

A CHRONICLE FOR VAMPIRE: THE MASQUERADE

THE CRIMSON GUTTER



VAMPIRE

THE MASQUERADE



THE VEINS OF THE CITY FLOW WITH BLOOD!

You've been Embraced, brought into the night and left to fend for yourself with your coterie. Now what?

The Crimson Gutter provides a starter chronicle, designed to help novice or experienced Storytellers run any introductory game of **Vampire: The Masquerade**. *The Crimson Gutter* chronicle introduces core concepts during play such as feeding, the sects (Anarchs, Camarilla, and the Church of Caine), and the Masquerade itself while giving the players' characters a chance to carve a niche for themselves among the Kindred. The 21 stories contained within can be played in isolation or strung together to form multiple arcs of a chronicle.

Experienced Storytellers can easily adapt these stories to their own chronicles, drawing from them to fill an evening of play or adapting whole story arcs. Within the pages of *The Crimson Gutter*, you'll find:

- A city setting adaptable to any fictional or real city, including eight recurring locations and more than 20 recurring Storyteller characters
- Highly adaptable stories designed to be changed and repurposed according to the actions of the characters
- Suitable for new Storytellers who want to introduce the basics of **Vampire** and experienced Storytellers who want to run a street-level chronicle or re-introduce and emphasize basic concepts of the game
- Stories tailored to joining or opposing the Anarchs, Camarilla, and the Church of Caine
- Three appendices provide additional fodder for dropping in feeding complications, fleshing out locations, and future stories.



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VAMPIRE

THE MASQUERADE

THE CRIMSON GUTTER

A Chronicle for
Vampire: The Masquerade



VAMPIRE

THE MASQUERADE

THE CRIMSON GUTTER

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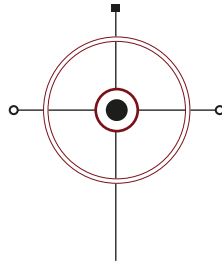


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Let's Dance



It's been a while since my own Embrace, but I still remember those first nights. The horror of it, realizing I could no longer see my family in the light of the sun. Becoming conscious of the pulse under the delicate skin of their necks. I could have made so many mistakes, thrown away my inheritance on one bad choice fueled by the Hunger. But I didn't.

Why?

I was Embraced to the Camarilla. My sire gave me this chance and guided me through the process step by step, teaching the Traditions and forcing me to step away from my mortal relations until I knew how to deal with them.

I've worked hard for the Camarilla. The business concerns my family built over the decades are mine now, growing and developing thanks to the support of my Kindred. Tonight, I can say that whatever the Camarilla in this city does, it's on my dime.

I'm proud of that.

What do you get when you're Embraced into the Anarchs or by one of the autarkis? You enter the night in ignorance, driven by your fear and Hunger, killing because you know nothing else. Your mortal existence disappears as you destroy the mask that you were born with, for no other reason than an ignorant lack of self-control.

We always think of this as a tragedy, the fledgling screaming their terror and loneliness. Yet, some of them enjoy it from the start. They imagine themselves as the kings and queens of the crimson gutter, dangerous predators lording over the dark city as they suck the meager lifeblood of hapless vagrants.

That is no way to exist. Serve your betters. Look good while you're doing it. Bide your time. You will be richly rewarded just as I was and will be.

— CLEO DRUMMOND
AN ASPIRING CAMARILLA MEMBER

“Think back to those first nights as Caine wanders the Land of Nod! Once upon a time, our Dark Father was mortal, just like any of us. He was a farmer, tending the land and growing fruits and vegetables. He understood the cycle of life, day turning into night, summer to winter. He was deeply enmeshed in the world of the living.

When God transformed him into the first and greatest of his Dark Angels, do you think he explained himself? Sat down with Caine to have discourse on what was needed and expected?

No!

Caine was left to roam, and suddenly in his eyes the Land of Nod had changed. It was no longer a land of change, life, and growth. No, it was a land of darkness, death, and decay. Yet in those first nights of his blessed state, the Dark Father didn't succumb to despair. He grasped the meaning of his newfound existence. He knew what was asked of him!

We must be like the Dark Father in the Land of Nod! Even though the answers are hidden from us, even though we must find our own purpose, we are still here for a reason! And that reason will give us strength to resist the Hunger inside us!”

— BYRON ROCHA
CHURCH OF CAINE PRIEST

You've leafed through *Vampire: The Masquerade*. Perhaps you've experimented with making a few characters or run a session or two as the Storyteller. The next step is to run a chronicle. That's where this book comes in. *The Crimson Gutter* is an introductory chronicle designed to get your characters on the streets.

The events of the chronicle showcase a young coterie coming to their own in a divided city. At the start, they're clueless nobodies barely able to survive night to night. By the end, they have made their reputation in at least one of the factions fighting over the city's feeding grounds.

Your Story

This chronicle—as written down in this book—is not intended to tell a single, coherent story. Rather, it's a toolbox containing supporting characters, locations, and scenes you can mesh together into a chronicle of your own. It all comes together in the action of roleplaying!

For this reason, the goal here has been to present easily customizable options and alternatives so the chronicle can react to what the players' characters are doing. After all, they're the main characters of this story. Everything they do should matter.

The chronicle is composed of stories, each meant to provide roughly a single session of play, although duration may vary greatly depending on your storytelling style and how your players approach the action. As the characters make choices, some story options open up to them, while others are discarded.

There are four chapters of stories. The starting point is the story path First Steps (see p. 51). It details the initial experiences of the characters as they try to adjust to their new existence in the city and meet some of the Kindred for the first time. The depredations of a wight, a vampire lost to the Beast, grant the coterie an opportunity to distinguish themselves.

As they get a better idea of who's who among the local Kindred, the characters find out about the two great sects, the Anarchs and the Camarilla. They were not Embraced into either sect but both offer the chance to join. Each sect has its own chapter and storyline, showcasing the Anarchs' commitment to freedom and the Camarilla's reliance on tradition and authority.

While the characters consider their options, a third choice emerges: The Church of Caine, the subject of the fourth and last story chapter. The Church is not a sect and numbers both Anarch and Camarilla Kindred among its members, but it has a modicum of power in the domain and could possibly shelter the characters against more powerful enemies. The Church can also offer truths, or at least tales, that help make sense of a Kindred's existence.

In practice, the stories will intersect in play, combining with scenes from the characters' nightly existence. In a single session, you might play a feeding scene, a scene where the characters interact with a Touchstone, the opening of one story and the conclusion of another. The interests and goals of the players and their characters will guide the action.

This means that especially more experienced Storytellers can just raid this book for spare parts. We present a series of roughly single-session stories you can use in sequence or independently of each other, fitting them into your own chronicle with whatever adjustments you feel necessary. The material in this book is designed to be modular, ready to be torn apart and remixed.

Similarly, the supporting characters and locations presented here can be renamed and repurposed to fit the specifics of the game you're storytelling.

CONTENT WARNING

Vampire: The Masquerade is a game of personal and political horror where you portray a blood-sucking monster in a world that resembles the real world. You should tailor this chronicle to your group's preferences to bring about that good discomfort that people enjoy from the horror genre. In addition to themes inherent in Vampire such as blood, bodily fluids and deception, you might need to consider elements such as mention of drug and alcohol use, questionable consent, kidnapping, self-harm, gun violence, human trafficking and torture, not to mention violent death and outright murder

Please take time to discuss these topics with your group and adjust the story as appropriate using the Advice for Considerate Play section in *Vampire*, p. 421.

“I’ve heard that line before, about Anarchs prowling the gutters.

What those greedy twits don’t tell you is that you don’t get to be a lord of the night when you join the Camarilla.

No, you’ll be some entitled, privileged little shit’s personal servant for all eternity.

At least with us, you can have dignity.

And a chance to fuck with those who think they can fuck with you.”

— BO CUNNINGHAM
ANARCH TROUBLEMAKER

Domains

In this city, neither the Camarilla nor the Anarchs have managed to gain dominance. Both have their own domains scattered across the city. The Camarilla holds centers of power, the financial district, and wealthier residential areas. The Anarchs hold the nightlife district and city center, as well as poorer residential areas.

A third of the city is not claimed by anyone, making it possible for the players' characters to claim a domain even early on. Multiple stories in this book involve claiming more domain, and after a certain point the question may be more about holding onto it. After all, as many Kindred have found, policing your holdings can be hard work.

The local culture among the Kindred is such that to hold a domain, you have to be actively interested in enforcing and policing your claim. If you make claims beyond your abilities, you will be challenged and possibly ridiculed. This is why none of the city's Kindred, even the Camarilla Prince, has chosen to make sweeping claims.

The chief purpose of a domain is feeding. If you know your feeding ground and take care not to overexpose it to undead predation, it's much easier to sustain yourself as a vampire. Conversely, if you don't have a domain you can reliably feed in, you're in trouble. Masquerade breaches and other issues crop up more often, and you're closer to succumbing to the Beast because you're so hungry all the time. If you poach on someone else's domain, you may be subjected to a Camarilla Blood Hunt or just get beaten up by the Anarchs.

The obvious way to control a domain is to threaten any Kindred you catch poaching. However, you can put down deeper roots by owning properties, creating relationships with local business owners, and making ghoulies of cops and organized crime figures. This way, you know what happens in the domain, find it much easier to hide when needed, and can resist takeover attempts more effectively.

There's a distinct difference in style between the sects when it comes to local influence. The Camarilla's members prefer money, ownership, and bribery, while most Anarchs do better with personal connections and relationships.

WHERE?

This book is set in a floating domain not anchored to any specific city. You can easily adapt it to work anywhere in the US or Canada, and with a bit of effort, in other countries as well. A popular choice is to set the chronicle in your own city. After all, it's the town you probably know best! Alternatively, you can choose a nearby bigger urban area.

If the game is set in your own city, you can replace the locations in this book with other, similar ones that you're familiar with. After all, a location you and your players have personally visited in real life may seem that much more tangible when encountered in the chronicle. When you consider renaming some or all of the supporting characters, think about what kind of people live in the city you have chosen. For example, if there's a lot of people there from a specific minority, it makes sense for that minority to be represented among the supporting characters as well.

One possibility is to set the chronicle in a well-known city such as New York, adapting the locations given here to the new milieu. This works especially well if your players are from different places. A famous setting is easier to approach by all of your players.

You can even create a fictitious city and set the game there, using the material provided here as is.

“This is a great city if you like your freedom, but if you’re working for these bastards, you got to know a few things. First, be independent. Don’t kneel for anyone. It’s a hard un-life because nobody’s got your back but you’ll be better off. Just make sure you’re useful. Otherwise they’ll end you. Me, I’m useful. The Camarilla is great if you can stomach the condescension. They tend to pay their debts. The Anarchs are the opposite: They talk a good game but they’re unreliable. Get it in advance if you can. And the Church of Caine... Sometimes they’re good for it. But you can’t trust someone who has the Dark Father telling them to fuck you over.”

—SIDNEY ABEL
INDEPENDENT COURIER

Reasons to Join

This chronicle works best if the characters feel like they have a real choice between different sects. Do they want to join the Camarilla or the Anarchs? Or do they wish to disregard both and seek a third option among the Church of Cain?

For this choice to work, all three factions should have obvious upsides despite their problems. If the characters feel that the best choice is to ignore all of them, the chronicle stalls. You may wish to discuss the general shape of the chronicle during session zero: In the beginning, the coterie figures out what it means to be a vampire, after which they may decide to throw their lot in with one group or another. This may be anticipated during character creation (see the section Character Creation, below) by making characters who might be interested in the Camarilla, the Anarchs or the Church of Caine.

With this in mind, here are a few points on which to sell the factions. Note that these are all subjective selling points, the kind of things a vampire from

a given faction might tell you if you ask them why you should join. They’re not objective truth about the world the Kindred exist in. Most importantly, the sects and the Church are a lot less pleasant than implied by these selling points. They’re composed of selfish bloodsucking monsters who are entirely willing to use whoever they can to advance their own agendas.

Those same monsters are often also practiced liars. These are the lies they tell to entice the inexperienced and the unwary.

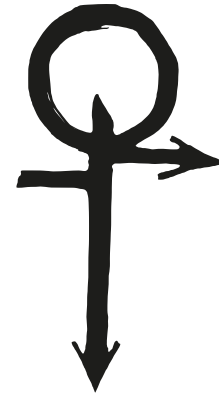




Camarilla

Join the Camarilla if you want security and power.

- Access to the Elysium where the beautiful, powerful, and influential gather. Even if your circumstances are grimy, at the Elysium you may pretend for a while to be a real success story, just like all the Kindred around you.
- Connections. The Kindred of the Camarilla do their best to influence and exploit any and all mortal institutions, especially ones with power and wealth. Perhaps if you develop the right connections in the sect, you can get a piece of the action.
- Support. You're afraid Second Inquisition hunters are after you or worry that a disgruntled ghoul will destroy you while you sleep. In the Camarilla, you can ask for advice from Kindred who have existed for a century, perhaps even more. In some domains, the role of Shadow exists specifically to guide younger and newer Kindred in their first steps in the sect.
- You're a vampire but that doesn't make you a monster! Or so the Kindred of the Camarilla say, convincingly enough that you can lie to yourself to make you feel better.



Anarchs

Join the Anarchs if you want freedom and community.

- Hang out at Anarch bars and get invited to Anarch parties, where other young Kindred will offer much-needed peer support. Have fun and let your hair down.
- Figure out how to exist as a vampire: where to hunt, how to accumulate a herd. It's easier when others who do it every night show you how.
- Pack mentality. Once you find a gang of your own or form one with your friends, you're members of the Anarchs. If the Camarilla or someone else fucks with you, you can call for help from your compatriots. You're a group of like-minded individuals supporting each other in difficult circumstances.
- Stay in touch with the mortal world. The Anarchs are connected to the world around them, and this helps you as you learn how to pretend you're still alive. You don't have to give up everything when you become a vampire.



Church of Caine

Join the Church of Caine if you want answers and self-improvement.

- **Privileged access to the Church:** its physical spaces, libraries, closed ceremonies, and financial resources.
- **Community.** Sometimes it's lovely being a vampire, and it feels good to know that there are others like you. Discuss your condition together, and you'll feel less alone.
- **Why do vampires exist? Where do you all come from? Are you eternally damned?** The Camarilla and the Anarchs are weak in answering the big questions, but the Church always has an explanation at hand.
- **Help against the Beast.** The struggle to retain your humanity doesn't have to be a solitary one. Kindred have fought the same war against the Beast for millennia, and the Church is the only entity you know of to actually try to build on all that experience.

Sacrificial Lambs

The chronicle assumes that the players' characters are interested in joining a group of Kindred. They can do so by following the story path of each group until they become mutually exclusive. But what if the characters are not interested in joining any group?

One way to motivate them without being unduly coercive is to introduce another group of young fledglings in similar circumstances as the players' characters. They can be rivals for the same domains, even enemies, or allies and compatriots, as the story demands. However, their function in the chronicle is to demonstrate what happens to those who have no protection.

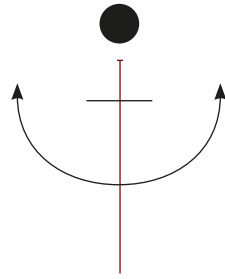
A vampire not protected by any of the factions has nobody to help them if someone decides to make them prey. That's just what happens to the wannabe-independent coterie. A Camarilla Sheriff or an Anarch gang boss decides that they're sitting on a valuable domain and kills them for "endangering the Masquerade."

Sacrificial lambs are also useful once the characters have joined a sect or a faction. In that situation, you can showcase the difference between propaganda and reality by letting the faction do something terrible to a coterie of supporting characters. If the worst happens to the players' characters immediately upon joining, there's a danger that they jump ship without exploring the story potential of the faction. This is why it often works better to have the faction be terrible towards someone else, perhaps even with assurances that they'd never do this to the players' coterie.

Examples of such actions are:

- **The Anarchs:** A thin-blood of poaching on their domain. The thin-blood protests that they didn't know and they thought shared their domains. The gangs execute them as a warning.
- **The Camarilla:** A prospective member arrives at Elysium without knowing that the Prince or someone else has already rejected them. Camarilla members are discreetly told that once the fledgling leaves Elysium, they're not under anyone's protection.
- **The Church of Caine:** Sometimes individual members of the Church come up with their own theological ideas, and sometimes this leads to the sacrifice of a fledgling member of the congregation. In the interests of the unity of the Church, all should pretend it didn't happen. ■





CHAPTER ONE

waking up in
THE GUTTER

“Last night, I saw a beautiful girl passed out on the sidewalk outside a nightclub. She had been so drunk, she’d needed to sit down on the curb to sober up. Only she’d fallen asleep, vulnerable in her pretty little dress.

What do you think I did? It’s not so often that the night provides a victim, perfectly set up to slake your thirst. Do you think I drank from her?

Oh no.

It’s no fun when it’s easy like that.

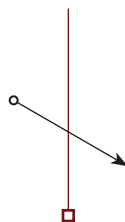
The legacy of Caine is the legacy of a hunter.

We must hunt, stalk, keep our instincts sharp. If we don’t, we’ll find ourselves hunted in turn.

I left the girl lying there, a freebie for the next lick to come along.

Later, I found a policeman who provided a good, satisfying chase. Even fought back, which was nice.”

—AN TRAN
 AN ANARCH AND A MEMBER
 OF THE CHURCH OF CAINE



The character is the player's window into the world of **Vampire**. They experience the opportunities and challenges, the dangers and temptations of *The Crimson Gutter* chronicle through their characters, taking the perspective of the character as their own.

In this chapter, we lay down the basics of the chronicle both for the Storyteller and the players. The players create characters and the Storyteller learns about the supporting characters and locations important for the stories in later chapters.

Character Creation

Creating a character for *The Crimson Gutter* chronicle makes use of the basic character creation rules in *Vampire*, p. 135, with the adjustments detailed below. You should create the characters together as a troupe during session zero.

All of the characters in the coterie are young fledglings, Embraced within the last six months. They have just about managed to get to grips with the very basics of vampiric existence, but things like hunting and the Hunger still give them plenty of trouble.

The characters have banded together for mutual protection and companionship, forming a coterie and sharing a haven. They might be confused about what's going on, but at least they know they're not alone. Their mutual presence tells them that there are more vampires out there.

Step by Step

These are the adjustments to be made to the character creation process:

Core Concept: Concepts that work well in a street-level chronicle set in a single domain are the best. Examples are a corrupt cop fired for being a little too obvious about being on the take, a club kid who didn't quite realize how dangerous the local scene really was, and a journalist who lost their job because they were Embraced into the Nosferatu and became unable to maintain a mortal identity.

Concepts that would work less well include a biker who leaves town at the first sign of trouble, a rock star Embraced into the Toreador, and a multimillionaire ready to join the undead elite.

Clan and Sire: The players can choose any clan which suits their fancy, bearing in mind that their characters will not be connected to any sort of clan-based organization such as the Tremere might have.

After each player has chosen a clan for their character, they should choose a sire, working together with the Storyteller. Table 1 focuses on the clans found in the core *Vampire: The Masquerade* rulebook, while Table 2 includes clans found in the *Players Guide* and other sourcebooks. You can find the sires starting from p. 22.

Your generation is the 13th unless otherwise noted. Note that if your sire is Nora McCreery, you'll be a thin-blood with a Blood Potency of 0. Otherwise, your Blood Potency is 1. If your character has a Generation of 11, their potential is higher than that of their peers. For that reason, you should choose an additional 1 point Flaw.

TABLE 1: CORE CLAN SIRES

















Clan Symbol	Clan
	Brujah: Rui da Costa, Donny Sheridan (Donny's childe will be of the 12th Generation)
	Caitiff: Bryce Garber or unknown (Storyteller: see Your True Sire on p. 82)
	Gangrel: Sidney Abel, Bo Cunningham
	Malkavian: Frida Boucher, Jerri Voss
	Nosferatu: Kieran Cotterill, Dexter Wilkins, An Tran, Carol Winfield
	Thin-Blooded: Nora McCreery (Nora's childe will be of the 15th Generation)
	Toreador: Mark Floros, Mateo Serrano
	Tremere: Marilyn Haig, Caroline Janson (Caroline's childe will be of the 11th Generation), Lesley Woodrow (Lesley's childe will be of the 11th Generation)
	Ventrue: Cleo Drummond (Cleo's childe will be of the 12th Generation), Fred Hartmann, Robert Vasile (Robert's childe will be of the 11th Generation)

TABLE 2: EXPANDED CLAN SIRES

Clan Symbol	Clan
	Banu Haqim: Mateo Serrano
	Hecata: Dexter Wilkins
	Lasombra: Marilyn Haig
	Ministry: Caroline Janson (Caroline's childe will be of the 11th Generation)
	Ravnos: Sidney Abel
	Salubri: Carol Winfield
	Tzimisce: Robert Vasile (Robert's childe will be of the 11th Generation)

Note that day-walking thin-blood characters work best in all-thin-blood chronicles. Mixing them with characters of higher Blood Potency may cause problems of pacing and focus if some characters are able to operate during the day and others not.

Note that some sires appear on multiple clan entires. This is because their clan depends on whether you're using the expanded clans presented in the *Vampire Players Guide* (and other *Vampire* books) or not. You may also choose to implement the options in the *Players Guide* only in part, for example by including Tzimisce in the domain but not Salubri. A good option is to include more

unusual clans if a player wants to play a specific one, and leave the others out.

If two or more characters share a clan, it's a good idea for them to share a sire as well, making them vampiric siblings. They might have been Embraced together or met and realized the truth about their connection later.

Attributes, Skills, and Disciplines: Assign these as per the usual character creation process. It's probably going to be useful if at least someone in the coterie has Streetwise and Investigation.

Predator: Skip the step where the players choose a Predator Type. This will happen later, during play. You should avoid the Predator Type Blood Leech because it's difficult to play in a *Crimson Gutter* chronicle.

Advantages: Choose Advantages as usual, with the exception that the thin-blood Merits Anarch Comrades and Camarilla Contract and the thin-blood Flaws Branded by the Camarilla and Shunned by the Anarchs are out of bounds because at the start of the chronicle, the coterie are still unknowns in local Kindred society. Not using them also keeps all options open for the characters later when they decide whether they want to join one of the city's factions.

The Background Fame is only allowed at one dot, Influence at a maximum of two dots, Resources at a maximum of two dots, and Mawla and Status are not allowed at all.

Convictions and Touchstones: Choose as per the usual character creation rules.

Predator Type: The players discover the Predator Types of their characters in play. See p. 53. This means they're not assigned during character creation.

Chronicle Tenets: The troupe should discuss and choose the Chronicle Tenets in use in their *The Crimson Gutter* chronicle. In *Vampire*, p. 172, there are four example sets of possible Tenets: Humanist, Creed of Justice, Gothic/Romantic and Street Code. All work for this purpose, each giving the chronicle their own flavor.

You may wish to come back to the Chronicle Tenets after completing the First Steps chapter in play. You can check if the Tenets you originally chose reflect the type of play you're engaging in and adjusting them if needed. The purpose of this is to make sure the mechanisms you use serve your style of play.

Sea of Time: The core *Crimson Gutter* chronicle assumes characters are built as childer.

TABLE 3: THE EMBRACE

None of the players' characters have had an easy Embrace. Most of their sires didn't take them in and teach them the basics of being undead. Choose one of these options to describe how you became a vampire, specifically in terms of your relationship with your sire.

In case the character doesn't know the name of the sire, the Storyteller should decide who the sire is and make a note of it in their records. The identity of the sire then becomes a revelation during play.



The Embrace

- 1 You were on a night out with your friends, drunk, high, or both. You got separated from them, ducking into a bar to go to the bathroom. You remember bizarrely pleasurable sensations and a fading consciousness before you woke up on the filthy tile floor, your panicking sire looking down on you before they said, "Sorry," and disappeared.
You know your sire's face but not their name.
- 2 You enjoyed a whirlwind romance, the kind that only seemed to happen in the movies. The fact that you only met them late at night added to the mystique. And the sex... You usually didn't remember much, but it always left you yearning for more. Then, one night in the throes of passion, your sire drank you dry and gave you a taste of their own Blood. You spent a few more nights with them, but something had changed. The connection was off, the spark had died. Then your sire ghosted you.
You know your sire's name and face. You know that outing them for their illegal Embrace could get them into trouble and have mixed feelings about whether you should do so. Do you want them to suffer the consequences when they might end up in their destruction?
- 3 You were kidnapped off the street, waking up in a derelict warehouse bound to a chair. Your screams muffled by a gag, you couldn't do anything as your sire walked up to you, drained you dry, and Embraced you. You remember the terror mixed with the filthy joy of the Kiss, a combination you're trying to forget. From the discussions you vaguely remember overhearing as you returned to consciousness as an undead monster, you've pieced together the idea that you were Embraced to be released into the domain of an enemy as a terror tactic. It must have failed because you've never run into this enemy. When you came you, the Hunger reared inside you and you murdered and drank dry one of your kidnappers, something you've had mixed feelings about ever since.
You know your sire's face but not their name.
- 4 You got the whole pitch: "Immortality", the Hunger, endless night, opportunity and loss. Your sire revealed the existence of vampires to you and gave you the choice to become one. Tempted by the idea of immortality and eternal youth, you accepted. Only, something went wrong and shortly after your Embrace, your sire just dumped you on the streets, obviously spooked. You still have no idea what happened. Your first night as a vampire resulted in a random passerby getting killed as you couldn't control yourself.
You know your sire's name and face. You feel a gnawing guilt that there might have been something wrong with you.
- 5 They called you a "blood doll" but you didn't quite understand what that meant. You just knew that when you got invited to mysterious private parties, you ended up having some of the most erotically charged experiences of your life, even if they later were hard to recall. At one of these parties, you were already feeling weak and lying on the floor when you heard shouting, accusations, crying and felt the taste of Blood on your lips.
You never received another invite. You know your sire's face but not their name. Sometimes you wonder if you failed in some way.
- 6 Your introduction into the world of the undead was better than most. At first, your sire just saw you as a regular source of blood, but eventually, you grew closer, and they offered you the Embrace. You became a vampire, perhaps regretting what you lost but grateful to your sire for the opportunity. All was well, until one night, you saw them staked and thrown into a van in the alley outside your sire's haven.
You know your sire's name and face. Your sire is not one of the Storyteller characters on the list but a new vampire, a neonate from your chosen clan, whom you should detail together with your Storyteller. They've been kidnapped and possibly killed by one of the vampiric factions of the city and may turn up later in the chronicle.
- 7 Your sire Embraced you as impersonally and coldly as possible, with only the pleasure of the Kiss to complicate the experience. They told you what you were and said you'd have to fend for yourself. If you survived, you were worthy. If not, you deserved to be destroyed.
You know your sire's name and face.
- 8 You remember being hit by a car; your newly mangled body thrown to the side of the road. You remember the taste of the Blood; how good it made you feel. You remember floating back to consciousness, lying in bed, before the darkness took you again. When you came to, you were in a hotel room paid for a week, registered under what was probably a false name. You have vague memories of a face but no idea if the Kiss was an act of mercy or something else.
You know your sire's face but not their name.
- 9 You knew your sire but never realized they were a vampire. They were just someone who was part of your mortal life and whom you hated very much. They were a venal, untrustworthy, malicious asshole, always there to make your existence just a tiny bit more miserable. What's worse, the feeling was reciprocated. Just how much, you discovered the night your sire Embraced you. Out of spite, to curse you into the night.
You know your sire's name and face.
- 10 Your sire is another player's character. In this case, you should hash out the circumstances of your Embrace together with your co-player, keeping in mind that both of your characters are cordial enough to share a haven. Pay attention to the generation this gives your character, as you may end up a thin-blood. Otherwise, you must share a clan with the character who's your sire.
As you discuss what happened during your Embrace, consider the fact that it will have been illegal and possibly has consequences for the sire down the road. Think also how the frenzy that often occurs in the immediate aftermath of an Embrace may complicate your relationship now.

TABLE 4: QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BLOOD

How do you feel about all that has happened to you? What kind of concerns do you have about being a vampire and where do you want to go? Do you still have dreams or have you thought of giving up?

Choose one of the options below to represent your character's feelings about being one of the Kindred. The purpose of this choice is to give you a basis for how to react to the ideas of the Anarchs, the Camarilla, and other factions as you may encounter them during the chronicle. Characters develop organically, so it's entirely possible your character reacts in a surprising way when these themes actually show up in play.

Your Embrace

1	You've seen the movies and the tv shows. Vampires are mysterious, glamorous, and most of all rich. You want to get in on this privileged unlife. It must be possible! Pop culture never lies! The only trouble is that this beautiful fantasy is at odds with the somewhat reduced circumstances in which you find yourself now.
2	You don't believe in going solo. You've always been a team player, feeling most comfortable when you're part of something bigger than yourself. When you became a vampire, the world felt very cold indeed, empty of anything you might relate yourself to beyond the Kindred in your coterie. But surely there must be something out there!
3	You've experimented a bit with your Blood. You've figured out that it has a powerful effect on mortals, making them stronger and healthier. You suspect that this is just the beginning. Someone out there has used the Blood and your inherent powers to a much greater effect, and you wish to learn from them.
4	You're clearly a vampire. You thirst for blood and have to skulk at night, hiding from the sun. But what does it all mean? Your instincts tell you that it's best to keep your condition a secret but surely the answers are out there, somewhere. Are there a lot of other vampires? Where do vampires come from? Can you regain your humanity and see the sun again without burning?
5	Sure, what happened to you raises existential questions, but what you really want is just practical advice. How to hide your true nature? Is it possible to hold onto the remnants of your mortal life? What to do when you lust after the blood of your family members? It'd be great to have others around you who have already dealt with these issues!
6	You're not so much religious in the traditional sense as you're a seeker, always looking for the grand stories and magnificent myths which will make sense of the world around you. You don't need them to be true or verifiable. What matters is that they make sense given your own experience. And right now, you need a story which explains why you're a vampire.
7	This is a temporary setback. Sure, there was a bump on the road when you lost your life and became undead. Not denying that. Your plans had to change. But there must be a way to become successful, to learn from the best, to join the elite! Every society has one, and that includes the society of the dead.
8	The Hunger gnaws at your very soul. This is not what you want. You want to be a good person, a normal considerate human, not this animal making you do terrible things. You know that addicts get better when they help each other and you believe such support must be available somewhere out there.
9	You and your pals are bloodsucking monsters. Sure, there are downsides. The hunt, having to hurt people. But it's also so cool! Nobody will mess with you again! Still, you feel somewhat vulnerable because of your inexperience. If there's a bigger gang, a tougher group out there, you'd love to join.
10	You don't see yourself dating a human. Not when their throbbing pulse makes you want to rip out their throats every time you get close. No, to increase your dating pool, you must get in touch with other vampires. Besides, vampires are hot and you're one, so this should work out splendidly!

The Coterie

The purpose of the choices presented in Tables 1 and 2 is to align your character with some of the themes and events which appear in the chronicle. You should fit all these bits and pieces, your clan, Skills, and the choices you made together, so they make a coherent character. Remember that sometimes it's okay to have seemingly discordant character elements, as they can point to inner conflicts that are interesting to play.

Here are some questions you can discuss as a troupe during Session zero after you've created your characters:

- How did the characters meet?
- Have the characters hunted together?
- Who proposed setting up a shared haven?
- What's your shared haven like?
- Do you hang out together or otherwise share in your nightly travails?
- Does the coterie have a leader, someone everyone looks to for answers?

The purpose of talking about these questions is to create a feeling of what your coterie is like. That's why it's fine to let the conversation meander, especially if you've budgeted plenty of time for your Session zero.

After you've talked enough to develop some basic group dynamics, you can choose a coterie type! (See *Vampire*, p. 197.) The recommended coterie types for *Crimson Gutter* chronicle are Blood Cult, Champions, Fang Gang, Hunting Party and Plumaire. Here are some possible options for why a coterie of each type could have come together:

Blood Cult: The characters have come together because each has been seeking answers to the mystery of their own vampirism. They know they're vampires, but what does that mean? That has developed into a blood cult of sorts as made-up half-truths about the mysterious powers of the night have helped a lot in convincing witless mortals to offer themselves as victims.

Champions: There are a lot of things wrong in this world but, perhaps you can use your powers to do some good! If you choose this coterie type, the story of the coterie in *The Crimson Gutter* chronicle

is likely to be that of corruption. You think you can do good, but your vampiric nature turns everything into a sordid mess. The characters could even seek to end vampiric depredations on the mortals living in this city, only to become compromised as they end up in Kindred society. Take care not to choose a cause that would make it impossible to interact with other Kindred socially, as much of the chronicle is about the characters' entrance into Kindred circles.

Fang Gang: This is probably the easiest coterie type to use with *The Crimson Gutter*. The characters are criminals, and came together as a coterie because they found each other through the city's criminal underworld. The world of the Kindred intersects with the world of crime anyway, so the characters may even have the sense that there are other Kindred out there beyond just their sires. With this coterie type, the question is what kind of a criminal enterprise the characters are involved in? Are they small time hoods or do they aim for something grander?

Hunting Party: The difference between this and other coterie types is that here, the characters have a solid handle on hunting. They might not know much about Kindred or occult matters, but they do know how to hunt for blood. This surely shapes their outlook when they come into contact with other Kindred. Their ability may make them valuable to other, more established Kindred and makes them seem more credible as vampires.

Plumaire: This is another easy coterie concept. The characters know each other and have joined as a coterie because they come from the same countercultural scene or some other mortal social group. Perhaps they all went to the same electronic music clubs, where the Kindred also liked to hunt. With this coterie type, you should take care to build some additional purpose and cohesion into the coterie to make sure they have a reason to stay together beyond a similar taste in music. For example, perhaps they feel protective of their own community and want to shield it from other Kindred... While corrupting it with their own influence.

Once you're done, it's time to put these characters into play!

Supporting Characters

The Kindred here are the ones the coterie is most likely to meet during their earliest nights. Some are as green as the coterie, while others have some measure of power and influence. This is a Storyteller section, as is most of this book. If a character has one of these supporting characters as their sire, the Storyteller may give them a few details on what the sire is like.

Each of these supporting characters could be a sire of a player's character. Most have ties to the Camarilla or Anarchs, but a few put their faith in the Church of Caine above any sect. Some even dare to go it alone as autarkis.

For some characters, an alternative clan is given in parentheses in case you wish to make use of the expanded clans presented in *Players Guide*.

Each character has a note called "As a Sire," detailing what they're ordinarily like in that role. If that characterization is at odds with the Embrace the childe's player chose during character creation, this discrepancy represents a lapse that the sire is now struggling with. If they're normally cold-blooded and calculating, why did they Embrace someone in the throes of emotion? They may even deny their own childe to preserve their own illusions.

Another note, "Betrayal," includes suggestions for how things can go wrong with each character. They represent the way the predatory, treacherous nature of the Kindred tends to turn community into communal horror. You don't have to implement all of these suggested betrayals! Use what fits the needs of your chronicle.

TABLE 5: THE FACTIONS

Here are all the supporting characters introduced in this section, broken down by faction.

Autarkis	Anarch	Camarilla	The Church of Caine
Sidney Abel	Bo Cunningham	Frida Boucher	Rui da Costa
Dexter Wilkins	Rui da Costa	Rui da Costa	Marilyn Haig
Carol Winfield	Bryce Garber	Kieran Cotterill	Fred Hartmann
	Fred Hartmann	Cleo Drummond	An Tran
	Caroline Janson	Mark Floros	Jerri Voss
	Nora McCreery	Marilyn Haig	
	Donny Sheridan	Mateo Serrano	
	An Tran	Robert Vasile	
	Jerri Voss	Lesley Woodrow	
	Emily Coldara		
	Shara Allen		
	Marcus Gallowglass		

The supporting characters are aspects of the night-to-night existence of a vampire: the tragic, the ambitious, the monstrous.

STORYTELLER CHARACTER SUMMARY
Sidney Abel, The Independent Courier

Autarkis, 12th Generation Gangrel (Ravnos),
Fledgling, p. 22

Shara Allen, the Firebrand

Anarchs (The Thrill Kill Gang), 8th Generation
Gangrel, Neonate, p. 43

Frida Boucher, the Sheriff's Investigator

Camarilla, 12th Generation Malkavian,
Fledgling, p. 23

Pauline Calais, the Visiting Dignitary

Camarilla, 8th Generation Toreador, Ancilla, p. 125

Emily Coldara, the Idealist

Anarchs (The Night Forum), 8th Generation Brujah,
Ancilla, p. 42

Kieran Cotterill, the Kindred Historian

Camarilla, 12th Generation Nosferatu,
Neonate, p. 24

Bo Cunningham, the Heedless Rebel

Anarchs (The Thrill Kill Gang), 12th Generation
Gangrel, Fledgling, p. 25

Rui da Costa, Everybody's Ally

Camarilla, Anarchs and the Church of Caine, 12th
Generation Brujah, Neonate, p. 26

Cleo Drummond, the Ambitious Elitist

Camarilla, 11th Generation Ventrue, Ancilla, p. 27

Mark Floros, the Drama Engineer

Camarilla, 12th Generation Toreador,
Neonate, p. 28

Marcus Gallowglass, the Humanitarian

Anarchs (The Circle of Mercy), 9th Generation
Ministry, Neonate, p. 44

Bryce Garber, the Hapless Outsider

Anarchs (The Night Forum), 12th Generation
Caitiff, Neonate, p. 29

Marilyn Haig, the Pillar of the Community

Camarilla and the Church of Caine, 12th Generation
Tremere (Lasombra), Neonate, p. 30

Fred Hartmann, Fallen From Grace

Anarchs (The Night Forum) and the Church of Caine,
12th Generation Ventrue, Neonate, p. 31

Caroline Janson, Fake It Till You Make It

Anarch (The Night Forum), 10th Generation
Tremere (Ministry), Neonate, p. 32

Viola Legrange, the Blood Leech

Autarkis, 11th Generation Ventrue, Ancilla, p. 93

Nora McCreery, the Regretful Duskborn

Anarchs (The Circle of Mercy), 14th Generation
Thin-Blooded, Fledgling, p. 33

Rachel, the Nosferatu Skulker

Autarkis, 12th Generation Nosferatu,
Neonate, p. 92

Mateo Serrano, the Put Upon Diplomat

Camarilla, 12th Generation Toreador (Banu Haqim),
Fledgling, p. 34

Donny Sheridan, the Family Man

Anarchs (The Night Forum), 11th Generation
Brujah, Ancilla, p. 35

An Tran, the Faithful Hunter

Anarchs (The Circle of Mercy) and the Church of
Caine, 12th Generation Nosferatu, Neonate, p. 36

Robert Vasile, the Lone Gentleman

Camarilla, 10th Generation Ventrue (Tzimisce),
Ancilla, p. 37

Jerri Voss, the Devil's Advocate

Anarchs (The Night Forum) and the Church of
Caine, 12th Generation Malkavian, Neonate, p. 38

**Dexter Wilkins (Puttanesca if Hecata),
the Import-Export Man**

Autarkis, 12th Generation Nosferatu (Hecata),
Neonate, p. 39

Carol Winfield, the Lost Spy

Autarkis, 12th Generation Nosferatu (Salubri),
Neonate, p. 40

Lesley Woodrow, the Young Leader

Camarilla, 10th Generation Tremere, Ancilla, p. 41



Sidney Abel

THE INDEPENDENT COURIER

AUTARKIS

12TH Generation Gangrel (Ravnos) Fledgling

Sidney Abel was a teenage runaway, and years of scraping by prepared her for unlife. Her sire was a courier, and she not only took up his work after his final death, but she also inherited the sports car he used for deliveries. Several renovations and paintjobs later, her cherry-red sedan is an unmistakable sight for the city's Kindred.

She tells herself that she's only staying in this city until work dries up but keeps finding reasons to stick around for just a little bit longer.

- **Difficulties:** 4/2
- **Blood Potency:** 1
- **Humanity:** 6
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 4, Mental 3, Disciplines 4
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 8 if Gangrel, 5 if Ravnos, Willpower 5
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Drive 7, Insight 6, Awareness 5
- **Disciplines (Gangrel):** Fortitude 3 (Resilience, Toughness, Defy Bane), Protean 1 (Eyes of the Beast)
- **Disciplines (Ravnos):** Obfuscate 2 (Silence of Death, Chimerstry), Presence 2 (Daunt, Lingering Kiss)

Appearance: Sidney has a lanky frame, golden skin, and grey eyes. She keeps her blonde hair in a short bob.

In Play: Sidney works hard and plays hard. She'll take any job, but she's not afraid to mouth off about them in her off-hours. There are other couriers like her, but she's one of the few that works all sides of the fence. She has transported everything from messages and valuables to victims. She's very friendly but terrified of making deep emotional connections.

Locations: When she's not on the road, Sidney's working out of a makeshift office in the North Convoy Business Center. She spends her free time at Pink Slips.

As a Sire: Sidney's Embraces are accidental. She takes responsibility for her mistakes but keeps her childer at a distance. She won't let this obligation keep her here.

Betrayal: It's easy to think Sidney is on your side because she talks shit about the sects and her clients. She gives the impression that she understands what it means to be an outsider, a newcomer to the Kindred community. Her betrayals are pedestrian in nature: She just looks out for no. 1, and sometimes that may mean fucking over players' characters she's been in friendly terms with.

Frida Boucher

THE SHERIFF'S INVESTIGATOR

CAMARILLA

12TH Generation Malkavian Fledgling

Frida Boucher's quiet life came to a violent end at the hands of an assailant that she's now sure was an Anarch. The Camarilla apprehended both, and her sire was staked and left for the sun. The Sheriff had a different fate in mind for Frida. She was offered a chance to serve as an investigator for the Ivory Tower. It was an offer made from pity, but to everyone's surprise, she took to the task well.

Styling herself after her favorite mystery novel protagonists, Frida watches out for Tradition violations and Anarch conspiracies.

- **Difficulties:** 4/2
- **Blood Potency:** 1
- **Humanity:** 6
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 2, Social 4, Mental 5, Disciplines 4
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 7
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Stealth 5, Streetwise 6, Investigation 7
- **Disciplines:** Auspex 2 (Sense the Unseen, Premonition), Dominate 1 (Cloud Memory)

Appearance: Frida has a bulky frame and tired brown eyes. She's pale, with reddened cheeks. Her long black hair is in tangles.

In Play: Frida pounces on mysteries and never lets go, even if it puts her at great risk. She jumps to conclusions and always makes public accusations. She has a strong bias against the Anarchs when choosing suspects, but iron-clad evidence and persuasive arguments can break through it.

Locations: Frida works out of a suite at the Sub Rosa Financial Park and harasses Anarchs at Al's Place.



As a Sire: Frida sees her childer as a combination of protégés and sidekicks and seeks out mortals with sharp deductive skills and sharper wit. Outside of extreme situations, she sires only with the Prince's permission.

Betrayal: If the players' characters are on good terms with Frida, she might speak of them quite warmly and give the impression she's genuinely on their side. However, deep inside she craves the security provided by the Camarilla and always chooses sect allegiance over players' characters.



Kieran Cotterill

THE KINDRED HISTORIAN

CAMARILLA

12TH Generation Nosferatu Neonate

Kieran Cotterill ended his mortal days as a corrupt attorney who sold out the wrong client. In undeath, he serves the local Camarilla as its historian, a position given to him after his sire suffered the Beckoning. Within his haven is a substantial archive of diaries, letters and other ephemera concerning the domain's past, well-organized and well-secured.

Few have seen physically laid eyes on Kieran, and even fewer have seen him out of the disguises necessary to hide his Nosferatu nature.

- **Difficulties:** 4/3
- **Blood Potency:** 3
- **Humanity:** 5
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 6, Disciplines 5
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 8
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Stealth 8, Subterfuge 7, Politics 7
- **Disciplines:** Obfuscate 3 (Cloak of Shadows, Unseen Passage, Mask of a Thousand Faces), Animalism 2 (Sense the Beast, Feral Whispers), Potence 1 (Soaring Leap)

Appearance: Kieran has a gnarled frame, perpetually flaky pale skin, and sunken black eyes. Strands of white hair sprout in spots on his scalp.

