy 5

Thaumaturgical Paths: Path of Blood 5, Movement of the Mind 5, Lure of Flames 4, Elemental Mastery 3, Countermagic 2, Spirit Manipulation 2

Backgrounds: Allies 4, Contacts 2, Influence 3, Mentor 5, Resources 4, Status 2

Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 4, Courage 4

Morality: Humanity 7

Willpower: 9

Merits/ Flaws: Time Sense, Natural Linguist

HAROLD GOODSTON, PARIAH

Background: Harold was born in Benton City, Missouri in 1828. At the age of 15, he realized he was a werewolf and joined others of his kind on some monstrous mission in Chicago.

In 1860, while scouting an enemy's lair, Harold's pack encountered several vampires and battle ensued. His pack scattered after two fell in combat. Harold and three others were taken prisoner. When Harold awoke, he found himself bound by silver chains alongside three other survivors from his pack.

Their captor soon revealed his plans to Embrace the four werewolves. Harold watched as each of his packmates died. When the vampire came for him, he awaited a release that never arrived.

Harold Goodston became one of the Kindred.

Oliver Ligon, Harold's new master, observed and manipulated kine politics on behalf of Prince Maxwell. Goodston

learned his lessons from Oliver well, but he never forgot his true heritage — despite the fact that his continued existence betrayed it utterly.

Harold served his master faithfully for the next 11 years. He found that, in a twisted fashion, he enjoyed his new power. Money and vices flowed to him, and he could outfight Kindred who got in his way. He briefly attempted to return to his people but broke off that effort after two werewolves nearly destroyed him.

When Chicago burned on Devil's Night, the Ventrue Lodin seized the princedom from Maxwell. Lodin's agents destroyed Oliver, and none of Harold's efforts at revenge succeeded. Over the next two decades, Harold withdrew from Kindred society. He moved to the sewers, took the name "Pariah" and embarked on a private search for Golconda. Thereafter, he returned to the surface only when seeking lore to secure his salvation.

Pariah re-entered society in the mid-1990s in an effort to resolve the mutually catastrophic conflict between Chicago's werewolves and vampires. His information was crucial for several key Lupine victories, though they refused to accept him after the war wound down. They still saw him as a threat and offered him only the mercy of a quick death. A special pack formed to hunt him down immediately after the war.

Unfortunately for the pack, it was unprepared for the power of Pariah's rage melded with the ferocity of the vampiric Beast. No one was more surprised than Pariah, who regained his will only to find the bodies of three Lupines laying drained at his feet. He fled, seeking another haven deeper in the sewers, howling his mingled rage and sorrow to the uncaring night.

Ublo-Satha, Gargoyle servant to the Tremere, listened... and reported to the child-regent Nicolai. The elder Tremere, their curiosity aroused, assigned the Gargoyle to continue studying Pariah for weaknesses Nicolai might use as levers of control.

Pariah's self-imposed exile brought him no peace. His inner torment worsened under nightmares Nicolai induced with thaumaturgical rituals. As Nicolai intended, Pariah became convinced that the dreams flowed from his isolation.

Nicolai let Pariah make the first move. The elder's childlike appearance and protection-seeking manner completely deceived the outcast. Still, Pariah did not immediately commit himself to the elder, despite the urgings of his induced dreams.

For their second meeting, Nicolai arranged for local bravos to attack him while Pariah was nearby. The abomination — for so the night creatures called him — answered the "child's" cry for help and, at Nicolai's request, remained to talk after chasing the assailants away. The two conversed into the early hours of the morning.

Nicolai fooled Pariah into performing a few tasks for the Tremere over several months. In one instance, he used Ublo-

Satha to make it appear that minions of Nicolai's rivals attempted to kill him. Pariah willingly destroyed those minions with a savagery that frightened Nicolai.

Pariah assists Nicolai when he can, though he never fully understands the depths of the Tremere's deceit. He is happy to have a "friend" with whom he can confide. Despite long intervals between each encounter, these meetings are a great comfort to Pariah.

On occasion, Pariah attempts to spy on Lupines so he may vicariously experience his old society. He longs to rejoin them, but he is haunted by the memory of the werewolves he drained.

After such sojourns, Pariah desperately contemplates walking into the sun, but he has not yet been able to muster the will to follow through. His instinctive will to survive is at odds with his desire for destruction, and he has not yet reconciled the two.

Through the use of his magic, Nicolai has given Pariah two draughts of his blood. The third drink will come soon....

Image: Pariah's fur in wolf form is dingy white, scraggly and unkempt. It would be silvery were it clean. He has unusually large fangs and jet-black claws and his body is sleek and muscular. His human form is that of a pale, dirty bum wearing old clothes, a baseball cap, trenchcoat and combat boots.

Roleplaying Hints: Watch quietly from the shadows and never expose yourself. You show warmth to no one for fear that you may cause harm. Sometimes, you lose track of what you're doing because of the depression, but try to hide it. If someone attracts your attention, ignore him. You carry the world on your shoulders and have a dark, gloomy attitude. When you manage to pull yourself from the pit of despair, you walk with the posture and pride of bearing you once lived, and even your rags and filth cannot hide that. However, this only



makes your retreat into depression doubly crushing when it inevitably comes.

Clan: Ventrue

Sire: Oliver Ligon

Nature: Survivor

Demeanor: Deviant

Generation: 8th

Embrace: 1860

Apparent Age: early 30s

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Galliard

Tribe: Ronin (formerly Silver Fangs)

Physical: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 4, Brawl 5, Dodge 4, Primal-Urge 5, Streetwise 4

Skills: Animal Ken 3, Firearms 2, Melee 2, Repair 3, Stealth 3, Survival 2

Knowledges: Area Knowledge (Chicago) 4, City Secrets (Chicago) 3, Enigmas 4, Investigation 3, Kindred Lore 3, Medicine 4, Occult 4, Rituals 3, Sewer Lore 2

Disciplines: Animalism 1, Auspex 2, Fortitude 1, Obfuscate 4, Potence 2, Presence 3, Protean 5

Gifts: (Homid) Persuasion (1), Jam Technology (2), Disquiet (3), (Galliard) Mindspeak (1), Dreamspeak (2), (Silver Fangs) Sense Wyrms (1), Lambent Flame (1), Luna's Armor (2), Awe (2), Silver Claws (3), Wrath of Gaia (3). If you do not own **Werewolf: The Apocalypse**, simply add two extra dots of Auspex and Fortitude to simulate the effects of these Gifts. Additionally, give him Celerity to three dots to reflect Pariah's Lupine heritage.

Rites: Pariah knows several rituals that enable him to contact spirits for a variety of services. Due to his degenerate state, however, only demonic spirits respond. The effects of these rituals are up to individual Storytellers, although some effects allow him to track his enemies and conceal his haven from prying eyes. Use of these rituals destroys his spirit even further, however.

Backgrounds: Contacts 2, Herd 3, Past Life 4, Pure Breed 5, Resources 2

Rage: 5

Gnosis: 4

Willpower: 4

Notes: Several of Pariah's Traits appear in **Werewolf: The Apocalypse**, which goes into greater depth than the simple lists presented here. Additionally, Pariah uses the rules for abominations provided in the **Werewolf Players Guide Second Edition**.

Pariah is in a state of perpetual depression. Halve his dice pools, unless he spends Willpower to negate the penalty for a scene. He may not spend Willpower to gain automatic

successes. He may not spend blood points in the same turn he uses Gnosis or Rage.

Pariah's Gnosis must continue to drop as long as he neglects his Lupine heritage. As long as he associates with vampires, this decline is a given.

EL DIABLO VERDE

Background: The ways of the Jyhad are shrouded in subtlety, as cloaking and ephemeral as ancient Night itself. And yet, there is one arena in which the freakish denizens of the dark can flaunt their nature freely, in which Masquerades fall to tatters and the Delirium only exacerbates the onlookers' blood-mad frenzy. This is the circus of carnage known to World of Darkness sports aficionados as Extreme Wrestling Warfare. This barbaric spectacle, which is televised worldwide and garners enormous pay-per-view revenues, is wildly popular among mortal and Awakened beings alike. In EWW, the jaded fans are accustomed to crazed combat maneuvers and bizarre characters, so even the most monstrous of the night-breed is but another costumed legend, to be revered or reviled as the fans see fit.

Although the majority of EWW's competitors are human (if only nominally so), a fair number of supernaturals compete in the federation, both to hone their combat skills and to wallow in the luxury of indulging their powers in "public." The Pentex Corporation runs a training camp from which many "steroid"-twisted combatants emerge. EWW's current cruiserweight champion, *lucha* daredevil Huitzil Colibri, is whispered to be a jaguar-warrior of the elusive Bastet, while International Champion "Diamond" Duncan Dunsim's violent appetites and blood-red kilt inspire gruesome speculation from persons knowledgeable in the ways of the fae. The tag team division is dominated by two of New York's meanest, Assamite *antitribu* terror-twins Sucka T. and Farouk "Skorpio" Mustafa; these 23-time champs are collectively known as the 2Hot Nation of Harlem Ghetto Posse Gangsta Experience.

A formidable and motley crew, indeed. But the true lord and ruler of EWW — indeed, the mightiest combatant ever to lace up a pair of boots — is unquestionably the masked sensation, the Tijuana Terror, the Heavyweight Champion of the World, the Toughest S.O.B. in EWW, the Mexican Nightmare El Diablo Verde.

None can withstand the might of El Diablo Verde. His execution of the awe-inspiring 450° Corkscrew Diablocanrana™, a feat of athleticism seemingly impossible for a combatant his size, routinely brings the bloodthirsty crowd to its feet. His Chupacabra Helldriver™, while seemingly simple, is one of the most effective finishing maneuvers in the sport. His crippling Javelín de Infierno™, a *tope suicida*/ spinebuster combination, has sent mortals to the grave and weaker Kindred into agonized torpor. And when El Diablo Verde locks on the debilitating Calamar Gigante Clutch™... well,



whatcha gonna do when the Largest Arms in the World of Darkness® run wild on you?

Once, El Diablo Verde was merely mortal, though he was a mighty *luchador* even then. He won the Mexican Heavyweight title in his rookie year, at the age of 18, and retained his mask through an unprecedented 50 mask-versus-mask bouts. Alas, El Diablo Verde's meteoric rise to fame attracted the notice of the dark. Seeking a pawn in their games, a Sabbat pack captured the *luchador*, gave him the Embrace and sought to administer the Creation Rites. But even death could not still *el corazon fuerza* of El Diablo Verde! Diablo's kidnappers ran afoul of another group of undead — whether a Camarilla coterie or a rival pack, Diablo neither knows, nor cares, to this night.

In any event, the momentary confusion provided the break El Diablo Verde needed. Grasping the shovel with which his assailants had intended to bury him, El Diablo Verde made his stand in that benighted graveyard. And what a stand! *Vampiros* fell beneath his mighty blows like wheat before the thresher's flail! Heads spun from torsos, spines were wrenched bodily from their housings, and many a monster shrieked its last as El Diablo Verde body-slammed it back to Hell! Finally, toward dawn, El Diablo Verde stood alone amid a charnel house of ashes and twisted bodies. Strangely tired, El Diablo Verde lay down in the open grave that had been intended for him and used his mighty *brazos* to wrench a stone slab over the opening. Then, the victor slept the sleep of champions.

Upon awakening, El Diablo Verde quickly realized that he could never unmask in public again. But his sadness was tempered by the unholy strength that flowed through his limbs. He knew the legends of the people, and he realized what he was and what he would need to do. No, he could not

stay here. He would flee to *el norte*, make a name for himself in the great EWW, and should that not work out, well...

But it would work. Was he not mightiest among men, and now mightiest among the Damned as well? Yes... pondering, he realized that many of the EWW combatants' "gimmicks" must indeed be real! These mockeries openly cavorted and skirmished before the mortal throngs, hiding their evil beneath the thinnest of shrouds, then preying on the fans who supported them! Well, it was time for *venganza* — they who sought to drag El Diablo Verde into the world of the dead would find themselves counted out for eternity!

And so a legend was born. A rabid throng of fans — Los Hijos del Diablo, who wear replica masks, T-shirts and whatever the Diablo Verde franchise cranks out this week — follows El Diablo Verde from arena to arena, rabidly cheering him on while hurling epithets and trash at wrestlers unfortunate enough to be his opponents. Thus far, Los Hijos have little reason to be disappointed — El Diablo Verde is the EWW's dominant heavyweight, with only a smattering of losses and the title wrapped securely around his undead washboard waist.

Now, El Diablo Verde stands alone against those denizens of the dark that prey on the weak and helpless. Come one, come all. El Diablo Verde fears no one! Who's next? *Who's next?!?!?!?*

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Image: Gaze upon the magnificence of El Diablo Verde! *¿Quien es mas macho?* He is a figure to make *chicas* swoon and *caballeros* gnash their teeth in impotent envy! Watch as he soars from the top turnbuckle to descend like *la aguilá* upon his hapless opponent! Cringe as his 25-inch biceps immobilize his foe, like *la anaconda* crushing an unwary peccary! But take heart, for though *la mascara verde* is a thing of terror, only *nudos*, villains and other miscreants need fear the wrath of El Diablo Verde!

Roleplaying Hints: You are a mighty champion and a hero to *La Raza*. As such, the craven ways of your new "people" mean little to you. Camarilla, Sabbath — what are these petty struggles beside the glory of conquest in the squared circle? Were there any *cojones* among the Damned, the masters of the Jyhad would settle their differences like men, in a barbed-wire battle royal death match, instead of cowering in their crypts like *niñitas*! As a nominal subject of the Camarilla, you make the barest show of observing the Traditions when you pass into the sect's demenses — but the prince who seeks to hinder you, or who feeds on Los Hijos del Diablo, will find himself on the receiving end of a Helldrivver before he can take the 10-count DQ, *comprende?*

Clan: Nosferatu

Sire: El Tiburón

Nature: Competitor

ARRIBA LA RAZA!

Forgive us.

We had to.

Demeanor: Gallant

Generation: 13th

Embrace: 1993

Apparent Age: early 20s, when distinguishable

Physical: Strength 5, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 5, Manipulation 2, Appearance 0 (3 in mask)

Mental: Perception 2, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Talents: Alertness 1, Athletics 5, Brawl 5, Dodge 4, Expression 2, Intimidation 5, Leadership 4, Streetwise 2

Skills: Drive 1, Melee 4, Performance (getting pops) 4, Stealth 1

Knowledges: Finance 1, Linguistics (English) 1, Medicine 1, Occult 1, Politics 1, Wrestling Lore 4

Disciplines: Celerity 5, Fortitude 5, Potence 5, Presence 3

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Fame 4, Herd 4, Retainers 5, Resources 5, Status 1

Virtues: Conscience 4, Self-Control 2, Courage 5

Morality: Humanity 6

Willpower: 10

CALVIN CLAVIER, GANGREL ENFORCER ON THE WEST COAST

Background: If everyone could just get along, nobody'd have to get hurt. Calvin lived that motto while growing up and going through school in Los Angeles. He avoided conflict by lying low and refraining from activism. Of course, that didn't prevent Calvin from getting drafted into the armed forces when the conflict in Vietnam escalated. Rammed through infantry training, he left for the hellish jungles in 1969.

Calvin had never wanted to be a military man; he quickly left the service after his tour of duty ended. Back home, in a country that reviled him for his unwilling participation in the warfare, Calvin did what he'd always done: he sunk into obscurity and tried to blend into society again. He took a job with the local police department as a detective. Although he was unexceptional as an investigator, he survived and prospered. His work on the LAPD, in the home he'd returned to, gave him some satisfaction; he helped to solve problems and prevent conflicts.

Tracking down what he thought was a cult, Calvin found a small band of white supremacists and neo-nazis in a fortified retreat outside Los Angeles. His investigation went sour when he arrived at their headquarters; his partner was shot and he was pinned down by gunfire while trying to enter the building. Crawling from cover point to cover point, Calvin managed to shoot three assailants and disarm another one in close combat.

