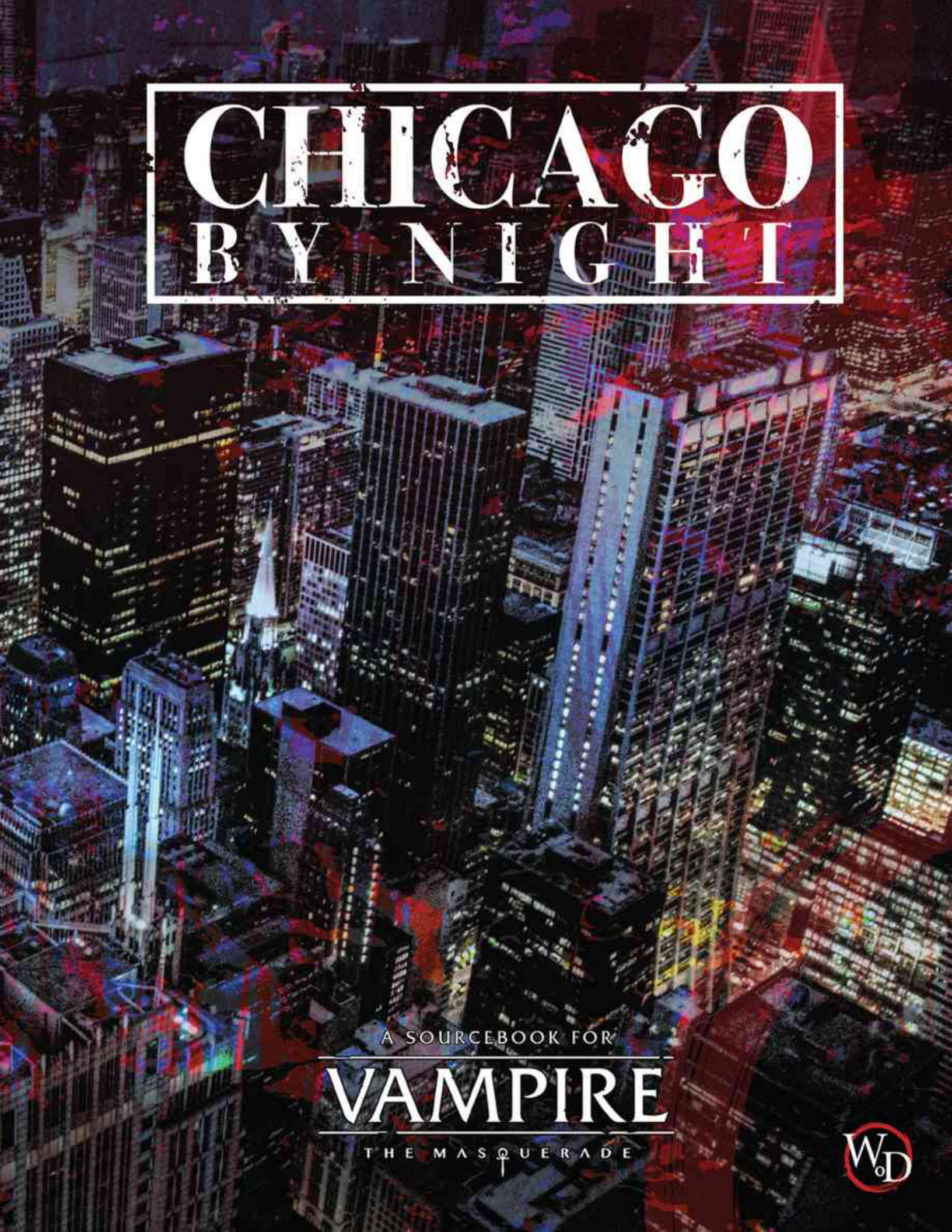
CHICAGO
BY NIGHT
A SOURCEBOOK FOR
VAMPIRE
THE MASQUERADE
WoD

CHICAGO BY NIGHT

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Introduction

If rumors are true, you've done more to rehabilitate your city in the eyes of the Camarilla than perhaps any other American Prince. You have enforced a strict Masquerade, keeping your Kindred safe from the Inquisition. You have somehow forged a truce with the Lupines, promising peace on your streets. You have curtailed the numbers of Anarchs and Sabbat without losing the humanity to which we cleave. What's more, you uphold the role of Clan Ventrue ascendant, even in these trying times. On one hand I am inclined to praise you as some kind of wonder Prince. On the other I must question: How long before the flimsy barricade around Chicago frays, its contained fires spilling to incinerate us all?

— **Justicar Lucinde, from a letter to Kevin Jackson, February 14, 2019**

Chicago is more than a simple city with a few vampires lurking in alleys and nightclubs. It is a pulsing, electric domain containing a multitude of Kindred with hundreds of plots, secrets, and fears. It is the Camarilla's North American crown jewel. Chicago is a symbol of hope for Kindred in this age of fear. It serves to show that when the Traditions are enforced, when forgiveness is provided in exchange for future favors, and when all Kindred are given a hope of admittance to the elite ranks of the Ivory Tower, a domain might function effectively, no matter the disparate elements making up its vampiric population.

Chicago is a hallowed ground, wracked by a bloody history but standing tall despite infernos and fallen Princes threatening to reduce it to rubble. It is also a lie built on the ashes of Kindred who have outlived their uses or posed too great a threat to the Camarilla's precious Masquerade.

Chicago has all the promise of a modern domain for young vampires. It holds a youthful Prince aloft, and proclaims "if we can do it, so can you," "no Kindred is too insignificant to be denied a role in the Camarilla," and "all you have to do is work hard for the sect and we will take you into our protective grip." All the while, fledglings burn for petty fuck-ups, Anarchs find their numbers culled, and the Ventrue sink their fingers deeper into the city's heart, ensuring nobody will wrest power from the Clan of Kings.

Any Kindred can stake a claim in Chicago, claim a haven and territory, and try to make the best of it. It is, after all, one of the wealthiest domains in the United States. But a few nights into that Kindred's stay — even as they're feeling secure with their influence — another vampire, or that vampire's ghouls, or even their mortal subjects, will show up at the new Kindred's door. They might make offers. They might promise deals. They probably smile as they threaten.

There's a cost to being a Kindred in Chicago and your debts will stack up, all as the hierarchy of vampires above you count the sacrifices you've made for an honored place under their control.

Jewels Have Many Facets

Chicago by Night is a campaign setting for **Vampire: The Masquerade**, providing you all the tools you need for running chronicles in Chicago or indeed any other domain, as the content within this book is simple to extract and use for your cities elsewhere around the world. Change characters, location names, character clans, and political affiliations: This book encourages you to use it as your world for **Vampire: The Masquerade**.

- **Introduction** — You're reading it right now.
- **Four Trips to the Second City** — Fiction throughout this book illustrates the activities of several of the Prince's Hounds; upcoming political shifts, gains, and losses; and one potential introduction of the Lasombra to the city.
- **Red No⁹ 5** — Fiction regarding the newest nightspot in Chicago, popular among Kindred and exclusive in its admittance of clientele. Discover, from a mortal's perspective, the hottest bar in the city.
- **Chapter One: The World of Chicago** — Learn about the history of this domain, the challenges facing it in modern nights, and the secrets of multiple Kindred, all in the form of in-world artifacts that can be used as handouts and treasure items for players wanting to know more about the domain.
- **Chapter Two: Welcome to the Night** — Clan Lasombra has long clung to the Sabbat sect, but these nights see them flock in increasing number to the ranks of the Camarilla. Welcome to the Night outlines the array of reasons for their migration, details what might make a mighty clan into refugees seeking sanctuary among ancient enemies, and illustrates the Lasombra attitude toward their new home.
- **Chapter Three: The City** — Discover the districts and key locations of Chicago, the new Homestead system for playing chronicles restricted to select areas of the domain, and an assortment of encounter tables for Storytellers looking at presenting players

with fresh and horrifying character and territory developments.

- **Chapter Four: Kindred of Chicago —** Over 50 Kindred are provided with biographies, stats, ambitions, secrets, relationships, and ways to play a role in any chronicle set in an urban environment such as Chicago. While Chicago undoubtedly houses more Kindred than exist within these pages, these SPCs are more than enough to build any chronicle in Chicago or elsewhere.
- **Chapter Five: Coteries —** Chicago's Kindred don't all exist in isolation. Quite the contrary, they form coteries, just like the PCs. This chapter outlines several of those coteries, their agendas, their rivalries, and uneasy alliances. Additionally, Coteries provides multiple new coterie types for PCs to use in their stories.
- **Chapter Six: Clan Lasombra —** This chapter provides the information necessary to make Clan Lasombra playable vampires. As well as detailing sample character archetypes, the clan's bane and compulsions, along with the kinds of mortals the Magisters are drawn to Embrace, it provides the Clan of Night's Discipline of Oblivion.
- **Chapter Seven: Loresheets —** A city as rich in history as Chicago contains a multitude of loresheets connecting characters, events, regions, cults, and philosophical alignments. A character may purchase a loresheet from this chapter to more deeply embed their past and future in this domain.
- **Chapter Eight: Chicago Chronicles —** Here we provide dozens of chronicle hooks encompassing the core themes of Kindred existence in Chicago: The Beast, Frenzy, Hierarchy, Humanity, Hunger, and You Are What You Eat. For a Storyteller looking for a chronicle idea in a pinch, or the Storyteller who wishes to build something grand from a small seed, this chapter contains plentiful ideas.
- **Chapter Nine: The Sacrifice —** The full chronicle, lasting most groups approximately three game sessions, in which Lasombra delegates make their entreaty to join the Camarilla of Chicago. In this story, PCs engage in social intrigue, solve mysteries, and get involved in combat situations — some of their choosing, others less so — all to eventually decide the fate of Clan Lasombra.

Four Trips to the Second City

I

Three dead men cruised through Chicago. Their motorcycles roared as they sped through its busy streets. Ramrod and his ghouls took the rear, keeping any cars behind them at a wide distance. Dread rode in the middle. Tyrus rode in front, leading his gang to one of the city's union halls, where the Anarchs were meeting.

For Tyrus, meeting in respectable places like this was a bad sign. In the old days, the movement kept itself to squatted buildings or crumbling warehouses. Those were better times. Now, so many of the old faces had died or left for the deserts. In their absence, the Anarchs were getting bolder. Tonight Maldavis, one of their greatest shames, called them together for a "discussion on our future."

So, the Wolf Pack went on the hunt. As agents of the Camarilla, they were duty-bound to put the fear of God into them. Kicking their skulls in was just for fun.

Tyrus pulled a pack of cigarettes and a lighter from his jacket. He glanced at the ghouls. "You two got your shit together?"

He didn't remember their names. He didn't care. Ramrod mentioned something about them being siblings, the latest in a line of people desperate enough to drink his blood. Tyrus never asked where he got his ghouls, or why they vanished every couple of years. As long as he wasn't embarrassing the Pack, what he did was his own business.

"Yeah, yeah," the brother said. Like his sister, he was fresh from feeding, eyes open and wild. He whipped out a switchblade.

"You'd better be," Tyrus said. "The Anarchs are wusses, but you get enough of them in one room and they think they can take on anyone."

He lit his cigarette. Dread and Ramrod flinched in the presence of his lighter's flame.

Tyrus took a puff and grinned. Thirty years and it still spooked them. "Let's dance!"

He kicked the thick wooden door open, heralding his presence with a cloud of dust and splinters. The other four rushed ahead of him. One of the Anarchs leaped for them, only to get pinned down by the ghouls. Dread held off any other wannabe heroes with a sawed-off shotgun. Maldavis stood at the front of the hall, glaring at Tyrus.

She growled. "Did Jackson send you?"

Tyrus shook his head. "We were in the neighborhood, and thought we'd pay a house call. Make sure no one's got any big ideas."

"Bullshit." Maldavis stormed down the steps in front of the stage. "Who else could you answer to?"

Tyrus strolled up to meet her halfway down the aisle. "Just us." He blew smoke in her face.

Maldavis didn't blink. "You could have walked away, like the rest of your clan. Then you could fight for something that *really* matters."

He pulled the cigarette from his mouth. "You think I care about what my 'clan' does?"

He held the cigarette up to her face, close to her cheek. Maldavis grimaced.

"I'm a member of the Wolf Pack. That's all."

He crushed the still-lit cigarette into his arm, not breaking eye contact. "I know where my loyalties lie. But what about you? See, I heard—"

A shot rang out from above. Tyrus turned to see one of Ramrod's ghouls hit the floor twitching. His head was blown open.

"Ray!" Ramrod ran toward the ghouls.

Dread aimed his shotgun upward but the other gunman hit first. The blast tore through his throat. The shotgun flew from his hand.

Tyrus looked up to see a figure in the shadowy rafters above.

"Hey!" He shoved Maldavis to the ground and ran onto the wall. He crawled up to the rafters to see a man in combat fatigues halfway towards the exit. The man examined him with gray, bloodshot eyes.

Tyrus rushed towards him. "Got something to say for yourself?"

He didn't know where the man pulled the pistol from. All he knew was that it was a point-blank shot between his eyes. By the time he wiped the blood and bits of brain from his eyes, the gunman was gone.

II

The four of them came in from the rain, following the signs into the psychic parlor. The waiting room was small, dimly lit, and smelled of sage incense.

The visit was Nadine's idea. Tyrus knew her name now. It was hard to forget it after hearing Ramrod say it hundreds of times in all kinds of tones over the past few weeks. After she helped them bury her brother somewhere off of I-80, she wanted to talk to his ghost.

At first, Tyrus was against it. He knew vampires who could talk to ghosts. They were not good people. Still, there was something in the way that Ramrod talked to her lately. He made awkward attempts at gentle assurance and dime-store platitudes about "being in a better place." It felt wrong. So he brought them to Max's parlor.

Tyrus didn't know what to make of it. Maybe Ramrod was just getting soft. Maybe *he* was too, for even taking them here. He shuffled on the sofa, his damp

clothes slipping on the upholstery's protective plastic.

Max parted the curtain between his studio and the waiting room and stepped through.

"Careful there, big guy. The Galura Water Slide's for paying customers only." He smiled.

Tyrus didn't smile back. He grabbed a wad of damp bills from his pocket. He was halfway to handing them over when Nadine spoke up.

"Do you speak with the dead?" She looked at Max with hopeful eyes.

After a moment, he said, "No. That's not really what I do."

Nadine's face fell. "Oh."

Tyrus smashed the money into Max's palm. "Nadine, it's either him or the warlocks."

Max counted the cash. "And good luck with getting them to do anything."

"There you go," Tyrus said to Nadine. He whispered to Max, "Her brother died. Just…make her feel better."

The young man beckoned the group into his studio. "I'll try."

He asked Nadine to shuffle a deck of tarot cards and drew enough of them to make a full half circle. While she did so, Max sat back in his chair, eyes shut tight.

Tyrus frowned as Nadine revealed the cards. It wasn't like anything in the movies. The deck was filled with images of flying dragons, iron forges, and celebrating skeletons. Max caressed each card as it came on the table, as if he read them with his fingers.

"I see a soul at peace," he said. "It has moved on and forgiven."

Nadine let out a happy sob. Ramrod patted her shoulder. Dread and Tyrus looked at each other, the former wearing a bemused smile.

Max continued down the spread. He frowned. "I see wolves."

Tyrus raised an eyebrow.

The seer continued. "They've been running for years. They don't know how tired they are. They don't see the eagle watching them."

Tyrus stood up. "What are you talking about?"

"The pack leader thinks he can hide in the forests. They follow but the eagle hops from tree to tree." Max moved through the cards faster, tapping each one. "They think they're all alone, and the pack leader takes a moment to lick his scars but the eagle comes down. And the last thing the leader sees before it tears out its throat is these big, gray eyes…"

Tyrus slammed his hands on the table. "Shut up!"

Max came out of his trance. "You're all in danger."

"Uh-huh. Nothing new there." Tyrus stepped through the curtain. "Let's go, Pack. We got what we wanted."

"Don't leave the city!" Max yelped. "The eagle's going to finish the job if you do. You don't know what that'll start!"

"Let it," Tyrus said. "I could go for a rematch."

III

When Sierra Van Burrace accepted the Wolf Pack's demand to see her, she requested that they obey the Asako Penthouse dress code of tasteful, modern formalwear. When they finally arrived at the hotel, only Nadine and Ramrod fit the criteria. She still had some good clothes that she hadn't sold off yet, and let her sire use her brother's dress shirt and pants. The plaid, Civil-War-era getup Dread wore fit the spirit of the law, if not the letter. Tyrus didn't bother, wearing the same leather, chains, and boots he always wore.

Sierra looked him over with a sneer. "You can't even follow simple directions."

"Directions are for chumps," Tyrus said.

"Just what I wanted to hear from an Archon." She motioned to an attendant. "Bring us the drinks."

She sat them at a table. They heard a chorus of screaming from the room next door. The screaming faded to whimpers of pain. The attendant returned with glasses of warm, fresh blood. She placed one of the glasses before Nadine, who gulped it down in one go.

Sierra smirked. "Is she new?"

"Not that new," she answered, still taking in the flavors of terror the blood had. "A couple of nights."

For all his fear of going soft, taking the Pack on their first hunt with a newly Embraced Nadine was a smashing success. It was serendipity: A whole family's car broke down on a private road. They even trusted the Pack, right up until they unleashed her on them. Naivety was a rare thing nowadays, Tyrus thought. Something to treasure.

Sierra slid a manila folder over the dining table. Tyrus caught it and pulled it toward him, marking it with an oily handprint.

"That," she said, "is Clan Lasombra's petition."

Dread rose from the table, hand on his shotgun. "Lasombra!?"

Shadows snaked up the walls and ceiling around Sierra. Tyrus grabbed his friend and threw him back on his seat.

"Easy, easy!" He hated to admit it, but this was a fight he couldn't afford to start.

The room returned to normal. "He didn't know?" Sierra asked.

"I kept him in the dark," Tyrus said. "No pun intended."

Dread glared at her. "I've had bad experiences with shadows."

After a moment to regain her composure, she continued. "The petition describes what we hope to bring to the Camarilla, and what we have done to earn our place. I trust that you will bring it to the Prince as soon as possible, so we can begin negotiations."

"Yeah, he'll get it." Tyrus sniffed the blood in the glass. It was human enough. After taking a sip, he said, "You know, it's funny."

"What?"

"The Lasombra had everything in the Sabbat. If these negotiations screw up, you get nothing. If I didn't know any better, I'd say you were rushing it to this. I'd say it looks like you're all running from something."

Sierra gripped her empty glass. "You might be right."

IV

Two dead men talked on a pier. After Tyrus finished his report, Prince Kevin Jackson kept quiet for a long time. They listened to the sound of water lapping against the beach.

Then, the Prince said, "Do you know what your problem is, Tyrus?"

Tyrus stretched his back. "I'm just too handsome."

"You start shit," Jackson said. "You act like nothing's changed, and it's putting us all in danger."

"Hey," Tyrus said, "You want to keep the peace, sometimes you gotta bust some heads."

"That's what I ***mean***. You still think your gang's the only thing keeping the peace. So you bust an Anarch meeting, where I already had people in place, and then you go around and antagonize the person I asked you to speak with."

Tyrus scoffed. "We're just asking the questions that need to be asked."

"You don't think I was already asking?" Prince Jackson grabbed Tyrus' shoulder and pulled him close. "It's the 21st century, Tyrus. We keep order, but we keep everyone safe while we do it. Do you think you're keeping everyone safe?"

"Well." Tyrus stood up. "I'd better get back to the Pack then. Wouldn't want us to start some shit, huh? Make things ***unsafe***?"

Jackson motioned for him to sit. "I wasn't finished. I have a job for you."

"Oh?"

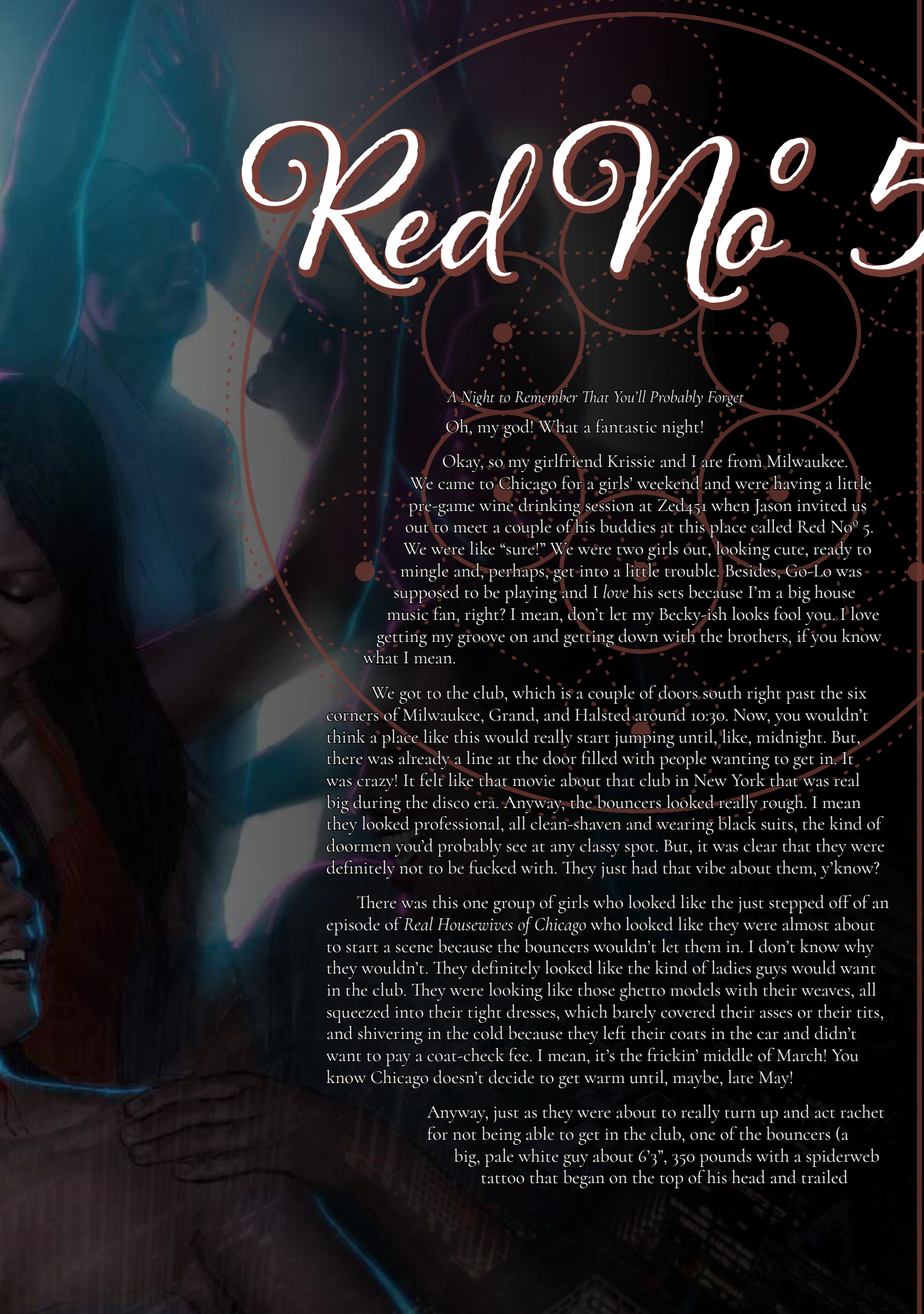
The Prince handed him a picture of a smiling young black man. "He's one of ours, but he's looking to move to Seattle. Now, he hasn't traveled before, and that's a bigger trip than just going to Milwaukee. He'll need protection, and you live on the road."

Tyrus turned the picture over in his hand. "Always wanted to see the forests."

Jackson raised an eyebrow.

Tyrus grinned. "Don't worry about it. Just thought of something I heard a while back. I'll tell the Pack to gear up."

Jackson nodded. The Prince walked from the pier, escorted by his guards. Tyrus stayed. He smoked a cigarette and watched Lake Michigan gleam in the moonlight.



Red No° 5

A Night to Remember That You'll Probably Forget

Oh, my god! What a fantastic night!

Okay, so my girlfriend Krissie and I are from Milwaukee. We came to Chicago for a girls' weekend and were having a little pre-game wine drinking session at Zed451 when Jason invited us out to meet a couple of his buddies at this place called Red No° 5. We were like "sure!" We were two girls out, looking cute, ready to mingle and, perhaps, get into a little trouble. Besides, Go-Lo was supposed to be playing and I *love* his sets because I'm a big house music fan, right? I mean, don't let my Becky-ish looks fool you. I love getting my groove on and getting down with the brothers, if you know what I mean.

We got to the club, which is a couple of doors south right past the six corners of Milwaukee, Grand, and Halsted around 10:30. Now, you wouldn't think a place like this would really start jumping until, like, midnight. But, there was already a line at the door filled with people wanting to get in. It was crazy! It felt like that movie about that club in New York that was real big during the disco era. Anyway, the bouncers looked really rough. I mean they looked professional, all clean-shaven and wearing black suits, the kind of doormen you'd probably see at any classy spot. But, it was clear that they were definitely not to be fucked with. They just had that vibe about them, y'know?

There was this one group of girls who looked like the just stepped off of an episode of *Real Housewives of Chicago* who looked like they were almost about to start a scene because the bouncers wouldn't let them in. I don't know why they wouldn't. They definitely looked like the kind of ladies guys would want in the club. They were looking like those ghetto models with their weaves, all squeezed into their tight dresses, which barely covered their asses or their tits, and shivering in the cold because they left their coats in the car and didn't want to pay a coat-check fee. I mean, it's the frickin' middle of March! You know Chicago doesn't decide to get warm until, maybe, late May!

Anyway, just as they were about to really turn up and act rachet for not being able to get in the club, one of the bouncers (a big, pale white guy about 6'3", 350 pounds with a spiderweb tattoo that began on the top of his head and trailed

down to his neck with a spider at the end of it) lowered his head, tipped his sunglasses down to the bridge of his nose (so pretentious with the sunglasses at night, right?) and stared right into the lead chick's eyes. Then, he says real calm and cool, "I'm sorry, but you ladies are not allowed in Red No^{9} 5 this evening."

I don't know, but it looked like the lead girl almost wet her pants. She was so scared, she quickly went to her girlfriends and announced they were leaving that very second. The other girls were so shaken up by the look on their friend's face they left the line without hesitation. I looked at the group I came here with and got extremely nervous.

Don't get me wrong. I mean, Krissie and I are, like, super-cute girls. We're both blonde and we both work out. Krissie is a little thinner and, like, two inches taller than me, but I've got the bigger rack and a little junk in my trunk, which the brothers like. I totally get called a snow bunny all of the time. But we definitely weren't model-chick, hoochie-fabulous like those girls who were kicked out of line. On top of that, we had three guys with us, in untucked shirts, blue jeans, and regular shoes. If those girls couldn't get in, what chance would our grubby little crew have getting past the velvet rope?

I was kind of shocked when the spiderweb bouncer let us into the club with a smile and a friendly "Enjoy your evening."

Now, what I *didn't* mention earlier was that Krissie and I were ready to party. By that I mean, we were smoking a little reefer in the car, which accentuated a really lovely merlot buzz. Then, Jason's buddy Trevor surprises us with a couple of capsules of pure MDMA, not that corny ecstacy shit. Obviously, Trevor was hoping a couple of happy pills would get him some lovin' from either Krissie or me... A blowjob at the very least. It was obvious he wasn't picky. But what he didn't know was that Krissie and I were old pros in this game and, we were in full TLC mode that night, AKA no scrubs.

We paid our entry fee and got our hands stamped. That's when the pills started kicking in a little hard, but manageable, as we started walking down this black corridor into the club. The red lights made it feel a little mysterious, like *Eyes Wide Shut*, but less cheesy. It was kinda sexy.

We enter the main room and it was pretty big, but not crowded. It wasn't empty. I mean, there were plenty of people there, but it was easy to walk around without bumping into anybody unless they were really sloppy. It wasn't your usual Friday-night crowd. Sure, there were a couple of people in suits and fancy dresses in the club who looked like they were playing it up, but this didn't feel like the usual "Let's go out because it's Friday" type of crowd. They were dressed nice, but there was a casual vibe, like they all knew each other or something.

The red lights hit the mahogany walls and chrome railings real nice (I'm studying interior design so I pay attention to these things). The DJ had his own platform above the dance floor. It was a small, circular perch that was large enough to fit the turntables, a small couch and a circular table to set your drinks down. The DJ was playing some old-school hip hop from the 90s. The initial rush eased into the smooth groove of some really good shit. We walked past the first bar through a doorway that didn't have a bouncer with a rope in front...free access!

There was another bar behind the main floor! So cool! There were these black leather couches with mahogany tables. People were hanging out and having drinks, so I thought we should continue with another drink before heading downstairs to hear Go-Lo's set. Those couches were so soft and buttery, I felt like we were in the coolest music video ever!

So here I was, feeling good and rubbing this leather couch. Trevor thinks that this is a sign that he should make his move. Krissie, being the baddest bitch ever, slides between me and Jason like a good cock blocker should. Unfortunately, Trevor doesn't get the hint and starts trying to push up on the both of us... the creep! It's about this close to getting ugly and harshing my roll when the waitress comes to our table for our drink order.

Oh, what I forgot to say is that all of the waitresses are hot. I mean, "Off the cover of Vogue and what the hell are you doing working here?" hot. Our waitress was this tall, light-skinned black girl with

green eyes and a close-cropped haircut dyed blonde. She was wearing a tight, black, scoop-neck cocktail dress. I don't know if it was the mix of weed, Molly, and alcohol, but I was seriously questioning my orientation with this girl.

So, she gives me a menu. And I'm looking at the specials and I say out loud, "Excuse me, what's in a Winter Rosebud?" Her eyes get a little big and she quickly snatches the menu from my hand and gives me another one. "I'm so, so sorry! I gave you the wrong menu! That was...um...last night's specials. Here's tonight's menu."

I thought that her reaction was a little over the top. I mean, so what if it was last night's menu? What's the big deal? I didn't know alcohol went bad a day later. Whatever. I'm rolling and it's not even that deep. So I kept my thoughts to myself and order my drink.

Then, I saw *him*.

Now, remember when I said that this felt like the coolest music video ever? Okay, imagine you're moving in slow motion. The music is thumping 96 beats per minute in sync with your heartbeat. The lights dissolve from red to purple to blue and back again. People from all races and backgrounds are around you looking cool and ethnic and different and sexy...

And then, the crowd of beautiful dancing people parts, revealing the sexiest man God Almighty ever made.

He walked into the room talking to a waitress, who was giving him some receipts to look over. There was some corporate-looking douchebag in a suit walking on his other side. He was about six feet tall with milk-chocolate skin. His hair was cut real low, he had a goatee, and he wore simple metal loops in his ears. He was chill, but had a little swagger you know what I'm saying? He wore a tight pair of blue jeans, black shell-toe sneakers, and a black t-shirt that hugged his muscular shoulders and arms but hung loose untucked over his jeans. I mean, his outfit shouldn't have stood out like that. On anyone else, especially the guys Krissie and I were stuck with, you wouldn't give that guy a second look. But this guy...his look was super crisp and he wore it with such confidence. He totally owned it. Like I said, mama likes a little hot chocolate in her milk and this guy was looking very yummy.

I was thinking about the butterscotch babies Special Dark (my name for Mr. Yummy) and I were gonna have and being totally comfortable with my parents disowning me when Krissie bumped my shoulder and said we should go downstairs to hear Go-Lo's set and to get away from Trevor's clammy mitts. I totally was down for that since Special Dark looked like he was heading that way, too. We told the boys we were heading downstairs and that they should hold down the table until we got back because we weren't gonna be down there long (total lies). They were busy making plans to try and mack on some of the girls they'd been seeing in the club, since it was obvious that they were getting nowhere with us. Krissie managed to get a pill from Trevor, ecstasy this time. We split it, popped the respective halves into our mouths, washing the bitter taste down with our extremely well-made cocktails and made our way to the basement.