In Play: Kieran makes his presence known with messages scrawled on walls and letters delivered via dead drop. Camarilla coterie have an easier time gaining access to Kieran's archive, but he's willing to offer the chance to an Anarch who seems trustworthy. Money and favors are accepted, but his preferred currency is new historical information to add to his records.

Locations: On the rare occasions Kieran is seen in public, he's sitting in on night classes at the Streiber Polytechnic Institute.

As a Sire: Kieran's children are projects, people he'd like to mold into proper members of Kindred society and perhaps even inheritors to his great archive. They're some of the few who get to see him face-to-face.

Betrayal: Kieran genuinely believes in his work and has a kind of integrity making him loathe to spread incorrect information. Ordinarily, the things he tells players' characters are true. The problem is that he's not particularly powerful or brave, and someone opposed to the characters may be leaning on him. Under pressure, he may betray his own principles and lie.

Bo Cunningham

THE HEEDLESS REBEL

ANARCHS (The Thrill Kill Gang)

12TH Generation Gangrel Fledgling

Bo lived a life dominated by rules and boundaries. They found freedom in the Embrace, which brought them to the city's Anarchs. Since their arrival, they've been attached to several daring strikes against the Unchained's adversaries. They're the youngest vampire on the Camarilla's shitlist, and they're proud of it.

They've started poaching on Camarilla territory in hopes of drawing the members out. This development concerns some older Anarchs. It's not that they respect the Ivory Tower's territory, but they're worried that the Tower will use Bo's actions to bring about a reckoning the sect isn't prepared for.

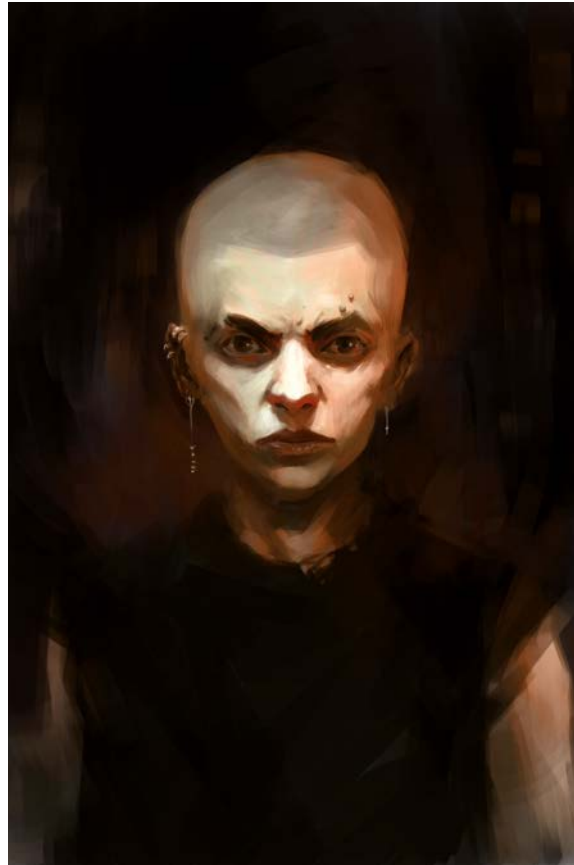
- **Difficulties:** 4/2
- **Blood Potency:** 1
- **Humanity:** 6
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 4, Mental 3, Disciplines 4
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 5
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Brawl 6, Streetwise 7, Awareness 5
- **Disciplines:** Protean 2 (Weight of the Feather, Feral Weapons), Fortitude 1 (Resilience)

Appearance: Bo has a slim frame, amber-toned skin, and brown eyes. They shave their head every night.

In Play: Bo seeks new and exciting hunts, inviting other Anarchs to track and feed upon unique targets. Every night for them is a battle between the temptation to push their abilities to the limit and the knowledge that they must hold on to their humanity. Without an intervention, humanity will lose that battle.

Locations: Bo hangs out at Al's Place, and the Streiber Polytechnic Institute is their only consistent hunting ground.

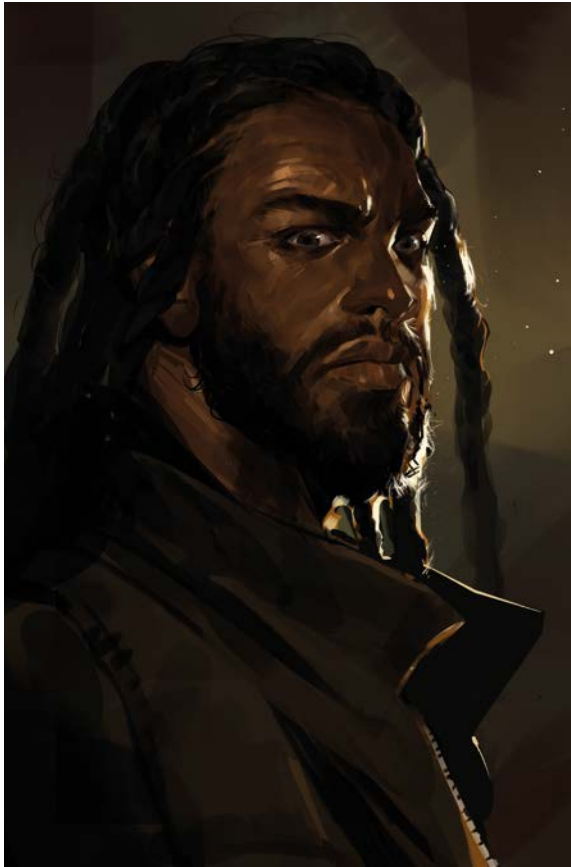
As a Sire: Right after the Embrace, Bo treats their



childer like a partner-in-crime. Once it's clear that their childe has ideas and ambitions beyond taking risks for sake of taking risks, the relationship sours quickly.

Betrayal: Bo is not a very consistent person. They might give the impression that they're on the side of Anarch characters, rebelling against authority, but they're awful at committing to a plan. They're flaky and prone to running their mouth in an embarrassing way. The characters may discover that Bo has been making threats against the Camarilla in their name. "My friends will come for you assholes!"





Rui da Costa

EVERYBODY'S ALLY

CAMARILLA, ANARCHS
and THE CHURCH OF CAINE
12TH Generation Brujah Neonate

Rui made his name among the Anarchs as a voice for the powerless on the Camarilla side. When most Brujah fell away from the Ivory Tower, he shocked his allies by staying. He claims it was necessary to keep the Camarilla honest; they claim he didn't want to up his comfortable life.

Rui's recently joined the Church of Caine. It's not a full conversion. He's convinced that the blood cult's ideology could heal the rift between the sects.

- **Difficulties:** 4/2

- **Blood Potency:** 2
- **Humanity:** 5
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 4, Mental 3, Disciplines 5
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 5
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Melee 7, Persuasion 6, Politics 8
- **Disciplines:** Potence 3 (Lethal Body, Prowess, Uncanny Grip), Celerity 2 (Rapid Reflexes, Fleetness), Presence 1 (Awe)

Appearance: Rui has a broad frame, mahogany skin, and gray eyes. His black hair is in locs.

In Play: Rui is either an Anarch coterie's contact within the Ivory Tower or a Camarilla coterie's last resort when they've drawn too much of the Unchained's ire. He keeps a cool head in public and saves any expressions of anger for his haven. He uses his charm to sway characters into attending Gnostic services.

Locations: Rui is one of the few Camarilla members who spends time at Al's Place. He venerates Caine at Saint Januarius Catholic Church.

As a Sire: Rui hopes he can instill his diplomatic talents into his progeny and expects them to join the Church of Caine. Childer get to see him at his worst when diplomacy doesn't work and his demeanor melts into pure rage.

Betrayal: Rui is one of the friendliest Kindred the characters may come into contact with. He talks a good game about cooperation, mutual support and the power of diplomacy. However, there's a cost to being in good terms with everyone: When real trouble arrives and the characters need an ally, Rui is nowhere to be seen.

Cleo Drummond

THE AMBITIOUS ELITIST

CAMARILLA

11TH Generation Ventrue Ancilla

Cleo built her local fashion boutique empire with hard work and her grandmother's inheritance. She took immortality when her sire offered it, convinced that no one else could carry on her legacy but her. Her profits are a source for the slush fund that keeps the city's Camarilla functioning.

For all her efforts, she's a small bit player without an official title. She'll change that, no matter who must get hurt to accomplish it.

- **Difficulties:** 5/3
- **Blood Potency:** 3
- **Humanity:** 5
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 7, Mental 6, Disciplines 6
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 7
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Larceny 8, Intimidation 9, Finance 7
- **Disciplines:** Dominate 3 (Cloud Memory, Mesmerize, The Forgetful Mind), Presence 3 (Awe, Lingering Kiss, Entrancement), Fortitude 2 (Resilience, Toughness)

Appearance: Cleo has a voluptuous frame, tawny skin, and green eyes. Her black hair reaches her shoulders.

In Play: As a middle manager in the Ivory Tower, Cleo uses her economic and social sway to "encourage" Camarilla characters to take on tasks to aid the domain and intimidate Anarch characters into staying in line. She'll back down from almost anything if characters can get a higher-up to reprimand her.

Locations: Cleo is at work in one of her many shops or her headquarters at Sub Rosa Financial Park.



As a Sire: Cleo treats her childer like personal assistants one night and indentured servants another. She sees the Embrace as a favor towards her childer. Considering that she's the one that has to get the Prince's permission and transition a mortal into undeath, the least her childer can do is obey her.

Betrayal: Kindred are liars but Cleo is better than most. Her motivations for treachery are obvious: She wants to rise in the city's Camarilla hierarchy and is happy to throw anyone under the bus to do it. The question is, does she manage to get the characters to believe a beautiful lie before she does so?



Mark Floros

THE DRAMA ENGINEER

CAMARILLA

12TH Generation Toreador Neonate

In life, Mark Floros wrote some of the greatest stage plays in the history of independent theatre. The careless act of a trusted friend brought the end of his life, the start of his unlife, and the end of his career, all in that order.

He doesn't miss being alive. As Kindred, he has the power, resources, and time to pursue a bold new canvas for storytelling: manipulating the lives of others.

- **Difficulties:** 4/3
- **Blood Potency:** 3
- **Humanity:** 6
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 7, Mental 6, Disciplines 5
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Craft 6, Performance 8, Investigation 7
- **Disciplines:** Presence 3 (Awe, Lingering Kiss, Entrancement), Celerity 2 (Cat's Grace, Fleetness), Auspex 1 (Heightened Senses)

Appearance: Mark has a husky frame, a great tan, and blue eyes. His red hair is long and curly.

In Play: Mark lives for creating drama, especially among the Kindred. He engineers feuds and spreads rumors for his amusement. He'll even take responsibility for slights other vampires commit if it's both entertaining to do and unlikely to get him killed. Characters that risk getting wrapped up in his schemes might find him a reliable source for news within the Camarilla.

Locations: Mark enjoys shooting the breeze at Blacklight and Taylor's Lakeside. He controls the latter via a ghoul proprietor.

As a Sire: Mark sees his childe as not only an opportunity to end a mortal's story, but to write a new one from scratch. He wants to create the best possible narrative for his childe, one that may clash with a character's moral comfort.

Betrayal: Mark can be quite charming when he sets his mind to it. He's happy to make all sorts of promises and declarations of eternal affection, but when he finds an entertaining angle for betrayal he'll take it. He's happy to subject the characters to bizarre social intrigues just for his own amusement, although it's a bonus if he gets something out of it.

Bryce Garber

THE HAPLESS OUTSIDER

ANARCHS (The Night Forum)

12TH Generation Caitiff Neonate

Someone had their eye on Bryce Garber for a long while before his Embrace. Whoever they were, they used a copy of his apartment key to break into his home and take his life. The Anarchs found him first and defended him from the Camarilla's stakes.

He's settled into his new drinking habit but hopes that someday he can find his sire. If he ever does, the payback will be swift and terrible.

- **Difficulties:** 4/2
- **Blood Potency:** 1
- **Humanity:** 5
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 5, Mental 3, Disciplines 4
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 5
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Survival 8, Streetwise 7, Awareness 6
- **Disciplines:** Auspex 3 (Heightened Senses, Premonition, Scry the Soul), Presence 2 (Daunt, Lingering Kiss), Fortitude 1 (Resilience)

Appearance: Bryce has a sickly frame with pale skin and brown eyes. His shaggy brown hair always looks greasy.

In Play: Bryce owes a great debt to the Unchained. He's happy to help Anarch coterie that need his unique talents. He's bemused by the pageantry of Kindred heritage and pokes fun at any character that takes their bloodline too seriously.

Locations: Bryce takes night shifts at the North Convoy Business Center and plays midnight basketball at Al's Place.

As a Sire: He'll do his best to get his childe off on the right foot but keeps having sired them a secret, even from his allies. The Anarchs might not be willing to save them as well if caught. It's possible that his childe might naturally develop Disciplines and abilities he could never teach. This will amuse him.



Betrayal: Bryce tries to do things right, sometimes. He remembers values like loyalty and friendship and considers them important. The trouble is that he's had a rough time as a vampire, and the immediate needs of the moment tend to trump loftier motivations. Bryce is not one for grand betrayals: When he backstabs someone, it has the grubby ambience of a back-alley deal gone bad.



Marilyn Haig

THE PILLAR OF THE COMMUNITY
CAMARILLA and THE CHURCH OF CAINE
12TH Generation Tremere (Lasombra) Neonate

As a mortal, Marilyn Haig got too close to discovering the existence of vampires. Her sire found her, tore her life apart, then Embraced her. Destroying them was the first time she felt in control in years. She joined the Camarilla to help them prevent and eliminate Masquerade breaches.

She does her job well, but her true loyalties lie with the Church of Caine. With their counsel, her unlife finally makes sense. She was never dealt a bad hand; she was chosen to serve God.

- **Difficulties:** 4/3
- **Blood Potency:** 2
- **Humanity:** 5
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 5, Mental 5, Disciplines 5
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 7
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Melee 7, Subterfuge 8, Investigation 7
- **Disciplines (Tremere):** Auspex 2 (Sense the Unseen, Premonition), Blood Sorcery 3 (Corrosive Vitae, Extinguish Vitae, Blood of Potency), Dominate 1 (Compel)
- **Disciplines (Lasombra):** Oblivion 3 (Shadow Cloak, Arms of Ahriman, Shadow Perspective), Fortitude 2 (Unswayable Mind, Toughness), Dominate 1 (Compel)

Appearance: Marilyn has a wide frame, light golden skin, and brown eyes. She usually tucks her blond hair into a baseball cap.

In Play: In Marilyn's mind, she's not only protecting the Camarilla's domain from prying eyes, but defending them from the assault of hell itself. Characters that draw even the slightest suspicion of breaking the Masquerade discover the full force of her fury.

Locations: Marilyn is out anywhere the Camarilla sends her to. When possible, she spends the last portion of her night at Saint Januarius Catholic Church.

As a Sire: Marilyn wants to create a survivor just like her. She only aids childer when necessary, insisting upon their self-reliance. Every so often, she "leaves town" and engineers a test of her childer's capabilities.

Betrayal: Marilyn is less duplicitous than most Kindred, telling characters straight if she doesn't trust or like them. It's possible to be her ally in a fight against a common enemy, but she puts her principles above such allegiances. If she thinks a character is breaking the Masquerade, she'll go after them.

Fred Hartmann

FALLEN FROM GRACE

ANARCHs (The Night Forum)
and THE CHURCH OF CAINE
12TH Generation Ventrue Neonate

Once, Fred Hartmann was a well-respected Camarilla member, known for his incredible project management. After an incident that Fred only refers to as “a faux-pas,” he fell from grace and was expelled from the sect. He defected to the Anarchs, who still aren’t comfortable with him.

Then, the Church of Caine also took him in. The Gnostic’s beliefs soothed his wounded ego, and he’s become one of the faith’s greatest advocates in the city’s Anarch movement.

- **Difficulties:** 4/3
- **Blood Potency:** 1
- **Humanity:** 5
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 7, Mental 5, Disciplines 5
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 7
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Firearms 7, Leadership 8, Occult 6
- **Disciplines:** Dominate 3 (Compel, Mesmerize, Submerged Directive), Presence 2 (Daunt, Lingering Kiss), Fortitude 1 (Unswayable Mind)

Appearance: Fred has a heavy-set frame, creamy white skin, and blue eyes. His blond hair is slicked back.

In Play: Fred’s willing to lend his tactical expertise to Anarch characters, but he expects to have a share in the credit. He’s chummy with any Kindred who claims an important lineage. If they get along well, he’ll try to induct them into the Church of Caine.

Locations: Fred stalks his old colleagues at the Sub Rosa Financial Park; he worships at Saint Januarius Catholic Church.



As a Sire: Fred believes that his childer deserve the very best as the continuations of his illustrious bloodline. He parades them around social gatherings like someone showing off their new watch. He also believes that a childe of his must never bring shame to their bloodline. What counts as shameful changes night to night.

Betrayal: Fred feels that the Camarilla betrayed him. He’s bitter and aggrieved, his ego comforted only by the vampire supremacist views of the Church of Caine. He has a tendency to want to get close to Kindred who appear to have lineage or status, but he also resents them and finds reasons to betray them.



Caroline Janson

FAKE IT TILL YOU MAKE IT
ANARCHS

10TH Generation Tremere (Ministry) Neonate

Caroline Janson lied her way into a great college, becoming a valedictorian, and then into a cushy job at a national television news network. It was there that she met her sire. She told him the truth, that she wanted to be like him, and he granted her wish.

Now, she's moved to the city and helps push stories that advance the Anarch movement's agenda.

- **Difficulties:** 5 / 3
- **Blood Potency:** 4
- **Humanity:** 4
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 7, Mental 6, Disciplines 5
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 8
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Larceny 8, Subterfuge 9, Politics 7
- **Disciplines:** Protean 3 (Eyes of the Beast, Feral Weapons, Shape Change), Presence 3 (Eyes of the Serpent, Lingering Kiss, Entrancement), Obfuscate 2 (Silence of Death, Unseen Passage)

Appearance: Caroline has a lean frame, bronze skin, and hazel eyes. Her black hair is in box braids.

In Play: Caroline sees the truth like a sculptor sees clay; it's something to shape at her whim. Her closest allies might receive half-truths or lies of omission at the worst possible moment. When a character catches her bending the truth, she praises their judgment but refuses to apologize.

Locations: When Caroline isn't hard at work during the night shift at the local TV station, she's moshing her cares away at the nightlife spot Pink Slips.

As a Sire: Caroline sees no need to lie to her progeny. A childe can't appreciate the craft of a good lie without a strong sense for truth. Plus, they depend on her for shelter and feeding grounds, which tends to prevent them from revealing her secrets.

Betrayal: Caroline has a very strong Mask, and she's very particular about protecting it. She has a full mortal life and maintaining it is not easy. She likes to appear as someone who can grant you favors but her view of others is utilitarian: If a character ceases to be useful to her or the Anarch Movement, she turns treacherous on a dime.

Nora McCreery

THE REGRETFUL DUSKBORN

ANARCHS (The Thrill Kill Gang)

14TH Generation Thin-Blooded Fledgling

In a moment of weakness, Nora McCreery made a terrible mistake. While suffering in the last stages of a terminal illness, she was visited by a vampire feeding on other residents in her ward. The vampire offered her a way out, and she accepted. She never saw her sire again.

She's aghast at what she's become. She fell in with the Anarchs for survival and spends her nights seeking a cure for her new condition.

- **Difficulties:** 3/2
- **Blood Potency:** 0
- **Humanity:** 7
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 3, Mental 3, Disciplines 3
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 5
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Survival 5, Insight 7, Medicine 6
- **Disciplines:** Thin-Blood Alchemy 2 (Far Reach, Haze)

Appearance: Nora has a frail frame, cream-colored skin, and green eyes. She keeps her gray hair in a ponytail.

In Play: Nora isn't afraid to let a vampire know when they've crossed a moral line. She's fiercely protective of the city's thin-blooded and suspicious of characters who treat them with disgust. In exchange for help cleaning her haven, she teaches what little she knows of Thin-Blood Alchemy.

Locations: Nora hunts about a mile away from her home in the suburbs. She keeps her alchemical gear in a storage locker at North Convoy Business Center.



As a Sire: Nora can't apologize enough to her progeny. The Embrace shouldn't have happened, but she won't leave her childe to enter unlife as unprepared as she was. She'll double her efforts to find a cure for their condition and would be horrified if her childe chose to become a true vampire.

Betrayal: Sometimes Nora's regret veers into self-hatred. That's when she makes truly abominable choices: Perhaps a vampire she knows is better off destroyed, for their own sake. Who would want to suffer from such a vile existence?



Mateo Serrano

THE PUT UPON DIPLOMAT

CAMARILLA

12TH Generation Toreador (Banu Haqim) Fledgling

Mateo Serrano was a counseling student before he caught the eye of a prominent member of the city's Camarilla. Mateo's Embrace was approved by the Prince, and he accepted his sire's offer. Two nights later, his sire was a pile of ash with a stake driven through it.

In an attempt to deflect suspicion from himself, he's taken up his sire's position as a Camarilla diplomat. However, it isn't working. He's still the prime suspect, and unless someone solves the crime, he'll have to take the punishment.

- **Difficulties:** 4/2
- **Blood Potency:** 1
- **Humanity:** 6
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 3, Social 5, Mental 5, Disciplines 4
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 5
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Stealth 6, Insight 7, Awareness 5
- **Disciplines:** Blood Sorcery 2 (Corrosive Vitae, Extinguish Vitae), Obfuscate 1 (Silence of Death)

Appearance: Mateo has a small frame, olive skin, and brown eyes. His black hair is in a pompadour.

In Play: When a vampire wants to join the Camarilla, Mateo is one of the first people they'll meet. After a cordial introduction, he grills them to see if they're worthy of joining the Camarilla. He's polite but firm.

Locations: Mateo is a night school student at Streiber Polytechnic Institute. He's also a regular at Blacklight.

As a Sire: Mateo isn't prepared for a childe. He knows enough about unlife to give his childe a solid foundation but has little idea how to keep them in line without a strong Blood Bond. The thought makes him uncomfortable, but he sees no other option.

Betrayal: Mateo is very good at giving a positive first impression. He comes across as thoughtful, considered and not at all desperate, at least most of the time. His facade of affability crumbles the second he feels he can use the players' characters to secure his position in the Camarilla.

Donny Sheridan

THE FAMILY MAN

ANARCHS (The Night Forum)

11TH Generation Brujah Ancilla

Donny Sheridan had a family when he was Embraced. He didn't want to give them up, so the Camarilla murdered them. He went into hiding, joined the Anarchs, and now plans to take his revenge.

He's replaced his family several times over. With careful planning, Kindred power, and sheer luck, he currently lives under three different identities, each helping raise a mortal family.

- **Difficulties:** 4/3
- **Blood Potency:** 3
- **Humanity:** 5
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 6, Mental 6, Disciplines 6
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 6
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 7, Leadership 9, Academics 8
- **Disciplines:** Presence 3 (Awe, Lingering Kiss, Entrancement), Celerity 3 (Cat's Grace, Fleetness, Blink), Potence 2 (Unswayable Mind, Toughness)

Appearance: Donny has a paunchy frame, fair skin, and green eyes. His brown hair is in a comb-over.

In Play: Donny encourages characters to stretch the Masquerade to its limits. He uses his robust mortal cover as an example of the steps Anarchs must take if they seek real freedom. He's a family man in every sense of the word and shows off the photos often.

Locations: Donny visits one of his families every night but never stays over. He's a regular at Blacklight and Pink Slips.



As a Sire: Donny's childer are assigned to one of his families, and he expects them to show the same level of affection. He tells his mortal loved ones that the childer's a distant cousin or even a long-estranged stepsibling returning home. None of his families know he or his childer are vampires, but some members suspect they're con artists or mobsters.

Betrayal: Donny likes things to go his way. He can be very helpful to new Kindred, showing them the tricks and traps of nightly existence, but he believes that his method of embedding into mortal society is inherently superior. He has a habit of getting disappointed with young Kindred who fail to grasp the genius of his method and spitefully betraying them.



An Tran

THE FAITHFUL HUNTER

ANARCH (The Circle of Mercy)
and THE CHURCH OF CAINE
12TH Generation Nosferatu Neonate

An Tran's last coterie was murdered by lupines, and they swore they'd never be a bystander again. Their faith in the Church of Caine further encouraged them to face the unknown and tame the Beast within. When another wolf trespassed in their domain, they didn't hesitate.

They see themselves as Gnostic more than Anarch, but they're fine with the Unchained seeing them as a legend in the making. Evangelization is best done with deeds.

- **Difficulties:** 4/3
- **Blood Potency:** 2
- **Humanity:** 5
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 7, Social 5, Mental 5, Disciplines 7
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 7
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Brawl 8, Animal Ken 7, Occult 6
- **Disciplines:** Potence 3 (Lethal Body, Prowess, Brutal Feed), Obfuscate 2 (Cloak of Shadows, Unseen Passage), Animalism 1 (Sense the Beast)

Appearance: An has a hunched frame, gangrenous skin, and completely black eyes. No one's seen them out of their aged varsity hoodie.

In Play: An has no tolerance for frivolity and eccentricity, things frequent among the Anarchs. They're among the first to discover threats to the city. Those that hunt with them might get a chance to learn more about the occult underbelly of the city.

Locations: An is usually seen in the city's alleyways and back roads. They also keep a close eye for anything suspicious at Saint Januarius Catholic Church and Streiber Polytechnic Institute.

As a Sire: An gives their childer a crash course on the strange and unknown. They'd like their childer to join the Church of Caine but believes than an effective predator should be capable of making up their own mind.

Betrayal: An might not even consider what she does betrayal. After all, to survive, fledgling Kindred need to toughen up. Characters fighting or hunting alongside them need to keep up. If they fail to do so, it's their own fault they get into trouble. Sometimes, An decides to do characters a favor by pushing them into danger on purpose. That's the only way they'll learn the world is unpredictable and dangerous.

Robert Vasile

THE LONE GENTLEMAN

CAMARILLA

12TH Generation Ventrue (Tzimisce) Ancilla

When the Camarilla demanded to know why Robert Vasile came to the city, he told them he “was tired of fighting.” He established a suburban haven, started a company, and purchased properties throughout the city.

No one is sure what to make of Robert. He claims he just wants a peaceful unlife, but his expanding territory brings about rumors of an autarky in development.

- **Difficulties:** 5 / 3
- **Blood Potency:** 4
- **Humanity:** 4
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 7, Mental 7, Disciplines 7
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 7
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Craft 7, Etiquette 9, Awareness 8
- **Disciplines (Ventrue):** Protean 3 (Eyes of the Beast, Feral Weapons, Earth Meld), Dominate 3 (Compel, Mesmerize, The Forgetful Mind), Animalism 2 (Sense the Beast, Feral Whispers)
- **Disciplines (Tzimisce):** Protean 3 (Eyes of the Beast, Vicissitude, Fleshcrafting), Dominate 3 (Compel, Mesmerize, The Forgetful Mind), Animalism 2 (Sense the Beast, Feral Whispers)

Appearance: Robert has a brawny frame, light beige skin, and hazel eyes. He has shoulder-length black hair.

In Play: Robert is a gentleman among Kindred. All vampires, including the thin-blooded, are treated with unconditional civility. The same can't be said for mortals. He sees them either as another Kindred's belongings or as something to add to his collection.



Locations: Robert's property management business is headquartered at the Sub Rosa Financial Park. He has an interest in Al's Place and hopes to purchase it.

As a Sire: Robert sires in batches. In the old days, he scattered his progeny to the winds and waited to see who came back successful. Now, he'd like to see if his childer can spend their unlives in the same place. A childer must either learn to tolerate their siblings-in-blood or get them out of the picture.

Betrayal: Lord of his own little domain, Robert can present an affable exterior but he's extremely watchful of every little snub and sign of disrespect. And lack of respect is not something he can accept. He has a habit of developing subtle vendettas where the target often doesn't even realize they've slighted Robert and then been targeted with a campaign of vengeance.



Jerri Voss

THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

ANARCHS (The Night Forum)
and THE CHURCH OF CAINE
12TH Generation Malkavian Neonate

In another city, Jerri Voss helped their Anarch Movement topple the local Camarilla. They brought both metaphorical and practical vision, while their comrades brought the blades. Later on, they watched their ideal society implode in the face of reality and had to flee to this city as the Ivory Tower retook power.

Jerri remains dedicated to the Anarch cause, but they're burnt out. Every night, the idea of abandoning traditional Kindred society and fleeing to the Church of Caine feels more inviting.

- **Difficulties:** 4/2
- **Blood Potency:** 2
- **Humanity:** 5
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 4, Mental 3, Disciplines 5
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 5
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 7, Insight 8, Investigation 6
- **Disciplines:** Dominate 3 (Compel, Dementation, Submerged Directive), Auspex 2 (Heightened Senses, Premonition), Obfuscate 1 (Cloak of Shadows)

Appearance: Jerri has a chubby frame, tawny-beige skin, and amber eyes. Their dyed silver hair is kept in a pixie cut.

In Play: Jerri's a natural devil's advocate. They confront a player's character's ideals, picking their worldview apart in search of contradictions or unforeseen consequences. They know how to get under anyone's skin, and characters that withstand their withering critiques might pick up a few tips.

Locations: Jerri's on a first name basis with the bartenders at Pink Slips. On bad nights, they attend service at Saint Januarius Catholic Church.

As a Sire: Jerri might sire a childe out of panic or as a favor to a close mortal contact. If so, they bring their childe up to speed, providing them with a list of convenient places to hunt, then give them a wide berth.

Betrayal: Sometimes Jerri is wrong. They play their role as the devil's advocate, picking apart the plans of others, and then those bastards succeed anyway. That's difficult for Jerri. They have become cynical and they don't like it when others actually manage to get somewhere. When that happens, they may start a quiet campaign of sabotage.

Dexter Wilkins

THE IMPORT-EXPORT MAN

AUTARKIS

12TH Generation Nosferatu (Hecata) Neonate

When Dexter Wilkins' sire drove him into this city and threw him out on the street, he told him that he'd either make a fortune here or greet the sun in a ditch. He did the former.

Dexter's a gun runner, an exports dealer, and a human trafficker. It should be time to contact his sire and connect the city to his network, but Dexter wants to enjoy his criminal empire a little longer.

The Puttanesca are a family which has traditionally provided many ghouls to the Hecata, and from which they have Embraced a number of Kindred over the years. If you're using the clans in the *Players Guide*, you can make Dexter into a Hecata and a member of the Puttanesca family.

- **Difficulties:** 4/3
- **Blood Potency:** 3
- **Humanity:** 5
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 7, Mental 5, Disciplines 5
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 7
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Drive 7, Streetwise 8, Occult 6
- **Disciplines:** Oblivion 3 (Ashes to Ashes, Fatal Precognition, Passion Feast), Auspex 2 (Sense the Unseen, Premonition), Fortitude 1 (Resilience)

Appearance: Dexter has a towering frame, a deathly pallor even with the Blush of Life, and milky gray eyes. He keeps his salt-and-pepper hair in a side part.

In Play: Dexter's an exemplary businessman in some of the worst markets imaginable, and he has no shame. Without a good reason or fantastic bribe, he'll never directly involve himself in any scuffle between the city's sects.



Locations: Dexter stores legit and gray market wares at the North Convoy Business Center. Anything else is kept in nondescript buildings just outside of the city limits.

As a Sire: Dexter claims his childe is a "junior partner" in his business, but in practice, they're more like an unpaid intern. They take on the dirty work while he stays the public face of the operation. When things go south, he'll direct the blame and consequences onto the childe.

Betrayal: In a way, Dexter is more honest than most. He's going to fuck over the characters if there's an advantage in doing so and doesn't particularly care if they know.



Carol Winfield

THE LOST SPY

AUTARKIS

12TH Generation Nosferatu (Salubri) Neonate

Carol Winfield was a nurse before her Embrace. It was a matter of convenience. Her sire needed to bring a local into the fold before he was discovered, and she was alone at the bus station.

Before he left, he imparted her with a mission: if she could gather enough information about the city's Kindred, he'd show her how to cure her condition. It's been years since she's heard from him, but she hopes her mission will end soon.

- **Difficulties:** 4/2
- **Blood Potency:** 3
- **Humanity:** 5
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 4, Mental 4, Disciplines 5
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 5, Willpower 5
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Survival 6, Streetwise 7, Medicine 8
- **Disciplines:** Auspex 3 (Heightened Senses, Obeah, Scry the Soul), Fortitude 2 (Unswayable Mind, Valeren), Dominate 1 (Cloud Memory)

Appearance: Carol has a lithe frame, ashy brown skin, and blue eyes. She's rarely seen without a skull cap.

In Play: Carol is dedicated to her mission but can't help getting attached to characters with high Humanity or a genuine need to do good. She keeps tabs on them and might even try to help them from the shadows. Anyone publicly seen interacting her is cast with suspicion, no matter the sect.

Locations: Carol finds herself on everyone's territory but most often around sect strongholds like Al's Place and the Sub Rosa Financial Park.

As a Sire: Carol's children are inducted into her conspiracy, though she won't reveal the full details until she's sure the child is ready. She stays by their side, both to ensure their safety and to make sure they won't betray her.

Betrayal: Carol is desperate to become mortal again and she hasn't quite grasped how close to impossible that is. She's loyal and trustworthy but also susceptible to manipulation. If someone less principled dangles a promise of redemption in front of her, she may end up betraying characters she's become attached to. She'll regret it if it happens.

Lesley Woodrow

THE YOUNG LEADER

CAMARILLA

10TH Generation Tremere Ancilla

Lesley Woodrow was nowhere close to the top of the Tremere Pyramid, but they know that its implosion was the worst thing to happen to the clan. Though they spend their nights serving the Camarilla as one of their occult experts, they also lead the first chantry the city's had in years.

While the chantry only consists of Lesley and a handful of Warlocks, they're sure it's only a matter of time until the Pyramid rises once more.

- **Difficulties:** 5 / 3
- **Blood Potency:** 4
- **Humanity:** 4
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 7, Mental 8, Disciplines 7
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Melee 7, Persuasion 8, Occult 9
- **Disciplines:** Blood Sorcery 3 (A Taste for Blood, Extinguish Vitae, Blood of Potency), Auspex 3 (Sense the Unseen, Premonition, Scry the Soul), Dominate 2 (Compel, Mesmerize)

Appearance: Lesley has an imposing frame, coppery skin, and brown eyes. They keep their black hair in a crew cut.

In Play: Lesley believes that everyone should know their place. Those making a blatant power grab find them hot on their trail. Their loyalties lie with the Tremere first, a fact characters could use to their advantage.

Locations: Lesley's yet to find a stable home for their chantry. For now, they move between an abandoned office at Sub Rosa Financial Park and the basement beneath Taylor's Lakeside.



As a Sire: Lesley chooses their childer carefully. Reckless Embraces had a hand in the clan's downturn, after all. When they sire a childe, they induct them into the chantry and teach them the importance of maintaining hierarchy in chaotic times.

Betrayal: Lesley sees themselves as something of a player in the city's political game. The characters are pawns, to be used and discarded as necessary. Lesley plays the role assigned to them as a Tremere leader, learned and careful, but sometimes they make badly thought out moves of betrayal and treachery in their desire to appear a Kindred power player.

Anarch Gang Bosses

These supporting characters lead the three Anarch gangs in the city. They represent the grandest figures on the city's political map the players' characters can reasonably interact with.

Emily Coldara

THE IDEALIST

8TH Generation Brujah Ancilla

Emily is the cleverest of the local Anarchs and an idealist. She's big on consensus, reason and order instead of arbitrary rules and power politics. She leads a group of Anarchs called the Night Forum.

- **Difficulties:** 4/3
- **Blood Potency:** 4
- **Humanity:** 6
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 7, Mental 6, Disciplines 6
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 6
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Academics 8, Awareness 8, Investigation 8, Leadership 8, Politics 9, Subterfuge 7
- **Disciplines:** Celerity 3 (Cat's Grace, Fleetness, Blink), Obfuscate 1 (Cloak of Shadows), Potence 3 (Lethal Body, Prowess, Uncanny Grip), Presence 3 (Awe, Lingering Kiss, Entrancement)

Betrayal: Emily talks a really good game about community building, constructive co-operation and broad-based consensus. She believes herself to be a good person struggling successfully with the demons of vampirism. Because of this, she has embedded herself with the causes and communities she wants to support, absolutely blind to the fact that her presence, vampiric Hunger and nightly needs poison the people around her. Her betrayal is unconscious: she doesn't realize she is the problem.

Shara Allen

THE FIREBRAND

8TH Generation Gangrel Neonate

Shara is a firebrand and the leader of the Thrill Kill Gang. She wants to see the Anarchs rise and develop enough strength and power to see an end to the city's Camarilla, so all Kindred inhabitants can be free.

- **Difficulties:** 4/3
- **Blood Potency:** 4
- **Humanity:** 4
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 8, Social 6, Mental 5, Disciplines 6
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 6
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Brawl 10, Drive 9, Intimidation 8, Leadership 6, Streetwise 7
- **Disciplines:** Animalism 3 (Sense the Beast, Feral Whispers, Animal Succulence), Fortitude 4 (Unswayable Mind, Toughness, Defy Bane, Flesh of Marble), Protean 3 (Eyes of the Beast, Feral Weapons, Earth Meld)

Betrayal: Shara likes to fuck with people. Sometimes she terrorizes people outside her gang just for fun. Her followers may be subjected to it as well, in the shame of hazing rituals she makes up to serve a well-developed cruel streak. Although Shara can make a character's existence difficult, she's the least treacherous Anarch boss as her vindictiveness is predictable.

Marcus Gallowglass

THE HUMANITARIAN

9TH Generation Ministry Neonate

Marcus is a humanitarian who is something of a father figure to the community. He fears the Anarchs are losing their touch with humanity and wants them to focus on building enduring unives as clandestine members of human communities. The Anarch group led by Gallowglass is called the Circle of Mercy.

- **Difficulties:** 4/3
- **Blood Potency:** 3
- **Humanity:** 7
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 7, Mental 7, Disciplines 7
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 7
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 8, Insight 10, Performance 8, Persuasion 8, Subterfuge 8
- **Disciplines:** Obfuscate 3 (Cloak of Shadows, Unseen Passage, Mask of a Thousand Faces), Presence 4 (Daunt, Lingering Kiss, Entrancement, Irresistible Voice), Protean 3 (Weight of the Feather, Feral Weapons, Shapechange)

Betrayal: Marcus is a philosopher, a debater and a thinker. He does his best to guide each individual on their own, personal journey. These principles are all well and good, but when Marcus feels threatened, they don't apply anymore. He justifies the terror and death that follow by arguing that when you have something beautiful, you have to protect it. He's intelligent enough to lie even to himself when he comes up with new justifications for awful actions.

Locations

Some locations are sect or blood cult held territory and others are common ground. Each location has unique effects and can change and develop over time.

Al's Place (Rec Center)

The Winston P. Albert Recreation Center, known as “Al’s Place” to locals, is the last operating public community center in the city. Its campus contains classrooms for continuing education, several sports courts, a swimming pool, and a library.

Its legacy as a gathering place for activists attracted the Anarchs, who use it as an unofficial “capital” for their domains in the city.

Factions: Anarch

Characters: Frida Boucher, Bo Cunningham, Rui da Costa, Bryce Garber, Robert Vasile, Carol Winfield

Mechanics: The freewheeling spirit of the community center gets all kinds of people to let their guard down. When a character makes a test to interrogate or influence a mortal at Al’s Place, they receive a +1 bonus to the dice pool of their Intimidation, Insight, Persuasion or Subterfuge test. This bonus may stack with other bonuses.

Development: If the Camarilla gains strength, Al’s Place is the first location in the crosshairs. The Ivory Tower could manipulate the city government into having it condemned or disguise a surprise attack on the property as gang activity.

If the Anarchs gain strength, fortifying their most popular gathering place is a priority. They could push for restoration initiatives that increase its security or improve its amenities to increase its mortal popularity and use the kine as a shield.

If Robert buys out the property, he could allow the Anarchs to continue organizing there in exchange for a tithe or flush them out and redevelop the property into a business center.

Blacklight (Nightclub)

Nestled in the heart of the city, Blacklight is one of the hottest nightclubs around. It has two floors, each with their own dance floor. The ground level is lit by UV lights and swirling spotlights. The upper floor uses projection mapping to create psychedelic environments that pulse to the beat. Its large capacity, dark environments, and placement outside of any vampire’s holdings makes it a perfect hunting ground.

There’s an unshakeable rumor that a single vampire or coterie is the club’s secret patron. Whether this is true or just another example of undead appropriating the city’s glories for themselves remains to be seen.

Factions: Camarilla, Anarch

Characters: Mark Floros, Mateo Serrano, Donny Sheridan

Mechanics: When rolling for a mortal’s Resonance (*Vampire*, p. 226) at Blacklight, use Table 6.

TABLE 6: BLACKLIGHT RESONANCES

Roll Id10	Gift
1	Choleric
2	Melancholy
3–5	Phlegmatic
6–10	Sanguine

Development: If Blacklight’s popularity increases, it becomes the hottest club in the region. Soon, it gets national coverage. This is a double-edged sword for the Kindred. On the one hand, a higher class of clientele means a higher class of victim. On the other, any undead investors or prolific hunters might have a target painted on their back.

If Blacklight’s Kindred patron exists and is discovered, the formerly neutral ground politicizes quickly. As a battle rages for the club, it experiences financial woes and bursts of violence on its grounds become common. Without a compromise, the club could meet a sudden, messy end.

Pink Slips (Bar)

Pink Slips is a hole-in-the-wall bar in the roughest part of the city. The bar serves beer and bottom shelf liquor. Live country, blues, and punk rock plays on a stage protected from glass projectiles by chicken wire. The bar gets its name from one of its walls, pasted top to bottom with layoff notices donated by patrons.

Its regulars are tuckers, bikers, gangsters, and Kindred outside of the Camarilla. Its owner suspects that something's up with some of their patrons, but he's too worried about the increasing bills to investigate further.

Factions: Anarch, Independent

Characters: Sidney Abel, Caroline Janson, Donny Sheridan, Jerri Voss

Mechanics: When rolling for a mortal's Resonance at Pink Slips, use the Table 7.

TABLE 7: PINK SLIPS RESONANCES

Roll Id10	Gift
1	Choleric
2–5	Melancholy
6	Phlegmatic
7–10	Sanguine

Development: If a gang war breaks out, Pink Slips becomes one of its fronts. This could be an opportunity for the Kindred to influence the city's most powerful criminals. It could also bring an increased police presence in the area, which could increase the risk of a Masquerade breach.

If Pink Slips goes out of business, the unstoppable force of gentrification rushes to fill the void. Kindred like Robert Vasile might swoop in to take the place, ensuring less neutral ground in the city. It could also get bought out by a mortal business owner, one less willing to ignore a vampire making moves on prey in the corner.

North Convoy Business Center (Warehouse)

North Convoy Business Center is a large warehouse and storage locker facility open to public clients. Its prices are cheap, and its owners take almost any business. Kindred have used them for decades, including those who skipped town, were Beckoned, or met final death. Finding a "lost locker" belonging to one of these vampires could reveal long-lost truths, fascinating curiosities, or at least something pawnable.

Factions: Camarilla, Anarch, Autarktis

Characters: Sidney Abel, Bryce Garber, Nora McCreery, Dexter Wilkins

Mechanics: Once per story, a character with access to the North Convoy Business Center may rummage through its untouched cargo and storage lockers by dedicating at least half a night of time and either an Intelligence + Academics (to look through cargo logs) or Wits + Investigation (to physically search through inventory) test. The character gains an object or substance with a Resources value equivalent to the number of successes rolled, to a maximum of 5, which may be sold and used in lieu of the character's Resources for the rest of the story.

Development: If someone gets caught with an item from the business center, it could trigger a large-scale investigation of the warehouse's cargo by mortal authorities. If the characters used the place for storage, they could have their unives exposed.

Not every lost locker owner is gone forever. A vampire might return from a long absence to find their belongings stolen. A routine rummage might have created a powerful enemy.