Then he met the monster who commanded the group. Gunnar, an aged Scandinavian Gangrel, used the trappings of Norse myth to lead the band of dull-witted punks into believing he was a reincarnated Aryan god. Gunnar had no



greater political or hate-crime agenda; he merely sought blood. Impressed by the policeman's careful dispatching of his warband, the Gangrel Embraced the struggling and horrified Calvin, then disappeared into the night to find a new coven of gullible mortals.

Abandoned, as with many Gangrel, Calvin had to learn the difficult lessons of vampiric survival on his own. He tore into the bodies of his attackers, drained them of blood, then staggered away from the site and tried to comprehend what he had become. During the day, he sought shelter in an abandoned railroad car where he slowly realized the full extent of his changes. Thinking himself perhaps unique, he traveled eastward to find some semblance of order in his new unlife.

After Calvin reached Tennessee in 1986, he was noticed by another roving Gangrel. Roughly initiated at last into his clan and into vampiric society, he discovered the Camarilla and learned more of his limitations and capabilities. The idea of a nation of hidden vampires, negotiating their disputes and hiding from prying eyes, meshed well with his own philosophies of existence, and he quickly gained a reputation as a staunch supporter of the Masquerade. His diplomatic tendencies, combined with his formidable combat training and his Gangrel predilection for traveling, made him a desirable envoy and enforcer.

With continued Sabbat pressure against the Camarilla on the East Coast, Calvin was once again drafted into service, this time in a more delicate capacity. Although the anarchy free state had long been a "dumping ground" for politically volatile Kindred, it remained a buffer between parts of the Camarilla and the Sabbat. It also boasted several prosperous cities and some impressively determined Cainites. Calvin and a half-dozen other agents were dispatched to the West Coast, there to keep an eye on the anarchs, uphold the

Masquerade and make sure that the free state did not become more of a problem for the Camarilla.

Diplomacy, with the aid of Calvin's more silver-tongued coterie companions, kept many of the anarchs quiescent; enforcement served to discipline the most rash and bellicose. For a full decade, Calvin roamed the coastline, unappreciated by a Camarilla unwilling to admit to the political expedience of the free state. The seizure of San Diego by Tara provided Calvin with a stable base of operations and new recruits to replace his fallen comrades. Even the wholesale exodus of the Gangrel from the Camarilla did not deter him; Calvin was too dedicated to his vision of the Camarilla's purpose and to the enforcement of its ideals to be compromised. He needed help, though — many anarchy gangs reported run-ins with well-informed hunters or even strange vampires with unknown powers. Other anarchs have disappeared completely. Calvin himself remained unsure of the cause until he met one of these "Cathayans," and despite his best peaceful intentions, he barely survived the fight — and was still vomiting gouts of black, useless vitae for two nights afterward. A desperate cry for assistance has gone unnoticed by a Camarilla reeling from Sabbat strikes on the East Coast. Now, Calvin is on his own, with only the assistance of a small group of neonates that is slowly being picked apart and pulled down by the Asian vampires' onslaught.

Image: Just over six feet tall and gangly, Calvin has surprising strength for his lean frame. His hair is dark and cut short; his brown eyes constantly flit from side to side. Calvin has a tendency to slouch, concealing his true height and build. He typically dresses in heavy shoes, baggy pants and sturdy button-up shirts — almost like a walking L.L. Bean catalog of used clothing. He has long, catlike whiskers and callused pads on the balls of his hands and feet, the results of too many skirmishes lost to the Beast.

Roleplaying Hints: You dislike fighting and discord. Despite your peaceful nature, though, you are terrifying in a conflict. You are normally soft-spoken and not particularly forceful or charismatic; you leave that to others. Instead, you are an idealist, one who motivates others by example. You are confused and frustrated by the Camarilla's unwillingness to send aid against the Cathayans — and by the Cathayans' unremitting hostility. When something threatens you or your coterie, you act quickly and decisively. At other times, you are quiet, unassuming and gentle. You are beginning to realize that the cover-up of the Antediluvians wasn't the Camarilla's only big lie, though, and doubt is beginning to eat up your concern for duty. Still, you are committed to peaceful solutions, and you want to do your best to ensure that everyone can get along peaceably even in anarchy territory. If a few of the most outspoken have to go — well, it's all for the best, really.

Clan: Gangrel

Sire: Gunnar

Nature: Visionary

Demeanor: Autist
Generation: 11th
Embrace: 1977
Apparent Age: mid-20s
Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3
Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 1, Appearance 2
Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3
Talents: Athletics 4, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Expression 4, Intimidation 2, Leadership 1, Streetwise 2
Skills: Animal Ken 2, Firearms 3, Melee 2, Security 2, Stealth 4, Survival 3
Knowledges: Academics 1, Investigation 3, Law 2, Linguistics (Vietnamese) 1, Occult 1, Politics 1
Disciplines: Animalism 1, Celerity 1, Fortitude 2, Protean 2
Backgrounds: Allies 2, Resources 2, Status 2
Virtues: Conscience 4, Self-Control 3, Courage 4
Morality: Humanity 6
Willpower: 5

CÉSAR HOLFELD, CHILD OF THE FINAL NIGHTS

Background: As the second of three brothers, César had a hard time maintaining the attention of his parents. His older brother broke all the rules and received all of their ire. His younger brother got the grades and received all of their praise. César had neither to offer his family. With no criminal record and average grades, he was the invisible middle son.

César sought companionship with his schoolmates, but they usually bored him. Nothing they liked — sports, academics, video games, even girls — seemed to hold much interest for him. Most of his peers considered him “odd” at the least, when they considered him at all. Once again, César found himself to be invisible in a sea of people.

High school led to college, but little changed for César Holfield. His studies bored him more than before, perhaps, and his attendance showed his lack of interest. César slept late, missed classes, failed tests, and none of it really mattered much to him. No one really seemed to notice at home. It took his parents six months to discover he had dropped out of school altogether.

At least life on the street seemed to hold some appeal for César. The act of surviving kept him busy, but entry-level accounting put him to sleep. César abandoned his entire life. He left a message on his parent’s answering machine, explaining that he would be “out for a little while.”

Deep in thought about nothing and looking for someone to commiserate with, César struck up a conversation with a young woman. Her name was Jocelyn, and she would talk to him as long as he was buying. With what little money he had remaining, César bought her a drink and they talked for a little while. Eventually, she invited him to her place, a small apartment near the bar. Once there, she revealed her true motives, began kissing his neck — what a strange birthmark, she said — and ran her fingers through his hair. She wanted

more cash if he wanted to spend some “quality time” with her. He had nothing left to give, so she promptly ushered him into the hall outside.

Penniless and miserable, César returned to the park he had come to think of as a home. He watched the leaves scatter along the sidewalk and tried to stay warm. When a shadow passed over him, he thought the end had finally come in the form of a mugger or psycho. A fierce pain struck his neck, and he felt his life drain away only to be replaced by new life down his throat. As suddenly as it had begun, the attack was over and César once again simply shivered in the dark and watched the leaves scatter on the wind.

The next morning César sought shelter in a nearby warehouse. He could no longer stand the rays of the sun. His appetite for food had been replaced by a thirst for blood, but with surprisingly little passion. César realized the attack had changed him into a vampire, and immortality held as little appeal to César as mortality once had.

Another major change came over César that winter night. For the first time, it seemed, his peer group could pick him out of the crowd. Jocelyn found him again the following week, only this time her reaction was very different. She was stunned to see what had become of him. She explained that she’d planned to feeding from him but felt sorry for him in the end. Then she explained to him some of the basic rules and details of vampiric society.

Jocelyn thought she had made a friend in César, but the following night he disappeared. She began searching for him with little more than a first name and a physical description — his most distinguishing characteristic being a crescent-moon-shaped birthmark at the nape of his neck. No one, of course, had seen him. She continued her search, eventually contacting other Kindred and again passing on his description.



The Tremere have long studied the prophecies of Caine held within the pages of the *Book of Nod*. When word got to them of a vampire bearing a crescent-moon-shaped birthmark, their collective hearts nearly started working again. Certain passages speak of such a birthmark portending disaster in relation to Gehenna. Without hesitation, the Inner Circle was notified and every conclave received a warning to search for a vampire with this mark.

César remains oblivious to the entire stir he has caused. He tries to avoid other vampires, not so much preferring his own company as shunning anyone else's. He finds most "Kindred" to be anything but. Their endless plots and secret agendas are all just too convoluted and a bit pointless for his taste. As such, he has avoided the Tremere dragnet for the time being. César simply continues to wander from city to city, in search of a bit of conversation here and vitae there.

Image: César stands with his shoulders despondently slumped. His tattered brown trenchcoat hangs limply over his skinny frame. Unshaven and unkempt, he exists on the streets, his natural good looks and boyish smile obscured. In his rare social moments, César is always distant and often makes obscure references.

Roleplaying Hints: Immortal unlife? Can it get any worse, really? You could get stuck in a room full of Toreador and Venture discussing clan politics or some similar nonsense, but there's not much chance of your being invited to one of those meetings anytime soon. There must be something more than just waking, drinking and sleeping, doesn't there? For the love of God, *doesn't there?* If there isn't....

Clan: Caitiff

Sire: Unknown

Nature: Loner

Demeanor: Curmudgeon

Generation: 15th

Embrace: 1996

Apparent Age: late teens

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Dodge 2, Empathy 2, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Drive 1, Etiquette 2, Performance 1, Stealth 4, Survival 3

Knowledges: Academics 2, Computer 1, Medicine 1, Politics 2, Science 2

Disciplines: Auspex 1, Obsfuscate 2

Backgrounds: Contacts 1

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

Morality: Humanity 7

Willpower: 3

KYOKO SHINSEGAWA, THE SCOURGE

Background: One of the *gaijin* took an interest in Kyoko from the moment he saw her, and it proved her ultimate damnation.

A visiting envoy to the Bishamon *uji*, Friedrich Kreizer represented Clan Tremere in a doomed attempt to establish a chantry in Kyoto, Japan. For decades, the Warlocks had held a fascination with the *feng shui* magic possessed by the geomancers of the Kuei-jin. Claiming to be an expert on "matters of the cultures Oriental," Kreizer negotiated a diplomatic commission with the mysterious Kindred of the East.

As truth revealed, however, Kreizer had little knowledge of the ways of the Kuei-jin. His true intentions remain a mystery — was he ignorant and overconfident, or did he simply seek an escape from the intrigues of Vienna? Whatever the case, Kreizer met young Kyoko at a traveler's hostel in a Japanese fishing village shortly after he arrived in Kyoto. Her beauty, exotic as it was to the traveling European, captivated him, and the last pages of his journals suggest that she ignited "mortal passions long unknown to [his] dead heart."

Kreizer's ignorance of Kuei-jin custom led to his inevitable demise, and a detachment of assassins attacked him before he had a chance to make a disastrous introduction. As he staggered back to the hostel from the fishing pier where his assailants had done their deed, he fought off the ravages of hunger frenzy just long enough...

...to lose control at the sight of Kyoko putting out his evening meal. She thought it strange that this pale-skinned guest never ate his rice and prawns, but she brought them each night as was her duty. On that last fateful night, however, the guest lurched into his room, spattered in blood with tatters of flesh dangling from his body, and fell upon her.

Kyoko felt her vision dim and her extremities grow cold as the monster tore open her body and gorged himself on her hot blood. She fought back desperately, but the monster was too strong for her even its weakened state. In one final, willful act, however, she managed to drive a wooden spoon through the creature's heart before blacking out.

Kyoko awoke minutes later to the sound of her father screaming. She found her face covered with her own blood and that of the creature that lay paralyzed on the straw tick beside her. With a speed fueled by terror, Kyoko fetched her father's grain flail from the stockroom and struck the creature's head from its body, whereupon the demon crumbled to greasy ash.

Defiled by the monster, Kyoko fled into the night, leaving behind every shred of safety and security she had known. She had heard of the Demon People before, though, and she had learned from an itinerant sorcerer how to contact them. She walked into the forest, knelt by the river and sang, scattering a handful of spices on the water's surface.

Before long, the Scaled Monk joined her by the riverbank and told her what she had become.

"You are now the daughter of the Devil," he told her. "You will bring only misfortune with you and leave only tragedy in your wake."

"But what can I do, Scaled Monk?" Kyoko cried. "Shall I end this new life?"

"No," the monk replied. "That is not your choice to make. What you must do, flower of the blood-waters, is travel to the lands of the demons who made you. Whether to the west or the east, you must flee, and while there, slake your thirst on the life of the devil-kings."

And so Kyoko fled, booking midnight passage on a ship headed to San Francisco with money stolen from the village's coffers.

Since arriving on the shores of America, Kyoko has learned English and German (which she recognized from the monster's private journal), and she has aligned herself with a small cabal of Tremere (knowledge of which she also gleaned from Kreizer's diary). She can barely bring herself to practice the corrupt magic of the westerners, however, and she has chosen a route in line with the Scaled Monk's words instead: Kyoko has become the Scourge of San Francisco, under appointment by Prince Vannevar Thomas.

Kyoko knows that she works for the same devils who made her, yet she fulfills her destiny in the only way she can — by destroying those weak enough to fall before her sword and flail. A recent influx of Asian Kuei-jin has set her longing for the past that was so brutally taken from her, but she knows the Demon People of her old home would not hesitate to strike her down. And so, Kyoko faces a nightly unlife of struggle; she has become the rock upon which petty anarchists and thin-blooded Kindred alike break themselves in their flight from the Kuei-jin in the south.

Image: Kyoko fits whatever part she is required to play to get close to her intended victim. By no means a master of disguise, she relies on her anonymity and the ignorance of her



victim to enable her to play her new role. On the rare occasion when she socializes in her true identity, she displays a distinct lack of personal initiative. Her clothing and hairstyles match the latest covers of fashion magazines with no individual modification.

Roleplaying Hints: You are efficient and single-minded when "on the job," dedicated to the pursuit of your quarry. In your personal time, however, you are shiftless and scared — the Embrace forever froze you in the latter stages of your youth, and you are still a young girl in many ways. You allow no one to see this vulnerability, however, as to do so would allow them power over you. Instead, your public manner becomes more and more brusque as you force the killer in you (the side that protects you and validates your existence) to rise to prominence. After the salons and prowls, though, you regress more and more each night.