The basement. Oh. My. God. It was amazing. It had a similar layout to the top floor, but didn't have the second bar in the back. The black leather couches and tables were on an upper landing that flanked the dance floor. Go-Lo was in full effect. He was laying down some super-funky Afro House. It felt like we were at an Afropunk festival. It was all natural hair and face paint. Some people had nose piercings and tattoos, but some people dressed... older? I mean, I saw some people our age dressed like the 70s fashions from Soul Train were new. But it didn't matter because Go-Lo got them all into the same groove and everybody was dancing like it was some tribal ceremony invoking the ancestors.

And, before you ask how do I know about that tribal ancestor stuff, I've taken some Pan-African studies classes, too. I'm, like, totally woke.

Now, the second half of the roll is kicking right when Go-Lo drops my favorite new track. Krissie and I get on the dance floor and just start getting into the whole groove. So, we're dancing, and I see Special Dark at the left corner table sitting with this tall, lanky, super-dark bald black guy in a wine-colored suit with a yellow tie. He was kind of creepy looking.

And, no! It's not because he was really dark that I thought he was creepy! I'm not a racist! I'm just saying that he just sat there like some sort of statue, barely nodding his heading to the music while Special Dark was trying to say something to him, which seemed kind of important.

I get really focused on details when I roll. It's kinda my thing.

Next to the statue was this Latina woman with big, curly hair wearing a yellow, flapper-style dress. She was gorgeous and she had her arm wrapped in the statue's while they sat. They were obviously a couple. They almost looked like they could be Special Dark's parents based on the vibes they gave off from their body language. I saw Special Dark get up from the table and start making his way to the dance floor. I started dancing as seductively as possible to get his attention. Unfortunately, the only attention I attracted was some greasy drunk guy trying to grind up on my booty. He was grabbing my waist, trying to pull me close, and I could smell a mixture of menthol cigarettes and Jack Daniel's on his breath. Ugh! He was gross! Even worse, I could see Special Dark dancing with Krissie…that bitch! While she was getting swept off her feet by my future baby daddy, I was stuck under the bridge with this troll who could not take a fucking hint!

Krissie whispered something in Special Dark's ear. I think she wanted to check on Jason and Trevor (since they were our ride) and left Special Dark on the dance floor as she headed upstairs. There he was, my dark prince, alone while I was stuck with this basic bro trying to publicly get in my pants.

Then Special Dark turned his head and our eyes locked. He studied the situation for a moment and obviously saw a damsel in distress. What happened next is probably the sexiest thing that ever happened to anyone. He smiled and held out his hand, which I took immediately, and pulled me away from the asshole. I wrapped my arms around his neck and we started dancing as if we'd known each other for years. I barely noticed the bro attempt to make me the ham in his freakdown sandwich. He must've finally gotten the hint, because he finally left me and Special Dark alone so we could get to know each other a little better.

As we danced, Special Dark told me his name was Bennett and he was the host for tonight's party. I also think he said he was a co-owner of Red No^{o} 5. All I could pay attention to was rubbing his strong, milk-chocolate arms as he held me close while we swayed to the beat. I looked into his light brown eyes and couldn't take it anymore. I wanted this man and it wasn't the drugs that prompted my next course of action. I mashed my face against his, feeling his soft, pillowy lips against mine. Man, could he kiss. He took my breath away! This was it. In my mind, we were gonna run away together, get married, and have a couple of beautiful mop-haired café au lait children. I was so lost in the moment, I didn't notice Krissie coming back downstairs until she broke up my potential romantic love scene with Bennett.

Now, here's where the story gets *really* crazy.

Krissie joins us, wraps her arms around the both of us and we all start dancing together. Bennett is in the middle of these two white girls like a reverse cookie sandwich. I know that rando bro would have been extra-pissed if he saw this happening. Krissie and I were rolling really hard now. It got really hot as our hands were sliding up and down Bennett's waist, arms, and all over each other. Then, Krissie slides from behind Bennett to come in between us. She turns and plants a long, soft wet kiss on his pillow lips. Normally, this would have pissed me off, but I was feeling so good I didn't care. In fact, it was a huge turn on. Then, Krissie turned to me with a look that I never saw before. I was like a deer in headlights as she started to kiss me! Next thing I know, we were all kissing each other and becoming this sweaty, sexy heap of passion.

Oh, man. We needed to find a room and handle this before we really became "those people" at the club. Krissie and I were definitely letting our inner hoes out that night. But, I guess we had nothing to worry about since Bennett was the club owner, right?

The next few moments were a blur. Bennett's strong hands are gripping my ass just right while Krissie is kissing and licking Bennett's neck before returning to his lips. We're still all moving to the

beat of the music when Bennett breaks away and starts kissing my neck as Krissie licks his ear… Ow! Did Bennett just bite me on my neck? That was kind of hard, but hot at the same time. Oh, now Krissie is licking my neck where Bennett just gave me a hickey. She pulls away with her tongue sticking out before shoving it down Bennett's throat. Wait. Was that blood on her tongue? Wait. Was that *my* blood on her tongue?

Jason and Trevor ruined our love fest by coming downstairs and ripping Krissie and I away from our new favorite candy bar. They pushed Bennett toward the bar. The boys were really pissed and tried to start a fight with Bennett, probably because he got farther with us then they ever could, or ever will. They got all up in his face while Bennett stood there cool as a cucumber. I don't know why the bouncers didn't get involved, but Bennett just shot them an "I got this" look and these three big, scary guys, including the tattooed bouncer from earlier in the night backed away.

Now, during this whole time, the music was going and the people kept dancing. It's like it was no big deal. Even the statue and The flapper just sat there like this was nothing, just another Friday night at Red Noº 5…

Until Trevor broke a beer bottle on the edge of the bar and lunged at Bennett. What came next happened so fast, and I was so fucked up, I know I'm making this up. But, I thought Bennett grabbed Trevor, spun him around into a chokehold and sunk his teeth into Trevor's neck. He threw Trevor down like a used napkin, grabbed Jason by the neck and body slammed him to the ground.

With one hand.

The last thing I remember was Bennett's light brown eyes staring at me while his mouth was stained with Trevor's blood. Then, everything got very hazy…

I woke up the next morning in my hotel room. Krissie was lying next to me in the bed; we were still fully clothed. She woke up about five minutes after me. We tried to clear our heads from the fog because we were both groggy as shit. The Molly we took last night was clean, but still. The after-roll leaves you in this half-floating state that could last the whole next day. We both were wondering what happened last night. It was a dream, right? Jason and Trevor were fine, right? Krissie went to get us some coffee while I tried to call Jason and see if he and Trevor were okay from the night before. The call went straight to voicemail. I tried calling again, same thing. I must have called at least 10 times before finally giving up.

Jason never called back.

A couple of months later, Krissie and I were back in Chicago for another night on the town. We decided to head back to Red Noº 5 since we had such a great time there before the weirdness. As we got to the front of the line, we saw that my favorite spidery bouncer was working the front door. However, he wasn't so warm to us this time.

"I'm sorry, ladies, but I can't let you in tonight," he said.

"Why not?" I asked in my best little-girl voice.

"Last time you were here, you caused problems. We can't afford problems here."

"That wasn't us!" I pleaded. "We didn't cause the problem, it was those two guys we came here with! You can't blame us for something someone else…"

Before I could get the next words out, Mr. Bouncer lowered his head and tipped his sunglasses to the bridge of his nose. I looked into his eyes and, at that moment, saw what happened to Jason and Trevor. They brought us into an environment we knew nothing about and they proceeded to shit all over the place and break the rules. They paid the price and it wasn't pretty. It was only because of the rules that Krissie and I were able to walk out of the club. Now I know how those hoochie mamas felt a couple of months past.

Krissie and I got out of the line and left. We never stepped foot into Red Noº 5 again.

We don't know what happened to Jason and Trevor and we don't wanna know.

We just knew that we didn't belong there.

chapter one

The World of Chicago

The Greater Chicago Welcome Center Introduction

Greeting traveler, and welcome to the Greater Chicago Welcome Center. We would like to take some time to share a bit of history about our wonderful city. While the city of Chicago was founded in 1833, Native American tribes populated the area previously, specifically the Algonquian peoples. It also was home to the Potawatomi, Miami, and Illinois nations. Chicago was a trade center and home. When French settlers came to the city, the populations of the native tribes diminished from sickness and being forced from their lands...

My dear darling Aluc

I am glad to hear you safely traveled to our city and I hope you have found it somewhat hospitable. I trust you will have Alexa or a ghoul read this aloud for you as, sadly, I do not know braille.

I wanted to write you and inform you of some of our history here in the city before you entered, as it has set the tone for modern nights. A lot of it is quite, quite dreary I'm afraid, so for your sanity I shall focus on the fun parts.

You know, Chicago has been a long-sought-after city since the arrival of the French. The Native tribes had been living here for some time when they built Fort Dearborn and were not happy the French intended to stay, no, not at all. It seems there was a rivalry between two vampires on each of these sides that fueled this resentment. Menelaus, an ancient member of the "Learned" Clan (yes, I know that name is something of a joke), had been living with the Native Americans for several generations and compelled their trust and silence. From what I understand of the situation, he had an archrival going back centuries. That one's identity eludes me, but I'm given to understand he or she was a member of my own clan. We'll call that one "Rose" for the sake of ease. Well, there's no doubt in my mind their centuries-old dispute spilled over onto this soil and forever changed the domain.

It seems Rose and Menelaus orchestrated a large battle between the Native Americans and the French, which the Native Americans of course lost. A wonderful, beautiful people, but ravaged by disease by this point. They really had no hope. Menelaus was angered and the two ancient vampires battled each other at the cost of many mortal lives. Both vampires fell into torpor during the fight and their bodies were dragged from the field by their respective servants.

Nobody really knows their plans or where their conflict began, nor have they been able to follow it since that moment. Apparently, there has been a much longer game being played out in Chicago but it went by unnoticed until much later when pieces of the puzzle began to fall into place, Kindred realizing their strings had been pulled for centuries in some cases! I believe this is why the old Gangrel and Malkavian Primogen left the city too tired of being puppets.

It doesn't matter now, at any rate. I understand Menelaus may have departed in these nights, leaving his puppets with strings severed. I have never encountered Rose knowingly, but her presence is undeniable now. I do wonder who she has in her thrall, Aluc, truly I do. Having monsters as ancient as that at play is an unpleasant thing one must consider.

There is a much larger game, Aluc. I do hope you are ready to become a pawn, because that is all we will ever be.

With that said, welcome to Chicago! Don't let my dour close dismay you from your course, and come visit the Succubus Club whenever you find the time.

Be well,

Annabelle

Olaf tells all, for those who would listen

They thought me dead, child, but no. No I am not. I am here, and I am king of the streets! Or at least, that is what they call me these days. Olaf, the One-Eyed King! I no longer have fancy titles, status, oor any station higher than rats. But I was a mighty ruler, I tell you. No scum was able to topple me, no. I was feared and my enemies quaked at the mere mention of my name.

But much like Icarus, I flew too high to the sun, so to speak. My damn pride leads me to greater and greater heights. And that's what happens when you fly too high, you hear me? The fall is much greater than if you were to lay low. And so, here I am. Squalid among the poor and forgotten, giving jobs to the lowly who can't find work. I lift up those who I can, if only because it is not yet my time to be lifted. But it'll come.

It'll fucking come!

Malkavian wretches say "Wah, wah! We're nothing more than chess pieces on a board! Our masters are the ones who get to choose where we go! Somebody show us the light!" Cretins. For years I served under Maxwell, who was undoubtedly a good pawn to an old vampire. But one night the board shifted. The Great Fire of Chicago left me with an opportunity to ascend to my throne, ousting Maxwell and banishing him from the city. It became the ritual, you know? A new Prince may never execute an old one. Something I wanted enforced to cover my own sorry ass in the case of some jumped-up usurper, and to keep the pretense of nobility alive. Pfft.

I sat on my throne for many years, a ruler even my enemies were terrified of! But I made mistakes, child, oh how I did. My continued missteps led to my eventual fall. I gave power to the wrong people in the city, and it was the very low dissent dragged up and began to dismantle what I had built. Ungrateful. Unworthy. The night will come where I crush them again.

Ah, but I grow weary of falling over and over again, child. Don't say I didn't warn you. They'll be waiting for you to trip and fall, and I won't be there to cushion the fall. I'll be climbing on your back to retake a little ounce or two of power. Now go, back to your fake throne and take comfort knowing you are not me. "You may, my glories and my states depose, but not my griefs; still am I king of those!"

To put it in language you might understand: Fuck off before I get these vagrants to take you apart limb by limb. This is my domain and always will be.

THE GREAT CALAMITY OF THE AGE!

An extract from the Chicago Mirror, October 9, 1871

The night of Sunday, October 8th will go down in history as one of the greatest disasters in history. A fire started in the O'Leary barn swept through the city overnight, leaving Chicago in absolute ruin. Most of the businesses in the area are nothing more than smoldering ruins and many citizens are left without homes. The mayor has not been able to comment at this time, as he has been busy helping to organize groups of citizens to help contain the blaze, which is still slowly spreading today. Nobody is certain how this blaze started.

FIRSTLIGHT Transcript CH908A

GENGIS: Hey I hear u r in town

J123: Yep. I've been here for a couple of weeks now. Where have you been?

GENGIS: Around. I got caught up in b'ball season

J123: You still watch that? Hey, why didn't you warn me about Lake Michigan? I tried to go to the beach the other night and was not prepared for that.

GENGIS: Shit I didn't warn you. Sorry. Yeah bad news there. Don't go there. That place super weird.

J123: Noted. So what have you been up too?

GENGIS: Check the breather antifa types

J123: Yes

GENGIS: They really get some of the big yacht club member pissed u no wim? Last time this was a thing they started riots and shit.

J123: Why has this gotten your attention?

GENGIS: last round of strikes that happened caught teh swede off guard and he lost a bunch of control. Im thinking this could work in r favor rite now.

J123: You mean start protests and riots? To what end?

GENGIS: shuts down the city and make it real hard for $$$ to continue. force the yacht club to play nice for a while an let some of us in

J123: Ok, I like where this is headed. Just be careful ok?

GENGIS: Yah let's get a drink at the red5?

J123: I'm down

As spoken by an unidentified "Anarch"

Peace is for the weak. Silk slippers, boys and girls. Peace makes for soft rulers.

The time of peace reigned for nearly 50 years. Nothing but nonstop boredom. The Primogen Council lorded a power structure over Lodin, ensuring their control over the city for some time. Instead of fighting back, Lodin focused on Modius, the Degenerate "Prince" of Gary. Lodin loved a war, so while Chicago's Kindred reclined to bask in the peace that made them soft and unready for the eventual Lupine invasion and Anarch uprisings, Lodin set against Modius.

Never forget Modius was a joke and every one of us who threw his life into fighting that worthless ass was wasting more of our time than gaining prestige. Fuck knows I know. Still, I can't fault Lodin's need for distraction.

Pricked by Lodin's incessant needling, Modius unsuccessfully led the Chicago strikes as an attempt to unbalance the Ventrue's hold over the domain and overthrow him. Modius escaped to Gary with Annabelle's assistance, and continued to grow his power base in that city.

Of course, Lodin allowed Capone and Ballard, two of his childer, the freedom to go after Modius. They set upon the city, eroding its infrastructure and destroying the economy. Their efforts were so successful that even to this day the city and surrounding areas have not been able to recover.

But hey, that's what makes it a fun little barony.

The Hottest Invitation in Town

You are cordially invited to attend a gathering hosted by Aluc of the Ministry. It will be held on November 8th at the halls of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Chicago's first established Elysium during the Cauchemar Era. A private performance will be held beforehand for those that are interested in attending. This will be a black-tie event.

Text extracted from an email regarding Blankbody #441C

I saw the damnedest thing and have to tell you about it.

You know Hernandez? Well I was out for a midnight snack and found her walking around outside the Lincoln Park Zoo waiting for someone. Thinking this could be interesting, I made myself as small as I can and pretended to be a shadow, you know?

So, a beaten-up old car parks on the side of the road and a guy — Arab, got one of those hats, early 30s, bit of a spring in his step — leaves the car and joins her. They speak in low tones while they walk along the neighborhood, but I've got good ears, see?

The guy has an accent. I guess I'd describe it as European, but I know that doesn't help much. German? So, he says: "Primogen Rosa, it's nice to meet you. Thank you for taking the time to see me."

She gives him a look and shakes her head "Rudi, I will always have time for you, brother. What is it you wanted to speak to me about?"

Rudi.

Rudi! You know, the one who leads a whole army of animals out in Norway or wherever. He's got a rep and he's not in the big C.

So, Rudi makes nice a bit before continuing on "I am curious, Rosa, why you decided to join the C-------- -- even after our family left it. What could they possible give you that is better than the freedom?"

Guess he's here to convert the big warrior queen.

"They gave me second chances. I made a huge mistake that night killing all those people. I risked the safety of everyone in the city. The Viking allowed me to live, and it's weighed heavily on my mind since then. I joined because what they believe in is right. Ultimately, it will be what keeps us safe."

So, it sounds like she feels indebted to the C, but you know, she's come around to believing in it.

Rudi nodded slowly like a therapist. I've seen this kind of shit before and so's he. "I can see that being important to you. I just wish you would have talked to someone when we decided to leave the club. Rosa," he says, "you know we can take care of ourselves. We are the survivors. We're good at it. While it helps to have backup like you feel your organization gives you, we don't need it. We make our own path."

I guess he's trying to make a Prim go A++++, but she then turns it around on him with a laugh. She laughs at Rudi!

"I know. So what can I offer you to come to the Camarilla? You would be excellent on our team."

Honestly, I couldn't tell if Rudi was shocked, amused, or offended. He just shook her hand and said "Nothing, right now. But thank you for the offer. You know how to reach me if you need something. Goodnight."

Off he drives into the night.

Now, I'm guessing he's up to more than that if he's come all the way out here. It can't just be for a chat. Are the A+++++ planning a big move?

THE WARNING

A recorded conversation between PFJ and an unidentified individual

I know why you are here. I get it, I do. The writing is on the wall and you are just doing what you have to. Just remember to play nice. You are in my city and if you become a threat to my city, I will end you.

This is your one warning.

Prince Jackson

CHICAGO BOTANICAL GARDENS TO OPEN NEW GARDEN AREA

An extract from the Chicago Mail, June 25, 1972

The Chicago Horticultural Society is happy to announce its new Botanical Gardens, a project 10 years in the making. They have several tours, a reception, and family activities planned for the day. The Horticultural Society has stated its plans for the new location will be educational, offering classes and workshops for those who are interested.

From the secret recordings of Jason Newberry

[Recording Begins]

ALEXA: Primogen Newberry, you summoned me for a meeting? What can I help you with?

SON: Alexa, you cute thing! So cool to see you again. I hope Chicago has been good to you so far. I wanted to introduce myself to see if I could help you with anything.

[Silence in recording lasting six seconds]

ALEXA: It is nice to meet you, Son. I've been learning a bit about your city, and one thing struck me as very curious. There are a great many Ventrue within the city, and most of them are sired by Lodin, is that correct?

[Background laughter from a third party in the room?]

SON: That is correct. The old Prince sired a great many Kindred. That dog seems to have been very open when it came to his own progeny. Had a tight grip on that Tradition for everyone else.

ALEXA: Curious the Primogen Council didn't step in about that. Weren't they more powerful than they are now?

[More background laughter]

SON: Alexa baby, the Council has always been a force to reckon with in Chicago. Several of them voiced their support for the Kindred known as Maldavis to get rid of the Lodestar. You may want to talk with Annabelle at some point about that.

ALEXA: I will contact her at some point, rest assured. Did the Council's actions ever lead to anything?

SON: Yes. In fact, it led to Lodin losing a lot of his power.

ALEXA: Thank you for your insight into this matter.

SON: You're welcome, my lady. Should you ever need anything or a safe place to stay, you may contact me.

[More laughter]

ALEXA: I am no lady, please remember that. I appreciate the offer but will decline at this time.

[Recording Ends]

More from the mouth of Olaf

Do you want to know what the lowest point of a king's reign is? It is that moment when everyone around him has turned their backs and he is brought to his knees to beg for forgiveness. Everyone thinks it would be when he loses his crown, but no, begging for a king is a lowly act.

But beg is what I did, little child. I had reached my breaking point and didn't know what to do anymore. Maldavis had gotten so far ahead of me that I couldn't root that sow out. Everywhere I turned, she had something waiting for me to try and take whatever power I had left.

I'd never felt so threatened. It was exhilarating, though. I'd do it all again for the rush of the threat. That's the one thing other Kindred don't get about being Prince: You'll never find the nights tedious.

And they let me have it, oh yes they did. Their Prince was brought low before them, on his knees begging, and they decided it best to kick him while he was down. They had the upper hand on me. They always had the upper hand, and they knew it. I never forgot how they treated me, though. One must always learn from one's mistakes.

"One." Christ, you wouldn't think we were stood under a bridge surrounded by bums in sleeping bags.

I had to bend to their requests, even though it went against my own rules.

It pays to be the swing vote in these situations. Annabelle was almost always the swing. She got the most out of this deal, but I'd finally got the backing I needed to move against Maldavis.

But that was the beginning of my fall, when I flew high enough to feel the sun start to melt my wings. It was only a matter of time by that point. But you should talk to that bitch, she'll tell you. And she'll delight in it.

A Final Letter

To whom it may concern,

By the time you find this note I will be dead. Knowing my suffering will soon be at an end convinces me now is the time to come clean on my knowledge of Mayor Washington's death. I am the last surviving member of his bodyguard detail, and though for years I maintained I was absent during his death, I was witness to it all and scared into silence.

Mayor Washington was working late in his office November 24th, 1987 like he usually did. Thanksgiving was in a couple of days and he wanted to get as much work done as possible so that he could spend time with Mary Ella without worry. As he packed up his things to go, he called out to me to switch off the office lights. It was as the lights went off a man in the dark whispered to me "Drive him home and do nothing to save him." I remember my knees going weak. They say it's just an expression, but I felt about ready to collapse on the carpet. The wall helped steady me. The mayor asked if I was okay and I answered "yes." I didn't feel I could say anything else. The person who whispered to me had gone.

I drove him home without issue. I wondered if I was imagining everything, but felt I had to keep watch over his house that night. I saw him enter the lounge and fall asleep in his favorite chair.

That's when I saw the figure, a strikingly blonde man in a black tracksuit, easily enter the home via the conservatory. As Harold slept, I saw the man kiss him on the neck like a movie vampire. He was there for minutes, just holding that pose. I couldn't move from my seat, just watching this weird display.

When the man left the house, he came over to my car and I sped away.

I never told anyone because the man kept visiting me, every now and then, to talk about someone called "Mal Davis" who he would say was "Washington's mistress." He would laugh that with the mayor dead, as he died the following day at work, "Davis has lost everything." He just loved mocking me with that.

Then he stopped coming. But I never stopped being scared.

I'm so sorry.

Cunningham

CHICAGO'S MAYOR WASHINGTON DIES AFTER A HEART ATTACK IN HIS OFFICE

An extract from the Chicago Star, November 25, 1987

Mayor Washington suffered a heart attack in his office while meeting with his press secretary. He was rushed to Northwestern Memorial Hospital where he was pronounced dead. Press Secretary Alton Miller reported that Mayor Washington slumped over on his desk while they were discussing School Board issues, and emergency services were called immediately.

Mayor Washington was Chicago's first black mayor and was 65 years old.

Text extracted from an encrypted email from gbiker@sunburst.col to mmm@sunburst.col. Both emails since deactivated. Flagged due to use of word "Anarch".

You stupid upstart of an **Anarch**. Do you really think it wise to work the unions and SJWs up into a riot to see if you can gain control over the city? The last time we tried that, it didn't work. And guess what? A lot of people died. Don't you remember being run out of the city like animals? I almost died that night, and you hid away in Milwaukee.

You should rethink your actions here, G. Let's not get too deep and lose the fight again. We aren't going up against L anymore. We have to be prepared in more ways than controlling the mortal population. We need numbers, and a plan.

Let's meet.

M

Entelechy School Lesson #114 – The Flood

Floods have been around for eternity. Since the time man first started recording history, floods have been a central theme, appearing in history book and religious texts. While some may not be entirely accurate, it makes sense that water and particular floods would make their way into Kindred history. This is where the great Chicago flood comes into play, and it is a dark time for both Kindred and mortals alike.

In 1992, rumors started circulating that Clan Tremere was working on finding out the havens of the Nosferatu. It was assumed the endeavor was fruitless, as members of Clan Nosferatu tend to make their havens extremely hard to find and equally dangerous to get to. These rumors were a central point for several weeks and had just started dying down when a great flood struck the downtown area of Chicago.

Upon initial investigations, it appeared as though the flood was natural. Chicago was built on a marshland anyway, so it was bound to flood at some point. Then, reports of many homeless turning up dead within the sewers started, but they were kept out of mainstream media. Downtown Chicago ground to a halt for over a week, impacting businesses and homes within that area. Along with those investigative reports was talk of massive damage done to Nosferatu havens within the city. From there, it was not hard to put the pieces together and finish the puzzle.

The biggest question remaining was why would the Tremere do this? What was in it for them at the time, to endanger so many Kindred and take the lives of countless mortals?

While there isn't one good answer to those questions, there is plenty of speculation, most of which revolve around the Kindred Khalid and Nicolai and a rivalry between the two. Others speculate Lodin paid Nicolai to do this and eliminate his enemies, but that Nicolai failed in his task and caused much more damage to the city than was originally intended. Another rumor started by Tommy Walker was that another Nosferatu was trying to destroy Khalid.

Sheriff Damien's Recordings #78

Aluc: I am very impressed with the city so far. It has been rather welcoming for strangers such as Alexa and I. I've already indulged in several sublime pleasures…

Bret: I'm glad to hear you're finding your way around so easily, dude. Have you visited the Suck Club yet?

Aluc: The Succubus? No, I have not. Annabelle told me about it, but I've heard it's not easy to find if you don't know where to look.

Bret: Damn straight, but I know where to find it and the secret knock. You should come see it sometime. I think you and Alexa would find it fun, given your tastes.

Aluc: Has it always been a city staple?

Bret: Sure. It was founded and protected by Thornhill, a Ventrue. He's ash now. These nights it's more under the stewardship of interested Roses like myself, Portia, and Annabelle. I can't complain about being pinned between those two ladies!

Aluc: My friend, your tone betrays your bravado. I hear there were attacks on it? I guess it isn't an Elysium.

Bret: It is and it isn't. Jackson's made steps to declare it so, but the Suck still leaves a bad taste with some Kindred. There was only one such attack, really. That was the night the werewolves descended. They were after Lodin, I thought. Other Kindred thought the Lupines were after someone more powerful, but who's more powerful than the Prince, right?

Aluc: Who indeed. How did the rest of the city fare? If their focus was on the club, did they attack then retreat?

Bret: No, far from it. They only attacked the club one night of the whole mess. Lodin declared a blood hunt on all the werewolves and our city answered with force. We were able to destroy a good number of werewolves, but we were unaware of the bigger problem.

Aluc: What happened?

Bret: They destroyed a great many of us. They came for us everywhere. In our havens, at the club, in Elysium. Nobody was safe. In the end, about a third of us were dead. Some rumors still float out there the Gangrel were telling them where to find our havens. Flea-ridden pricks. I'm glad they've gone Anarch.

Aluc: I understand your old Prince met his end. What happened to the Primogen?

Bret: All thrown into chaos. It was quickly discovered Lodin was destroyed in the fight. Several other officers were missing or dead. It was a scramble to keep the city together so the Anarchs wouldn't seize it.

Slam Poetry from the Streets of Chicago

Olaf Holte
Prince Number One
Motherfucker never knew what it meant to get gone
Cocksucker never understood he needed silver in his gun
Motherfucker should have never woke from his coffin
ha
But that cocksucker got to go and call himself Lodin
Word is the weak bitch gets all up in his penthouse
Thinks walls'll protect him from the teeth and claws of the bloodhounds
The pack was eight large
Tearing howling alpha in charge
The white man came down head in his crown bang bang he shoots and one wolfine goes down!
But Olaf
White Prince
Blonde hair blue eyes
Cold as hell blood like ice
His ass can't fight off the whole rest of the seven in one night
Tales do tell they did rip him a new one
Turn his ass to ash and feed him his own gun
But word on the street
Is that motherfucker can't be beat
Old Olaf's still with us
Like he ain't never left.

The Professor's Notes

CRITIAS: So how did you end up here in Chicago, Mercy?

MERCY: I was born here. My name doesn't just straight away make me a migrant.

CRITIAS: My apologies. I watch the news occasionally, you see

MERCY: Plenty of Latinas were born here old man.

CRITIAS: I'll try again. What is it you love about this city? This domain?

MERCY: Chicago's always been so alive and filled with a drive to bring about change. I've always wanted to be a part of that.

CRITIAS: What makes you believe you are worthy of joining my academy?

MERCY: I thought this was some Prince-mandated bullshit. I have a choice?

CRITIAS: We don't all have a choice. But in this, you do. Be smart.

MERCY: I guess it's not going to hurt to find out about the values of our kind.

CRITIAS: And what makes you believe I should waste my time with you?

MERCY: Because I am worth it. I'm a fighter, and will continue to fight.

CRITIAS: I see. And what of your religious beliefs? Do you see those as a driving force of change?

MERCY: Yes and no. That question is complicated. My heart knows this is where I need to be. My religion tells me I need to find some peace with mycondition.

CRITIAS: And now that you've heard the rumors, how do you feel about Menele and everything he was able to accomplish within this city?

MERCY: From what I heard from your clanmates, your sire was a pillar of humanity and someone who could have brought great good to this city and this sect. It's a shame he left, I guess.

CRITIAS: [Shouting] You are wrong! You have been deceived as well! Until you are able to see clearly, you are nothing more than a pawn. Leave my school!

[Sounds of items being destroyed and footsteps running out]

TRIBUTE TO A FALLEN PRINCE

Queen Anne Bowesley of London's Tribute to Prince Lodin of Chicago

We have lost a great friend in the Americas. Most of you knew Lodin, the Prince of Chicago. Unlike many of our kind, he was a great traveler, and regularly visited here and on the Continent. His visits were always a pleasure, and he was the finest of companions.

Despite the criticism Anarchs heaped upon him, Lodin acted for the good of all Kindred. Some may have called his rule harsh, others called him pawn, but our welfare was always paramount in his mind. He defended the Masquerade with incomparable dedication and ability, and protected all those of the Camarilla from our many enemies.

His death is a loss we all suffer. Kindred have lost a superb leader, the Camarilla has lost a stalwart protector, and I have lost a dear friend. The world was made a better place by his presence, and a sadder place by his loss.

Lady Anne, Prince of London

Where is Tia?

I'm not trying to accuse you of anything, I'm just wondering if you've seen her. Last I saw of Tia, and she's real special to me, she said she was going to see you at the club. I didn't even know she knew you, but she seemed to real well before she headed out.

Look Portia, I want you to know I'm not going to blame you if you did need to have a drink and thought she was a good taster. I've had a drink once or twice on her account. It's just, I love her. She makes me feel alive again, you get me?

So, if you've seen her, just tell me where. If there's bad news, break it to me straight. I'm a big girl and can take it. Just don't leave me hanging.

Shifting Crowns

Let's be clear: the Primogen Council in the city was always very strong. They were able to rule the city for a good number of years before someone was supported enough to take the praxis. But who would take the crown?

First up, we have Joseph Peterson from Clan Ventrue! This boy was on fire! In fact, he was so hot he burned out before even taking the city! See, when the Primogen don't support you and the city finds you incompetent, it doesn't matter what clan you hail from, you won't get support. And so Joseph is our first failure to the seat, and out with a blaze of glory. He's been exiled for his failure. It's totally fine to laugh at him.

Now we have Kevin Jackson of Clan Ventrue! Now this boy is hot, right? Like, real hot. So hot that he not only has the support of the Primogen, but the rest of the city as well. So far, he has been able to keep hold of the crown.