Saint Januarius Catholic Church (Church)

Saint Januarius Catholic Church was consecrated in the early 20th Century. Its founding parishioners were working class and remain so to this day. Baptisms, marriages, funerals, and mass were held without incident for decades.

When the Church of Caine formed in the city, they needed a place to hold services. Saint Januarius was small and quiet enough to suit their needs. What started as large anonymous donations soon became a successful effort to make ghouls of its clergy. Now, this house of worship obeys two masters, Jesus Christ and Caine.

Factions: Church of Caine, Camarilla, Anarch

Characters: Rui da Costa, Marilyn Haig, Fred Hartmann, An Tran, Jerri Voss

Mechanics: The Church of Caine's presence on this holy ground tarnishes its sanctity, but not its serenity. Once per night, religious characters who pray or meditate in the church's garden or ponder texts in its library for at least an hour may recover 1 Willpower damage.

Development: The increasing Gnostic influence on the clergy could draw the laymen's notice. They might take it upon themselves to discover and eliminate the vampires worshiping at their parish. Worse still, they could call upon a far greater power – the Society of Leopold.

If the Gnostics gain strength, their church faces an attack on two fronts. The Anarchs might have no problem destroying church property to intimidate the faithful, and the Camarilla might use their pull to put the church's financial assets in peril.

Streiber Polytechnic Institute (An Institution of Learning)

Streiber Polytechnic Institute is an institute of technology on the eastern side of the city. Founded in the late 1800s (or the mid-1900s if your chronicle takes place in a newer city), Streiber offers degrees in engineering, natural sciences, optics, and architecture. Their men's football team, the Streiber Weathermen, has a passionate following.

Vampires began hunting on its campus not long after its founding. There are always enough people moving around that a young-looking vampire dressed like a student won't arouse too much suspicion. Two Princes ago, the institute became public ground. No Kindred, not even the Prince, could claim absolute dominion over it. This holds true, though no one knows for how long.

Factions: Camarilla, Anarch, Church of Caine

Characters: Kieran Cotterill, Bo Cunningham, Mateo Serrano, An Tran

Mechanics: The institute contains a wealth of knowledge. Characters with access to the institute receive a +1 dice pool bonus towards research rolls involving applied science or technology.

Development: Multiple vampires on campus means that someone's going to get hurt. A high-profile death after a feeding gone wrong might call vampire hunters into action. This could lead to the hunters or even Marilyn targeting the campus' regulars.

The institute could receive a government grant to develop new technology on campus. While most of its activities would be public, one would be a top-secret FIRSTLIGHT-led push to improve Xscope technology (see the sourcebook *Second Inquisition*). If the characters discover this project, they could potentially deliver the hunters a huge setback.

Sub Rosa Financial Park (District)

The collective name for a collection of banks, hotels, office buildings, and main public buildings along Sub Rosa Boulevard, the Sub Rosa Financial Park is the economic nervous system of the city.

The financial park is the seat of the Camarilla's power. They've held it since the area was just a line of trading posts. It's home to a haven the Prince uses sometimes to receive visitors and a number of locations suitable for discreet meetings. Elysia held in this part of the city are for major events like the debut of a child.

Factions: Camarilla

Characters: Frida Boucher, Cleo Drummond, Fred Hartmann, Robert Vasile, Carol Winfield, Lesley Woodrow

Mechanics: As an important Camarilla domain, the financial park's security systems are state of the art. Unless the system is shut down or disabled, tests or conflicts at the financial park using Stealth are always made with a +1 to Difficulty, applied before the application of any other relevant dice pool modifiers.

Development: Staying in one place could have serious consequences for the Camarilla. Forces like the Anarchs or factions of the Second Inquisition might get the drop on a private meeting of the Ivory Tower's elite. If they're successful, the city could face the mother of all power vacuums.

The financial park sees business from all over the world. A vampire from far outside the city could establish a branch of their business in the park. The Ivory Tower might be divided on how to approach this potential threat.

Taylor's Lakeside (Restaurant)

Taylor's Lakeside is a restaurant on the western side of the city. It specializes in New American cuisine, and its bartenders are some of the country's best. Its main dining hall also serves as a public venue. Its wealthiest diners pay top dollar to feast in one of the private rooms.

Mortals aren't the only patrons here. The restaurant's owner, a ghoul of Mark Floros, gives the Ivory Tower free reign over the establishment. If Elysia held in the financial park are for business, the ones held here are for pleasure. Kindred treat mortal dates to a sumptuous meal, then bring them to a private room for their own course. Quite a few ghouls were created here.

Factions: Camarilla

Characters: Mark Floros, Lesley Woodrow

Mechanics: The restaurant's atmosphere is designed to soften a vampire's predatory appearance. When using the Blush of Life, players' characters receive a +1 dice bonus to tests against mortals using Etiquette or Persuasion.

Development: The restaurant could face a major Masquerade breach. Its staff are kept well away from Kindred activities, but an employee in the wrong place at the wrong time could set events into motion. Unless the source is convinced or forced to keep quiet, Taylor's could be the subject of a clandestine government raid. The restaurant's financial records are clean, but the owner knows where the bodies are buried.

If Mark Floros is harmed or forced to leave the city, Taylor's Lakeside is in danger. The owner needs a financier to keep the place running and Blood to keep several decades worth of aging at bay. This could become a political free-for-all. In addition to Camarilla members vying for ownership, an enterprising Anarch, or someone like Robert Vasile, might take a shot at claiming the Ivory Tower's exclusive playground.

HORROR IN THE CRIMSON GUTTER

The game mechanics of *Vampire: The Masquerade* are designed to support a horror game. When a player's character loses control and kills a victim, that's one of the most archetypical horror scenes in a vampire story. The need to feed overrides morality and values with catastrophic consequences. With time, many Kindred become morally callous, no longer caring about other people's suffering. This is represented in the system with the Humanity mechanic. As moral standards degrade, Humanity goes down and the vampire has increasing trouble relating to mortals.

In a Crimson Gutter chronicle, much of the horror has been designed so that it flows from using the game's mechanics in the various scenes.

Losing Control

Vampire's basic game mechanics, such as messy criticals and Stains, bring the predatory, repressed nature of the Kindred to the fore. As Hunger increases, so does the risk of catastrophic loss of control. Such moments may lead to intense regret and shame, but the Hunger never ends. The next night, you need to hunt again no matter how moral you're trying to be.

When a character loses control, consider:

- Are there mortals present?
- Is there a chance of endangering the Masquerade?
- Is it possible for someone the character cares about to get hurt?
- Are there other Kindred there to witness the loss of control?

After the scene is over, you can ask the player:

- How does the player's character feel about losing control like that?
- Does the character have regrets?
- Does the incident make the character think they want to do things differently in the future, or are they becoming jaded?
- Does the character make excuses for what happened?

The purpose of these questions is to bring out the personal horror in *Vampire*. The mechanics made it happen, and now you can take a moment to feel what it means. If the loss of control was witnessed by other Kindred, they can comment on it. They can be worried, dismissive or sardonic, depending on who they are.

Community Horror

Vampire: The Masquerade is a storytelling game of personal and political horror. The word “political” in that description comes alive when the players’ characters have an opportunity to explore Kindred community. This is a core theme in the Crimson Gutter chronicle: As the characters enter the society of their own kind, they come to realize that a society of the undead has its own flavor of horror.

There’s an essential two-step to the process of how the horrors of Kindred community are revealed. Vampires are liars after all, and the face they present at first is rarely a truthful one.

First Impressions: Almost all Kindred try to show themselves and their factions off in an advantageous light. They talk up their strengths and dismiss and ignore their downsides. Of course, the specific angle a character has depends on how they see themselves in relation to the players’ characters. If they find the players’ characters to be weak and irrelevant, they won’t bother trying to make things look good. If they want something from the players’ coterie, they may put in more of an effort.

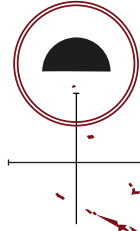
For more on how supporting characters might sell their own faction or sect to a wavering player’s character, see p. 10.

The Reality: After the players’ characters have become invested in the faction to some level, the masks come off. They see Storyteller characters treated horribly, their own complaints are ignored, and they have to suffer the greed and cruelty of their new compatriots.

Each supporting character includes notes on how this shift works in their case.

To make this shift work, the characters have to become invested in a faction. If they can just go home without losing anything, the impact of the horror is lessened. It comes to full bloom only if the characters feel that they should nevertheless remain in the faction, that being part of it or associated with it is too important to give up. This way, the political horror of Vampire has a chance to come to the fore. ■





CHAPTER TWO

FIRST STEPS

“A desperate, junkie-looking vampire feeds from the neck of a man at the urinal of a seedy, filthy bar toilet.

They make it sound so fancy, those Camarilla weasels, when they talk about the Embrace. Let me tell you what it really is.

It’s pain. It’s the feeling of looking your friends and family in the eyes and seeing only disgust and fear. They cringe away, whimpering, unable to comprehend what has happened to you. Deep inside, the Beast gnawing at your soul rejoices in their abject terror.

I lost everything. I was mortal, with a life. I became something resembling an animal, prowling the streets and alleys, slinking into the sewers to escape the sun.

The ignorance. The Hunger. Not knowing what had happened or why. What I had become.

Many of us falter when we take our first steps as creatures of the Blood. The loss of a mortal life is immeasurable. It’s a blessing, the necessary start of our journey as Caine’s Angels, but how many of us are able to perceive that in the moment?

Especially if we’re Nosferatu?

The answers are out there; you have to survive long enough to find them.”

– AN TRAN
A CHURCH OF CAINE NOSFERATU



The assumption in *The Crimson Gutter* chronicle is that the players' characters have all become Kindred fairly recently, although the specifics of their coterie type of course influence this. They have banded together for protection and companionship but don't really know much of anything about what it means to be a vampire, to say nothing of vampiric society.

As the characters meet other Kindred in the city and start to make out the contours of local vampire society, a vampire lost to the Beast rampages through the domain. More specifically, and awkwardly, the characters' domain. To clear their own name of any suspicions related to the wight and to prove themselves as capable Kindred, the characters have to find the lost vampire.

If you're raiding this book for raw materials for a chronicle with more experienced characters, the basic story of hunting for the wight still works. You just have to change some of the framing and incentives to make sure it fits with your players' coterie.

In these stories, the characters stumble on the concept of domain by accident, simply because having a territory you're familiar with is useful for any vampire. They have their usual haunts, and if other Kindred are aware of them, they've assumed the coterie has made a claim. The player's characters may not even be aware of this at first as other Kindred simply discreetly note their presence. The territory controlled by the characters makes them interesting to the different factions in the city: the Anarchs, the Camarilla, and the Church of Caine.

Unfortunately, not all Kindred know of the players' coterie's presence or respects it. Another vampire, Robert Vasile, has claimed domain overlapping the one inhabited by the players' characters.

Explainer Characters

As the characters meet others of their kind for the first time or interact with their erstwhile sires, you may wish to consider how to convey information about the setting or the nature of the Kindred. This is especially important if this is your players' first experience with a **Vampire** game, and they are not familiar with the setting. This chronicle is set up so that the players and the characters can learn important concepts at a natural pace, but the information still has to come from somewhere.

One possible solution is to assign the task of exposition to one or two Storyteller characters. They should be fairly irrelevant and powerless Kindred who don't directly compete with the players' characters. Fledglings who have spent a year or two as Kindred and have possibly just joined one of the sects would be a good choice.

As the chronicle progresses, the importance of these explainer characters fades, and they can start taking on more dramatic roles. It's less crucial for the players' characters to have someone to ask questions from once they've been introduced to Kindred society and have contacts within all the different factions.

Sidney Abel is an example of a Storyteller character who would work well in this role. She's not in a position to challenge the players' characters and benefits from a positive association with them. Her role as a courier gives her access to information, explaining why she knows more than the average fledgling.

Vampire 101

At the start of the chronicle, you should reserve time for playing through some of the basic scenes that showcase what vampires are all about. In Appendix I, you'll find complications to feeding attempts sorted by Predator Type. However, in the beginning, you'll find that just playing out uncomplicated basic feeding scenes can be interesting.

You can start the chronicle simply by presenting a scene where the characters are at their haven with three Hunger dice each. Perhaps they have been unlucky in their hunts in recent nights, leaving them with a gnawing empty feeling inside.

What kind of ideas do they have for the hunt? Starting with a scene like this also establishes the player-led nature of the game. The players explain their plans for the hunt and you, as the Storyteller, help play it out, moving to the first story in this chapter, *Bring on the Night* when it seems like the players are ready for some complications on their hunt.

ASSIGNING PREDATOR TYPES

In the beginning, the characters in a *Crimson Gutter* chronicle don't have Predator Types. They should be chosen or assigned after you've played through your first feeding scenes and seen what kind of choices the characters make.

What kind of ideas do your players have when confronted with the simple, essential question of the Hunger? Whether they seek to seduce victims in nightclubs or use their status in their local subculture to feed suggests what kind of predators the characters are.

Since the Predator Type is a big part of the character, you should assign them while discussing the subject with the players. Which Predator Types make sense to them as they consider what kind of a vampire their character is becoming?

It's up to you when specifically you wish to assign Predator Types, but it should happen in the first few sessions of the chronicle. You may ask that if a player wants a specific Predator Type for their character, they should feed using that style three times.

STORYTELLING A BIG SOCIAL SCENE

How to handle a social scene with multiple supporting characters interacting with both each other and the coterie?

The answer lies in caricature and a bit of preparation. For each supporting character you want to present by name, consider what you need to do. Do you want the players to remember them, or do you want the Storyteller character to interact with the players' characters?

If you want to introduce a character, perhaps because you intend to use them in a future story, have them do something distinct that the players' characters notice. Perhaps they leave the gathering, shouting and banging doors. Or maybe they're visibly drunk, having slaked their Hunger from a drunken victim.

If the goal is to have a character interact with the players' characters, decide what they want and how they try to get it. This can be an important plot point or something completely trivial. As an example of the latter, perhaps the supporting character tries to make an impression by bragging about the size of their domain.

Finally, if you have the time, you can make a quick sketch of the party venue, marking down everyone the characters know by name. That way, the players can look at your sketch and it's easier for them to take initiative and go talk to supporting characters. It's also useful as a reference for players to copy names from for their Relationship Map.



I. BRING ON THE NIGHT

FEEDING GONE AWRY

Social, Physical (optional)

The players' characters, urged on by their strange new Hunger, converge at a public place in search of a meal. Unbeknownst to them, their hunting ground is the recent acquisition of an influential vampire, who doesn't take kindly to their poaching. In the vampire's eyes, ignorance of the law is no excuse. The players' characters must feed safely and out of sight of the vampire's goons.

The players' characters aren't alone. Other Kindred, just as bewildered at the vampire's claim as they are, could help them or set them up to save their own skin. The arrival of a wight, a vampire driven by their Beast, complicates matters further. Blood will flow, and not in the way the coterie wants.

Why the Players' Coterie?

Sometimes it's as simple as "needs must." Hunting, feeding, and their circumstances and consequences are a core loop of **Vampire: The Masquerade**. It's the one motivation that every vampire character, no matter their clan or sect, has in common. The need to hunt, and hunt safely, is the kind of pressure that brings the players' coterie together.

The players' characters are also the new kids on the block and may or may not have a connection to their sire. Though they may not know it, the actions they take in this story could color the way others view them through the rest of the chronicle.

Goals

The players' characters have three goals. The first is slaking their Hunger. The second is to stay out of the sight of ordinary mortals, the mortal servants of the hunting ground's owner, and the owner himself. The third is to deal with the wight by driving it away before it harms anyone else, managing the aftermath to minimize damage, or some combination of the two.

For the Storyteller, your main goal is giving the players enough space to establish their characters and their relationships to the rest of the coterie. This is the table's chance to take everything they've put on their sheets and relationship map and put it into action. Your other goals are to emphasize the importance of Hunger and feeding, introduce domains and establish why they're important, and provide a very visible reason why the players' characters should hold on to their humanity.

Supporting Characters

This story uses the following characters:

Robert Vasile: Robert has recently claimed the hunting ground as a domain, and he isn't interested in keeping it the free feeding zone it was once known to be. His reasons for the acquisition are simple: It's a popular hunting ground and he feels he can gain status and favors by granting access to it. Unfortunately, its popularity means that many Kindred are used to hunting there, as this evening demonstrates.

Vasile has ordered several ex-military ghouls (see characteristics in *Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 372) in his employ to remove poachers – one for each players' character. In addition to their listed abilities, they also have a combat skill of your choice (Firearms, Brawl, or Melee) at five dice and can use Dominate 1 (Compel). If the players' characters make a big enough scene, Robert intervenes directly. He doesn't want to ask the Sheriff or anyone else for help with defending his new domain from poachers because he's afraid it would make him look weak, unable to tend to his new acquisition.

Nora McCreery: The Run-Off is out looking for a meal, just like the players' characters. This is one of the few places she hunts at when she has the stomach for it. She isn't great at avoiding Robert's guards as their presence is new to her, which could serve as an opportunity for the players' characters to either confront them or to use her as a convenient distraction.

The Wight: Once it was Alan Sellers, a Gangrel in great standing with the Camarilla and respected among the Anarchs and the Church of Caine. Now it's a bundle of hunger, aggression, and cruelty in the shape of a man. It uses the traits of a wight (*Vampire*, p. 375).



Locations

Before running this story, pick one of the following locations as the setting. Whichever location you pick is the latest expansion to Robert's domain. Unless someone forces him to give up the property, it remains his for as long he's still standing. Since his newly claimed domain is in the territory controlled by the players' characters, choose one which makes most sense in terms of the neighborhood the coterie claims as their own.

Blacklight: If Robert has Blacklight, he's the secret patron behind the club's owners and has been for some time. He hadn't thought much of it, but now that its popularity has exploded, he wants a greater say in its operation. Clearing out blood-sucking freeloaders is the first step.

Pink Slips: If Robert has Pink Slips, it's a recent purchase. He bought the place with cash, kept on the current owner, and brought the security staff under his control. He doesn't care for the bar's aesthetic or clientele, and evicting poachers is part of his "restoration plan."

Streiber Polytechnic Institute: Robert used his influence to place a mortal proxy on the campus' board of directors and uses that as proof of his claim over the entire campus. It's a shocking move to all the factions in the city. For some, its proof that he's established an autarky under everyone's noses. If you choose this location, the story takes place at a house party hosted by a fraternity or sorority house on campus-held land. Robert's guards are campus security crashing the party as the student body is too transient to provide good long-term servants.

Scenes

Introductions: The players' characters arrive at the hunting ground. Go around the table and ask each player how their character is feeling at the start of the night. Ask them to collectively decide why this was where they chose to hunt and feed together. If the players are stumped, some options are:

- One of their sires mentioned it as a good place to feed.
- It's an old haunt, one where they'll feel comfortable hunting.
- A crowded, public place like this is best cover they could think of.
- They came across the venue by chance and couldn't resist the temptation to feed.

After the characters' introduction, describe the general aesthetics and mood of the hunting ground. Blacklight is a dark and sexy place where the beautiful dance and flirt. Pink Slips is an authentic hole in the wall filled with surly types. The house party at Streiber is wild and packed with college kids making poor choices.

The Hunt: The players have free reign to explore the hunting ground and find their perfect target. This is the first of the many hunting scenes you'll run in this game. While most are best summed up with quick descriptions and dice pools, this one should be played out blow-by-blow, character by character. Let the players earn their first Kiss.

Scanning the crowd for potential victims is an Intelligence + Insight test at Difficulty 2. On a win, a character catches someone alone or gets an opening to lure someone to a private spot in a manner appropriate to their character. A failure points out a suitable target in full view of witnesses or in a less than ideal location. You may offer a win at a cost, which gives the character an opening but attracts the attention of Robert's ghouls. If a character uses a mental Discipline on any mortal except Robert's ghouls, they're unprepared.

If a player has a chosen Predator type and hunts according to it, call for its associated dice pool for feeding. The hunting ground has openings for any kind of Predator Type, whether it's the surprise

appearance of a devoted follower for the Osiris or Scene Queen or a secluded room for the Siren. If a player doesn't have or doesn't want to use a Predator Type, default to Strength + Brawl (for a forceful Kiss), Charisma + Persuasion (for a coercive Kiss), or Dexterity + Stealth (for Kissing an unsuspecting victim).

The feeding Difficulty is 3. A win lets the character slake any amount of Hunger (*Vampire*, p. 212). A failure slakes one Hunger but inflicts an amount of Aggravated Health damage equal to the margin of failure. A win at a cost draws the attention of Robert's ghouls.

When running this scene, be sure to let characters aid each other in their hunts if they so desire. They can also run into Nora as they pursue prey. She's not the most elegant predator, but she's willing to help the characters hunt if she gets the impression that they're very new to this, especially if they're thin-blooded.

Bouncers: If one or more characters win at a cost when scanning a crowd or feeding, obviously use a mental Discipline on a victim, or severely injure a mortal, Robert's ghouls spring into action. If all the characters successfully hunted, the bouncers start pursuing them before they can leave.

If Nora helped any character hunt, the bouncers target her first. They don't know everything about vampires, but they know enough to recognize what a predator on the prowl looks like. Perhaps unwisely, it gives them a feeling of superiority. If the characters don't intervene, they take their time in kicking her out, enjoying the rush of getting to mess with a vampire barely able to fight back.

Keeping out of the bouncers' sight is a Wits + Stealth test at Difficulty 4. If the coterie uses Nora as a distraction, the Difficulty goes down to 2.

If the bouncers catch the characters, they engage in a social conflict. They use subtle hints about the character's undead nature, Robert's authority, and threats of violence to bully them out. The characters can invoke their sires' authority (should they know them) with Charisma + Politics, appeal to their sympathies for new vampires with Charisma

+ Etiquette, or convince the bouncers that they're allowed here with Manipulation + Subterfuge. The conflict lasts for three rounds, and the side that takes the least Willpower damage wins. When using mental Disciplines, the bouncers count as prepared mortals.

If the characters win the conflict, the bouncers are willing to let them be but need to speak to Robert first. If the characters lose the conflict, they must either accept getting kicked out or escalate the conflict to violence.

The Wight: Just as the characters sneak out or as their conflict with the bouncers wraps up, the wight arrives, possibly animated by the memory of having used to hunt here. It wastes no time tearing into the crowd, shrugging off their feeble attacks and draining them dry for all to see. (Note that this takes a few rounds so if the characters are quick on the uptake, they may intervene.) It creates a whirlwind of hideous violence barreling straight towards the characters. If the bouncers are around, they'll try to stop it, but unless the characters intervene, they're just the wight's next meal.

No matter how much they know about what they've become, a few things are certain when characters make eye contact with the wight: it's one of them, but there's nothing human in its features. If the coterie puts up a fight, it's not interested. It'll defend itself, but it just wants to finish up its slaughter and slink back into the night.

The wight flees after three rounds of physical conflict with the coterie or if the bouncers have enough time to call Robert. If the coterie wastes no time escaping, it flees shortly after them. If the coterie's still around when it's gone, it's obvious that among the blood and gore are bystanders, their phones still recording the event. It's a clear Masquerade breach, if the characters know the concept. If they do, and if they feel they need to protect their domain, they can lessen the impact with a convincing cover story to tell the survivors (Manipulation + Subterfuge), by covering up any obvious vampire markings while tending to the wounded (Manipulation + Medicine), or by getting

ahead of the narrative by talking to the media first (Charisma + Performance).

If this is the first session for players new to **Vampire**, you may note that using Discipline powers is difficult because something like Cloud Memory would have to be applied individually, a hard thing to do with a crowd. Swaying the people with Awe might have slightly better results.

Aftermath: If the coterie helped Nora, she owes them a boon and might provide them with some alchemical creations in a future story. If not, her story gives the coterie a bad reputation among the thin-blooded.

If the characters fed without getting detected or won the social conflict against the bouncers, Robert is intrigued if he learns what happened. Some competent free agents like the coterie could be useful.

If the characters try to protect the Masquerade after the wight's attack, they make a positive impression on Mark Floros and Caroline Janson, should they learn about what they did.

Pay attention especially to messy criticals, bestial failures and Stains. If the characters kill someone or lose control, this may be the time to introduce the players to how Humanity works, and how Stains accumulate. (see *Vampire*, p. 239.).

Variations

This story assumes the players' characters are fledglings at the start of the story with personal rapport and perhaps some connection to their sires, but little understanding of what domain means to the Kindred. Here are two story alterations for more established coterie and one with even less assumed experience:

Purposeful Poaching: One or more of the players' character's sires learn of Robert's recent expansion and asks them to feed on his territory. This could be to test his security, draw him out for a negotiation for feeding rights, or as a retaliatory measure.

My Sire, Robert: If one or more of the players' characters has Robert Vasile as their sire, the players' characters are there to celebrate Robert's latest acquisition (if they're on good terms with him), to get a quick bite to eat while the old man isn't looking (if they're not on good terms), or about to attend the worst family reunion of their unlives (if they have no idea).

Rude Awakening: If your table enjoys playing fish out of water, consider using this story as their very first night as vampires. They rise as vampires in various places around the location, slowly finding each other as they come to terms with their new existence. What they've become and who their sires are could be secondary mysteries in later stories.

II. A JURY OF YOUR PEERS

A FALSE ACCUSATION LEADS TO NEW ALLIES AND ENEMIES

Social, Mental (optional)

The players' characters join a Kindred gathering hosted by the Anarchs, the Camarilla or the Church of Caine, the choice of faction depending on the needs of the Storyteller. The mood is tense, but cordial, and the coterie gets a glimpse of how other Kindred in the city get along. The characters get invited by one of the Kindred they have met so far, as a courtesy.

The coterie learns that a series of attacks, much like the one during their first hunt, have been occurring throughout the city. A Camarilla investigator accuses them of aiding the attacker. The players' characters must clear their names. They soon learn the greatest danger might be their fellow Kindred.



This story is best run a few nights after the first story. In between the stories, you may consider asking how the characters hunt each night, making Rouse Checks as necessary. Consider running it after a few sessions where the characters engage in regular hunts, pursue their personal Ambitions and Desires, and play scenes with their Touchstones. Meanwhile, the wight continues to strike without fear, giving the impression that this city is not a law where Kindred law is effectively upheld, and the host faction prepares for their meeting. This way, the story feels like a natural consequence as opposed to marching the characters between plot points.

Why the Players' Coterie?

The players' characters had the best glimpse of the wight and had a front row seat to the massacre. If anyone listens to them, they could take command of the situation.

They're also new to the domain, and its denizens want to know who they are as soon as possible. A new vampire in the city is a potential ally, an insidious threat, or a patsy-in-waiting. They'll want to know which one they're dealing with.

Goals

The players' characters have three goals. The first is to get to know the other vampires around them. The second is to establish relationships with them. The third is to make sure the Kindred don't believe they're responsible for the wight's attack in any way even though it's happening in their domain.

For the Storyteller, your main goal is to give your players a chance to know the supporting characters and determine which ones are more likely to appear in future stories. These are the characters your coterie might spend an eternity with, so it's important to see how they interact with the extended cast. It's possible that your troupe may come into this story expecting to join one faction and come out of it itching to join another!

You should also get the players to buy into the fact that by following up on the wight they might gain status in the newly discovered vampire community. You may also use the existence of hunters and the Second Inquisition when a supporting character explains why the Masquerade is so important. "My sire was destroyed by hunters!"

Your next goal is to sow the seeds for later stories. If the players haven't already decided on a faction, this could be their first step towards pursuing the Camarilla, Anarch, or Church of Caine series of stories. You can also drop rumors and hooks for stories of your own. You might even find ideas for stories you never thought of before during this one.

Your final goal is to provide some insight into the political goals of the supporting characters, including any players' characters' sires who may be present.

Supporting Characters

This story could have as many supporting characters present as the Storyteller can reasonably portray, but a good rule of thumb is to have at least one interact with each member of the coterie. This ensures a variety of options without overwhelming the table. The sires of the players' characters are a good choice and you can also just include random characters from this book. Factionless characters are less likely to attend the gathering, except in some variations. The three characters below should be among your selections.

Frida Boucher: Frida wants this Masquerade breach shut down. If the meeting is hosted by the Anarchs, she's there as an outsider advocating for the idea that upholding the Masquerade is in everyone's best interests. She's unwilling to take the coterie at its word, especially because they're Autarkis in her view. She's seen the footage circulating around the internet but doesn't believe that the wight's attack in a public place is random. She's too prone to thinking that Kindred plots are behind everything.

Rui da Costa: As a Brujah loyal to the Camarilla, Rui sees this gathering as an opportunity to bridge

the rift separating the Ivory Tower and the Anarchs. He turns to Church of Caine doctrine to urge the community to act as one, which isn't as effective as he'd hoped.

Fred Hartmann: This free Ventrue serves as Rui's foil in this story. According to Fred, this is the Anarchs' chance to prove themselves more capable of dealing with the situation than the Camarilla. While he respects Rui as a fellow Church of Caine member, tonight is all about hammering in his sect's superiority. If the Anarchs organized the gathering, he took charge, and as the sect currently has no leader, no one told him he couldn't.

If the Church of Caine organized the meeting, Rui and Fred host it together.

Locations

Before starting the story, select one of the following locations for its setting. If your troupe already has a set faction, consider picking an option connected to a faction they're not a part of. It will provide a rare glimpse into how the other side spends their existence.

Al's Place: If the Anarchs host the gathering, it's held in one of the community center's classrooms. It's the biggest on the property, but it's still a bit cramped. Frida accuses the coterie from the teacher's desk, and they can use the room's corners and single supply closet for private discussion.

Saint Januarius Catholic Church: If the Church of Caine hosts the gathering, it takes place in a large general use hall near the church itself. It has a stage, a cafeteria, and several small multi-use rooms available for private discussions. Frida brings them on stage to accuse them.

Taylor's Lakeside: If the Camarilla hosts the gathering, it's held in Taylor's Lakeside after closing time — a treasured location that members of other sects rarely see. This is both an assurance that the Camarilla means what it says and a power move to encourage the other factions to be on their best behavior. There are private dining rooms for discussion. Frida accuses them in the main dining hall.

Scenes

Invitations: A messenger approaches the coterie with an invitation to a gathering at the location you've chosen for the discussion of "the recent threat to our community." This messenger could be a member of the hosting faction or an independent like Sidney Abel. The messenger doesn't approach at a haven used by one or more of the characters but instead while a member of the coterie is out hunting. The messenger approaches the player's character who's hunting style is most visible in the city's nightlife. They ask that character to pass on the invitation to the rest of the coterie.

It's clear that the threat is referring to the wight and that the messenger is honest with their words.

- A Wits + Insight test at Difficulty 2 can ease any lingering suspicions.
- A Manipulation + Subterfuge at Difficulty 2 can get the messenger to reveal more than they planned, for example that Kindred both in the Camarilla and the Anarchs are considering using the incident to take the player's coterie's domain away from them using the wight incident.
- A Charisma + Etiquette at Difficulty 2 can impress the messenger and get them to support the characters.

Breaking the Ice: When the coterie arrives at the gathering, the mood is tense. The Camarilla and Anarchs have had tense relations for over a decade, and even would-be allies are wedged apart by the arrival of the Church of Caine. The coterie has a chance to ease tensions and get to know the locals. Use one or more of the following mini-scenes, or create your own:

- *The Turncoats:* Rui or Fred are cornered by members of their former factions. It's a heated argument over Camarilla and Anarch ideals that could escalate. The players' characters can break it up with a Charisma + Etiquette test at Difficulty 3 or take a side and try to win with a Charisma + Politics test at Difficulty 4. Successfully breaking up the argument or

arguing for the host's side gives the host a good impression of the coterie. Successfully arguing for the belligerent's side makes them interested in the coterie.

- **Clan Assessment:** If your city has one or more clans with an organized structure (such as traditionalist Tremere), members of a player's character's clan pull them away from the coterie. Depending on how the clan's organized, they might bring them up to speed on any cross-faction agreements they have or offer to teach an in-clan Discipline the character doesn't know, for a price.
- **Signs and Portents:** Pick one or more of the stories from chapters 3, 4 or 5 and give the players' characters a chance to learn of them. Perhaps one of the Anarch bosses, who is trying to bring their gang to the top, is making vampires of the Camarilla angry or the Church of Caine's outsider priest opens the gathering with an unwelcome prayer.
- Somewhere in these mini-scenes, the players' characters should get a chance to run into Frida. She seems cordial enough, but a Wits + Insight test at Difficulty 3 reveals an underlying suspicion of the coterie. If pressed, either start a new mini-scene or move on to the next scene.

The Video: When the coterie's settled in, the organizing faction confirms what the guests fear. A wight is wreaking havoc across the city, leaving bodies in its wake. Worse, its largest attack was filmed.

The host shows a video. It's the start of the twist from "Bring on the Night" from the crowd's point of view. The camera watches the wight maim several people and gets a clear look at its face. Then its operator flees the scene. The media speculates that drugs could have caused the attack but the theory feels flimsy in the face of what was seen on the video.

Reading the crowd as they watch this is an Intelligence + Insight test at Difficulty 3. A win reveals that Fred Hartmann recognizes the wight. If confronted, he can tell them the wight used to be called Alan Sellers and is someone many here trusted

before it started to exhibit signs of catastrophic loss of Humanity.

The Accusation: Before the coterie investigates further, Frida takes command of the gathering. She says that wights would never throw themselves into a crowd like that without provocation or invitation. Despite their bestial nature, they're cunning predators. After describing how she found security camera footage of someone opening the back door of the venue, she concludes that someone let it in intentionally. Then, she accuses one of the coterie vaguely matching the grainy video of opening that door.

The crowd's shaken enough that, despite the lack of evidence, some accept Frida's conclusions. The coterie has a few options as the room turns against them: Presenting a clear-headed testimony with a Composure + Persuasion test at Difficulty 3. Tearing apart Frida's argument with an Intelligence + Larceny test at Difficulty 4. Convincing Frida to back off in front of an increasingly suspicious crowd is a Charisma + Intimidation test at Difficulty 4. The coterie should be free to try any of these routes, or all three if they really want to shut her down. They only need to win one of these tests to clear their names.

Failure at these tests won't get the coterie killed but it's obvious that unless they manage to clear their names, their chances of joining a faction are zero and some even demand their destruction.

If the characters made a good impression on members of the meeting during the story, they can invoke their help for a +1 die bonus to a maximum of +3. If Nora is at the gathering and the coterie stuck up for her in the previous story, she vouches for them but only provides a +1 die bonus to presenting their testimony. Her status as a thin-blooded vampire lessens her clout even among sympathetic vampires.

Aftermath: If the coterie clears their names, Frida is humiliated. She storms out of the gathering, just short of a Fury Frenzy. The host then leads

a discussion on what to do with the wight. Destruction is the only option, but the reluctance in the crowd is palpable. Attention turns to the players' characters as the wight seems to inhabit their domain, after all. It's clear that anyone who finds and kills it earns the city's gratitude, a valuable prize.

If the coterie can't clear their names, Frida is vindicated. She suggests exile to punish them but is shouted down by guests sympathetic to the coterie. Eventually, she relents and uses her Sheriff-granted authority to task them with hunting down and killing the wight plaguing their domain.

In either outcome, it's obvious this is an opportunity for the coterie to make a name for themselves and justify their possession of their domain. They might not want to fight the wight but even just investigating its origins gains a lot. If the characters succeed, they prove themselves as responsible members of the local Kindred community who understand the nature of the Masquerade.

All factions agree to let the coterie take on the investigation. If Mark Floros or Caroline Jansen are present, they personally invite the coterie to discuss the wight at a later time. If not, Mark sends the coterie a hand-written invitation.

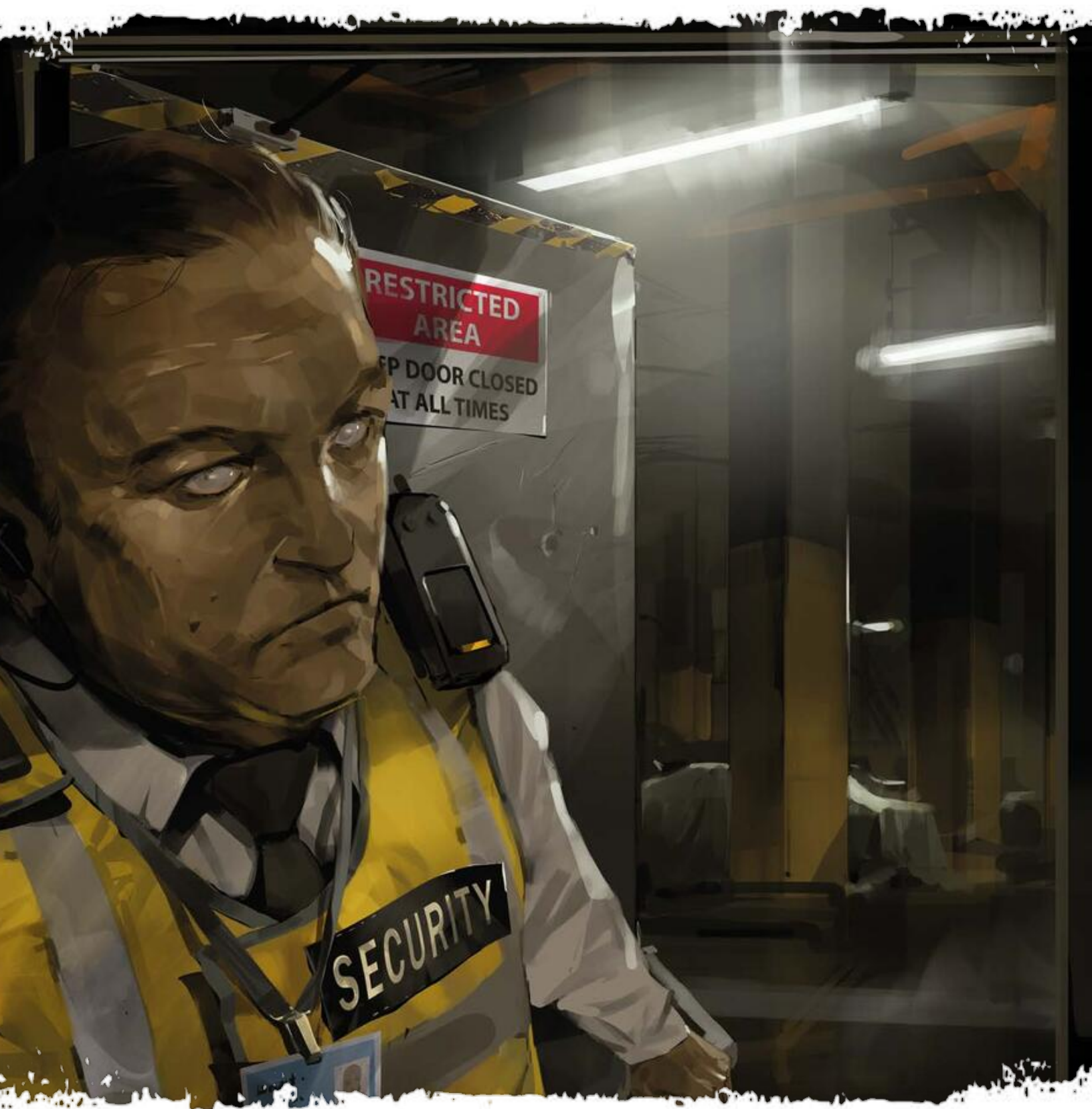
Variations

This story assumes that the event is hosted by a specific faction but members from other factions are also present. Here are three story alterations for two different types of gatherings, and an alteration accounting for an additional ally the coterie might have.

Justice, With Just Us: If your chronicle has vitriolic relations between the city's factions, the gathering is limited to one faction, most likely the one the players have joined or would like to join. Nothing changes in a Camarilla-only version. In an Anarch-only version, Donny Sheridan is the accuser. In a Church of Caine-only version, Jerri Voss is the accuser.

My Sire's Party: If you'd like Frida's accusation to come as a surprise, consider changing the gathering from one hosted by a faction to an open social gathering hosted by a single vampire. This could be any member of the domain, but ideally, it should be a sire of a player's character. Frida takes command of the event to show the wight video and then accuse the players' coterie.

The Landlord's Assistance: If the players' characters were able to meet and make a good impression on Robert Vasile in the previous story, they have an extra advantage if they're willing to use it. Robert doesn't regularly attend any gathering like this, but the wight's attack might drive him to seek out the factions for aid. He's willing to shut down Frida's accusations, but he expects the favor to be paid in kind.



III. MORTAL FAILINGS

INVESTIGATING A MASQUERADE BREACH

Physical and Social

This story assumes that the coterie is motivated to hunt down the wight. This may be because they want to clear their own names, impress other Kindred or even because they genuinely believe the Masquerade is very important. The growing panic and public attention caused by the wight's attacks are starting to stretch the Masquerade thin, and the city's vampires fear it might attract the attention of vampire hunters. The coterie must suppress the kine's attempts to dig deeper.

Along the way, they learn more about the wight through the mortal ties it left behind and about why their peers seem reluctant to reveal its former identity. Or seemed, in case the characters managed to suss it out in the previous story, *A Jury of Your Peers*.

This story should take place right after *A Jury of Your Peers* and could occur as soon as the very next night. It's also the launching pad for the next three stories, which can be played in any order.

Why the Players' Coterie?

The players' characters are sworn to take down the wight. Depending on how the last story ended, this is either a duty the domain expects them to perform in exchange for their involvement in the wight's attack at the venue or an opportunity to fast-track their way into status and influence. On top of that, the wight appeared in their domain and they need to prove they can hold onto it.

From the perspective of the domain's authorities, letting the coterie handle the cover-up sets them up for possible failure, which would allow for an uncontested takeover of the domain later. The players' characters might also have closer ties to mortal authorities, higher Humanity to better fit among the kine, or be simply expendable.

Goals

The characters have three goals: The first is to get the Masquerade breaches caused by the wight under control, either by intimidating the journalist driving the panic or tampering with the investigation to draw away the attention of deadlier forces. The second is to learn more about the wight through what it left behind. The third is to take advantage of their existing mortal assets and gain new ones.

For the Storyteller, your main goal is to flesh out your player's character's Backgrounds, especially any Allies, Contacts, and Retainers. Mortals aren't just important to vampires as food. They provide access to assets, abilities, and locations the sun touches. Not every Background is relevant to this story, but encourage your players to use their Backgrounds when possible.

Your other goal is to give your players space to play around with their Disciplines and other abilities of the Blood. The previous two stories had your players' characters hunting and politicking in a single place. This one gives your table a chance to choose a target, form a plan, and exercise their capabilities on ordinary people outside of the Kindred community.

Supporting Characters

This story uses the following characters:

Mark Floros: Mark knew the wight when it was Alan. They were part of a coterie together, which is how he knows about the wight's previous ties to the city's police. He's jovial with the players' characters and enjoys teasing Caroline about her flexibility with the truth, but inside he's deeply troubled by his ally's slide into inhumanity.

Caroline Jansen: Caroline was one of the wight's contacts among the Anarchs. The news network she works for owns the struggling alternative newspaper that Alan's ghoul writes for, and she found the Gangrel through him. She shares what she knows with the coterie with grim sincerity, something she almost never does. Everything else is fair game for her usual half-truths and deceptions.

Troy Lane and Alesha Ferrell, The Wight's Servants: Among the city's police department, the wight bought Detective Troy Lane through blackmail and bribery five years ago. In the city's local media, it turned Alesha Ferrell, an up-and-coming city beat journalist, into a ghoul ten years ago. Neither were prepared for getting cut off from the money or Blood. Troy is a Police Detective (*Vampire*, p. 371), and Alesha is a Ghoul (*Vampire*, p. 372) with no Disciplines.

Olivia Cooper and Carl Gould, The Hunters: The increasing attacks and accompanying viral videos drew the attention of a number of vampire hunters. Two are about to cross paths with the coterie. The first is Olivia Cooper, an Internal Affairs officer looking to pin Troy for corruption. The second is Carl Gould, a survivor of the attack from "Bring on the Night", out for vengeance. Olivia is also a Police Detective, and Carl uses the stats of a Gangster (*Vampire*, p. 371).