Clan: Tremere

Sire: Friedrich Kreizer

Nature: Sadist/ Child

Demeanor: Traditionalist

Generation: 10th

Embrace: 1897

Apparent Age: late teens

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Interrogation 2, Intimidation 3, Streetwise 3, Style 2

Skills: Animal Ken 2, Drive 2, Etiquette 1, Firearms 1, Melee 4, Security 2, Stealth 3, Survival 2, Vamp 1

Knowledges: Academics 1, Computer 1, Investigation 3, Linguistics 2 (English, German), Occult 1

Disciplines: Auspex 2, Celerity 2, Dominate 1, Fortitude 2, Thaumaturgy 1

Thaumaturgical Paths: Path of Blood 1

Backgrounds: Contacts 2, Resources 3, Status 2

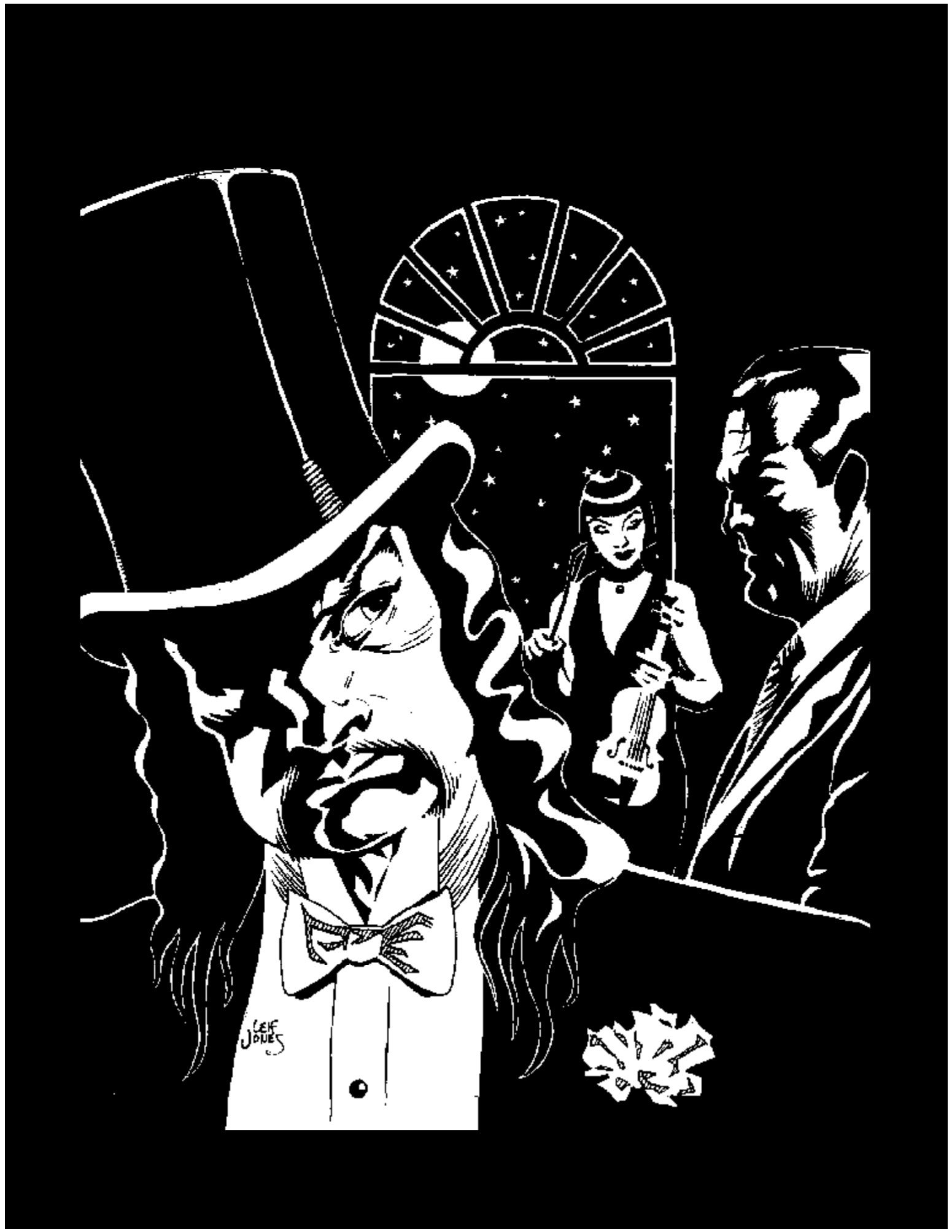
Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 3, Courage 3

Morality: Humanity 4

Derangements: Multiple personalities (resulting in split Nature)

Willpower: 4







CHAPTER THREE: INDEPENDENTS AND INCONNU

The night does not necessarily belong to either of the two major sects of vampires. Indeed, in these desperate, modern nights many vampires choose to eschew the petty politics of sects and make their own destinies. As many elders have said, little matters besides the Blood itself; everything else is affectation.

The wise vampire, however, harbors no misconception about the Kindred. Each vampire is a predator and monster above all else. Even ones who ally themselves with sects need nourishment. Why waste the nights with lesser concerns, reason the independents? Why serve the agendas of others? As the Final Nights fall upon the vampires — as ever more prophecies reveal themselves and point toward Gehenna — many wonder exactly what role these unaligned Kindred may play and whose will they serve.

And so the Jihad continues ever onward.

BRUNHILDE, LEADER OF THE VALKYRIES

Background: Brunhilde's mortal life is little more than a fragment of a memory now. She never knew her sire but remembers those early nights after her Embrace as she roamed the wilderness in search of sustenance. Eventually, she found others of her kind, and the fierce Gangrel taught her about what she had become. The group of female Gangrel she found believed there were Valkyries, the warrior-women of Norse legend. They saw themselves as the unliving extension of the Nordic myths, and they took it upon themselves to act accordingly. Brunhilde saw herself as a legend reborn.

Brunhilde spent several centuries fulfilling her self-appointed station. The Valkyries swept down onto battlefields

to decide the fates of brave warriors. Believing themselves guided by the will of Odin, they sent the valiant to Valhalla by the score. The Valkyries kept a relative peace with the other Gangrel who existed among the Viking warriors, and for many years no force in Europe could stop the ravaging hordes.

The coming of Christianity brought great change. Ventrue and Toreador lords from England and Germany eventually conquered the Vikings. While the other Gangrel



adapted, the Valkyries fought back. Striking from their forest havens, the Valkyries fought to keep the Scandinavian countries wild and barbaric. The Ventrue, Toreador, and even the Brujah finally hunted them down one by one. Valkyries who did not meet Final Death hid or fell into deep torpor.

Brunhilde voluntarily went into such a torpor after 200 years on the run, only to be roused by the bloodshed of World War I. Whereas many of Europe's Kindred were engaged in the war, she set about to find the Valkyries who remained. She regrouped the handful of Valkyries left under her leadership, and again set about retaking the land that was once theirs. They saw the culture and civility of the modern world as an affront to their beliefs. Brunhilde longed for the nights of bloodshed and paganism.

In the decades since World War II, anarch activity in the Scandinavian countries has increased dramatically. The Kindred leadership of the region denies any problems but is, in reality, complacent and ineffectual. Brunhilde and her Valkyries encouraged the anarch unrest at every turn. She saw the anarchs as a means to help her topple the Ventrue and Toreador who had invaded her land centuries ago.

Brunhilde apparently won't settle with merely usurping the Kindred of Scandinavia. The sketchy description of the unknown assassin who took the life of Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme in 1986 could easily fit the implacable Gangrel. If she was the assassin, it is unknown what she might have gained from such a move, except unnerving the Kindred of the region. Secretly, the princes of the Scandinavian countries are worried, and for good reason. Brunhilde, and the Valkyries, are not going to stop until Scandinavia is the harsh and barbaric land they remember.

Image: Brunhilde is a tall, slender Nordic woman with an athletic build, blond hair, pale skin and ice-blue eyes. She is coldly beautiful in a feral way. As with many Gangrel of her age, she has acquired several animalistic features. The shape of her eyes, her permanently clawlike fingernails and her light covering of pale fur make her resemble the wolves native to the region. She generally dresses in punk attire, with ripped jeans and a leather jacket.

Roleplaying Hints: You believe that you are a legend incarnate. You see yourself as fulfilling the will of Odin. The thin-skinned Ventrue have taken over your country and turned the once-fierce Nordic warriors into mortal cattle. The Valkyries were decimated because they did not see the coming threats. You and your new followers, however, will not fall victim to a lack of foresight again. You do not try to hide your rage at what has become of your beloved region, and you fight back at all costs to restore its lost savagery.

Clan: Gangrel

Sire: Unknown

Nature: Competitor

Demeanor: Fanatic

Generation: 6th

Embrace: 150 B.C.

Apparent Age: late 20s

Physical: Strength 6, Dexterity 7, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 5, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 5, Brawl 7, Intimidation 4, Leadership 5

Skills: Animal Ken 4, Drive 4, Firearms 2, Melee 6, Ride 4, Stealth 2, Survival 4

Knowledges: Linguistics (German, English) 2, Medicine 2, Occult 3, Politics 2

Disciplines: Animalism 4, Celerity 3, Fortitude 4, Potence 2, Presence 4, Protean 5

Backgrounds: Fame 1, Retainers 5

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

Morality: Humanity 3

Derangements: Gluttony, Megalomania, Paranoia

Willpower: 9

FATIMA AL-FAQADI, THE LAND OF VENGUANCE

Background: Fatima al-Faqadi was born into a family of devoted Almohad Moorish warriors. When the barbaric Christians invaded her homeland, she struck back any way she could. First, she assassinated drunken knights in the guise of a young camp girl. Later, as the First Crusade drew to a close, she fought openly alongside the defenders of Allah.

Her passion and skill drew the attention of the Assamites. After much debate, the clan agreed to break its ages-old precept of not Embracing women and brought her to Alamut. There, she trained to become the ultimate assassin.

A devout Muslim, she fought against the invaders in the subsequent Crusades. Eventually, she helped regain her people's holy lands. It was upon those battlefields she met the vampire who would influence much of her destiny: the Lasombra Lucita. Fatima and Lucita fought a night-long battle that left them both severely wounded and huddling together in a shallow cave to avoid the coming dawn. Out of respect for the only worthy opponent she had ever faced, Fatima spared Lucita as a matter of honor. The two became friends and eventually lovers.

As the Crusades came to a close, Lucita returned to Europe. Through the years, the Assamite's goals have conflicted with the Lasombra's, and Fatima and Lucita have fought on both the same and opposite sides of various conflicts. They have also worked together, namely when the Lasombra set about destroying their own elders in the Anarch Revolt. Their relationship has become a torrid love/hate affair that always stops short of sending them both to Final Death. Fatima has appeared from nowhere just in time to save Lucita on several occasions.



The Assamite elders once gave Fatima a contract for the assassination of Lucita. Torn by mixed loyalties, she vowed to fulfill her duty to her clan. Fatima leaked news of the contract to Lucita through various mortal agents, however; when Fatima showed up, Lucita was ready and sent the Assamite into torpor. Upon awakening, she reported her failure to Alamut. It is the only contract Fatima has ever failed to complete.

Throughout the centuries, Fatima has become one of the Assamites' star operatives. She has killed numerous elders, troublemakers and even entire Sabbat packs.

Fatima is fanatical in her support of the Assamite cause. She goes to any lengths to fulfill a contract or impress a clan elder, and her work has not gone unnoticed. After the lifting of the clan's curse, Fatima has taken every opportunity to commit diablerie. Her power has increased greatly, and she now stands as one of the Assamites' most powerful members. Her challenges of her clanmates suggest that she wants to become the clan's first female caliph, which the conservative Assassins are unlikely to permit.

Image: With her lush form and large, almond-shaped eyes, Fatima is the definition of beauty. A graceful five feet, six inches in height, she possesses a lean, muscular build and the dusky complexion ubiquitous among her clan. She adapts her looks and clothing as required by the current contract she is pursuing. When left to her own devices, she dresses in traditional Arab garb and carries an ancient damascene scimitar.

Roleplaying Hints: The world sees you as a heartless killer; make the most of it. Change your demeanor to fit the current situation, and to get close to your victim. Inside, you are a deeply obsessive creature. Your love for Lucita, your Muslim faith and your belief in your clan sometimes vie for

your loyalties and attentions. Inner turmoil drives you, but you use it as a fuel instead of letting it paralyze you. Always remember that the goals of the Assamite clan are ultimately the most important and must be accomplished at all costs.

Clan: Assamite

Sire: Thetmes

Nature: Fanatic

Demeanor: Loner

Generation: 6th

Embrace: 1102

Apparent Age: mid-20s

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 5, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 4

Talents: Acrobatics 3, Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 5, Dodge 3, Leadership 1, Masquerade 3, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Drive 1, Etiquette 2, Firearms 4, Melee 5, Performance 3, Repair 1, Ride 2, Security 3, Stealth 4, Survival 3, Vamp 3

Knowledges: Academics 3, Camarilla Lore 2, Clan Knowledge (Assamite) 3, Investigation 3, Linguistics (a plethora) 5, Medicine 3, Occult 2, Politics 2, Sabbat Lore 3, Science 1

Disciplines: Auspex 1, Celerity 4, Fortitude 2, Obfuscate 4, Potence 3, Quietus 5

Backgrounds: Alternate Identity 3, Contacts 4, Resources 4, Status 2

Virtues: Conviction 4, Self-Control 2, Courage 5

Morality: Path of Blood 7

Willpower: 6

MARCIANA GIOVANNI, INVESTIGATOR TO THE CAMARILLA

Background: Marciana is commonly perceived as the one Giovanni who has crossed the lines of her clan's famed neutrality and decided to actively support certain Camarilla efforts. Her knowledge of Necromancy and excellent investigatory and forensic medicine skills make her an invaluable free agent. Stroking her cat, she glides into a room, slides the facts into place and names the culprit of a crime. Her efficiency is only increased by the fact that she can speak with deceased victims.

Marciana enjoyed all the privileges of wealth as a girl born into one of the wealthiest families in Venice. She entered the Venetian social whirl without giving a second thought to the strange things that happened in her family and home, including the occasional visits by the mysterious figures referred to as "uncles." Her illusions were shattered when, on her 19th birthday, her father took her to the family mausoleum. Waiting there for her were seven robed and hooded figures. The stone doors of the crypt closed behind her. When they opened again, the flighty girl was gone and a serious woman emerged. Constantly tested and trained, she

was immersed in the family business to see if she might be worthy of the curse of immortality.

The beautiful, intense woman who had escaped her studies by dancing in the plazas quickly put frivolous pursuits behind her as she delved into the dark secrets of the dead and the darker secrets of international finance with equal devotion. Happy with her progress, her undead patrons decided that she would be given the kiss of undeath.

Marciana's destiny as just another neonate within the ranks of the Giovanni changed when circumstances revealed her hidden talents. On a visit to see a contact involved in the heroin trade, she arrived to find him dead in his office. Scrawled on the wall in the man's own blood was a letter "G" circled, with a slash across it. The clan's upper echelons gave the job of investigating the crime to Marciana. Using her skills in Necromancy, she called the man's spirit from the beyond and, with its help, discovered the identity of the murderer, a rogue Toreador competitor in the drug trade.

Using her own natural talent at investigation, Marciana tracked the Kindred to his lair and arranged for a few members of the family to pay the hapless Cainite a visit. Her eyes glittered in the darkness as she watched the vengeful Giovanni descend upon the foolish Toreador and destroy him.

After this incident, Marciana's superiors realized that she might be very useful as an investigator. Encouraged to train in forensic medicine, investigation and law, her vampiric abilities allowed these skills to develop rapidly. Soon, the Giovanni offered her services to the Camarilla as an investigator for hire.

Marciana's abilities to speak with the dead, coupled with her razor sharp investigative mind, have produced results in investigations that stymied even the powerful justicars and archons. Her reputation is such that even the most exalted within the Camarilla come to her. When Alastor Cambridge

was killed, his sire went directly to Marciana to uncover the culprit.

Marciana would be higher on the Sabbat hit list, but she has managed to avoid the limelight. Vampires who do know of her understand that she is the best investigator within the sphere of the undead.

Marciana does not charge for her services, but in the time-honored tradition of the Giovanni clan simply requests that, at a future date, her employer grant her a favor. Such favors vary in scope depending on the complexity or difficulty of the case. Through her services, Marciana has built a web of contacts and resources that rival ones of any other active Kindred. Marciana asks her clients to keep her requests secret as a part of her fee; thus, the Camarilla is unaware of the extent of her network. If the Inner Council were ever to realize that each of its members owes Marciana a boon, and that at any time she could call in these favors simultaneously, it might see cause to take action and remove her. Marciana's network of favors reaches from these heights to neonate coteries in various cities, vampires whom she sometimes uses to do legwork and other minor tasks.

Marciana herself is intensely loyal to her family and its cause, but to reassure her clients, she claims no affiliation with it. This ploy has been so successful that many Kindred believe she is hiding from her family, and they keep her secrets to prevent her destruction by the Giovanni and the loss of a valuable resource.

Image: Marciana has unremarkable looks for a woman in her 40s, with graying hair tied in a bun and a pair of cosmetic glasses perched on an aquiline nose. She dresses in elegantly cut Italian wool and silk business suits, and she often wears a decorative brooch. She always has a cat with her. Many people have noticed that it is always a different cat, changing every night. No one is quite certain what happens to these animals, though Marciana always seems to treat them with affection.

Roleplaying Hints: You affect a demeanor like a gentle aunt, very genial and kind, but there is definitely a steel fist inside your velvet glove. When working on a case, you become a paragon of single-minded obsession, but you cover it up with a genteel surface.