He is so loyal to the Camarilla that he actually executed his own clan's Primogen, Capone. Can you imagine that? It doesn't take a lot to figure out what happened there. Capone was a major Masquerade issue and Kevin needed to make sure the city would continue to have the backing of the Camarilla. When your sect declares technology is out and hand-delivered notes are in, you know it's going to be a bad time for anyone with a face like Capone's.

Well, him and any clanless or dusky who doesn't toe the line. Word is, Jackson's made a business of disappearing anyone who doesn't support his smiling self.

From the handwritten transcript of Sullivan Dane

Voice 1: Have you heard the news? There is a Lasombra in town!

Voice 2: Wait, aren't they the ones from the Sabbat? Shouldn't we tell the Sheriff?

Voice 1: No, this one was invited to be in the city. Apparently, she was sent by her elders to talk with the Prince.

Voice 2: Wait, really? That's strange. Do you know what about?

Voice 1: Not yet. I heard she's like a Hilton or something though.

Voice 2: They have those in the Sabbat?

Voice 1: Apparently.

Nathaniel

My sire was an asshole. He was a racist, manipulative asshole, and I am glad I no longer have to be in his shadow. For all his edicts, he sure messed several things up alright. But don't worry, I took care of them. Leave it to the black man to clean up a racist white man's mess.

You see, Lodin had favorites, and if you were useful to him, you could get away with shit. Capone is a prime example of that. What in the world is an asshole whose face is all over history books, newspapers, and museums doing being a vampire? Seriously? That shit don't fly with me.

So yes, I took Capone out for being a serious issue to the secrecy of us vampires. And you know what? I cleaned up a bunch of messes left behind after. Every Kindred that broke any of the Traditions or threatened our kind, I took care of.

And you know what else? That earns me some respect, even from you and the other nihilists. I got props from the Justicars for cleaning up the city. And I intend to keep doing what's right for this city and keeping our kind safe. If that means being heavy handed, so be it.

The reign of Lodin is done. May he be forgotten.

Come to Elysium if you want me to recognize your presence. If you don't, you'll feel the full weight of this new era coming down on your ugly ass.

Prince Kevin Jackson

Sheriff Damien's Recordings #102

Wauneka: So, this is the Loop? I thought these tunnels were closed after the flood?

Calhoun: They were, childe. According to the mortals. We managed to open some of them up again for us to use. They were just too convenient to let go.

Wauneka: Do you really think that's wise? What if Prince Jackson finds out? Wouldn't this be a threat to the Masquerade?

Calhoun: Probably. But nobody comes down here anymore anyway. Besides, most of the Nosferatu who knew this place existed died in 1992.

Wauneka: Yeah. When it flooded down here. What was that noise?

Calhoun: I doubt those rats are watching us of their own volition. Someone wants to know what we're discussing. Let's move top side, shall we?

From the Diary of Sun Che

I was just walking along the path when I heard the whispers on the wind.

"*Soon*," they said.

I asked myself "Soon what" and to my surprise, for the first time in a long time, the voice answered.

"*Soon you shall see my power.*"

Diary, I tried to act defiant. I said "Not if I can help it" or "Over my dead body" or something. Obviously, I'm already dead.

I continued my walk to the park. It was beautiful last night, diary. The pond and the floral walking path around it soothed my mind and quieted the voice. I was staring into the still waters when the demon came back.

"*Where are you going? Am I going to come out and play?*"

Dearest

I have found Chicago to be tolerant of my presence for the time being. Negotiations with Prince Jackson have started and have been going well. The residents of the city are of course reticent, but once we impress on them the influence they can gain with us as their allies? Well. Once I've concluded speaking with Prince Jackson, I shall start conversing with others within the domain and work to earn their support.

I believe Prince Jackson will support Clan Lasombra joining the Camarilla, as if he does so and it goes well, he'll look like some kind of pioneer. We'll play on this. It's no secret he wants to be the Camarilla's American face. Obviously, his concern is for the Masquerade and how our elders have so impacted this in times gone by, yourself included.

I imagine he's going to expect blood as payment, and not in the Haqim way. I think he'll expect a sacrifice. As you've requested, I'll gauge its properness before committing our clan to any course of action.

Your darling,

Sierra

I didn't answer this time, diary. I continued walking. I reached a broad meadow — I love these parts of Chicago — and some woodlands. I left the path and walked beyond the tree line.

"*Someone is following us.*"

This time I snapped. I could feel my vitae starting to burn in my veins. I didn't unleash myself, but I chastised the voice. "Nobody is following us. We're in the park. It's night. You're making me paranoid."

It was then that I realized I had come to a mausoleum. I had no idea one existed out in this reserve. I felt drawn to try the handle, and it turned. The door opened.

It was tight in there. The way trees roots had burrowed through the stone it was as if it had become a passage built as if for children. If I still had to breathe, I wouldn't have entered, I'm sure of it, but within seconds I was on my hands and knees and crawling within.

"*Look.*"

There were skeletons all around, diary. At least 10, maybe 20. I asked aloud, "What is this place?" and the voice that came back wasn't from within. One of the skeletons spoke to me.

"A place to bury those who died of cholera. What are you doing here?" It wasn't a skeleton at all. A watchman, maybe. An elderly gentleman, drawn and wan, had entered the cavern and was shining a flashlight in my face. I've no idea how he got inside without me seeing him.

"*I told you we were being followed.*" That mocking prick.

"Shut up." The man must have thought me mad as I shielded my eyes from the light "I'm sorry sir. I thought I saw my dog go down here."

"Young lady, this is no place for you. Let's go." He went to grab my arm and started to drag me out.

I couldn't control myself any longer, diary. I felt my face contort before I even knew the Beast was coming to the fore. I think I shouted, "Keep your hands to yourself!" before I struck him and drained him.

The demon's mocking voice coaxed me back to sanity. "*Your goddess will not help you. Nobody will. Nobody but me. Just give in and let me help you.*"

The thing is, diary, when I woke up the man's body wasn't there. No trace of blood. Nothing. I just got the hell out and fled into the night.

Cross-Clan Invitations

Ms. Stewart,

You are cordially invited to attend the Field Museum After Midnight party. The party will be open to the public, so please remember your manners.

A special tour of the museum has been arranged for any who wish to have a backstage look and see what really goes on behind the scenes. It'll be more than Sue the T-Rex on display this coming night!

De Leon

The Ministry

Olaf's Evidence

Ah, do you see how the mighty can fall? Do you? I have proof right here that indeed, my own court was working against me! How can I trust anyone? I can't, that's why, and that was my folly. But I learned, little childe. Now I am only king of myself and the rags on my back.

But do you want to know how the mighty fall? Take this to Critias and see just how far they fall.

Capone

Here is the evidence you requested on the Primogen Council members within your court. While I was following everyone in the court, the two that stuck out to me are included below. Please use this as you will. Our debt is paid.

Maldavis

I have been holding the council back from allowing Lodin the ability to go after you and the Anarchs, but I can only do so for so long. It is imperative you act quickly and finish the job, or I fear it may be too late. Watch your back.

Critias

See, childe, the treachery of those who I protected? Selling their loyalty for what? Favors? Trinkets? More power? To what end were they trying to accomplish? Well, they certainly got their way. Supporting an Anarch?

I dare say it is tantamount to treason!

Sheriff Damien's Recordings #110

Galura: I'm telling you, there is something fucked up happening in the city.

Bennett: Are you seriously on this thing again? I'm telling you, nothing bad is happening. Have a drink, man. Chill.

Galura: Tell that to my brain. I can't stop seeing things. Water, poison, blood. Everywhere. It's going to happen.

Bennett: What shit are you seeing?

Galura: There is something in the lake. Like a fucking shark, only worse. It's big. And ancient. Like, predates mortals ancient.

Bennett: And how do you propose we deal with it?

Galura: I don't know! I'm not the problem solver! I never was! I just have these visions and I try to tell people who will actually do something about it.

Bennett: My man Adze says ignore things like that. He says things like that will sleep for centuries.

Galura: Adze, Adze, Adze. He represents change. I'm not sure if it's good.

Bennett: Guy just wants to make as much money as possible.

Galura: He wants more than that. He wants a kingdom.

Maldavis

I remain torn on my support for you. I can see the situation further escalating and I do not like where I believe it is headed. If you can offer me something greater, I will continue to hold Lodin back.

Annabelle

From the records of Clan Nosferatu

I decided I'd play stick the tail on the newcomers and who did I find but Alexa and Aluc on Michigan. I played trailing tourist, taking in everything they were saying and doing.

They were walking hand in hand down the street. He wasn't using his cane. He trusts them to guide him, I guess. Their conversation wasn't some great revelation, at least not at first, but here's the skinny:

Alexa was asking him about the International Museum of Surgical Sciences in Chicago, and whether they could take a look as these things interest them. Their partner, in turn, offered to arrange a tour for them both tonight. Guy must have some pull.

They went on like this for a while, talking about some morbid traps for curious tourists. Famous crime scenes, the location of Holmes' murder castle, all that stuff. It seems Alexa's into some creepy shit.

So then they ask him how his investigation's been going. I record their interaction word for word

"Well enough, though there is something weird going on in the city. I'm not sure I can describe it other than off." That was Aluc.

"Strange. I've had that same feeling. I wonder if we are experiencing the same thing." Alexa here.

"Around the Succubus Club. It has a great atmosphere but there's a stench of power to it that I think the locals have grown immune to, which interests me. How long do you need the gas before you become sedated?" Aluc again.

"Maybe we should pay it a visit. Grab a meal to take home for after." Alexa now.

They start talking about other things after this and I eventually part with them when I lose them in a shopping mall. Curious stuff!

FIRSTLIGHT Text Message Intercept #CH832

NUMBER BLOCKED: I understand you have found the Dark Mother to be truth.

ERZULIE: Who is this? How did you get my number?

NUMBER BLOCKED: Lilith calls to you, does she not, sister?

ERZULIE: She does, how did you know this?

NUMBER BLOCKED: We know a great many things, Erzulie. The coven awaits you, if you wish to join us.

ERZULIE: Where?

NUMBER BLOCKED: 41.8947, 87.6062

Text extracted from email to Blankbody #1021H

Tracy

We have come to understand that you feel you have no place within your society. You have been outcast from your family and are searching for a family. We wish to offer that opportunity to you. We do not normally accept your kind within our ranks, but you are a special case. Please accept our invitation to view our headquarters. Once you do, coordinates will be sent to you an hour before the meetup time. This is for both of our safety.

Good Evening

Sheriff Damien's Recordings #229

Jackson: What have you found with the Anarchs?

Damien: So far, they seem to be on the outskirts and not causing too much trouble.

Jackson: What about Gengis? He was an issue before.

Damien: He was, and still could be. He's got his hands on some of the leftist groups. We just have to watch to make sure they don't shut down the city with riots.

Jackson: Should that be a priority?

Damien: My suggestion will be to see what happens with the first of the demos. If it stays civil and doesn't disrupt the city, I don't see the harm. If we siderail the mortals too much, questions might start getting asked.

Jackson: And what of our new Lasombra friends?

Damien: She seems legit to me. He seems to be a grotesque of some kind, with no interest in his reason for being sent here. I've followed her for a while and have not seen her do anything that would make me question her intentions other than her business ventures.

Jackson: I'm not too concerned about that right now. Keep an eye on her.

Damien: Was there anything else you wanted me to look into?

Jackson: Yeah, there's a wooded area near Skokie that had a hand found in it. It came back as a woman missing for a couple of weeks. You might want to check that out.

Damien: Understood. Is it a threat?

Jackson: Her hand was removed by a knife, so I would say no threat to the Masquerade, but there may be other things going on. I'd say it's nothing to do with us, but we both know of the Primogen who likes to nest down there.

Damien: That sick fuck.

As spoken by an unidentified "Anarch"

Read this and read it well. I'm not in this shithole of a city for my health. I'm here to serve the Movement, and if you're going to obstruct me, I'll be forced to go higher than you. You may think you're king shit as Baron of Gary, but Chicago is a whole other kettle of fish. Got that?

I know you're looking to make nice with Jacko and his glittering new domain, but that isn't how the Movement of tonight is going to play. The old ways of collaboration are long gone. You may have age on us, you may have title, but neither of those things means fuck all when the big boys can just close up shop and tell us to take a hike.

No, now's the time to fight back. I'm just waiting for the order. When it comes, wait for the boom.

Dear Rabbi Basaras,

I know it has been some time since I have written you; I wanted to reach out in advance of my arrival in your city. The coming presence of my brother and I is somewhat known at this point, but the reasons behind it are not, and I delight in keeping everyone guessing. I am sure if you are meant to know, the Friends of the Night will pass on that information.

I have come to ask for your help once I reach the city. Since I will be in meetings and councils for what seems like the immediate future, it has come to my attention that there might be several of our clanmates residing in the city, who may need plucking from this coil of ours. I'm unsure of whom they might be at this time, but I do know the Hound wants them gone before I arrive. He will do his part, but we rely on you to help clear the board of interference.

My hope is to find these people and use their elimination as leverage for our future bargaining. As thanks to you, feel free to check in at the Diamond Yama Hotel at any time, should you desire a massage, discreet resting place, or just a bite to eat.

Yours,

Sierra

Nights of Pleasure

Come and join the celebration at House Mamuwalde! June is Pride month and we are proud to celebrate all of our community's identities. House Mamuwalde will be hosting several themed parties over the next four weeks. Come as you are, you glorious individuals. I want to see all you crazy diamonds shine!

Mama Francois

Text extracted from email to Blankbody #CodeRed19

Hey,

So uhhhh, is it true you guys sparkle?

Just kidding. Anyway, you really should be more careful. I was able to track you from your phone. If you don't want that to happen anymore, just let me know. I'd like to work for you in a more official capacity.

Blankbody Voicemail Intercept #82CH

Hi, this is Annabelle. Please leave a message

Annabelle? It's Nero. I'm just worried because you haven't been seen in a couple of nights. I know it's not like me to give a fig, but give me a call, okay?

Alexa's Dream Record #12

I was standing in a garden I've never been in, but I was fairly certain I was in Eden, the first garden. It was the most beautiful garden I've ever seen. I could feel my heart burst with joy at being there in this most beautiful place. I never wanted to leave.

I walked around the garden, exploring all the new plants growing there, plants I've never seen before. I knew better then to touch anything. In the center of the garden was a tree with the most beautiful apples in it. I started to reach up to grab one when a hand stopped me

from it. I hoped it was Aluc. It was a dark-skinned woman with hair long and flowing to the earth.

"No, childe," she said, *"Those are not for us. If you eat them, you will not be welcome here any longer."*

I found myself answering "Mother, why am I here? What brought me to this garden, to Eden?"

"Because you serve the gods, do you not? You serve all of them without question."

"I do serve them. It is my purpose."

Her hand caressed my face and I cried for the first time in over a century. I even woke with blood on my cheeks.

"Why do you cry?"

"Because you are so beautiful and because I want to serve you."

"You will, my darling. You shall serve me and all the gods. And Eden will be waiting for you when you are done."

"But who are you? What god are you?"

"I am the Mother God. I am the first woman to walk the earth, and the first to be punished. I was a god before Caine. I am Lilith."

In my dream I pulled away from the woman and for the first time since I entered the garden, I wanted to leave. I cried out, "No! You are no god! You are a demon!" I am never this hysterical in my waking hours. My fangs grew and a snarl left my throat.

"You cannot leave here, childe. Not without my permission."

"You cannot keep me here. Wake up!" I knew I was waiting for this dream to end, only it didn't. "I said wake up!"

The garden filled with laughter and it drove me mad. I almost felt overwhelmed by the madness that struck me. In an act of desperation, I managed to make my way to the tree and pick an apple off it, taking a bite.

This Lilith woman screamed an unholy scream and pain washed over me like a wave. I watched as Eden started to die around me, the plants rotting on the ground, and it made my heart want to break into a thousand pieces.

When I woke up, I swear I spat out a chunk of apple. Aluc had been keeping fruit and other food in the apartment. Had I been sleepwalking and yet climbed back into bed?

As I sat in bed next to Aluc, I began to weep uncontrollably, fresh vitae joining the crusted smears around my eyes. Aluc told me to write this all down and sank fast back to sleep.

I am afraid to join him.

FIRSTLIGHT Text Message Intercept #CH839

BRONWYN: Do you have any orders for tonight?

HQ: Nope nothing tonight.

BRONWYN: Okay, cool. Have a good night.

HQ: Sorry, just got two in. One is to the SC. The other is to a greenhouse.

BRONWYN: Strange, did they say what they wanted?

HQ: SC is the normal order for them. Greenhouse was masochists. Maybe check S&M clubs?

BRONWYN: Weird hippies. Alright, I'll get that started.

Sheriff Damien's Recordings #303

Critias: I hear there is a Lasombra within the city. Curious, isn't it?

Kevin: Yes, it is curious indeed. Why would you ask?

Critias: Because I am wondering what a member of the rebellion is doing within the walls of our Elysium. Doesn't it go against everything you believe in?

Kevin: It does. And it takes a lot for me not to just destroy them.

Critias: Why don't you? Are you turning into Lodin? Getting soft?

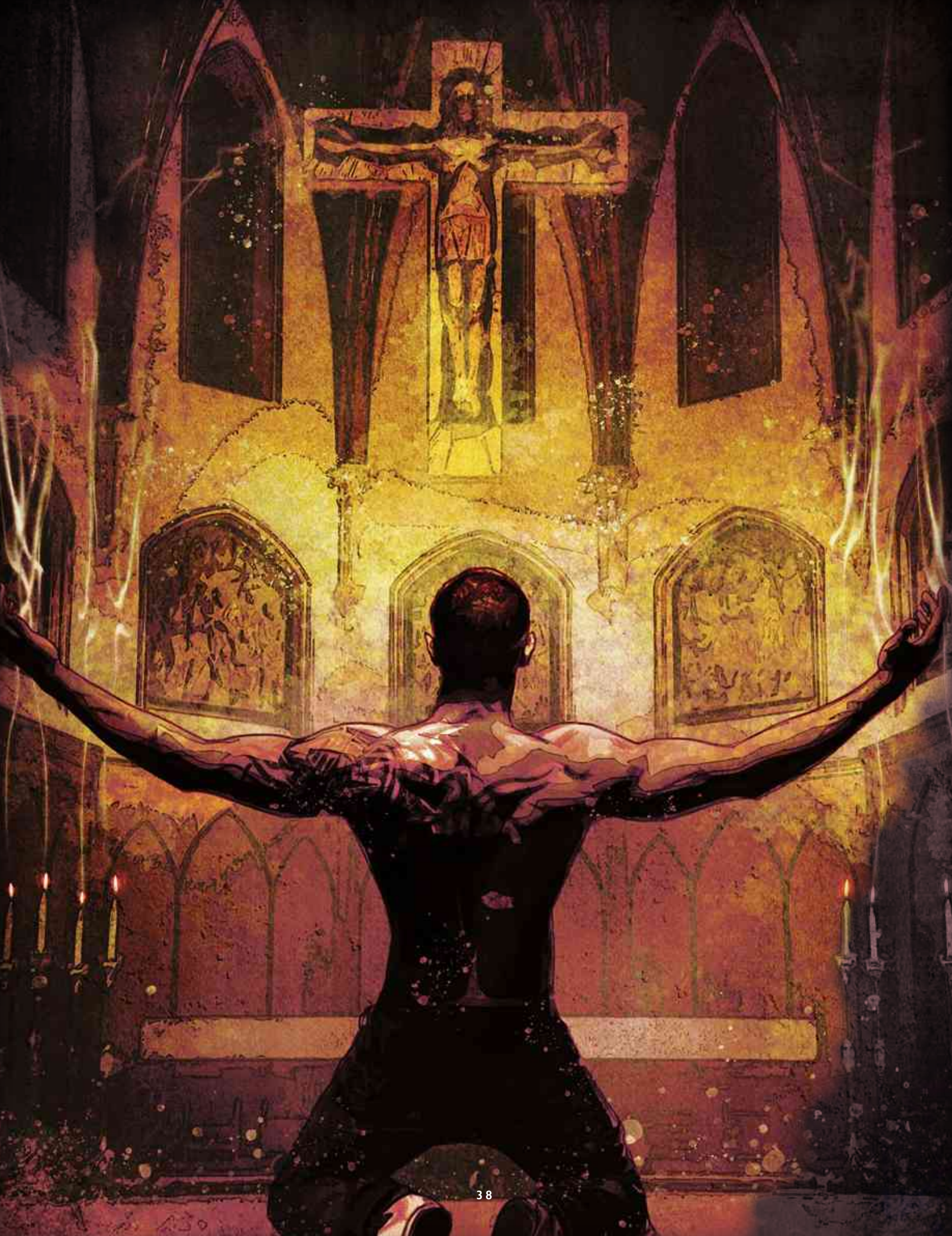
Kevin: No. The Lasombra have come to Chicago for a very specific reason. And I have been asked by the Directorate to listen to that reason.

Critias: I see. It's not like you to take orders from others.

Kevin: In the long run, this will be helping the Camarilla. That's what I'm told. It grates, but I'm playing nice. If for some reason that changes, there will be a couple of ash piles you can study. How does that sound?

Critias: Sounds like a deal to me, oh Prince.

[Recording Ends]



chapter two

Welcome to the Night

"That's right, drink it up. Good boy." Little Lamb pulled Mr. Carson from her breast and placed the man's head in her lap. She stroked the oil magnate's curly hair as he dozed off like a baby filled with warm milk. Looking down at the blood slave, Lamb cooed a little before talking further.

"Did you know we Embraced Jesus?" Carson snuffled in response, not really listening.

"It's true. At least it's true according to a book I was shown. We Embraced Jesus, Peter was his ghoul, and that's how we got in on the church building so early on. Oh, and we helped create Islam. One of our eldest elders was a confidante of Mohammed, sallallahu alayhi wa sallam. It's true, I promise." The blood doll snored gently while Lamb rolled her eyes.

"So you think it sounds like a load of horseshit, huh? Well," she looked around the empty church, "I can see why. I mean it would go a long way to ñexplaining the resurrection and how interested the Magisters have always been in the Church, but it's a big claim to swallow."

Little Lamb lifted Max's head slightly, moving off the pew and placing a cushion in her place so as not to wake the addict laying there. "So most Lasombra go around having heard this little piece of myth and they chalk it up as crap. But...I'm going to tell you something I've not even told my sire. I attended this church the other night. I stayed in for Mass, I droned the words and said the prayers, and when I looked up at Jesus and Mary, with Jesus' face half in shadow, I saw the dark half smiling. He was on the cross and he was fucking smiling out of the Abyss at me."

Little Lamb started laughing, before genuflecting and shaking her head at Jesus. "If you're one of us, Mr. Christ, how about you call the Inquisition off for a while?"

The Deal

Malenkov,

I know it grates the balls of one such as yourself to consider bending to the Cam, but it's time to face facts: We need to take it like a trooper just this once or prepare for a permanent filleting. I know which option I favor.

There's word the Amici Noctis reached out to trusted Keepers, those with reputations for clan over sect loyalty, and the Friends arranged diplomatic missions by these same Keepers to the Anarchs and the Camarilla. At first, these representatives are to make solitary offerings of fealty to the Ivory Tower, before petitioning for the entry of the entire clan.

I know what you're thinking, and I thought the same. The act is going to be far from easy but get this: Some domains are accepting Lasombra "refugees" in exchange for the sacrifice of Lasombra the Camarilla's Princes deem "unsuitable."

So, understand: We sacrifice our pawns to stand alongside the Camarilla's kings and queens. In this case, our pawns refer to any Sabbat unprepared or unable to abandon monstrosity or maintain the Masquerade. The Camarilla want those anxious to defect, not those who might cause trouble.

I suspect at least half the Lasombra will remain in the Sabbat, but will lack central authority or direction if the Amici Noctis is going full Ivory Tower. Those of us who held titles of Archbishop in the Sabbat now attempt to do so in the Camarilla, bringing with us our manipulation of the Catholic Church. Any Lasombra ranked Cardinal are put to the torch as a gesture of good faith. Ironic, I suppose.

Few Kindred will trust us, for our betrayal of the Sabbat highlights fickle loyalties, or so the Degenerates say. The Camarilla will, however, value our clan's power, ruthlessness, and sphere of mortal influence. The Ventrue despise having to contest praxis with ancient enemies, just as the Toreador loathe sharing roles in Elysium with we latecomers. Despite this, and due to the close eye all clans keep on us in their domains, it seems we Lasombra may yet make tenuous allies of the Camarilla.

I'm not done, though, and neither will the Camarilla be. They'll push and push to see what they can get out of us, and they're already doing so in a few domains I've heard of. The weak cities, the ones who lost half their Kindred population to the Anarchs, they're the ones saying we just need to deliver the staked bodies of Sabbat troublemakers, Lasombra or not. The conservative domains? The ones we want to get in on? They've been known to ask for the following:

- For every Lasombra joining the Camarilla, an elder Lasombra must be presented as sacrifice.
- Lasombra intending on joining the Camarilla must submit to a Blood Bond.
- A maximum of three Lasombra may exist in any one Camarilla domain.
- Lasombra are to receive no warnings regarding the Traditions; just punishment.
- The practice of our particular brand of blood arts is forbidden on pain of final death.
- No Lasombra may hold title in Camarilla domains for at least 50 years.

I could go on. The Camarilla love this new power they have over us.

I say let them. The only deal of the above that troubles me is the talk of our murdering elders to appease our new "allies." Are the Amici Noctis really going to go for that? How long before we come for them, in that case?

Interesting nights, Mal. I hope we both survive to see the end of this turbulent period, though don't be surprised if someone labels you a "troublemaker" for being such an infamous war criminal in the Sabbat-Camarilla wars, or an elder ripe for sacrifice. After all, don't you have childer and younger siblings?

T. Fisk

The Lasombra in Society

Good evening again, my perfect flock.

Let me tell you: In the domains where Magisters join with the Camarilla, the reluctant clans already holding membership at least have consolation they hold all the mortal influence cards. They reason we Lasombra will be playing catch up for some time.

Those vampires are wrong. Before the Sabbat's formation, we Magisters concentrated our influence on mortal religious institutions while our Ventrue and Toreador counterparts did so on mortal nobility. These manipulating tendrils never went away, they just hid a little better. Few Lasombra Embraced in the last century are even aware of our clan's power within the Church, but this knowledge now spreads thick and fast, especially with myriad Protestant faiths on the rise in the United States and the Catholic Church dominant in South America.

While we Lasombra might struggle to influence doctrine, the nomination of a Pope, or a faith's support of a war (those issues being high-profile and containing too many variables), members of our clan in Rome have easier access to the Vatican's records than others. A vampire like myself, who preys on charity workers and missionaries, can influence the Church's effectiveness and priests at a regional level, and a mercenary killer like Talley — you know him, yes? — benefits from the intelligence of where the Second Inquisition focuses its gaze.

As a whole, Clan Lasombra is a clan of hypocrisy and pragmatism. Oh, it's no great fault to call us hypocrites. A certain amount of honesty is required in a chapel such as this. Most Keepers only use the Church for its power, rather than in a spiritual sense. The Amici Noctis decree that it must be this way, anyway, though you may give the finger to those dusty turds.

Hiding among congregations conveys multiple benefits, from sleeping beneath churches to using priests as puppets and flocks as herds. Have you heard of the Lasombra of France and Spain who seize the catacombs of all the national cathedrals as their domain? They really piss off the Nosferatu.

Something in our blood makes an individual Magister hunger for self-aggrandizement, first of individual vampire, secondly of clan, and to prove ourselves better than everyone else. Of course, this acts as a means to power, whether spiritual, material, or governmental. We're not dissimilar to the stereotypical Ventrue in this regard, except where the Ventrue desire to rule, we desire to triumph. Power is a symptom, not necessarily a goal. Though religion is the predominant sector in which we court influence, our clanmates seize the opportunity to dominate kine at the state level, as in the way prodigal Lasombra Moon Si-young manipulates the affairs of Busan through control of the city's media. She does this not to lead the city but to show she's better than other moguls in the city. The challenge becomes one of discretion.

Now that many within our clan nominally hold allegiance to the Camarilla, we can't easily claim a senator as a puppet or whisper into the ear of a monarch. In these early nights of union between Camarilla and Lasombra, we Magisters must exercise restraint or draw the collective ire of our new sect-mates. In the case of a vampire like Moon Si-young, she works entirely through mortal agents and shares none of her true influence with fellow Cainites. She is satisfied, for now, domineering over the kine. She's a good girl.

With the recent division within Clan Tremere, many Kindred suspect we'll be fast to occupy the Warlocks' chair. In several domains, this has already become the case, with Magisters acting as advisors, personal bodyguards, regents, and chamberlains to Ventrue Princes. This pleases Ventrue tyrants such as Agnethe of Christiania and Camilla of Rome immensely, I'm told, as they can now lord over another clan, one they have despised for centuries. The vampires this vexes more than any other are those of Clan Toreador, who have long felt underestimated within the sect they helped found. As they see ancient enemies grabbing at posts that should be rightfully theirs, Degenerates such as Edward Williams of Denver and Annabelle of Chicago take every action to hamstring our activities.

Trust me, my little flock, this is all for the good. We want the gaps in the Camarilla a little wider so we can fit more easily inside.

Talley's Tale

Allow me to tell you a little tale about my life as a Sabbat knight, Templar, and Bishop, and how these roles translate into Kindred society tonight.

In my lengthy time as a servant of the Sabbat, I slew the sect's enemies, protected the existences of over-old Keepers and Fiends, drank the vitae of my brothers to enforce loyalty, and gave less than two shits about the lives of the kine.

I was prized for my skill with the Abyss, my blade, and the gun. The Friends of the Night awarded me the right to diablerize, created titles in exchange for my deeds, and gave me anything my unbeating heart could desire.

This tale is not a sad one. I earned everything I wanted. The Sabbat gave me everything I needed. By all rights, I should be as content in the Camarilla as I was in the Sabbat, but now my own clanmates see me as a ripe sacrifice to make. A ticket to join the elite club known as the Ivory Tower.

I loathe the bastards I served diligently for years, who now betray me and leave me without a sect. I wonder if I'll go down like some disgruntled postal worker, shooting up an ancient castle full of Keepers for how they cut my career short just before I could claim a pension.

No. I think I'll enjoy the hunt.

Anyway, you must look at the Lasombra role in the Camarilla. What do they do now, that Clan Lasombra didn't before? I can tell you what some of my kin do: slay the sect's enemies, protect the existences of over-old Blue Bloods and Degenerates, take the money of employers to enforce loyalty, and yes, they still give less than two shits about the lives of the kine. The difference is now, with the Inquisition on the scene, they are more circumspect in their nightly activities.

What role does Clan Lasombra now play in the Jyhad? The same as we ever have. We control via the faith. Whether Camarilla or not, we set the doctrine for the methuselah cults. We baptize and excommunicate. We are still the only clan, once regarded as High, to reward its members based on achievement instead of lineage.

Or so we claim, anyhow. I'm beginning to see my own words as quite hollow.

Talley

From: thehound@sunburst.co.uk
To: xx3lbxx@sunburst.us
Subject: Grabbing a bite to eat

Hello,

I dislike communicating this way, old boy, so I'll keep it brief. If you need me otherwise, you can do what everyone else does and find me personally.

There aren't many safe places to eat in Chicago, sadly. For the Camarilla's U.S. capital, it certainly leaves a lot to be desired. There's no privacy, if you get my meaning. A lot of "press" looking for tourists like us. Still, it is easier to find a solitary dining partner these nights then when we used to go out in groups.

In most cities, I recommend you find a date and really let him or her know you wanted to spend some time out at a quiet, dark dining establishment. Look into their lovely eyes, implore sweet nothings, and sample the tasting menu.

In Chicago you need to be smarter about who you pick up, how you convince them to dine with you, and importantly — where to eat. No just grabbing an attractive mate in a bar, no just locking eyes and saying "I want you." Maybe in L.A. or Indianapolis, but certainly not Chicago.

So how do you do it and where do you go? If you want to avoid Jackson's attention and that of the press, you have to rely on natural charm, old boy. Just good old-fashioned words. You have to find out about your partner, what they like, and enchant them with your good manners.