Locations

This story uses the following locations:

City Police Department: The two-story building is in the city's downtown. It has a reception desk, cubicles for administration workers and detectives, three interview rooms, and a single evidence locker. The building is guarded by several guards (use the stats for Police Detectives) of at least the coterie's number. At night, there are only a handful of police officers on duty.

Intrepid Weekly Headquarters: The weekly alternative paper Alesha works for is located on the second floor of an office building in the city's suburbs. Besides the accounting and server rooms,

the headquarters has an open-floor plan. A single security guard (use the stats for Gangster) is on call.

Sub Rosa Financial Park: Mark and Caroline's designated meeting place is at Bertie's, a fancy restaurant in the Royal Palm Hotel. Mark has a major investment in the hotel, and it's close to Caroline's workplace.

IN MEDIA RES

This is a storytelling technique you can use sometimes to skip play that seems uninteresting. Instead of following an investigation step by step, the Storyteller can just skip ahead and say: "After following a few clues, you end up at Bertie's." Then, the players can take it from there. This is also a useful technique if you're pressed for time and want to fit certain events into a session.

Scenes

All About Alan: The coterie arrives at Bertie's. This happens if their investigation leads them here or the Storyteller just starts play in media res. The characters are not on any reservation, and Mark uses a cover name among mortals, which he didn't give the coterie. They can make a Manipulation + Persuasion test at Difficulty 3, use Presence, or bribe the host by temporarily losing a dot of Resources for the night to get in. If all options fail, Mark convinces the host to let them in.

Mark comments on the coterie's method of getting in and apologizes for the inconvenience. If this is the first time the coterie meets either Storyteller character, they introduce themselves. Introductions are much warmer if the coterie took steps to protect the Masquerade in "Bring on the Night".

Mark and Caroline share the following information:

- The wight's name was Alan Sellers.
- Alan was in a coterie with Mark; they kept mortals from investigating any deaths Camarilla members committed. One homicide detective, Troy Lane, was forced into Alan's employ.

- Alan got Alesha Ferrell, a journalist for the *Intrepid Weekly*, addicted to his Blood and used her to disseminate false narratives.
- Alan seemed troubled by his own existence and went missing two months ago. The recent attacks are his re-emergence.
- They have no idea where the wight is now. Alan's haven was found abandoned; its retainer had been devoured.

They ask the coterie to find Troy at the police station or Alesha at the newspaper headquarters and convince them to cover up the truth. If the coterie wants to take both tasks on for that extra bit of glory, let them.

Mark permits the coterie to hunt in the restaurant as an incentive, pointing out the special back room he uses when he feeds here.

The Police Station: The coterie can get into the police station or to Troy in a few ways:

- Influence in law enforcement or at two dots or above gives the player's character enough clout to set up a meeting with Troy in an interview room.
- Allies in law enforcement could be called in to give the coterie clearance to enter the building.
- The coterie could break in. This is a series test (*Vampire*, p. 294) of Resolve + Technology at Difficulty 4 or a Physical Discipline (to disable the electronic lock system), Dexterity + Stealth at Difficulty 3 or a Mental Discipline (to avoid detection), and Intelligence + Investigation at Difficulty 2 (to find Troy's desk).
- They could catch Troy alone in another place. A Retainer could mark out his home for the coterie during daylight hours or discover a place he likes to visit during breaks.
- Another idea the players come up with.

Troy isn't aware that vampires exist but knows that Alan's connected to the murder spree he's been assigned to investigate. He cares more about freedom from Alan's blackmail than losing his income and wants him in jail. The coterie could make a Manipulation + Subterfuge test at Difficulty 4 to convince him they inherited Alan's blackmail

or a Manipulation + Persuasion test at Difficulty 3 to get him to cover up the case with the assurance that they'll get rid of Alan. As an unprepared mortal, Presence could get him to do what they want if correctly applied.

The Newspaper: The coterie can get into the *Intrepid Weekly* headquarters or to Alesha in a couple of different ways:

- The coterie could use a Contact in journalism or another field to bait Alesha into an interview at the headquarters or a separate location.
- Fame in journalism at any dot rating could let a player's character waltz on into the headquarters in the guise of an evening lecturer.
- The guard on duty is happy to "lose" a key card and take a long break if a player's character temporarily loses two dots of Resources for the rest of the story. Otherwise, breaking in is a series test like at the police station, only the Resolve + Technology test is reduced to Difficulty 3.
- Retainers can also find Alesha's house or another location where she'd be alone during the daytime.

Alesha doesn't know that Alan became a wight and is convinced he left her. Her reports on the attacks contain subtle hints to their true vampiric nature to bring him back to her. She takes the truth of what he's become very hard. The coterie could convince her to give up the public appeals with a Manipulation + Persuasion test at Difficulty 3, but she won't participate in a coverup without either a Manipulation + Intimidation test at Difficulty 4 or an agreement to feed from another vampire's Blood on her terms.

For the purposes of Dominate, Alesha is a prepared mortal.

Enough time has passed since Alesha's last sip of vitae that she has reverted to her true age, the effects of being a ghoul lost. She aged ten years in a single day, and tries to conceal the effects with makeup. Going cold-turkey shook her severely and she's wondering if vampire Blood might make her young again. (It won't.)

The Hunters (Optional): As the coterie negotiates with their targets, or just as it seems like they're coming to an agreement, the hunters come in.

Olivia overhears the discussion at the police office (or is paying Troy a visit if the coterie is speaking to him elsewhere) and tries eavesdropping. A Wits + Awareness test at Difficulty 3 picks up on her arrival, and a player's character with Premonition (*Vampire*, p. 249) receives a vision of the event moments before it happens. If caught, she tries grilling the coterie as to why they're here. A suitable Mental Discipline or a Manipulation + Subterfuge or Intimidation test at Difficulty 3 drives her away.

Carl breaks into the Intrepid Weekly headquarters (or wherever the coterie is talking to Alesha) after the coterie gets inside, and he directly confronts Alesha. He accuses her of knowing more than she lets on, which could escalate into violence. An Intelligence + Insight test at Difficulty 2 picks up on his survivor's guilt. A suitable Mental Discipline or a Composure + Persuasion or Subterfuge test at Difficulty 4 gets him to back off.

Aftermath: If the coterie succeeds, they don't need to worry about Alesha or Troy. The coverup is a success, and the domain has a bit more time to take down the wight before a Second Inquisition agency moves in. If the players' characters chose to do only one of these tasks, Mark or Caroline take care of the other in the most brutal yet effective way you can imagine. Alesha or Troy could be purchased as an Ally, Contact, or Retainer at 2 and 3 dots, respectively. If the players' characters make Alesha into their ghoul, she demands steady communication and a strict monthly feeding schedule.

If the coterie didn't succeed with either Troy or Alesha, there aren't any consequences ... yet. Mark and Caroline are annoyed but chalk it up to a green coterie. They promise to tie up the coterie's loose ends but the characters owe them a boon. Alternatively, they make ask for half of the characters' domain. Unbeknownst to them, the eyes of a Second Inquisition agency turn towards the domain.

No matter if the coterie succeeded with Troy, he reveals that when he received his last bribe from Alan, he saw him chatting with someone else at the meeting place, someone whose description they discover matches Bo Cunningham if they ask around other Kindred. This could be an opening into running *No Princes, No Masters* as a future story.

No matter if the coterie succeeded with Alesha, she reveals that the last time she fed from Alan, she arrived too early and found him drinking from the wrist of a man with Kieran Cotterill's description. Again, if the characters haven't met Kieran, they can give his description to other Kindred who make the connection. The expression on Alan's face reminded her of how she felt when she drank from him. This could be an opening into running "A Polite Society" as a future story.

Whatever outcome occurs, Olivia comes across Carl's social media posts about his hunt, and the two join forces.

Variations

This story assumes that the players' characters have no connection with the wight or any of the mortal characters. Here are two story alterations to connect these Storyteller characters to your players' characters:

Touchstone Contact: Consider exchanging Troy or Alesha for a player's character's Touchstone. In this variation, Touchstones must have connections to law enforcement or journalism but aren't necessarily a blood slave or someone being blackmailed. The fear that some other vampire could have done something could be dramatic enough.

My Friend, My Hunter: If your players are open to an antagonistic storyline with mortal friends and family, consider using one as a hunter. In this variation, these replacements shouldn't already be hardened vampire hunters. Perhaps they think the player's character died at the first story's venue and seek justice or are searching for the truth behind that weird video they saw.



IV. A POLITE SOCIETY

SEARCHING FOR THE LAST WITNESS

Mental and Physical

The coterie searches for Kieran Cotterill, one of the last Kindred to see Alan Sellers before he lost himself to the Beast and became a wight. They learn that Kieran secretly bound Alan to his Blood, the start of a downward spiral that led to the wight that now plagues the streets. The vampire goes to any lengths to keep his secrets, even if it means bonding the coterie.

This story, No Princes, No Masters, and That Old Time Religion can be run in any order. This story could also be used as an entry point into the Camarilla chapter.

Why the Players' Coterie?

The coterie members are some of the few that know of Kieran's connection to Alan in his final days of rationality. If the characters have made it known they're hunting for the wight, they'll have access to the Camarilla in a way that many others don't have. Such privileges are contingent on the actions of the coterie, of course. If they were to offend the Camarilla or fail to deal with the wight, their newfound access can be quickly revoked.

Goals

The players have two goals. The first is to track down Kieran Cotterill. The second will be to escape Kieran's haven without falling under his influence.

For the Storyteller, you have two goals. Your main goal is to portray the Camarilla as a well-organized sect worth joining. Your other goal is to introduce the Blood Bond as a concept.

Supporting Characters

This story uses the following characters:

Kieran Cotterill: Kieran regrets what he's done, but his loneliness and paranoia compel him to try again.

Mateo Serrano: As the Court's best diplomat and a prime suspect in a completely different case, Mateo's both powerful and under suspicion. He can guide, but not act.

Locations

This story uses the following locations:

Sub Rosa Financial Park: Unless an outsider has business with a specific vampire, they're encouraged to meet in Sub Rosa Lake Park, the public park inside the district.

Streiber Polytechnic Institute: Mateo and Kieran both sometimes pretend to attend classes on campus for the purposes of hunting. The latter is a dual History and Library Science major.

Kieran's Haven: Kieran's haven is the city's old courthouse, kept in pristine condition. It's a small two-story building with administrative offices, three courtrooms, and a holding cell in the basement, where the vampire sleeps.

Scenes

Consulting the Tower: Asking around about Kieran's whereabouts draws the attention of Camarilla vampires. Mateo gets in touch via messenger and asks to meet the coterie at the financial park. You may consider simply starting in media res with this scene, skipping some of the investigatory work.

Mateo wants to hear everything the characters know. He's disturbed to hear Kieran might be involved. He explains the vampire's role as a historian, and how he's rarely seen by anyone, let alone Alan. Once the coterie tells him all they know, he says Kieran sometimes attends the institute as "Nathan Reed." He urges them to find him while he relays what he's learned back to the hounds.

Night School: Local Kindred influence keeps the campus open late although the characters are more successful if they show up in the hours immediately after sunset. A Charisma + Persuasion test at Difficulty 3 or a suitable Mental Discipline sways the administration into pulling up "Nathan's" student records. An Intelligence + Technology test at Difficulty 4 lets the coterie hack into the roster. Just searching through the campus is a Resolve + Investigation test at Difficulty 4.

Kieran is in the back of a lecture hall dressed in a hoodie, baseball cap, and sunglasses. He pretends to be an ordinary student with a combination of a hoodie and Obfuscate, but a Charisma + Persuasion or Manipulation + Persuasion test, both at Difficulty 3, gets him to drop the act. He knows they're here about Alan, and he requests that they speak in private at his nearby haven.

Kieran's Story: Once Kieran and the coterie get to his haven, he comes clean about everything. Alan wanted to gain the power of supernatural

strength (in game terms learn Potence), and Kieran needed the Gangrel's social freedom to gather more information on the other sects. He claimed that he knew more of the ability than he let on, and through bullshitting about "advanced sessions," got Alan bound to his Blood.

Alan took to the bond harder than Kieran expected, and he soon outgrew his usefulness. The Gangrel was great at hiding it, but in private he was hopelessly devoted to the Nosferatu. Unwilling to reach out for help or admit his guilt, Kieran cut Alan off and drove him away. That was the last he saw of him until his re-emergence as a wight.

When he finishes, he begs the coterie to keep his secret. He fears he'll lose his standing in the Camarilla, or worse.

The Security System (Optional): If the coterie agrees to keep Kieran's secret or wins a Manipulation + Subterfuge test at Difficulty 4 to lie, he lets them leave. If it's clear they won't agree or if they fail the test, Kieran gets desperate.

If desperate, the vampire activates his security system, putting the haven in lockdown. Then he vanishes with Obfuscate in search of something to restrain the coterie. He intends to imprison them long enough to subject each of them to the Blood Bond.

Detecting Kieran requires Sense the Unseen. Getting the locks open is either an Intelligence + Technology test at Difficulty 4 to hotwire the security system or a Dexterity + Larceny test at Difficulty 3 to open the doors. For an optional complication, consider having Kieran summon a swarm of bats upon the coterie as either a final distraction or to harm them as they leave.

Aftermath: If the coterie kept Kieran's secret, he owes them a minor boon (p. *Vampire*, p. 315). Mateo and the sheriff's hounds may still be suspicious of the outcome and might do their own investigation in a future story.

If they didn't keep his secret, the city's Camarilla find themselves in a conundrum. Kieran didn't break the Traditions, but he did make it harder to resolve the wight issue. Mateo assures the coterie,

saying that the Camarilla will find a suitable punishment for him, but requests that they pry no further into the sect's business. Perhaps by getting to know the Camarilla better or even joining them, they could have a hand in his fate.

If any of the coterie can't escape Kieran's haven, imprisoned characters are kept in the courtroom's holding cell. Kieran tries to get them in a Blood Bond by only providing his own Blood for the characters to drink, perhaps by using the Mask of Thousand Faces to appear as an inviting vessel. If the characters drink from him, they risk deepening the bond each time they drink. It's possible by the time help arrives, the character or characters are bound.

Variations

This story assumes the characters have no connection with Kieran and got the lead from Alesha in *Mortal Failures*. Here are two variations if Kieran is a sire of a player's character or if the coterie never met Alesha:

Sins of the Sire: If Kieran is a sire of a player's character, they're already somewhat Blood Bonded. Kieran plans to finish the job, ensuring he'll have a true companion and successor. Even if Kieran is a sire, he's still secretive and hard to get in touch with, making it necessary to look for him. However, a child with a positive relationship with him has a +1 bonus to Social rolls.

Mateo's Request: If the coterie never got the lead in the previous story, Mateo reaches out to the coterie. He's sure Kieran knows more about the wight than he lets on. Mateo pretends to be sympathetic to the characters' need to clear their names but actually just wants them to take the risks inherent in hunting down a wight.





V. NO PRINCES, NO MASTERS

FINDING WITNESSES AMONG THE RABBLE

Social, possible Physical

The coterie finds Bo Cunningham, one of the last Kindred to see Alan Sellers before he became a wight. Bo is happy to cooperate and invites them on a hunt with Nora. They learn that Bo encouraged Alan to indulge in feeding and helped erode his humanity.

When Nora chastises Bo for encouraging Alan to lose himself, they threaten to fly into a Frenzy. The coterie must deescalate the situation or redirect Bo's rage before it's too late.

This story, A Polite Society, and That Old Time Religion can be run in any order. This story could also be used as an entry into the Anarch chapter.

Why the Players' Coterie?

Just as in *A Polite Society*, the coterie members are some of the few that know of Bo's connection with the wight. The Anarchs aren't the closed-off society the Camarilla are and the coterie's goal of finding the wight gives them an opportunity to take a closer look at the sect's inner workings.

Goals

The players' characters have two goals. The first is to track down Bo. The second is to ease Bo's anger or find a way to keep Bo from causing further harm.

As the Storyteller, you have two goals. The first is to depict the Anarchs as a loosely associated sect worth joining. The second is to demonstrate what entering a Frenzy looks like when a player's character isn't the one experiencing it.

Supporting Characters

This story uses the following characters:

Bo Cunningham: Bo doesn't want to feel responsible for the wight attacks in any way. They'll push against any attempt by a player's character or a Storyteller character assign blame until they reach their breaking point.

Nora McCreery: No matter how the coterie treated her in *Bring on the Night*, she supports the coterie's hunt. She won't back down from her principles, even if it means receiving the final death from an ally.

Locations

This story uses the following settings:

Al's Place: The community center is one of Bo's favorite places to hang out. Other Anarchs might approach the coterie while they're waiting for Bo to make sure they're not here to make trouble.

The Backstreets: This rundown part of the city belongs to the Camarilla. Where exactly it is doesn't matter. The important thing is that Bo's up for some poaching, and anywhere'll do.

Scenes

Shoot Some Hoops: Bo is quick to respond to anyone asking around for them. They agree to meet them at Al's Place.

The Gangrel is playing basketball on an outdoor court when the coterie arrives. They challenge the players' characters to a friendly game to break the ice. Anyone taking them on makes a Stamina + Athletics test at Difficulty 3. They congratulate any winners and call out anyone that used an obvious Discipline to gain an advantage. If no one partakes, they hide their frustration with some light teasing.

Afterwards, they invite the coterie to go hunting with them. "I'm getting thirsty. If you want to talk more, come with me to look for blood. Besides, I've found you learn a lot seeing how a vampire hunts."

A-Hunting We Will Go: Just before Bo and the coterie leave, Nora arrives. Bo invites her along and she agrees.

Bo guides Nora and the coterie to the back streets. Make note of the elaborate graffiti in the area. An Intelligence + Streetwise or Politics test at Difficulty 2 reveals this area as Camarilla territory.

If confronted, Bo answers that hunting here is a stand against the Ivory Tower. Nora agrees with Bo in principle but calls the act immature. They pursue prey instead of saying anything.

On the part of the coterie, you can play out the hunt by following what the players do and reacting to them. The Anarchs are interested in how they go about it but refrain from judgment while the hunt is in progress. They adapt their own tactics to whatever the coterie decides. If you want to add extra color to the scene, you can have Bo assist the characters in their own disastrous way.

Cards on the Table: During the hunt, Bo disappears for a few minutes to hunt their own prey. Soon, they return with a hungry gleam in their eyes. Their prey resisted and escaped. They mutter that they wish Alan was still himself, that he was more fun.

The coterie only needs to ask to get Bo ranting. They say that Alan came to them after he “lost someone,” comparing him to someone going through a bad breakup. They recount taking him on hunts like these. Alan’s feedings got more brutal, something Bo encouraged in hopes of getting him to abandon the Camarilla. Then he vanished, and the wight appeared after.

If asked why they didn’t tell anyone, Bo says they told the Anarch gang boss Shara Allen who ignored the information. Other Anarchs wanted to keep it secret in hopes of embarrassing the Camarilla.

The Triggering Incident (Optional): Nora is one of the Anarchs who didn’t know this, and the revelation is the last straw. She viciously lambasts Bo for their carelessness. Bo’s growing anger and imminent explosion is obvious.

The coterie can take three actions before Bo enters a Fury Frenzy and attacks Nora. They could use Quell the Beast (*Vampire*, p. 246) on Bo, talk the two down with a Composure + Persuasion test at Difficulty 4, or drag one of the two away from the situation with a Strength + Athletics test at Difficulty 3.

If Bo frenzies, Nora doesn’t have long before she’s seriously injured or worse. A critical win with Quell the Beast ends the Frenzy, but the coterie could also use the remains of a smashed wooden pallet nearby as a stake (*Vampire*, p. 221), or restrain Bo with a Strength + Athletics test at Difficulty 3 until the other Anarchs intervene. The easiest option is to let Bo rip into Nora. They’ll snap out of it once she stops moving, but letting that happen might incur Stains on the players’ characters.

Aftermath: If the coterie prevents or stops Bo

from frenzying, Bo is calm but firm in their denial of any responsibility for the wight. It’s an irreconcilable difference between Nora and Bo, which could have consequences in future stories. Bo leads the coterie out of Camarilla territory without incident.

If the coterie restrained or staked Bo, Nora texts An Tran in a panic, shocked at their efficiency. Soon, a group of Anarchs led by An Tran arrives, accompanied by the gang boss, Shara Allen. They take custody of a frenzied Bo with shocking skill and claim they’ll take care of them. The coterie is left humiliated by the experience and under the sect’s close watch.

If Nora was seriously injured or killed by Bo, they fall into despair. This could be the sign they need to turn things around, or perhaps there’ll be a new wight in a few months’ time.

If confronted, Shara Allen reluctantly apologizes for hiding the wight. Leadership among the Anarchs is fractured, and the group as a collective decided on it, and they clearly made a terrible decision. Perhaps, if the coterie got to know the Anarchs, they could help them find a suitable leader (see Chapter Three).

Variations

This story assumes the characters have no ties with Bo and got the lead from Troy in *Mortal Failures*. Here are two variations if Bo is a player character’s sire or if the coterie never met Troy:

Childe-ish Rebellion: Bo’s childe doesn’t know any of what they did, and their relationship doesn’t make it easier to talk Bo down. If the childe isn’t on Bo’s side the whole time, this could be the beginning of a sour turn in their partnership.

Nora’s Tip: If the coterie never got the lead in *Mortal Failings*, Nora contacts them about Bo. Destroying the wight overtakes any hard feelings she might have towards the coterie. She invites the coterie and Bo to Al’s Place for a talk.

VI. THAT OLD TIME RELIGION

FINDING THE WIGHT'S COLLABORATOR

Mental and Social

The Church of Caine member Marilyn Haig approaches the coterie with a promising lead. The church is certain that they've found the wight's collaborator. She asks the coterie to join the search.

The Gnostic has a murderous approach to their quest, and the collaborator isn't what she seems. It's also clear that the church's intentions for the wight conflict with Camarilla's laws. The coterie must manage the blood cultist's zealotry or direct it to better ends.

This story, A Polite Society, and No Princes, No Masters can be run in any order. It happens no matter which lead, if any, the coterie discovers in Mortal Failings. This story could be used as an entry point into the Church of Caine chapter.

Why the Players' Coterie?

After tackling a potential Masquerade breach, the coterie appears fearless and in control to the Church. Bringing the coterie dedicated to hunting down the wight along could also grant the faith a sense of legitimacy.

Goals

The players' characters have two goals. The first goal is to find "the collaborator." The second is to temper Marilyn's faith-inspired violent tendencies before they cause problems.

As the Storyteller, you have two goals. The first is to depict the Church of Caine as a faithful but flawed religious following worth joining. The second is to present alternative ways vampires can seek to manage their Beasts.

Supporting Characters

This story uses the following characters:

Marilyn Haig: Marilyn is a Gnostic with a laser-focus on pragmatism. She considers mortals as unenlightened beings of hell and acts accordingly.

Carol Winfield: Carol's enigmatic mission brought her to the warehouse. Gathering info on the wight is yet another objective in her eternal quest for a restored humanity.

Locations

This story uses the following settings:

Saint Januarius Catholic Church: The stronghold of the Church of Caine. The Kindred take full advantage of the property tonight.

North Convoy Business Center: There are several keen-eyed guards equal to the coterie's number on duty. They're Police Detectives with Investigation 7 instead of Investigation 6.

Scenes

Going to the Chapel: The coterie receives a message from Marilyn Haig. It's a postcard with a picture of the Saint Januarius church and the words: "Meet me here tomorrow night. I have a lead for you. —Marilyn".

The coterie finds her in the chapel as a discussion on the Book of Nod wraps up. Marilyn explains that the church has discovered evidence of someone breaking into the North Convoy Business Center over the past several nights. As they're sure it's a collaborator looking for notes and letters from the wight, Marilyn turned to the coterie for help.

The characters notice an oddly hungry look in the congregation's eyes as they discuss the wight.

Slaying Demons: The North Convoy Business Center's security is usually lax, but its mortal owners are also aware of the break-ins. They've improved their defenses with a new security camera system (Intelligence + Technology at Difficulty 3 to hack), new padlocks on the lockers (Dexterity + Larceny at Difficulty 2 to break), and an increase in the number of night guards from two to four.

The coterie could avoid the guards with Obfuscate or a Dexterity + Stealth test at Difficulty 3, but Marilyn has a different idea in mind. The first time the coterie comes across a guard, she tries to murder him. The coterie can stop her with a Strength + Brawl test at Difficulty 3 or through an appropriate Discipline. She's not pleased and explains that unleashing her Beast on the unenlightened is no issue. The coterie could convince her to sneak past or knock out guards with a Manipulation + Persuasion test at Difficulty 4. Otherwise, she'll continue to target them for death. Letting her do this might inflict Stains. She might even give the impression she's on her way to becoming a wight as well.

The Collaborator: Finding the collaborator requires tests of Intelligence + Awareness (to pick up Carol's subtle tracks), Resolve + Academics (to use the business center's manifest to figure out that the tracks lead to a long-forgotten section of the warehouse), and Dexterity + Investigation (to use the destination and tracks to catch Carol), all at Difficulty 3. Failing a test causes a night guard to notice a member of the coterie.

Carol doesn't see Marilyn or the coterie coming. She's trying to crack open locker H156, registered to Alan Sellers, the Mask and identity used by the wight.

If the coterie doesn't speak to Carol immediately, Marilyn takes the initiative and tackles her. Held by Marilyn, Carol has trouble fighting back and begs the coterie's help. It's clear Marilyn won't stop of her own free will. A Strength + Brawl test at Difficulty 4 breaks up the fight. If the coterie talks to Carol first, Marilyn interrupts them and accuses her of being the wight's collaborator and tries to

strike. The same test at Difficulty 3 holds her back.

Marilyn tells Carol that she won't stop the church from "devouring your fellow denizen of hell." An Investigation + Occult test at Difficulty 2 interprets the meaning; the Gnostics plan to devour the wight without the Prince's permission. (See *Diablerie, Vampire* p. 234.)

After pulling off or restraining Marilyn, Carol explains that she's only here to find more information about the wight. An Intelligence + Insight test at Difficulty 2 confirms her words.

Aftermath: If the coterie hears out Carol and confirms her story, Marilyn isn't happy but accepts it. She won't apologize for her actions, especially not if she got violent. She believes Carol, a loner who keeps trespassing onto domains, is entirely at fault for the situation.

If the coterie let Marilyn attack Carol, or even joined in, the vampire is no match for the Gnostic, and especially not a gang assault. She falls into Torpor after three rounds of violence. Marilyn doesn't go for the kill, saying that her Beast has had enough fun. Unless the coterie objects, she takes the body back to the Church for interrogation.

If asked, Marilyn says that her faith demands diablerie as punishment, no matter what any Prince says. The wight allowed his Beast to overtake him, transforming him into something worse than a mortal. Perhaps visiting the Church of Caine could help the coterie make sense of this bizarre mindset.

No matter what the outcome, any player's character with Strength of at least 4 or Larceny of at least 1 can unseal locker H156 quietly. If none of the characters have these, they can still pry the locker open but it causes a ruckus that alert the guards. There's no time to look through the papers now. Depending on how violent things got, the police are either about to be called, are on their way, or are arriving this instant. They need to take the papers and get out before they're caught.

Variations

This story assumes the players' characters have no connections with Marilyn Haig or Carol Winfield. Here are two variations if either Storyteller character is a sire of a player's character:

Needs Must: Unlike the regular story, Marilyn's known about Alan's stash for some time now. She only chose to relay the information now because her childe proved they could hold their own. She's deeply disappointed if the childe makes a case for the guard's life.

You Don't Know Me: Before this story, Carol warns her childe that should they cross paths while she gathers information on the wight, they should deny knowing each other. That way, no suspicion falls on them or their coterie. She'll keep up the cover until final death if need be, but will the childe?



VII. BUT FOR THE GRACE...

STRIKING AGAINST THE WIGHT

Mental, Physical, and Social

The coterie discovers the wight's haven, a location from its former life, kept secret. After a chance to prepare and enlist allies, they strike.

The wight uses the most of its remaining intelligence to defend itself. The other factions have their own schemes. The hunters tracked down the wight, too, and they're not afraid to take down a few extra quarries. The coterie must tangle with both allies and enemies in this conclusion to the introductory story track.

Ideally, this story is run after *A Polite Society*, *No Princes, No Masters*, and *That Old Time Religion* are all finished in whatever order you ran them. *That Old Time Religion* must be run before this story, otherwise you'll need another way to get the whereabouts of the location to the coterie. If you can't run it, a character the coterie trusts most comes across the location and gets in touch before this story. Alternatively, you can plant the location of the haven in one of the other two stories.



Why the Players' Coterie?

By now, the players' characters know the wight's origin, they might have access to its former vassals, and they have the location of the wight's haven, something no other vampire in the domain has. They have everything they need to take it down for good.

Goals

The players' characters have one goal: to formulate a plan for neutralizing the wight, whether by trapping it, destroying it, or handing it over to any allies to fulfill their agendas. Should this plan fall through, they'll have to adopt a new one on the fly.



For the Storyteller, your main goal is to bring it all home. It's time to tie plot threads together and give the players an elaborate set piece to navigate. Whether this is the end of a short chronicle or the first arc of many, the story should feel climactic.

Your next goal is to let your players execute everything they've learned. Over the past stories, your players picked up on the basics of *Vampire: The Masquerade*. They've hunted, politicked, schemed, and fought their way to this moment. Now, the training wheels come off.

Your final goal is to show that while the characters are undead, the world around them is very much alive. Whatever decisions they've made over these stories should play a part here. This story provides a few openings, but this chapter can't account for everything your players did. If you see an opportunity to show the consequences of a character action from a previous session, go for it.

Supporting Characters

This story uses the following characters:

The Wight (Alan Sellers): The wight's traits shouldn't need to change between the previous story and this one, but don't be afraid to boost its physical Attributes and combat Skills by up to two dots if you feel the need for a greater challenge.

The Hunters: After Olivia and Carl started working together, they stumbled upon the wight's haven thanks to a lucky break. If the coterie has more than five players' characters, or if they've brought a lot of allies, consider doubling up their numbers and perhaps adding a clergy character or a faith hunter (*Vampire*, p. 371). These Storyteller characters are hunters they assembled through back channels.

Locations

Before running this story, choose one of the following locations as the wight's secret haven:

Abandoned Police Facility: Officially, this small warehouse a mile out of the city isn't and never has been the police's property. In truth, the cops used it as a black site for years until a scathing report in the *Intrepid Weekly* shut it down. Alan learned about it through Troy and picked it up for cheap.

Alesha's Old House: Alesha used to live in a small rental house in the suburbs until Alan turned her into a ghoul. He moved her into a nice apartment in the city for easy access but kept her old place in case he ever needed to lay low.

The Husk: The colloquial name for an old civic landfill outside of the city. After the city hired a private company for waste management, it's no longer in public use and could erupt into flames at any time. Alan picked up the property in a city auction.

Scenes

Some Light Reading: When the coterie has Alan's records, they need an entire night's worth of reading and cross-referencing to discover his secret haven. All but one of the properties (the one you chose) are known havens of his. There's no test required to find the haven's location; the time spent is enough.

Gleaning any further information from the records is a Resolve + Investigation test at Difficulty 3 or a Resolve + Finance test at a Difficulty of 2. A win reveals a diary written in code on loose leaf paper among the deeds, receipts, and tax forms. Deciphering the diary is an Intelligence + Investigation test at Difficulty 4. The decoded diary starts as a record of night-to-night routines, shifts to his Blood Bond-created obsession with Kieran, and finally describes his hunts with Bo.

The story isn't anything new, but it does have the location of secret passages in his havens, including his secret one. Anyone who reads the deciphered diary receives a +2 to all dice pools dedicated to tracking down the wight while in its haven.

The coterie can pull up blueprints of the haven online or at a local library with an Intelligence + Academics test at Difficulty 3. If the coterie studied the haven's blueprints, they receive a +1 die to all Awareness pools while in the haven for the rest of the story.

If your players want to strike while the iron's hot, the characters head straight to Tally Ho the very next night. Otherwise, give them both narrative and real-life time to plan an attack. If the planning takes longer than fifteen minutes, you should cut it short and ask the players to proceed with what they have. The same goes if they start working through complex hypotheticals.

Everyone Wants Something: Whether it's because the coterie is asking around for assistance, Marilyn or Carol is telling others that the coterie has secret records from Alan, or by some other means, word spreads that the coterie's about to find the wight. Some or all the factions might reach out in hopes of getting something from the coterie.

- **Anarchs:** The new Anarch leader (if this is after Ending the Rivalry) or another veteran Anarch such as one of the gang bosses asks the coterie to stake the wight and bring it to them. While it's too late to use it to embarrass the Camarilla, those interested in seeing if a wight can be brought back to reason, want to use it as a guinea pig.
- Nora McCreery is willing to provide backup and comes with bottles of her alchemic creations.
- **Camarilla:** Frida Boucher asks the coterie to destroy the wight and bring back either its head or its ashes, whichever is left. She warns them that the sect has ways of determining if any ash they bring is the wight's and that the Prince hasn't declared this a Blood Hunt to avoid seeming too easy on the trigger.
- Frida is willing to provide backup and might even insist on coming if the coterie couldn't clear their names in *A Jury of Your Peers*.
- **Church of Caine:** Fred Hartmann, knowing they already know, asks the coterie to let the church consume the wight. The coterie can

either stake the wight and bring it to the church building or allow a single Gnostic to come along and eat it on behalf of the congregation.

- Marilyn Haig is willing to provide backup and has permission to consume the wight for the church, should staking it be impossible.

None of the sects need an answer until after the coterie encounters the wight in this story.

Tally Ho: When the players feel ready to go, their characters head for the secret haven. An Intelligence + Survival test at Difficulty 2 picks up the wight's bloody tracks and markings on the walls.

The wight can't develop new traps in its haven, but it's smart enough to trigger the ones its former self left. These traps, all detected with Wits + Awareness or Larceny at Difficulty 3, are short range firearms attached to a tripwire (Dexterity + Larceny at Difficulty 2 to disarm), an emergency floodlight system (if activated, it takes a Composure + Resolve test at Difficulty 3 to prevent a -3 penalty to all Awareness-based rolls), spiked floors (Dexterity + Athletics at Difficulty 2 to navigate, -2 penalty to Physical tests for the scene if failed), and whatever else you feel gives a fair challenge.

The wight seeks to separate the coterie and pick them off starting from the weakest. It uses traps and secret passageways to prevent a group assault. Chasing the wight in its haven is a pursuit (*Vampire*, p. 412). The players can also make preparedness tests (*Vampire*, p. 410) for anything that could catch or impede the wight that they wouldn't ordinarily carry.

The Hunters (Optional): The first twist occurs after the coterie catches sight of the wight. As they begin their pursuit, the hunters arrive, having conducted their own investigation into the wight. If the coterie used their Disciplines or acted in a clearly non-human way around them in Mortal Failings, the hunters believe they're servants of the wight and will engage. They will also engage if the characters don't have Blush of Life on, and the hunters get close enough to examine them.

If the hunters have no reason to suspect the coterie, they try to interrogate them as to why they're here. A Charisma + Persuasion or Subterfuge test at Difficulty

4 could convince them to focus on the wight instead.

The second twist occurs when the wight feels cornered, or if the coterie convinces the hunters to work with them. It rushes to a nearby room to set off a jury-rigged incendiary device. An appropriate Mental Discipline (for example, ordering it to stop with Dominate), a Strength + Brawl contest (to restrain it), or a Dexterity + Athletics contest (to get to the device before it can) thwarts it.

If the device goes off, the coterie has three turns to restrain, stake, or bring the wight to torpor before the fire grows into an inferno. Getting too close to the flames may require a Terror Frenzy test (*Vampire*, p. 220) at Difficulty 3. If a player's character is willing to risk Frenzy, they could try shoving the wight into their own fire with a Strength + Brawl contest to end it.

The hunters will try to escape with their lives if the fight gets dire, but the wight won't. Its Beast won't surrender its home to anyone, not even if it'll mean final death.

Aftermath: The wight's dealt with. The Kindred suffer from one threat less. Alternatively, the whole coterie lies around, incapacitated or destroyed.

If the coterie had help from the hunters, they're too new to the hunt to know everything about vampires. A staked wight, in their eyes, is a dead wight. They'll want to take the body, if there is one, and the coterie might have to manipulate them or drive them away from the scene.

If the coterie had help from a sect member and the wight's body is intact, it's time for the sect member's due. This could be a problem if the coterie brought more than one ally, and they may need to mediate to determine who gets to claim the body.

Even if they don't get what they want, every sect shows some appreciation. If a coterie already belongs to a faction by now, they each might get a free dot in their Status with that faction. A player's character might receive a minor boon from a Kindred, no matter their affiliation. They might also receive more tangible rewards, such as access to a faction's feeding ground or valuable assets.

The limelight won't last long. Now that the wight's gone, the coterie's back to being an ordinary

batch of bloodsuckers. Any special treatment sects gave them during this storyline quickly fades, and the coterie needs a new purpose.

If the characters lose, this can result in their final destruction. Alternatively, the wight fails to finish them off, making it possible for an ally or a lowlife vampire to rescue them in return for a significant boon. For a more complex result, perhaps the characters wake up to an interrogation from the hunters.

Variations

The following variations are either a change resulting from the players' characters' actions in a previous story, a final revelation for a willing player, or the start of another mystery to carry into future stories.

The Cavalry's Here: If the coterie couldn't tamp down the panic in *Mortal Failings*, the forces of the Second Inquisition activate in the time before *But for the Grace*. In addition to the hunters, a strike team of two inquisitor investigators and an inquisitor Delta (*Vampire*, p. 372), all from a local intelligence agency, make an assault in the twist of this story. Neither the hunters nor the strike team are aware of each other.

Your True Sire: If one of your players portrays a Caitiff, Gangrel, or thin-blooded vampire and wanted to keep their sire a mystery at character creation, this is an opportunity to solve that mystery. Alan drops hints about a childe in his records, and the wight recognizes the player's character before attacking. Despite the ignoble end of the wight, this could be a way for the character to claim Alan's properties or even join the Camarilla.

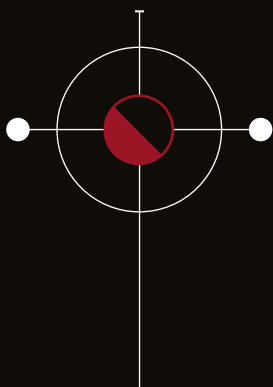
A Black Hand: If you'd like to introduce the Sabbat (see *Sabbat: The Black Hand*) as antagonists into your chronicle, the coterie finds the sect's iconography in the wight's haven and references in Alan's journal to meeting "our counterparts" for a way to break his Blood Bond. Are the Sabbat still here? ■

Flow Chart of Scenes









CHAPTER THREE

the free and

THE BOLD

“I don’t know much, but I do know you need someone to look out for you if you’re going to survive. I had the Camarilla on my ass before I even became a... Before my Embrace. I just didn’t know it. They were going to kill me, and I never found out why!”

I guess they still do, but now I’m in the Anarchs. My gang protects me, and that’s worth more than anything.”

– BRYCE GARBER,
CLANLESS ANARCH

Now that the players’ characters understand a little about their nature as Kindred, they need to pick a side. In the following stories, it should become clear that there are powerful forces in the city they live in, none of which are content to leave them alone. The great sects vie not just for domain and power but for the hearts and minds of all Kindred. You can run the stories in Chapters Three, Four, and Five concurrently or even interleaved with stories from Chapter Two. The final shape of events is determined by events in your chronicle.

Both the Camarilla and the Anarchs need new members. Each new coterie brings their domain and hunting grounds with them as they join, and with that the city, piece by piece. If the players’ characters want a peaceful existence, they are out of luck. While picking the Camarilla or the Anarchs is to make an enemy of the other, trying to remain neutral just makes enemies of them both.

The players' characters learn more about the two sects vying for control of their city over the story paths in Chapters Three and Four. At some point they need to choose an allegiance, if they prove worthy of either sect. Such proof will be evident if they do well working with the local sects in the following stories.

In this chapter, they deal with the Anarchs, and in Chapter Four, they will be dealing with the Camarilla. This should give them enough information to choose which to join. The stories come with suggestions on how to vary them in case the characters have already pledged to go with another faction. This means that you can use Anarch material from a new angle even if the characters went with the Camarilla.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE CAMARILLA?

Anarchs insist that joining the Camarilla is to give up your freedom. The sect is run by and for the privileged, and less monied and powerful Kindred will only ever hear empty promises when it comes to their own domain and even basic autonomy. That's before you get to the rules. The Camarilla has a rule for everything, when you can feed, when you can't, who from. Those in power get the best of everything and leave the rest to fight over scraps, keeping them too busy to revolt.

If you join the Camarilla, you will never make another decision. Everything is already decided for you by the Traditions, the powerful, and your own growing desperation. Failure to comply means starvation and destruction.

Presenting the Anarchs

As you introduce the Anarchs to the chronicle, you have to consider how to present both their good and bad sides. They're a deluded bunch of hypocrites talking about values while they exploit humanity the same as any other vampire, but they're also often much more egalitarian than the Camarilla will ever be.

If one of the characters' sires is in the Anarchs, you can use them to highlight the different sides of the sect. They confide in their childe more openly than they'd talk to other Kindred, complaining about the problems in their chosen gang but also mentioning how the Anarchs helped them when the Camarilla tried to steal their domain.

It's helpful if the characters know a few low-level Anarchs socially and can talk with them about what's going on in the sect. For this reason, it's useful to introduce supporting characters who don't really have story roles but rather just hang around, offering a sounding board for whatever ideas the players' characters wish to discuss. Pretty much any Anarch in Table 3 except the gang bosses you're not using for anything else can serve this purpose.

In terms of atmosphere and milieu, the most important thing in how to present the Anarchs in this chronicle is to show them hanging around mortals in populated locations such as Al's Place. They're much more connected to mortal life than Camarilla Kindred tend to be and this shows in where they spend their time. It also makes them difficult to target for anyone with violent intentions as collateral damage and Masquerade breaches are always just an inch away.

THE GANGS

There are three major Anarch gangs in the city. Each can be composed of one or more coteries, depending on the needs of the chronicle. Almost every Anarch belongs to one of the gangs because mutual protection is one of the main selling points of joining the sect in the first place. The gang is where that protection comes from and without one, it doesn't really work.

The gangs are:

The Night Forum: Led by the idealistic Emily Coldara. How should a society of predators be organized? This is the question Coldara asks, arguing that the depredations of the Beast inside every vampire only means that it's even more important to reject the hierarchies of clan and Camarilla and create a system where every Kindred can exploit mortals on an equal basis.

The Thrill Kill Gang: Led by the violent Shara Allen. The core of the gang is Allen's own biker posse, wild, boisterous, and prone to fights with each other as well as outsiders. Those unwilling to hit somebody in the face are viewed with suspicion.

The Circle of Mercy: Led by the fatherly Marcus Gallowglass. According to Gallowglass, Anarchs are defined by their close proximity to mortal life. A successful Anarch society blends in seamlessly with the world around it. The purpose of the Circle is for the members to help each other survive among mortals, keeping in touch with their humanity both for spiritual reasons and to make it easier to exist discreetly as vampires.

JOINING THE ANARCHS

It is not especially difficult to join the Anarchs, but it's hard to earn their trust and respect. The Anarchs don't assume anyone is a member until they ask to join, so if you want in, you have to make yourself known. They're always in need of recruits to hold onto all the territory they claim, and they especially love to see converts from the Camarilla, as long as they aren't spies.

You need to earn the trust of the local Anarchs before they will let you close to their leaders and tell you secrets. More than one Camarilla spy has thought they got in easy and discovered the hard way that no one had trusted them with shit.

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They say that the vampire is a lonely predator, but that's bullshit. It's much more fun to corner some poor bastard when you have your buddies with you. If you're afraid you won't get enough blood when everybody's drinking from the same victim, you just need another victim. Remember, sharing is caring and there's enough for everybody out there!