Clan: Giovanni

Sire: Almodo Giovanni

Nature: Conniver

Demeanor: Caregiver

Generation: 11th

Embrace: 1924

Apparent Age: mid-40s

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 5



Talents: Alertness 4, Dodge 2, Empathy 3, Intimidation 2, Intuition 4, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 5

Skills: Drive 2, Etiquette 2, Firearms 1, Security 3, Stealth 3, Survival 2

Knowledges: Academics 4, Bureaucracy 2, Enigmas 4, Finance 3, Investigation 5, Law 5, Medicine (forensic) 4, Occult 4, Politics 3, Science 4

Disciplines: Dominate 4, Necromancy 3, Presence 2

Necromantic Paths: Sepulchre Path 3, Ash Path 1

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Contacts 5, Influence 4, Resources 4, Status 2

Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 4, Courage 3

Morality: Humanity 6

Willpower: 6

AMBROGINO GIOVANNI

Background: A bastard son to both the mortal Giovanni family and to Clan Giovanni, Ambrogino propelled himself to the highest echelons of Necromancer prominence through ruthlessness and ambition. His determination made him an accomplished necromancer even before his Embrace. This same quality led him to seek the seers of the afterlife through whom he foresaw himself ascending to godhead.

Driven by this revelation, Ambrogino has dedicated more than 300 years to the pursuit of the *Sargon Fragment* — an artifact that reveals the Antediluvian Cappadocius' plans to diablerize God and thus become God. Although Ambrogino scoffs at the idea of literally slaying an aspect of the Holy Trinity, he does believe that Cappadocius was close to reaching a source of godlike powers just before he was destroyed.

Since 1666, Ambrogino has raced against a group of Camarilla-sponsored Kindred to find the *Sargon Fragment*. This fanatical pursuit resulted in the Fire of London and the violation of a standing truce between the Giovanni and the Camarilla. Over the centuries, Ambrogino's recklessness gained him ground over his rivals, and in 1882 he acquired *The Anexhexeton* — an artifact that provides the divine wisdom required to fathom the path to apotheosis. With his new trophy in hand, he retreated to the Mausoleum, the clan's Venetian stronghold.

For the next century, Ambrogino kept a remarkably low profile. Like a gambler sensing that he had pushed his luck too far, he became convinced that his crusade had finally drawn the attention of Clan Giovanni's founder, Augustus. While Augustus always gave Ambrogino remarkably free reign, the Antediluvian would have destroyed him instantly had he discovered Ambrogino's true ambitions.

Even during this quiet time, Ambrogino was not idle. In spite of earlier hopes to the contrary, evidence now indicated that the *Sargon Fragment* had been destroyed in the London fire. Still driven by his vision from the wraithly Oracles, he began searching for the *Fragment* in the Land of the Dead —



for the Giovanni know that sometimes the ghosts of things, and not just people, “exist” beyond the Shroud.

For decades, Ambrogino conducted a meticulous search of the Underworld. It was a slow and tedious business — interviewing spirits and sending agents across the Shroud. Then, in the summer of 1999, things changed dramatically.

Ambrogino was in the Mausoleum scrying a particularly dangerous region known as the Sea of Shadows, when suddenly the sea became a tsunami. There was a flash, a surge, and all at once, the Mausoleum's mystical alarms sounded ferociously. A frantic inspection revealed that not only were all of the spirit snares filled with shrieking souls, but some unfortunate ghosts had embedded themselves throughout the structure of the building. They were thrown into chairs and walls. They had buried themselves in powerful artifacts. Some frantic spirits had even tried to hide themselves within several members of the clan.

Opening a new window to the Underworld revealed a nightmare in motion. Wraiths — and the ruptured remnants of wraiths — blasted about like desert sand. Spirits jetted by, groping for a foothold, seeking any shelter from the storm. Then, caught up in the vicious currents, they would vanish.

Ambrogino was aware that such storms occasionally raged across the Underworld, but in a millennium he had never seen one this ferocious. Not liking what the turn of events did to his plans, he canvassed the pathetic remnants of souls trapped in the Mausoleum. The torn and shuddering husks communicated little, and what they did say was mostly gibberish. Over time, however, Ambrogino noticed a common theme in their ramblings, and he soon wondered if there was not great opportunity in the madness.

He learned that the storm had begun with a blinding and all-encompassing light, followed by a brief moment of quite and calm. In that moment, three radiant, glowing shapes arose “skyward” and paused as if taking stock of creation. For the beat of a living heart, all was still. All eyes were fixed on the three expectantly, as if in wait for the coming of utter splendor or absolute devastation. And then they were gone. An unbelievably thunderous blast rolled out to meet the witnesses — and the unlucky were consumed.

The description of the glowing figures captivated Ambrogino. He asked again and again what they’d looked like and where they had gone. When it seemed that there was nothing more to learn, he ordered the captive spirits destroyed, then retreated to the athenaeum to reflect.

A week later, Ambrogino made plans for his first extended journey in a century. When asked of his plans, he said simply, “Perhaps Cappadocius was right all along.”

Image: Ambrogino appears as a large and powerful man in his middle 50s. He has graying shoulder-length hair and gray eyes. Virtually no one alive, however, would match this description to the man. Ambrogino hides his image behind his powers of Obfuscate and generally appears to be a younger and less imposing version of himself. No matter what visage he takes, his left hand is always seen as a gray and withered claw — the price he pays for the power to control his deadly magic.

Roleplaying Hints: You are focused and confident. You have spent a millennium patiently working to gain the power of divinity. You never doubted it would come because you can see the future — or parts of it, at least. The fact that you were unprepared for the cataclysm in the Underworld concerns you quite a bit. You have a feeling that your next journey will either propel you into the greatness you’ve always foreseen or bring you to some ironic and unimagined doom.

Clan: Giovanni

Sire: Lady Constanca

Nature: Conniver

Demeanor: Visionary

Generation: 5th

Embrace: 1045

Apparent Age: mid-30s

Physical: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 6

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 5, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 5, Intelligence 6, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 5, Athletics 3, Brawl 4, Dodge 4, Empathy 3, Intimidation 5, Leadership 4, Subterfuge 5

Skills: Etiquette 4, Firearms 4, Melee 5, Performance 5, Ride 4, Security 4, Stealth 5, Survival 5

Knowledges: Academics 5, Bureaucracy 5, Finance 5, Investigation 5, Law 4, Linguistics (a multitude) 5, Literature 2, Occult 8, Politics 5

Disciplines: Auspex 4, Celerity 3, Dominate 5, Fortitude 4, Mortis 4, Necromancy 8, Obfuscate 4, Potence 6, Presence 4, Thanatosis 1, Thaumaturgy 7

Thaumaturgical Paths: Path of Blood 5, Spirit Thaumaturgy 5

Necromantic Paths: Sepulchre Path 5, Bone Path 5, Ash Path 5, Mortuus Path 3

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Contacts 5, Herd 5, Influence 5, Resources 5, Retainers 5

Virtues: Conviction 5, Self-Control 2, Courage 4

Morality: Path of the Bones 7

Willpower: 7

Merits/ Flaws: Iron Will

CALLIRUS, THE JACKDAW KING

Background: Callirus is without a doubt the most accomplished *gorgio* (non-Gypsy) of the Ravnos clan. His cons and tricks are legion, and some of them so notable and audacious that he is also the only non-Gypsy clan member who would not be slain on sight by the purist Ravnos of Europe. Besides, he was Embraced by one of the most notorious Ravnos of centuries past, Magdra, who was himself fully of Gypsy blood. Who would dispute Magdra’s choice?

Callirus was a young Spanish man who grew into adulthood with nothing to show for himself but the cons that won him food for the day — no family, no regular home, no aspirations for the future. That changed one day when an elaborate hoax meant to swindle a greedy merchant of a few coins turned dangerous. Callirus found himself (disguised, of course) in a richly ornamented coach, where he spoke with a central European nobleman who talked so bluntly about matters of blood and unlife that he was either deranged or a vampire. Either way, Callirus knew his con — and more importantly, his life — depended upon believing this man was a vampire.

Artful even then as few others were at storytelling (Callirus’ word; others call it “deception” or “lying”), the young Spaniard spun an amazing web of lies and innuendo. The result: His con worked and he lived to tell about it. However, this success emboldened Callirus. He was determined to know more about what this nobleman had referred to as the “Kindred,” so he worked for months to assemble the proper papers and cultivate the essential contacts, then launched a scam so ambitious that its eventual failure stunned dozens of Kindred the revelation that a mortal had been in their midst for over a year.

Fortunately, the Kindred who finally saw through Callirus’ game were Ravnos, and a respected elder of that time, Magdra, thought the jest so entertaining, so utterly improbable, that he turned the lie into truth. Callirus, though, was sent to England and away from the Gypsies, who at that time composed the great majority of the Ravnos clan.

Callirus heeded this banishment, but only to a point. His arrival in England marked the beginning three-and-a-half centuries of elaborate deceptions that tonight involve un-



known scores of identities, most of which place him at the center of international theft and smuggling rings, but some of which are as upstanding citizens (though probably only to pave the way for the criminal activities of his alter egos). There is truly no telling where Callirus may turn up next, as even the most astute recognize only a few of his guises.

Image: No easy answer exists for someone inquiring after Callirus' appearance. He is invariably a handsome young man, but beyond that it's impossible to say, for his looks vary by the night and maybe even by the hour. Callirus, when not in disguise, not affecting the mannerisms of another, not cloaking himself in illusion or pretending to be what he isn't, appears as a thin, clean-shaven man of seeming Latin ancestry. The slight duskiness of his skin and his lustrously thick but close-cropped black hair allow him to pass without alteration as a Ravnos of Gypsy blood. His fingers are like perpetual motion machines. They are long, slender, and exquisitely dextrous — the envy of pianists. Small objects anywhere around Callirus have a way of gravitating to his hands, where rubber bands, toothpicks, paperclips and the like are stretched and spun in a continuous and unconscious display. Should one of Callirus' disguises ever fail, the cause is sure to be this trademark habit.

Roleplaying Hints: There is a time for work, and there is a time for play. By this rule you make your unlife; others who understand this behavior can interact with you, for otherwise you follow no predictable pattern. You may be all jokes and fun with someone one night, yet the next expect them to get down to business with you, no small talk allowed.

Clan: Ravnos

Sire: Magdra

Nature: Gallant

Demeanor: Critic

Generation: 9th

Embrace: 1632

Apparent Age: late 20s

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 5, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 5, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 4, Fortune-telling 3, Leadership 5, Masquerade 5, Scrounging 4, Seduction 5, Streetwise 4, Subterfuge 5

Skills: Animal Ken 3, Disguise 5, Drive 3, Firearms 4, Performance 5, Sleight of Hand 6, Stealth 3

Knowledges: Academics 2, Enigmas 3, Linguistics (English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, and a host of others) 5

Disciplines: Animalism 4, Auspex 2, Chimerstry 5, Fortitude 5, Presence 1

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Contacts 5, Influence 5, Resources 5

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

Morality: Humanity 6

Willpower: 7

GHIVRAN DALAAL, THE DEAD GOD

Background: Even before his Embrace, Ghivran wandered India in search of hedonistic pleasures and vile pursuits. As a mortal, his immorality combined with his charming demeanor to win him many devotees. These followers gave Ghivran anything they owned, succumbed to his every desire and even surrendered their lives. Fascinated by death, he often tortured his disciples in order to watch for the exact moment when the soul left the body. Little more than slaves, all who fell under his seductive spell could hope only that death came quickly at the end.

Markus Kozier found Ghivran in a burned-out temple near Delhi. Markus witnessed a ceremony wherein a young boy was stripped of his clothing before numerous onlookers, including the child's parents. Ghivran then skinned the child with a carving knife and tossed bits of flesh to the crowd. Markus became enraptured by the sheer abandonment of humanity by both Ghivran and his flock and decided to create an eternal companion from Ghivran to keep himself enjuvenated throughout the Long Night.

Having experienced almost every pleasure and pain the human body could know, Dalaal accepted Markus' offer without hesitation. For one year, the two became close companions, traveling through most of southern Asia. Wherever they went, Ghivran would attract a body of followers eager for his attentions, and Markus reveled in the debauchery. That is, until Dalaal grew bored with his sire.

While Ghivran fed Markus' desire, Markus did nothing in return. Ghivran found his sire to be a dullard with little imagination and less charm. Boredom soon turned to resentment and then to anger. Finally, Ghivran turned his special attentions to the vampire who'd given him immortality.



Ghivran ordered his slaves to bind his sire and eat of his flesh. They did so with no hesitation. When Markus screamed for an end to the torment, Ghivran bit into his naked skull and absorbed his sire's life force. He then slaughtered his followers in a blood-crazed madness that seemed to be borne on the blood of the Amaranth.

Ghivran has come to New Delhi. His thirst for pain remains unsatisfied, and mortals no longer ease his addiction. Dalaal has once again attracted a retinue of loyal slaves who find victims for his unique taste in entertainment. Now, however, the entertainment consists of other vampires who unhappily find themselves caught in the Dead God's web.

Image: Ghivran Dalaal retains his handsome mortal features. The pallor of death has not overcome his dark skin, but instead highlights his pronounced facial features and green eyes. Dalaal adorns himself with many piercings that change on a daily basis. As each wound heals during the day, his followers pierce his body with varying patterns of jewelry. Ghivran often lies within his temple completely naked, pleasuring or torturing — to him there is no difference — one or more of his servants.

Roleplaying Hints: To live by human morality is weak. It is better to experience life and death in all its many forms without restriction. Although you used to find human pain and pleasure exciting, the torture of a vampire, as eternal unlife hangs in the balance, is the only thing that satisfies you now. Let no one stand in the way of your pleasure.

Clan: Ravnos
Sire: Markus Kozier
Nature: Deviant
Demeanor: Fanatic
Generation: 9th

Embrace: 1905

Apparent Age: late teens

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 5, Manipulation 4, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 2

Talents: Brawl 2, Empathy 4, Expression 3, Interrogation 3, Intimidation 3, Leadership 5, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Etiquette 2, Performance 3, Survival 2

Knowledges: Academics 1, Law 2, Occult 2

Disciplines: Animalism 2, Auspex 2, Chimerstry 2, Fortitude 3

Backgrounds: Fame 2, Herd 5, Resources 3, Retainers 4

Virtues: Conviction 0, Self-Control 1, Courage 3

Morality: Humanity 2

Willpower: 4

COUNTESS ORMONDE

Background: Many maintain that the most formidable heirs to the Curse of Caine often come from the unlikeliest beginnings. Certainly Ormonde, once proud and errant child of Sutekh, is no exception.

Childe and sire first came upon one another in the muted half-light of the marketplace, scant moments before the Bordeaux dawn. He was unloading a crude wooden table from which he bartered his family's crops, as she was concluding an ill-timed errand that necessitated her frantic flight from the imminent morning. No words passed between them — only a momentary exchange of glances before the noblewoman hurried into a curtained carriage. It was the moment that made everything else possible.

Jean-Michel carried out his day's duties and returned that night to the farm, his three children and a wife, old beyond her years already, whose belly was swollen with their fourth; something, however, had changed inside him. Wherever the farmer went, whatever distractions he attempted, he could not dismiss from his head or heart the apparition he had beheld in the shadowed square. Had it been love at first sight? That special sorcery all women share? Or simply the persistent regrets of a life not lived?

What the peasant did not — could not — know was that, secreted away from light in an ornate, windowless chamber, the dreams of Lady Clea Auguste d'Holford were similarly haunted. She was well versed in the many snares and strategies through which a man's heart might be won and wasted; what was it about this one? An unbroken spirit? A game she had not yet played to completion? Some quality she no longer possessed?

No sooner had she resolved to make him hers than he returned, searching the dusk-lit plaza for some sign of her presence and bearing a pathetic bouquet of wildflowers in his trembling hand. He left behind his fields, his family, his wife, his will, and he never once looked back. And, though it took years, far longer than the Lady d'Holford would ever have



spent on any other mortal, he broke. Softened by a life of excess and opulence, laden with baubles, finery and half a dozen venereal diseases, the reprobate entered immortality on his knees, his lifeblood seeping away with any trace of the man Jean-Michel d'Ormonde had been.

Tonight, Ormonde ("Count Ormonde," he gently stresses) lives a transient, solitary existence, flitting from city to city in search of diversion and the Next Big Party. His sire, full of disgust, discarded him like old trash not long after his Embrace; he is frequently mistaken for a Toreador, Ventrue or even Lasombra, and thus passes through Camarilla and Sabbat territory unchallenged. The vice-strewn *fin de siècle* has proved a veritable playground for his perverse passions; his charm and good looks, along with a remarkable tendency toward discretion over valor, have seen him through several tight spots over the centuries.