I know, you're thinking "but I can do x to make it easier!" Well shut that thought up and file it under "bad idea." Consider it akin to drugging someone's drink and how well that would go down with the establishment.

And where to dine? I recommend once you've charmed your partner, you go back to a nice motel on the outskirts. Sometimes they have a buffet or allow deliveries to your room, but the point is, popular spots are bad spots. Those places get packed with people we don't like unless you book very well in advance.

So, have you got that? Charm. Isolation. No experience you'll wish to recount on holidayadvisor.com

I know, it doesn't sound like what you're expecting from our family, but give it time. Things will improve for us. For now, old boy, you play quiet scum, just like the dancer and the stockbroker down the hall.

Do not reply.

The Sins of Clan Lasombra

Hey. You know you sometimes get that itch, right? That itch to let it all out and go a little monster? You're not alone, mate.

We frequently make our love for monstrous behavior well known. Other Kindred cringe in fear at us, as we hide behind the institution of Catholicism while performing worse feats than any other bloodline in the Camarilla. You got to laugh, haven't you? We use religion to twist innocent minds and access innocent bodies, using the cover of our enemy to perform unimaginably grotesque acts. We inspire young vampire to rebel but you know what? We rarely lead the charge, hanging back to take the reins once the fighting dies down.

These nights, many of us seem to be attempting to atone for sins of the past, striving to act with honor, loyalty, and restraint. Don't be fooled, mate. These Magisters ain't penitents attempting to find God's mercy, but are vampires attempting to show their peers they can be so much more than feral beasts. They know they got to wear the mask of humanity to survive the Second Inquisition's eyes everywhere and the Camarilla's waiting guillotine.

Little Lamb told me "our blood makes us prone to sins of pride and delusion, urging us to delve into deviant behaviors for the sake of experimentation, no matter the risk." I don't know about that, but I do know many of us murder blood and ethics only to find our bodies forever taken over by the Beast. Maybe that's the same thing.

Anyway, watch out. You've got enemies around you and inside you, get it?

Marco

Keepers Become Magisters

Read this well, oh flock of mine. It's a new dawn for the Clan of the Night, and an exciting time indeed.

Let's start with the history. The words "Lasombra" and "Kindred" rarely occupied the same sentence before this century. We Lasombra considered ourselves Cainites of the Sabbat, above human-fearing epithets. But yeah, times change. These nights, we aim to stand shoulder to shoulder with our former enemies and rivals and, somehow, some of us are quite comfortable with the idea. I guess it should make us sick, but survival has always been high on the list of our clan's priorities.

Yeah, the Lasombra were a Sabbat pillar. Maybe we still are in some domains. Had been for 500 years though, and that's not a bad stretch. We were feared, reviled, and all those other cool words reserved for the vampire who's a bigger shit than Prince whoeverthefuck.

So, what could make us flip? What could make us turn our backs on the Sabbat we loved and believed in, only to join (or attempt to join, because it's not an easy task) the Camarilla on the other side?

Read on!

The Reason from Above

You're not going to have been blind to the sudden devolution of the Sabbat. It shocked our elders among the Amici Noctis, in Spain, Tunisia, Morocco, and Italy. Even some Lasombra in Mexico City and Rio de Janeiro balked at our increasing savagery. I bet it made them think "oh shit, they're going to rise up and eat us just like we did to our ancestors 500 years back." Well... They weren't wrong.

Maybe our fall wasn't so sudden. We'd been charging into hell for the best part of a century when Gehenna came. The Camarilla were hors d'oeuvres, our battles with them whetting our appetites for the crusade to come. And come it did. We were finally ready, years of degeneration and sin finally to be put to good use.

Yeah, I know. Clearly, things didn't go that way.

THE AMICI WHO?

According to clan legend, the Magisters listen to a council of vampires selected from the most capable of the clan when it comes to matters of Lasombra politics and agenda. No in-clan assassination, diablerie, or power grab may occur without this council's say-so. If rumors are true, the Amici Noctis consist of millennia-old elders and fresh neonates alike. The only qualification for membership is evidence of adaptation to and overcoming of hostile circumstance. A few Sabbat Lasombra hold positions among this shadow council, but so too do a couple of Lasombra who weathered the Sabbat's many attempts at murdering them. Therefore, the Amici Noctis is distinctly bipartisan, with clan interests ahead of sect.

Of course, rumors are rumors. Nearly every clan has some fabled council of elders directing the show, and not one of the Amici Noctis has a public name. Some even wonder if these "Friends of the Night" are puppets of Oblivion or the clan Antediluvian.

Despite claimed desires for permanent revolution and an end to methuselah tyranny, when the Amici Noctis found their powerbases threatened by the Sabbat's Gehenna Crusade, they paused for thought.

Now, this is guesswork, but I'm betting they asked, "Why are we still fighting this war? Have we not already slain our Antediluvian? Is there really any way we stop the rising methuselahs and endure mortal scrutiny when our sect has become so debased?"

But in secret? In secret, those old fucks were whispering, "This shit's gone too far. We're waking up monsters we have no hope of defeating and we're waking up monsters in our childer that are going to climb up our pedestals and eat us whole."

They looked to each other and then to the Camarilla. "Perhaps we can offer *them* something and break bread with the other High Clans once more."

So yeah, if you're already in the Camarilla, you've heard the Sabbat got too hot for we Lasombra, making us skip sects. There's more to it than that, though.

The View from Below

Honestly, these elders were unchanged by time. For all their talk of rolling revolt, they spent centuries cementing their grip over the young and naive, myself included. Occasionally they deigned to lift an ancilla to recognition, but more often they treated their younger counterparts with disdain, as they ever had. My clan's principles encourage dominance through strength and deed, citing rebellion as one such method of grasping power. These principles are fine in theory, until centuries-old vampires put the boot down on unasked-for upward trajectories. I can't count the number of times an elder should have rewarded me with the right to diablerie, the right to Embrace, or whatever, just to say, "maybe next time." Crusty bastards.

Things may have changed for the rank and file as we laid down their lives on battlefields for elders in dark cathedrals, but the heads of the clan never changed. Never. Can you taste the bitterness, my lovely flock? We, one of the founding clans of the Sabbat, were and still are among the worst offenders for crushing our fledglings' wills and steering them like pawns.

So why would we join the Camarilla? Maybe it's because after all this time of being bound to each other and some degenerate Priest or Ductus, we finally had enough of being kicked into battle to fight for the same pricks who'd lorded over the clan for half a millennium.

Oh, you might think "Surely you'd have leapt to the Anarch Movement, Little Lamb! They stand up for that kind of fightback!"

Don't be dense, my precious flock. We may resent elder mistreatment, but lie down with the dogs and you might pick up fleas. Gangrel and Brujah, we are not. Joining the Camarilla comes as a calculated move. They need us. They need what we're offering. And when they ask us to make a sacrifice of this elder or that to prove our worth... Well, we're only too keen to prove our loyalty.

The Other Perspective

Anyway, maybe the barbarism of our sect spurred some Lasombra into abandoning the pretense of fanatical crusade. Sure, I wasn't among the turncoats at first. Strategists such as myself stowed away in planes, filled cargo containers on ships with Sabbat packs, even chartered our own vessels from the Caribbean. When I reached Mosul, after a fuckload of horrifying encounters in Algeria and Libya, I got to taste my first ancient vampire. It was glorious, but I needed more strength than my pack possessed. I knew the Amici Noctis were making murmurings of this crusade's fruitlessness, but I wasn't done. I still had a war to fight, and terrible beings rose from beneath the sands and stones. My pack hadn't abandoned the sect yet.

You know, I laugh at the memory I'm about to write about. If I didn't, my beautiful flock, you would see bloody tears on my cheeks.

THE LASOMBRA MIGRATION

Chicago by Night sets forth a great change in **Vampire: The Masquerade**: the entry of Clan Lasombra into the Camarilla, or at least its departure from the Sabbat. The timeline for this migration is deliberately vague, as this movement could have taken place at the inception of the Gehenna Crusade, at its height, or when it reaches its devastating depths. Alternatively, for your chronicle, the Lasombra may remain Sabbat at heart. Indeed, this entire play toward the Ivory Tower may be a maneuver to destabilize the increasingly elitist sect before the Lasombra return to the Sword of Caine with Princes' heads on spears and belts.

How the events of **Chicago by Night** play out is down to you and your players, though future books will explore Lasombra activities beyond the Sabbat. Though their aims in Chicago are primarily for admittance into the Camarilla at the city, state, and potentially national level (depending on the amount of influence a new Prince like Kevin Jackson can swing), there is nothing stopping them finding alms within the Anarch Movement. It would certainly be an easier move for the clan than initiating friendship with vampires of Clan Ventrue.

Out in Iraq, my Ductus — it's what the Sabbat call a pack or coterie leader — came to me with intelligence on one of these rumored, just awoken elders terrorizing the kine. We thought "easy pickings" because you know, when vampires just wake after centuries of torpor, they're not at full tilt.

So off we went to dirt town, middle of fucking nowhere. As predicted, all the mortals were dead, injured, or hiding. No native vampires in sight to call the place a domain. As we were scouting the place out, we found Him.

Him.

I don't know if He was our clan founder, just a real old Keeper, or something completely different, but when He saw us, we felt the pull to his gigantic mouth, his all-consuming black hole. The void was calling.

I got out. My pack did not. Sometimes I wonder if He let me go. It doesn't really matter, all told, because I survived. That's what we Lasombra do: We survive, and we go on to triumph.

I wasn't the only one to see Him out there. Some claim to have encountered Him in Libya, others in Afghanistan. There's even a report of His presence in Sicily, and some claim the so-called Emperor of D.C. is just Him in another form. What I do know, is enough of us saw Him and what He can do to realize our crusade was leading only to a protracted form of suicide.

Now I get to tell you this tale, my kin of Clan Lasombra. I get to tell you why the Amici Noctis say we've joined the Camarilla, why the ignorant neonates say we've joined the Camarilla, and why *I* say we've joined the Camarilla.

We thought we'd killed the greatest monsters of our clan in time immemorial, but they're just waking up. Fighting them isn't going to help. We need to hide, make the shadows our own, and wait for the Inquisition to purge them for us. With our influence among the organized religions of the world, maybe we can give the Inquisition a push.

You know, I was told in the Sabbat that "We march to eliminate the methuselahs and Antediluvians! We march to liberate ourselves from the Jyhad!"

It's all bullshit, my faithful congregation. He was calling us there to feed him. The Crusade's strings don't run to some Regent or a bunch of Cardinals; they run straight into the hungry dark.

I can't help but think of all the bloodshed in Africa and the Middle East for this Gehenna Crusade, all the Cainite lives lost, of how we celebrated the one in 20 vampires who returned from conflict with a methuselah, bloated like a tick on new power. We just forgot the 19 fallen and where their vitae went. Who it fed. Who or what the ashes of methuselahs summoned to the surface.

Welcome
to
Wrigley Field

chapter three

The City

A Tale of Two Cities

Chicago is a series of paradoxes and transitions, of ever-changing paradigms and whimsy. It is both beautiful and putrid, both corrupt and a pillar of truth, an unstoppable force for change while holding onto the past with howling desperation. Chicago's inherent dichotomy is reflected in the people, buildings, neighborhoods, history, and, most definitely, in its vampires.

Anyone who knows Chicago knows division is part of its makeup. It has two of almost everything. Newspapers, pizza styles, baseball teams — Chicago is often referenced as the most segregated city in the world. Those borders, often disguised as viaducts, were intentionally put into place by systematic political machines with overtly racist and bigoted biases. While many of those machines were dismantled via the unending waves of time, the scars remain and some of that machinery is still in working order, perpetuating age-old agendas and schemes.

Chicago is a gilded city. Beautiful and glittering, a wonder of modern development laid upon the bones of history and the backs of the less fortunate. A home to some of the darkest corruption and most trying needs. A school-board president stealing money from children — a crime strangely common to Chicago — is a good example of the reckless brutality the city exudes.

When threatened, Chicago gains a unified, undeniably proud, dangerous populace. Wielding the malice of a swarm of hornets, Chicagoans bring ruin upon those who dare to question their will. The populace gladly speaks ill of the myriad problems plaguing their home but the moment an outsider does the same, those same Chicagoans will become fiercely defensive of their city.

The city in a **Vampire: The Masquerade** chronicle is just as an essential aspect of your campaign as your players or the storyline. It drives forward the moods and themes you want to build within your game. It is the blueprint you lay across your chronicle and provides boundaries, areas of inquiry, and setting for the horrors that occur in the night. It provides a backdrop and impetus for action and reaction. Yet it doesn't possess one defined flavor. Each block, each tenant building, and each neighborhood has a very distinctive flow and energy.

The city of skyscrapers has infinite possibilities for the Damned. While the so-called "pillar clans" of the Camarilla — Ventrue, Toreador, and Tremere — tend to stay close to the city center (often referred to as the Loop, or in Kindred parlance, "The Hive"), the other clans act as satellites around the neighborhoods and sides. Each section of the city has a specific feel to it, almost a little city of its own.

Then there are the Lasombra. Their attempt to join the Camarilla has caused a brand-new set of problems

Jackson,

I'm writing this from the top of a daycare off 31st Avenue on the South Side. Fantastic place owned by the governor's wife. Surely, a non-profit to cover some of their more abhorrent tastes. Regrettably for them, their overnight janitorial service was seen with one of our target's puppets. Delightful rooftop playground overlooking the entirety of the Jewel, though. It really is quite a skyline. I can even admit I missed it during my time spent sequestered, following the Crash.

As for the defectors, I have intelligence of value. The work has been laborious, to say the least. I deduce Cameron is helping them into the city. That conniving rat has always been looking for an exit strategy. They should never have let him out of the dirt, let alone given him his own pack. I'll be delivering him in person once I locate him. Too valuable to leave to the staff.

The contacts made in the past seem oblivious to the defection, and since I started probing all communications have gone dead. Allocation and eradication should be implemented to neutralize leaks. We need to target the more "liberal" among our number. The information provided here is a breakdown of the entirety of the Jewel for us to effectively anticipate their movements. Investments should be reviewed to ensure they're not trying to buy the city out from beneath us. The city is quite the sprawling beast, but never have I found something I haven't been able to burn.

I will see you soon but must finish my work here first. I must still decline the offered title as I find loyalty to you, my leader and brother, is its own reward. Family comes first, and I hope you can see the sincerity in my service.

Did you know the daycare is serving hot dogs tomorrow? A Chicago favorite, how lovely. Perfect cover for the smell of burnt flesh. If Hinds was still with us, he would have said "They should have chosen a union-backed service. Scabs. Scabs, every last one of them." I still laugh at the memories.

H. Ballard

within Kindred society. With the exodus of Brujah and Gangrel from the Camarilla, and the new influx of Cainite power, old, well-known territory lines have fallen into disarray. Feeding grounds are now subject to the disputes of the Jyhad. Possession, after all, is nine-tenths of the law, and clans across the city are committing to open or subtle actions to claim positions and areas of influence.

The Fifth Star

There are four red stars on the Chicago flag, each for a famous event in the city's history. These events have been monumental levels of achievement or horrifying tragedies. Over the years there have been multiple petitions to the city to add a fifth star. These were always shut down, but the petitions always represented massive shifts in the cities culture and makeup. One was even proposed for the huge floods that ravaged the city in 1992. That petition became a point of contention between the Tremere and Nosferatu, as the Nosferatu believed it to be some sort of insult to their survival. The most recent and perhaps most dynamic proposal in contemporary memory was to add a star to signify the years of development in an attempt to bid for the 2016 Olympics.

To most mortal eyes, the Olympics are a transient event in which athletes play games at a superior level for the eyes of an appreciative audience. That's it. They mean nothing more than a month or so of sports taking up the airwaves. Some even resent the interruption to their regular programming.

To the investor, the city planner, the government, and the Kindred, an event like the Olympics is a chance to inject life, money, radical changes to infrastructure, and economic strength into its host city, and

potentially the country within which it sits. Many take the Olympics for granted, but no other event brings in upwards of hundreds of thousands of tourists and their money to a single city in such a short period of time. Bidding to play host for the games is a costly endeavor, but when it goes well and the city manages the surge, everyone benefits.

The 2016 Olympic bid signaled a burst of mortal and immortal activity in Chicago. Mainly, it brought the possibility of an increased kine population and cashflow throughout the city. The Kindred community of Chicago was excited by the prospect and began influencing it in their own ways. They founded numerous influence movements, shifting kine from areas in which they'd lived for generations, manipulating the leveling of entire neighborhoods in an attempt at "city building," though of course average citizens refer to it as "gentrification."

The sudden surge in Kindred control over mortal infrastructure greatly affected Kevin Jackson. The young Ventrue had carefully cultivated his area of control within the Cabrini Green neighborhood and the gangland. With an unknown promise from his broodmate and Prince, Joseph Peterson, he gave up his areas of control in a brief moment of solidarity for the betterment of the city. Against his best judgement, he even snitched on several of his gangland contacts in a city-wide sting that broke up the three major gangs that had control of the city.

City resources were outsourced to the highest bidder for century-long contracts, contracts obviously put into place by those only who could benefit from the inability to age. The levels of resentment are still alive and well to present nights, where working-class citizens felt as if they were taken advantage of during the process. They felt the city did not care, that the great goddess Columbia, mother of the city born from the excess of the Columbian Expositions, had turned her loving gaze away from her children.

Kindred worldwide began falling into this swirling chaos of influence management overwhelming the city. Chicago, being known as "the Jewel of the American Camarilla," pulled in favors and boons ages old to try to raise the grand sporting event into being. They lost sight of what the Olympics were, some investors not even knowing the reason they were pouring money into Chicago other than their peers were doing the same. The brief Prince, Joseph Peterson, used every bit of his leverage to fulfill this goal, placing the very soul of the city of Chicago, and the legitimacy of his praxis, upon the table to make the Olympics happen. He grew so fixated on this one event he lost sight of the cost, should the bid fail.

The day of the announcement was well publicized. With the media controlled by the Prince of the city, all eyes were trained upon the then-sitting mayor, Richard M. Daley Jr. and adoring Chicagoans. The Prince went to sleep that morning knowing he would wake to showing the world how *he* had clad the Camarilla's Jewel in gold. The cult of personality surrounding Daley that Peterson's media machine had carefully cultivated over the years was in full display, the presumed "father of Chicago" taking the city into the future with all its citizens ready to reap the benefits. In those moments, Chicagoans were so sure they had won.

The headline photographs in all the major newspaper outlets showed Daley and his surrounding fans, all in complete shock that they not only didn't win, but they were the first city to be let go in the process. The outrage and schadenfreude spread through the city like wildfire. Businesses had taken out loans to support the wave of people, the city had lost huge amounts of possible income by not only losing the Olympics but also outsourcing their assets. The complete and utter loss of the hopes of gigantic returns for the city shook it to its core. People were, and still are, furious.

To add insult to injury, the location picked was a then-Sabbat stronghold, Rio de Janeiro.

While the city had been perfectly coiffed and manicured by the marketing machinations of the Peterson praxis, the show had no returns and all the accumulated debts of boons and money weighed heavily upon the Prince. The Primogen Council completely lost faith in the sitting Prince and the city questioned heavily the power of the Ventrue. Their pawn in the office of the mayor was replaced as quickly as possible, seen as a scar from the monumental failure. Peterson tried to pivot into the fame the city was

DOMAINS FAR AND WIDE

Here, we are working with the domain of Chicago, but this model can be used for any setting in any city in the **World of Darkness**. One of the first steps is asking yourself and your players what is and is not *your* city. This is best as a collaborative effort within your gaming troupe, as we are at our best when we work together with other people. As a Storyteller though, that doesn't necessarily mean throwing out all the secrets of a city onto the board. A collaborative, city "Truth and Lies" list can be added as needed to the back of your relationship map as the chronicle goes along or at the beginning of the game itself.

garnering from Barack Obama but to no avail. Debts still laid bare in the black ink of Critias' pen and the machinations of Peterson's family were even worse.

Kevin Jackson had risked his entire portfolio for Peterson. Jackson's rebellious tendencies rose up from the insult, where his sibling in vitae refused to pay back any of his investment. Peterson often handwaved loss as something that made the city better behind closed doors to other broodmates, but "just the cost of doing business" was not an acceptable excuse to Kevin. He made his own deals with Inyanga of the Gangrel, seized up territory through criminal means, and petitioned the Primogen Council that he would make a more effective Prince than Peterson, the lingering Maxwell (who had not outright declared his defection from the Camarilla), or pure council rule.

The induction of Kevin Jackson as Prince rocked the Camarilla community. Not only has there never been someone so young sitting in praxis of the Jewel, rarely have the Ventrue openly shown such internal conflict. Young Kindred swayed to Jackson's side, looking for someone who would finally listen to their concerns. He has also been perceived as soft on the rising tide of the second Anarch Rebellion, much to the dismay of the city elders. They might have been able to hamstring his ascension, but for the Beckoning weakening their numbers. The echoes of the catastrophe that was the 2016 Olympic bid still weigh heavily on the city, and old debts have still yet to been paid, but Jackson is determined to forge ahead, exiling Peterson as a shame on the Ventrue.

The change of praxis echoes in the mortal realm. The mayor of Chicago decided to step down with Peterson's disappearance, and over a dozen contenders threw their hats in the ring in response. The city stands on the edge of a massive shift. Old, well-known names and other parties are making plays for control of the city. While Jackson has declared his praxis, he quietly fears he may have lost touch with the speed of modern society's advancement.

Field of White

The Chicago flag was adopted by the city in 1917 after holding a city-wide competition. Considered one of the most aesthetically pleasing flags in the world by vexillologists (a point of pride often mentioned by the city's Toreador), it is broken into three parts. The first part is the field of white. This represents the north, west, and South Sides of the city. The East Side is often forgotten about as most people just laugh and retort, "what? The lake?" but it does have a series of neighborhoods of note.

Land is essential to vampire society. From the land, vampires build most of their laws or interactions. Be it territory, the parasitic relationship with the population of places, or controlling (or dealing with) the aspects of a city, land plays a major role with how city politics play out in a **Vampire: The Masquerade** chronicle. With the waves of change, the city is now experiencing shifts in well-known boundary lines. Kindred that once knew their feeding grounds down to the gangway at which it stopped now question what they can get away with.

To take it a step further, environment helps make a chronicle and the PCs' night-to-night lives. A rather well-known educational theory, first penned by Urie Bronfenbrenner and known as the ecological systems theory, provides a perspective that human beings developed in a series of nesting structures, each larger than the last, and each providing environmental forces that guide and build humans. Vampires are no different. From family to coterie, gang, and pack, to neighborhood and city, these factors all build upon one another to create the environmental system of a Storyteller's game world.

Truth and Lies

A city has a reputation that is alive and breathing. It is mutable, and its range may be worldwide or restricted

To my most dear, Ms. Marley Giovanni,

I know it has been some time since I contacted you, and I do hope this finds you and your family well. I am quite amazed at your family's accomplishments on the West Side. The work you and yours have done rebuilding the medical corridor is simply phenomenal. I am in need and would wish to call in that favor from yourself and the "expertise" of the Hecata.

H. Ballard

to one specific neighborhood. There are just *things* people know about the town in which they grew up, whether obtuse rumor or fact. This is where our common understanding of a city is woven into the mask a city wears. These aspects change over time and can be added to or molded by society and mass media. Lies sometimes take on the roles of truths eventually as Kindred and kine live up to the hype or are expected to participate in them. Within the **World of Darkness** and the city of Chicago there are many layers of truth and deceit that may build the mood of a game environment. This is also a fantastic way to provide players with story hooks they will know walking into the game with their characters.

We recommend five of each side of the spectrum to build a good environment, but this is not completely necessary. Granting enough understanding is the goal of this exercise and provides a beginning to building the energy of your city.

Truths of Chicago

THE CITY OF CHICAGO IS THE THIRD-LARGEST CITY IN THE COUNTRY AND IS CONSIDERED AN "INTERNATIONAL CITY."

Mortals and vampires visiting Chicago do not truly grasp just how unbelievably large the city is. When people from out of town see Chicagoans using social media and experiencing the fruits of the city they often remark how when they come to visit "they want to do all of these things in one day." This is simply not possible. On a good day it can take up to two hours just to drive through the city proper. With a population of 2.7 million people, the third largest in the world for its landmass, and the world's longest continuous street (Western Avenue), it is obvious why it is often referred to as "Chicagoland."

For vampires, Chicago is an endless delight of possibilities. There are simply so many kine here and with the historic weakness of the Camarilla laws that govern the city, many Cainites are taking this time to push the envelope a little. After all, it is so much better to ask for forgiveness than to beg for permission.

CHICAGO IS CORRUPT.

There is a reason why the Chicagoland area is called "Crook County" by those often trampled under the remnants of machine politics. I mean, come on, citizens have to pay their parking tickets to "the Department of Revenue." Up until very recently patronage politics was just a part of daily life in Chicago. The people were the machine (and some still think they are), they helped people they knew, got paid, and made things work. Everyone got a cut of everything from everyone, Kindred included, unless you didn't play the game. Then you were just an enemy.

Chicago has a list of politicians that have gone to jail one way or another a mile long, let alone in the rest of the state of Illinois. Three of its last four governors went to prison, the last one attempting to sell a seat of a United States senator. It may be a bit of an issue.

Vampires by their very nature are corruption. They wheel and deal in back rooms and dark alleyways. Chicago is no exception to this rule. It is not uncommon for public funds to go missing or magically reappear, for schools to be shut down in neighborhood territories in efforts to drive out populace, or for multiple blocks of city streets to suddenly gentrify over the span of a year or so. The possibilities for conniving machinations are endless in a city as large as Chicago and the Kindred of the city are well-versed in its promise.

CHICAGO IS THE MOST HEAVILY SEGREGATED CITY IN THE WORLD.

As progressive and democratic as the city attempts to present itself, it was one of the first modern cities to implement segregation. With the convergence of the "science" of eugenics, intense city development, real-estate economics, and the budding field of sociology in the 1890s, the developers of the city created a laboratory build upon bias and racial divisions. Neighborhoods were dividing lines for every bit of descendancy, whether race, religion, or country of origin.

These tensions continue to modern nights where massive subsidized housing structures hold poverty-stricken citizens in the beige prisons of public housing. In the bid to clean the city's image, most of these buildings have been torn down, yet the land itself has mostly been undeveloped and holds a certain palpable misery to it. What has been developed (such as the famed Cabrini Green neighborhood) was set to become "mixed-income" housing, a possible outcome of Jackson's assistance to his Ventrue broodmate. Yet lawsuits have been filed as there has been no development of such buildings. The neighborhoods have just been simply gentrified and the horror-filled buildings easily replaced by, in some places, million-dollar townhomes. Some of the land around the city was found to be so toxic that the federal government had to step in and designate it as superfund sites. These places are often not good streets at night, as whispers of "demons" and "devils" have been taking up in neighborhood gossip. This may just be some weird holdover from the "Hull House Devil" urban folklore on the South Side, but no one particularly wants to find out.

CHANGE IS DIFFICULT FOR CHICAGOANS TO ACCEPT.

Chicago has a big problem with change. When Comiskey Park was sold off, South Siders lost their collective minds. They couldn't even grasp that a building could be named something different. When the Sears Tower was bought and had its name changed, the company buying it learned from the past and took out a two-page long introduction in both papers in an attempt to stem the inevitable wave of scorn. There are countless stories like that in Chicago. Chicagoans are a people of tradition, humble Midwesterners who simply do not wish to be messed with. They want to be left to their own devices and love their traditions even if they are innately flawed.

This heavily falls into place in Chicago Kindred culture as well. Vampires tend to struggle with moving on with the times. They easily get lost or out of touch with the common vein of culture. A prime example is the new Prince of Chicago, another Ventrue from the same line ruling Chicago once again. What if it is time for a change? With the madness-inducing Beckoning flowing into Cainite society, it is only a matter of time until someone else reaches for the seat of power in the city. Will such a struggle collapse into outright Jyhad? And what of the rumors of the Anarch connections to the Prince? Or of the ancient entities beneath Lake Michigan? Will the Jewel be destroyed by the inside out?

CHICAGO IS INCREDIBLY PROUD OF ITS CULTURE.

Chicagoans are, to a fault, proud of their city and its accomplishments. The populace tends to build up or destroy movements. The Haymarket riots helped begin the struggle for the workers' rights kine possess today. Everyone in Chicago remembers the madness that swept into the city during the 1968 Democratic Convention. Disco was murdered openly in Comiskey Park and the following riot changed drinking laws in the city forever. From its ashes, house music was born and eventually built the electronic music scene Kindred so often connect with.

Failure or bravado is often checked by the Kindred and kine population. Chicago's Kindred have seen this perfect example with every change of power within the city; Joseph Peterson being just the last in a long string of transformation. Anything that threatens the collective whole of the city tends to be driven out. In the case of the new Prince, Kevin Jackson, does the city have enough patience for another Ventrue? Can it deal with the grating weight of the Ivory Tower or will its population finally break into open warfare? Does the Camarilla have what it takes to protect the soul of the city any longer?

Lies of Chicago

CHICAGOANS REFER TO CHICAGO AS "THE CITY OF BIG SHOULDERS" OR "THE WINDY CITY."

Chicagoans don't refer to themselves with the majority of the nickname's outsiders have given them. The perceived amount of violence committed in the city has provided the despicable, racist nickname of "Chiraq." While many Chicagoans have felt the enormous horror and anguish of gangland gun violence, they actively despise this nickname. Many people of all walks of life work very hard to make sure citizens are safe in the city. The common trope of "those people don't care about their community" is an absolute lie.

Nicknames, though, are a part of communal city parlance. Even the way Chicagoans talk has tendency to create new and interesting vocabulary. They often add "s" to the end of things or "the" in front of a noun. "I'mma go down to the Jewels and get a pound of sausage" is a perfect example. Chicagoans tend to drop letters from words, saying "tree" instead of "three" and add a hard "A" sound to words with the vowel. They love to make language bright and vibrant, a parlance that is quite alive. Chicagoans use the word "finna," which replaces "going to." Chicagoans also change the names of places, like calling the Cloud Gate art installation "the bean" in Millennium Park. They even create words like "dibs" which is placing an object in the street to save a parking place, or "grabowski" for everyday hard-working people.

ONCE YOU'VE SEEN DOWNTOWN, YOU'VE SEEN ALL OF CHICAGO.

Chicago is the third-largest city in landmass in the world, not the United States, the world. It is simply monstrous in size. Kindred and kine who have lived here their entire existence still routinely find out about new locations. There is simply no way to experience it all. Let alone the buildings. The Chicago Architecture Foundation routinely partners with owners of buildings to provide tours (which often sell out) to Chicagoans and tourists. Many buildings have an air of mystery about them as most have a team of security that only allows access to those deemed worthy.

Chicagoland has any type of location you could find in a temperate climate. From city blocks so bombed out that nature is reclaiming them, to deep forest preserves, to tightly knit urban sprawl, to seemingly infinite spaces in the towering skyscrapers. Gothic structures loom over long abandoned L-track stations and glittering art installations adorn the walls under viaducts that home the homeless. And who knows what mysteries may lie dormant in the tunnels beneath the city?

CHICAGO IS VIOLENT.

Chicago has an international reputation of being a hotbed of gangland violence and murder. This stems from its gangster past often connected with the reign of terror committed by Capone and his mob control of the Chicago underworld. The drug wars of the '80s and the recent increase of gang warfare haven't helped either, as the press grab a hold of any story of shootings that go on around the city. Truthfully, Chicago is getting better. The city does not have the most murders per capita and the police force and community groups often work in tandem to provide services to the citizens who need it most. Chicago also has some of the toughest gun laws in the nation and works hard to stop the roots of violence that plague the city's lower-income communities. Chicago also has a numbers problem. Because of its enormous populace, the number of murders and shootings is perceived to be of epidemic proportions, yet they are proportional or even fewer than most major metropolitan areas.