—BO CUNNINGHAM
MEMBER OF THE THRILL-KILL GANG

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I. JOYRIDE

GOING FOR A RIDE WITH THE LOCAL ANARCHS

Social, a lot of Physical

A group of Brujah and Gangrel Anarch bikers cross paths with the players' characters. They're members of the Thrill Kill Gang and have come to the players' characters' turf to challenge them to a bike race, with an underlying threat of violence if the characters try to argue they're not bikers themselves. The Anarchs are open about their allegiance and don't really seem to care what side the players' characters are on. The Anarch's hunting grounds are reasonably nearby, and they basically want to meet the neighbors and sound out whether their domain could be stolen from them.

The gang intends to just have a simple race, but they are judging the players' characters at the same time. They want to see if they're ready to flex their vampire muscles to win. They'll also be happy to escalate if the players' characters have some ideas of their own.

Why the Players' Coterie?

Most of what the Anarchs say is true; they really do want to see what the neighbors are like. But there is an ulterior motive. They suspect the players' characters might make good recruits to the Anarch cause. This might be due to something the players' characters have previously done or just because their hunting grounds are in a good position.

They aren't offering membership right now. This whole evening is just an opportunity to plant the seed of recruitment and see if the players' characters are worth it. One basic question the Anarchs are interested in is whether the players' coterie is simply fun to hang around with.

Goals

What the players' characters want will depend on how interested they are in the Anarchs. If they have been curious about the sect, as potential recruits or spies, this is a golden opportunity. But not everything has to be work; the gang has basically turned up for some fun. What's the point of agelessness if you don't know how to enjoy yourself?

It shouldn't be any surprise the players' characters are being assessed. So, they may want to try to make a good impression or act out just to be contrary.

For the Storyteller, the goal is to give the players' characters an introduction to Anarch culture and set them on the path of either looking for membership or making a point of rejecting it.

STATING THE OBVIOUS

Sometimes when you want to frame a situation certain way, such as in the Goals section of this story, you may want to just flat out tell the players that these are all possible options. Although it goes beyond how their characters might organically interpret the situation, it helps with the flow of the game and cuts away uncertainty and second-guessing.

Supporting Characters

Bo Cunningham and Donny Sheridan are both good options as the gang leader. The rest of the gang are an even mix of Brujah, Ministry and Gangrel.

Anarch Gang Member

This young Kindred is angry and hot headed. Flush with new power, they have no idea how much more dangerous than them their elders are.

- **Clan:** Brujah
- **Difficulties:** 4/2
- **Blood Potency:** 2
- **Humanity:** 6
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 4, Mental 4, Disciplines 5
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 7, Willpower 6
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Athletics 7, Brawl 7, Drive 7, Streetwise 7
- **Disciplines:** Celerity 1 (Rapid Reflexes), Potence 2 (Lethal Body, Prowess), Presence 1 (Awe)

Locations

The race takes place on the city streets. The Storyteller can use this encounter to introduce locations from this chronicle as the racers pass them.

Scenes

Meeting the Neighbors: The players' characters are at one of their favorite haunts when the gang arrives. This might be a bar, a club, or a park, anywhere open and public the characters see as their own. The gang won't break into anyone's haven, but they are making a statement by stepping on someone else's turf.

While their appearance may make hackles rise, the gang remains polite and respectful. They defer to the players' characters and don't challenge their authority, although they won't be obsequious about it. They expect to be treated as guests as they are playing nice, so if the players' characters are too over protective of their domain, things could get physical.

They'll introduce themselves as Anarchs and ask if the players' characters fancy having "a little fun." This is the first test, to see if the players' characters are ready to kick loose. If they get the snobby refusal they'd expect of a Camarilla elitist, they'll bid the players' characters good night and leave them to it.

However, they don't expect all of the players' characters to refuse. As long as just one of them is willing to join them in a friendly competition, they'll let the others come along as an audience.

Playing nice and being polite hosts will take a Charisma + Etiquette test from the character who talks the most. Failure will show the Anarchs who the troublemakers are. Trying to determine the Anarch's intent, and if they're being straight with the players' characters, will require a Wits + Insight test.

Note that the Anarch bikers understand politeness differently than a Camarilla courtier would. To the Anarchs, a bit of rough language, posturing or tough talk is nothing to get angry about, although they are touchy about their pride.

The Race: The Anarchs are offering a simple motorcycle race across town. Obviously, they are not expecting the players' characters to observe speed limits or take notice of police requests to pull over. But ideally, they will manage to race without turning the experience into the final fifteen minutes of *The Blues Brothers*.

Before the race can begin, one of the gang members will set off with one of the players' characters to wait at a mutually agreed finish line across the city. More are welcome to join at the finish line, but at least one of the gang members and one of the players' characters should be there to act as judges in case things get close. One of the gang members will remain at the starting line to start the race and join everyone else as soon as they can. If none of the players' characters have bikes, the gang can lend them one. If more than one of the players' characters wants to race, they are welcome to. In this case two of the gang members will join the race instead of one, but there is still only one winner.

How the racers choose to get to the finish line is up to them. A flat-out speed race will get the cops chasing after them pretty swiftly, but taking a few short cuts, or powering down streets the cops don't patrol is perfectly fine. The gang isn't intending this to be a fight, so if the players' characters get the wrong idea and try and ambush other racers, they won't make any friends here.

To play out the race, the characters have to get the most successes over three tests. The specifics of each test are up to the player and depend on the strategy they choose. They can:

- **Focus on pure skill:** Wits + Drive is what it's all about. Sharp turns, navigating the traffic skillfully, all the best moves.
- **Try and find a shortcut:** Intelligence + Streetwise allows a character to find a better route. A bad failure represents them getting lost.
- **Power down the main streets:** Composure + Drive allows a character to really burn down the wider streets. But failure or fumble will draw police attention or possible cause an accident.
- **Go fast through the bad streets:** Wits + Streetwise allows a character to find places the police don't go, so they can ride fast. But failure or fumble will get them lost in the bad part of town or make them the victim of a robbery.

- **Use Disciplines:** Presence to seduce one of the bikers and talk them into taking a loss, Dominate to give a startling command which makes them crash or Animalism to call animals to distract them.
- The Storyteller can create new options if the players have a different idea about how to reach the finish line faster.

The Anarchs may make things interesting by upping the stakes mid-race:

- An Anarch throws a Molotov cocktail on the path of a players' character, forcing them to either crash or drive through the conflagration. Driving through the fire requires a Composure + Drive test at a Difficulty of 3.
- An Anarch drives on the sidewalk and pushes a mortal pedestrian into the path of a players' character. A successful Wits + Drive test is required to avoid a crash, with a Difficulty of 3 if the character tries to avoid hurting the mortal, and 2 if they don't care.

After the series of tests, the Storyteller can declare which character reaches the finish line first after adding up the total successes from all six rolls. They can assume the main gang member gained nine successes. If a second gang member joined, they got only five successes. The players' characters can then be ranked accordingly.

While the rest of the coterie races, one of them is waiting at the finish line. The Anarch waiting with them uses the opportunity to ask about the coterie, their plans and allegiances. Depending on how the conversation goes, it can also be about the personal travails of being a vampire. The Anarch can confess that they're having real trouble relating to their mortal family anymore.

Alternative Competitions: The players' characters may propose an alternative competition. The Anarchs are up for anything as long as it feels fun. They're not going to play chess but a friendly brawl might just do the trick. This could be especially relevant if none of the players' coterie knows how to drive a motorcycle.

The Black Knight: If you're feeling that the race requires shaking up halfway through, you can introduce one or more surprise contestants. They may be members of a rival Anarch gang or outarkis – Kindred who know how to race a bike and feel like fucking with both the players' coterie and another gang for fun or as vengeance.

Aftermath: Depending on how the players' characters behaved during the race, they might have made friends or enemies of the Anarch gang. If relations are cordial, the gang will ask to hang out sometime. They'd like to talk more about what the Anarchs can do for the players' characters.

Variations

If the characters are not prospective Anarchs, this story can still be run in a different way. The Anarchs might offer the race as a way to settle a challenge or score with the players' characters, such as a dispute over domain rights or hunting grounds. In this case, they will already have genuine beef with the players' characters for some real or imagined slight and will be less polite and reasonable to deal with. While they will still play fair in the race, they will not be very gracious winners or losers.

Bo Cunningham or Donny Sheridan as Sires: If either of the possible Anarch posse leaders are also the sire of a player's character, the Anarchs are both more friendly and more confrontational. They feel that "the childe of the boss" needs a bit roughing up. If the childe is one of the characters in the race, the Anarchs try to gang up on them and get them to crash. Avoiding such a fate requires a Wits + Driving roll at a Difficulty of 3.

II. RESCUE MISSION

RESCUING AN ANARCH FROM THE ENEMY

Mental and Social

The same Anarch gang as before comes to the players' characters for help. One of their gang members (called Steel) went into Camarilla territory and hasn't returned. Whatever has happened to him can't be good. As the gang can't go into Camarilla territory themselves without causing more trouble, they ask the players' characters to bring Steel back.

The reason the errant gang member hasn't caused any trouble yet is that they've been kidnapped. They ran into a Ventrue ancilla called Viola, who can only exist on vampire Blood. Realizing that no one important would miss Steel, Viola took him prisoner to feed on him at her leisure.

Why the Players' Coterie?

Whatever the outcome of the joyride previously, the players' characters are the gang's only real hope. If the gang are caught in Camarilla territory, it will cause an incident, and they are amazed something hasn't kicked off already. So, the gang needs someone, either Camarilla or unaligned, to visit on their behalf.

Goals

For the players' characters, this is another opportunity to get the Anarchs to owe them a favor. If things went badly during the joyride, it gives them a second chance to prove themselves. If they've been curious about the Camarilla, it also gives them an opportunity to find out more.

The Storyteller can use this adventure to help steer the characters towards the Anarchs or Camarilla to learn more and join one of them. The journey into Camarilla territory also offers the opportunity to run into Camarilla Kindred and start making friends.

Supporting Characters

Steel: The missing gang member is a pretty ordinary young Brujah who did something dumb, like so many young Brujah do. He's raring to go and looking to make a name for himself, and so he got out of his depth (for statistics, see Anarch Gang Member p. 89).

Rachel: A neonate Nosferatu who saw Steel get captured and doesn't know what to do or who she can go to.

Viola: The kidnapper is an opportunistic Ventrue ancilla. She's survived this long as a blood drinker by being careful, but recently she's begun to get sloppy, convinced everyone else is too stupid to catch her. Finding a lone Anarch no one would miss was too good an opportunity to pass up.

Rachel, Nosferatu Skulker

This young Nosferatu lurks in the shadows and listens. She isn't after anything in particular, just listening in case something interesting turns up in the conversation.

- **Clan:** Nosferatu
- **Difficulties:** 4/2
- **Blood Potency:** 2
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 5, Social 3, Mental 5, Disciplines 5
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 6
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Animal Ken 6, Awareness 7, Stealth 7, Streetwise 6, Subterfuge 5
- **Disciplines:** Animalism 1 (Sense the Beast), Auspex 1 (Heightened Senses), Obfuscate 2 (Cloak of Shadows, Unseen Passage), Potence 1 (Lethal Body)

Viola Legrange, Blood Leech

A quirk in her Blood causes Viola to only be able to feed on vitae. Over the decades, the hunt for vampire Blood has come to define her Kindred existence, setting her on the path of deepening moral compromise. It's easy to see her eventually becoming a wight as she loses the last of her connections to mortal society.

- **Clan:** Ventrue
- **Difficulties:** 5 / 4
- **Blood Potency:** 3
- **Humanity:** 4
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 4, Social 6, Mental 6, Disciplines 6
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 6, Willpower 8
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Awareness 9, Insight 7, Persuasion 7, Subterfuge 8, Survival 6
- **Disciplines:** Auspex 2 (Heightened Senses, Premonition), Dominate 4 (Cloud Memory, Mesmerize, The Forgetful Mind, Mass Manipulation), Fortitude 2 (Resilience, Toughness), Presence 3 (Daunt, Lingering Kiss, Entrancement)



Locations

The Camarilla-Controlled City Streets: There is a certain amount of footwork involved in this encounter. While the streets are not different here, the players' characters should always feel they are trespassing in some way. They may feel as if they are being watched, and it is very possible they are.

The Sewers: If the players' characters meet Rachel, she will take them into the sewers. The players' characters may also try to use the sewers to move around the city, as long as they haven't made enemies of the Nosferatu.

Blacklight: This high-end nightclub is a form of neutral ground and a good place to meet Camarilla Kindred where everyone might play nicely together.

Viola's Haven: This is the location of the climax of the story, where the players' characters attempt to free Steel. Viola sleeps elsewhere, but this basement under a deserted factory has served as her larder for some time.

Scenes

Call for Help: The Anarch gang from Joyride return to visit the players' characters and ask for their help in rescuing Steel. The players' characters' reaction may depend on how they left things, but an Intelligence+ Insight test will show the gang is being genuine. The gang doesn't know much about where Steel went, as it was after an argument, and he went off in a huff.

The gang believes there are two options Steel could've taken to blow off steam. The first is that he went to the club Blacklight to dance it off. The second is that he went out in search of a fight. He's been known to take his anger out on kine bikers or criminals. Whichever he decided to do, he foolishly set off towards Camarilla territory.

Blacklight: Blacklight is a very popular hangout for kine and Kindred and generally considered neutral ground between the Camarilla and the Anarchs. If the players' characters have never been here before and if they decide to hunt, one of the regulars (Mark Floros, Mateo Serrano, or Donny

Sheridan) will approach them to see what they are up to. There will be a few neonate club goers populating the club as well.

The players' characters should make Composure + Etiquette tests to prove they know how to behave and not cause any faux pas. If they can succeed in a Charisma + Persuasion test, they can get someone to talk to them about Steel. It seems a Kindred matching Steel's description was here last night. They caused a bit of trouble and got thrown out by security, but the players' characters can be told which direction Steel went.

Biker Bar: After leaving Blacklight, Steel came across a local biker bar called The Cave. He only intended to pass by but still felt angry, so a fight ensued with one of the bikers drinking outside. This led to Steel taking on the entire gang and losing, even with vampiric abilities. The players' characters might come across The Cave while walking around the area or coming from the club. Either way, there is a certain amount of recent damage to the place that makes it look worth investigating.

Anyone in the Cave will share the story of a drunk guy taking on the gang last night with any player's character who can succeed a Manipulation + Persuasion test. The Difficulty will increase the less like a biker the character looks. No one knows what happened to Steel, as he was dumped in the street and has not been seen since.

The Streets Outside: The players' characters might spot the Nosferatu Rachel near either Blacklight or The Cave. She's skulking near popular feeding spots, looking for possible Kindred contacts to sell a little information to. She saw what happened to Steel and can tell the players' characters that his unconscious body was picked up in a van by a well-dressed woman. She followed the van, sensing information she could trade for something else. She can tell them where the van took Steel but she'll need something in return.

While money is not useless, Rachel mostly wants to hear some sort of secret. It's up to the Storyteller what might be good enough, but Rachel is angling for something that she can leverage by selling it onwards.

Industrial Estate: Rachel's information will lead the players' characters to an industrial area in a quiet part of town. If they make successful Wits + Awareness tests at Difficulty 3, they can find the van parked outside an apparently deserted factory. If they can't find the van on their own, they can interview any of the homeless people that have taken refuge in this area. Someone will recognize the van on a successful Charisma + Streetwise test at Difficulty 3.

Finding Steel: Investigating the factory will allow the players' characters to find their way to Viola's basement hideout. She has Steel chained up and on the verge of frenzy from loss of Blood behind a steel door. It's clear from the surroundings that he is not the first Kindred to find themselves here — the smell of vitae is soaked deep into the walls.

Viola (Optional): You can create a twist to the story where Viola might be found in her hideout. She might allow the players' characters to rescue Steel, who only has the dimmest memory of his captor. This is enough for him to recognize her again if the Storyteller wants to make Viola a recurring villain. Otherwise, they find Viola here, flush from feeding on Steel, so the players' characters can engage in a violent climax. The Storyteller can also make Viola's presence dependent on the amount of noise the characters have made in their investigations. If Viola has heard people looking for Steel, she may cut her losses or choose to lay a trap.

Aftermath: Rescuing Steel will earn his and his gang's gratitude. As such, it will grant the players' characters a lot of respect with the local Anarchs. If they were polite and careful with the Camarilla, they may have also made some useful contacts there. If they kill Viola, they will have earned the enmity of her allies, as she has associates among the Camarilla. If she survives (either by running before or during a fight), she will sooner or later want to pay the players' characters back for the trouble they caused her.

Variations

This story can be adapted to suit any sect by simply changing the allegiance of some of the participants. A Camarilla vampire might get lost in Anarch territory, making Viola an Anarch. A member of the Church of Caine could have been captured by a Kindred of either the Camarilla or the Anarchs. Either way, the search and locations will work the same.

BENEFITS OF ANARCH MEMBERSHIP

The main reason anyone is tempted to join the Anarchs is freedom. The sect insists that only they allow you to do as you please and that to be part of the Camarilla is to chain yourself to an Ivory Tower that cares nothing for you. It's true to a certain extent, but not as much as they'd like everyone to think. You aren't actually free to do whatever you like among the Anarchs. They still respect the Masquerade and expect loyalty to their cause.

This is where the problems start. The Anarchs do have rules but these are commonly unwritten, hiding under the facade of complete liberty. Everyone knows there are rules, but no one will actually tell you what they are. This makes navigating the complex hierarchy of respect and experience all the more difficult. For example, a newbie or a fledgling is not supposed to challenge established leaders, insulting the wrong person can still get you beaten up and hunting on someone else's territory may result in final death.

Sadly, for the most part, the main rule is: "Might makes right." Generally, if you can hold something or take it, you can keep it. The way to survive is to be part of a gang or coterie that has enough power to be able to compete with the other Anarchs. An individual vampire is in for a difficult time without allies.

The real main selling point of the Anarchs is the promise of backup. If you are an Anarch, you can expect other Anarchs to come to your aid. They won't protect your domain or help you weasel out of a parking ticket—that's Camarilla shit. But if you need someone to have your back when you go to war, you can count on your comrades. You'd do the same for them, right?

III. PROVING GROUND

MEETING THE BOSSES

Physical, Mental, or Social

As the characters get to know the Anarchs, they discover that the current Anarch leadership in the city is going through a few changes. Three prominent Anarch gang leaders are each vying for primacy and a shot at a pre-eminent position for themselves and their gangs. If the characters wish to be accepted among the Anarchs, they'll need to impress at least one of the leaders, and having a good relationship with more than one is certainly useful.



Why the Players' Coterie?

If the players' characters were successful in the previous two stories, Joyride and Rescue Mission, the Anarchs are now actively working on recruiting them. If the characters were not successful, it's possible they're being recruited anyway because the Anarchs want to keep their domain from the Camarilla.



Goals

For the players' characters this is a chance to meet three important Anarch figures and decide if they want to support them. At the end of this story, they should have gained a patron and become fully accepted into the sect, assuming they wish to be members.

For the Storyteller this is a way to show the players how the Anarchs work, or at least how they work in this domain. It's a chance to give the players' characters leverage in terms of how the domain moves.

Supporting Characters

The most important supporting characters in this story are the leaders of the three major Anarch gangs, Emily Coldara, Shara Allen and Marcus Gallowglass, each vying to have their gang set policy for the sect.

Locations

These three main locations are where the potential Barons can be found:

Al's Place: The local community center is where Marcus can often be found. He's such a fixture here many people think he's actually called "Al".

Pink Slips: This biker bar is where Shara can usually be found with her crew. If the players' characters have visited the place before, it's unlikely she would have spared them any attention.

Streiber Polytechnic Institute, Student's Building: The general students' building where students organize events, operate the student government, and run an advice center is in a quiet part of the Polytechnic campus. Informally, it is also a place to hang out and plan various forms of activism. Emily can be found here quietly nudging young minds to question authority and make a better world.

Scenes

Honest Assessment: An Anarch contact (Bo Cunningham, Donny Sheridan or Nora McCreery are possible options, as is an Anarch sire if that applies to a player character) of the players' characters comes to visit them, asking for their help. This might be a member of the gang they met in Joyride or anyone else they've gained some rapport with. Now that the players' characters are close to joining the sect, their contact feels it's only right to share some of the local politics. They tell the players' characters that there's no single leader of the Anarchs at the moment, and because of this, the faction lacks cohesion and focus. There are three potential leaders, but none of them have managed to gain enough support to claim and defend a position on the top.

The contact tells the coterie that together, they could tip the power balance and help decide the new leader of the Anarchs. They strongly suggest that the players' characters should meet each of the potential gang bosses so they can get a proper impression of them. This will also be the last thing they need to do to join the Anarchs. If they're accepted by one of these leaders, they're in. But throwing their support behind one potential leader will obviously alienate the others. So, they'll need to be sure.

In the following scenes, the players' characters can meet each of the potential leaders and decide who to side with. There are also several opportunities for them to resolve a problem on their behalf. But it is how they solve the issue, rather than if they do so successfully, that matters here. Helping one boss in a particular way might actually impress a different boss who agrees with their methods.

The bosses have the following preferences:

- **Emily** — Cleverness and use of mental abilities and skills. The players' characters should think their way around the problem and ideally treat everyone as an equal, seeing to everyone's needs.
- **Shara** — Direct action and the use of physical skills and abilities. Get in there, bash some heads, and get the job done. Completing the job is more

important than how it is completed.

- **Marcus** — Humane action and use of social skills and abilities. Treat everyone with respect and make the humane decision, not the most expedient or political one.

The following scenes can be done in any order, and it is up to the players' characters how to approach. They might walk right up to a gang boss and say "hi" or watch from the shadows for a while to get a better idea.

Emily: Emily can usually be found at the Students' Building at the Polytechnic campus. Access will depend on what the players' characters look like. If they appear they could be students, parents, or wealthy investors they will most likely be left alone (if they don't cause trouble).

Early in the night, Emily can easily be found in the common room of the building discussing politics animatedly with a large group of students. A Wits + Insight test will show that while she appears to be letting others lead the discussion, she is skillfully controlling the flow with occasional insights.

The best way to impress Emily is to do something for the students. She herself suggests it: "Don't just stand around. If you want to make a good impression, talk to people here and see what they need." Emily is always paying attention to others who show like-minded traits and works to retain those folks in her orbit. Are the characters still able to relate to mortals? The following problems become evident if the characters eavesdrop a few conversations:

- A girl called Melanie is having trouble with her ex-boyfriend. He is on the football team and used to getting what he wants.
- A local landlord is doubling the rent for some older students, and they will have to move or drop out if he does.
- A student called Gary is suffering from homesickness and loneliness and having suicidal thoughts.

Dealing with any one of these issues will impress Emily, but only if the players' characters do so with cleverness and their wits, although compassion also goes a long way. As the Storyteller, you should involve enough tests to make sure that there's a decent chance for Brutal outcomes to occur. Interacting closely with mortals is one of those situations where the mechanics of **Vampire** generate horror situations. A vampire who loses control among fragile mortals can have disastrous consequences. This is also why Emily values the ability to deal with these situations discreetly: She believes in very close association with mortal society and is good at ignoring how damaging the presence of vampires is to the people around them.

Marcus: Marcus is easy to find in the community center, as he is always in the middle of things. He's generally found in the middle of an odd job, like fixing a pipe or washing dishes, but somehow, he always has time to stop and chat. He makes a big deal of maintaining a Mask as a good, upstanding member of the community and he's better at it than almost any vampire the characters have ever met. As anyone can come to the center, access isn't an issue, but the players' characters will be taken for outsiders.

Marcus will be impressed by those who help the people of the community center or the center itself. One option is to give him a hand with his odd jobs, as he respects those who are willing to get their hands dirty. But he mainly looks to see how they deal with interruptions from people. Fixing a burst pipe is all well and good, but being rude to everyone who approaches will not earn any favor.

Other issues that might arise among the attendees include:

- Someone falls badly playing a sport at the center and needs medical help and for someone to call an ambulance. It's bad, and there's a lot of blood.
- A single mother and her 3-year-old child have turned up at the center with nowhere to go after being evicted.
- A young man has gotten involved with a small-scale drug-pushing gang and wants out but is scared to turn to the police.

Helping out will impress Marcus, but only if the coterie does so with compassion. Social skills are ideal to use where possible. Even if the players' characters can't fix the problem, they get respect for helping the involved people deal with how they're feeling. Similar to what Emily is doing, Marcus also views this as a test for the characters' ability to interact with mortals, but with him the focus is more on the whole community rather than individuals.

Shara: Shara can usually be found at the Pink Slips biker bar. She tends to hold court with her crew and anyone else who will listen, calling for the Anarchs to get off their asses and do something before the Camarilla screws everyone over. Her rhetoric is designed to get her crowd angry, and it works very well. Shara is less personable than the other bosses, insisting anyone who wants her time has to earn it. Solving some of the problems going on in the bar will earn that attention. Note that not everyone in the bar is Kindred, although many people are very drunk, so you can get away with more than usual.

- A drunken mortal patron is causing trouble and needs to be removed. They are very big and strong and have no problem throwing their weight around.
- A new face gets accused of being a Camarilla spy, the accuser insisting they've seen them with known Camarilla Kindred. Once the truth is uncovered, either the accused or the accuser will need to be thrown out.
- A rival gang from another bar arrives for a throwdown. The players' characters might attempt to defuse the situation or make sure the unwelcome visitors are taught a lesson.

Shara will be impressed by any successful use of violence and physical force. She'll respect anyone who gets the job done quickly without thinking too much about it or asking permission from anyone first. She won't care if the characters break heads or hearts.

A Gang of Your Own: All this time, the discussions and tests the characters have gone through with the Anarch bosses have been about joining one of their gangs and becoming part of the Anarchs. However, the players' characters have the option to form their own Anarch gang. If they seem independent-minded, one of the Anarch leaders may even suggest this. If the characters decide to go for this option, they'll need the support of at least two of the three leaders.

The downside of starting a gang of their own is that they have to work harder to find a place for themselves in the Anarch system. The upside is that the characters will be their own bosses. It's the harder road but with significant potential rewards as a successful independent Anarch gang becomes a distinct entity in the city's political landscape.

Aftermath: After the coterie is done visiting each of the potential leaders, the Storyteller should decide if they have impressed any of them. If they have, that leader will offer them official membership among the Anarchs as part of their gang. All of them have the authority to do this, even though they don't run the sect as a whole.

The Storyteller might offer some sort of ceremony or final test, but with the Anarchs, that isn't really necessary. The players' characters have proven themselves many times by now, so they're in. But there's no reason there can't be a celebration thrown for gaining new members.

If the characters fail to impress any of the bosses, they won't be offered a chance to join the Anarchs. Someone may even suggest they might be "happier" in the Camarilla or the Church of Caine. If the characters fail egregiously, the Anarchs may decide to take them out in an ambush.



Variations

These scenes can be adapted to portray a diplomatic mission from the Church of Caine or the Camarilla. Since the Anarchs don't have a single ruler, any attempt to influence or court them requires talking to all three leaders. They ask the characters to jump through hoops to prove their commitment or just because the gang boss in question is bored.



IV. STAKING A CLAIM

CLAIMING NEW DOMAIN

Physical, some Mental or Social

The players' coterie is now probably part of the Anarchs, but their journey isn't over yet. They need to establish themselves in their new adopted gang or become known as a gang of their own. Luckily, a prime piece of real estate has become available and claiming it would demonstrate that the coterie is willing to play the game. Unfortunately, the players' characters are not the only ones wanting it.

Why the Players' Coterie?

Joining the Anarchs, or at least establishing they can be trusted, is only half the battle for the players' characters. They need to be respected if they are to have a chance at real power in the sect. What they do in these early nights defines how others will see them, so they need to make their mark quickly.

Goals

The coterie's goal of this story is to claim a recently vacated area as part of their domain. This will mark them as a proper Anarch crew.

For the Storyteller, this is an opportunity to get the players' characters to put down roots in the city and strengthen their standing as a group.

Supporting Characters

Darius: Darius is the vanished elder who used to own The Well, a valuable domain. While he doesn't directly appear in this story, Darius's specter is present throughout it. Nobody knows much about Darius except he wanted to be left alone and was powerful enough that everyone respected that. However, some of the older Kindred are thought to have gone to him for advice on occasion. He'd been muttering about what sounded like the Beckoning for a few years now, and after increasingly erratic behavior he finally failed to appear to an agreed-upon meeting a couple of nights ago. Greed has made others decide that he must have finally succumbed to the Beckoning, leaving his domain up for grabs.

Locations

The Well: The domain that is up for grabs is located in the middle of one of the poorer parts of the city, with a significant immigrant community. For the purposes of hunting and nesting among mortals who are not prone to talking to the police, it's perfect. The community is mainly families, so despite the dangerous reputation

the area has with wealthier people, it's actually surprisingly safe. Darius has spent time making the place his home, using a lot of Dominate and Presence. Locals generally avoid the vicinity of his haven without quite knowing why. It just has bad vibes.

If they control it, The Well provides players' characters the opportunity to use experience points to buy domain backgrounds up to the following limits: Chasse 2, Lien 3, Portillion 4.

Scenes

Make Your Mark: The players' characters' new backer (one of the gang bosses) comes to tell them that an Anarch elder called Darius has left the city. This means his haven is up for grabs, and there are plenty who want it. The backer explains that Darius failed to show up to a meeting concerning the division of domain among the Anarch gangs, confirming longstanding rumors of him soon succumbing to the Beckoning, something that many have been hoping to happen for years.

The boss tells the characters they need to establish themselves as a crew, if they haven't already, and claim the area. This is not just for their own good. The haven is a sought-after and useful one, and claiming it will bring kudos to both the players' characters and their patron. The boss mentions that a leadership battle is brewing and claiming this respected haven for the patron's side will help their cause.

If the players' characters agree to join the fight for the haven and domain of Darius, their patron explains that they have to physically claim the domain by driving off other Kindred without endangering the Masquerade. To make sure the claim is recognized by the rest of the Anarchs, the coterie need to do so as a recognized crew, so they need a name.

The Contenders: Once they have decided on a name for themselves, the players' characters can meet at the appropriate time to contest for the domain before the three gangs. If the coterie is affiliated with a gang, their own side lets them fight for the domain

with the other major gangs. If the coterie is not affiliated with a gang, they have to go against all three.

The opposing gangs are attempting to secure a foothold in the domain, using various strategies to secure it for themselves. These include moving criminal operations into The Well, having some of their mortal retainers move in, and just hanging out in the area themselves, scaring off other Kindred.

As the members of the gang they're affiliated with can explain to the coterie, the way to stave off the two other gangs is to proactively attack them, forcing them to defend their existing holdings instead of going for something new.

The Night Forum: Many members of the Forum are well-connected in the world of mortals. They have Masks, own properties and influence mortal organizations. It's possible for the characters to sabotage these holdings enough to cause sufficient distress to make the Forum back off.

A bit of detective work reveals one of the options below. A Resolve + Investigation roll at a Difficulty of 3 reveals more options, one for each point of margin.

The Apartment Building: An apartment building owned by a real estate company owned in turn by the mortal fronts of a number of Forum members. A successful Intelligence + Politics roll at a Difficulty of 3 lets the characters make complaints of building code violations that motivate an official inspection, threatening the illicit activities the Forum members are using it for.

The Bodega: A neighborhood bodega is owned by the ghoul of a Forum member. The bodega is used to deliver messages between all the members of the gang. They drop the message with the owner, and another Kindred picks it up later. The characters can grasp how it works by observing the bodega for a night and making a successful Resolve + Streetwise roll at a Difficulty of 3. If they do so, they can leave anonymous threatening messages for Forum Kindred, suggesting their operations are compromised.

The Garage: Members of the Forum are associated with a criminal operation stealing cars and stripping them for parts. A garage is being used

to take apart the cars while also functioning as a legitimate business. The characters can compile a package of evidence on the operation and leak it to the police with a successful Intelligence + Investigation roll at a Difficulty of 3.

Hunting Grounds: The characters follow members of the Forum to see where they hunt, then cause enough disturbances in the area to provoke a heightened police presence, making hunting more difficult. Wits + Stealth and Resolve + Streetwise at a Difficulty of 3 are possible tests to figure out where the Forum members hunt.

If the characters succeed at two tasks of this nature, they have spooked the Forum.

The Thrill Kill Gang: The Gang is the easiest of the gangs to force to back off, at least if the characters don't mind getting their hands dirty. They simply have to go to a known Anarch hangout such as Pink Slips, pick out an affiliate of the gang and beat them up, making sure to tell them that The Well is off limits.

However, picking a target at the right level requires finesse. A successful Composure + Etiquette roll at a Difficulty of 3 lets the characters suss out a suitable target: A low-level criminal and ghoul not really attached to the Gang but trying to leech a sustenance off it. (Use the stats for Ghoul, *Vampire* p. 372.)

If the characters instead choose to rough up an actual member of the Thrill Kill Gang (use the stats for Anarch Revolutionary in *Vampire*, p. 374), three more soon arrive to kick their ass. If the characters survive, they have the option of writing the whole incident off as a bit of violent roughhousing. This requires a successful Charisma + Etiquette roll at a Difficulty of 5, lowered to 4 if the characters offer a meaningful concession such as feeding rights at the domain everyone is going after.

The Circle of Mercy: If the coterie has to sabotage the operations of the Circle of Mercy, the way to do it is to cause chaos at the Streiber Polytechnic Institute where members of the Circle often hunt and congregate. If the members of the Circle feel they have to secure their own holdings

first, they retreat from claiming The Well. If the characters cause a Masquerade breach or kill an associate of a Circle member, the situation escalates to a war.

Options include:

- ***Seduce a Mortal Ally:*** A player's character seduces a mortal ally or relation of one of the Circle Kindred, causing disquiet and worry. Charisma + Persuade at a Difficulty of 3 gets the mortal to sound smitten in their messages to their vampire "friend".
- ***Participate in Class:*** A character impersonates a student, causing a scene at class suggesting enemy infiltration of the territory. A Manipulation + Performance at a Difficulty of 3 causes enough of a mess that the Circle is sure to hear about it.
- ***Threatening Graffiti:*** The characters decorate the Institute's walls with Kindred graffiti, legible to those in the know. A Composure + Crafts (Graffiti) roll at a Difficulty of 3 lets them do it so the message is conveyed properly.
- ***Take a Piece Off the Board:*** The characters identify a mortal ally of a Circle member and cause their life to become so difficult, they are useless to the Kindred. For example, by violently mugging them on the street for the purpose of causing trauma or framing them for misconduct that so they get fired or expelled. Killing the mortal is also an option but often leaving them alive causes more trouble. Such actions may cause Stains if they violate chronicle Tenets.

To be successful, the characters should accomplish at least two of these acts or something similar.

Complications: The most significant complication is if the other gangs decide to use similar tactics against the characters. They make threats first, and may then escalate by going after Touchstones, Retainers or Kindred allies. A response involving an enemy Kindred seducing a Touchstone is a subtle threat: The Touchstone may oppose any attempts to rectify the situation because they've fallen in love with a charming stranger!

They may also sabotage whatever mortal holdings

the characters might have. A successful Intelligence + Finance roll at a Difficulty of 4 reveals what's happening, allowing the characters to respond. If the characters do respond, it requires a successful Composure + Finance or Politics roll at a Difficulty of 4 to stave off the problem. If the characters fail or don't act at all, one of them loses a dot off a relevant Background for the duration of the story.

Aftermath: Once the characters have visibly established their presence at The Well and scared off the other gangs, their claim of domain is accepted by the city's other Anarchs. This also establishes them more securely in their chosen gang, or gives them credibility as a gang of their own if that's what they've gone for.

Variations

This story can be repurposed for discreet warfare between the factions. Any one of the three factions may wish to attack the influence of the others, or discreetly suggest that an enemy should back off. You can use the scenes here, just in a new context.



V. ENDING THE RIVALRY

ESTABLISHING THEMSELVES IN THE ANARCHS

Physical, Mental, or Social

By now, the players' characters have made their initial moves, establishing themselves either as members of the Anarchs or known hangarrounders. What sort of name will depend on how well they've been doing. Meanwhile, in the background the competition between the bosses is heating up, and their patron has decided to make their move. So, it's time for the players' characters to reaffirm their allegiances, grow their power, and possibly play kingmakers to the next Anarch leader. Note that depending on how much the players improvise, this can take multiple sessions.

Why the Players' Coterie?

Over the last few stories, the players' characters have become involved with Anarchs and their problems. Their opinions count in this city, and if they're clever, they'll recognize the use of developing that powerbase and using it to gain favor. You can display this by making some of the Anarchs the characters have interacted with into their supporters who talk them up at Anarch gatherings. This way, their growing reputation is visible to the players' characters.

Goals

The players' characters have a chance at real power in this story. But that also means they're going to have to put something on the line to get it. If they do, they can end this story at the forefront of the premier Anarch gang in the city.

For the Storyteller, this is the finale for this storyline, so it's time to pull out all the stops and up the ante.

Supporting Characters

The players' characters will acquire a number of new recruits to help them out. The potential faction leaders will feature strongly in this story, as well as any other Anarch friends the players' characters bring along.

Locations

The locations in this story depend on where the players' characters choose to go. The usual haunts of the three bosses may feature if that's where the players' characters try to take them down.

Scenes

Call to Arms: The players' characters' backer comes to visit them and tells them they want to make their move to claim leadership of the local Anarchs. They expect the players' characters' crew to stand with them. But the crew will have to be bigger to carry any weight. So, the patron wants the players' characters to go on a ghoulish recruitment drive. Ideally, the crew needs to double in size, so each character needs to bring in a new recruit from among the ghouls hanging around the Anarchs.

Potential new recruits might be invented by the Storyteller, or the players themselves can create them, possibly using them later as secondary characters.

Fan Recruitment: As the new cooler kids on the block, the players' characters have gained a few fans among Anarch ghouls. These are desperate individuals who are looking to become part of a crew and getting a steady supply of Blood. In this scene, the boot is on the other foot, as the players' characters can devise a means for these new recruits to prove themselves. While it might just be down to who brings in a vessel with blood of the most unique Resonance, a Wits + Insight test will be required to see if the recruit is really the right fit and not a desperate junkie who can't control themselves.

New Sires: The Anarchs are not as controlling as the Camarilla about Embracing new Kindred, but they do not take it lightly either. The players' characters can Embrace new members and recruit that way. The player should detail a person they have in mind and how they'll go about offering the Embrace. They'll have to take on the responsibility for teaching their childe how to survive. Whether the childe will thank the player's character for their transformation or not may well depend on how free with the truth the player's character was before the Embrace.

The Plan: After strengthening their crew, the players' characters' backer will share their plan. They want to take out one of their rivals using a method that'll place suspicion on the other rival. In the confusion, the backer plans to take the reins as an interim measure and never let them go.

To make sure they're not suspected, the backer needs the players' characters to carry out the plan. They'll grant them any resources or back up they need, but they can't be involved directly, as they need a rock-solid alibi proving they had nothing to do with it. This will require a leap of faith on the players' characters' part. Their backer could double cross them and reveal their involvement as the true culprits. This is probably a fair risk if the players' characters have some dirt on their backer as security.

But, if they succeed, they'll be able to ask anything of the new Anarch leader, so the opportunity may be too good to pass up even if they don't.

Reconnaissance: Before the players' characters try to take any of the potential leaders down, they need to do some groundwork. First, they'll need to decide which of the gang leaders to target. This depends on two factors: How easy it will be to take on either boss, and how easy will it be to place suspicion on the other one.

Once they've picked a target, they need to start rumors. This requires them to visit a few Kindred locations and quietly suggest to ordinary Anarchs which particular potential Baron might be targeted, and by whom. This requires a successful Manipulation + Subterfuge test in each venue. Total failures get them noticed as the gossipmongers, messy criticals risk turning the crowd into a mob.

Framing Shara: Shara's violent attitude makes her the simplest to blame. All that needs to be done is organize a drive-by shooting using masked bikers. However, this should ideally target both her rivals. So, the players' characters' patron will have to be attacked too. They'll survive while the other boss is gunned down. This means the true rival will have to be lured into the right position somehow. There is a strong chance of collateral damage and causing injury and death of innocents may well yield Stains.

Framing Emily: Emily is known for using her intelligence and connections, so framing her for a police raid works well. Both the other bosses will have to be raided, but the backer can ensure they've cleaned out their haven beforehand. Ideally, the players' characters plant something in the true rival's hangout. This requires a Wits + Larceny or Stealth test. As the police are unwitting stooges in this plan, bringing them in requires just a phone call to a tip line. However, police contacts will help smooth everything along.

Framing Marcus: Marcus is the least aggressive, making an attack by him harder to sell. His attack can be made out to be an attempt to tarnish the reputations of his rivals by suggesting they've lost

their humanity. This can be done by circulating photographs of the rivals caught on camera in Frenzy or otherwise endangering the Masquerade. The photos need to be faked, but not so well an expert can't disprove them. Faking the photos will require a Wits + Technology test. Spotting the fakery requires an Intelligence + Insight test with more successes than the roll to create them achieved.

Selling It: The players' characters need to get the Anarchs angry about what just happened to make sure it's considered bad enough to hurt the target's reputation. This rabble rousing will require a Manipulation + Leadership test and a further Charisma + Subterfuge test to make sure the rumor trail doesn't lead back to the players' characters.

Taking Power: Once the calls for order and leadership become too loud to ignore, the players' characters' backer will step forward to humbly declare their gang to be in control of the city's Anarch domains. The Storyteller may require more tests from the players' characters to back them up. But if they've done the job well, taking power should be a formality.

If the players' characters have done well, the balance of loyalties is on their side. That means that after announcing their takeover, their backer institutes a purge of the most strident of the two opposing gangs, attempting to destroy as many members as possible during the nights that follow. If the characters didn't do so well, the result of the announcement is full-on gang war.

The Spy (Optional): One of the new recruits in the players' characters' crew is actually a Camarilla spy. They aren't especially high ranking, but they report to the local Primogen. This time of uncertainty is perfect for getting the Anarchs to fight each other, so the spy will attempt to stir up trouble where possible. If they're discovered, the players' characters will have to decide what to do with them, remembering that having recruited a spy might destroy their reputation. However, the spy might also offer the players' characters a chance to form a relationship with the Camarilla if they're ready for a little quid pro quo.

If anything goes wrong, the backer can sell out the players' characters and cast their participation in the plot as a Camarilla conspiracy.

Aftermath: With the players' characters' backer and their gang now in a pre-eminent position and owing them a huge favor, the players' characters are at the center of the Anarch community. Incidentally, this does put them in a position to act as the perfect Camarilla spies...

There are many possibilities in case the characters fail during this story. The worst is probably that the local Anarchs take them for hostile manipulators and try to destroy them or drive them into exile. This could be enough to force the characters to seek shelter among the Camarilla or the Church of Caine.

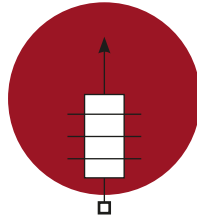
If the characters are successful and the takeover proceeds as planned, their backer asks them to help in destroying remaining Anarch enemies. At this point, there is no pretense at building bridges. Members of the most oppositional gang must simply cease to exist. Each Anarch leader has their own way to justify this: Shara speaks in terms of an existential threat where they destroy you if you don't destroy them. Emily and Marcus present the enemy as evil incarnate, a moral blight which eventually consumes all Kindred in the city unless checked.

If the results of the takeover are inconclusive or the new ascendant gang is too weak, the local Anarchs descend into a civil war where all try to destroy all. In such circumstances characters might seek to find shelter in the Camarilla.

Variations

If the characters are not Anarchs but instead belong to the Camarilla or the Church of Caine, you can use this story as a framework for a campaign of sabotage. Their patrons or mentors tell them about the leadership struggle among the Anarchs and suggest infiltrating the gang that's recruiting most carelessly. This way, the players' characters can seduce the boss of that gang into an ill-advised plan to frame their rivals. ■





CHAPTER FOUR

The Aristocracy OF THE NIGHT

“I used to believe that the audience makes a performance sing. In rehearsals, the actors feel dull, limp, dead-eyed. On the stage, awash in the attention of a live audience, they’re electrified. They give of themselves when there’s someone to receive that gift.

I’m not alive anymore. I’m one of the undead, and God willing will remain so for decades and centuries to come. All of the audiences who have seen my work will have died, the memories of their experiences expiring with them.