Image: Ormonde is a slender man whose slight build sometimes lends the illusion of height to his otherwise unimpressive stature. In life, he was cheerfully handsome, a low-born farm boy who had missed the turn to beauty by inches, but his sire's cruel kiss has put all that behind him forever. Jean-Michel's features are delicate, almost feminine, at once studiously reserved and dangerously expressive. The count sports a neatly trimmed goatee, wears his dark, lustrous hair loose past his shoulders (sometimes gently gathered with ribbon or tied up in elaborate marquis-style plaits, as best befits the occasion) and keeps a stylish pair of tinted glasses close at hand. Even in casual company, his raiment is striking and carefully chosen for effect.

Roleplaying Hints: Everything that made you human was stolen long ago; what remains is a perpetual pantomime of going through the motions as you did in the market square so many years ago. Although you once took delight in the decadence and depravity of your brethren, everything has

started to merge into a kaleidoscopic whirl of blushing barmaids, callow compliments and petty pleasures. This makes the ease with which you slip into the roles of old-world aristocracy and "long-haired sensitive ponytail man" all the more disturbing—you are still very good at what you do. The pageant would be perfect if only you could include yourself in the deception. But that façade has failed. Beneath the caked-on charm and veneer of *savoir-faire*, others have begun to pick up an impression of cold, hungry voyeurism that overpowers your angelic elegance and derring-do. Thus, you move from circle to circle, constantly cycling through acquaintances and amorous relations before anyone can glimpse your thinly attempts to disguise the emptiness within.

Clan: Followers of Set

Sire: Lady Clea Auguste d'Holford

Nature: Bon Vivant

Demeanor: Gallant

Generation: 9th

Embrace: 1599

Apparent Age: mid-30s (although it can vary seven or eight years in either direction through artful variation of cosmetic applications and wardrobe)

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 5, Appearance 5

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 4, Wits 5

Talents: Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Dodge 2, Empathy 4, Expression 2, Fortune-telling 2, Intuition 3, Leadership 1, Masquerade 5, Streetwise 2, Style 4, Subterfuge 5

Skills: Archery 1, Disguise 3, Drive 2, Etiquette 4, Firearms 2, Melee 2, Ride 2, Vamp 4

Knowledges: Academics 1, Bureaucracy 2, Camarilla Lore 2, Clan Knowledge (Setites) 3, Computer 1, Finance 2, Investigation 4, Law 2, Linguistics 4, Medicine 1, Occult 2, Politics 4, Psychology 3, Sabbat Lore 1

Disciplines: Auspex 3, Dominate 3, Obfuscate 4, Presence 4, Serpentis 3

Backgrounds: Resources 4

Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 2, Courage 1

Morality: Humanity 5

Willpower: 5

AL-ASHRAD, AMROF ALAVLIT

Background: All honor to al-Ashrad, he who watched the breaking of the Curse that the devil-touched Tremere laid upon the Blood. He who performed the Ritual of Creation, which kept the Children of Haqim strong through the many nights of their disgrace. He who forged the Fang of Kali and strung the Bow of the Sun. He who chains the storms and strikes down devils with his hand of iron. All honor to al-Ashrad, the greatest magician in the world!

Lost to the mists of time is the mortal life of al-Ashrad, he who walked out of the long mountain nights with leashed lightnings in his hand and the world in his eye, offering his



magics to Haqim. Wise was Haqim to accept the service of al-Ashrad, for the Ancestor and the man who would be Amr both knew of the centuries of disgrace that awaited the Children. Both foresaw that the Children's honor would not be cleansed without the might of the greatest magician in the world.

It came to pass that some of the Children of Haqim resented the acceptance of a mortal man into their ranks, and they plotted the downfall of al-Ashrad. But the Amr's eyes and ears were many in those nights, and he prepared well for the treacherous Children. When the conspirators came for him, al-Ashrad was ready. He slew the foremost with a blazing arrow from the Bow of the Sun. He fell upon the rest with sword and spells. Demons fought at his side. He tore through the would-be murderers as would a whirlwind set against a spider's web. When the dust had settled, 10 of Haqim's finest sons lay on the ground, yet al-Ashrad had suffered no wounds.

The greatest magician in the world went to the chambers of the Ancestor and spoke of what had happened. What transpired there none can say for certain, but the stories tell of a mighty argument, of al-Ashrad's accusations that the Ancestor had sought to bind his power to the service of the Children, thoughtless of the sorcerer's freedom. Haqim's anger was no less, for the first of those al-Ashrad had slain was his favorite and most trusted son. The Ancestor's belief was that the magician had sought to usurp that child's position as his right hand.

Both mighty creatures' spines stiffened with pride, and they might have come to blows had not ur-Shulgi, Haqim's second son, intervened. Facing the wrath of the disputants, he told them that he had gazed into their souls and found them both in error. The conspirators had acted of their own volition, ur-Shulgi told them, and al-Ashrad had not sought to supplant Haqim's children.

Haqim's face grew dark, for he was not accustomed to hearing his words questioned, even by those of his own blood. Wisdom stayed his hand, however, for he knew that ur-Shulgi spoke true. He could not stand by without taking action, however, for al-Ashrad was not of Haqim's Blood and he had slain a double handful of Haqim's favored.

"So be it," spoke Haqim. "You have slain those who were my hands and eyes, those who were counted among the strongest arms and swiftest minds of my Blood. By rights, I should have your life as forfeit for theirs, but your counsel has been wise, and your magics have been mighty. This will not end here, for those who attacked you were not alone among my children. A man not of the Blood will never be fully accepted in Alamut, no matter how faithful his service to me. Thus, I must first take from you that which you took from me." Having spoken, Haqim severed al-Ashrad's arm with one blow from his scimitar and plucked out al-Ashrad's eye with a second blurring motion. The sorcerer never flinched, never cried out, but accepted Haqim's justice with grace and dignity, as was his duty as a prince of men.

Then Haqim turned to ur-Shulgi, his second son, cousin to the *djinni* and keeper of the lore of Alamut, saying, "I cannot take this man into the Blood, my son, for too many would see such an act as proof that I favor him over all others, and Alamut would be torn apart from inside. Bring him to the Blood, that he may walk forever among my sons." Ur-Shulgi nodded, for he saw the wisdom in Haqim's proclamation. He took al-Ashrad into his arms, intending to give unto him the Blood.

And then it was that al-Ashrad failed; the only time in his long life. He spoke to Haqim, "Ancestor, I have served faithfully and borne your punishment. Why do you curse me further by poisoning me with the Blood?" To which, Haqim answered, "As a man, you would ever be less than the Children," and al-Ashrad had no argument.

Al-Ashrad has served the Children of Haqim ever since, leading the line of the wizards from his chambers in Alamut. When the Children were hard-pressed by the armies of the *munafiqun*, his sorcerers took the field alongside the warriors of the Blood, striking down the mightiest knights with their lightnings and sending hordes of *djinni* against the invaders. In the darkest hours of the wars, al-Ashrad took up his enchanted blade and joined the battle himself, turning the tides single-handedly and rending the greatest warlocks of the accursed Tremere with his magics. When the Curse was laid upon the Children, al-Ashrad retreated to his laboratories and magic circles, devoting the entirety of his being to redeeming the honor of the Blood. Now, through ur-Shulgi, his centuries of labor have finally met with success.

All honor to the Ancestor, whose wisdom preserved the man who would deliver the Children of Haqim from the Curse. All honor to Ur-Shulgi, from whom the mightiest mages in the world descend. All honor to al-Ashrad, the greatest magician in the world!

Image: There is an aura of power to al-Ashrad that is less seen than felt, a slight stirring in the air around him, an invisible force that seems barely contained within his being, dormant only because he wishes it to be so. His skin is pale like ivory, unmarred by a thousand duels with demons and demon-touched Tremere. His appearance is an anomaly among the dark-skinned Assamites. A diamond replacement rumored to give the Amr sight beyond sight occupies the empty socket of his left eye. His right eye is a cool-burning blue, the color of the daylight desert skies that he has not gazed upon for centuries. Al-Ashrad's hair and beard were iron-gray before his Embrace, though he now shaves them nightly. He prefers to garb himself in simple white robes, loose and flowing and sewn with myriad pockets that contain innumerable components for his spells. The left arm of these robes remains pinned back, a continual reminder of Haqim's justice. Al-Ashrad's voice is deep and resonant, instantly commanding yet always calm and understated. The Amr moves with the ease of youth, and he has grown accustomed to compensating for the lack of his arm by using his magics to perform common tasks, an act that distresses many visitors to his laboratories who are unused to flasks leaping from tables to pour themselves.

Roleplaying Hints: Although the rest of the Children of Haqim think you are the greatest magician in the world, you know differently, and the shame of the deception you are forced to continue gnaws at you like a demon chained within your belly. Your magics are mighty, true, but they are nothing compared to the might of your sire (see ur-Shulgi, p. 89), he whose hand guided yours in breaking the Curse. You know better than any other what his awakening means, and the thought of what is to come fills your nights with distraction and your daytime dreams with images of blood-soaked ground. Nevertheless, you *are* the Amr, and you will continue to do your duty to the Blood to the last — even if that means acting in defiance of what most of the clan feels is the “true path.” Now that the Curse is broken, your foremost hope is that you and your magi — and, perhaps, your allies among the scholars — can somehow rein in the warriors before they bring on a second war, one that you cannot win. You have never wholly accepted the monomaniacal ways of the Path of Blood, believing instead that the role of the Children is to counsel from a position of strength rather than to blaze a trail of ashes across the world.

Clan: Children of Haqim (Assamite)

Sire: ur-Shulgi

Nature: Perfectionist

Demeanor: Visionary

Generation: 5th

Embrace: first century AD; al-Ashrad was between 500 and 1000 years old at that time

Apparent Age: ageless

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 7

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 7, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 7, Intelligence 8, Wits 8

Talents: Alertness 6, Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Dodge 6, Empathy 5, Expression 7, Instruction 7, Intimidation 8, Intuition 8, Leadership 6, Subterfuge 8

Skills: Archery 8, Crafts (blacksmith) 8, Etiquette 8, Herbalism 8, Meditation 8, Melee 8, Ride 5, Stealth 7, Survival 6

Knowledges: Academics (history) 8, Demon Lore 8, Investigation 6, Linguistics (a long list of magical, spoken and dead languages, including Enochian) 8, Medicine 6, Occult 8, Philosophy 6, Politics 6, Science 5

Disciplines: Auspex 7, Celerity 4, Chimerstry 3, Dominate 3, Fortitude 5, Obeah 3, Obfuscate 7, Quietus 8, Thaumaturgy 8

Thaumaturgical Paths: Lure of Flames 5, Movement of the Mind 5, Neptune's Might 3, Path of Blood 5, Path of Conjuring 4, Path of Warding 5, Rego Manes 5, Rego Mentem 5, Way of the Levinbolt 5, Weather Control 5, Countermagic 5

Backgrounds: Allies 8, Clan Prestige 8, Contacts 8, Herd 5, Influence 5, Resources 6, Retainers (bound demons) 8

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

Morality: Humanity 2

Willpower: 9

UR-SHULGI, THE SHEPHERD

Background: In certain fragments of the *Book of Nod*, primarily those recovered in the Middle East, passages appear that speak of the old gods — those worshipped by the mortals who dwelt in the Second City. Some of these names are familiar to the Cainite scholar of the modern nights: Ashur, Kel-nach, Enkidu, Rashadii. Some have no direct correlation to any other record of Kindred history: Mancheaka, Nar-Sheptha, Sha'hiri and ur-Shulgi. This last name appears in four separate passages, and Setite scholars infer from its context that it is an avatar of one of the Second City's war-gods.

The war-god Haqim.

In a valley in the Zagros Mountains, on the border of modern-day Iran and Iraq, an intrepid explorer with substantial powers of supernatural perception might find a small cave, recently opened by an Iraqi infantry squad. The squad's truck is still parked there, in fact. The squad's commander assumes that his men went AWOL, and he has made no particular effort to find them — which is probably best for him, as the soldiers are in no condition to defend their reputations or anything else.

Should the intrepid explorer enter the cave, however, he would find those soldiers' bodies arrayed on the ground, unmarked save for flecks of blood on their lips and expressions of... surprise... on their faces. Their weapons still lie by their sides, except for the handful of grenades they expended in opening the cave. An autopsy — if the hypothetical explorer had the skill and inclination to perform one —



would reveal that their internal organs ruptured from fluid pressure. The corpses would be well-preserved for such an exploration, for no blood whatsoever remains within them.

Further exploration into the cave would reveal five simple stone crypts of the approximate size of bank vaults. Three are closed, their heavy lids secured in place by gravity and stronger forces. One gapes half-open, as if awaiting the deposit of whatever precious item it was intended to contain. The last is shattered beyond repair, presumably from the inside, judging from the half-dozen fist-sized stone shards scattered on the slabs before it.

In Petra, Jordan, there is a much larger cave complex in the desert sandstone. An individual who knows the proper routes might make his way to a large unlit chamber half a mile beneath the surface of the earth. Thousands of niches — most of which are empty — have been carved into the walls of this chamber. A few contain wax-sealed earthen jars bearing freshly-inscribed words in a language that has not been uttered by any living tongue for millennia. Were the observer capable of translating this language, the words on the jars would be resolved into names. A scholar of the Children of Haqim would recognize many of them. The company is quite distinguished: Jamal, Talaq, Ismail. The jars, if they were to be opened by one with sufficient magical power, would be found to contain the heart's blood of those whose names the vessels bear.

A flurry of rumors sweeps through the *rafiq*, who awoke to find that the Curse laid by the demon-touched Tremere has been shattered like a dropped crystal goblet, that their Blood once more ran pure and burning in their veins.

Al-Ashrad and his brood have attained success in their attempts to cleanse the Blood, they whisper, all honor to the magi. The Sorcerer and his followers have been destroyed, they murmur, and with his death the ritual was broken. The power of the Blood has washed away all impurities, they smile behind their masks.

As stories proliferate throughout the Assamite ranks, the eldest of the *rafiq* feel a call from the caves beneath Petra. Jamal was the first to heed it. The amr, when asked what has become of the Master, merely shakes his head. He alone of the unliving elders of Alamut understands the truth — for though it was his hand that broke the Curse, it was not his will, nor his knowledge, nor his power. He was merely the tool of a master artisan, whose skill tore the bonds of the Curse asunder as if they were spiderwebs before a scimitar.

Al-Ashrad alone knows the fate of Jamal — there is no more need for a false Master to hold the Mountain in Haqim's place. The true master of Alamut has sent his herald, ur-Shulgi, his second childe, to announce his return in fire and blood and stone. Ur-Shulgi, who shattered the terrible Curse; ur-Shulgi, who rent the rogue Talaq in half with but a thought; ur-Shulgi, who threatened to destroy the flaccid "Assamites" to the last if they chose not to heed their sire's call.

Image: Time has not been kind to Ur-Shulgi, nor have the ravages of the beast within it or the numerous enemies it has challenged. It looks like nothing so much as a scarred, burnt child, a young god born from fire and violence. Its skin, obsidian-black with age, displays a lattice of scars, some of which weep blood when the Methuselah becomes agitated. Here and there, bits of bone and sinew protrude from beneath its skin, as if its body has been flayed. Additionally, Ur-Shulgi's eyes have been either gouged or burnt away, though it claims to be able to see without hindrance. When it deigns to clothe itself, Ur-Shulgi wears unadorned, light-colored caftans and robes, often with a bone or amber necklace. Its voice seems to billow up from the depths of a dry desert well (surprisingly to some, Ur-Shulgi is perfectly fluent in any modern language in which it is addressed). Ur-Shulgi normally remains motionless when conversing with its childer or other "Kindred," unless it wishes to make a rhetorical point through a cat-like flash of violence. If it absolutely *has* to shift position to do anything other than kill, it does not move so much as flicker from point to point.