With the praxis of Kevin Jackson, violence will likely not get any better. Having sacrificed many of his own men in the Chicago Olympic bid and assisting with the resulting city-wide gang crackdown, Jackson may have caused an issue. In an attempt to get back at Peterson, Jackson utilized the power vacuums created by the absence of the gangs. He helped create hundreds of gangs across the city, all seemingly left to their own devices. This is whispered between the city's Kindred as the reason why there has been so much gangland violence, with only Jackson's Bloods remaining a consistently unified force. It is quietly spoken that the Prince may have opened this Pandora's box of violence intentionally, though he couldn't have possibly predicted all the unrest that followed.

Along with the countless gangs within the city, the economic disparity among areas plays a big role in the creation of crime. This is an issue Jackson moved on in the past and will possibly now push forward with his newfound power. The ease of access from Indiana's straw sale of guns creates loopholes in Chicago's gun laws, allowing an endless flow of firearms into the city. As much as civic will may be against gun violence, it doesn't lessen the city's capacity for mayhem.

CHICAGO IS THE CAPITAL OF ILLINOIS.

Springfield, Illinois is the capital of the state, which is a fact many Chicagoans, both living and undead, often forget. The major seats of power, both economic and political, stem from Springfield, much to the chagrin of other Illinoisans. Springfield's governmental clout has creat-

ed fringe movements within the state's body politic to push for Chicago's secession. Recent economic reports have stated more tax dollars per person have gone to those living outside Cook County and the city, breeding resentment in the inhabitants of Chicago. Chicagoans consider anything west of I-355 and south of I-80 another state, or perhaps a different country.

CHICAGOANS DISLIKE TOURISTS.

Chicagoans love tourists, but they don't like outsiders who think they can tell them what to do. This common thread burst to life at the 1968 city convention when riots and protests were created by "outsiders" and "rabble-rousers." Being a city of big thinkers and those who go out and grab their futures, Chicagoans consider anyone who tries to tell them how they are supposed to live as a threat. This common belief in rebellion has always been an underlying current in Chicago. The impetus to make your world better is a common belief in the popular culture of the town.

The Machine

Within any city it is easy to become disoriented by the sheer magnitude of a population. Hundreds of thousands of individuals can make up a neighborhood. The amount of people moving on a single day is almost incomprehensible. It is nothing less than a cacophony of sound and motion. Yet this is not what you need to show your players when you are playing a game set in the city of Chicago. That would be an impossible task. What you need to provide your players is the feeling that there are a million tiny things going on at once.

The city of Chicago is often referred to as "the machine." This most likely stems from its years of machine politics and corruption, yet the name remains as a moniker for the overall metropolitan area and government. Like any machine, Chicago is made up of many working pieces, some large and hulking, slow to interact but brutal in its entirety, and some small and quick, flitting by and making gentle waves and effects. Within this same vein, you can zoom in and out upon the setting of any game providing context and motion within each piece. While all the portions of a of a city are different, they all work relatively within the same dynamic. They work, or don't work, or work within some capacity, for the people inhabiting them within some range of usage. This chapter begins with the smallest cogs in the machine and reaches upward as the skyscrapers do.

Homesteading

Every vampire in **Vampire: The Masquerade** has some sort of haven. There is a sliding scale on how effective, safe, and comfortable it may be, and you can find more on that in the core book. There are some universal truths to these locations, though. They must protect Cainites from the curse of the sun, they hold their possessions, and they are all a single part of a larger neighborhood and city proper. All of them, from skyscrapers worth millions of dollars to shitty studio apartments all have relatively the same things that go along with them. There is rent, mortgage, or at least taxes on the property. The location has a connection to Chicago, whether simply that it is in the city or ranging up to be a shining example of commerce and culture. It has city-provided utilities and planning such as parking, garbage, or snow removal. Then there's integrity of the physical building itself, how well it is built, how it is architecturally designed (there are many famous buildings in the city that are only worth the amount they are because of the architects involved), and its street number or location.

All perceived areas of gameplay fit within *The Homestead.* Each Homestead is made up of four aspects: Affair, Association, Clout, and Utility. The Homestead is how vampires perceive the city personally or through

Ms. Stewart,

It seems the Hecata have jumped ship. There is literally no trace of them anywhere I can find in the city. I've looked in all their usual haunts. The Medical Corridor is working fantastically, along with the huge influx of heroin they were going in on with the Fiends on I-290. Little trace of those bastards either. What is going on in our city? Did it eat them? What do they know that made them pack up and leave without a goodbye?

H. Ballard

the lenses of their coterie, depending on how a Storyteller wishes to use the system. Homesteads have ratings based on a 0-5 scale and can change from character to character. It is also subject to change from advancement of storyline or interaction. Storytellers can choose to allow players to know or not know their Homestead ratings.

Homesteading should provide depth and breadth to gameplay, not become hard-and-fast rules that Storytellers must push onto their players. Use what is useful or beneficial to your chronicle.

While it can be perceived as subjective, the 0-5 scale allows flexibility for players and Storytellers. Where a 0 in a haven's Clout can literally mean there are large holes in the sides of the building, it could also mean it is in a completely overgrown area in the major metropolitan bracket. A 5 in the block Utility bracket could be a brand new, refurbished townhome gated community with green energy systems, or a 5 in Affair could just mean the property, such as the abandoned postal service building over congress avenue, may be completely dilapidated but worth hundreds of millions of dollars from its sheer size. This system is whatever you want to make it into, with a conversation required between Storytellers and players for its development.

Homestead ratings can easily be posted on relationship maps used within gameplay. Storytellers can allow stacking of Homestead affects if they choose or not. It depends on how they want the style of play to look.

Homestead Traits

Affair is the whole of the financial situation of a property, properties, or area of a city. This includes all taxes, mortgage, or rent to exist within the locations. It is how much all the assets within the properties are worth and any monetary benefits from tenants or businesses residing there. This can be the amount of jobs an area holds. This can also be the amount of taxes spent on an area or the amount of financial actions taking place. An area such as the financial district in the Loop where the Chicago Stock Exchange is located would have an Affair rating of 5, whereas a block that has been largely abandoned by citizens and has no businesses would easily have a rating of 0. An economically stressed neighborhood in the West Side could have an Affair rating of 2 as there are very few local jobs and the crime rate is higher. Or a Storyteller can say that same area has a rating of 4 as there are many working-class people working hard to support each other.

Association is the depth of connection to the overall larger city. It represents the connection of the properties to the rest of the city and the knowledge of people about said connection. It is the area's relationship to the highways, L lines, community services such as businesses or shops, cultural locations of note, or other specific locations. This also has to do with the amount of kine existing in the area. A trendy place in the Rack right off a redline stop would have a larger association rating than say a subdivision in a suburb somewhere on the West Side.

HOMESTEAD TRAITS

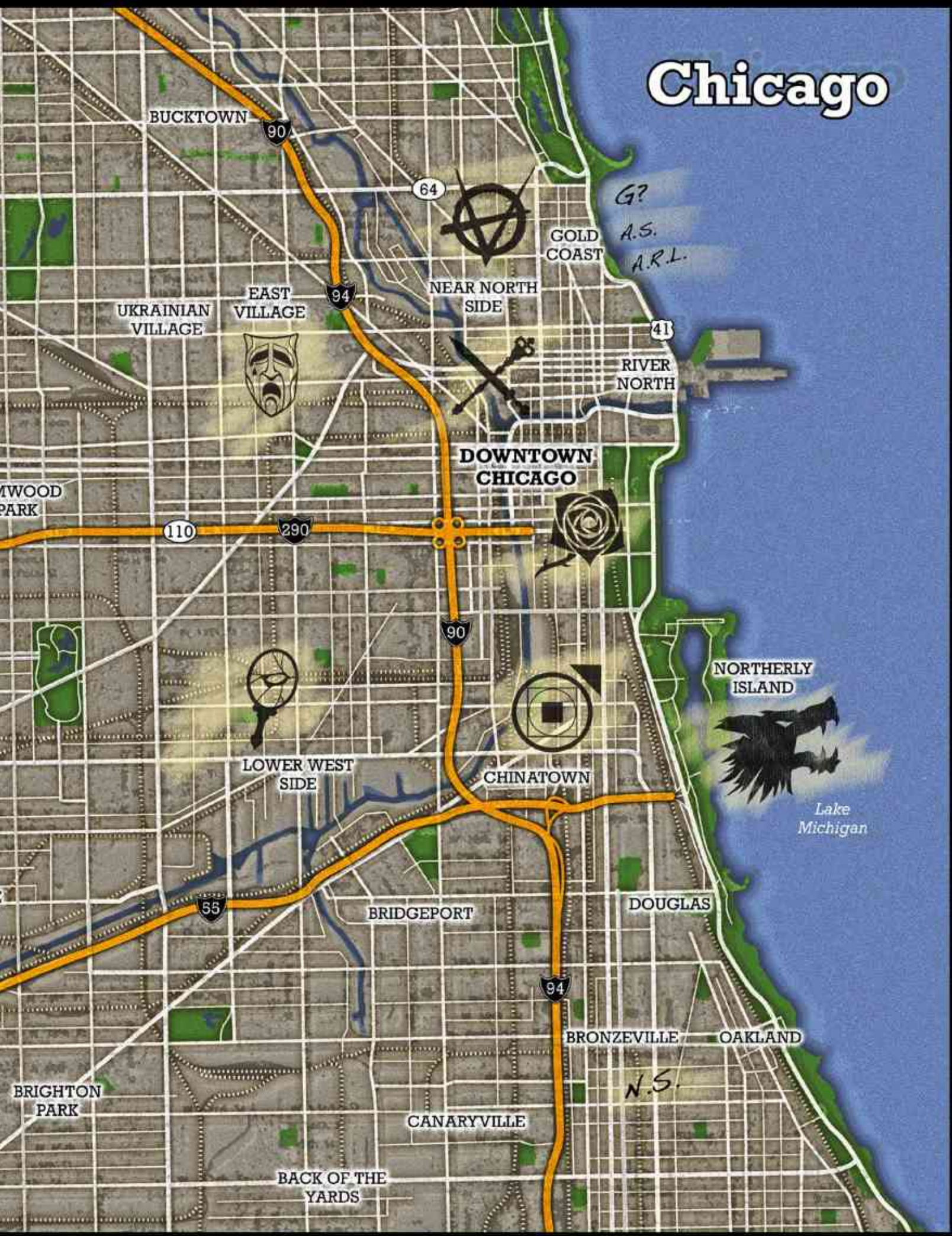
0-5	Homestead rating provides a −2 modifier to any defined areas of import and +1 die to a Skill roll.
6-10	Homestead rating provides a −1 and a +1 modifier to two areas of import.
11-15	Homestead rating provides a +1 to any area of import and +1 to a Skill roll.
16-20	Homestead rating provides a +2 to any defined areas of import and a −1 modifier to another area of import.

Clout is the physical embodiment of the location. It can be its size, shape, security, and any physical relationship it possesses with which the players can interact. The Willis Tower would have a Clout rating of 5, being the largest building in the city while also possessing a large security force. A small storefront church on the East Side would have a Clout rating of 1 or 2. A neighborhood with a relatively comfortable, trusting populace may leave doors unlocked, therefore having a lower Clout rating due to ease of access.

Utility is the amount of services provided to an area. As mayors have lost their jobs in the past due to lack of snow plowing in the city, this is a significant area. Utility may be the quality of air in a neighborhood or the cleanliness of the street in front of a haven. It can be the ease of access to the ward captain or community watch on the block, or a city's access to clean water. A neighborhood within the shadow of a coal-fired power plant could have a Utility of 5 because of its access to electricity or it could be a 2 because of the level of air pollution. The West Side could have a utility of 5 because of the I-290 medical corridor, or it could have a utility of 1 because of its lack of trauma centers in the crime-ridden areas.

To build a Homestead rating of an area, assign numbers associated with the four aspects of the area and simply add them together. Again, this can be used for

ELMWOOD PARK
BELMONT CENTRAL
64
64
50
HUMBOLDT PARK
E
AUSTIN VILLAGE
OAK PARK
FOREST PARK
ELMWOOD PARK
110
290
LAWNDALE
Do not enter until all Lupines confirmed eliminated
CICERO
NORTH RIVERSIDE
BERWYN
LITTLE VILLAGE
171
50
RIVERSIDE
34
STICKNEY
LYONS
55
FOREST VIEW
ARCHER HEIGHTS


Chicago
BUCKTOWN
90
64
G?
A.S.
A.R.L.
GOLD COAST
NEAR NORTH SIDE
EAST VILLAGE
UKRAINIAN VILLAGE
94
41
RIVER NORTH
DOWNTOWN CHICAGO
MWOOD
PARK
110
290
90
NORTHERLY ISLAND
LOWER WEST SIDE
CHINATOWN
Lake Michigan
55
BRIDGEPORT
DOUGLAS
94
BRONZEVILLE
OAKLAND
N.S.
BRIGHTON PARK
CANARYVILLE
BACK OF THE YARDS

any amount of space, from a single haven to an entire city. As soon as described in full, the negatives and positive figures add to the number of character dice rolled in these areas. The modifiers apply to areas of import and Skill rolls, respectively. Areas of import can be anything from uses of specific Disciplines, ease of hunting, rolls to resist frenzy or Hunger, or use of a certain Attribute or Skill. Skill roll modifiers are as the name implies, granting additional or fewer dice to a named Skill. The Cook County Courthouse may have a bonus for Manipulation rolls but a negative for feeding, for instance, due to the heavy presence of lawyers but close scrutiny from court guards and bailiffs. The South Side may have a bonus for Brawl rolls due to the roughness of the area but have a negative for Finance, due to its poverty.

Areas of import and named Skills in the Homestead system should be agreed between Storytellers and players, where possible.

EXAMPLE BLOCK:
106TH & AVENUE M, EAST SIDE

Affair: 3, Middle-class homes, no business.

Association: 2, Relative distance from major highways and cultural destinations, yet close to the 10th Ward Alderman's Office and has a Safe Passage route through it.

Clout: 3, Sturdy brick houses often locked due to citizens scared of breaking and entering by criminals.

Utility: 2, Basements often flood during summer due to bad city planning.

Homestead Rating: 10, +1 to Politics rolls due to proximity of 10th Ward office. −1 to all Stealth or Larceny rolls due to heavy Community Watch activity.

Safe Passage street model: These areas are routinely monitored by CPD and have "Blue Boxes" on light poles that video record the street during certain times. Possibility for Masquerade breach is high on the north side of the block.

SPCS OF NOTE

Olga: Retiree and head of Community Watch and neighbor, usually found on her front porch.

Desi: Member of Safe Passage team helping students get to school on time and local gossip.

Block

The city of Chicago is set within a grid system created in the early 1900s to combat growing confusion over the city layout. The heart of the guide grid is the intersection of State and Madison Streets smack in the middle of the Hive. The addresses on all east-west streets begin with the words "east" or "west," depending on whether they fall east or west of State Street. Similarly, the addresses on all north-south streets all begin with the words "north" or "south," whether they fall north or south of Madison Street. With this said, the block has become a staple of Chicago neighborhood culture.

This microcosm of a city can provide enough material to create an entire chronicle. Storytellers can flesh out as much or as little as they would like in this area, providing players with background knowledge or leaving it to the players to get to know their immediate area. To create this level of intimacy, there are several areas you need to develop to create this style of play. What are the streets like that carve the location into existence? Are they busy or relatively boring? Who mostly uses these roads? Is it predominantly people who live here or is it a major thoroughfare?

Then there are the people who live alongside the Kindred or coterie. Are there families? What do they do? How do they live? Are there any people that work third shift that could witness the strange goings on in the middle of the night? Are they nosy?

What is located on your character's block? Does it have any local businesses or points of interest such as a park or school? Does it have any access to forms of transportation like an L-track stop, a Divvy bike rack, or car-sharing service?

Most, if not all, blocks in Chicago have an alleyway running through them. What does the alley next to your character's haven look like? Does it have high gates that block views from neighbors or good places to put up tags? Do people often block off the alleyway while working on their cars or is it clear? Are there speed bumps?

Blocks should be built on the Homestead rating system and have SPCs of note for the area. They should also have anything that will directly impact the players explained as well.

EXAMPLE NEIGHBORHOOD: STREETERVILLE

Affair: 5, With the location being lakeside, the property values are huge. This is also the location of the children's museum and Navy Pier, among other tourist traps.

Association: 5, With the city's Ferris wheel front and center, this area has direct connection to the city's history and the 1893 Columbian Exposition.

Clout: 3, While there are large apartment and condo complexes in and around the area, this portion of the city has a lot of buildings that are places of employment. The security in these buildings mostly consists of electronic security systems and there isn't a particularly huge police presence, as it has a history of low crime.

Utility: 3, Average wait time for snow plowing and recent construction on the bridges overlooking the Chicago River have slowed down traffic significantly.

Homestead Rating: 16, +2 to all Presence rolls. The spirit of Captain James Streeter, pirate king of Chicago flows through this part of the city. All hunting rolls suffer −1 die since there are just so many people in this area. It's hard to feed without drawing attention to yourself.

Neighborhood

Neighborhoods are the common units of measurement for a community. They build up a city by giving it character and commonality within space. Some neighborhoods are built around certain religious, ethnic, or economic backgrounds, while others are based around job opportunities. Whatever the cause, neighborhoods have a special place in the pantheon of city. When building a neighborhood, the same Homesteading rules apply but on a secondary level. This mesosphere of influence doesn't have the same in-your-face feel that a block does and has a subtler sway on gameplay. This may be gained by only providing bonuses to certain actions or Disciplines instead of Skills or only having the bonuses apply in certain parts of the neighborhood. Remember that flexibility is a forward component of this style of gameplay.

Questions you should ask when building a neighborhood should consist of the purpose behind its creation. Who or what caused its existence? Is there a predominant or persuasive cultural thread behind it? How is it set up or is there anything such as a highway or river that runs through it? These all have effects on the overall Homestead rating of the neighborhood and flavor of setting a session or chronicle within it.

Sides

All cities have "sides" to them. These are entire swaths of an urban environment, made up of multiple neighborhoods, villages, or boroughs. This is the exosphere of influence on our players. Characters might influence the side Homestead rating, but this should be only after large amounts of time or influence have been spent on developing the region's personalities and infrastructure.

This is where we begin to see large, sweeping portions of culture blending into the Homestead rating. Questions you should ask yourself when building a side of a city are more open ended and vague. What

EXAMPLE SIDE: THE SOUTH SIDE

Affair: 2, Not what it used to be in terms of population or manufacturing, the South Side of Chicago also has some of the lower property values in the city, but it has been on the rise with gentrification pushed by political areas of influence.

Association: 3, While it does hold Sox Park, the lakeside convention district, and the University of Chicago, the South Side often gets lost in the shuffle of the rest of Chicago. It's a stop on the way to go somewhere else.

Clout: 2, Mostly single-family homes, apartment blocks, or small businesses, not many skyscrapers or anything of note.

Utility: 2, This side of the city often gets plowed later than others, it doesn't get as many tax dollars, and there have often been school closings on this side of town over the last few years. There is a large police presence, though and it does have an amazing social scene built by its community.

Homestead Rating: 9, All rolls with a Composure Attribute suffer −1 die, but all Streetwise rolls gain +1 die.

type of person likes this part of the city? Why do people live in or around here? Is this part of the city given a certain designation like "the bad side of town"? Why does this part of the city look the way it does? These questions and questions like them provide context for the feel of a side.

The Major Metropolitan

Providing a Homestead rating for a major metropolitan area is a broad and sweeping process. Instead of the finesse a block or neighborhood provides, a major metropolitan Homestead rating should be broad strokes of modification. There are so many factors to consider. Yet the same factors still apply when implementing a Homestead rating for the city at large. The questions asked at this level should be completely esoteric or existential. What does your city do for the citizen? Do people like being there? Why does this city exist? Where is it going in the future? You can be intentionally vague at this level as the number of factors are almost impossible to comprehend.

EXAMPLE CITY: CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Affair: 3, The city has an enormous amount of debt and is not doing much to rid itself of it.

Association: 1, Chicago tends to be standoffish toward the rest of the greater United States.

Clout: 5, "The Second City" has a huge amount of natural resources along with positive city planning.

Utility: 3, With the recent finding of lead-lined pipes possibly leaking into the city's water supply, the Utility rating has dropped.

Homestead Rating: 12, within Chicago city limits add +1 die to all Leadership and Persuasion rolls. Chicagoans love to sell their city.

Sierra—

Cameron is ash. Rest of them missing or ash. Their haven is FUBAR. Lombard is a situation, but by and large cleanup has been successful. Get word to Malenkov. It's time for you to move, my dear. Do your daddy proud.

Crippen

The Waves of Time

The waves of Lake Michigan will never stop, no matter what machinations a Camarilla Kindred puts into play, no matter how upset some upstart Anarch gets, no matter what violence is poured into the city by the Sabbat. No matter what, there are forces of the universe outside the Damned's control. The sun will rise; the sun will set. Seasons will change and the Jyhad will go on until the end times. With that said, the environment built within a game should not be a static and rigid entity. The ever-changing ecosystem of your game should be modified by the reactions of the players and events within your chronicle.

Some places have problems changing with the times. This can be because of the presence of an ancient vampire or just the stodginess of the people. This calcification causes real-life consequences to city life. While it may be more work, remember to apply consequences to your city from storyline and character choices. Have your Homestead ratings change over time. Have human beings age or die. Provide movement and process within the city environment that you have built. That in and of itself provides a real-life aspect to gameplay.

The Marks

§ 21-1.3. Criminal defacement of property.

(a) A person commits criminal defacement of property when the person knowingly damages the property of another by defacing, deforming, or otherwise damaging the property by the use of paint or any other similar substance, or by the use of a writing instrument, etching tool, or any other similar device. It is an affirmative defense to a violation of this Section that the owner of the property damaged consented to such damage.

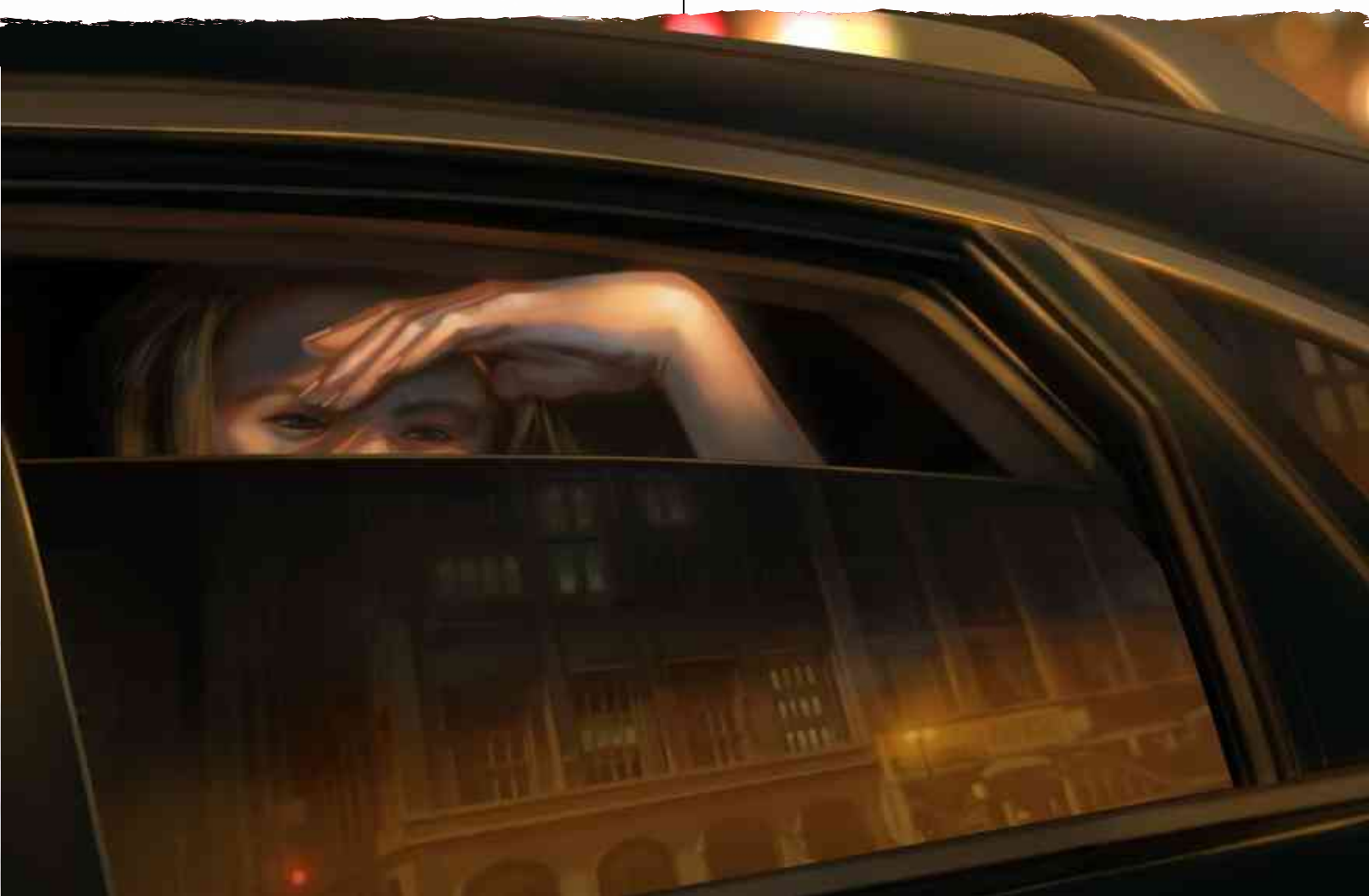
Illinois Statutes Chapter 720.

Spray paint was invented 1942 in Chicago, Illinois. In 1992, the Chicago City Council decided to outright ban the sale and distribution of all spray-based paints within the city limits. To take away supposed "weapons of terror" (as the aldermen colorfully referred to them) sale of aerosol paint was banned, causing city-wide outrage within business and art communities. The law was contested and eventually even made its way to the U.S. Supreme Court where it was upheld. While recently there have been rumblings of allowing the sale of these paints to "adults," there is still no end to this ban in sight.

This law pushed Chicago Kindred to think of marks much differently. While it is still possible to go right outside of the Chicago border into the surrounding suburbs and pick up some spray paint, it is mildly inconvenient. Younger Kindred still get paint shipped to their havens through online transactions. Nevertheless, the ban has pushed Kindred to become more creative with their marks in and around Chicago.

Because of the ban, people have found new and more novel ways of tagging an area. One of the more popular ways has been etching onto mirrors in public establishments. This provides a silvery white effect over the glass. Kindred often provide marks of control or warnings on mirrors. The effect has been used on outside mirrored windows of buildings as well, to provide ownership of territories or buildings.

Murals are a huge part of the art scene in certain neighborhoods of Chicago. This is where a business is either asked, paid, or coerced into allowing a side of their building to be used as a canvas for a large piece of artwork. These murals often connect to the inhabitants and culture of a neighborhood, perhaps having aspects of religious connotations, ethnic background, or local folklore. Cainites often integrate their own secret language into the large paintings, in subtle or not so subtle ways.



Blue Bars

The bands of blue on the Chicago flag stand for Lake Michigan and the north branch of the Chicago river. These are both natural bodies of water the people of Chicago have bent to their will, yet could not survive without. Lake Michigan supplies tap water to the larger Chicagoland area and Chicagoans have engineered the river to flow backwards downstate to St. Louis to get rid of sewage. Chicagoans shaped the forces of nature, but even with that level of power there are just some things they cannot do.

Scarcity drives ingenuity. While Storytellers want players to have the best experience they can, conflict builds storyline. The conflict in the city of Chicago often comes from the players interacting with and relating to the environment. As much as characters may want to change the environment of a city, there are some things simply out of their control.

The Spirit of the City

Some places are just special. They provide levels of nostalgia or connection on an almost spiritual level. This deep connection to the land, or lack thereof, can help bring definition to humans and vampires. A city like Chicago just has a certain *je ne sais quoi,* an indefinable trait or energy that flows through all major metropolitan areas. Be it a mixture of the culture and people or the earth under it, every city has a spirit and that spirit can occasionally act upon its own to produce serendipitous convergences.

To reflect this, we have created the *Spirit of the City* system. This system can enhance and build elements of a story and provide the distinct flavor a city needs. You can use the provided tables here for your **Chicago by Night** chronicle or make your own. All one needs is a location, a given number of sudden events, and a corresponding number of successful outcomes and failures.

These tables don't need to be utilized in every experience. Sometimes people and Kindred can just go out to get a pack of smokes. Sometimes driving to your local club is completely mundane. There are those nights though when seemingly anything that can happen will happen. These tables help Storytellers and players make their city more interactive and provide a deeper, richer experience with the environment. They may also cause a bit of conflict within a coterie, provide machinations of enemies, and jumping-off points for stories within your city environment.

The *Spirit of the City* system is simple to implement into your game. Take two dice and designate one the City die and the other your Luck die. It is optional who initiates this stream of play. It can be either the player or the Storyteller. Roll the two dice; the City die will determine the situation in which the PCs are involved and the Luck die will provide whether it will be a success or failure, successes being results of 6 and above.

This system can be used to speed up situational game play or slow it down to make sections of story kick in. If used, the players and Storytellers should be able to initiate rolls to their woe or benefit. If a failure occurs, Storytellers may initiate a *win at a cost* deliberation. Remember both player and the Storyteller can suggest a cost for this success, though it should never play out to be as beneficial as the success provided by the Spirit of the City system.

These quotes associated with the successes and failures on these tables provide jumping-off points for situations. Feel free to modify or change them for your chronicle's use.

Note: Modifiers and disadvantages conveyed through the Spirit of the City are temporary, with a Storyteller-determined duration unless specified otherwise. Modifiers can be made permanent if experience points are used to purchase them or relationships detailed are cultivated in the story. Many of these bonuses are left nebulous, to account for different character origins, dispositions, and behavior.

The Avenues of Chicago

Driving south to north through Chicago on a good night is usually a harrowing experience due to traffic, potential hijackings, street violence, and dilapidated neighborhoods as scenery, let alone on a bad night or when being chased. These are some situations that may occur when on the Chicago roads. All failures may initiate a Drive roll to come to a resolution or players may take the next logical conclusion of the storyline if they wish. See table on p. XX.

The Block

As seen earlier in the Homesteading section, a city block can become a setting for an entire chronicle of **Vampire: The Masquerade**. This table provides some situations that can occur in building your relationship

with the block of your haven or one of your coterie members' blocks. See table on p. XX.

The Occult Scene

The Chicago occult scene is deep. There are many traditions, temples, and shops that dot the city. Then there are the not-so-open locations and circles that practice around the city that you or your coterie may have interrupted. See table on p. XX.

The Underworld

There is crime everywhere throughout Chicago, in a multitude of shades and of a variety of focuses. These are some of the random acts of criminality you can experience in Chicago. See table on p. XX.

Dragoon

These are massive influence actions that completely change the evening or unlife of a vampire. They are to be used sparingly and with caution, as they can completely create or upend a storyline. See table on p. XX.

People Person

Sometimes you're just at the right place at the right time. Sometimes you know the right words to say. Sometimes you're respected as a fellow worker. Chicagoans tend to look out for one another and sometimes you get lucky and people just like you. Then there are those nights where you couldn't say the right thing if it was plastered on the forehead of the person to whom you're talking. See table on p. XX.

The Collar Counties

The Chicago Collar counties are restless, wild spaces filled with seemingly random horrors. While they embody the malaise of suburban life, they also hold enough space where these same abominations (if not looked at directly) can seemingly pass as normal, everyday humans. The chittering, mirthful laughter coming from a forest preserve is often just taken as coyotes celebrating a kill. The cold pouring out from a cornfield behind a subdivision is chalked up to funky geothermal stuff or botanical weirdness. The rumor of the remnants of the world's first thermonuclear reactor being buried in a local forest and now leaking quietly into the water supply is just an urban legend, right? See table on p. XX.

Smoke and Mirrors

This table consists of problems only Kindred would walk into in the city of Chicago. Storytellers can use this table after feeding scenes to see if their players gain negative effects from the blood they consumed or to see if they will have a random encounter later in the game session. Use this table discreetly before a game session to see what will happen. Remember, there is always a cause to these problems, they don't randomly occur. Perhaps there is some vampire visiting economic suffering on the kine of this area. Perhaps a corporation is leaking chemicals into the local water supply or there are other Cainites around not cleaning up after themselves. Whatever the problem is, it provides depth of story to give this information to your players. See table on p. XX.