What use is creating work for mortals whose existence is only temporary? What’s the point of grasping for immortality in art when you know you’re immortal in the flesh?

These are the kinds of questions I’m now free to ask. The Embrace granted me that freedom, but it wasn’t just a matter of the Blood. Being in the Camarilla also became important.

I used to dream of a patron, a wealthy supporter like those who funded the great works of the Renaissance artists. In the Camarilla, I have found something better. I’ve joined an immortal society who’ll witness my genius, whatever form it takes. I don’t have to create stories for the stage when I can stage them in the lives and unlives of our less fortunate mortal servants and Kindred.

The meaning I grant to someone who’s existence I reshape is more valuable than any gift!”

– MARK FLOROS
CAMARILLA MEMBER
AND FORMER PLAYWRIGHT

The Camarilla. The Ivory Tower. The mighty edifice of vampire power and privilege, making its members into something more than just leeches crawling in the crimson gutter!

In these stories, the players' characters will encounter the local Camarilla from the bottom up. These are not stories of the bold and decisive rulers of all Kindred but of oppressed, put-upon, lower-ranking Camarilla members who scramble to keep every benefit they enjoy intact. Immense power and wealth shimmer on the horizon, but the supporting characters we see in these stories don't get to enjoy them, at least not without having to pay for it in some manner.

From the viewpoint of the players' characters, the Camarilla is the most aspirational of the city's factions. It presents an image of the Kindred as the secret rulers of the world. It's an attractive idea, even if in reality, the sect is more like the wastrel-rich parasites leeching off the body of mortal society. Only these bloodsuckers suck blood for real.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE ANARCHS?

Camarilla propaganda emphasizes the very thing the Anarchs are proud of—their lack of rules. Without rules, only the strong survive. Sure, the Camarilla may be weighted towards the privileged, but they put in the work and earned their position. Among the Anarchs, it's a free-for-all, and only the bullies ever win. They'll only come and help you out if there's a fight brewing.

The Anarchs lack subtlety and therefore cannot help defend against unseen threats, business takeovers, or even cunning hunters. If it isn't raw violence, the Anarchs generally don't know how to deal with it. They're basically a group of children who have yet to wake up and realize civilization only comes with structure.

Presenting the Camarilla

The Camarilla can give very different first impressions depending on the specific circumstance. Consider these two possibilities:

- The players' characters are invited to the opening of an art exhibition doubling as Elysium. The purpose of the invitation is to give local Camarilla members the chance to amuse themselves by subtly humiliating the hapless fledglings.
- A few of the Camarilla's mid-ranking members decide that the players' characters' domain would strengthen the sect's holdings in the city. They go on a charm offensive, inviting the characters to exclusive events and parties where they are feted and seduced.

To give a nuanced impression of the Camarilla, you can use the scene that contradicts the impression the characters have so far. Still, even when you bring out the Camarilla's awfulness, it's good to keep it as a viable faction for the characters to join.

As with the Anarchs, this chronicle works best when you showcase both the good and the bad. You might get financial backing and access to a fancier unlife, but you probably also end up in a very strict hierarchy where respecting your betters is the only choice you have.

If you want to make the Camarilla particularly awful, one possibility is to direct the cruelty towards relatively powerless Storyteller characters. The players' characters witness it, and are perhaps even called to participate in it. Not making the players' characters the victims tends to give them more emotional space to figure out their response.

JOINING THE CAMARILLA

In times past, membership of the Camarilla was not offered; it was enforced. The rise of the Anarchs has forced Camarilla domains to reevaluate how they work. Membership is more exclusive now, not something that's extended to any Kindred who shows up.

One of the paradoxes of Camarilla membership is that if the local Camarilla perceives the entirety of the city as their domain, they demand that everyone follows their rules, even those they refuse to take in as members. In Antiquity, anyone could live in Rome, but to be a citizen of Rome came with extra rights and privileges.

BENEFITS OF CAMARILLA MEMBERSHIP

The Camarilla promotes itself as an ordered society that protects all its members and rewards dedication. While any Kindred can live in a Camarilla city, only full members can claim the protection of its rules. The Camarilla is the elite, and it pays to be part of it.

Full members of the Camarilla in this city are:

- Automatically invited to any party or soirée held at Elysium. This gives all members the right to be a part of Camarilla society and catch up on the gossip. Basically, you're a member of the club.
- Protected by the rules and laws of the sect. If you're wronged, you can appeal to the Court (Sheriff, Primogen or even Prince), and if you present a convincing case, they'll enforce reparations on your behalf.
- Able to petition the Prince directly. There may be a waiting list, but it's your right to ask to speak personally to the Prince of the city and air your grievances. What's often left unsaid is that sometimes you wait years for the audience, and the Prince will definitely hold it against you if you waste their time.
- Able to claim the right to hold a domain. If the Camarilla has granted you a domain, they'll protect your right to it against the claims of other Camarilla Kindred. Unlike the Anarchs, the Camarilla holds to the idea that all domains must be ratified by the Prince, even if only ceremonially.

The Prince of the City

The Camarilla domain in *The Crimson Gutter* has a Prince and a Primogen council. They're not strong enough to assert dominion over the entire city and remain locked in a stalemate with the Anarchs.

The Prince is seen only rarely. Possibly never, if the players' characters are more interested in pursuing the Anarch and Church of Caine paths.

A basic rule of this chronicle is that nothing can be resolved by appealing to the Prince. They're not interested, they don't care, or they don't want to see the characters. If the characters force themselves into the Prince's presence, they'll make the most unjust and careless decisions possible.

The basic rule of Status is that if someone has significantly higher Status than you, it's a serious overreach to go appeal to them directly.

For the chronicle to function, the Prince should have these qualities:

- They're politically weak and try to hide it by remaining aloof.
- They're beholden to a squabbling Primogen council.
- They believe that interacting with young Kindred makes them look weak.

Otherwise, they can be a Ventrue or a Toreador, an ancilla who became the Prince because of a political compromise among the Primogen.

The Camarilla figures who are visible to the players' characters' and with whom they interact are lesser functionaries such as Cleo Drummond or the Sheriff.

I. FORMAL INTRODUCTIONS

CHECKING OUT THE PARTY

Social

The players' characters are invited to a minor Elysium gathering of the city's Camarilla Kindred. The invitation comes out of the blue and is meant to surprise them a little, as it underlines that the Camarilla has been watching them and knows where to find them. The party itself is a simple affair hosted by the Toreador Mark Floros to show off the work of his latest protégé, and the Prince will not be present. It's all very low key as far as the Camarilla is concerned, but the players' characters will still be judged on everything by everyone from the minute they walk in the door.

Why the Players' Coterie?

The Camarilla has noticed the players' characters and wants to see where they fit in the city. Will they prove to be useful new additions to the Camarilla? Or maybe they're just rabble who can be left to their own devices as long as they obey the rules?

The other possibility is that the Camarilla has noticed the characters socializing with a lot of Anarchs recently. Turning prospective Anarchs into spies among the rabble is a real bonus. The Anarchs believe in spies too, so if they play this well, the players' characters might become double agents.

Goals

The Camarilla claims to own important domains in the city, so getting on their good side is never a bad plan. For the players' characters, the party provides an opportunity for them to introduce themselves and get to know who's who. Depending on who they met during the stories in *First Steps*, they may already recognize a few faces. That's a good start if they want to go further.

For the Storyteller, the goal is to give the players' characters an introduction to Camarilla culture and set them on the path of either looking for membership or figuring out if they can get along without it. A good way to bring in distinct Camarilla culture is to have supporting characters talk about the Traditions. (See *Vampire*, p. 51.)

Supporting Characters

As this story involves a party, it's a good opportunity to populate it with pretty much any Camarilla characters the Storyteller likes. It's good to have a combination of a few Camarilla characters the coterie has already met as well as new faces. The Kindred in the gallery crowd will mainly be Toreador and Ventrue, but any Camarilla Kindred are welcome. Mark Floros acts as the host and Cleo Drummond invites the coterie. None of the Primogen nor the Prince will be in attendance. Ghouls and mortal retainers, in addition to a few blood dolls, are also present.

This is a good opportunity to introduce the players' characters to any of the city's Camarilla residents. As such, the Storyteller might plant the beginnings of several other story seeds among the other guests.

Locations

The location for the party is the Reinhart Gallery, located in an upscale part of the city. It's a small ground-floor gallery that comfortably fits around 150 people, although tonight there are around 80 guests in attendance. Only a minority are Kindred, the rest being ghouls and other mortals orbiting the vampire world. The gallery itself is a large white space designed to show paintings and small sculptures; it has several interior walls that create more hanging space and break up the area with a few nooks and crannies.



As the gallery is in a very affluent neighborhood, the Storyteller should note that the police presence is strong. They appear quickly and in force if trouble breaks out anywhere. Violence here makes the papers, endangering the Masquerade.

Scenes

The Invite: The players' characters are visited at a known haunt by Cleo Drummond who has been tasked to deliver an invitation. She arrives dressed for the evening and waits for the characters to notice her. She'll beckon them near when they do, and if they ignore her, she'll take umbrage, drop the invitation on the ground, and leave in her chauffeured car.

If the characters come and talk to her, they should make a Charisma + Etiquette test to appear sufficiently polite. Success will help Cleo decide to be friendly towards them and answer any questions they have. Otherwise, she'll hand over the plain but expensive invitation and leave. The invitation gives directions to the gallery, inviting the players' characters to "a viewing of select pieces by a talented new artist" at midnight tonight. The players' characters should make an Intelligence + Etiquette test upon reading the invitation to notice that guests are expected to be in formal wear (black tie).

If the players' characters are polite and charming to Cleo, they'll earn her temporary allegiance. She'll agree to introduce them to a few people and generally help them out at the party. If they're rude or difficult, not only will she complain about them to other Camarilla Kindred, but she'll ignore the characters at the gathering until they apologize.

Another way to play out the scene is to simply narrate it quickly, and then jump straight to the gallery in the next scene.

The Gallery: Getting to the gallery is easy, and door security is minimal. There's one large, well-dressed bouncer named Paul at the door and a woman named Sarah with a tablet who checks the players' characters' invitation and welcomes them. Both Sarah and Paul are mortal and have no idea

who they work for. The people at the gallery are a mixture of Kindred and ghouls.

When the characters arrive, each of them should do a Composure + Performance test to make an impression with their entrance and style. Sarah will politely inform them this is a formal event (if they haven't noticed), and Paul will suggest they go and change if they don't get the hint. If they refuse to leave and change, they'll only compound their reputation and make a lot of enemies in a very short time.

If the characters are on good terms with Cleo Drummond, she'll welcome them and help introduce them to the gathering. If the characters do not have her help, the Difficulty of any social test is increased by 1 as they don't know anyone or any of the rules.

What the players' characters do now that they've arrived is up to them. No one else will talk to them unless they socialize.

There are a number of things the players' characters can do. The Storyteller can list the options below or see what they decide to do themselves. Note that any grand gestures to the gathering as a whole will earn them another black mark, even if they're entertaining. This is a subtle and quiet gathering of hushed artistic discussion, not a forum for grandstanding.

As the Storyteller, you should tally the black marks characters accrue in their various interactions to see what kind of an impression they make. Failed rolls may not mean an immediate catastrophe, but they do add up.

- **Listen to the Conversation:** (Composure + Stealth or Wits + Awareness + Auspex, Difficulty 3.) A character politely listens on the fringes of conversation. If the test is successful, they may ask the Storyteller one question about the gathering or those in attendance. The character can't divine anyone's deepest secrets, but they can ask who doesn't get on with who, who looks new, or what line of business someone is in. Failure indicates the character is shunned for eavesdropping.

- **Join a Conversation:** (Manipulation + Subterfuge, Difficulty 3.) A character can attempt to join in a group and slide into their conversation with a bon mot or incisive suggestion. Success will get them an introduction to the group, letting them learn the names of those they are talking to and a little about each of them (including enough to divine their affiliations and status). A failure makes them appear rude and pushy, and the group will ignore them and move on.
- **Join in an Artistic Discussion:** (Intelligence + Craft or Academics, Difficulty 3.) As everyone is here to talk about the art on display, a character can offer their opinion. Success makes the character appear erudite and cultured and may get them an invitation to another event. A failure makes them look crass and uncultured, and they may even insult the artist if they didn't know who they were talking to.
- **Get to Know Someone:** (Manipulation + Insight, Difficulty 3.) A character finds someone else who is on their own or just not currently in a group and strikes up a conversation. With a success, they get to know the person in question, who they are and what they do. Doing especially well creates a permanent positive affinity to some degree. Failure means they are rude or upset the person in question, so hopefully the character didn't pick anyone important.
- **Share an Entertaining Story:** (Charisma + Performance, Difficulty 3.) Once a character has become part of a group or is at least on speaking terms with someone, they may attempt to impress them with a story. Success here will get the attention of more people, and if they do it well, they can become the center of the party. Failure will make them look crass and boring and make people ignore them.
- **Talk to the Host:** Once a character has talked to at least one other person or group, they can attempt to approach the host, Mark Floros, and their protégé, the artist whose work is on

display. Approaching the host's group and attempting to join it requires a Composure + Etiquette test, with failure meaning the character cannot see a way in. Once they join the group, they need to get the host's attention, introduce themselves, and say something interesting. This requires a Charisma + Leadership test. Success will impress the host; failure will just disappoint them. However, anyone who doesn't at least try to introduce themselves at some point in the evening will earn themselves a black mark.

Note that the players' characters are welcome, even encouraged, to ask about the benefits of Camarilla membership. But any attempt to actually join right here and now will be considered crass, like asking the price of a gift you were just given. The response to any question about actually joining will be met with a curt "this is hardly the time or place." If they push it, the players' characters will just appear desperate.

The evening will go on for a couple of hours, easily giving the characters time to make four or five tests each if they're inclined to. Eventually the Storyteller should call for a Wits + Etiquette test to notice it's time to leave. Whether they pass or fail, if they keep trying to socialize past this point, the Difficulty of all tests increases by 2.

A Bit of Sport: Someone at the party, possibly even the host, decides to make a bit of sport of the characters. You can introduce the twist if play seems to sag or things need to be livened up. Alternatively, the target of this bit of cruelty can be a supporting character, someone with even less power than the players' characters. The best the characters can do if they're targeted is to avoid losing face.

Here are a few tricks for someone wanting to trip up the players' characters:

- **Matchmaking:** Pretend that another Kindred is taken with one of the players' characters, hoping they'll make a move. Try to goad the character into doing so.

- *Revolutionary Fervor:* Argue that everyone at the Elysium hates the Prince and, to fit in, the players' characters must loudly declaim them as well.
- *A Credible Terror:* Posit that everyone at the Elysium suspects the characters are too soft. To show they're real vampires, they should feed from someone in a showy manner.

Navigating such traps without embarrassing oneself requires a successful Wits + Etiquette test at Difficulty 3. A critical success on the roll means the character went along with it and somehow managed to make it look good.

Aftermath: At the end of the evening, the Storyteller should add up the black marks the players' characters have earned through acts of rudeness, obliviousness, and failed tests to see how well they did. They get little recognition for successful tests, as that is what is expected. But especially good rolls and ideas will increase their prestige. From there, the Storyteller can decide if the players' characters impressed the host's group or not. This should be a general judgment by the Storyteller based on their successes and failures rather than on a set number of successful rolls. How well the players' characters have managed to impress the Camarilla will not be based on ticking boxes, but on their general ability to comport themselves.

No one will come and tell the players' characters how well they did or where they went wrong. However, an Intelligence + Etiquette test at a difficulty of 3 gives a general impression. If they've made any friends, they might get a report from one of them. Either way, there will be one of three possible outcomes for the players' characters:

- They proved themselves worthy of further interest.
- They very much impressed the gathering, who are now wondering how to recruit them to the Camarilla.
- They disappointed the gathering, leading the local Camarilla to wonder if the coterie should be destroyed before it ends up joining the Anarchs.

Variations

If the characters are not prospective Camarilla recruits this story runs a different way. If Anarch characters crash a Camarilla party, you can use the structure in this story to see how they do, depending on what they're after.

The story can also function as the template for any social gathering where the characters are trying to make a good impression.



II. ACCOUNTING

PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS

Physical, Mental, or Social

The players' characters are offered a chance to prove themselves worthy of Camarilla membership. This might be because they've proved impressive or have asked about it, and someone thinks they're worth a shot. They'll be offered the opportunity to prove themselves in a test during a single night in the city. During this test, they'll be drained of some blood, so they are hungry, and forced to interact with the kine to see if they can keep a level head. They'll also be tested on their understanding of the six Traditions.



Why the Players' Coterie?

If the players' characters have been inquiring about membership in the Camarilla, this is the next step. Even if they haven't asked, they may have done something to make the Camarilla want to recruit them. This could also be the case if the players' characters have started getting close to the Anarchs. The Camarilla certainly doesn't want the Anarchs gaining more recruits, especially not competent ones, so this may be a last-ditch effort to keep the players' characters on the right side.

Goals

If the players' characters are actively seeking membership, the goal is obvious: passing the test is the next step to getting what they want. But passing does not automatically result in membership. It may also be a way of getting in the Camarilla's good graces, even if the players' characters don't want to join. If the Camarilla has made the offer out of the blue, the players' characters may have an opportunity to determine their worth to the Camarilla. By being coy about joining, they may be able to gauge how far the Camarilla is willing to go to recruit them.

The Storyteller can use this story as a way to teach the players' characters the Traditions and also see how they fare when they're hungry. It's a good way to push the characters a little and see how they react when hunger puts them under pressure.

Supporting Characters

Frida Boucher: On behalf of the Sheriff, Frida takes the lead on dealing with the players' characters in this adventure. While several Kindred will be watching what is going on from the shadows, Frida will be on hand to make sure the Masquerade remains intact and occasionally give assistance to the players' characters.

The Sheriff: The Sheriff, whoever that may be in your chronicle, is also a looming presence in the story. They will be keeping an eye on the proceedings, but from a distance. This is to emphasize two important facts about the Camarilla. Firstly, it makes the Sheriff scarier, as they are the punishment awaiting the characters if they screw up. Fear of what the Sheriff might do is one of the ways the Camarilla keeps neonates in line. Secondly, it highlights that the Camarilla's leaders don't bother with minor matters. The players' characters aren't worthy of the Sheriff's attention yet. They have more important things to do. But if they prove worthy of joining the Camarilla, they may well become important enough to meet the Sheriff or even join their team.

Connor West: A tall, white student and basketball player originally from the Midwest, Connor exudes health, good cheer and naivete. His blood is unusually tasty and alluring, making him desirable to any Kindred. He becomes increasingly confused and scared as events progress.

Locations

Most of the scenes here occur on the city streets, but there's also a visit to Blacklight. The players' characters are free to explore the city and may aim for certain places they know if they run into trouble.

Scenes

Invitation: Early one night, Frida Boucher comes looking for the players' characters to make them an offer. They're being considered for Camarilla membership (whether they asked for it or not), so they're being offered an opportunity to prove themselves. She will emphasize that passing the test won't mean automatic membership, but it will go a long way.

The players' characters are free to ask her any questions they like about joining the Camarilla and what it means. She'll answer as honestly as she can, but she'll eventually tell them that she

doesn't have all night and ask if they are in or out. The test will start immediately, and they can walk away at any point.

Preparation: If the characters choose to take the test, they will be taken by limousine to an empty office building. Here, Frida will explain the test, which for the most part is pretty simple. The characters will be drained of a certain amount of blood and must then make their way across town on foot to a specific location on the other side. Getting there first is not as important as getting there without incident. They'll each be given the printout of a map with the location marked and custody of a confused, lost student named Connor West. He is to be taken alive and unharmed to the end. Unknown to him, Frida uses a luggage tracking tag in Connor's pocket to follow the characters, a fact she won't hide if asked.

If the characters agree, they'll be asked to cut themselves and intentionally bleed enough to give them two Hunger dice. Frida says the Blood represents a tithe all aspirants have to pay. Once they're prepared, the characters are free to start, taking Connor with them.

The following scenes can be done in any order depending on where the characters choose to go. The Storyteller is free to challenge them with any other encounters they like as they make their journey. Each encounter asks for a Skill test to stay in control of the character's Hunger. With three or four Hunger dice, a failure is always possible and may have terrible consequences in a crowd. But if they want to feed, do they do it while on the move? Or do they drink from Connor? This urge and their level of control over it should be the focus of the roleplay in each scene.

Blacklight: As they pass Blacklight, there's a large crowd outside. There's a long line to get in, but some have given up on getting inside and are having an impromptu dance party in the street. Avoiding the street party requires a test where a failure may cause an altercation with a drunk partygoer leading to another test. Each test obviously increases the chances of the Beast coming to the fore. Example tests:

- Composure + Athletics at a Difficulty of 2 to discreetly bypass the dancing people.
- Charisma + Performance at a Difficulty of 3 to dance through the crowd.
- Wits + Streetwise at a Difficulty of 3 to find an alternate route quickly.

Street Protest: A protest march fills the street. People are packed tightly as they walk, and the anger in the air is palpable. Getting past this encounter without incident requires a Composure + Insight test.

Gang Trouble: In a more derelict part of town, a local gang decides a player's character is an easy target. The gang will want their wallet and phone. The characters can just comply, in which case nothing happens. They can try to talk their way out of it with a Composure + Leadership test at a Difficulty of 4 or they can fight the gang using Composure + Brawl. They may use Strength instead of Composure if they choose to fight without holding back. If the characters successfully inflict damage on any of the gang members, they'll all run.

Drunk Teenager: A very drunk teenager stumbles out of a bar they probably shouldn't have been in, straight into a player's character. They want to get home and decide the character is their best friend and will look after them. The next problem is finding a cab to put them in to get them home. Otherwise, they'll just follow along. If a character's Beast comes to the fore as a result of another test, the teenager presents an obvious and unfortunate victim.

Destruction: The final location is a deserted industrial building with an arena inside made of rusted corrugated steel. Frida and several other Kindred and ghouls appear at the top of the arena on an observation gantry, armed with high powered rifles. They throw a collection of knives into the arena below.

Frida sadly announces there is only space in the Camarilla for one less than the total amount of characters. It's up to them to decide who. Anyone can choose to leave at this point, and if they do, the number of available spaces drops as well.

Essentially, the characters who still wish to join will have to see to it that at least one of them destroyed tonight. Frida will say this is a game she and her pals like to play that the Primogen or the Prince don't know about.

The characters can try to deal with the situation in different ways. They can Embrace Connor and then destroy him, satisfying the requirement. They can destroy one of their own, or they can make a legalistic argument and posit that Frida is not within her authority to order anybody's destruction since that right should only be vested with the Prince.

Any of the solutions work, even the one calling back to the Traditions. They're held in high regard in the Camarilla, after all.

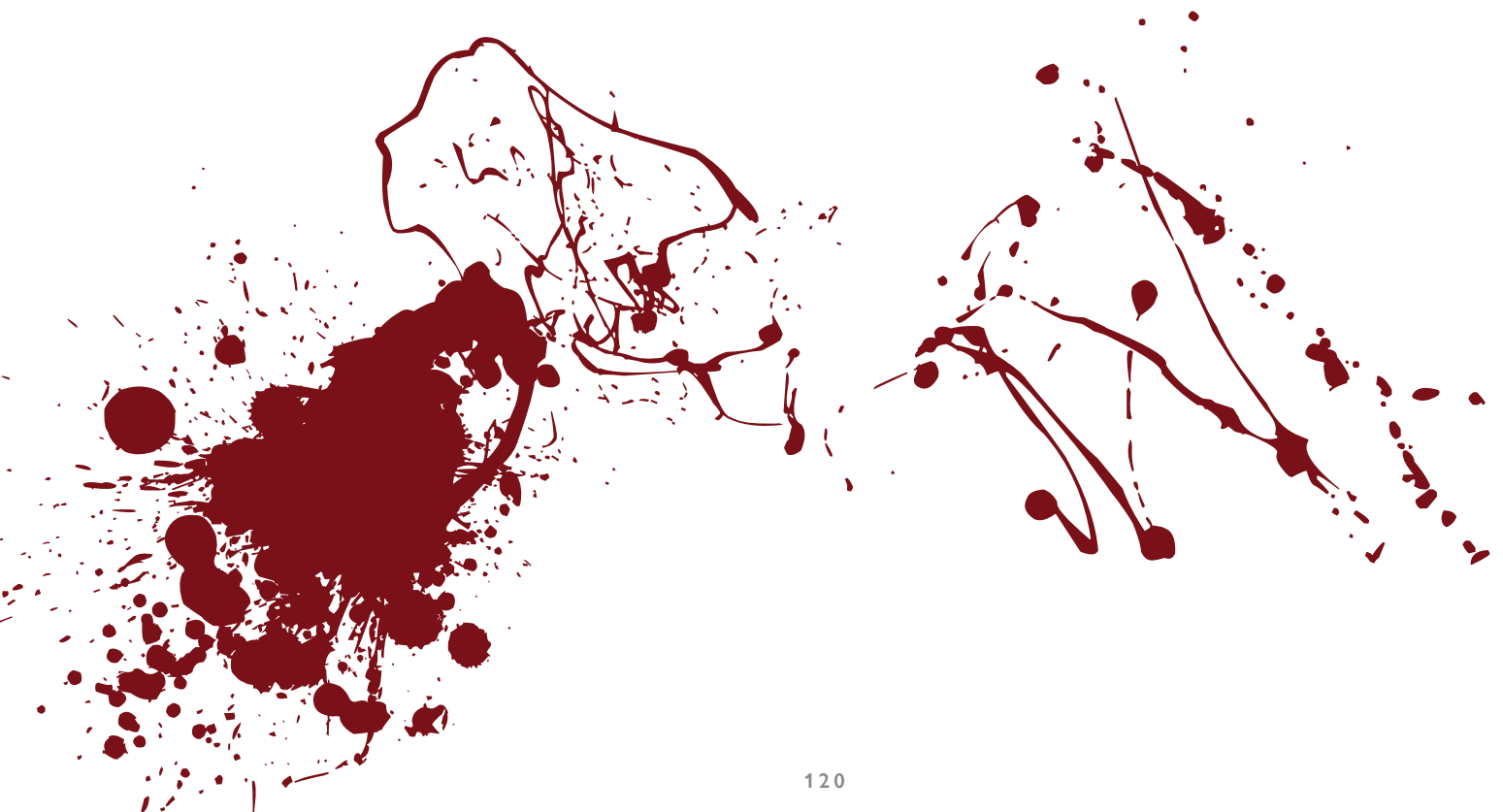
If the characters decide to destroy one of their own but can't agree on who, Frida will let the situation devolve into a fight. Should the characters attempt to assault Frida, the ghouls and Kindred watching will gun down the perpetrator. Once this scene plays out, Frida will allow the players' characters to leave.

Aftermath: It's up to the Storyteller to decide if the players' characters will be offered any form of membership after this. Passing all the tests

and keeping their cool will certainly impress the Camarilla the most. However, they could still be offered membership even if they fail depending on the Camarilla's need and how badly they failed the tests. But this might also define where the Camarilla wants to place them. Characters who are especially violent might be introduced to the Sheriff to become expendable hunting dogs. Those who walk out on the test without arguing their case will be considered civilized, but not very clever and possibly too rebellious.

Variations

As the Masquerade is important to both the Camarilla and the Anarchs, most of the scenes here will work for any of them. The final scene, Destruction, should be replaced with something more relevant to the sect in question. The Anarchs might run the scene as it appears to be, but without letting any of the players' characters get too badly hurt. The Church of Caine might insist on a less violent scene but organize one that forces the characters to make a sacrifice for the Church, in terms of possessions or even friendships outside the Church.



III. DOMAIN

TAKING OVER AN ELDER'S DOMAIN

Mental and Social

Occasionally, a Camarilla elder disappears, leaving their domain up for grabs if they haven't bequeathed it to anyone. When this happens, it presents an opportunity for the players' characters to stake their claim to the city. But taking control won't be simple. The characters will have to get there in first while fending off attempts from other Kindred and coterie.

Why the Players' Coterie?

It's up to the players' characters to take what they want, and if they're not proactive, they're going to quickly become someone's pawns. A good, solid addition to their existing domain will also put them on the Camarilla map and mark them as potential long-time allies.

Goals

The players' characters' goal is to claim the domain in question. But how they go about it also matters. This is a good opportunity to make some allies in the Camarilla and perhaps even impress those with real power.

For the Storyteller, this is also an opportunity to establish the characters as a force in the chronicle's city. They'll no longer be outsiders but part of the fabric of local Kindred society.

Supporting Characters

Pretty much everyone in the local Camarilla wants the domain, so there isn't a lot of support for the players' characters' claim. Still, many local Kindred are experienced enough to know when they have lost and don't want to escalate matters into open conflict.

Those who may show interest in the domain include Cleo Drummond, Mark Floros, Fred

Hartmann, Marilyn Haig, and Dexter Wilkins. They may also want to help the players' characters for a piece of the action or try to destroy their chances on behalf of one of their rivals.

For example, a Kindred who realizes they're no longer in the game can offer to sabotage the coterie's rivals. In return, the coterie grants the Kindred feeding rights in the domain in perpetuity. Each ally gained like this lowers the Difficulty on rolls relevant to claiming the domain by 1.

Locations

The Watchtower: The domain that's up for grabs is on the border between the city's financial district and more exclusive nightlife streets, close to the Sub Rosa Financial Park. It's essentially sandwiched between established Camarilla and Anarch domains. As well as offering plush haven potential, the missing elder left behind a penthouse office suite with a view over the city that would be perfect for entertaining friends and allies. The downsides are lack of security and a less than central location.

As a domain, The Watchtower may potentially have the following backgrounds, assuming players invest the necessary experience points: Chasse 1, Lien 2, and Portillion 2. Claiming it gives the coterie a bonus of +2 to Haven, Status, and Resources.

As the players' characters attempt to take control of the domain, they can look for contacts and help in any of the city's locations. Some of the government buildings may also contain vital files and records. The Court (possibly in the form of Cleo Drummond) is willing to accept the characters' claim on the domain only if they have demonstrated they can control it in a concrete way.



Scenes

You're Late: An existing ally of the players' characters, possibly Cleo Drummond, visits them to tell them of an advantageous domain that's become available. In the Camarilla, few announcements are made about such things, but rumors swirl. Fortunately, the ally has their ear to the ground and believes it's useful to have the players' characters owe them a boon in the future. The ally knows they don't have the means to claim the domain for themselves so they're trying to use the coterie to deny it to their enemies.

It's possible the ally is actually going to make a claim on the domain themselves, and they're planning on using an inexperienced coterie as a distraction for their rivals. This may prove to be a miscalculation if the players' coterie succeeds. Kindred plots can get complicated!

The ally can provide detailed information about the domain to explain why the players' characters should get in the race to pursue it. They also explain this isn't a prize given freely. The players' characters will need to take control of the domain using their influence and contacts without violating the Masquerade. In short, "If you can take the domain, it's yours, but you should expect to fight for it."

Investigation: The players' characters should set out to have a look at the domain in question and see if they can dig up any information about it. They can also try and find out who the competition might be. This scene can be driven by the players' characters but is also an opportunity for the Storyteller to give the players clues to help them along.

The players' characters should make Intelligence + Streetwise tests to discover the domain's footprint in the mortal world, in case there might be building owners, financial records, surveys mentioning it, or similar issues. The Storyteller can take the best result, with one piece of information per success, or grant each player who succeeded detail on one of the many ways to take control of some of the domain. These options are:

- **Buy up property:** Legally claim some of the real estate.
- **Forge and replace deeds:** Create false but binding records of ownership.
- **Control the bureaucracy:** Bribe or use Dominate to influence local officials.
- **Pressurize local businesses financially:** Essentially run a protection racket by taking control of some of the supply chain.
- **Make a deal with organized crime:** Get criminals working for you to claim the local underworld.
- **Fund local activism and projects:** Get the local population on your side by funding community projects, and support activist groups working against your rivals.

To take control of the domain, the players' characters will have to reign supreme in three of these areas. If they do, the Court considers their takeover a *fait accompli*. In this city, the Prince is weak and reluctant to make attempts at enforcement that could fail, further demonstrating their lack of strength. If the characters have ideas of their own that the Storyteller thinks might also work, they can pursue those. In that case, there is a decent chance their rivals will have considered them as well.

In each scene, the Storyteller can allow the players' characters to succeed if their test is successful. If you want to involve rivalries, the players' characters will have to beat the test made by each rival. However, not every rival will attempt each option. The right Allies or Contacts can provide one or two-dice bonuses to these tests, at the Storyteller's discretion.

The scenes can be played out depending on the players' characters' approach. They can interact directly with their quarry or use agents from afar.

Uncover Rivalries: The only way to find out who the opposition are is by asking around. Someone will have said something to someone they thought they could trust. A few rivals might be so confident they think they can tell the world and still win. The players' characters will have to hang out at Kindred haunts and see if anyone will talk. This will take a Charisma + Investigation test (possibly

multiple tests for multiple rivals). A messy critical or bestial failure means the characters reveal their hand and now everyone knows they're gunning for the domain.

Buy Up Property: The easy option to claim territory is by just buying it strategically. Not everything is for sale, so you can't buy the domain outright, but a few key locations will offer some control of the area. Doing this requires a Resources rating of 4 or more and a successful Intelligence + Finance test, in addition to a Mask or a mortal front of some kind to legally hold the property.

Forge and Replace Deeds: This option involves sneaking into the relevant offices and archives to insert forged documents, creating a paper trail to claim ownership of key properties. Forgeries take an Intelligence + Craft test to create and a Dexterity + Larceny test to insert into the right files. Alternatively, an Intelligence + Technology test at a Difficulty of 4 allows the character to hack the system to make the right adjustments. Some records are still kept on paper, making them open to discovery later by a determined enemy.

Subvert the Bureaucracy: If you can't change the paperwork, take control of the hand that files or signs it. Getting close to bureaucrats, union leaders, civil servants, and politicians is tricky and requires a Composure + Stealth test (or something else depending on the approach). The character can then use Presence, a simple bribe (Wits + Persuasion), or a convincing argument (Charisma or Manipulation + Persuasion) to get them on their side.

Pressurize Local Businesses Financially: Getting local businesses to accept your guidance requires either making financial threats (Manipulation + Finance) or taking control of their supply chain (Intelligence + Finance). You might even call in health inspectors using Manipulation + Animal Ken to get someone closed down.

Make a Deal with Organized Crime: Getting the local criminal underground on your side is dangerous but can make for a very fruitful partnership. It requires a Composure + Intimidation test to get them to play ball. Where things go after

that depends on the players' characters.

Fund Local Activism and Projects: This option is about playing nice and making positive contacts in the local community. It takes a Charisma + Finance test to make the right donations to the right places. A Manipulation + Politics test stirs up the right activists to pressure your rivals.

The Body: If it feels like you need a twist to make this story more interesting, consider having one or more of the players' characters discover the staked, recently torpid body of the disappeared elder in a secret backroom, a sewer, or another discreet location. It turns out they were taken out by rivals.

Do the characters wake up the elder or discreetly dispose of them, this time more permanently? If the elder is woken up, the characters may be in for a disappointment as the old vampire first seeks to slake their thirst on whoever happens to be at hand and then tries to escape. The real identity and history of the elder can be made up by the Storyteller, perhaps pointing to future stories beyond those in this book.

Aftermath: If the players' characters are successful enough, the domain is theirs. They can opt to celebrate as they like. If they're not part of the Camarilla at this point, they'll be pressured to join as the sect doesn't like losing domains to others. If the characters refuse such an invitation, they'll make enemies of the local Camarilla.

Variations

While the Church of Caine and the Anarchs are less invested in controlling domains through influence in the mortal world, you can still use the material here if Anarch or Church characters want to sink their fangs deeper into the fabric of their local community. They can even steal someone else's domain by making their control a fact on the ground, no matter where the officially agreed upon territory lines go.

IV. HOSPITALITY

HOSTING A PARTY

Social

At this point, the coterie should have a reputation among the local Kindred. Because of this, the city's Camarilla gives them the dubious honor of hosting a reception for an important visiting ancilla. They'll need to find a place grand enough to hold the event, make sure it's secure, and arrange entertainment. They'll also need to provide someone to drink.

Why the Players' Coterie?

There are hidden dangers to hosting the ancilla, so the names of the characters have been put forth both by their friends and their enemies. It presents a chance to look good in front of important people but also the risk of seriously losing face or something worse. Giving the characters responsibility is a test, and their performance in terms of the correct etiquette and their general competence will be judged by their fellow Camarilla Kindred.

Goals

The players' characters should realize this task is a good chance to increase their prestige, but they shouldn't be naïve enough to think it doesn't involve danger. Their names will be on the ticket here, and whatever happens will be remembered. If it goes well, they could become the toast of the city and set the tone for future Camarilla gatherings. They could also destroy their status and that of their allies if they screw it up. Vampires have long memories.

For the Storyteller, this story offers a sandbox to let the players explore the world and come up with cool ideas. In terms of the chronicle, it will allow them to make a mark on the local Camarilla social scene, for good or ill.

Supporting Characters

The supporting characters will be up to the players' characters to some degree, as they are putting together the guest list. Local Camarilla Kindred such as Cleo Drummond and the Sheriff attend, as will most of the clan of the visiting ancilla (Toreador in this case).

By default, the visiting ancilla is:

Pauline Calais

8th Generation Toreador, Ancilla

Originally a girl born in Marseilles to difficult circumstances in the early years of the 19th Century, Pauline has reinvented herself many times over the decades. She has re-invented herself many times over the years, performing the duties of a Camarilla Archon for a long time until she left that role and decided to become a fixture of the sect's social scene in various domains.

Pauline has a complex relationship with her own past, at times proud of what she was able to do but also bitter that her fight for position and status was so difficult and painful. She likes to play games with other Kindred, seeing it as a gift to them to make them tougher.

- **Difficulties:** 5 / 3
- **Blood Potency:** 4
- **Humanity:** 5
- **Standard Dice Pools:** Physical 6, Social 8, Mental 7, Disciplines 7
- **Secondary Attributes:** Health 8, Willpower 7
- **Exceptional Dice Pools:** Larceny 9, Etiquette 9, Persuasion 9
- **Disciplines:** Auspex 5 (Heightened Senses, Premonition, Scry the Soul, Spirit's Touch, Possession), Celerity 3 (Cat's Grace, Fleetness, Blink), Fortitude 2 (Resilience, Toughness), Presence 4 (Awe, Lingering Kiss, Entrancement, Summon)



As an alternative option, if you have access to *Chicago By Night* (p. 183), you can use the Toreador elder Annabelle.

Locations

The main location in this story will be the venue the players' characters choose for the event. They can seek help from allies in a number of places or investigate several options for venues. The Storyteller can allow the players to invent new locations in the city for consideration as venues.

Scenes

Command Performance: A courier drops a note, inviting the players' characters to visit Cleo Drummond. The meeting is not a formal one, being a simple conversation in one of Drummond's favorite haunts. Drummond tells the characters they are impressed with them and would like to offer them an opportunity to prove their skills to the Camarilla at large.

Drummond goes on to explain that an important ancilla from another city is arriving in a few nights to discuss various affairs of state. As befits their station they will be welcomed with a soiree in their honor with the cream of Camarilla society. The players' characters are given an almost unlimited budget, but they're going to need to do the work of planning and ordering what they need.

A Wits + Insight test will tell the players' characters Drummond is not asking or offering but telling them to get this done. Drummond won't offer any more information, but will be unimpressed if the characters don't at least ask who the visiting ancilla is. If they do, they'll be told it's Pauline Calais, a former Archon and a well-connected insider in many Camarilla domains. If they want to know more, they'll have to ask someone else as Drummond's time is limited.

Research: Research will help the characters make the right choices. There are three things they really need to find out, but they'll need to figure that out for themselves. To learn the answers (if they think to ask the questions) they'll need to talk to other Kindred and get the recent gossip.

- **Who is Pauline Calais?** The first question is who is this ancilla, or really, what will impress them. With a Charisma + Investigation test, the characters can discover that she's renowned for hosting extravagant parties herself. The players' characters will need to hire the best of everything or she'll know where corners have been cut. But it'll also be clear she has good taste so just spending money will not be enough. The event will need to be stylish and fashionable.
- **What is Calais' background?** This is harder to find out but some of the older Kindred might know. Again, a Charisma + Etiquette test will be required to get an answer from local Kindred society. It's fairly trivial to discover that Calais was born in 19th Century Marseille and moved to Paris when she became a vampire. A good success will reveal Calais is sensitive about her past, and too much of a Parisian theme will not go down well.
- **What does the Prince think of Calais?** This is a critical question the characters might not think to ask. The Prince is a remote figure not really seen in the course of *The Crimson Gutter* chronicle but their opinion may still matter. With a Manipulation + Investigation test they can discover the Prince and Calais had a recent spat and do not get on well at all. It will take a further Manipulation + Insight test to discover

the Prince is still angry about the encounter and wants to see Calais embarrassed. The players' characters should not be so stupid as to try to meet and ask the Prince about this or decide to overtly embarrass Calais. Nevertheless, what they choose to do with this information will be key to their success.

Finding a Venue: The first thing the players' characters need to do is find a suitable venue for the gathering. When representing the Camarilla, Drummond has deep pockets and will pay any price. The question is, what is appropriate? Each character should make an Intelligence + Streetwise test, and each who succeeds finds a venue suitable in terms of scale, security, and location. Each player can describe their venue, and then the group can decide which to go for. Each venue might be a historical building or a modern one. Historical buildings are generally more pleasing but full of difficulties, increasing all Difficulties for organizing the party by 1. Modern buildings aren't as nice but are better suited for modern functions.

The attendees will be impressed only with a historical building. Calais will be doubly impressed with one that has the feel of old Paris, but only up to a point. A subtle reference is good; an overarching Parisian theme is bad.

The building comes with a certain amount of security, but the characters may like to bring some of their own.

Catering: The players' characters should prepare a selection of blood dolls for the evening. Finding living vessels requires a Charisma or Manipulation + Persuasion test, adding a die to the pool for every point of Dominate, Presence, and Herd for each character making the test. Each success finds a vessel ready to attend, based on some pretext the characters have to invent. This can be very Stain-inducing as few people want to knowingly become living snacks.

Decorations and Style: While the players' characters won't necessarily be hanging bunting themselves, they do need to make sure someone decorates according to their instructions. This might involve anything from ice sculptures to paintings

or flowers. An Intelligence + Etiquette test will tell them what is appropriate and a Wits + Craft test will tell them what is stylish. The levels of success the characters have on these tests determine how well they pull off the decorations.

Running the Party: For the party itself, the Storyteller should judge how well received it is by Calais and the assembled Kindred based on the success of the tests and the choices the players' characters have made so far.

If the players' characters want to get involved in the party, the Storyteller can use some of the options in Formal Introductions but with higher Difficulties. The attendees here are much harder to impress.

If the party is awful, the players' characters will know instantly from the snide looks of the attendees. If things are going badly, they can attempt to apologize with a Charisma + Etiquette test or try to organize something new at the last minute (using one of the earlier tests at a higher Difficulty).

Plan To Fail: The problem with this party is that the Prince wants it to fail. He wants to teach Calais a lesson because of their rivalry, and making her attend a sub-par party will be a slap in the face. As the players' characters organized it, the Prince is free from blame and can see them punished for the insult. The whole affair is designed to subtly declare war with Calais.

If the players' characters do well, Calais will be honored by the affair and consider it an apology from the absent Prince. This puts the characters in an awkward position with the local Camarilla establishment, costing them reputation. It's possible Drummond will take the credit for producing such a

marvelous affair and then gets into trouble with the Prince.

If the players' characters can figure this out and find a way to embarrass Calais subtly, they'll ingratiate themselves with the Prince and may even gain an audience at some point in the future.

Aftermath: Once the party is over, the players' characters need to oversee the tidying up. Vessels need to be taken care of and either have their memories wiped or be paid for their silence with a Manipulation + Leadership or Intimidation test. If anyone was killed, the players' characters risk Stains as the ones who failed to protect them. If that happens, the bodies will need getting rid of.