Roleplaying Hints: As the second childe of Haqim, you were the first of the Assamite magi. Now, you act as your sire's herald and loremaster. You are the most efficient war-mage on the face of the planet, though you do not think of yourself in such simplistic. In fact, most of your thought processes are completely incomprehensible to anyone not of your age and power stratum. To outside observers, you are violence given a physical body, the vengeance of Haqim upon all those who would oppose his will. You remember the glory of the Second City and the old gods who walked there. This "Allah" is an upstart whose faith has corrupted the line of Haqim, and you must either show all those who worship him the error of their ways, or purge them from among the *rafiq*. Casually shattering the "curse" that the Usurpers laid upon the Assamites was the first step on this road, and those presumptuous meddlers will be the first to fall before the whirlwind that the Camarilla attempted to chain.

Clan: Children of Haqim (Assamite)

Sire: Haqim

Nature: Traditionalist

Demeanor: Fanatic

Generation: 4th

Embrace: A translation of the *Parables of Blood* relates ur-Shulgi's Embrace to "the night when the stones spoke and the skies cried a blood rain."

Apparent Age: indeterminate, though ur-Shulgi's small body suggests a young Embrace

Physical: unknown

Social: Charisma and Manipulation unknown; Appearance 0, as Ur-Shulgi does not bother to conceal its form unless it is preparing to strike

Mental: unknown

Talents: unknown

Skills: unknown

Knowledges: Academics (history) 9, Linguistics 9, Occult 9, others unknown

Disciplines: Auspex 8, Obfuscate 9, Quietus 9, Thaumaturgy 9; others unknown

Thaumaturgical Paths: unknown; presumably godlike proficiency in the ancient practices

Backgrounds: unknown

Virtues: unknown; do such trappings matter to a god?

Morality: Path of Blood (ancient form) 10

Derangements: what would be megalomania in a lesser creature

Willpower: 10

UNKNOWN

There are multiple reasons that most of Ur-Shulgi's Traits aren't given numerical values. First, the Assamite Methuselah is still shaking off the dust of centuries, and it's not at full operating capacity yet. Second, it doesn't matter what those Traits are — ur-Shulgi is powerful enough to crush any aggressor, except another Methuselah, without apparent effort. "Any aggressor" includes any coterie of players' characters unlucky enough to meet it and foolish enough to challenge its might. Third and finally, Ur-Shulgi doesn't want anyone knowing the extent of its capabilities — what's listed here is simply what it has demonstrated to surviving witnesses thus far. However, consider this: Less than a week after being awakened by its sire, ur-Shulgi had enough power to casually shred a ritual cast by the combined might of the Tremere Inner Circle without more than the faintest exertion. That should be a good indicator of what this creature can accomplish should it choose (or be forced) to go all-out.

XAVIER, PATRIARCH AND FIRSTWILC JUSTICAR OF CLAN GANGREL

Background: The fabled "son of the night" began the long, winding path through life, death, and what lay beyond as a sergeant in the army of Edward the Black Prince. A conscripted yeoman commoner of the hotly contested Loire northlands, Xavier de Calais was already well-acquainted with the manner in which the ends might be played against the middle. Instinct and acumen served him well in those early years. He survived numerous skirmishes and strategically positioned himself as an outwardly subservient adjunct to several lesser contenders, even as he rose slowly in rank and repute. At Maupertuis near Poitiers, the turning point of what historians would later name the Hundred Years War, Xavier rode with Denis de Morbeke and half-a-hundred disinherited French footmen. The two vassals led the press and stormed the French gates to secure the English claim and take John the Good prisoner. Xavier's valor was rewarded that very evening by two august benefactors: James Lord Audley, who imparted to him a knighthood and some minor coastal holdings, and an unnamed wanderer posing as a *jongleur* from far-off lands, who inducted the commoner into a ruling class of a very different nature....

It is a sometime-tradition of the Gangrel clan to leave its fledglings for a while to roam the world, driven by their self-loathing, some insatiable wanderlust born of the Blood, and perhaps other motivations. Xavier-born-Xavier received just such an Embrace. After several hellish nights during which the newly knighted noble learned firsthand the Hunger and the folly of monsters mimicking mortal lives, he fled north to the frozen wastes. There he learned the thrill of the hunt, the inexpressible desire to pit flesh against flesh until one emerged strongest, the uncertainty that preceded each new battle and the anticipation of the coming night in which the cycle would begin anew. Beasts, men, nameless man-monsters fabled to walk the northernmost bergs and ridges — all these and more fell before his fangs.

Xavier might have spent an eternity of nights in that half-human existence, but something awoke inside him. An atavism in his unbeating heart harked back to earlier times — to a game more challenging than the flesh-and-blood variety. This dark, hungry current bid him return to the world of men at the close of the 15th century.

The no-longer-young fledgling journeyed south and collected not a few pelts from the man-wolves that frequented the depths of the Black Forest. (To this night Xavier is an insatiable Lupine hunter — his very presence stresses whatever tenuous relations might exist between the werewolves and Kindred in any given province, and it is said that the Lupines remember him in their songs and stories as "Kills-Our-Brothers.") For the first time in decades, he encountered others of his kind in the Rhineland, where he learned the importance of recognition, territory and the centuries-old subterfuge the Camarilla vampires called their

Masquerade. He tarried there for some years and listened to their Traditions, their tales of the New World — until the Beast awoke again to stir his soul.

This time Xaviar's travels took him into the cursed lands of eastern Europe and beyond, through the forested Balkans and Turkish tributaries, into the Sudan and southern lands. Some believe that, while the Kanem-Bornu and Songhai empires clashed for control of the nascent nation, Xaviar seated himself deep within the heart of the unexplored southernmost wilderness and enjoyed veneration as a god-king by a people who had never before seen white flesh. Others insist he sired a score of bastards in that span, many of whom survive to this night — that more Gangrel blood stems from Xaviar than from any other member of the line. Still other accounts maintain that he ran with the lost children of Laibon, gazed upon their burning sands and lightless jungles to learn their secrets, make their forbidden magics. The truth may well never be known; the patriarch dismisses all such inquiries with a condescending smirk.

It is known, however, that the wanderer's African sojourn came to an end near the dawn of the 18th century. Xaviar crossed the Atlantic amidst the Puritan incursion and stormed into the first American Conclave (held in 1704 in the port city of Boston). There he laid his greatest trophy to date at the feet of the Inner Circle: Elijah, Gangrel Justicar, lost to his own inner demons, at last hunted down like the Beast he had become and destroyed by his kinsman. The Circle of Six provisionally accepted the newcomer into its ranks as an archon, and Xaviar assumed Elijah's seat on the Justicar Council seven years later.

After that auspicious evening, Xaviar served the Camarilla as justicar from his fortified New Orleans domain (although he leans decidedly toward looking out for his own interests). Unlike so many of his clanmates, the justicar



struggled to keep abreast of the changing times. In many ways his involvement in mortal society was more reminiscent of Ventrue lineage than Gangrel; his command of sociopolitical and technological advancement was remarkable for one so old, and he cultivated an impressive network of contacts during his stay on the continent. (Aksinya Daclau, Gangrel *antitribu* and heretic Sabbat, is believed to be one of Rhun the Minstrel's brood, and therefore Xaviar's "sister" by blood. Neither, however, comments on any such familial or political relationship.)

As with so many of his station, Xaviar's term as justicar was plagued by detractors. Rumors surrounding Xaviar's activities and whereabouts ranged from accounts of ultra-high-tech mortal hit squads to would-be witnesses of diablerie and infernal practices to fantastic allegations concerning some "unholy bond with the beasts," the only source from which Xaviar can still feed following his African excursions. A handful of questionable affairs and accusations aside, Xaviar's combination of information brokerage, opportunistic double-dealing and now-you-see-me-now-you-don't politicking served him well in the completion of his duties over the past 300 years....

All of which makes recent developments all the more confusing. In 1999, not long after a search-and-destroy operation in which the renegade Smiling Jack was hunted down and brought to justice, Xaviar resigned his commission as justicar and disappeared from Kindred society. Scant nights later, the Gangrel clan followed suit, renouncing Camarilla membership almost to a vampire. Only Warlord Karsh (who Xaviar openly calls traitor) and a handful of fringe elements remain. Those few Kindred who have any information (or inclination to speak) on the subject name Xaviar's testimony concerning the existence of timeless ancients — the Antediluvians of lore — as responsible for the withdrawal.

Image: Considering himself one of the noble beasts of the night, Xaviar has little use for clothes. Still, he finds clothes make it easier to deal with people, so he wears loose, comfortable travel clothes, jeans, jackets, T-shirts and other anonymous trappings when he must. Embraced in the field as he was, Xaviar displays a perpetual three days' growth of beard, which he sometimes shaves but usually does not. His many nights of predation have given rise to many frenzies, and he has acquired the nose, inky eyes and protruding ears of a bat. Xaviar moves soundlessly, suggesting that perhaps he has picked up a few other proclivities of bats as well. His hands have become hooked claws, and short, rude spurs protrude from his spine. Despite his bestial appearance, however, Xaviar exudes an aura of majesty appropriate to one of the great creatures of legend about which his sire once sang.

Roleplaying Hints: The ill-tempered exterior you show the world conceals both voracious intellect and ruthless ambition. Some of your contemporaries swear by old-fashioned, fairy-tale concepts such as honor, solitude and stoicism. Let them; you have weapons they would not dare use. You are

a climber first and foremost — a competitor, a challenger, a consummate conniver. Whereas others of your kind would prevail through forthright superiority and flowery speeches, you have mastered the exploited weakness, the slow, steady erosion of confidence that follows in chaos' wake, the well-placed word behind the scenes that softens an opponent in preparation for your inevitable strike. You have never let anything stand in your way, and you are not about to start now.

Clan: Gangrel

Sire: Rhun of Tintagel

Nature: Competitor

Demeanor: Curmudgeon

Generation: 7th

Embrace: 1356

Apparent Age: late 30s

Physical: Strength 5, Dexterity 5, Stamina 6

Social: Charisma 5, Manipulation 4, Appearance 1

Mental: Perception 6, Intelligence 4, Wits 6

Talents: Alertness 5, Athletics 4, Brawl 5, Dodge 4, Intimidation 4, Leadership 5, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 6

Skills: Animal Ken 4, Archery 4, Drive 1, Etiquette 2, Firearms 3, Melee 5, Performance 3, Ride 4, Security 2, Stealth 4, Survival 6

Knowledges: Computer 1, Finance 2, Hearth Wisdom 3, Investigation 5, Linguistics 3, Medicine 2, Occult 3, Politics 3, Science 1

Disciplines: Abombwe 4, Animalism 6, Auspex 2, Celerity 3, Fortitude 6, Potence 4, Protean 6

Backgrounds: Allies 6, Contacts 5, Resources 4, Retainers 5

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

Morality: Humanity 4

Willpower: 8

QUFUR AM-HERU, CHAMPION OF SET

Background: Although the original tale is so old and polluted by legends that few even of his clanmates know the retelling, Cainite history names *qufur am-heru* as first vassal to Set — champion, trusted adviser, devoted servant and marshal of the storm-god's armies. It was he, the stories claim, who held the Temple against the coming hordes led by Set's nephew Horus and gave his life that his master might escape those who sought his end. The warrior charged his children with eternal fealty and service in preparation for Set's eventual return.

Three of Set's childer have worn the title of *qufur am-heru* ("greatest who guards me" in a chthonic Setite dialect) throughout the intervening centuries. Each *qufur*, driven by a premonition on the eve of his imminent destruction, Embraces a childer (preferably a mortal descendant) and schools the fledgling in the rites and responsibilities of his inherited station before committing the ultimate sacrifice in his lord's name — thus leaving his successor to begin the cycle

anew. Whatever the particulars, this admittedly time-distorted and fanciful tale is not without its roots in reality. The newest Cainite to claim the name Qufur am-Heru, the son of a priest and apprentice to a scribe of Amasis' court, received the Kiss in the sixth century B.C., the night before the Achaemenian hordes swarmed over his Egyptian heartland to pillage and raze everything in their path. Even Set's temple and its guardian, Qufur's sire, were left in ashes. The neonate, who watched from afar, hid himself and grew strong, covertly striking at the Persian menace again and again over the years until the infidels were driven from the desert sands.

Owing either to his elder Blood or some inflexible sense of duty, Qufur has spent most of eternity in the cold sleep of torpor. He has risen for a decade or two no more than a dozen times over the millennia, generally when his services as defender of the faith are needed. Alexander's fourth-century subversion of Lower Egypt saw Qufur's participation in secret negotiation with Macedonian generals to promote Pharaonic rule, a compromise insuring his people's survival. He also involved himself in the Muslim siege of Alexandria, in which he personally financed the restoration of countless art houses and museums to make them dynastic treasures rather than trophies of war. Qufur witnessed the sack and reconstruction of Cairo after the Third Crusade, when the streets ran scarlet with infidel blood shed by his blade. Even the Napoleonic press toward cultural eradication was not free from his ministrations, as he lectured orphans and schoolchildren by torchlight so that they would not be duped by French propaganda. Rommel's 1942 defeat at El-Alamein, where the *qufur* was forced to relocate his ancestral haven after its inadvertent destruction at the hands of the British, and a scattered handful of other less-celebrated occasions stand as testament to his ability to change with the times — a feat many vampires his age have difficulty mastering.



The close of the 20th century seems to be another of those occasions. Tonight Qufur continues his lord's crusade from a hidden locale on the Moroccan coast. A preternaturally swift learner, he knows that sword and scabbard are but two of many tools with which war is waged, and that the nightly battle must be fought on other fronts. The speed with which he has adapted to the modern world is nothing short of astonishing — already he has given the global economic arena (the European Common Market in particular) his attention to establish himself as a major player and gone so far as to threaten Ventrue prominence on a number of fronts. He has never sired; his mortal (and immortal) disciples, however, have begun to infiltrate worldwide academic and theological circles, and it is only a matter of time before their numbers reach critical mass — what others might call a cult.

An observer would be hard pressed to label Qufur as a "traditional" vampire; he is engaging, pleasant and seemingly free of malice. He never displays (much less uses) his fangs; even when feeding, he "drinks" from goblets, glasses or syringes rather than contacting the vein directly. Qufur professes no outward animosity toward any "of the Blood," whatever their lineage or loyalties; indeed, he welcomes conversation with other Kindred as opportunities to hone his verbal acumen or simply to trade information. The Setite has come to view the city of Tangier as his domain, however, and Cainite visitors who settle there overlong have an unfortunate habit of disappearing. His clanmates (those few who recognize him at all) seem to regard him as pariah, though he has some scattered contacts among the eldest surviving Followers of Set, who seem to accept him as a long-estranged peer. Even when holding council with these few and hearing their incessant inquiries about his purpose in waking at what many consider the End Times, the *qufur* is strangely silent. As for modern Setites, Qufur reserves disdain for most of them. Even the paramount Children of Set have earned his contempt; he reviles Heshu as a "rustic cunctator" and Kemintiri as a "dung-streaked whore." Qufur seems to have his own vision of dead Set's dream and little tolerance for others'.

Image: Qufur has the build of an amateur athlete and the grace of an acrobat. He wears expensive, tailored suits (indeed, one of his retainers is his steward and clothier) cut from the finest fabrics available. The skin on his arms and across his broad back bears the marks of tribal scarification: scores and scores of small, round welts made by cutting open the flesh ever so slightly and rubbing ash into the wound. Qufur wears a knot of hair that falls over his left eye, suggesting some sort of ancient Egyptian nobility, but a small tattoo at the base of his neck implies that he may have been a criminal or slave during his life.

Roleplaying Hints: Soft-spoken and stately, you are a true believer in what you feel is right — the inevitable and necessary destruction of this world, that another might take its place. Earnestness permeates your every word and deed; although you are nowhere near naïve enough to announce

your true motives to all who would listen, you find deception distasteful. Whether brimming with cautious enthusiasm, aflame with righteous fervor, or quietly musing in a social setting, you always seem to be in a good mood — a true rarity among the Damned. Even in an unlife-or-death situation you remain composed, dignified, and you conduct yourself honorably. You know what is coming, what it will mean for the peoples of this desolate world, how you and yours might make ready; your clarity of vision and incontrovertible charm could (and once did) influence nations. It is just as well that those you so effortlessly infect with your zeal have no idea of what you intend to unleash on the Earth.