Elysia

Elysia are gathering locations for the city's Kindred to gather and socialize. It often devolves into backroom dealing and backstabbing, but Kindred cannot help but mingle with their own kind. Elysium represents peace and vampire society — a rarity anywhere else. See table on p. XX.

Dignitaries and Debutantes

Kindred of note run the gamut from Prince to Herald and Camarilla Sheriff to Sabbat Templar. Your interactions with them can lead to opportunities and the formation of fresh rivalries. See table on p. XX.

Red Stars

The flag of Chicago has four red stars in the center white bar, representing special events or locations within the city's history. The points on the flag have specific meanings as well, from bragging rights, virtues, aspects of power, and the political entities Chicago has belonged to in the past.

This section reflects that same design, be it special locations within the city or aspects of the city and how they work. These places hold essential value to the Kindred of the city and are protected as much as possible.

A malaise has been running rampant through the city as of late. No one really knows who is behind it or how they are orchestrating it. Places of cultural import have been shutting down or get closed seemingly for no reason at all. These are all locations and services that have been long loved by the communities of both Kindred and kine, yet they all shuttered. There seems to be no rhyme or reason to the closures. At first, the Toreador blamed the Nosferatu, but then some of their holdings were also closed, and their human pawns disappeared as well. It has caused a level of unease amongst the Chicago Kindred, as they don't know who or what will be struck next.

So far, the city has lost Q101 and 97.9 The Loop, rock radio stations, yet the former was resurrected with the help of some local Brujah. A string of famous club closures such as Touché and Jackhammer rocked the LGBTQIA+ community. The Alley, an internationally recognized outlet for counter-culture clothes and items, even closed for a brief time. Neo, Chicago's premier goth and industrial club, locked its doors along with the Double Door, one of Chicago's remaining independent music venues. Countless other institutions have fallen to this cultural recession. In a city as large as Chicago, things close all the time, so it hasn't really garnered anything other than collective groans of apathy, nostalgia, or sadness from the kine populace. Kindred, however, continue to worry over this seemingly random destruction of their areas of influence.

Elysia

The practice of Elysium was not particularly important to Kindred within the first few centuries of development in the New World. It was a simpler time, when rules were looser and vampires often existed hundreds of miles apart from each other. With the building of larger metropolitan areas, the need arose for reverence of cultural bastions, along with protection from the rise of the sporadic Anarch rebellions. Lodin first declared Elysium within the city of Chicago in the early 20th century, and it's stuck in various important Chicago sites since then.

The need for common neutral ground and protected locations has never been greater than in these modern nights. With the Anarchs once again swinging and the Sabbat devolving to greater savagery than before, Chicago's Kindred community has stood behind the tradition of Elysium when they could find very little to agree upon elsewhere. The remaining elders of the city and the Primogen Council still put their weight behind the protection of the locations and their assets. Even vampires as ancient or monstrous as Helena or Jason Newberry respect Elysium, most of the time. Anarchs believe in the practice as well, as it provides them a common space to try to gain allies or sympathizers, and meet to discuss concerns common to all Kindred. Importantly, the act of Elysia allows the Lasombra to reach out and meet other Kindred in a safe location.

The tradition is strictly adhered to these nights and fiercely interpreted with little mercy to offenders. Yet the lack of Elysium in certain locations of the city also calls to the more sinister urges of the Damned.

The Laws of Elysium

First set down by the former Prince Lodin, these four laws have been recently re-declared by the new Prince and Primogen Council. These rules are left intentionally vague for ease of use, and manipulation, by the elders of the city. There is a communal set of oral traditions that resembles precedent among the Camarilla elders and the Keeper's officers.

A running issue in Chicago involves the Caitiff Anarch Victoria Longwood, who tagged the alley wall of the Blue Velvet Club with graffiti to help other Anarchs find the location. Though seized by Damien, the Sheriff, she explained she tagged the club because the use of internet was outright banned by the Camarilla. The court's officers have argued back and forth for months over whether Longwood should be punished for damaging Elysium, or rewarded for finding a new way of advertising its presence. After all, she was signposting the Blue Velvet for its intended purpose. Currently, Longwood exists staked and in torpor somewhere in the city, while the court debates her fate.

1. **ON PAIN OF A BLOOD HUNT, NO VIOLENCE IS PERMITTED ON THE PREMISES AGAINST KINDRED, KINE, OR PROPERTY.**

This rule is rather simple in description yet complicated in practice. What exactly is "violence"? Kindred in the past have accused others of use of the subtler disciplines as an act of violence and found in the right by the elders. But it is also well known that if you don't get caught, the court is none the wiser.

2. **THE ELYSIUM IS TO BE CONSIDERED NEUTRAL GROUND. NO CONFLICT OF ANY SORT AMONG KINDRED MAY BE CARRIED ONTO ITS SACRED GROUND.**

This is quite a hypocrisy, as most Kindred hold age-old grudges against each other. Yet, conflict is frowned upon and open acts of hostility are most definitely a breach of etiquette. Therefore, it is encouraged that all Cainites do everything within their power to bolster their willpower before entering Elysium.

3 ACCESS SHALL NOT BE LIMITED; ALL CAINITES ARE WELCOME.

This rule is one of the most contentious in modern nights. With the mass exodus of Kindred from the Camarilla, many members wish to scrap this rule for the new Anarchs. Cooler heads prevailed, as Elysium is considered above all political views. This law has also been incredibly helpful to the Lasombra with their recent attempts at transition.

4 ONE SHOULD NOT ATTRACT ATTENTION AS ONE LEAVES AND ENTERS ELYSIUM.

Subtlety has always been celebrated within the Ivory Tower. This rule is the most flexible as the majority of Kindred who attend Elysium love to put on airs of power and grace. Entrances into buildings have at times been modified into grand productions, especially by some of the more artistically minded Kindred. Attention from kine is always frowned upon, especially in mind of the city's press corps.

The Rack

The Rack of Chicago has moved around and expanded over the years. While it used to center around Rush Street, it has since grown to encompass Wicker Park, Wrigleyville, and Boystown. The Rack has also changed in approach over the years. While it still holds the most opportunity for feeding, it has been declared open market to all vampires of the city if they use discretion and are cognizant of the Masquerade during their feeding. Territory and special feeding grounds have only been made available to citizens who have been declared "deserving" by the office of the Prince and the Primogen Council.

While the Rack holds plentiful feeding opportunities, it also is looked down upon as a location for making a haven. Its dubious reputation for petty crime and public intoxication tends to turn away the elitist attitudes of the Camarilla and the chaotic nature of the location makes some Anarchs nervous, as a situation there can quickly escalate. It is mostly inhabited by fledglings or neonates who are "earning their fangs." Yet, in a pinch, it is often used for a quick bite and sip for all the Kindred of Chicago.

In the recent past, the CPD have taken a relaxed view on public intoxication and marijuana use. While anyone being rowdy will still be swept into a police car, if you are keeping to yourself, you tend not to find confrontation. The same goes for Kindred within this location. When dealing with the Chicago Police Department in this area, if your character succeeds on a

Difficulty 3 Resolve + Etiquette roll, you gain +1 die to all Social rolls with them for the remainder of the story. Any belligerent behavior immediately provides –2 dice modifier to all rolls dealing with the Chicago Police for the story's duration.

The Rack has the largest number of bars within the city, and with the advent of the microbrewery, even more people have returned to this area to drink. The music scene around the Rack is also booming, with the multitude of underground rock, hip hop, and electronica venues popping up all over these neighborhoods. The party scene is extremely vibrant, providing +1 die to all attempts at appearing human, as the lively nature of the proceedings infects even the undead. There is also an unfortunate penchant for bravado and fighting. Kindred suffer –1 die on Awareness rolls.

THE SUCCUBUS CLUB

The once-famed destination for the denizens of the Chicago nightclub scene, the Succubus Club closed its doors in the late 1990s. Declining sales, the aftermath of the Lupine assault, and changes of culture were often cited by local papers and magazines for the famous, edgy nightclub's demise. The local NPR station WBEZ even did a *Sound Opinions* piece recently, remembering the goth scene of past Chicago and taking note of its influences that were felt worldwide. That is, at least, the story as the public knows it.

In the last year the Succubus Club reopened, at first exclusively to Kindred, but now to kine as well. The Succubus Club's owner remains anonymous to the public at large, adding an air of mystery to the club that spawned dozens of imitators, a few successful franchises, and even a wandering "pop-up" clone, but none are quite as successful as the real thing.

These nights, the club is once again the place to be for Camarilla Kindred. The Succubus is a multi-level club containing a dance floor, four bars, a stage and DJ booth, balconies, elevated walkways, and VIP suites all in the main chamber alone. The club has received extensive renovations, though whether the money came from the Prince, the owner, or some other benefactor is unknown. Deeper into the club are two galleries, a spa, a cigar and whiskey lounge, and further private rooms for VIP occupancy. The uppermost floor is completely soundproofed from activities below, and is usually reserved for string quartets and opera singers. The ceiling of this floor is made from glass, revealing the night sky up above. Between this floor and those below are the offices of the mortal (and possibly immortal) staff. Buried beneath the venue's wine-and-beer cellars are the remains of the old Succubus Club in storage and the basement maze used exclusively by Kindred for secret talks and exciting hunts. If a mortal sneaks this far down, they're unlikely to return with memory of their journey.

The Succubus Club rivals the Blue Velvet and Red No⁹ 5 as the most popular Kindred-run bars in Chicago. What the other two have in class, live music, and aesthetic, the Succubus makes up for in nostalgia. The club sees visitors of all ages and all sects, where the Blue Velvet predominantly caters to the elite and Red No⁹ 5 appeals mainly to outsiders.

All Social interactions with kine within the Succubus Club gain +2 dice as the environment is specially designed to create an aura of warmth and passion within the human occupants.

THE HIVE

The Loop is the financial and economic heart of the city of Chicago. During the day it is awash with humanity going this way and that to careers and life events. During the evening a more refined, polished clientele descends upon the upscale bars fronted by mixologists and followed by expensive dinners. The Hive, what Kindred call the Loop, is the center of the city and from where all city life flows outward.

The Hive holds most of the city offices, the Cook County buildings, the courthouse, the three major train stations, and a multitude of Elysia. This area is the most heavily populated by tourists as it holds most of the scenic locations of the city. It also contains a plethora of plain-looking office buildings and the most notable and well-known skyscrapers. There is also an academic stronghold along Congress Avenue, as it holds both the Washington Library and multiple universities. This is also where the "Broadway" of Chicago is considered to be located.

The Hive is often considered a model of the overall city itself and is a good gauge for the wellness of the city. It is also firmly under the control of the Ventrue and Toreador clans. The Malkavian clan, via Primogen Newberry, has recently asked for feeding rights on the L lines that run through this part of the city, but their request has yet to be granted. The Malkavians have always been given a wide berth by the officers of the city, allowing them to feed and come and go as they please due to their mistakenly perceived fragile natures.

All Performance, Academics, and Finance rolls in this area gain +1 die due to the heightened levels of access and opportunity built into the neighborhood. Due to the stage-like mentality of this area, any Larceny and Drive rolls are at –1 die due to heavy police presence and throngs of tourists.

THE L

There are few things Chicagoans connect more to madness than commuting. Travel in the city can

be tough at times, but it is better than other cities, at least according to news outlets. Chicago's elevated train, or the 'L,' is no exception. Lines stretch and meander all over the city and those in charge have recently been given the go ahead to expand even further. They all converge in a circle wrapping around the Hive in some sort of delightful spider web around the city.

This may be why the Malkavians of the city are fond of the L. Within the last five years, the administration and mayor's office decided to shut down over half of the city's mental-health facilities, effectively crippling the city's safety net for some of their neediest citizens. With no end in sight and the city proclaiming a practice of "small center and home care" for the mentally ill, those suffering often find themselves homeless, without care, and falling through the cracks of society. An easy and cheap way to get out of the often-harsh Chicago weather, be it brutal summers or biting winter, is to ride the L around the city.

There has also been a recent uptick in train-related suicides in Chicago. Numbers have been spotty at best and not released publicly, but it is often reported in the local news traffic reports, as it affects morning and evening commute times.

Those touched with differentiation of mental and cognizant ability fascinate the city's Malkavians. They often gather ghouls or groom new childer from those experiencing the city in constant motion. "Get off the redline before 9 P.M." is a common bit of advice given to young Chicagoans by their family members. Perhaps there is some merit to this advice.

All Dominate rolls gain +1 die when used within the Chicago Elevated Train system. Be it the claustrophobic nature of the cars or some other occult manifestation, the trains lend themselves to hysteria and lunacy. Due to the paranoia many train commuters suffer into the night, there's an infectious –1 die to all Resolve rolls when on board the L.

Dear Lester,

Your masters are not mine. Yours are within the earth and mine are within the water. Are they of the same brood, the same family, perhaps? I do not know. But kindly refrain from casting aspersions against the Cultivars. We have nothing to do with your feeding problem.

Mother's blessings,

Edith

THE CHICAGO PEDWAY

A series of underground tunnels and overhead bridges weaves through the heart of the Hive, connecting most of the buildings. This area was only recently completed and was immediately grabbed as territory by the Nosferatu, via Primogen "Khalid." Bolstered by the loss of the shadier parts of lower Wacker Drive in the rebuilding and revising of the city at the turn of the century, the Nosferatu made the calculated decision to push for this territory. The territorial disputes over the Pedway have been a point of conflict with the Ventrue, who own and operate a large number of the buildings to which the Pedway is connected. Through the trading of boons, unrequested support of the Caitiff and thin-bloods in this endeavor, and backroom deals, the Nosferatu seem to firmly control the location.

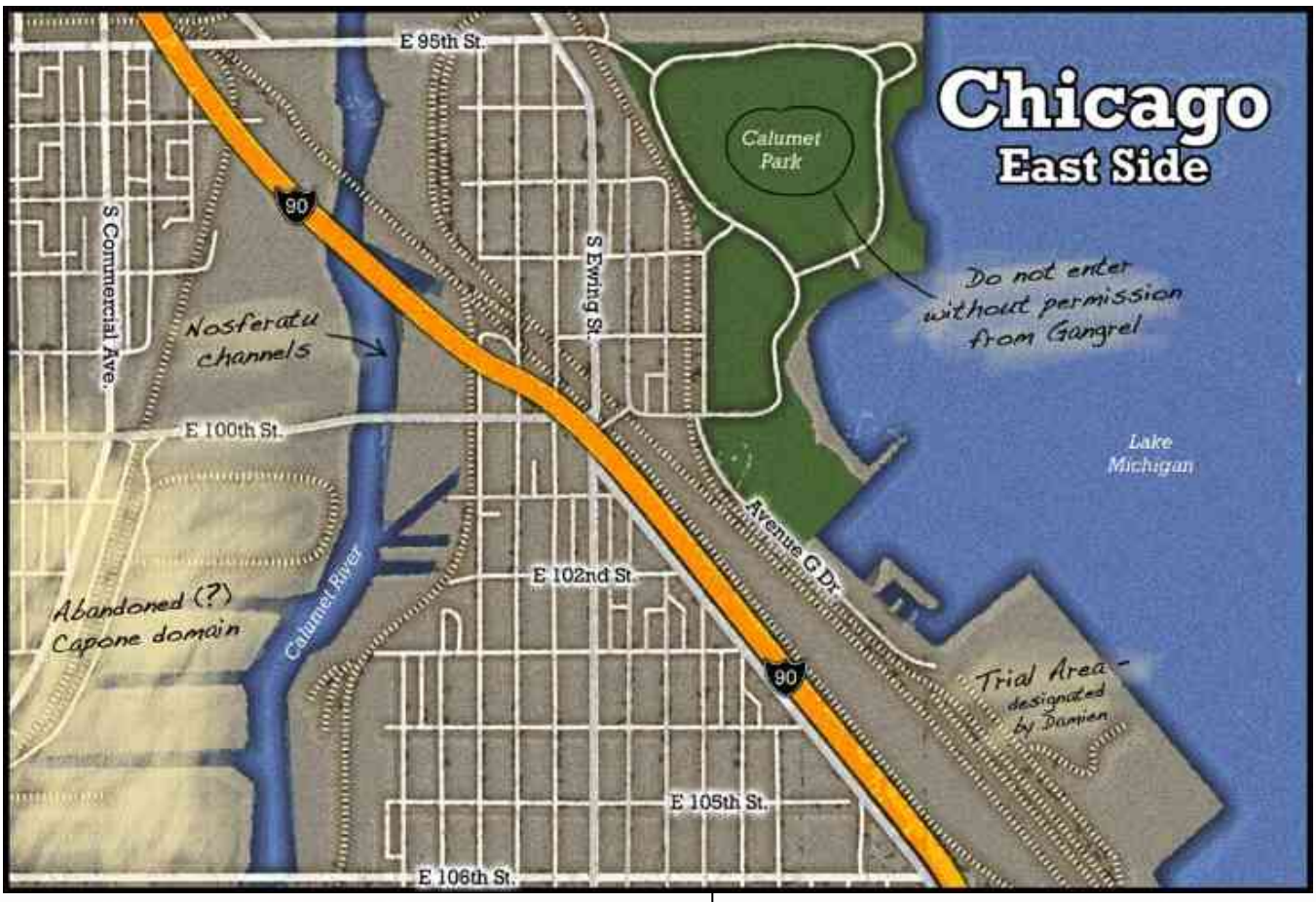
This situation has given some hope to Caitiff and thin-bloods who exist under the heels of the Ventrue clan. This fragile grouping of allies has literally pulled the ground out from underneath the kings of Chicago, though there surely will be retribution coming in later nights.

All Stealth rolls within the Pedway gain +1 die due to its transient and shady nature, with Presence rolls suffering –1 die. This location is not one for grandstanding, but for moving on and moving quickly.

The "East" Side

Most Chicagoans don't realize the city goes as far south as it does. The East Side of Chicago stretches across the lakefront beaches, the museum campus, and a handful of neighborhoods. In some places it falls only a few blocks away from the state of Indiana. A more industrial portion of the city, the East Side is a hard-knock, working-class area containing a large portion of old and new Anarch holdings.

This area of the city holds the majority of Brujah turf and assets, being in direct access to the museums, University of Chicago, and tougher neighborhoods like Hegewisch and a neighborhood by the same "East Side" moniker. The Nosferatu enjoy the vacant or abandoned industrial areas provided here. This side also holds many



of the city's Caitiff and thin-bloods, who are often left to their own devices or openly threatened by the more righteous members of the Camarilla.

In the late 1980s, the manufacturing heart of the city was in the East Side of Chicago. There were plentiful labor-intensive jobs that paid incredibly well and pushed America and Chicago forward. Then, after a series of trade deals and a massive economic shift caused in part by Ballard's "interdiction," all the steel mill and manufacturing jobs disappeared almost overnight. This economic vacuum caused extensive damage across the mortal populace of the area. This part of the city simply never recovered and, after almost being demolished for an airport by the Daley regime, seemed to freeze in time.

Brooding, with a mixture of industrial parks and refined spaces, this area provides +1 die to all Intimidation rolls when dealing with the mortal populace. It also takes on the contemptuous nature of the lake, bad weather causing monstrous waves to crash onto the shores of Lake Michigan. When such weather occurs, all Kindred on the East Side have –1 die to resist frenzy.

STEVE'S LOUNGE, 13200 S. BALTIMORE AVENUE

Built in 1958, Steve's has been a local staple in the East Side neighborhood of Hegewisch since its opening. Hosting events from baptisms to weddings to wakes, this tiny dance hall and bar has held family gatherings encompassing the entire lives and deaths of Chicago citizens for over a half a century. Known for supporting neighborhood clientele with cultural tastes such as the local Friday fish fry (a big to-do in heavily Catholic neighborhoods) and polish sausage, it contains two dance halls, a stage, and a little bar where sleepy pensioners drink their days away. This bar style has been slowly disappearing from the Chicago scene for years (partly due to changing tastes but also rumored to be due to some other, more malicious, influence) but Steve's withstands the tide of change.

The hall, when not holding family gatherings, is often rented out to vampires of the local Anarch Movement. A perfect location run by mortals who keep to themselves, this dance hall area has become a war room of sorts for meetings where they plan advancements of the Anarch cause. Being an underground marketplace of Kindred ideas, this location provides +1 die to all Insight, Persuasion, and Technology rolls.

The South Side

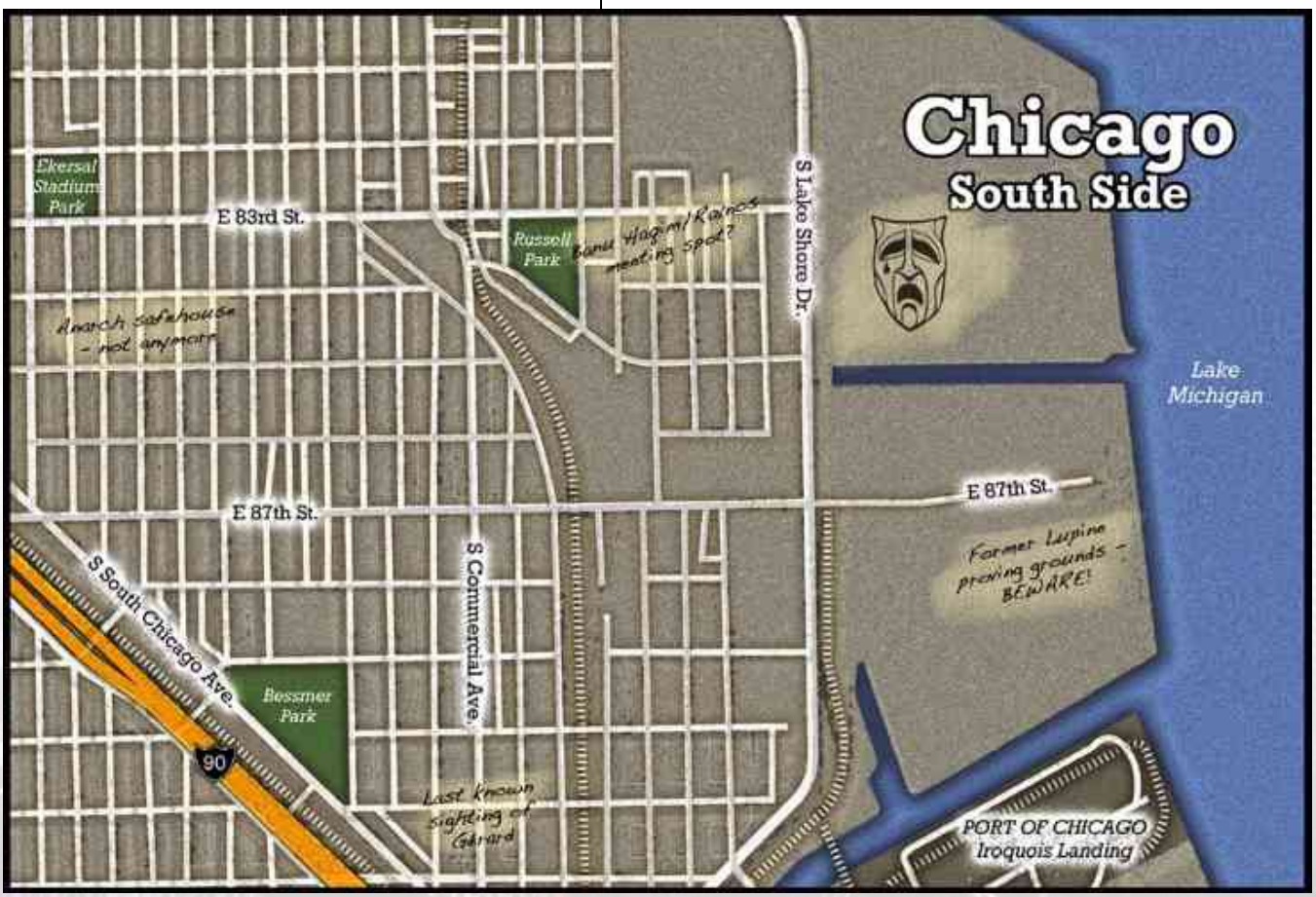
The South Side is often named the "real" Chicago by people who live within its confines. It is the embodiment of the unofficial motto of the city, "I Will." This section of the city varies wildly in economic demographics, going from small housing projects to upper-middle-class dwellings and even gothic-style mansions in Hyde Park. A common architectural thread running through a majority of buildings is faux pillars that surround doorways of apartment complexes and older homes. This area has a quiet dignity, even though it has held some of the worst horrors of criminal violence within the past few decades.

The gang conflicts hit this portion of the city particularly hard. Entire blocks of buildings have been left abandoned by families leaving the neighborhoods considered too dangerous to live in any longer. These buildings often burn down after being stripped by drug addicts or the homeless for materials they can trade for money. There are too many buildings for the city to demolish, so they are left to board them up and put large, red "X" signs over the doors.

Religion holds a heavy sway within these areas, ranging from massive and vibrant African American AME churches, Muslim mosques, Catholic cathedrals, Jewish and Buddhist temples, and storefront places of worship. With the economic woes often plaguing neighborhoods in this area, citizens turn to having fortunes of faith and kindness to their fellow man.

The few Lasombra already in Chicago have been rumored to want to gentrify Pilsen, Archer Avenue, and Little Village; heavily Catholic areas made up of predominantly working-class and immigrant communities. Marcel of the Ministry once ran a blood cult out of the now-razed Robert Taylor Homes, but his clan scattered amidst the southland and developed a large presence in more-evangelical communities. The Tremere enjoy religious aspects of the area, as with religion comes the esoteric. Superstition weighs heavily on the South Side and there is a large amount of occult, religious, and botanical shops in the area.

Kevin Jackson has declared the bottom quarter of the South Side as Lupine territory, but that doesn't seem to stop desperate thin-bloods and outsider clans attempting to stake a claim on isolated neighborhoods and industrial sites.



This part of the city holds the only other airport within the city, Midway Airport, which is used for interstate and some international travel. Though it is considered Elysium and neutral territory for the use of all clans, the Lupines have it securely under their claw, and for now, no vampires dare access the airport.

Vampires in this area of the city gain +1 die on Occult and Blood Sorcery-related rolls, but suffer –2 dice on all Resolve rolls. It's difficult to remain calm in the thick of werewolf territory.

CHINATOWN

Chinatown is technically under the control of the Tremere, who almost never visit, but have made it clear nobody else should enter the area, either. That's been the rule for a long time. And even though the Tremere are no longer represented in Chicago's court, the Prince continues to uphold this rule.

Until the 1920s, there weren't any hard-and-fast rules, but western Kindred had little interest in Chinatown, where language barriers and low incomes (and their own racism) made it unattractive turf. This changed starting in 1926, but awful things happened to vampires who, by fang or Discipline, attempted to assert control over the place. Two attempts to Embrace Chinatown residents ended with the intended recipient bursting into flames, taking the prospective sire with them. A handful of visiting Kindred in search of prey vanished. In 1943, neonate Jack McGurn, forgotten childe of Capone, announced his intention to "get protection, the old way" from the area. The fact that he later arrived at Elysium having been flayed, and with no memory of his prior whereabouts, was not in itself cause for alarm. Kindred are used to occasional atrocities. The fact he was unable to heal, and any blood he

Mr. Jackson,

I don't care who runs things, but I also don't know how much you've been told after the transfer of power. Let's be clear about something: You don't run Chinatown. You don't set foot in Chinatown. You want something there, you come to me. If anyone stupidly wanders in there and has an unusual experience, don't tell DuSable, unless you want your wayward idiot to make a long trip in a tiny box. Call me immediately.

You may have all the stupid notes Nicolai left for the old bosses, using pop-culture code words and Orientalist trash, talking about the "Jade Demon" and all that. First, let me assure you that none of us are holed up in there. That includes our Asian cousins. In fact, if any of them come to visit, you should dissuade them with all available means from visiting Chinatown.

Second, don't trust the old sources. Nicolai didn't know a damn thing. Again, come to me first. DuSable has some experience in this regard, but you don't want him getting involved unless you feel like another war.

Third, if anyone coming out of Chinatown makes trouble with the help of truly extraordinary capabilities, kill them, burn everything, and bring me everything that doesn't burn. They're breaking some very old rules.

That's what you need to know right now. I will be visiting shortly to provide a detailed briefing.

Erichtho

drank simply oozed from his body, was however alarming. Capone disposed of him. McGurn's existence became a forbidden subject. Lodin asked the Tremere to investigate it and Garwood Marshall came back with rumors that Chinatown was controlled by a sect of occultists, their nature unknown. Lodin declared the area off limits but planned an organized incursion.

Fortunately, Erichtho forestalled this maneuver by visiting Chinatown herself, as she suspected her knowledge of mortal magi, by now matchless among Chicago Kindred, might clarify things. She discovered Marshall's evidence of conspiracy was based on misinterpreting the role of Chinatown's mutual-aid associations. The Tongs weren't always involved in strictly legal business, but weren't controlled by a supernatural force. Only by noticing unusual behavior and utilizing her own abilities to unlock their memories did she discover that, under psychic coercion, several Chinatown leaders paid for unusual construction around and under the neighborhood. The compulsion included instructions to forget the transactions. Erichtho left their memories hidden and, studying the patterns, visited an innocuous building in the center of the neighborhood.

Three nights later, she returned to the Tremere chantry with an agreement between her own "Secret People of the City" and the Xūmigōngpai ("Abyssal Labyrinth School"). Her memories were limited, but she clearly recalled being in a place that could not possibly be in Chicago. Besides the black hedgerows, the moon was in the wrong phase and position in the sky. The sect's representative, the "holder of jade demon bindings," dressed in Ming Dynasty attire, casually read her thoughts and dictated the terms to her. She wrote it in her own blood. Her sire and Regent Nicolai Antonescu promptly forbade her from sharing the document with anyone and briefed Lodin himself, combining Marshall's rumors, a small amount of Erichtho's impressions (concealing her apparent kidnapping) and a great deal of his own inventiveness. The representative became the "Jade Demon," and the rest of it was spun into a tale of Chinatown controlled by occult conspiracies, instead of an immigrant community unknowingly victimized by one. He stole the credit and got it wrong, but at least he kept Lodin from making a terrible mistake.

After Nicolai left for and presumably burned with the Prime Chantry, Erichtho retrieved the agreement. Its terms are surprisingly fair. Kindred aren't supposed to enter Chinatown except on the most trivial business. The Xūmigōngpai will never leave Chinatown except for similarly trivial purposes, such as shopping or paying taxes. The penalty for breaking the agreement is the hideous torture of the offender and a fine of 1,000 taels (about 83 pounds) of gold. On subsequent visits to Chinatown, she discovered that in July 1999, the building where she made contact burned to the ground, apparently the victim of a freak gas-main explosion. Is the Xūmigōngpai gone? She hasn't noticed anything out of the ordinary, but Auspex-tinged dreams warn of something left undone, and a copper crescent moon over black hedges, where the stars are wrong.

Chinatown is technically forbidden territory, but the troves of lore hidden in shops and the impressive library within its limits allow all Kindred in this area +1 die to Occult rolls. Additionally, the criminal element here awards any vampires with contacts among the Tongs or other groups +1 die to Streetwise rolls.

The West Side

The West Side of Chicago has dramatically transformed over the last few decades. A booming medical corridor was built along the I-290 highway out of the city only a mile or so past where it crosses the Chicago River. This was mostly funded and created under the guidance of the Hecata clan based out of the Little Italy neighborhood. This guidance disappeared in the last decade without a trace. The clan was known to be highly secretive, only having two public representatives that ever openly attended Elysium, one a balding, middle-aged man known only as "Genet" and a younger woman by the name of "Marley." They both only spoke to the Primogen Council or the Prince privately; under the agreement they were never to involve themselves in sectarian politics, including meeting with Anarchs or impressionable neonates.

The assumed agreement for the next century was that the clan would keep to itself yet help bring economic recovery and glory back to the West Side as it had done in the past, under the direction of Genet, who would be the person taking any missives or contacts after a meeting, with the additional caveat that they had absolutely no interaction with Alphonse Capone. They committed to keeping the "Promise" and the West Side grew in wealth and bodies.