The real aftermath is how the party went for the assembled guests. If the Storyteller judges it to have been a hit, they may allow the players to purchase a dot in Status. The Storyteller should also decide how Calais felt about the party, and from that, how impressed the Prince was with the coterie's performance. For the players' characters' futures, that reaction might be more pertinent and longer lasting.

Variations

While each of them deals with them differently, all the sects have important ancillae. The only difference is what they each expect. The options here can be adapted to develop a party for any type of important visitor, just with different requirements to impress the ancilla in question.

Here are a few suggestions:

- A visiting Sheriff from a neighboring domain. Ostensibly here on a social visit, in reality, trying to find a known Anarch revolutionary.
- Someone purporting to be an elder who make their home in the domain in years past. They know the name and some details, but in reality they're just a con artist trying to bluff their way into a juicy domain.
- A Sabbat infiltrator who barely manages to maintain a humane facade until it falls in the midst of the party. What do the characters do when their soiree turns into a blood bath?

V. DESTRUCTION

GOING ON A BLOOD HUNT

Physical, Mental

The Camarilla likes to remind everyone of the price of betrayal now and again with a good old-fashioned Blood Hunt. This is a chance for the players' characters to prove their worth, increase their influence, or disrupt everyone's fun by helping the prey escape.

Why the Players' Coterie?

The players' characters' involvement will depend on their reputation and ambition. If they want to improve their status, hunting down criminals is one way to do it and also prove that they're dangerous to anyone who might be thinking of taking them on. Joining the hunt also proves their loyalty to the Camarilla.

If they're looking to cause mischief and think they can be subtle about it, they can join to help the prey escape. This is especially true if it's someone they know. You could even suggest this as an option to the players if they don't come up with it on their own.

Goals

The goal here is simple: Be the ones to catch the prey and receive the accolades of being the ones who solved the problem. A Blood Hunt is also a chance to commit Diablerie without repercussions, and a supporting character might discreetly ask the characters if they're planning to do so. Even when it's not against the law, it's still a huge taboo in Kindred society so it won't be openly discussed. The alternative is to be the ones to find the prey and help them escape, which will be much tougher with a city of vampires on the hunt.

The Storyteller can use this story to underline the violence that bubbles under the surface despite all the Camarilla's pretensions to civility. It doesn't matter how many parties they hold or laws they make, the Kindred are still creatures of blood and violence.

Supporting Characters

This story is something of a free-for-all, with several different groups joining the hunt. The Storyteller can bring back any of the coteries or characters the players' characters met in previous stories, especially if they didn't get along. Some of the characters' allies can also ask to join them in the hunt and help them out. Such an offer of allegiance might even be a precursor to asking to join the coterie.

The main Storyteller character is the Kindred being hunted. The Storyteller should pick one from the list below. The prey is very dangerous and should use the statistics for a Bloodthirsty Sheriff (*Vampire*, p. 375).

- The prey has fallen to the Beast and needs to be executed before they do more damage. (Note that this doesn't actually have to be true. Perhaps the victim of the hunt is just said to be a wight to make the hunt feel justified.)
- The prey said the wrong thing at the wrong time to the Prince and refused to apologize.
- The prey is guilty of a terrible crime, such as murdering another Kindred or committing diablerie.
- The prey has been accused of such a crime but is actually innocent. How much evidence there is depends on the skill of those responsible for the framing

Another option for the prey is that they can be one of the Anarch bosses from Chapter Three. Perhaps the Prince wants to simply get rid of them despite the risk that this might ignite a war between the sects. For an especially devious plan, perhaps another Anarch boss is colluding with the Prince to become the Baron when their rival has been destroyed.

Locations

The story takes place across the city, both during the hunt and as the players' characters search for clues to begin tracking the quarry. Any location might potentially be used depending on what choices the players' characters make.

Scenes

The Hunt Is On: The Sheriff calls a general meeting of the city's Camarilla. There they'll formally issue a proclamation that a certain Kindred is no longer protected by the rule of law and that it is upon every loyal member of the sect to see them destroyed.

The Timing of the Hunt: The city is a big place, so a hunt of this type is not a straight-out footrace. Following a Blood Hunt is an exercise in plotting the movements of the prey and trying to predict their next move. Getting out of a city safely is very difficult for a Kindred, and this one has only one night to do it unless they manage to find shelter. Getting onto a train is pretty obvious as a mode of escape. Driving is good, but if all the Kindred are on the hunt, most roads will have someone keeping an eye on them. Taking a plane is almost suicidal given how long you have to wait at the airport and the risk of unforeseen complications. The best option for the prey is to keep moving, find out where there are the least number of hunters, steal a car on the edge of town, and make a run for it.

Finding Clues: As the players' characters search the city, they'll need to make Intelligence + Streetwise tests to ask in the right places. Charisma or Manipulation + Persuasion or Intimidation will get people to talk about what they've seen. Wits + Insight tests will reveal if they're lying to put the characters off the scent. If the characters want to look for physical clues rather than talk to contacts, they can make Wits + Investigation tests to follow signs of Kindred activity, although that may lead to rival hunters as easily as to the prey.

Running the Hunt: As an alternative to simply having the players follow clues described by the

Storyteller, you can put the hunt in their hands. If they make a successful test, let the players be the ones to announce what the supporting character reveals or the nature of the clue they find and where it leads to. This might be a place they already know or something the player creates on the spot. The Storyteller should roll on Table 8: The Hunt to determine if the clue is good or not. The players decide where it leads and get to describe the place. If they do well in the resulting encounter, they should add +1 (cumulative) to their next roll.

TABLE 8: THE HUNT

Roll a die to determine where the clue leads.

Roll	Gift
1	Clue leads to a rival gang looking to ambush the characters.
2	Clue leads to a highly populated location (a nightclub, a mall, or a popular park).
3	Clue leads to a remote location (a ruin, a closed factory, a warehouse).
4	Clue leads to a place a rival vampire participating in the Blood Hunt has been destroyed (by the prey or another rival).
5	Clue leads to a particular character who's seen something.
6	Clue leads to a location a rival coterie has found first.
7	Clue leads to a location the prey has laid a trap at.
8	Clue leads to the prey, who's engaged with a rival coterie.
9	Clue leads to a location the prey is on their way to.
10	Clue leads to the prey's location, but they've seen the characters approach.

Settling Scores (Optional): Twists can be thrown into the mix as often as the Storyteller likes. During a Blood Hunt, a lot of old scores can be settled. While no laws are suspended, a lot of deaths can be written off as unfortunate accidents in such a chaotic time. If the prey is found and executed, they make a good scapegoat for any violence there are no other witnesses for. Rivals may take this opportunity to hunt down the players' characters and get revenge.

The players' characters may do the same, disposing of enemies in the throes of the hunt. If there's someone the characters particularly despise, you may create a scene where they're exposed, such as wounded from a fight with the quarry.

Aftermath: If the characters are successful enough, they'll eventually face the prey. How this scene plays out depends on the prey. If the prey is a monster, it's a stand-up fight. But the prey might try to convince the players' characters to spare or even help them by lying or telling the truth. Helping them escape will need care and careful planning, since if their complicity is discovered, the characters will become the next to be hunted.

The story can end with the Camarilla Kindred being called back to an audience with the Prince. This will either be to see the victors declared, to an appropriate rise in status, or to hear that the prey has officially escaped. If the latter is the case, the Prince is furious. Should the players' characters manage to come out of the experience having done well, they'll be granted membership in the Camarilla if they're not members already. The Sheriff may also be looking to recruit them, just in case this experience didn't seem dangerous enough.

If the characters never found the quarry, the story ends with another coterie or individual Kindred claiming victory and getting the rewards for it. For a true surprise twist, if the players' characters helped the victim escape, another Kindred might simply lie that they were successful in the hunt. The players' characters can then watch them get rewarded for their fraudulent efforts.

Variations

While only the Camarilla engages in official Blood Hunts, Anarchs or even the Church of Caine might decide to hunt down one of their own anyway. Usually, each faction is only able to enforce their laws in their own domains. This story can also be adjusted so that the quarry is not a member of the hunters' own sect but an enemy or even an outsider to the city.

If the characters are Anarchs, they could be asked to save the victim of a Camarilla Blood Hunt. The trouble is that this might get them declared enemies by the Camarilla. Do Anarchs leaders consider them disposable in the conflict between the sects?

A supporting character could try to enlist the coterie's help for the purposes of Diablerie. If the characters hunt down the quarry of the Blood Hunt, they'd then commit Diablerie on the victim. The characters can refuse such an offer, accept it in the hope of a reward, or even decide to commit Diablerie on the character who proposed it. ■





CHAPTER FIVE



CAINE'S ANGELS



“I used to believe in the revolution. Unlike some of the schmucks who call themselves Anarchs in this city, I have actually experienced one. We took the fight to the Camarilla and won. We kicked out the boss!

I still remember those nights so vividly. It’s an amazing feeling when you get to witness the ideas you fought for triumph. How many of us can say that we’ve really experienced that?

Many are those who talk revolution among the Anarchs. But how many have, as I have, walked into the Prince’s haven and set it ablaze?

We were all so beautiful then...

Only, it didn’t last. Cracks started to show almost immediately after we took power. Infighting, power plays, betrayals, petty resentments... And the Camarilla ... I used to believe they were the proudest of us all, haughty beyond belief. Yet, I saw a Toreador Keeper of the Elysium, two hundred years old, literally kiss the boot of a Brujah biker. We thought we had broken him, humiliated him, but no. From his lowly position, he schemed, lied, manipulated, and one night, the domain belonged to the Camarilla again, and that damn Keeper was now the Prince.

The same man who had groveled at our feet.

Those monsters were much more flexible than we had given them credit for. I had to escape the city and now I’m here. An Anarch, sure... But I need to know there’s something more to this. If not revolution, then something else. The Church of Caine invited some of us to a sermon and the things they talked about made such sense. I don’t know if I’m completely convinced, but I like to go to St. Januarius and just sit on the back, listening.”

**– JERRI VOSS,
CHURCH OF CAINE INITIATE**

What to do when you're dismayed by the power politics of the two great sects? What if you want something more than what the Camarilla and the Anarchs are able to offer?

The Church of Caine is a vampiric religion building on the idea of the Kindred as dark angels tending to the mortal flock, eternally battling their base, bestial impulses. They venerate Caine as the originator of all vampirekind, the first sire who begat the bloodlines. The mythology of the Dark Father is documented in the Book of Nod, a collection of ancient stories built on quasi-Christian imagery.

After a certain point, the Anarchs and the Camarilla become mutually exclusive. You can have allies and pawns in both sects but you can't belong to both unless you're a traitor or a double agent. With the Church it's different: Its membership consists of Anarchs, Camarilla, and even autarkis who reject all sects. For the latter, the Church is the only safe haven in the city.

A Resurgence of Faith

The modern Church of Caine builds on a legacy that goes back a thousand years, all the way to the original medieval Cainite Heresy. This is why Church members are still often called Gnostics. Through the centuries, offshoots of the Church have surfaced in various domains but its current prevalence is a relatively recent phenomenon.

As the Second Inquisition rises, thin-blood vampires become more common, Camarilla centers of power collapse, and Anarch revolutionaries push their individual, idiosyncratic explanations for who and what the Kindred are; it seems that many vampires yearn for a clear explanation of their role in the world. They might not always literally believe in the Dark Father but it's comforting to think existence means something for the undead.

Although the Church of Caine has a very long history and is spread to many domains around the world, it's not a unified Kindred religion in the sense that it doesn't have a single, universally accepted dogma. The Kindred are too scattered, their communications too difficult for that to happen. Instead, Church of Caine priests interpret ideas their own way, sometimes with wildly conflicting results. It's even possible for a domain to have two dueling Church of Caine factions, each insisting that their own interpretation of the Dark Father's will is the correct one.

Roles common to the Church in many domains include:

The Congregation: The ordinary membership of the Church in the local domain, with no special responsibilities.

Doorkeepers: The defenders of the faith, low in the Church hierarchy but extremely important if the congregation is threatened by an outside force. The Doorkeepers are expected to attend services and participate in the sacraments.

Acolytes: A low-level role similar to that of the Doorkeepers, Acolytes tend to nightly practical issues such as arranging the tools needed for ceremonies and finding meeting places. For less martial Kindred, the title of Acolyte is usually the first step to rising into a more important role from the ranks of the congregation.

Priests: One of the most visible and important roles in the Church, the Priest administers Church doctrine, conducts rituals and seeks to grow the community of the faithful. The Priests are usually the face of the Church, the leaders whose character most influences how Gnostics are seen in the local domain. A Church without a Priest falls apart soon enough.

In many domains, the Church is small enough that it consists of just a Priest, an Acolyte and a Doorkeeper, with perhaps half a dozen Kindred as congregation.

Read more about the Church of Caine in *Cults of the Blood Gods*, p. 57.

Presenting the Church of Caine

The Church of Caine can be different things depending on what your players are interested in. Here are a few themes you can focus on:

Faith: The Church is a genuine community of faith, with members who find meaning in the worship of the Dark Father. In this interpretation, community, togetherness, connection, and faith give meaning to what the Gnostics do.

Myth: Where do vampires come from? Why are we undead, cursed to drink human blood? The Church offers answers, even if they're couched in mythological language. The story of Caine is impossible to prove or disprove, but at least it's something.

Guidance: The Church is adamant that Kindred must not give in to the temptations of the Beast. They offer experience and peer support for the struggling blood addict.

Power: Because the Church is interested in the vampire condition, its members may be able to teach Discipline powers, Rituals, or Ceremonies otherwise unavailable. Its library may hold occult secrets.

If you're unsure what your players might be drawn to, drop hints of all these possibilities and see which they follow.

BECOMING A GNOSTIC

Converting to the Church of Caine isn't like joining a secular faction. Rumors still fly that the faith's revival is the work of sleeping methuselahs influencing generations of childer. Sires pass down tales to their progeny of the faith's first incarnation as a Sabbat front. A Kindred hoping for political upward mobility as a Gnostic is sorely mistaken. Those who do manage to find a place in sect leadership tend to downplay their faith; they're agnostics in public and Gnostics in their havens.

In exchange for their fealty and faith, Gnostics have a wider community than most modern Kindred. Members of enemy sects find companionship in its churches. This tight-knit congregation comes with an understanding that each member obeys Gnostic doctrine: never unwillingly permit the Beast's control, never succumb to fear, permit no one to come between you and your loyalty to Caine, feed from but do not consort with the truly damned, and never allow an insult to Caine's divinity.

In mechanical terms, a recent convert begins as a member of the congregation. They have no dots in Status: Church of Caine but may purchase them by following its doctrine and partaking in its sacraments.

More information on the Church of Caine can be found in *Cults of the Blood Gods*, p. 57.



I. NO ORDINARY SERVICE

ATTENDING A CHURCH OF CAINE SERVICE

Social, optional Physical

The coterie is invited to a service held by the Church of Caine. There, they learn the community is small and depends on a relatively recently arrived outsider, Byron Rocha, as their priest. Just as the priest's fiery sermon reaches its climax, a gang of Anarchs interrupt the event.

The Anarchs gang bosses are tired of the Gnostics bringing in outsiders, a dangerous act in these nights in their view because they're afraid the Church of Caine presents a challenge to their own ideas and authority. They demand that the Church kicks out the priest, or they'll do it for them. The coterie must mediate the situation before it gets ugly.

Why the Players' Coterie?

From a wider perspective, the Church of Caine invites all vampires to their faith. They believe that as descendants of Caine, every vampire is a being transformed from a fell creature into an angel. All vampires should join the Church and embrace their nature as divine predators.

More specifically, Rui da Costa invites the coterie to join them for the service because a member might have a sire among the congregation members, the coterie's actions impressed him, or because he knows that at least one of the members is seeking a greater meaning to their existence or greater control over their Beast.

Goals

The players' characters have two goals. The first is to get to know the Church of Caine and figure out whether they're worth supporting. This may let them see another side of familiar Storyteller characters. The second goal is to decide whether to stand for the the Gnostics or the Anarchs.

As the Storyteller, you have three goals. Your main goal is to provide a night-to-night look at the

city's Church of Caine. Until the Anarchs show up, everything is as it should be for the blood cult, even if there isn't much organization or splendor as they'd like to show off to the coterie. When the twist arrives, it should feel shocking to the congregation, almost blasphemous.

Your second goal is to get across why vampires, including the players' characters, would want to join the Church of Caine. The faith takes a dim look on mortals, but it gives vampires a noble purpose. If your players' characters have differing views on whether to keep mortal ties, this could be a great source of dramatic conflict.

Your third goal is to make it clear that while the Church of Caine's adherents might be members of other sects, they're viewed with suspicion by other political factions. Even the Anarchs, who were more tolerant towards blood cults before the Camarilla eased up, have a line in the sand.

Supporting Characters

This story uses the following characters:

Byron Rocha, the Gnostic Priest: The leader of the congregation is an outsider sent by a Gnostic-dominant domain to keep the church alive. Byron Rocha, the latest priest, hopes to raise one of the flock into a priest who could tend to the congregation on a permanent basis. Though he doesn't hold the actual position, he has the traits of a Noddist bishop (*Vampire*, p. 375).

Donny Sheridan: Donny doesn't like how the Church sees mortals. When the non-Gnostic Anarchs decided that someone needed to talk to their new priest, he was happy to be their messenger. Three gang members provide backup.

The Congregation: Rui da Costa, Marilyn Haig, Fred Hartmann, An Tran, and Jerri Voss are the Church's congregation in this city. Though they're

all present, you don't need to account for everything each Storyteller character is doing for the entire story. Aside from when they're mentioned here, use the congregation as much or as little as you like.

Locations

Saint Januarius Catholic Church: A far cry from places of worship in true Gnostic strongholds in other cities. The building itself is smaller than the multi-use hall nearby, which was constructed several decades later. While some larger churches commission sacred art in the guise of art from another faith, the city's faithful use the church's Catholic iconography as direct stand-ins for Caine and other major figures in the faith.

Some, but not all, officials at Saint Januarius Catholic Church are ghouls. They set up Gnostic services and ensure the mortal congregation isn't aware of the Church of Caine's use of their facilities.

Scenes

The Pitch: Rui da Costa approaches the coterie at a public event, whether something as ordinary as a concert or a Kindred event like a social Elysium. He tries to find common ground with at least one coterie member.

After some small talk or if the coterie asks him what he wants, he invites them to the Church of Caine's next service. He keeps his pitch grounded; at times, it almost sounds like he's inviting the coterie to a self-help class instead of a religious gathering. A Wits + Insight test at Difficulty 2 detects that he likes the Church but is not a true believer, and a critical win clarifies that he's slow-rolling the pitch because he's not sure if he himself believes everything he's saying. If confronted, he admits that he's still learning about the faith, but he does think what they teach would be good for the coterie.

If the coterie isn't hostile towards his invitation, he hands them a card with Saint Januarius's address on it.

If the coterie is hostile to Rui or ignores him, he writes a message on the card and leaves it in a place the players' characters can see before they leave the event. The message is the time and date of the service, and a "See you there?"

Testimonies: The coterie arrives at the church and finds it empty save for the five Gnostics. Rui greets them and says that their priest is running late. Before he arrives, you can run one or more of these mini scenes, or create your own:

Survivors' Guilt: If a player's character speaks to An Tran, they have a chance to discover why they're part of the faith. They're hesitant to talk about their reputation as a monster slayer, but a Charisma + Persuasion test at Difficulty 3 gets them to open about how the Church gave them the strength they needed to slaughter lupines. Failure at the test makes them belligerent and sullen, muttering about how the characters ask too many questions.

A Weight Lifted: If a player's character speaks to Marilyn Haig, they have a chance to discover the depths of her zealotry. Marilyn lays it on thick, describing Caine's greatness and waxing poetic about taming the Beast. An Intelligence + Occult test at Difficulty 3 gets to her point; she believes she's received a divine mandate to ensure the strong dominate the weak.

Everlasting Peace: If a player's character speaks to Rui da Costa, they have a chance to pin down his true reasons for joining the faith. They can push on his latent insincerity with a Manipulation + Persuasion test at Difficulty 3 to learn that he's here because the Church of Caine could end the division between the sects like it's done in other cities.

A Sermon: After at least one mini scene, or just as the coterie's getting to know the congregation, Byron arrives. He has a diminutive, frail stature, but he walks with confidence. Despite the very different types of vampires in this room, the congregation looks to him with reverence and trust.

The priest is cautious about the coterie. As he sets up the altar, he peppers the coterie with deeply personal questions. The players' characters can

answer as truthfully as they like. If they don't want to answer at all, they must win a Resolve + Etiquette test at Difficulty 3 to dodge his interrogation in a way that satisfies him.

Once he's sure that they're here to learn, or at least won't cause problems, he begins. He launches into a blistering sermon about fear. Fear is a weapon of Hell and it, not the Beast, is a vampire's greatest enemy.

He turns his focus to the city's sects and to how, without the guidance of the Church, fear rules both. He tries to be level-headed in his criticisms but interpreting his words with an Intelligence + Politics test at Difficulty 2 reveals a deep frustration with both sects.

The Anarchs: As his sermon turns toward the Anarchs, Donny enters. He reminds the congregation that every stranger they bring in is a potential danger to the community. They can bring attention from Second Inquisition hunters. They could be agents of hostile powers from malicious elders to the Sabbat. They might be recruiting in the domain for their own fell goals. Since the Camarilla spent too long looking the other way, the non-Gnostic Anarchs have decided to exile the priest tonight.

The Gnostics say that without the priest, there is no church. Donny's indifferent. It's clear this will turn violent if nothing's done.

A Manipulation + Insight test at Difficulty 3 when observing Donny reveals the real conflict here is that most of the congregation is composed of Anarchs, which the sect sees as a threat. It's obvious that the Gnostics are telling the truth: The church will dissolve without the priest.

The coterie could convince the crowd to calm down by reminding them that a fight in a mortal church is a potential Masquerade breach and winning a Charisma + Intimidation test at Difficulty 4. A Manipulation + Persuasion test at Difficulty 3 could either convince Donny and his Anarchs to give the congregation time to find a local priest before they exile Byron or extract a promise from

Byron that he won't use his position to manipulate the Anarchs.

If the coterie would rather fight, let them pick a side and duke it out. They can also escape the situation with a Composure + Etiquette test at Difficulty 4.

Aftermath: If the coterie shut down the fight by invoking the Masquerade, the tension deflates, but the problem is far from over. Donny and the non-Gnostic Anarchs look for a way to break the Church's hold over the sect. They see the Church essentially as an Anarch gang with undue power and Camarilla connections.

If the coterie bought the priest time before the exile, Donny gives them two weeks. The Anarchs leave and the church is left with a conundrum. How do you pick a spiritual leader in two weeks?

If the coterie gets Byron to promise that he won't control the Anarchs, Donny accepts the promise but threatens the worst kind of violence should he break it. Byron comes away convinced that he must expand the congregation and select a local priest, and soon.

If the coterie decided to fight or escape, the damaged property from the fight is passed off as an attempted robbery, but the church's mortal congregation starts to get suspicious. No matter who wins, the fight is considered an embarrassment to the domain. If the coterie took part in the fight, they might lose some favor with the Anarchs (if they sided with the church) or get seen as a "project" by the church (if they sided with the Anarchs). Unless they caused serious harm, this smooths over after a few nights.

If the church won the fight, they still buy the priest time, but it's only one week. If the Anarchs won the fight, Byron is not only forced to declare he won't manipulate the Anarchs, he's also bound to increasing its presence in the Camarilla.

Flow Chart of Scenes



Variations

If the players' characters aren't Gnostics or interested in becoming so, here are some different ways to run the story:

Break It Up: When the Anarchs sent Donny out to tell the Gnostics to stop bringing in strangers, they hoped it'd be a quick affair. It's been three hours since, which means the church is protesting or Donny's making it worse. The coterie is sent to find out which is it. Alternatively, the characters were sent to infiltrate the Church in advance and can now act on Donny's support.

Border Patrol: The Camarilla tolerates the Church of Caine but needs someone to make sure the priests they keep bringing in aren't borderline wights or Sabbat infiltrators. Tonight, the coterie's on immigration duty. Vet Byron Rocha, escort him to the church, and sit through a boring service. What could go wrong? Alternatively, the local Camarilla supports the Church and wants to defend it because they think it destabilizes the local Anarchs.

II. THE UNDEAD WORD

THE CHURCH OF CAINE SEEKS CONVERTS

Mental and Social

Faced with a looming deadline or an uncertain promise, the Church of Caine evangelizes. The coterie traverses the domains in hopes of reaching other Kindred or even mortals. A ghoul reaches out to them and asks to meet them in private.

That ghoul belongs to Dexter Wilkins. The trafficker doesn't want a blood cult preaching to his property. The coterie must find a way to avoid his notice, or perhaps awaken the crime lord's faith.



Why the Players' Coterie?

If the players' characters are pursuing membership in the Church of Caine, Byron and the congregation are still getting to know them. If they keep to dogma in a high-pressure situation, they'll be ready to receive their first sacrament.

For players' characters that aren't pursuing membership, they could regret having a hand in putting the church in its current situation, or they feel responsible for a character seeking conversion.

Goals

The players' characters have two goals. The first is to preach the Church of Caine's dogma. The second is to snag at least one recruit.

For the storyteller, you have two goals. Your main goal is to let the players' characters present the faith's dogma in their own way. Your other goal is to show that the Church of Caine finds challenges everywhere.

Supporting Characters

This story uses the following characters:

Becky Roberts: Becky is Dexter's long-suffering ghoul. He's promised her a chance at joining the operation as a "full partner," but he's never followed through.

Dexter Wilkins: Dexter runs his criminal empire without interference from the big factions, and he's not about to let some blood cult meddle in his affairs. However, he's haunted by the fear that all this money and power is meaningless in the face of eternity.

Locations

This story uses the following settings:

Streiber Polytechnic Institute: The institute isn't just a neutral ground for vampires. Caine's angels emerge from the damned, and one of these students might be the next one.

Yellow Oak Park: This public park is part of Dexter's domain. It has a reputation as a place to buy drugs, get mugged, or both.

Scenes

Evangelize: Byron contacts the coterie. He wants to know if the coterie will help evangelize tomorrow night. If they don't know what he's talking about, he explains the situation the church is in, and how expanding their numbers could either give the new priest a larger flock or ease the Anarchs' worries, depending on the last story's outcome.

If a player's character wants a material incentive, it's a Manipulation + Persuasion or Intimidation test at Difficulty 2, though it may be higher if the coterie mediated or fought in Donny's favor. Byron could offer a temporary Resource dot, free use of the church as a feeding ground, or the church's assistance in a future story.

Byron tells them to go to the institute.

Campus Preaching: On campus, the Gnostics tell the coterie to preach subtly when among mortals, but to be open if they're sure they're preaching to a vampire or a ghoul. The reason Byron wants the characters to preach to mortals is that he's developed a theological idea where the spark of divinity and affinity for the Blood can be seen in the living if one engages with them appropriately. This is not what the Church of Caine believes in most domains, but it's common to have a lot of doctrinal variety among the Gnostics.

Preaching subtly to crowds of mortals is a Charisma + Performance test at Difficulty 3. A win makes the faith come across as an esoteric "might makes right" Christianity offshoot, which has some appeal. A bestial failure could make the performance a potential Masquerade breach, but ordinary failures make the faith come off as typical evangelical nonsense.

All vampires associated with the campus are there save for An, who's on patrol for the Anarchs. If the coterie hasn't met these vampires, clues to their undead nature can be found with an Intelligence

+ Investigation test at Difficulty 4. The Animalism power Sense the Beast can also do the job, as can Auspex's Scry the Soul.

The Ghoul: While the coterie is evangelizing, a young woman in blue jeans and a yellow shirt listens in. She's Becky Roberts, Dexter's ghoul. If the coterie is preaching several times, she's present for at least two of their presentations.

After the coterie successfully preaches to a mortal crowd or at least one vampire, the woman approaches them. She introduces herself and tries to hint that she's a ghoul. If they can't catch on, a Wits + Occult test at Difficulty 2 makes it obvious.

Before she can ask for an unadulterated pitch on their faith, she receives a text message. She has business at Yellow Oak Park, but really wants the coterie to hear everything when she finishes. She either exchanges contact information or tells them the exact location where she'll be in an hour.

The Angry Shadow: When the coterie finds Becky at the park, they have a chance to sell her the faith. Anyone who isn't making the pitch could make a Wits + Awareness test at Difficulty 3 to realize that Dexter's tailing her. If no one keeps watch, Dexter confronts the coterie just as she asks if "becoming an angel" would be possible for her.

Dexter's angry at her and even angrier at the coterie. He tries to berate the group and belittle their faith, starting a three-round social conflict. The coterie can pick up on his fears with an Intelligence + Insight test at Difficulty 4. This can be used as a +1 Willpower damage weapon during the conflict.

Aftermath: The coterie wins the conflict if their Willpower trackers have less damage than Dexter's. He still doesn't approve of what they're doing, but he's convinced that his ghoul should make her own choices once in a while. Becky starts attending services, and the coterie may mentor her if they choose. They could even Embrace her in a future story, though that might rekindle Dexter's fury.

If Dexter is incapacitated, he cracks. He admits that his criminal empire hasn't satisfied the gnawing terror of knowing he'll potentially exist forever nor the lingering morals of his old mortal faith. The

coterie could use this opportunity to recruit him as well. He attends services and takes to the idea of becoming a superior predator for the Demiurge. In a future story, he might finally give Becky the Embrace she desires.

If the coterie lost the conflict, Dexter calls five gangsters (*Vampire*, p. 371) to drive the coterie out. Whether the coterie fights or flees, Dexter takes Becky back to his haven. The coterie might get a chance to recruit her in a future story, but Dexter develops a strong enmity towards the Church of Caine.

If the coterie can convince at least a single mortal, ghoul, or vampire to attend services, Byron is satisfied and rewards the coterie if they asked for a reward. Otherwise, he appreciates the coterie's efforts but doesn't grant any rewards. He needs those resources for the days to come.

Variations

If the players' characters aren't Gnostics or interested in becoming so, here are some different ways to run the story:

Not on Our Turf: The Church of Caine's preaching in domains that don't belong to them. Word has it that they're going for fledglings, ghouls, and even mortals. Tonight, the coterie discovers they've arrived in their domain as well. Will they put a stop to it or hear them out? In this version, the characters essentially take the role of Dexter, discovering that a ghoul, Touchstone or sire is being approached by the Church.

Escape from Yellow Oak Park: A Gnostic associate of the coterie's gone missing. An investigation finds that they were preaching in Yellow Oak Park when some of Dexter Wilkins' underlings got a hold of them. If the coterie's willing to come to their rescue, the church could be in their debt. In this case, a sire or a Kindred ally takes the role the characters would ordinarily have in the story.

III. TO WALK AMONG FLAMES

CLIMBING THE HIERARCHY

Mental and Physical

Byron receives word that he may grant one member of the congregation the title of deacon, a position that also bestows the responsibilities of priesthood upon them. The coterie is asked to prepare the Sacrament of Firewalking, so he can choose who among the older members of the congregation truly deserves the position.

Byron also has a surprise for the coterie. The parishioner or the whole coterie is offered the Sacrament of Valediction, a holy renouncement of their former mortal life. The players' characters must decide whether to walk Caine's path or turn away.

Why the Players' Coterie?

In the eyes of the Church, the players' characters have proven themselves as aspirant Gnostics, even if they've had some failures along the way. They're seen as ready to start taking on the nightly practical tasks of the Church, in part because the congregation really needs dependable hands. Because of this, they're exempt from the Sacrament of Firewalking. Byron wants them to help with the ritual rather than the older members because he thinks they all need it to be subjected to the ritual progress on their paths in the Church.

Goals

The players' characters have two goals. The first is to prepare the Sacrament of Firewalking for the older members. The second is to choose whether to undergo the Sacrament of Valediction.

The Storyteller's goals depend on how the players approach the Church. If their characters are genuinely interested in the faith and wish to be part of it, the Storyteller should make that happen. If the characters are playing along for more cynical reasons, the Storyteller should let that happen as well, as long as the members of the Church don't come across as complete rubes.

Another goal is to show that even the most faithful Gnostics are tempted by power and held back by fear and doubt.

Supporting Characters

This story focuses solely on the Church of Caine's current Kindred members Rui da Costa, Marilyn Haig, Fred Hartmann, An Tran and Jerri Voss. Mortals, even ghouls like Becky, are barred from attending a sacrament until the Prince permits the flock to Embrace them.

Locations

This story takes place at the Saint Januarius Catholic Church. The Sacrament of Firewalking is held in a field nearby, and the Sacrament of Valediction is held in the church itself.

Scenes

Good News: A few nights after the last story *The Undead Word*, Byron makes an announcement upon finishing a discussion of the *Book of Nod*. He's received word from the region's bishop that he has permission to elevate a member of the congregation to the position of Deacon. He plans to perform the Sacrament of Firewalking tomorrow night, and whoever best withstands their fear will become the new deacon and the city's first local priest.

After he dismisses the congregation, Byron asks the players' characters to stay behind. He tells them that while they're not going to partake in this sacrament, he'd like them to help prepare the path the chosen congregation members will walk. For religious reasons, it's important the preparations are done by Kindred and the others are busy with their own tasks.

Preparing the Bonfire: Preparing the bonfire consists of digging out a pit, setting up the floor of coals and a maze of haybales, and tying together a

large fuse Byron can light at a distance.

While setting up the bonfire, the coterie encounters a few members who are trying to tamper with the ritual or leave discreetly before it begins. No roll is necessary to notice them. You can run at least one of the following mini-scenes or create your own.

Rui's Concerns: Rui tries sneaking into the forest. He's sure he'll pass, but that's what scares him. He's not convinced he's ready for the responsibility.

Marilyn and Fred: Marilyn and Fred catch each other trying to apply fireproof gel to the coals (Marilyn) and the haybales (Fred). Neither knew the other would do this, and each is sure the other is trying to sabotage them.

Jerri's Test: Jerri tries to pour gasoline onto a section of the coals, ensuring they'll burn hotter than Byron expects. They'll walk into that section and prove their faith is unshakable.

Talking the Storyteller characters down or breaking up any fights is a Manipulation + Persuasion or Intimidation test at the enemy character's lowest listed Difficulty. The coterie could also choose to let the sabotage attempts play out or allow the unwilling member(s) to slip away.

The rest of the congregation is giddy when they speak to the coterie, and it's not just because of the upcoming fire walk. An Intelligence + Insight test at Difficulty 4 detects that the congregation expects them to go through their own kind of trial.

Snakes and Needles: When the players' characters finish their work, Byron doesn't begin the sacrament. Instead, he calls the entire flock into the church. All the votive candles are burning, and a smorgasbord of items mortals and vampires fear is displayed on the altar: snakes and spiders in terrariums, injection needles, and firearms.

The congregation turns their attention towards the players' characters, and Byron begins the Sacrament of Valediction, the initiation rite of the Church of Caine. He offers them each a choice. They may name one fear from their mortal life or current existence and let the congregation make them face it, or leave.

If the player's character accepts, they name the fear and the congregation exposes them to it. If the fear is



something that provokes the Beast, they must make a Terror Frenzy (*Vampire*, p. 220) check at Difficulty 3. If the player character chooses to lie about one of their fears, they enter a contest with Byron, using their Composure + Subterfuge versus his a Difficulty of 4. If they succeed, the sacrament continues. If they fail, Byron gives them one more chance to tell the truth and asks them to leave if they don't. If the characters name abstract fears like loneliness, Byron challenges them on it to see if it's really true, but if it is, the sacrament continues.

The congregation performs the Sacrament of Valediction on the coterie one-by-one.

Aftermath: If a player's character underwent the sacrament and didn't Frenzy, they're officially a Gnostic. Thanks to their actions in previous stories, Byron imbues them with the rights and powers of a doorkeeper, the Church's first line of defense against its enemies. They may choose to buy their first dot of Status: Church of Caine now. If they lied to pass, this dot could be lost if they're ever caught.

If the player's character frenzied, the rest of the coterie or the other members find them once they've fled to a safer place. Byron is sympathetic and reassures them, telling them there'll be another time to try again.

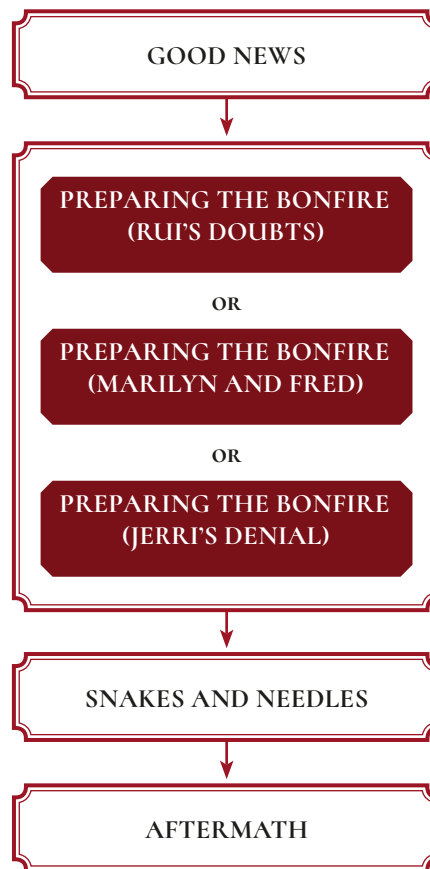
If the player's character left, Byron is deeply disappointed. Until they choose to take the sacrament, they'll remain an outsider.

The Sacrament of Firewalking occurs after the Sacrament of Valediction. Doorkeepers may watch, other players' characters must leave or win a Dexterity + Stealth test at Difficulty 2 to sneak a peek.

In the next story it's unclear who won since only Byron knows, but at least the characters know who lost decisively: Fred Hartmann and Jerri Voss. The older members without Fortitude come away proud but with horrific burns.

After this story is over and assuming the characters have succeeded in their actions, they'll gain Status 1 with the Church of Caine and assume the titles of Doorkeepers.

Flowchart of Scenes



Variations

If the players aren't Gnostics or interested in becoming so, here are some different ways to run the story:

Flammable Paper Trail: Some thin-blooded vampires have observed ghouls or mortal members of the Church of Caine buying large amounts of flammable products during the day and delivering them to the church. The coterie's asked to find out if the Gnostics are planning an attack, and if so, to stop them.

Hot Flames, Cold Feet: A faithful Gnostic associate of the coterie arrives at the coterie's Haven in distress. It's their time to walk the flames, and they can't do it. Will the coterie encourage their associate to rekindle their faith, or to escape the blood cult?



IV. AN INQUISITION OF OUR OWN

HUNTING FOR THE KILLER OF A PRIEST

Mental, Physical, and Social

A few nights after the Sacrament of Firewalking, Byron Rocha is murdered, and the Church of Caine is thrown into crisis. Byron met final death the night before he was to announce the domains' deacon, and no one knows who it was supposed to be. Worse still, the killer clearly had access to keys that only the church's older members carry.

The story assumes the characters want to find the priest's assassin and their accomplice. In addition, they must find Byron's final letter, which contains his choice for deacon. Then, there's the matter of what to do with the culprits. Does mercy have a place in a religion of predators and killers?

What's important is that at this point, the characters can start taking charge of Church affairs on their own. They are the ones with the ability to do something about this outrageous event.

Why the Players' Coterie?

By now, the players' characters are the church's doorkeepers, or at least in a coterie with one. A priest's murder is the sort of crisis they're designated to handle. In the absence of a priest or deacon, and with the arrival of a bishop being nights away at best, they're the only people who can restore order.

Goals

The players' characters have four goals. The first is to investigate the crime scene and find the killer. The second is to locate the whereabouts of Byron's letter. The third is to get to the letter before the murderer's accomplice does. The fourth is to determine the fates of Bryce, the murderer, of his accomplice, and of the city's Church of Caine.

As the Storyteller, you have two goals. Your main goal is to give your players a chance to direct the action and take charge among the congregation among the confusion as they solve the mystery. They've spent the previous stories doing things for others, but this investigation should be player-directed. Don't be afraid to change the accomplice if you feel their hunches are more dramatically interesting than what you were thinking of, including what's presented here.

Your other goal is to present difficult moral and political choices. Bryce broke the Sixth Tradition, but as a tool of the Anarchs, with little thought for the implications. The accomplice could take

advantage of the parish's isolation to argue that they didn't break the letter of Church dogma. However, they clearly broke its spirit, and the congregation won't let them get away with it if the coterie reveals the accomplice's identity.

Who gets punished, how do they receive that punishment, and is the coterie willing to risk another faction's ire in dealing it out?

Supporting Characters

This story uses the following characters:

The Accomplice: Before this story, choose the congregation member who gave the keys to the Anarchs and ensured no one was present for the murder. The most likely choices are Fred, Marilyn, or Rui. Fred did it because Donny blackmailed him. Marilyn did it because she wanted to fake a letter installing her as priest. Rui did it because the fear of being a real leader overtook him. When making the choice, you may consider the emotional impact of the revelation. Choose a supporting character the coterie has interacted positively with if you want dismay, or someone they dislike if you want to make things easier.

Bryce Garber: The Anarchs' triggerman. He did it without question, but now the pangs of regret start to settle in.

Sidney Abel: The city's courier and the last person to see Byron before final death. She promised Byron she'd deliver his letter safely.

Lesley Woodrow: Lesley doesn't just want to find the culprits because the Camarilla has cordial ties with the church. They hope a stronger Church of Caine could give their chantry eventual access to the Lure of Flames, a series of Rituals the coven lacks.

Locations

This story uses the following settings:

Saint Januarius Catholic Church: The scene of the crime. The church's ghouls shut down mortal services after the discovery of Byron's corpse under

the guise of “a major infestation.”

Al’s Place: The Anarch’s stronghold goes on a high alert after Byron’s final death. They’re expecting a fierce retaliation.

Sub Rosa Financial Park: Lesley’s chantry uses an unoccupied office building when performing rituals for those outside the clan. This keeps their real location a secret.

North Convoy Business Center: Sidney’s makeshift headquarters and the location of Byron’s last known missive.

Scenes

A Terrible Discovery: One of the ghouls managing the church asks the coterie to come to by right away for an emergency visit. The terror in their voice is obvious.

When they arrive, the coterie sees Byron’s headless body staked to the altar. There are clear signs of a struggle. Byron is young enough as a vampire that the body is in an extreme stage of decomposition but not yet ash. Someone with the Taste for Blood power (*Vampire*, p. 273) could pick up on two different vampiric Resonances from the remains.

An Intelligence + Awareness test at Difficulty 2 reveals a key ring filled with church keys beneath a pew. The ghoul recognizes the key ring as belonging to the congregation. A test of the same pool at Difficulty 3 shows two different sets of bloody shoe tracks on the floor. An Intelligence + Investigation test at Difficulty 3 finds a blood-soaked towel marked on the tag as the property of the Albert P. Winston Recreation Center.

The rear entrance to the church has been left ajar. The church has a closed-circuit camera system, but the interior footage has been replaced by a loop of the empty building by the Gnostics. Rear exterior footage shows a beat-up hatchback driving to the back of the church, a towel-masked figure emerging and then driving away twenty minutes later. The license plate number is visible. Front exterior footage shows Byron talking to Sidney Abel and handing her something a half hour before the sedan arrives.

The ghoul spoke with Byron over the phone before the murder. He was waiting for someone but didn’t specify who.

Culprit Hunting: The coterie may find the assassin any way they like. The following three mini paths present some possibilities.

Forensic Sorcery: If a player’s character knows the Blood Walk Ritual (*Vampire*, p. 276), they could use it to learn that the lower potency Blood is Bryce’s and the higher is Byron’s. If the coterie doesn’t know it, they could turn to someone like Lesley, who will cooperate in exchange for future access to Rituals taught to the parish by the greater Church of Caine.

Running Plates: If a player’s character knows the sedan’s license plate number, an Intelligence + Investigation test at Difficulty 3 lets them find its owner, Elizabeth Freeman. Asking around and winning a Charisma + Politics test at Difficulty 3 reveals it’s a Mask the Anarchs use.

Unchained Shakedown: If the coterie found the towel or remembers Donny’s threats, they might jump to conclusions and head straight for the Anarchs.