Clan: Followers of Set

Sire: Qufur am-Heru (deceased)

Nature: Martyr

Demeanor: Visionary

Generation: 7th

Embrace: 525 B.C.

Apparent Age: late teens to early 20s, depending on dress and accoutrements.

Physical: Strength 5, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 6, Manipulation 3, Appearance 4

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 6, Wits 5

Talents: Alertness 6, Athletics 4, Brawl 5, Dodge 6, Empathy 3, Expression (poetic hieroglyphs) 4, Intimidation 3, Leadership 4, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Animal Ken 3, Archery 5, Crafts (pottery) 3, Etiquette 5, Firearms 1, Herbalism 6, Melee 6, Performance 2, Ride 4, Stealth 5, Survival 3

Knowledges: Academics 6, Computer 1, Finance 5, Hearth Wisdom 6, Investigation 4, Law 3, Linguistics (the tongues of North Africa and Western Europe) 6, Medicine (embalming) 4, Occult 6, Science (alchemy) 4

Disciplines: Animalism 2, Auspex 2, Celerity 4, Dominate 3, Fortitude 4, Obfuscate 5, Obtenebration 2, Potence 3, Presence 6, Serpents 6, Thaumaturgy 4, Protean 1

Thaumaturgical Paths: Path of Blood 4, Lure of Flames 3, Path of Corruption 3, Neptune's Might 2, Spirit Manipulation 2

Backgrounds: Influence 4, Resources 6 (Pharaonic treasure), Retainers 4

Virtues: Conviction 3, Self-Control 5, Courage 3

Morality: Path of Typhon 6

Willpower: 7

DRACULA, SON OF THE DRAGON

Background: The life and times of Vlad Tepes Dracula long ago became the stuff of legend. The second son of a church knight's fleeting union with a convent's mistress, Vladimir of Hunedoara began his existence in the war-torn fortress of Sighisoara. Born into what would surely have been a life of luxury within Wallachian nobility and the Holy Roman Empire were it not for the heritage-steeped nation's

massing Ottoman nemesis, the Son of the Dragon would take Fate by the throat and bend her to his will.

It was not an easy time to be a child, least of all an heir apparent to a throne constantly besieged by the infidel hordes. Vlad and his younger brother Radu spent the better part of their adolescent years as hostages bartered to Murad II in political appeasement. The Turks released the brothers only when word came that Vlad and Radu's father and older brother were dead at the hands of treacherous *boyar* countrymen.

Surely the traumatic conditions surrounding Dracula's childhood profoundly shaped the man he would become. The 17-year old prince — by birthright if nothing else — fled to the house of his uncle Iancu, then-ruler of Wallachia, and he married into that noble line. He took up his father's sword and title as crusader in Sigismund's Order of the Dragon, gathered an army to his banner and pledged himself to vengeance.

It cost the Romanian prince two campaigns, eight years, and another shameful imprisonment, but he ultimately prevailed. Vladimir, Son of the Dragon, crushed all other claimants to the Wallachian throne and reduced his competitors' holdings to rubble. With his own hand, he took the life of his father's betrayer, Vadislav II. He forced the *boyar* back-stabbers, whose double-dealings had taken his brother Mircea's life, to a seven-league march that few survived; their families he condemned to the construction of his castle. He sentenced the remainder to slow, torturous deaths and public display, that their carrion corpses might testify to the price of treason.

Thus were born tales of the man whom Turkish soldiers and servant children alike named *kaziglu bey* — “impaler prince.”

Once again master of his father's domain, Prince Vlad turned his attentions to the Ottoman raiders whose forces perpetually tested the borders of his kingdom, and to the iron-fisted precepts of honor and order with which he ruled the denizens of that kingdom. To this night, popular culture runs rife with stories illustrating the draconian nature of Dracula's justice. Still lingering in many memories is the tale of the banquet hall, filled with beggars and vagrants, that the prince burned to the ground after a sumptuous charitable feast. The razed villages and poisoned well-water he left in his wake to starve Sultan Mehmed's armies attest to a cunning, evil mind, and the forest of 20,000 impaled Turkish dead with which he turned the sultan's battle host homeward drive the terrible truth home. *Tepes* (“impaler”), they called him, and *dracula* (“devil's son” or “dragon's son”), while the lines between man, myth and monster began to blur.

Ultimately, it was tragic happenstance that proved the Impaler's undoing. A treacherous alliance between Mehmed and Vlad's brother Radu coupled with the death of his beloved, Livia (who, it is written, flung herself into the dark waters of the Arghes to avoid Turkish capture), conspired to



drive Dracula from his throne and into hiding for a third time. In the decade of darkness that followed, the outcast prince first made use of the Protestant enemy's guerrilla tactics and armored wagons. Invoking forgotten familial allegiances and pacts with patrons best left unnamed, he first took counsel from the witch-woman Durga Syn.

Standing before the bound and broken creature his guardsmen had captured but been instructed not to kill, recalling the familiar legends of blood-drinkers and bodies that grew young and strong lying in their graves, Vlad Tepes Dracula first supped from the wellspring of undeath.

Dracula's long and illustrious unlif has proved this elder of the accursed Tzimisce to be a dangerous unknown. Following his publicly staged “assassination,” the *vampyr* has variously declared fealty to Hardestadt's Camarilla, the early Sabbat death-cult headed by Lugo, sinister *manus nigrum*, and easily a dozen more radical or esoteric causes. More recently, toward the close of the 18th and 19th centuries, he seems to have sundered all such ties and drawn away from Cainite society for undetermined reasons. In 1897 he went so far as to influence a bibulous Irish author's famed fiction, thus flying in the face of the Masquerade and throwing the delicate balance between Kindred and kine into disarray. It was his parting gesture *par force*. He has never since been seen in Cainite circles.

Tonight the Impaler holds solitary court from the ruins of his Tirgovistan fortress, between Pasul Tihuts and the Borgo Pass. His current activities, to say nothing of allegiances, are unknown; he keeps his own company, aloof from Camarilla, Sabbat and the greater game Kindred call the Jyhad, and he emerges only infrequently for matters of inscrutable meaning. Although his goals are unclear and his motives artfully concealed, when the Son of the Dragon strikes he is swift and ruthlessly thorough.

Some believe that Dracula is old, tired and broken, a fallen champion whose power is but a whisper beside the bellow it used to be. Others claim his hermitage is necessary to his survival — that his failed attempt to lose himself in the pages of fiction has made a hell of his unlife and rendered him a target, a prisoner in his own house, prey to fate and the whim of arrogant foes who would play Brutus to his Caesar. Still other sources allege he holds private audience with his unwilling creator, with whom he came to terms long ago. Some maintain that Dracula hunted down and destroyed his sire years past, even that he journeyed to the New World to do so, and that the name Lambach tonight is but another orchestration of Dracula's cunning. One fanciful tale even names the Impaler as one of the guiding forces at the head of the enigmatic Inconnu.

Whatever truth may be in these ramblings, in life and death, Vlad Tepes, Son of the Dragon, Impaler-Prince of Wallachia, has attained a degree of infamy. His is wholly unlike the unlife of any vampire who has gone before, a strain of immortality different from any previously known to the Children of Caine stalks the final nights.

Image: The Son of the Dragon appears much the way legend ascribes to him: long-haired, mustached, and possessed of a feral charm that disguises a black heart. His complexion is swarthy, highlighted by prominent cheekbones and a pair of green eyes that captivate those who meet his gaze. Dracula bears a strong, aristocratic nose that suggests his noble ancestry. He wears fine clothes, but shies away from the ostentatious, preferring to let his natural charisma work for him rather than a gaudy display of "vulgar peacockery." Impassioned in the extreme, Dracula nonetheless hides his emotions. His gestures are graceful and calculated; none of his movements go to waste.

Dracula has been known to change his appearance using his Vicissitude, but accounts of these forms vary so widely as to make any generalization useless. Among other shapes, he has been known to take the form of a bat, a wolflike creature resembling an enraged Lupine, an aged man, a beautiful woman and an androgynous child, to say nothing of the numerous guises he uses in his lair to entreat guests.

Roleplaying Hints: Centuries of self-imposed solitude coupled with the disillusion of deathlessness have molded your once-noble mien into something no longer even remotely human. You find yourself slipping into alien expressions and gestures with increasing frequency of late — a predatory sneering curl to the lip here, a telltale winding gait there, a disquieting low-throated snarl for this one, a chilling sibilant hiss for that one. You are as apt to transfix others for hours with your impenetrable gaze as you are to descend upon them in a murderous rage — or, worse, to disregard them entirely as you lose yourself in the depths of some unfathomable nostalgia.

Something within you longs for the past — for the older, simpler times, when the affairs of men and monsters were

governed by birthright, and bloodshed and honor — but the Dracula who exists in the here and now knows such things are long gone. You are done with the outside world, the folly of man, even the ambitions and artifices of your modern-minded contemporaries among the Children of Caine. You endure. You survey the world from atop your lofty, lonely throne. And you wait.

Clan: Tzimisce

Sire: Lambach Ruthven

Nature: Penitent

Demeanor: Traditionalist

Generation: 5th

Embrace: 1495

Apparent Age: mid-40s

Physical: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 5, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 5, Wits 6

Talents: Alertness 4, Brawl 3, Dodge 4, Grace 3, Interrogation 3, Intimidation 4, Intuition 2, Leadership 5, Style 3, Subterfuge 7

Skills: Animal Ken 4, Archery 3, Disguise 3, Etiquette 5, Melee 4, Performance 3, Ride 2, Stealth 2, Survival 3

Knowledges: Academics 4, Camarilla Lore 4, Hearth Wisdom 3, History 5, Investigation 3, Linguistics (the languages of Eastern and Western Europe, and a smattering of Eastern and dead tongues) 6, Medicine 2, Occult 5, Politics 5, Sabbat Lore 5

Disciplines: Animalism 6, Auspex 2, Celerity 2, Dominate 4, Fortitude 3, Potence 3, Protean 4, Thaumaturgy 5, Vicissitude 5 (**Note:** Dracula's knowledge of Thaumaturgy is actually the *koldunic* sorcery of the Tzimisce. Unless you have the rules for Koldunic Sorcery, which will appear in **Blood Magic**, assume Dracula has achieved Level Five in the Path of Blood, Elemental Mastery, the Green Path and Spirit Manipulation, and Level Two in Countermagic.)

Backgrounds: Fame 5, Herd 5, Resources 5, Retainers 5

Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 3, Courage 4

Morality: Humanity 3

Willpower: 8

REBEKAH, MONITOR OF CHICAGO

Background: As a street urchin of illegitimate parentage in first-century Judea, Rebekah spent her childhood in Roman-occupied Jerusalem, a strife-ridden time and place where one misstep could prove fatal. She was rescued from the streets and forced into the life of a servant-girl attending a lesser patrician. As were so many of her ancestry and station, she was regularly beaten and made victim to her master's unwholesome desires, and soon she learned to hate the aristocracy and all they represented.

Other dissidents, noting her discontent, her strategic position as adjutant to a city official, and the uses to which she

might be put, took the adolescent Rebekah into their confidence. Zealots, they came to be called in those early days — rebels who would not submit to the Roman idol-worshippers, their pagan practices or their avarice-borne taxpayer census. These insurgents, led by Judas of Galilee, maintained normal-seeming lives as subservient elements of the citizenry while spearheading civil disobedience, information networks, and even covert acts of upheaval behind the scenes. Rebekah soon acclimated to this notion of a double life by collecting missives and snippets of overheard conversation from her master's chambers and redistributing them among her newfound brethren.

But it was not enough. The servant-girl longed to do more, to be more, to strike a genuine blow against these invaders who would gorge themselves while others endured want. Her stubborn fervor and seemingly limitless determination ultimately put her in contact with a circle of like-minded extremists. These *sicarii* — “dagger-men,” political assassins so radical that not even the Zealots would associate with them — gladly welcomed a female recruit into their midst. Rebekah's master was found shortly thereafter with a blade buried in his throat, and his former servant left behind the life she had known for an exhilarating dual existence along the razor's edge.

At length, her involvement with the *sicarii* came to an end — her last target, an elder of the Roman court, made her continued stay in Jerusalem too dangerous. Rebekah fled south from the city and there sought refuge at the estate of an anonymous benefactor, a retired statesman and sympathizer to her cause....

And there Elihu the Monitor (then going by the name of Elias Andronicus) of Clan Ventrue taught her that other arenas existed wherein the battle against injustice and oppression might be fought.

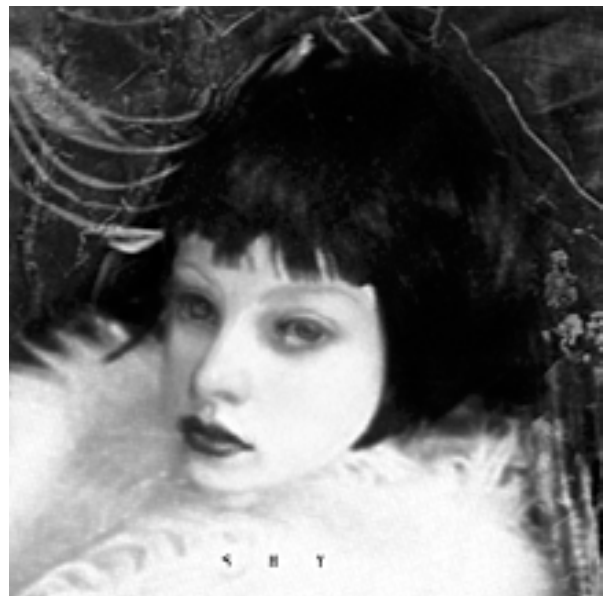
Rebekah's activities and whereabouts faded somewhat from Cainite view at this time; she was never one to maintain close ties with her clanmates, and her sire bade her accompany him from a Palestine that was no longer safe. They became lovers, traveling the continent for centuries, sampling what pleasures the Mediterranean and adjacent territories had to offer until fate and ill fortune trapped them in the wrong time and place: Barcelona, staging ground for the Spanish Inquisition. Rebekah and Elihu quickly found themselves little better than prisoners, besieged on all sides by race-based persecution and rapidly tightening nets of witch-hunters.

Their rescue came in the form of Rafael de Corazon, Renaissance craftsman and father of the august body history would later call the Camarilla. The Toreador offered them membership in his fledgling order in exchange for their withdrawal from the mortal world. Although Rebekah wanted to refuse his offer and challenge what she perceived as de Corazon's cowardice, Elihu unhesitatingly pledged their cooperation and support. The particulars following this first and

fatal disagreement between sire and childe are not publicly known, but Rebekah left the city of Barcelona alone and unfettered. The elder Ventrue was never heard from again.

Again she wandered the globe, perhaps haunted by the ramifications of what she had done, perhaps seeking something more than the parasitic existence she had been leading for millennia. Her travels took her to the eastern Cathayan shores, lands Elihu had always sought to visit. Like many others of the Inconnu, whose ranks she would later join, she chased the redemption of Golconda there for a time. One rumor has Rebekah allegedly subsisting for months at a time without feeding, a residual benefit of her experiments with such ascetic's practices as ritual starvation. Atop Mount Ararat, she was approached by an ancient unlike any she had previously encountered — a Cainite, countless millennia old, who claimed to be Rafael's sire. The Methuselah told her of others like herself, powerful elder vampires who wished only the blessing of solitude with which to while away eternity. Rebekah joined the ranks of the Inconnu the next evening.

For nearly two centuries since joining the enigmatic Inconnu, the Ventrue Methuselah has served as Monitor of Chicago. Lodin's fall has thrown the city into a state of continuous flux, and her observations are needed now more than ever. But Rebekah herself has not proven immune to this upheaval — the rise of the anarch presence has rekindled primal, irresistible urges in her, brought old memories to the surface and inspired her to cross the line between watching and acting. Already she has met with the insurgents left in Maldavis' wake (what many of these dissidents do not realize is that Maldavis herself was more often than not a lens Rebekah used to spy upon and guide the anarchists for years). It is only a matter of time before she marshals their number to some — any — end.



And in so doing she will sunder all ties with the Inconnu. Can their retribution be far behind?