Then the Promise broke down. Contracts were cancelled. Buildings were finished but funding for advancement was pulled. Hospital budgets were tightened and there was a citywide shortage of trauma centers, with hospitals refusing to take patients with gunshot wounds. All attempts to reach out to the clan or to the good doctor Genet, who promptly went on sabbatical to of-

ficially study the healthcare system of Italy, according to his offices, were returned with silence. Cold, eerie, silence.

Around this time is when heroin began flooding the city markets. The drug became so cheap and prevalent that a citywide epidemic was declared. It was not uncommon for dealers to literally just stand on the off ramps of I-290 and deal to passing cars or sit on the Blue Line train stops and hustle. The drug ravaged the area and the glittering future of the West Side stalled out.

The only other clan that calls this area of town home, the Gangrel, have mostly kept to themselves during this time. With most of the clan leaving the Camarilla, there were agreements to keep their territory if they took care of it. A lot of the West Side is lush and green, embodying the "City in a Garden" motto emblazoned on the city crest. While there is still much economic hardship in the area, it also holds many green spaces and "The Boulevards," winding roads left over from before the Great Fire with massive parks, green spaces, and field houses that support the people of Chicago.

The West Side possesses fantastic Magadon Pharmaceutical facilities and clinics available to those with the money to afford treatment, allowing all Kindred in this area +1 die to Medicine rolls. The dilapidation of this area's buildings and rapid spread of green zones also give Kindred here +1 die to Animal Ken rolls.

GARFIELD PARK CONSERVATORY, 300 N CENTRAL PARK AVENUE

An opulent lead-lined glass conservatory in the heart of a lower income area, the Garfield Park Conservatory was declared Elysium by Lodin many years ago. It takes up the entirety of a city block, with sweeping lawns shaded by beautiful old-growth trees. It even has a Green Line L stop on its southern side. This location is a bright and colorful contrast to the brutal realities going on around it. It acts as a salve to those who can enter. It is free to the public and funded mostly by donations. Rosa Hernandez of the Clan Gangrel has made sure the location will exist in perpetuity due to her own support.

The garden has outreach programs for people living within and around the local community. It is seen as a success where so much has failed around it. A YMCA across the street and most of the businesses and restaurants near it are doing well. The Toreador clan sees the success with a touch of jealousy and mild annoyance. Their gardens don't achieve such praise. How could such a low clan as the Gangrel be so prosperous? Let alone after they left the Camarilla? Quite scandalous indeed, and Annabelle is beginning to think the gardens could benefit from a little pruning.

All Kindred within this location gain +1 die to all rolls when resisting Hunger or frenzy, due to the garden's calming nature.

RED NOº 5, N GRAND & HALSTED, MILWAUKEE BUS AND COACH STATION

This club exudes exclusivity, the line to enter often snaking around the block and leading into the coach station. It amazes the locals how many tourists come to Chicago just to get into Red Noº 5. Many such out-of-towners find that without meeting exacting criteria or having a prior invitation, the heavies on either side of the club's famous red door deny most would-be patrons entry.

Ostensibly, the Caitiff Bennett Steadman controls the guest list or at least informs his crew of the types of people he wants in each night. Sometimes he'll tell them to specifically turn away anyone not dressed formally, white girls, or men in general. Other times he'll tell them to be on the lookout for patrons who look like they want to get high, have sex, or dance the night away — timewasters can get fucked and hang out at the Succubus Club or the Blue Velvet. Undoubtedly Steadman (and his boss, Adze) favor a black clientele, but money talks at the end of the night.

Once inside, the west wing of the building houses a bar and lounge where the music from next door isn't too overbearing. This is where people go for their meetings and to take their dates. On the other side of the bar, which actually sits in the center of the club, is the east wing. That's the dance floor, the live-musicians' stage, and a balcony area for VIPs. Kitchens and private rooms snake off around the club's central hub.

Red Noº 5 hosts a range of live music, including classic disco, modern techno, hip-hop, R&B, and rap artists. On a quiet night, Steadman might arrange a jazz or soul musician, or genuine blues artist. Almost every performer is a noted artist with pedigree or a bold up-and-comer, helping to explain the rush of would-be clubbers every night. Steadman never invites the prevailingly popular "white boys with guitars" to perform. They can play their instruments and wail anywhere else, but not in Red Noº 5. Here, the music is *real* and speaks to those who love it.

Though Steadman is the night-to-night organizer and frequently indulges himself with the prettiest clubgoers, and Adze is the power behind it all, hosting private meetings on balconies while overlooking his lucrative business, Adze's lover Erzulie and her devoted disciple Mamuwalde plan to use Red Noº 5 for their annual Blood Disco. This great act of celebration and sacrifice in the name of Lilith entails the spilling of blood, consummation of flesh, and gathering of clanless from far and wide.

All Kindred in Red Noº 5 gain +1 die to Persuasion rolls when aiming to seduce the kine, as an atmosphere of subtle lust pervades the building. Kine aren't having sex in the open here, but if you hook up in the Red, you're likely to find yourself with a companion until the dawn.

The North Side

Where the world often perceives Chicago as violent and brutal, it also often praises the northern portion. Beautiful and shining, diverse and healthy, scrappy fighters that never give up and take a loss with a laugh and quick anecdote, the North Side has an excellent marketing strategy.

Home to the city's Toreador, this part of the city is often regarded as the most aesthetically pleasing. It holds the city zoo, theater, music and arts district, and has more artistically inclined areas. It also holds a great portion of the city's Rack, providing a healthy party scene for both Kindred and kine.

This area also holds a significant amount of Malkavians around the Streeterville neighborhood near the North Side. Banu Haqim and Ravnos clan members have been known to make havens within this area as well, with most congregating around Argyle Avenue, Devon Avenue, or in the vicinity of O'Hare International Airport. Notably, numbers of such itinerant vampires have reduced since FIRSTLIGHT launched a buzz of activity around O'Hare. Some claim a vampire in the region sold out the local Deceivers to the Second Inquisition.

Once considered "outlands" by most Chicago Kindred, the North Side still tends to be a sleepier area within the world of vampire politics. While it contains Elysia, it tends to not hold many gatherings, and the Rack's inhabitants are belligerent at best. The North Side holds a majority of elder Kindred havens, many of whom wish to be left alone and do not interact with the city court.

THE NEO-FUTURIST THEATER, 5153 N ASHLAND

Home to the city's longest running late-night theater show, the Neo-Futurist Theater is a non-profit community theater pushing cutting-edge acting and theater work all within a small, black-box theater. Seen as one of the crowning achievements of the Toreador clan, this international theater company has provided entertainment to generations of theatergoers. Many young people make a visit to the theater as a rite of passage, often connecting to the hilarious and sometimes deeply profound works shown there. It is of note that many Toreador visit the location to watch locally written plays that are both affordable and well written. There are even rumbles that Annabelle is looking to make a childe of one of

the mortals in the acting troupe, but the other Degenerates protest loudly about the group being broken up.

While they write and produce standalone plays, the acting troupe is most well-known for their decades-long-running show "The Infinite Wrench," which recently dodged an attack from an unknown vampire menacing the greater art-and-culture community of Chicago. This time it was camouflaged as a copyright violation and cease-and-desist order. Thankfully, due to quick thinking on the troupe's part and some behind-the-scenes work by the city's Toreador, the show was able to continue.

Discreetly made an Elysium in 2015 by the Primogen Council, Kindred young and old come to see the shows put on every Friday and Saturday evening at 11:30 P.M. All Toreador gain +1 die to resist the effects of their bane when inside the building if a play is taking place, and all Performance rolls gain +1 die within the black-box theater.

The Collar

Once called "The Borderlands," the Chicago suburbs have become something unto themselves over the last two decades. Now called the Collar Counties, or just the Collar by most Kindred these nights, these neo-fiefdoms have become an excellent source of territory for those brave or reckless enough to take them. With a huge boom in the population of kine, those either leaving the city or coming in from other states, a loose collection of cities called the Fingers have become so large and full of people they *could* sustain a praxis or barony. Since the building of the I-355 corridor, the cities of Orland park, Wheaton, Joliet, Naperville, and Schaumburg have all become the new edge of the world, with former Chicago Brujah Joshua Tarnopolski setting himself up as Baron of Joliet and Naperville.

To put these cities and villages into context, the city of Cleveland, Ohio, a major, well-known Midwestern city, has a population of roughly 350,000. One of these cities, Orland Park, has a third of that. Aurora has two thirds of that. According to recent census figures, the city of Chicago has a population of 2.7 million people, whereas the outlying metropolitan area consists of 6.7 million people. This is a huge amount of kine, and the blood that flows within them is ready for the taking.

There has been a standing decree that all the suburbs were under the domain of the praxis of the sitting Prince. It is also a well-known open secret these territories are often unprotected or left alone by the Prince as it is simply a logistical and political nightmare getting

officers of the court into these locations. While the possibility exists of using these posts as "gifts" or even as punishments, most elder vampires find the Collar boring if not dangerous. Anarchs and young Camarilla vampires have recently been making their foray into these untamed locations, snapping up assets and influences to wield in the downtown area.

There are considerable areas of concern from this area for the average Cainite. Unaligned and fringe-sect Kindred have used the suburbs as staging areas for decades, the Church of Caine dominating the river city of Joliet until Tarnopolski led a rout of the remaining Noddists. Rumor has it, some marauding Heretics still use the back roads, such as Archer Avenue and Route 66, to slide into Chicago. Cover is simple when blending in with traveling tourists. The Church of the Dark Father supposedly sends in scouting missions regularly and takes part in guerilla tactics against Bahari strongholds. Being a pervasive threat and constant annoyance has been the goal for most of the roving coteries. Just the act of threatening the famed "Jewel of the Camarilla" has been a success in and of itself.

Now, things have changed. The manic flailing of random violence is more direct, more sinister, more militant. There have been more graffiti tags closer and closer to the city border referencing the "Seven Fires," "Where are they?" and "Peter Pan" with hooks and broken crowns. A recent uptick in arson — the conflagrations often attributed to the Cainite Heresy — has spread citywide. One fire killed multiple young children; another killed multiple generations of an extended family. Wherever the vampire Church goes, they are just as horrifying and dangerous as before, maybe even more so now that the Lasombra have agreed with the Ivory Tower that the Heresy must fall.

The wilds of these areas hold countless hostiles including, but not limited to, large Lupine packs. During the tragic events of 1993, these beings came to rain terror and misery upon the Kindred populace of Chicago. These nights, most Gangrel with connections to these beasts have either disappeared or been found as a pile of ash, with the cause being the Lupines or Rosa Hernandez, who despises them. The famed Fanum that used to be held by the shapeshifters has long been abandoned. The building sits empty and for sale since the Great Recession. Notably, the Lupine packs in the Collar never signed the truce set between Kevin Jackson and the werewolves in the city's South Side.

While these cities are huge and often hold hundreds of thousands of people, they are still not as dense as the inner city. When characters hunt in these places, a Storyteller may impose a –1 die penalty to find appropriate sources of feeding.

ORLAND PARK

A gigantic "village" just shy of 100,000 people, Orland Park is broad and wild. Its western border is mostly farmlands that fade into highly organized subdivisions and eventually into incredibly dense urban sprawl. A city has gone from nothing but grassland, farmland, and a mall to a sophisticated urban area in a matter of years, all centering around La Grange avenue. An impressive holding of land and economic value, it is also known to be controlled by werewolves. Due to the extreme levels of danger, not much is known about the town's Kindred population.

WHEATON

Wheaton has more churches per capita than any other place in the world and is home to Wheaton College and Seminary. The kine populace is predominantly Evangelical Christian. Until 1985 it was a dry city. One of the smaller Fingers, with a populace of around 50,000, Wheaton is also renowned for its extreme affluence. This may be why Kindred often refer to it while holding their pinky up.

A hotbed of Second Inquisition activity, the Chicago Kindred community often falls to the philosophy of letting sleeping dogs lie. But in this case, where there is great risk there is also great reward.

Being a bastion of so many churches, the Lasombra, the Ministry, and other religiously oriented Kindred have the possibility of accumulating incredible amounts of influence. Wheaton College alone, often referred to as "The Harvard of Evangelical Christianity" is known for being an interdenominational school for devout Christian students. The school's reach is broad,, as it's the Alma Mater of Billy Graham and holds a museum dedicated to American Evangelism and the international ministry of the reverend, and it's often used as a connecting location for convocations of ministry.

Wheaton also holds the Theosophical Society, a spiritual movement created in 1875 in New York. Eventually it made its way to the city of Wheaton where it procured a large acreage of land and built a library holding quite a large collection of grimoires and religious manuscripts. The Tremere clan, particularly those of House Carna, have recently been making inroads with the society in hopes to acquire some of the more obscure assets they have in their archive.

JOLIET

The most famous thing about the city of Joliet is its prison, which was its second-largest source of jobs until it was shut down due to a mixture of scandal and dilapidation. With the waves of the interdiction racing their way through the Collar at the end of the last cen-

tury, any prosperity Joliet had in its future was quickly crushed. Transitioning from a bustling ironworks city to a city of squalor, Joliet is set in wrought-steel bridges over the Des Plaines River. A distinctly rust belt town, Joliet stands as a testament to the brutality financial might can deploy on a city. A large portion of the city is dilapidated, lower-income housing. Sweeping neighborhoods already weakened by the loss of working-class jobs took the brunt of the gangland rout, playing host to the influx of refugees from the Chicago ghettos' dissolution at the turn of the century. The other portions of the city hold slowly rotting mansions. Skeletons of the economic security of the past, these parishes contain the academic strongholds and remaining old money. The city center boasts only two buildings of import: the county courthouse and Union Station at the end of the Southwest Service Metra Line, which begins in the heart of the Hive.

The Will County Courthouse is the county's seat of justice and was an area Clan Tzimisce controlled before Tarnopolski drove them out on behalf of the Anarch Movement. A temple of grief, the court preyed on the sorrow of the weak and less fortunate. Extravagant court fees were levied upon all who were forced to enter, and rulings tended to be less than fair. Kine of note were taken by the Fiends' blood slaves to be "lost in the system." While the Sabbat may have left their holdings, these ravenous slaves were abandoned and now look to acquire vitae in any possible way.

Set firmly within the squalor of the ruins of Joliet, the Church of Caine would routinely use the Southwest Service Line or backroads to get into Chicago proper from Joliet, mostly via Archer Avenue. There were stories of the huge bonfires they would set up in the middle of streets for their grotesque revelries marketed as "parish festivals." Rumors exist of some Heretics remaining in the town on Clan Brujah's sufferance. Joshua Tarnopolski and Anita Wainwright have agreed a small Church of Caine presence may be useful, to provide insight into that fringe religion's future aims. Then there are rumors all the Heretics left not because of Tarnopolski's purge, but because they could no longer control what they locked away within the walls of Statesville prison.

NAPERVILLE AND SCHAUMBURG

Both neighborhoods are relatively unknown to the Kindred of Chicago due to their longer distances from the city. They are known to be relatively economically stalwart and the culture pushes an agenda of conformity and monotony. The neighborhoods seem eerily peaceful and quiet, as if under some sort of spell or illusion. The last big dust up from either of these areas was a string of fights in the party scenes of Naperville, which were immediately hushed and became the cause for the city council to pass puritanical drinking and sound ordinances.

There is most definitely something amiss in these towns, what that may be is anyone's guess. While Tarnopolski claims Naperville in name, his Barony has yet to truly grasp the town.

GARY

Although not part of the Fingers, the city of Gary, Indiana (or what's left of it) is still considered by most Chicago Kindred to be a part of the Collar due to its geographical proximity to the city proper. With the presumed demise of Modius and perhaps also his rival Juggler, the remaining Kindred of the city have been making a name for themselves recently by disrupting the Circulatory System blood-trafficking service. Meanwhile, the mortal citizens are stemming the tide of destruction overtaking the city and are beginning, tentatively, to rebuild. Gary's Kindred have taken a hold of a common perception that Illinois is corrupt and too top heavy, and that freedom comes from the east. Kindred have been backing the new marketing campaign for Indiana, "The State That Works," placing billboards all over Chicago's major interstates. Anarchs have been looking to make inroads into the city as much of the remaining elders of the city have either died or walked away due to the Beckoning. With the less-restrictive political and legal environment, these young Kindred are looking to be trailblazers in the largely vacant Kindred scene.

It is incredibly obvious the remaining Kindred of Gary are using their state's perception of "freedom" to their benefit. They have been saturating the Chicago market with easily obtainable firearms and practically inviting the gangs and organized criminals of Chicagoland over the border to buy their fill. Their hopes are to keep slowly chipping away at the image of safety and security that Chicago attempts to project while making a tidy profit.

RESURRECTION CEMETERY MAUSOLEUM, 7201 ARCHER ROAD, JUSTICE

This cemetery is famous among kine for the "Resurrection Mary" ghost story, wherein a young girl is picked up off the side of the Archer Avenue and mysteriously disappears after the driver passes the cemetery gates.

A luminous white block rising far above the well-manicured lawns, the Resurrection Catholic Cemetery mausoleum is one of the rare Peterson-authorized Elysia outside the Chicago city limits. The mausoleum consists of three floors, the first two having chapels built in post-Vatican II's distinct 1960s style. Moldering

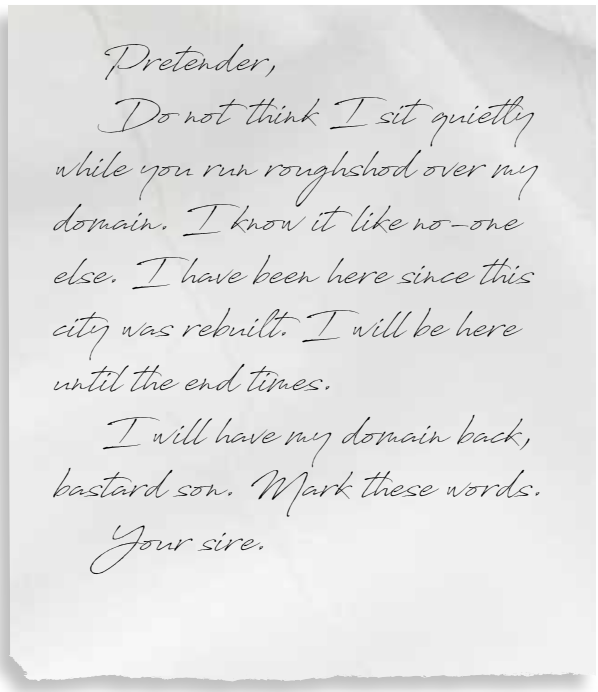
sofas line the off-white marble hallways that hold the deceased. While kept up by the groundskeeping staff, time is eating away slowly at the amenities of the crypt. Stained carpet and sun-bleached wood paneling take up any space not holding the dead. White statues line the first floor and upper hallways, providing a sense of being watched.

The mausoleum itself was built in collaboration at the end of the 1960s with the local Hecata clan members (who owned and operated many of the stonecutting memorial services, funeral homes, and groundskeeping services for the acres of cemeteries that line Archer Avenue), the Ministry (who worked heavily in the religious services of the area), and the Camarilla. It was perceived as a bulwark of reason against the madness of the Sabbat, who often used Archer Avenue to discreetly enter the city; a unifying location to benefit all Kindred of Chicago and the Collar.

Rumors at the time spoke that the necromantic clan also built the Elysium for the restless dead to visit and make contracts with the vampires of Chicago, but no Cainite ever openly backs up this story. The whispers of dark deals in marble-lined hallways always crop up whenever the Elysium is mentioned in polite conversation. What the restless dead could offer the Damned of Chicago is unknown, yet this rumor continues.

Recently there has been a large donation of art and building materials to the mausoleum's trust, operated by one of Alan Sovereign's shell companies. This donation included multiple sconces and symbols that are now attached to each hallway, each adorned with crowns.

Within the walls of the Mausoleum all Kindred gain +2 bonus dice to their Occult rolls but are at –2 dice for all Willpower rolls.



chapter four

Kindred of Chicago

"Who would choose to damn themselves by remaining in a city of sin such as this? To hell with Chicago and its Kindred!"

— Joseph Peterson, Ventrue media mogul and recently deposed Prince of Chicago, now in exile

Chicago's Camarilla Kindred proudly proclaim the city as the sect's American crown jewel. Kindred such as the Prince, Kevin Jackson, Sheriff Damien, and the city's Primogen Council all feel pride for their membership in the elite sect. Chicago made it, where cities like Indianapolis and Cincinnati fell to the Ivory Tower's strict, renewed Traditions and into states of ignominy. Chicago flourished, while San Jose and Jacksonville stumbled and fell in the economic recessions of the last two decades. Where cities like L.A. and New Orleans felt the swell of Anarch uprisings, Chicago endured and ascended to new prominence. The old ways under Lodin are gone. The Lupine threat is supposedly neutered. Chicago is, according to Prince Jackson "the unassailable throne of the American Camarilla."

Naturally, many Kindred dispute such a claim. Jackson's progressive face, all smiles for the Justicars and the neonates, preaching "education on the Traditions for all fledglings and a step onto the ladder of our sect for all those who deserve it" is an appealing line, but fails to mention the coldhearted persecution of Anarchs and other dissidents. "Education" often comes in the form of threats, punishments, and the Blood Bond, if not schooling at the Brujah Critias' "Eternal Academy," which comes with its own dangers. "Those who deserve it" are often Ventrue and Toreador, with little ground given to what Jackson callously dismisses as the "lesser clans."

The Kindred of Chicago don a peaceful veneer, happy to fake support for their Prince. They know his appearance as a liberal unionist who came up from nothing, with care for his fellow Kindred, is a complete sham. They know he has more in common with a Republican one-percenter who holds the power and lets little slip through his fingers. He may not be the ideal ruler, Chicago may not be the Camarilla paragon domain the Kindred claim it to be, but for as long as peace holds, the Archons stay away, the Anarchs fear the city's collective weight, and the city remains firmly in the Camarilla's grasp.

It's all a lie, but so much about Chicago is.

STATUS IS KING

The Status Background is absent from all character write-ups, due to its flexible nature for the majority of the Kindred in this book. It can be assumed that the Prince and Primogen have a Status of 5, the Sheriff a Status of 4, and Hounds have a Status of 3. Visiting dignitaries, political mediators, prominent Keepers of Elysium and party hosts are likely to have Status between 2 and 4. The rest of the characters range between 1 and 3 depending on their recent activities.

Chicago is a fluid city where a Kindred can lose Status far sooner than they might gain it.

Banu Haqim

"Chicago is a ripe vein to tap. Show the Camarilla we deserve a place on their jeweled throne."
— Tegyrius, Vizier of the Banu Haqim, in a command to Khadija Al-Kindi

The Children of Haqim have a small but important place in the domain of Chicago, acting as observers for the Ashirra and welcome diplomats following the Vermilion Wedding. Though they have yet to press for a seat on the Primogen Council — their numbers in the city are too few — Prince Jackson feels he can turn to the Banu Haqim for assistance in preserving the domain's defense should it come under assault from the Anarchs, in exchange for favors in the future. For their part, the Banu Haqim ingratiate themselves within the Chicago courts and sizeable Muslim communities of the city, quietly waiting for an opportune time to prove their worth.

KHADIJA AL-KINDI

Epitaph: The Disquieting Diplomat

Quote: *"So many of your ancients have made their way to the Middle East, to my homeland. It's only sensible for the Ashirra to send a representative in return."*

Clan: Banu Haqim

MORTAL DAYS: ASCENT FROM NOTHING

Born an orphan on the streets of Baghdad in the early decades of the 19th century, Khadija started life as a beggar. She thrived because of her quick fingers and innocent face, graduating to running errands and acting as a lookout for criminals. By the time she was 12, she was part of a smuggling ring, eventually coming to live in Alexandria, Egypt.

After she entered undeath, Khadija reflected on the fact that so many Kindred had a similar background. They had lifted themselves from poverty and created masks of respectability to live among the well-to-do. The skills acquired during such a life were extremely useful in surviving the first years of undeath.

In Khadija's case, the establishment of the British colonial system in the Egypt modernized by Mohammad Ali provided many opportunities to those capable of self-invention. She married three times, each husband lost to the vagaries of a criminal lifestyle. She had five children, three of whom made it to adulthood. All the while, she worked to run a clandestine trade network moving contraband across the Mediterranean.

In her later years, Khadija settled down in Alexandria under a new identity as a member of the Egyptian elite, facilitated by her third husband, a British colonial officer. She'd worked hard to create a good life and intended to enjoy it.

KINDRED NIGHTS: THE ASHIRRA'S VOICE

Khadija was in her late 50s at the time of her Embrace. Her sire was a fairly recent Embrace himself and brought her into the night for love. He saw that she was on the cusp of old age and wanted her to live forever, the Hunger be damned.

As these stories so often go, the relationship between sire and childe didn't last much longer than it

took for Khadija to acclimatize to her new condition. After she realized that counting from human birth, her sire was younger than she was, she abandoned him and set out to create an unlife for herself in the Ashirra courts of the Middle East.

As the 20th century progressed, Khadija served in various roles in different courts of Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and the United Arab Emirates. Her preference was the role of an emissary or a representative, because it allowed her to travel and participate in the making of history.

In the long term, the Embrace made Khadija's journey from street urchin to privileged elite complete. Being undead removed the last barriers set before her, those created by living in a conservative society as a woman. As a supernatural creature of the night, she had the power of the blood to assert her will and in Ashirra society, most understood long ago that discounting Kindred because of their gender was the youthful folly of those still clinging to their human lives.

Tonight, Khadija is a favored emissary of the Ashirra with access to the immense financial backing of the sect. She's able to travel despite the threat of the Second Inquisition because of her access to the travel infrastructure of the ultra-rich. When she arrives in Chicago on the private plane of a member of Dubai's ruling family, no customs officer will check her travel coffin.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Entering the Ranks:** The Primogen Council would be the appropriate place for Khadija, of course, while she remains in Chicago. Used to immediately entering the most elite circles of any city she visits, she feels that as the Ashirra and the Camarilla are coming together in alliance, she should take a role in the affairs of her new home. Making this happen might require some political maneuvering, but it's nothing she hasn't done before.

- **Detachment:** Khadija has become increasingly conscious of her fading conscience as of late. Her focus on top-level sect politics has left her connections to humanity increasingly distant. She feels desperate to rectify this, to find something to care about. The problem is that while she moves in the halls of power with perfect confidence, she's not so well practiced anymore when it comes to interacting with ordinary humans. Her attempts to connect now sometimes appear bizarre.

- **Voice of the Innocent:** As a political actor on the Chicago stage, Khadija is motivated as much by curiosity as the interests of the Ashirra. For this reason, she's always willing to listen to a neonate, especially if it's someone unusual and seemingly human. Khadija can recognize that which she lacks and wants to be closer to it. The problem is, her inhumanity might start causing problems for her new friends.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **The Four Seasons Chicago (Fame 3, Haven 4, Resources 4, Retainers 3)** Khadija is currently staying in a massive suite in the Four Seasons Hotel. It costs $35,000 a night, but what's money when shady Emirati business interests connected to the Ashirra are footing the bill? They also pay for the heavy private security keeping an eye on the suite around the clock. As a recent arrival, Khadija doesn't have a natural domain, but she feeds from among the city's political and financial elite.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Reginald Ashton (Resources 2, Retainer 2)** Reginald Ashton, Khadija's third husband from her mortal days, still serves her as a ghoul, although their marital relationship faded away a century ago. He's a 19th-century British diplomat who will die of old age the second his source of vitae dries up. Driven to exhaustion by the endless humiliations of being a blood junkie, he's quietly looking for an exit despite the Blood Bond.

- **Shumaila Hamidi (Contacts 1)** Hamidi is a cellist and a rising star in the Chicago classical music scene. Khadija saw her perform at a reception held by the office of the mayor of Chicago and latched onto her somewhat arbitrarily. She's showered Hamidi with gifts and sought to establish a connection with her but her efforts falter because Hamidi thinks she's a creep.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Aicha Rana (Proud)** Aicha is Khadija's fixer and guide to the modern world. She Embraced the girl five years ago in Marseilles, having selected her childe semi-randomly at a nightclub because Aicha looked like she was in tune with the youth of today. So far, Khadija has been very happy with her childe as Aicha has introduced her to all kinds of new mortal experiences.

- **Kathy Glens (Intrigued)** Khadija has developed an interest in Kathy similar to the one she has with the mortal Shumaila Hamidi. She likes Kindred who seem in tune with the mortal world and seeks to move with them, help them, emulate them, and, though she doesn't mean to do so, make them as dead to mortal ethics as she is.

WHISPERS:

- **Pilgrimage:** Many Camarilla Elders have gone to the Middle East, called by the Beckoning. Surely Khadija knows where they went and what they are doing?
- **A Distant Threat:** The Ashirra is a vast, powerful and mysterious sect of Kindred largely unknown in Chicago. Who knows what kind of terrible resources and powers they can call upon?
- **Unknown Quantity:** Though she's seen as a political long shot on the Chicago scene, some neonates are considering allying with Khadija. After all, her Ashirra background is very confusing and appealing from the perspective of city politics.
- **Alluring Youth:** Khadija has a tendency to become obsessed with younger neonates. A neonate who understands this can exploit her, although it will be playing with fire. Khadija can be very generous with her resources and time with young Kindred who seem like they are connected to their humanity, but if she gets bored with them, she'll drop them in an instant.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Khadija has a mortal identity as an Egyptian investor with a slew of holdings across the Middle East. There's little information about her available publicly, but in this she doesn't differ much from other members of the global wealthy elite who wish to remain anonymous and have the money to make it happen **(Mask 2)**.
- A weathered, hard woman in her late fifties, Khadija looks as if everything will be perfectly pleasant as long as things happen exactly as she wants them to happen. Despite her decades of luxurious life, the mark of a hard existence can still be seen on the lines of her face. There is nothing soft about her.
- Khadija dresses like a wealthy older woman of the international moneyed set. She prefers simplicity and neutral colors with minimal jewelry. At a glance, she could be mistaken for a member of the exiled court of the Shah of Iran.

Sire: Pink

Embraced: 1876 (Born 1821)

Ambition: Develop a bond of trust with Prince Jackson

Convictions: None

Touchstones: None

Humanity: 5

Generation: 9th

Blood Potency: 2

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4; Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Composure 4; Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 8

Skills: Brawl 2, Melee 2, Larceny 3, Stealth 3, Survival 4; Etiquette (Court) 5, Intimidation (Commanding) 4, Leadership 3, Persuasion (Compromise) 4, Subterfuge 4; Awareness 3, Finance 2, Occult 3, Politics (Ashirra) 4

Disciplines: Celerity 4, Dominate 2, Obfuscate 3

AICHA RANA

Epitaph: The Moral Hustler

Quote: *"I know we're all monsters here, but that doesn't mean we couldn't use a little kindness."*

Clan: Banu Haqim

MORTAL DAYS: FEW SWEET MEMORIES

Poverty and hopelessness tend to grind people down, but Aicha never lost her basic sense of optimism. Born in Marseilles, France, to a poor North African family, Aicha didn't have a lot of prospects growing up. She dreamed of going to art school and becoming a rapper, but instead she barely had time to practice her rhymes as she was working in a warehouse or as a waitress.

To make money when times were tough, Aicha dealt drugs to her friends and made amateur videos for YouTube of herself rapping or dancing. Sometimes she participated in more serious crimes, but never against people like herself: poor, in a precarious position. She justified it by their collective need. Nobody was taking care of them, so they had to do it themselves. Although in all honesty, sometimes it was just because you get dumb ideas when you're high at 2 A.M.

In her final years as a mortal, Aicha's life moved from catastrophe to catastrophe. Her father was in a workplace accident and lost his leg. The stress of having to support him gave her mother panic attacks. Her little brother went to jail for a mugging. As far as she knew, this would be the shape of her life forever.

KINDRED NIGHTS: NO BED OF ROSES

Five years ago, Aicha was one of the millions of working poor from immigrant backgrounds toiling all over Europe in menial jobs. Her creative ambitions remained hobbies, making it possible for her to find a

modicum of happiness in an otherwise gray life.