Regardless of how the coterie discovers Bryce, they also learn that he’s laying low at Al’s Place. These two facts are essential for the characters to progress so they should become apparent regardless of how rolls go. If the players roll well, additional detail can be furnished by the Storyteller.

Donny guards the rec center with two non-Gnostic Anarchs or generic Storyteller characters of your choosing. An extended Dexterity + Stealth test at Difficulty 10 (*Vampire*, p. 293), winning a social conflict with Donny, or winning a physical conflict against the whole crew brings the coterie to Bryce.

Bryce is holed up in the men’s locker room, mending severe wounds. He begs for mercy, saying that he just did what the Anarchs told him and that they should blame the person that gave them the keys, whoever it was.

If the coterie convinces him they won’t destroy him, truthfully or otherwise, he gives a vague description of the accomplice and adds that they asked if the priest had a letter with him, which

Bryce didn't find. He adds that he thought he saw a glimpse of Sidney's sedan as he was driving in, suggesting that she could be in on it.

The coterie has a few moments to do whatever they feel they need to with Bryce before the other Anarchs burst in.

Reaching the Messenger: If the coterie puts together the accomplice's identity from Bryce's description, they're not in their usual hangouts. If the players' characters have access to any ghouls, contacts, or allies the accomplice has, they'll say that the accomplice was heading to the business center for an errand.

If the coterie never got Bryce's tip or never watched the surveillance footage with Sidney, the ghoul who discovered the body contacts the coterie to tell them they couldn't find the letter Byron meant to send to the region's bishop. The ghouls fears that the killer destroyed it and suggests asking Sidney about it.

Sidney's taking inventory at the business center when the coterie arrives. She assumes they're there for business and asks them to come another night. If they ask about the accomplice, she says she hasn't seen them, which is the truth. If they ask about Byron's letter, she gets suspicious and says she doesn't want any part in the Church's intrigues. A Manipulation + Etiquette test at Difficulty 3 assuages her fears, and she tells them she's yet to send it.

She won't show them the letter unless the coterie convinces her with a Manipulation + Persuasion test at Difficulty 3 to reassure her it's important to the Church's future or a Manipulation + Intimidation test at Difficulty 2 to either threaten her or warn her someone might come take it. If they threaten her, she takes it personally whether they succeeded or not and won't work with them for at least the next story.

The Accomplice: The twist occurs either as Sidney prepares to show the coterie the letter or as Sidney prepares to kick them out after three failed attempts to get her to tell them about the letter or show it to them.

The accomplice appears in front of Sidney's office. Coterie that correctly suspected the accomplice can strike first. Otherwise, the accomplice asks the coterie what they're doing here. A Wits + Insight test at Difficulty 3 picks up on the accomplice's nervous tic, or how they're scoping the room for the closest path to Sidney's file cabinet.

If the coterie didn't convince Sidney to cooperate, the accomplice tries to win her over, and it does not go well. If Sidney was about to show the coterie the letter, the accomplice tries to convince her to give it to them but to no avail. Frustrated, the accomplice pulls out a weapon and threatens Sidney.

The accomplice talks freely about their motives. The coterie can talk them down by appealing to their shared faith and either a full-on social conflict or a Manipulation + Persuasion test at the character's highest Difficulty. They can disarm or restrain them with either a full-on physical conflict or a Strength + Brawl test at the character's highest Difficulty. Physical activities might draw the mortal guards' attention.

If the coterie wins, Sidney gives them the letter and demands they and the accomplice (should they still exist) leave. If the accomplice wins, they try to grab the letter and flee. The coterie can try to catch them with a pursuit contest (*Vampire*, p. 412).

Aftermath: If the coterie gives Bryce the final death, the Anarchs hold a grudge towards the Church for years to come. Handing him over to the Camarilla for a sanctioned Blood Hunt is the ultimate insult and demands outright war. Sparing him eases tensions with the Anarchs but displeases the congregation. If Bryce survives this story, he might come away with a good impression and could even consider joining the Church.

The Camarilla can choose to interpret any unsanctioned murder as a violation of the Sixth Tradition. They're willing to overlook Bryce after an intense lecture from the Sheriff, but killing the accomplice threatens to harm the cordial relations between the factions. They could crack down on the Church in a later story.

The congregation is divided on a fitting punishment for the accomplice, should they be spared, and leaves it up to the coterie. If they read the letter, they learn that Byron named the new deacon. By default, it's Rui, but you may change it to whoever's more suitable for your future stories. If the accomplice destroyed the letter, ran away with it and wasn't caught, or was selected as deacon and therefore barred from it, the coterie must call in a bishop to stop the congregation's inevitable power squabbles. If the accomplice successfully flees, they could become a future antagonist.

From now on, it's clear that while its adherents pay lip service to the other factions, the Church of Caine is a force of its own. How the factions will react — and how the coterie rises to prominence — is up to your table.

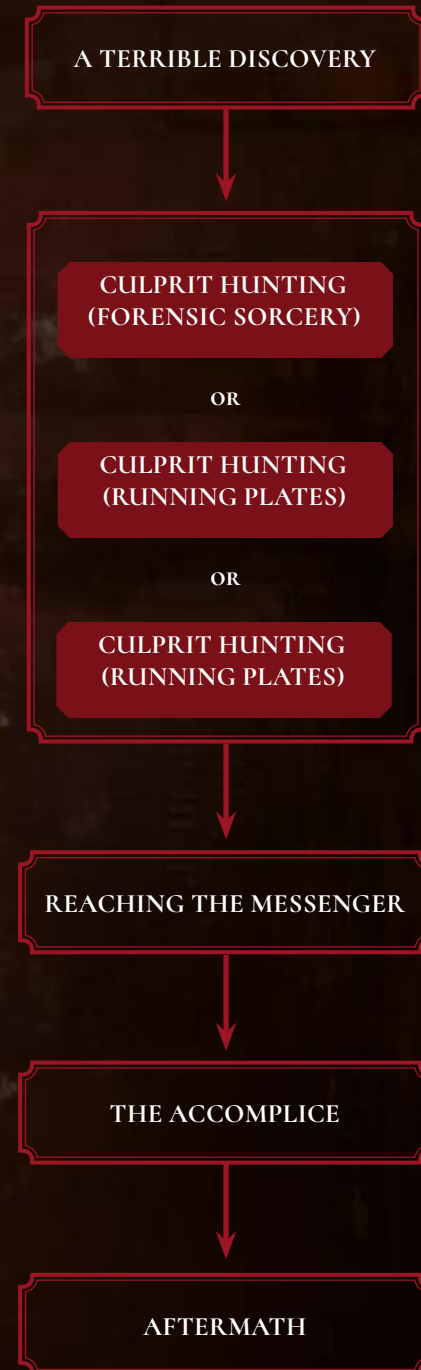
Variations

If the players aren't Gnostics or interested in becoming so, here are some different ways to run the story:

Damage Control: Very important people in the coterie's faction made a bad call, and the priest of the city's Church of Caine met final death. The coterie must clean up the mess. If the characters are in the Camarilla, they need to find a way to ease increasing tensions before the Gnostic members of their faction split off for good. Maybe finding the accomplice and redirecting the Church's anger towards them would help. If the characters are Anarchs, they should instead make the existing tensions worse, causing the Church to fall apart.

Priest Maker: The shocking death of the Church of Caine's priest leaves a power vacuum in the Church — and a fantastic opportunity for the coterie. Word on the street is that the priest left the choice for his replacement somewhere in the business center. If the coterie gets there before the Gnostics do, they could extract all kinds of benefits from the blood cult. ■

Flow Chart of Scenes



Appendix I: Feeding Complications

Feeding is at the core of what it means to be a vampire. While you need not play out every hunt, it's good to occasionally remind players what their characters need to do to survive. The following offers a series of scene options and complications you might play out for each potential Predator Type. Some of these may even suit other Predator Types with a little adjustment. You need not complicate every hunt, but every now and again, things might not go smoothly. Indeed, you can launch some of these scenes when a player fails a hunting roll.

TABLE 9: PREDATION

Predator Type	Act of Predation	Target	Typical Predator Pool	Source
Alleycat	Mugging. Physically overpowering an isolated vessel.	Mortal	Strength + Brawl	<i>Vampire: The Masquerade</i>
Alleycat	Vigilantism. Finding sinners or criminals upon whom to feed.	Mortal	Wits + Streetwise	<i>Vampire: The Masquerade</i>
Bagger	Locate corpses or medical waste. Finding preserved blood or a corpse.	Bagged Blood	Intelligence + Streetwise	<i>Vampire: The Masquerade</i>
Blood Leech	Cannibalism. You prey on other Kindred.	Kindred/Vitae	Storytellers are encouraged to make each hunt unique.	<i>Vampire: The Masquerade</i>
Cleaver	Grooming and gaslighting. You cultivate vessels, they may eventually become your Herd.	Mortal	Manipulation + Subterfuge	<i>Vampire: The Masquerade</i>
Consensualist	Grooming and validating. You cultivate vessels through truth rather than guile.	Mortal	Manipulation + Persuasion	<i>Vampire: The Masquerade</i>
Extortionist	Coercion (Obvious). Physically and obviously intimidating a vessel.	Mortal	Strength + Intimidation	<i>Players Guide</i>
Extortionist	Coercion (Covert). Subtle inference to intimidate your vessel.	Mortal	Manipulation + Intimidation	<i>Players Guide</i>
Farmer	Animal Predation. You hunt lesser vessels.	Animal	Composure + Animal Ken	<i>Players Guide</i>
Graverobber	Seeking mourners. You seek prey among whose loved ones are dying or already dead.	Mortal	Manipulation + Insight	<i>Players Guide</i>
Graverobber	Raiding the Morgue. Sifting through bodies to find a suitable drink.	Bagged Blood	Resolve + Medicine	<i>Players Guide</i>
Grim Reaper	Locate the dying. You seek out those about to die.	Mortal	Intelligence + Awareness	<i>Players Guide</i>

Predator Type	Act of Predation	Target	Typical Predator Pool	Source
Montero	Coordinated Hunt. Your retainers drive your prey to you.	Mortal	Intelligence + Stealth	<i>Players Guide</i>
Montero	Patient waiting. You're practiced at waiting for prey to find you.	Mortal	Resolve + Stealth	<i>Players Guide</i>
Osiris	Flattery and Fame. Your Fame opens the door, your guile gets you a meal.	Mortal	Manipulation + Intimidation + Fame	<i>Vampire: The Masquerade</i>
Osiris	Grooming and gaslighting. You cultivate vessels, they may eventually become your Herd.	Mortal	Manipulation + Subterfuge + Fame	<i>Vampire: The Masquerade</i>
Pursuer	Locate unloved. You seek out those who won't be missed.	Mortal	Intelligence + Investigation	<i>Players Guide</i>
Pursuer	Prey on a specific vessel. You study your victim and wait for the right moment to strike.	Mortal	Stamina + Stealth	<i>Players Guide</i>
Sandman	Breaking and entering. You steal what you need.	Mortal	Dexterity + Stealth	<i>Vampire: The Masquerade</i>
Scene-Queen	Grooming and gaslighting. You cultivate vessels, they may eventually become your Herd.	Mortal	Manipulation + Persuasion	<i>Vampire: The Masquerade</i>
Siren	Sex. A free meal with every one night stand.	Mortal	Charisma + Subterfuge	<i>Vampire: The Masquerade</i>
Trapdoor	Lure revelers. You set up a trap and lure them in.	Mortal	Charisma + Stealth	<i>Players Guide</i>
Trapdoor	Unsuspecting intruders. Your hunting ground is a web, waiting for vessels to fall into it.	Mortal	Dexterity + Stealth	<i>Players Guide</i>

Alleycat Never Easy

As you close in on this evening's random target, a piece of paving stone gives way and cracks under your foot. You fall, hard, just as you were about to pounce, crashing at the feet of your prey with teeth bared and a look of murder in your eyes. While your prey is surprised, they were wary of an attack in this deserted street, and they are all too ready to teach you the danger of preying on strangers.

Tests: As you pick yourself up, your prey finds a nearby weapon (such as a brick) and comes at you with it. You'll need to fight to take them down and feed. If you fail to beat your prey in three rounds, they run away and the result is a Masquerade breach.

Bait and Switch

Your prey is making a hunt of it. They seem wary and keep looking behind them as they walk through one of the quieter parts of town. You sneak after them, waiting for your moment to rush them and feed. But too late you realize you are the one being hunted as the crack of a rifle breaks the silence and you feel a bullet shatter your shoulder.

Tests: You need to decide whether to run or fight. A Composure + Awareness test will be needed to find where the shooter is coming from and to keep track of your quarry. This assumes these two are working without support — not a clever idea when hunting vampires, if that is what they're actually doing. If not, they may be in for a surprise.

Undercover

Your target is an easy mark, standing in the shadows in a bad part of town. But as you attack, you realize that they're wearing some sort of body armor under their street clothes. They're an undercover cop working a stakeout on a drug den across the street, and they're armed.

Tests: Dexterity + Stealth at a Difficulty of 3 to run away before they see too much. Combat will be tough as they have body armor and a pistol. Wits + Athletics at a Difficulty of 3 to stop them from calling for help on their radio.

Bagger Changing Agent

You're about to meet your usual supplier, a young kid who works at a local hospital. But just as you're about to step out of the shadows, you see them caught in a streetlight, and it is clearly not the kid you usually deal with. Did they get spooked? Has something happened to them? Is this some sort of trap?

Tests: You'll need Wits + Awareness test to see if anyone else is around. A failure may expose you to a busybody thinking they're witnessing a drug deal. If you make contact, a Wits + Insight test will be required to see if their story — that the usual contact was just held up — rings true.

New Codes

Usually getting to the blood bank is pretty simple, especially late at night. But tonight, you find the security has changed. The bank is not heavily guarded anymore, but the key cards and access has been upgraded, and you've lost your credentials.

Tests: You might break in with Strength + Larceny, but that'll be noisy. Finding someone else to get you in will need a bit of charm and a convincing story, tested with Manipulation + Subterfuge. However, to upgrade your security clearance in the long term, you'll need to find a way into the main security system, such as using Intelligence + Technology to hack it.

Emergency Room

You set out to the hospital and discover there's been a major road traffic incident in the area. The hospital is swamped with casualties and is so low on blood, they're also running a blood drive to restock their

vanishing supplies. The hospital is in chaos with many patients still arriving, making access a little easier. But there's little or no blood in the usual stock fridge, and what is there is being very carefully monitored and distributed.

Tests: Just entering the hospital with so many bleeding patients may require a Frenzy test. Plenty of people are donating blood, and not all of them are being monitored too closely. So, a Wits + Larceny test can claim a bag before a nurse collects it. A Composure + Subterfuge might allow you to steal something being taken to the operating rooms. But anything you take might be something vital to saving a life, so the Storyteller might call for Stains if you take more than you need right now.

Blood Leech Escape

Lacking in ethical scruples, you keep another of your kind in a cage or someplace similarly secure. But when you go to check on them, they're gone. They could never have escaped on their own, you're sure of it — at least you believe you are. You do know they were weak when you left them, so even with help, they can't have gotten far. If they tell other Kindred about you, there'll be trouble.

Tests: You need to track them, and quickly, using Wits + Streetwise or Survival. If you catch up to them, Intelligence + Awareness will help you avoid getting surprised by possible third parties. Recapturing them will require combat, either with your prey or whoever is helping them.

Neonate

Tonight, you find a new vampire, lost and frightened on the city streets. They may have been sired by accident, or it might be part of a test to see how they survive alone. Either way, you don't believe they're part of your sect, meaning anyone important to you won't notice they're missing.

Tests: Gaining their trust requires a Charisma + Subterfuge test, with the Difficulty depending on what you offer. You might use Wits + Investigation to get more information out of them; they may know something about another sect's activities that you can use. An Intelligence + Streetwise test will help you find a safe place to take their Blood or dispose of the body.

Cleaver Recital

One of the children in your adopted family has an evening recital at their school. It's deeply important to them that you attend. As it's in the early evening, this is possible, but you'll only just be waking up and potentially hungry, and you'll have to sit in an audience of mortals for the performance. But if you're careful, this might offer an opportunity to feed.

Tests: The usual tests for awakening will apply to rising early, and all Difficulties will be 1 higher until the scene is over, as you're not at your best. Most challenges will involve tests to resist Hunger and Frenzy rather than Skill tests. Not attending the recital will require Manipulation + Persuasion tests to make convincing excuses. If you fail, other adults won't think you're a vampire but rather a neglectful parent.

Nightmares

When you try to feed on one of your regular herd members, they recoil in horror. Some part of them remembers you feeding on them, and they've been experiencing this as intense nightmares. Any attempt to feed, however careful, reminds them of the terrible dreams they've had. They'll need therapy to work through this problem, but a good therapist may realize the dreams are actually memories.

Tests: All difficulties to feed as usual are increased by 2. Trying to convince your Herd to let you get close again requires Charisma + Persuasion tests.

Consensualist

Uninformed Consent

The victim you find is a stranger, but they're clearly into the idea of exchanging blood. You find a quiet place to become intimate and they're happy to indulge in some "vampire roleplay." That is until you discreetly bare your fangs and bite them. They scream in terror as they realize you weren't just acting, quickly becoming panicked and hysterical.

Tests: There are two options at this point: One is to physically restrain the victim, in which case a Strength + Brawl test can keep them quiet. If that fails, they'll make a run for it, requiring you to make a Dexterity + Athletics test to catch them. The other is a Composure + Insight test to find a way to calm them down, possibly with a Manipulation + Subterfuge test to explain the unexplainable.

Farmer Dual Hunt

You get the scent of a prey animal and set out to catch it, but you become aware you're not the only creature hunting it. Depending on what you hunt and where you're hunting it, this might be a feral dog or even a mountain lion. Will you try to beat your competitor to the prey, or hunt them instead?

Tests: Staying hidden from both hunter and prey requires Composure + Stealth tests. Locating them requires a Resolve + Awareness test. When the chase is on, use Dexterity or Stamina + Survival to make the kill. The prey will do their best to escape; the other hunter will run if you prove to be the stronger predator.

Sudden Reversal

As you hunt your usual animal prey, you're surprised to discover that your predations have caused that species to band together for protection. As you close in on a lone example of your prey, several animals of the same type attack you. The larger the prey,

the fewer the attackers, but small prey like rats will attack as a swarm.

Test: As you close in on the prey, several examples of that species initiate a combat. Detecting the ambush will require a Wits + Animal Ken test, although a Dexterity + Stealth test might make you a more difficult target to ambush. If the attack is definitively beaten away, things return to normal. But if the animals prevail, they'll maintain this system in the future to protect each other.

Osiris Strange Mark

When feeding from one of your herd, you notice they've been marked with a symbol you've not seen before. Several of your flock have adopted this symbol in terms of jewelry or even tattoos. However, none of them know what it means or remember acquiring it. Does your group have some sort of secret faction, or is another Osiris trying to take over your herd?

Tests: Seeing who among your flock has the symbol will require Wits + Subterfuge tests. Charisma + Leadership can be used to get them to tell you what they know or submit to powers and abilities to search their minds. Intelligence + Investigation or Academics might reveal the meaning of the symbol.

Paparazzi

You find a secluded place to feed on one of your herd, but just as you bite down, you see a series of camera flashes. Some photographer has been following you to get an exclusive picture and has gotten something more exclusive than they imagined.

Tests: The paparazzi is about to make a quick getaway, but you'll need to stop feeding before you can give chase which will require a Willpower expenditure. Then you'll need to track them using Wits + Streetwise or Survival. Once you catch up, you might initiate combat or try to explain yourself and get them to delete the pictures using

Manipulation + Intimidation or Persuasion. After all that excitement, do you remember to take care of the body you left lying when you went after the cameraman?

New Member

As you begin to feed on one of your flock, you find that the blood tastes a little different, although not altogether unpleasant. It's also darker and richer in color than before, and this new quality appears to have taken hold of all of your followers. While the blood is still nourishing, you find that drinking it makes you extremely Choleric for a scene after drinking.

Tests: The reason for this change is that recent occult activities among the cult have called up a spirit. The creature is inhabiting the blood and feeding off the anger and rage it inspires. Discovering this will require a Wits + Occult or Investigation test. Getting rid of it may be the focus of a story, if you indeed decide you want to be rid of it.

Sandman

Small Interruption

Just as you begin to feed on your sleeping victim, the door gently pushes open and a wide-eyed little girl stares at you in disbelief. She's woken up and come to ask her parent for a glass of water or a cuddle to help her get back to sleep. She wasn't expecting to see you.

Tests: Whatever explanation you're about to offer her will require Composure + Performance to sell convincingly. Manipulation + Persuasion might convince her that you're just a dream and she needs to go back to bed and never speak of this again. Certain abilities might make her forget, and it should go without saying that any attempt at combat will risk Stains.

Tainted Well

As you bite into your sleeping victim, you realize they're not as naturally asleep as you thought. Some sort of drug has put them to sleep and it remains in their blood. They might have taken a strong sedative, or even attempting to end their life. Either way, you find yourself falling under the influence of what they've taken.

Tests: To stop yourself from passing out, you'll need to make a Stamina + Resolve test. If you pass out, who might find you?

Scene Queen

Unexpected Bargaining

Your prey is willing and happy to allow you to feed once more, but when you're alone together, they tell you to stop. They've decided that your status in the scene isn't as good as it once was, and they want something else if they are to continue to be your blood doll. Their desires are quite mundane, but you're going to have to make a deal if you are to feed.

Tests: Making a deal will require Wits or Manipulation + Persuasion, with the Storyteller adjusting the Difficulty depending on what you have to offer. But you might also try to convince them your social status is just as it's always been and they should stay on your good side with Charisma + Leadership.

Overcome

You are introduced to a potential new victim who is utterly awed by you. They are everything you're looking for in prey and seem unable to resist your advances. They're feeling blessed just to sit near you. Unfortunately, they are so impressed by you they can barely speak. If you need consent to feed, it's nearly impossible to get even a nod out of them. Even a seduction is difficult, as while they will do anything you ask, you can't be sure how they will react to seeing anything of your true nature.

Tests: Any Charisma-based tests will be automatically successful for the most part, but liking you isn't the problem. Manipulation + Insight will be needed to gauge their potential reaction to you feeding. You will also need to use Composure + Leadership to impress on them the need to remain quiet about what they see, as they would dearly love to tell everyone all about how amazing you are.

Pretender

Tonight, your prey is someone new to the scene who wants to become your blood doll. But as you become intimate and feed, you realize they are indeed painfully new, perhaps not even part of the scene at all. Their appearance, or understanding of the culture, is just not up to scratch. Drawing such a person into your inner circle will undoubtedly hurt your status.

Tests: Convincing your usual crowd that the newbie is worthy of being let in is a difficult Manipulation + Leadership test. You can try to educate the newbie enough to get them through the night with Intelligence + Insight. Better yet, you might adjust the subculture a little to suit them using Manipulation + Streetwise over several nights.

Siren Bonus Guest

You seduce a new prey into bringing you back to their place. But just as you're beginning to feed in the throes of passion, their partner comes home unexpectedly. They're not happy to find the two of you together. It is too late to convince them you've just come to fix the plumbing or something similar, and you're still very hungry.

Tests: Convincing the partner you're just a fling takes a Wits + Performance test, but it'll only stop a Masquerade breach. The couple will still start arguing. If you're very good, you might be able to convince the partner to join the pair of you with a difficult Manipulation + Insight test. However, hiding your true nature from two sexual partners at the same time will be tricky.

Dom to Sub

Your latest conquest is all too willing to submit to your every desire. But once they have you in bed, they swiftly click a pair of handcuffs around your wrists and secure you to the bed. They seem interested in continuing but with the tables turned. If you submit, they produce more restraints, but their proclivities (while mundane) are quite brutal, leading you to get hurt. Unlike most on the fetish scene, they don't want to accept any safe words.

Tests: Breaking free of the handcuffs will require a Strength + Brawl test. If you submit to see where things go, it'll require a Stamina + Subterfuge test to avoid getting too hurt. You may still try to feed, but this will require a difficult Manipulation + Subterfuge test.

Appendix II: Plug-and-Play Scenes

The following scenes are quick options for the Storyteller to give character to a commonplace milieu. Why the players' characters have chosen to visit the scene depends on the story. They might have a meeting to go to, be looking to hide, or have some sort of business there. But if the Storyteller doesn't have anything planned or wants to complicate the scene with something else, these scenes offer a ready-made encounter. Each event might lead to a whole new story, depending on how the players' characters choose to interact with it and where the Storyteller wants to take the chronicle.

Abandoned Warehouse

This old building is empty and quiet; the wide-open area is populated only with some broken crates and rusted tools.

The Event: A local gang takes exception to the players' characters being here. They claim that the warehouse is their territory and say that not only do the players' characters have to leave, they also need to "pay a toll" for having visited.

What's Really Happening: One of the enemies of a player's character knew they would be coming here tonight and hired a local gang to confront them. The gang may not know much, having been paid by an anonymous benefactor. But the enemy could also have used the gang before and have more of a connection to them. If so, the gang will be more skilled and much harder to deal with.

As the gang members are mortal, the enemy isn't expecting them to kill the players' characters. They might just have sent them as a warning, in which case, they'll want the characters to know who sent them. It could even be a way for the enemy to get rid of a troublesome ally by getting the players' characters to deal with them for them.

Tests: Dealing with the gang will take more than just persuasion. A show of force will be required to prove the players' characters are not to be trifled with. This could be achieved with Strength + Intimidation but Manipulation + Streetwise might underline that they have connections.

Art Gallery

This elegant uptown gallery is a stylish white space filled with all manner of expensive art. The paintings are mostly modern, and a few small sculptures on plinths break up the space. Several wealthy people stand, glass in hand, trying to seem knowledgeable about paintings few of them really understand. Most are simply looking for something colorful and expensive to hang in their office.

The Event: The low chatter is broken by a slightly disheveled human, who may have had too much of the budget wine on offer. They point at a particular painting and claim that not only are they the artist but the painting itself is a forgery. Security steps in, but the artist refuses to be quiet and is extremely upset.

What's Really Happening: The disturbance is coming from the real artist, who may simply be very drunk. That's certainly the story the gallery owner will tell as the artist is taken away. But given the gallery is owned by a powerful Kindred, there may be more at play here. An enemy might want to upset the party and cause embarrassment and so they have made a few adjustments to the artist's memory. If so, it's someone near the owner, as few patrons allow just anyone to get that close to their charges.

The painting could be a forgery, and if so, where's the original? Did the forger expect the forgery to be noticed, so the owner knows exactly who has bested them? Perhaps a vampire just wants to prove the great and the good don't know art well enough to spot an obvious forgery. If the players' characters can solve the problem, or even just calm

down the artist, they might gain a powerful new patron in the form of the gallery owner.

Tests: Calming the situation will require a Composure + Leadership test, but getting involved at all may require an Intelligence + Etiquette test not to cause offense at stepping in. To determine if the painting is actually a forgery is very difficult and requires comparing it to the catalog with Intelligence + Craft or Investigation. Success will reveal it has been painted, but that a particular color has been changed in one section. This change is too obvious to be unintentional; the forger wants others to know it's a forgery.

Biker Bar

This place is on the bad side of town where few people are brave enough to venture. Outside the bar, bikers race and show off their motorcycles in a never-ending roar. Inside, the patrons drink and play pool, wearing more leather and chains than dancers in a fetish club. Anyone the regulars don't know stands out like a sore thumb.

The Event: As the players' characters try and find whoever they came here to do business with, there is a small explosion outside. What was a fairly rough pub suddenly turns into a war zone as bikers pull guns from a variety of hiding places and rush outside.

What's Really Happening: A rival gang has chosen this moment to launch an attack on the bar and its local gang. They open with a grenade and then proceed to shoot up the place. This isn't an uncommon occurrence, as the police rarely venture into this part of town. The ferocity of the attack depends on the needs of the story. It might be just a drive-by to stir the hornets' nest and cause some damage. But it could also be a more concerted attack designed to wipe the other gang out.

It may also be a combination of the two, where the rivals intended to just do a drive-by but the home gang was ready and set a trap so the attackers couldn't escape. The players' characters can hit the deck or join in depending on their skillset. What

they do will be noted by the local gang and its allies, and their actions may help or complicate whatever business they came here for once the dust settles.

Tests: Hitting the deck to avoid gunfire or the explosion requires a Dexterity + Athletics test, and failure will result in physical damage. Given the chaos and the number of people, those who join the fight should just make a test based on the weapon they're using instead of playing out a full combat scene. Each success represents an enemy combatant they take down. If they Frenzy or get a messy critical, they'll have taken out a few fighters on their own side. Note that using vampiric powers will depend on how carefully the Masquerade will be monitored here. Many of the gang members might be ghouls if this is Anarch territory, but many could just be human allies.

Corporate Offices

Identical corridors link identical rooms full of cubicles and flickering computer monitors. But once you reach the executive floor, things change, the walls become glass and offer views of the glittering lights of the city below. Your meeting is in the corner office or the boardroom, thick with the smell of ancient leather chairs and money.

The Event: Just as you're getting down to business (be it a meeting or corporate espionage) a large group of suits burst into the office floor. They're government agents investigating fraud and accounting inaccuracies, and they have a warrant to seize papers and documents.

What's Really Happening: This might just be a standard investigation, but it could also be part of a corporate war between Kindred rivals using the agents as catspaws. However, the reason for the interruption is less of a concern for the players' characters than their current interests. If they have files and accounts with this company, they may need to try and make sure the agents don't take those particular files. If they're doing some sort of espionage themselves, the distraction might prove very useful, but they'll have to beat the agents to

the files they want. As this is after dark, there are very few staff members in the building, and they are overwhelmed by dealing with the agents.

Tests: Getting or deleting the right files from a computer system requires an Intelligence + Technology test. Finding paper files will require a Wits + Investigation test. If the players' characters get questioned by agents, they'll need to make Composure + Subterfuge tests to keep their cool and not give anything away. If they want to distract some of the agents and lead them towards different files in their search under the guise of helping, they'll need to make Manipulation + Finance tests.

The Docks

Even late at night, the docks still bustle with activity. Ships are arriving and the process of unloading cargo is constant. Cranes lift containers onto vast piles, creating a maze of metal. Dock workers bustle about, undermanned and exhausted as the night wears on.

The Event: Dressed as anything but dock workers, the players' characters stand out here. It should not be surprising when they're approached by a supervisor with a clipboard who asks if they've come to sign for a particular shipping crate. The supervisor will hand them the receipt and point out the location of the crate as long as they sign.

What's Really Happening: An illicit cargo has arrived tonight, and the real owner doesn't want a paper trail connecting them to it. It might be coincidence that has brought the players' characters here, but they may also have been lured here by someone to act as patsies.

Once they have signed for the container, the characters will be given its location in the byzantine storage system. Getting crane time to place it on a lorry costs extra, but they can also find it themselves. The question is, what's in the container? Is it full of drugs or guns, maybe even people or a traveling elder? Perhaps the whole crate has only a small briefcase or a single flash drive inside. One thing is for sure: Now the players' characters have signed

for it, the real owners will be looking to take back possession.

Tests: While it's a simple test, the player's characters will need to perform a Manipulation or Charisma + Persuasion test to make the supervisor recognize the characters as the right people to receive the shipment. Finding the right container, even with a location number requires an Intelligence + Investigation test. While there isn't much security on the container, getting the padlock off requires Dexterity + Larceny if the players' characters don't want to leave any traces.

Elysium

While it appears to be a normal high-class party, everyone in attendance is a vampire, a ghoul, or a vessel. They're all dressed in the height of fashion, all using their apparel to show off their loyalties and personal taste.

The Event: As is usual among predators, everyone is walking on eggshells so as not to cause a scene. The Elysium is where you're on your best behavior, so when an angry voice shouts out, everyone turns to look at the source. A young neonate or ancilla has chosen this moment to accuse an established ancilla of stealing part of their domain. The ancilla is trying to remain calm and unperturbed but secretly wants to rip their throat out.

What's Really Happening: This is what it looks like. An ancilla has been quietly encroaching on the domain of a young coterie for some time, and the coterie's leader has chosen this moment to call them out on it. They tried appealing to the Prince and Primogen and got nowhere, so this is their last-ditch effort to make their point and draw a line. If they play it right, they will force the Prince's hand, though it might not move in a favorable way. The ancilla has a lot of support.

Tests: If the players' characters want to get involved, it will take a Charisma + Etiquette test to calm things down without making enemies. If they talk to other Kindred, an Intelligence + Politics test will help them uncover who has claimed what, and

who has what rights. They'll need to pick sides as they will be expected to help negotiate. The ancilla could be a powerful patron but will never see them as equals. The coterie is young but will feel indebted if the characters can help them reclaim what is theirs.

Fairground

Whether it's a permanent fair or a traveling carnival, it's a sea of people and bright lights. Children with cotton candy stare wide-eyed at the rides and bunco booths. Hawkers and clowns do tricks on every corner and watch the audience like hunters look at prey.

The Event: The wail of a lost child cuts through the noise. A mother shouts for help, but the mother and the child are not looking for each other. Others, less panicked, are talking to police or security about missing people.

What's Really Happening: A particularly brutal Anarch gang are using the cover of the fair to find victims or recruits. The fair itself might just be conveniently busy or it may be complicit in the abductions. This many missing people are bound to cause problems for the residents of the city, and that may be the true goal of the abductors. The players' characters will have to separate to find a lead, but this may make them vulnerable to the gang.

Tests: Wits + Investigate will help the characters find a clue about the abductions. Dexterity or Wits + Awareness tests will allow the players' characters to quickly search around the fairground. If the fair employees are complicit, Wits + Insight tests while talking to some of them might uncover the connection. But it will take Manipulation + Intimidation tests to get them to talk. If the characters locate the abductees, they may have to chase the vehicle they've been put in or fight brutal Anarch clowns to rescue them.

Inner Sanctum

The basement chamber was built many years ago, and the silver inlaid symbols in the floor are contrasted by dust and cobwebs in the corners. Robed figures chant in a circle, as the leader of the ceremony lights candles and directs the incantation by reading from worn parchment.

The Event: While this could be a full magical ritual, it might just as easily be a performance or a tradition so old that few understand it. Those outside the sect, clan, or order that performs it (most likely Tremere or Hecata, but they could also be Banu Haqim) will be privileged to observe.

Something goes wrong, the participants are startled but continue, thinking it might just be a simple mistake. Whether the problem is intentional or not, soon embarrassment becomes the least of their problems. Several participants begin to shake and convulse, and blood pours from their eyes and mouths. The air becomes heavy with it as the screaming begins.

What's Really Happening: Whether intentionally or not, the ritual has caused a supernatural effect, and it's not a good one. It might be that one of the participants has decided to make a few adjustments to take revenge on members of their clan or sect. Perhaps one of the guests has managed to introduce a foreign element, or convinced a participant to try something different. The question is how far will the effects spread and can the players' characters escape?

Tests: Noticing what is going on quickly requires a Wits + Occult test, and success will give the character an extra action before all hell breaks loose. They may want to make for the exit, but so does everybody else. It takes a Dexterity + Athletics test to get there first or a Strength + Athletics test to push to the front. Taking a moment to study the scene and, an Composure + Occult test might allow the character to see what the ritual's effects truly are and what might happen next. Resisting the effects of the ritual may call for Resolve + Occult tests. The scent of blood in the air may also require Frenzy tests.

Nightclub

It's early in the evening and the club is full. The music is loud and lights flash across every shadow. Kine are dancing and drinking, oblivious to the predators in their midst.

The Event: A fight breaks out on the dance floor between two young men. While this is not too unusual, the level of brutality is. They're both intent on doing serious harm to each other rather than just trading punches. The security team is quick to try and separate them, but it takes most of them. Soon, the dance floor is simply a mass of struggling bodies with the crowd either watching, joining in, or filming the fracas on their phones.

What's Really Happening: A Toreador vampire is at the root of the problem. They enjoy both this type of spectacle and the taste of adrenaline-soaked blood. It's a game to them to pick two victims and use Presence to seduce and enrage them. They pick the winner of the contest to feed from. However, tonight they've gone a little too far and they know it; it might even be considered a Masquerade breach. If the players' characters can see what's happening, the Toreador may enlist their help.

Tests: The fight might be broken up physically with Strength + Brawl tests. But the situation could also be calmed with Composure + Persuasion or Insight and the judicious use of Presence. The Toreador is watching from the edge of the crowd, and they might give away that they have a connection to the incident on a successful Wits + Insight test. Approaching them will need a Composure + Stealth test, which becomes a chase if the Toreador gets spooked by the characters' approach.

Sewers

Everything here is damp and dank, but you could easily hold a town meeting in the larger chambers. The light here is almost nonexistent, with pale bulkhead lights only glowing in the main tunnels.

The Event: A rat scuttles out of a side tunnel and regards the players' characters for a while. Then it seems to beckon them to follow. It pauses every so often to check they're still following and reaffirm it really is trying to get them to follow.

What's Really Happening: Obviously, someone wants to talk to the players' characters. They're just using the rat as the messenger. The most likely option is that the local Nosferatu want to know what the characters are doing in their domain. Even if they haven't claimed it formally, it's a given in many cities that the Nosferatu own the sewers. The Gangrel, Ravnos, and Tzimisce are also talented in Animalism, and one of them could seek the players' characters' help. They might be injured and in need of blood, or new to the city and want an introduction to the lords of the domain before they're accused of breaking the Fifth Tradition.

Tests: Following the rat is easy, but keeping track of where it's led you to requires a Wits + Awareness or Streetwise test. Realizing the rat is under someone else's control requires a Wits + Animal Ken test, if there was doubt.

Appendix III: Future Stories

Your coterie's chronicle doesn't end with the last page of this book. Eternity stretches out before you, if you have the will to claim it. The following story seeds are provided to help you kick-start the rest of your chronicle. You can take them as they are or use them to inspire new stories. Each is suitable for any of the three sects, with notes on how to adapt it to suit the sect of your choice.

Pygmalion

A Toreador sculptor and their latest work have vanished. Their coterie has checked their usual haunts and found nothing. However, for the last few weeks, they had been locking themselves in their studio, obsessed with their current project. The studio shows signs of a break-in suggesting a kidnapping, and the sculpture they were working on has disappeared as well.

Variations

The Anarchs: The sculpture is of the city's Prince and it's not complimentary. The Toreador showed it to an Anarch friend, and they thought it was hilarious and dangerous. The Anarchs have moved the Toreador to a safe location, so they can make copies to spread around the city on a single night once they're all ready.

The Camarilla: As above, but it was the city's Sheriff who found out about the sculpture of the Prince first. They've taken the sculpture and arrested the Toreador. But nothing has come of it so far, as the Sheriff is working on a plan to frame a rival for the insult in the Toreador's stead. When they've figured out a way to plant evidence on the rival, they'll reveal the sculpture and get rid of the Toreador.

The Church of Caine: The Toreador was trying to sculpt the face of Caine, based on visions they believed were sent from some sort of higher power. When they showed the work in progress to a high-ranking Church of Caine member, the church leader was entranced but thought the sculpture too dangerous to be made public. They're holding the sculptor and their work, but they're not sure what to do with them and can't bring themselves to destroy either one.

Border Dispute

Things are heating up between the local Anarchs and Camarilla. Members of each sect have hunted across a particular border in the city between their territories. Each claims they've done nothing wrong and that the border is actually slightly different to the line their rival insists is correct.

Given the way hostilities are increasing, both sides have agreed to create a neutral zone where neither can claim hunting rights or dominion. But on both sides, there are peacemakers and warmongers. Some Kindred are itching to trespass in the area and start an all-out war, believing they can win. Others are trying to police the area to prevent hostilities. Some think their side can't win; others just don't want to see the destruction winning will wreck on the city. A few want to see the city burn.

The players' characters will be drafted in on one side or the other, either to keep the peace or start a war depending on their allies and proclivities. But one thing is clear: if open war does break out, it might be impossible to stop.

Variations

The Anarchs: On the Anarch side, Brujah and Gangrel vampires are leading the call to war or are being drafted to protect the borders. Members of the Ministry are working to undermine the Camarilla, intending to see the war start on their terms.

The Camarilla: The Camarilla ostensibly wants peace, but its members also know they cannot shrink from war without looking weak. They are gathering Banu Haqim and Lasombra vampires as their front line, with Ventrue, Toreador, and Tremere hoping to be able to hide out, protect their assets, and let it all pass by. The Nosferatu are working a mixture of intelligence and diplomacy but mostly on their own.

The Church of Caine: The Church of Caine doesn't want war, but mainly because some of their special sites are within the buffer zone. They're being denied access by both sides. As a war will damage their property, if it starts, they might step in to protect what is theirs.

Prior Claim

A ghoulish emissary of an elder comes to tell the players' characters that their domain isn't actually theirs. The elder has just awoken from torpor and was surprised to see their domain had been given away. The demand begins nicely, with the elder saying they have no problem with what the players' characters have done — they are sure it's just an honest mistake, so if they clear out in a couple of nights, there won't be a problem.

If the players' characters escalate, the requests will quickly become threats. Unfortunately, while the Prince (or Baron) of the city agrees with the players' character's claim, they're not eager to back them against an elder or give the players' characters another domain in compensation. The rule is simple, if you don't have the strength or influence to keep a domain, you don't deserve it.

If the Storyteller wants to add a further twist, there is no elder and the ghouls pretend to be vampires when they make their initial approach. The

ghoul messengers are actually a family looking to insert themselves into the local Kindred community by claiming domain just as vampires would. They're working a huge bluff, but they're good at covering their trail, insisting the players' characters do not have enough social standing to meet their master in person.

Variations

The Anarchs: In an Anarch game, the players' characters are screwed. While the Anarchs will tacitly support them, they won't actually do anything. So, the player characters will have to call in a few favors (or owe a few) to get enough allies to fight the elder for their turf.

The Camarilla: As the Camarilla prides itself on supporting domain claims it has ratified, the player characters have a chance here. They'll have to prove their claim and make enough noise about it to shame the Prince and Primogen into supporting them against the elder. That's if they do have a rightful claim. But if they're not careful, they could make an enemy of the entire city ruling body. So, they'll have to make a few promises to make taking on the elder worthwhile for the Prince and Primogen.

The Church of Caine: The elder is an important member of the Church of Caine, and if they discover the players' characters are also members, they might offer a compromise. The elder will claim the domain (of course) but grant feeding rights to the players' characters. They'll also work to assemble a new church in the area that the players' characters will be in charge of and running. However, a new elder looking to create a new powerbase that they clearly intend to expand will ruffle a lot of feathers.

Undercurrent

The players' characters' domain turns out to be on top of the local Nosferatu main meeting place in the sewers. Technically, it could now be considered to belong to the players' characters, although most Kindred consider the sewers to be the province of the Nosferatu. Either way, there are a few pleasantries to be observed and the Nosferatu wants to talk.

It's not unreasonable for the players' characters to demand some sort of tribute or boon for letting things carry on as normal, promising to leave the Nosferatu their privacy. But if they get too demanding, they can make an enemy of the Nosferatu as a clan, and that will not go well for them, especially not if they have any secrets they want to keep.

The best negotiation tactic for the players' characters will be to make a deal where the Nosferatu tell them the odd secret from time to time. Nothing too juicy but something a clever character might make use of.

Variations

The Anarchs: Anarch Nosferatu will be a little more aggressive, as domain is not so formal for them. It could lead to a fight if the players' characters go at them head on, but not standing up for themselves will make the Nosferatu think they can walk all over them.

The Camarilla: Formality is observed in the Camarilla, and so negotiations might be more polite. The players' characters might even insist on finding a neutral arbiter to write up any agreements reached. The arbiter might be used by the Storyteller to guide the players' characters in their rights.

The Church of Caine: For a Church of Caine campaign, the Nosferatu meeting place is not just to meet but to worship. The Church's hold on the clan is strong in this city. The Nosferatu will invite the players' characters to a service and be a little offended if they outright refuse. If the players' characters try to restrict the clan's access to their holy site, they'll fight for it with religious fervor, which will not go well for the players' characters. ■



VAMPIRE

THE MASQUERADE

HUNTER

THE RECKONING

WEREWOLF

THE APOCALYPSE

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