Image: Rebekah bears the classical beauty of a Renaissance painting or Roman sculpture. While not exactly “gorgeous” in a modern context, the combination of her mystical, vampiric allure and divine bearing make her tremendously attractive. Her wavy black hair frames a pair of green eyes, and her skin has the tone (and feel) of fine marble. Rebekah dresses to fit into the crowd by adopting modern fashions and shedding them almost before they change. She is remarkably adept at portraying the mannerisms of young vampires — which other vampires more than two millennia in age have difficulty doing.

Roleplaying Hints: You are the ideal urban huntress — young-looking, attractive, educated, practiced at blending in and interacting with a variety of cultures and social strata, equally comfortable snorting cocaine, spooning caviar, or satisfying the baser needs of men and women. Your recent decision to reenter the world of mortal (and Kindred) affairs has freed you from age-old shackles of ennui and reawakened a familiar fire, an animal ferocity you find quite appealing, even stimulating. Once again, you are the Rebekah of old: angry, defiant, self-assured, *alive*, and you will not be restrained.

Clan: Ventrue

Sire: Elias Andronicus (Elihu — deceased)

Nature: Rebel

Demeanor: Thrill-Seeker

Generation: Unknown (A known diablerist, Rebekah is believed to have consumed the soul of her sire, among others), generally placed at 5th or 6th.

Embrace: A.D. 12

Apparent Age: mid-20s

Physical: Strength 5, Dexterity 6, Stamina 5

Social: Charisma 5, Manipulation 6, Appearance 5

Mental: Perception 7, Intelligence 6, Wits 8

Talents: Alertness 6, Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Dodge 5, Empathy 4, Leadership 3, Subterfuge 5

Skills: Animal Ken 3, Drive 1, Etiquette 2, Melee 4, Performance 3, Ride 3, Stealth 5, Survival 2, Vamp 3

Knowledges: Academics 1, Area Knowledge (Chicago) 7, Computer 1, Finance 1, Investigation 5, Linguistics (You’ve heard of it? She speaks it.) 8, Medicine 4, Occult 5, Politics 4

Disciplines: Animalism 2, Auspex 6, Celerity 2, Dominate 6, Fortitude 4, Obfuscate 5, Potence 3, Presence 5, Protean 5, Thaumaturgy 4

Thaumaturgical Paths: Path of Blood 4, Green Path 2

Backgrounds: Contacts 5, Resources 4, Retainers 2

Virtues: Conscience 4, Self-Control 5, Courage 3

Morality: Humanity 6

Willpower: 7

MAHATMA, MONITOR OF ISLANBUL

Background: Mahatma has involved himself with *Byzantium*’s history for as long as any Cainite can remember, perhaps even before the arrival of Theusa, the city’s true founder. From within his haven, Mahatma directed the city’s growth, and considered himself *Byzantium*’s shepherd. He drew the greatest artists and architects from across the known world to build *Byzantium*, a jewel on the road to the east. He regretted his earlier depredations (or perhaps feared losing his sanity to the wassail) and wanted to regain some of the beauty he had lost. It was ever a difficult task, as the city changed hands between the Spartans and Athenians many times, and each occurrence led to the city’s near destruction.

Constantine brought a definite end to the effort. His forces razed *Byzantium* to the ground, enslaved the surviving population and installed Constantine as ruler. Mahatma himself nearly fell into torpor from grievous wounds inflicted in a battle with Roman Cainites. Three Methuselaha accompanied the invaders: the Toreador Michael, an ancient creature recently converted to Christianity; the Ventrue Antonius, an empire builder who sought a way to supplant the Romans; and the Dracon, a mysterious Tzimisce who sought to reshape the world in his own image.

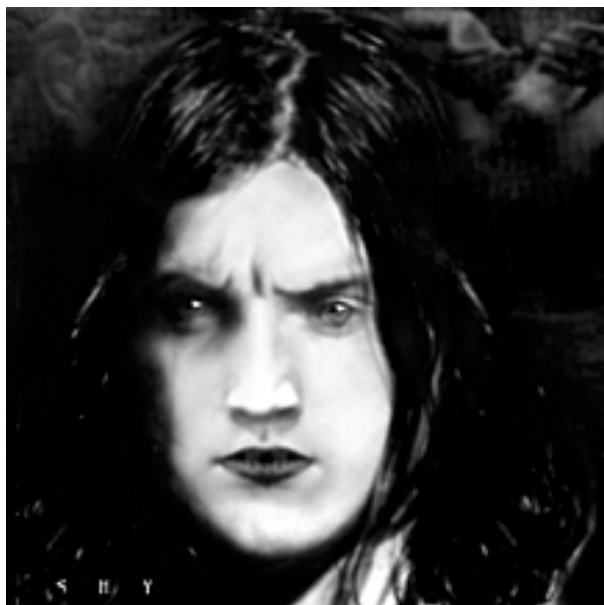
Rather than face this formidable trio directly, Mahatma left to gather strength and knowledge with which to combat them. He traveled the limits of the known world and beyond, seeking pawns for his personal crusade. He sent Cainite and mortal alike to raid his beloved city without thought for their survival. Any whom he could not manipulate, he destroyed.

When the Beast raged against the core of his sanity, Mahatma met the one who would change the course of his unlife forever. He found this Cainite at the heart of some city along the Mediterranean, which one he does not recall. The mysterious vampire challenged his assumptions with maddening riddles for which Mahatma could see no solution and games for which he saw no purpose. Yet, he could see that he faced a being of power who could perhaps break the Romans’ hold over his city.

Mahatma tried every possible trick to convince this Cainite to aid him in his quest, but nothing worked. When he tired of these games, he found he could not move to strike down the creature. He realized then that no force at his command could move this being, and he offered to learn from the mysterious vampire instead. The Cainite opened a third eye and introduced himself as the prophet Saulot.

Saulot guided Mahatma on the path to Golconda for several decades, and Mahatma grew to rely upon the Antediluvian’s tutelage. He found the hope Saulot offered to be a flash of light within the darkness his unlife had become. On the night that Saulot disappeared without warning, Mahatma fell into a frenzy that ravaged an entire village.

When Mahatma returned to his senses and saw how far he had fallen from Saulot’s teachings in only a few short hours, he sank into the earth. He lay there for many nights



and heard the mourning and outrage when other mortals found the destruction he had wrought. He thought he could hear Saulot's thoughts nearby, but they were elusive and he was unsure. Slowly, gripped by ennui and self-loathing, he slipped into torpor.

Mahatma dreamed of Tremere's crime of Amaranth and the Triumvirate's eventual fall — Antonius' destruction, the Dracon's departure and Michael's descent into delusion.

Upon awakening, Mahatma returned to his beloved *Byzantion*, only to find it devastated by crusader and barbarian, most of its beauty stolen or destroyed. He saw the outcome of his earlier manipulations and nearly returned to torpor.

As Mahatma again returned to the earth's embrace, however, he heard Saulot's voice in his dreams. Each night, the voice grew louder and more insistent, and finally it drove him from the earth. Saulot instructed him to return to the path, to regain what he had lost when Saulot left him.

Mahatma tries to reach Golconda, but he has yet to near that goal. He believes he is close now, closer than ever before. Saulot's voice has long since left him, but he believes he is strong enough to continue on his own.

Now, Mahatma observes the Cainites of Istanbul and watches for ones whom he deems worthy of redemption. He has found only one such being: Justinian of the Nosferatu. Mahatma communicates his intentions to Justinian through dreams and visions. He uses his power to protect the Nosferatu from the ravages of the Jyhad so that this protégé might find the way to Golconda — and perhaps show Mahatma what has eluded him all these centuries. The Inconnu finds his patience slipping, however; he may kill Justinian and seek another pupil.

Mahatma does not hesitate to destroy any unwelcome additions to the city's population, although he never does so directly. He has networks of spies and contacts among the mortal population who do this work for him. He does not want to see the Inquisition follow indiscreet Cainites into his city.

Now, Mahatma observes and rarely interferes. He quietly supports the Ventrue Prince Mustafa through his advisor, the Toreador Nakshidil. Specifically, he has Justinian watch her. Mahatma tutors Justinian through dreams and visions in the ways of the Inconnu and hopes eventually to reveal more to him. Justinian's duties also include watching for those who truly seek Golconda and bringing them to Mahatma's attention. It should be noted that the Inconnu often poses as Justinian's sire.

Image: Mahatma never shows his true appearance to others. He often appears as a young mortal man of great beauty, a physically perfect specimen of manhood, almost akin to Michelangelo's "David" come to life. He has alabaster skin and long, black hair, which falls straight down his back. When he shows this face, Mahatma prefers to follow mortal fashion trends. When he feels penitent, he shows the face of a particularly hideous Nosferatu, acrawl with lice, ticks and other unsavory creatures and dressed in the stinking rags of a leper.

Roleplaying Hints: Conceal yourself from the Kindred and their constant questions. You don't have the time to deal with curiosity seekers who lack commitment. When you do find individuals who are worthy of salvation, you send Justinian to contact them before you make any final determination regarding their fate. Kindred who do not measure up are destroyed. You love to spend time in Istanbul's Kumkapi district nightclubs in an attempt to connect with mortals. Even so, you are frustrated by the weight of centuries that separates you from them. When you desire isolation, you visit the Topkapi museum and castle, which encompasses *Byzantion's* original boundaries. One night each week, the castle is closed to the public so that you alone may enjoy its splendor and the memories it brings you.

Clan: Unknown

Sire: Laodice

Nature: Architect

Demeanor: Loner

Generation: 4th

Embrace: Unknown

Apparent Age: early 20s

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 5, Manipulation 4, Appearance 5

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 6, Wits 4

Talents: Acting 4, Alertness 6, Brawl 2, Dodge 4, Empathy 4, Intimidation 5, Leadership 3, Subterfuge 4

Skills: Etiquette 4, Performance 3, Stealth 5, Survival 5

Knowledges: Academics 5, Finance 3, Investigation 4, Linguistics 6, Occult 5, Politics 4

Disciplines: Auspex 8, Dominate 6, Fortitude 5, Mortis 6 (see *Vampire: The Dark Ages*), Obeah 7, Obfuscate 8, Potence 3, Presence 7, Protean 3

Backgrounds: Allies 5, Contacts 5, Influence 6, Resources 6, Status 6

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

Morality: Humanity 9

Willpower: 9

DONDINNI, MONITOR OF GENOA

Background: "It's the quiet ones you have to watch out for," or so the saying goes. Although the Camarilla pays little attention to Italy's principal port of Genoa, Dondinni, the resident monitor, knows something is wrong in his city. He happens to be the fourth monitor in residence at Genoa in the past millennium, and he is the only one to have survived so long. Dondinni is also highly unorthodox for a member of the Inconnu. His outspoken manner and his crusade against vampires whom he believes to be "tools of the Antediluvians" may risk his position within the Inconnu.

Dondinni came from Genoa during the Dark Ages. He recalls those hard nights like a man tasting ash; the central rule of Rome was gone, chaos gripped the countryside, and monsters sated their bloodthirsty appetites on the frightened populace. Dondinni called it Hell then, but now he knows it was but a shadow of coming Gehenna.

As a mortal peasant, Dondinni proved adept at survival and hiding, two qualities that brought him to the attention of the Genoese Nosferatu. These creatures needed mortal help as much as Dondinni needed their assistance to survive. He agreed to be their eyes by day, watching out for mortal agents of their enemies, whereas they offered him food and a place



to sleep. Never mind that the food was cooked rat, or the shelter a dank, abandoned cistern; it was still sanctuary from the beasts roaming the long nights. The relationship worked so well that the Nosferatu probably never planned to Embrace Dondinni. Instead, they ghoulled him to better withstand the ravages of disease and time. Dondinni lived centuries beyond his natural span, enduring the curses of both Cainite and mortal domains.

Dondinni never wanted to become Nosferatu, but fate dictated otherwise. When Pope Urban II called for a Crusade to free Jerusalem from the "infidels," the effort drew devout kine and Cainites alike. The Genoese Nosferatu sent Dondinni ahead of the first Crusaders to warn a handful of Nosferatu allies in Sidon and Tyre. Despite the hardships of the journey, Dondinni succeeded in his task several weeks before the second wave of crusaders swept through the region (the first wave perished in Anatolia). He even returned with the Nosferatu Hauzal, an ally of the Genoese.

When Hauzal and Dondinni arrived Genoa, they found the resident Nosferatu destroyed. Something had ravaged Dondinni's allies. Only streaks of dried vitae and piles of cold ash remained. Hauzal and Dondinni fled from Genoa that same night; centuries would pass before either returned. During this period, Dondinni served Hauzal in Madrid and eventually accepted the Embrace. As the years wore on and the Sabbat and Camarilla formed, however, Hauzal remained hidden and neutral. He advised Dondinni to do the same. Centuries after Dondinni's Embrace, Hauzal finally told Dondinni he was Inconnu, and another two centuries passed before the Inconnu admitted Dondinni into their ranks.

Dondinni is one of the youngest members of the Inconnu and often considered brash and arrogant by his superiors. Still, his skill as an observer is hard to dismiss. Given his knowledge of Genoa, he was the natural choice as the city's new monitor. In this role, Dondinni makes no secret of his efforts to uncover the fate of the Genoese Nosferatu 900 years ago, but the more he learns about Genoa, the less he understands. Dondinni's three Inconnu predecessors suffered the same brutal fate that befell the region's Nosferatu. The Kindred of Genoa remain quiet in Italy's fractured political arena, as if avoiding undue attention. In many ways, they act more like frightened prey than like vampires. Dondinni believes something makes its home beneath Genoa, but any theories he might have are exactly that: theories.

Dondinni has not found any proof apart from the destroyed vampires that some force is afoot. The young monitor has also been digging deeper into ancient records and archives, as well as formulating theories about Gehenna and the proliferation of minor bloodlines as an omen (in particular, the Daughters of Cacophony, whom he believes are tools of the Antediluvians). Dondinni has even suggested trying to guide sects such as the Sabbat to do the Inconnu's dirty work. Naturally, this notion triggered an Inconnu backlash despite Dondinni's unswerving loyalty to Hauzal and his superiors.

Now, the Inconnu question Dondinni's ability to remain neutral... and Dondinni debates with himself nightly as to whether or not neutrality is the best policy.

Image: Dondinni suffers the disfiguring curse of all Nosferatu. His uneven teeth jut from his mouth as if trying to escape, and his eyes protrude like those of a frog. Dondinni's skin is pulled taut over his frame, revealing individual bones and thin, stringy muscles. Most of his hair has fallen out, with only random strands left intact. He moves like a hunter, never facing straight but always sideways. He looks around constantly, and his eyes never stop darting from side to side.

Roleplaying Hints: You are loyal to the Inconnu, but its members' actions frustrate you. They cannot remain hidden and still hope to win against the Antediluvian threat. The Camarilla is too petty, the Sabbat too divided and the Inconnu too removed to stop Gehenna. Rather than betraying your elders, however, you abide by their decisions but continue to crusade for what you believe is right.

Clan: Nosferatu

Sire: Hauzal

Nature: Visionary

Demeanor: Survivor

Generation: 6th

Embrace: 1132

Apparent Age: varies

Physical: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Appearance 0

Mental: Perception 5, Intelligence 4, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 5, Empathy 4, Interrogation 3, Intrigue 4, Leadership 2, Scrounging 4, Search 4, Streetwise 5, Subterfuge 5

Skills: Animal Ken 4, Firearms 2, Melee (staff) 4, Security 3, Stealth 5, Survival 3

Knowledges: Academics 1, Area Knowledge (Genoa) 5, Bureaucracy 3, Camarilla Lore 3, City Secrets (Genoa) 4, Expert Knowledge: Inconnu Lore 3, Investigation 5, Linguistics (French, Latin) 2, Occult 4, Politics 5, Research 4, Sabbat Lore 3

Disciplines: Animalism 4, Auspex 3, Celerity 2, Dominate 2, Fortitude 3, Obfuscate 7, Potence 6, Protean 4, Vicissitude 3

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

Virtues: Conscience 3, Self-Control 4, Courage 5

Morality: Humanity 9

Derangements: Phobia: fire (Dondinni fears fire more than the average Kindred; his difficulty for Röttschreck rolls is always 10)

Willpower: 7