In the movies, an eternal vampire falls in love with a girl who has unique qualities of loyalty and love. It wasn't like that for Aicha. She was the random victim of a monster's momentary need. One night, when she was out partying with her friends, an ancient undying creature drained her blood and forced her to become her childe.

Her first nights as a vampire were a terrible time for Aicha. Her newfound Hunger threatened to destroy who she was and Khadija Al-Kindi wasn't exactly a caring, helpful sire. The older Child of Haqim expected Aicha to get her shit together or die.

For a year Aicha followed her sire in a desperate stupor, barely comprehending the hell she had entered. Yet bit by bit, her former personality emerged again. She found she could control the Hunger if she set her mind to it, at least most of the time. She could help people even as her service to Al-Kindi demanded she hurt them. The money she suddenly had access to could be sent home to her family and friends from her mortal days, elevating them from poverty.

Aicha works as a fixer and guide for Al-Khadija, traveling the world with her sire. Fortunately, Khadija keeps her on a long leash, so she has time and opportunity to explore the world of the Kindred for herself.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Getting By:** From her sire, Aicha understands they'll be in Chicago for a while. She has decided to use this opportunity to make a life for herself, or at least as much of a life as a vampire can have. She works to move into the drug trade, reasoning that using her vampiric powers on criminals is not so bad. Of course, the drug trade has victims of its own, but for Aicha it's such a fact of life she doesn't question its existence.

- **In Search of Life:** Aicha desperately wants to get to know Kindred who are not her sire. She fears and respects Khadija and will never turn against her, but any semblance of happiness is only possible far from the inhuman privileges of the older vampire's existence. Half the time she's naive, the other half hardened, depending on how much she wants to fool herself.

- **Salvage What Is Sacred:** As she gets to know local Kindred better, Aicha will find it harder and harder to ignore their moral turpitude. After all, if she ignores the evils perpetrated all around her, she will lose sight of who she is and fall to the Hunger. Worse, her sire provides nightly opportunities for witnessing vampiric terrors in action. As she gathers her courage, Aicha finds determination to sabotage the plots of her elders because they're morally despicable monsters. Or at least she will try until the Beast finds purchase in her soul.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Roseland House (Contacts 1, Haven 1)** Aicha used to share her sire's hotel suite but has recently moved to a place of her own, the house of her dealer contact Fred "the Creep." So named because of his habit of creeping up to people, Fred has a derelict house in the Roseland neighborhood of Chicago's South Side. To his great confusion, Aicha has started to sleep in his basement and get to know people in the neighborhood.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Fred "the Creep" (Contacts 1, Resources 1)** Aicha's newest thrall is Fred, who doesn't know the mysterious woman who suddenly appeared in his life is a vampire but understands that something bizarre is going on. Fred is a small-time drug dealer and Aicha wants to use him to trace his network up until she has a source of better-quality material she can then sell to the high-paying clients she meets through her sire. With the money she accumulates doing this, she plans to build a more secure life for herself. Fred finds Aicha to be mysterious, exotic and unapproachable, like a character from television.

- **Stephen Woods (Retainers 1)** Woods is a 70-year-old blood junkie servant originally retained by Khadija 50 years ago to act as a manservant. Bored of managing servants, Khadija delegated him to Aicha, who promptly forgot to feed the poor man, resulting in him aging 50 years rapidly. Aicha feels terrible guilt over this, which allows Woods to get away with much more than he would normally be able to.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Khadija Al-Kindi (Mawla 3, Disappointing)** Khadija is Aicha's sire and employer. Aicha is familiar with the incredible wealth her sire commands, but doesn't want anything to do with it if possible. She finds the wealth and the social milieu associated with it so morally debased that the company of South Side junkies is much preferable.

- **Marcel (Mawla 2, Familiarity)** Marcel from the Ministry is deeply connected to the Chicago drug trade and Aicha hopes to learn from him. After all, they're both from Marseilles, although Marcel left the city long before Aicha was even born. Still, they've met a few times to engage in the time-honored pastime of immigrants everywhere: complaining about the locals.

WHISPERS:

- **Foreign Power:** Aicha is an agent of the mysterious and dangerous Ashirra, the Kindred of the Middle East whose organization predates the Camarilla.

- **Dubious Alignment:** For an agent of the mysterious Ashirra, Aicha seems very young and uninterested in the sect-level politics of the Kindred. Based on how she spends her nights, she could easily be mistaken for an Anarch.

- **Easy Target:** Aicha is nice. Perhaps so nice she can be exploited by someone slippery enough to fool even one with her lifetime of experience with various hustles.

- **Give Me Freedom:** Aicha wants out from under the yoke of her sire, even if she isn't strong enough yet to admit it to herself. Perhaps someone could do her a good turn and help her out.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Aicha doesn't have a legal mortal identity that would hold water in the U.S. She's an EU citizen but she came to the country clandestinely on her sire's private jet so she has no desire to interact with any mortal authority. Apart from this, plenty of mortals know her as a new face, a young French girl who goes to see rap gigs and sells weed.

- Aicha is a tall, self-assured North African woman in her 20s. She has an approachable expression and looks cheerful until someone tries to fuck with her. If that happens, she turns on a dime and lets the asshole know what's what. At this point, she usually switches to French.

- Traveling with her sire, Aicha has learned to dress as the situation warrants, from looking like a personal assistant to a gala dress. On her own, she prefers to experiment with the street styles of wherever she is.

Sire: Khadija Al-Kindi

Embraced: 2014 (Born 1992)

Ambition: Ingratiate herself with the Chicago Kindred

Convictions: Always encourage other Kindred to show mercy

Touchstones: Her family, far away back home

Humanity: 8

Generation: 10th

Blood Potency: 1

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 2; Intelligence 2, Wits 4, Resolve 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 6

Skills: Athletics (Sprinting) 3, Brawl 3, Drive 2, Firearms 2, Melee 2, Larceny (Drug Deals) 3, Stealth 3, Survival 2; Etiquette 1, Intimidation 1, Performance (Rapping) 2, Persuasion 2, Streetwise (Students) 4, Subterfuge 2; Awareness 3, Investigation 2, Medicine 1, Occult 1

Disciplines: Celerity 2, Obfuscate 2

WHISPERS

Are the Whispers on each character write-up true? Almost certainly not, but the domain's Kindred have heard some of these rumors in Elysium, in private meetings, across the hubbub of the dance floor. Any one of them can be spun into a plot surrounding an SPC.

Brujah

"I despise your lapdog devotion to the Ivory Tower, but whatever your beliefs, you must unite our clan against the Ventrue. Critias? Are you listening?"

— Tyler, in her parting conversation with Critias

The Brujah have ever been a clan of individuals, yet it was the wish of Tyler, one of the eldest Brujah of Chicago, that the clan unite against Ventrue tyranny. Before the Beckoning drew her away from the Windy City, she addressed Critias and instructed him to keep the clan together. Due to their numbers and relative strength, the Brujah could potentially oust all opposition.

Tyler's wish was not to be, as Critias was bewitched by the fraying Blood Bond he shared with his sire. He doesn't even recall Tyler's reason for departure; he just knows she was there one night and gone the next.

The Brujah stand at a precipice where they face civil war with the Hellenes on one side and the Furores on the other. The former believe earnestly in the Camarilla's Traditions, while the latter riposte that freedom for Kindred is impossible within such strict hierarchy. The Furores consider the Hellenes sellouts and scabs. With Critias among them, the Hellenes have the weight of power on their side, but as the Furores increase their number, it may soon spell an end to Prince Jackson's tolerance for Brujah in Chicago. The clan may be forced to fight for its place or flee to another domain.

The Hellenes

Critias leads the Hellenes with the "Eternal Academy." He proves his clan's fealty to the Camarilla through implementation of Kevin Jackson's Tradition-education program, taking freshly Embraced fledglings — especially Caitiff and Duskborn — and schooling them hard in the correct way to behave as Kindred. Failure on the course is no option. Jackson has authorized one of the other Hellenes — the Sheriff Damien — to quietly eliminate any new vampires who pose a risk to Chicago's Masquerade. Critias likes to consider their branch of the Hellenes as strongly legalistic, in the philosophical sense.

Adversity breeds strange bedfellows, as Balthazar sits among the Hellenes. In part this is due to his acting as loyal hammer for former Princes to swing, but it is more due to the Anarch Brujah wishing him dead. Critias and Damien want nothing to do with him, but he keeps gravitating toward them in Elysium.

CRITIAS, "DOCTOR"

Epitaph: Philosopher, Polemicist, Brujah Primogen

Quote: *"Old ideas can rejuvenate. Carthage, the ideal, is old and new again."*

Clan: Brujah

MORTAL DAYS: A LIFETIME OF STUDY AND DEBATE

In Athens, the Sophists constantly questioned the morality of their society. One of the most hated Sophists was Critias, due to his keen, incisive questioning and intense wit, making him both compelling and entertaining to the intelligentsia and the masses alike. He acquired a substantial following, many of whom went on to become renowned philosophers, and grew indolent on his growing wealth and prestige. Indeed, Critias considered philosophy to be an elaborate scam — intellectual ephemera that could be used to acquire very real comforts and social standing.

Then a plague hit, which killed over a third of the city's populace. The surviving leaders desperately needed to deflect attention from themselves, so they accused Critias of corrupting the city's youth with propaganda. They gave him a choice: death or exile. Critias had grown to appreciate the comforts of life over dying for the truth, so he packed up his things and took one final bath before fleeing to Delphi.

Before he could depart, however, he was visited by a strange man — the Brujah known as Menele. The vampire had been an ardent follower of Critias' rhetorical games and wanted the Sophist as his childe. Menele confronted Critias in the baths, using his formidable powers of domination to keep the Sophist calm. They spent the night in vigorous debate over the nature of life, death, and the role of philosophy in both. Before the dawn, Critias became the victim of his own method, and he realized that his own edicts and philosophy were real, substantial, and worth dying for. Or, perhaps, worth living for, for the first time. After admitting defeat, Menele offered Critias a new choice: die for the truth, right then and there, or live for eternity and act the gadfly to the world. Critias chose the Embrace.

KINDRED NIGHTS: HIS MASTER'S VESSEL

The two Kindred traveled across Mediterranean North Africa. Menele taught his childe about the secrets of Kindred society, while Critias met with the greatest thinkers of the age, spending nights debating philosophy and logic. Between visits, he would drink from Menele, not realizing the dangers of the Blood Bond.

Eventually, Critias made his way to Carthage — the center of Clan Brujah's plans to control the world. They used the city to plan for a new golden age of Kindred and kine, where philosopher-kings would rule with logic, respect, and democratic debate. Critias was quickly swept up by the grand vision, and he became passionately devoted to the cause. He was exploring China when he heard the news of Carthage's fall, as well as rumors of his sire's death. He was heartbroken — this time by the brutal prejudice of the Ventrue and Malkavians — and he frequently fell into frenzies. It was only when he tore the throat out of a child that he realized his monstrous deeds. He decided to leave civilization and became a nomad, feeding only on animals and refusing the blood of mortals.

Unbeknownst to him, his travels were manipulated by Menele, through their unusually strong bond. Eventually, in 1942, he came to Chicago. Unwittingly, he became enmeshed in the city's ornate and complex web of politics, forcing him to settle there — or so he thought.

Critias' deep political skill and wit, sharpened on millennia of intellects, caused him to quickly ascend to the position of Primogen. In his spare time, he taught a few courses at Chicago University to mortal students, often inviting good-looking and intelligent male students to his apartment for intellectual debate, sex, feeding, and occasionally conversion into ghouls. The entire time, he continued to be the pawn of Menele in his eternal fight with Helena. When Prince Lodin was killed, Critias convinced the Primogen to rule the city until "a suitable candidate was found" — a state that lasted for nearly two decades.

Menele grew tired of fighting. He started to believe that some force — perhaps the Antediluvians, perhaps another — was manipulating them into conflict. Inspired by his childe's eternal efforts to educate others, he turned his puppet to a loftier goal: the education of young Brujah to return them to their original incarnation as intellectuals, rather than brutish thugs. Critias started the so-called "Entelechy School."

And then it all fell apart.

Menele succumbed to the Beckoning. Critias felt the ancient Blood Bond snap and knew with terrible certainty that he had been manipulated for millennia. He was no longer certain how much of his life was his, and how much was at the behest of his twice-dead sire. He spent three nights in frenzy, injuring several in the Entelechy School in the process. For a month afterward, the elder Brujah refused to leave his haven as he examined every action, every decision, trying to determine how much of his life was his, and how much was the manipulation of his sire. He feels the Beckoning himself, but believes the breaking of his Blood Bond has somehow delayed the effect.

Then, letters implicating him and Annabelle as the Primogen supporting Maldavis leaked out. In fact, that small incident is what brought Critias back to the council. He realized he had lost much of his grip over Chicago, and had to embed himself more deeply in the

city. Thinking the pull of the Beckoning was another manipulation by Menele from beyond the grave, Critias has trapped himself in the web of politics and obligations within the city. He's even gone so far as to increase his connections with the mortal realm and will only feed from people born in Chicago — both to rebuild his fleeting humanity, and to assure he has no desire to ever leave Chicago.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Dirty Papers:** Several letters implicating Annabelle and Critias as the Primogen supporting Maldavis in the Council Wars have leaked and are on the street. If the letters are acquired, Critias could leverage them to crush Maldavis' growing rebellion.

- **Tradition Lessons:** Critias is attempting a new experiment: teaching the ethics, debate, and philosophy to any Kindred of any clan. Some of the Lasombra have a particular interest in finding a way to cling to moral codes as they reject the Sabbat. The local Nosferatu believe this "experiment" is a Masquerade breach waiting to happen, and look to assemble a coterie to break it up.

- **Eternal Academy:** Despite Critias' aim of shoring up his withering conscience, his Eternal Academy — built to replace his destroyed Entelechy School — had led to a score of executions when Kindred students have failed the course on Traditions and Camarilla etiquette. Critias wishes he could put the punishments down to the Sheriff, but it's his furious frustration with failing students that leads to so many deaths. He wishes he'd never agreed to Prince Jackson's plan and feels he's played into the Ventrue's hands with his loose temper, but he won't back out now until he gets a full class to graduate to Camarilla standards.

- **He Lied to Me:** Critias still hasn't come to terms with Menele's epic deception — he's simply repressed his outrage and anger because he cannot afford to lose control over himself again. As he carefully examines and dissects his choices and decisions, he can only come to one inescapable conclusion: If everything he has done is at the will of Menele, then he must be Menele. This will not go well.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **University Housing (Haven 2, Retainers 1)** Critias has abandoned his haven on South University Avenue, believing it to be a trap Menele set up. Now he lives in a small house maintained by the University of Chicago Commercial Real Estate Operations (CREO). The house is maintained by his prize student, Mahavir, who lives with him and watches over him during the day.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **University Faculty (Contacts 3, Herd 2, Influence 3, Resources 2) Students (Contacts 2, Herd 3, Influence 2)** Critias has controlled the University of Chicago for decades, to the point that some younger Brujah joke he is the Prince of Hyde Park, despite the other Kindred in residence there. Critias has never shown any interest in controlling other areas of the city, but has recently (and aggressively) been expanding his control over the university. His command over faculty and students alike serves him both as a herd and as retainers who see him as just another member of staff.

- **Mahavir Chakrabarti (Retainers 1)** Mahavir, one of Critias' mortal students, is a bright and passionate philosophy major, and his debates in class evoke memories of the passionate discussions in Carthage. Mahavir also struggles with his attraction to Critias, afraid his conservative family will disown him should they find out their son is gay. This has caused Mahavir to become even more dependent on Critias. The elder, however, is reluctant to turn Mahavir into a ghoul — he knows all too well the prison of the Blood Bond and is loath to subject another to it.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Anita Wainwright (Surprising) Gérard (Energizing)** Critias has been educating some of the younger (and Anarch-sympathetic) Brujah in the city, particularly Anita and Gérard. He doesn't agree with their philosophy but loves debating them.

- **Primogen Council (Irritation)** He has been taking his role as Primogen more seriously since his sire's betrayal. Sometimes he will stand contrary to the council's wishes or fight against a proposed plan, just to make sure he and the other Primogen aren't being manipulated. His recent bouts of "devil's advocate" haven't won him many supporters from among his peers.

- **Kevin Jackson (Loyalty)** Critias has always felt loyal to the Camarilla and therefore loyal to the Primogen and Prince, when the latter role is occupied. He reports back to Prince Jackson on potential neonate and fledgling threats to the Masquerade if he feels he can't hammer out their kinks in his academy.

WHISPERS:

- **Discriminatory:** Critias is sexist and gay. He originally only taught male Brujah, and even to this night clearly prefers them over female students.
- **Hearing Voices:** Critias is ancient and insane. Once in a while you can hear him talking to someone named "Melanie" or something, even if no one else is around.
- **Many Faces:** Critias is an Anarch, or damn near. He's been quietly supporting the Anarchs since the '80s, and his Eternal Academy is just a way of getting recruits.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Critias is an elderly-looking gentleman. He's a little on the plump side, and he stands no more than five feet tall. "He is mostly bald (though often wears a thick wig), with a little white hairs and a thick white beard. His face is deeply wrinkled, and in recent years he has a haunted look in his eyes.
- In the privacy of his haven he still prefers to wear Athenian-style robes. Students have caught him like this a few times, but each time he comes up with an elaborate excuse.
- Critias' Mask is as Professor Dimitris Calombaris, a semi-retired teacher of philosophy at the University of Chicago. Before this disguise, he was Professor James Kazan, another semi-retired teacher of philosophy, and before then it was Professor Manos Papagianno. Few vampires would have gotten away with simply changing a name and address, and that acting as sufficient cover, but few vampires in Chicago possess the powerful mental skills of Critias or his sire **(Mask 2)**.

Sire: Menele

Embraced: 423 BCE (Born 478 BCE)

Ambition: Discover the real Critias

Convictions: Never be manipulated by anyone ever again

Touchstones: Mahavir, his most devoted mortal student. In him, Critias sees freedom

Humanity: 6

Generation: 5th

Blood Potency: 8

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5; Charisma 3, Manipulation 5, Composure 2; Intelligence 5, Wits 5, Resolve 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 8, Willpower 7

Skills: Athletics 2, Melee 3; Etiquette 3, Insight 3, Intimidation 5, Leadership (Oratory) 4, Persuasion 4; Academics (Philosophy, Sophistry) 5, Awareness 3, Occult 4, Politics (Camarilla) 4, Science 2

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

DAMIEN, THE SHERIFF

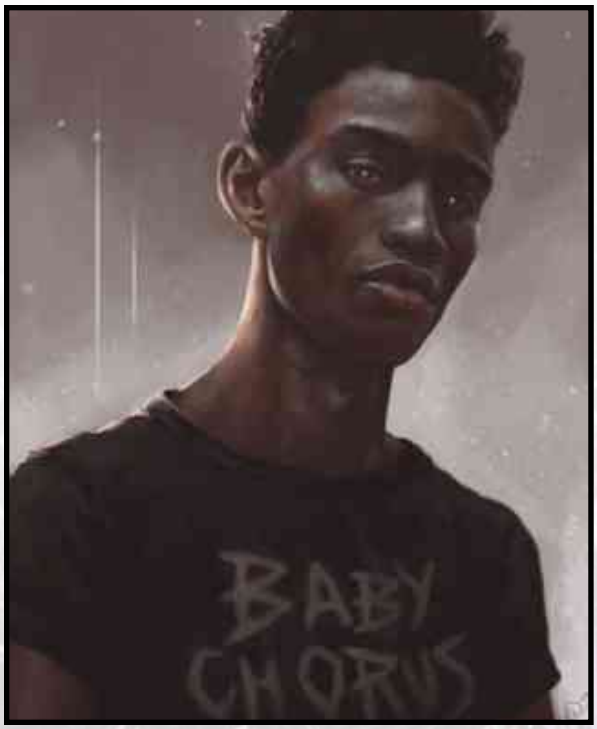
Epitaph: Reluctant Sheriff. Anything to get the band back together.

Quote: *"..."*

Clan: Brujah

MORTAL DAYS: ANYTHING TO SURVIVE

Damien's first memories were of pain, loneliness, and persecution. He doesn't remember his parents, celebrated musicians of the Chicago Black Renaissance who sang to him daily, or their tragic deaths. He does remember the rapid blows of a beefy fist to his face and his head slamming into the ground over and over and over again, until a fuzzy adult-sized figure intervened. Jeremiah, 12, five years his senior and Damien's personal demon, at Wayward Retreat Orphanage in the Glover Park Neighborhood. The daily beatings preceded Damien being scolded by the staff until he escaped the orphanage at the age of eight.



On the street, he did anything to make money to survive. He sang, recited poems, stole food from dumpsters outside grocery stores, and pickpocketed nightclub-goers. Damien fell in with a small band of other kids like himself led by an older boy, Taylor Rich. A year or so later, he was a runner for Policy, the illegal numbers game; his youth and size let him escape most people's attention. The few times he was caught, Damien would act like a big man, frequently getting a laugh or distracting his captors just enough for a quick escape.

Policy used him less after it came under Mafia control. Taylor, Jen, and Chad were the last of his found family. They all had to make money, or else. Needing more money, he turned to his primary talent, singing for some quick cash or whatever he could use to get by. Maybe it was his voice, his passion for life at age 14 that drew Critias to him, but Damien would be the next member of his ragtag family to vanish without warning. The ancient vampire Embraced the child, gifting him with immortality — then left him sireless, with no memory of who Embraced him.

KINDRED NIGHTS: AN UNLIKELY VOCATION

For years, Damien raided Mafia safehouses for cash to pay for his lifestyle — until Capone's goons started to carry stakes. One raid nearly led to his final death, had it not been for the timely intervention of Johann Keller, a Malkavian elder who believed Damien to be his son. Keller taught the boy about vampiric traditions and the Camarilla. Shortly afterward, Damien befriended Victoria McCoy, a Caitiff actress, and the two became Blood-Bound lovers.

In the 1980s, Damien joined the already-established band Baby Chorus as the new lead singer. The War of Chicago raged on in the streets, while Baby Chorus entertained the masses packed into the Cave. Damien leapt down into the crowd to sing when he saw the war firsthand. Fans were cheering their names when Damien turned back toward the band and saw a 10-foot-tall fur-covered nightmare of death rendering Garwood to ash. A half-dozen more Lupines emerged from thin air. The fake "little big man" syndrome vanished, as Damien's Brujah blood boiled and he soared into a blood rage. The battle at the Cave left many dead, mauled, or broken.

The wake of the war left Damien alone again, with no mentor, friends, or band. Johann died at the hands of the Sabbat. Victoria, his Caitiff lover, perished in battle with Lupines, as did Baby Chorus in the Cave. He saw magic before that death; he yearned to understand it and began researching the occult to better prepare for the next war.

The music called to him, and he knew the only thing that mattered was Baby Chorus. He spent the next decades appealing to Kathy Glens to come back to the band, to no avail. He would restart the band multiple times, only to fail.

In the late-2000s, Prince Jackson offered Damien the role of Sheriff of Chicago. Damien refused, but before Jackson left, he asked the Prince why he would want him in that role. He remembers the Prince's long laugh at the naivete of such an obvious question.

"Damien. To protect the city, I need someone who is not beholden to any of the old guard. Someone who will follow his Prince's orders, who can endure hardships and be my right hand. I could command you to do this, but would rather you choose it. The position shall remain open with the Hounds enforcing the law until a Sheriff is found."

Damien once again pleaded with Kathy to restart the band, and she refused. With little holding him back, Damien wandered the states, playing music in Anarch and Camarilla cities alike. One night, he heard the first whispers of the Lasombra making moves toward the Camarilla. An Anarch spoke of one of their number in Chicago monitoring an approach of Keeper dignitaries. Unknown to Damien, the Anarch was speaking of Maldavis. Damien headed back to Chicago with a plan to get the band back together.

For a number of years, the position of Sheriff remained unfilled. Damien went to Prince Jackson to request that Baby Chorus be placed center stage, and in return, Damien would accept the role. The Prince agreed, and Damien became Sheriff of Chicago. It's taken him surprisingly little time to start punishing other Kindred to the fullest extent of his power, leaving him to wonder if this was his destiny all along.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Longing for Fame:** Damien set up a record studio under the name "Alicia Wilson" to sell Baby Chorus-related materials and the occasional audio from performances. He is creating a lifeline for the band, if the deal with the Prince does not work.
- **Reinforcements:** All the Hounds were picked by the Prince and are loyal to him. Damien plans to double their number before the negotiations. The Prince's Hounds are better at keeping the peace than bringing the pain, and Damien wants to hand select more fighters than diplomats.
- **Sorcerer's Touch:** The werewolves deepened Damien's desire to understand magic. He can be found reading, researching, and questioning anyone with knowledge of the supernatural. Damien wants to be prepared to combat werewolves, Hecata, or Lasombra. He has stumbled over references to Oblivion.

- **Dark Echoes:** Damien hears the gentle call of the Beckoning, and from everything he's heard, it's going to get louder. He's intent on finding someone who knows how to stave off the call.

- **Take Them Out Back:** Prince Jackson has commanded Damien to clean up the Anarch nuisance in Chicago, but to do it discreetly. One of the Anarchs provided Jackson with a list comprising 10 Anarchs to remain untouched, leaving the rest as fair game. Damien believes in the promise of the Camarilla and swore an oath of loyalty to Jackson, so he now pursues every errant Anarch in the domain.

- Domain and Haven:

- **Starchild Studios (Haven 2, Resources 2)** Damien's haven is Starchild Studios in the Lake View neighborhood. He sleeps in a secret compartment within the soundproofed walls. To date, nobody knows he rests here during the daytime.

- **Avondale Offices (Contacts 3, Haven 1)** Prince Jackson has provided an office in Avondale for Damien's use as Sheriff. The Brujah keeps files here on various "trouble Kindred" such as Balthazar, the Hound Alexa Santos, and a thick folio on all the crimes he suspects Jason Newberry has committed.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Camarilla Kindred (Allies 3, Contacts 3)** Damien lost many of his Anarch connections by becoming Sheriff. He has a number of deputies and the Prince's law at his command, but at a street level he's persona non grata.

- **Studio Crew (Allies 2, Contacts 2, Influence 2) Groupies (Contacts 2, Fame 4, Herd 3, Retainers 1)** Damien's strongest mortal bonds are with the studio crew, Gale and Lottie Stafford, and the Baby Chorus groupies who attend every gig. He has developed an attraction to a groupie named Susanna Fisher, who has been following the band since they first formed. His bandmates smirk at the relationship between the apparently young Damien and the clearly mature Susanna, but enjoy that he has such a connection to humanity.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Kathy Glens (Family)** Damien considers Baby Chorus his family with Kathy his closest connection to the vampire world. She is the big sister of the group and he would sacrifice everything to keep her safe.

- **Kevin Jackson (Admiration)** Damien's relationship with Kevin Jackson is a strange one. He's Brujah while the Prince is Ventrue. Damien rarely toed the Camarilla line, but now he's Sheriff, and carries out Jackson's commands no matter how vicious. Damien knows his motives for such blind servitude are weak, but he also knows that without the band, he has nothing. He can't help but admire Jackson for how far he's come.

WHISPERS:

- **It's a Hit:** Record producers are showing up wherever Baby Chorus plays. Some people believe Damien sent .mp3 files out to catch their attention for some reason and could break the Masquerade.

- **Bomb in the Works:** He is an Anarch and is targeting established Kindred to weaken the city's power structure for a revolt. That is why he is recruiting more Hounds.

- **Skills in Question:** The vampire murders around the city are beyond such a young Sheriff's ability to resolve. Someone needs to replace him with a proper investigator.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Damien has created an identity for himself called Damien Bishop, whose parents died when he was four. He is currently in the custody of his reclusive uncle Alan Bishop **(Mask 1)**.

- Alicia Wilson was created as the band's manager and owner of Starchild Studios. She's a phantom, however. She only exists on paper.

- Damien is a scrawny, overly tall African-American kid with dark brown skin that's cool to the touch. While eternally 14, he appears a few years older, and is malnourished from years of living on the street. His hair is cut short, and he has piercing brown eyes and darkish gray skin. On stage, he sports a Baby Chorus T-shirt, black pants, and Converse shoes.

- Blush of Life darkens his complexion and makes him warm to the touch.

Sire: Critias

Embraced: 1962 (Born 1948)

Ambition: Get Baby Chorus trending (despite the risk to the Masquerade)

Convictions: Maintain order for the Prince

Touchstones: Julia and John Rich — the grandchildren of his childhood friend Taylor Rich reinforce his need to keep the Kindred away from mortal eyes

Humanity: 6

Generation: 6th

Blood Potency: 5

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 8, Willpower 8

Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl (Armed Opponents) 4, Drive 3, Firearms 3, Larceny 2, Melee 2, Stealth 4, Survival 2; Intimidation 2, Performance (Singing, Guitar) 4; Awareness (Ambushes) 3, Investigation (Deduction) 3, Law 2, Occult 1, Politics 2

Disciplines: Auspex 1, Celerity 3, Potence 3, Presence 1

THOMAS EWELL, "BALTHAZAR"

Epitaph: Live rich and covered in the blood of war

Clan: Brujah

MORTAL DAYS: TRAITOROUS RAIDER

Thomas Ewell was an aristocrat, spoiled and privileged. Born in 1827 in southern Georgia, he was beaten by a violent father, instilling in him a hatred for authority. When it was found that Thomas had in turn killed several of the slaves on his family's cotton plantation, he was exiled from home. Thomas never healed those deep psychological wounds and was never further punished for his crimes, so he headed north to New York, fitting in well there with the street gangs who had free rein to do as they pleased. It was there he found himself when the Civil War broke out, and used it as an excuse to rally up other local Confederates to raid the New England coast and build a fortune of his own. His violent passion for conquest inspired an impressive loyalty in the outlaws who followed him.

Although he mostly used the war as an excuse to steal and murder, the premise of the war set him firmly on the side of the South, not for any loyalty to kin or home but rather from a disgust at seeing any slaves freed. A deep-set racism had settled into his violent heart. He raided as far north as Canada, where he settled for a brief period of time with his fleeting fortunes. It was in Canada that the vampire Alexis Blanc took notice of Ewell. Alexis had fled Paris to escape the Camarilla and settled in Ottawa as one of the four city Barons. The two met at a society ball, and she was irresistibly drawn to his violent, domineering, aristocratic nature. He saw her as a driven heiress from whom he could regain his fortunes, but she was more of a femme fatale than he realized. Ewell thought he was manipulating her, which Alexis found adorable, and chose to Embrace him days after the war ended. She was far more ruthless than he, which surprised and delighted him.

KINDRED NIGHTS: ALLEGIANCE TO NONE BUT HIMSELF

Ewell remained in Canada with his sire after the Confederate defeat, and took on the new name Balthazar to fit his new identity. With Alexis he found he could be himself, but she grew more independent than the women he had met. He quickly tired of this once he learned she was the one in control. Ewell moved out, refusing to submit to her power or recognize her authority as Prince of Ottawa.

In the late 1870s, Balthazar and his new childe Marc Levesque ventured to Chicago in the hope of establishing a Brujah state. They were fast friends with Modius, a local powerbroker, who was waging a war against Chicago's corrupt political system. Balthazar encouraged Alexis to join them, the three joining Modius' side in a Kindred war far more brutal than he could've ever dreamed. Modius' followers bored Balthazar with their politics, however, and he soon grew weary of their poverty-drenched activism. There was no fortune to be won in this war, only a territory he wasn't thrilled to be rebuilding. Alexis became more intolerable to him by the

night, at the height of her power and disregarding most anything he had to say in favor of Marc and Modius.

At this point Balthazar fell back into his decadent aristocratic patterns, the passion for war draining from him as he felt powerless. He started attending elite parties again, which is where he met the Ventrue Hinds. It turned out to be a historic meeting, since at the time Hinds was on the hunt for ways to take out Modius in Lodin's name, and here was one of the prized generals in his war. Balthazar agreed to betray Modius and Alexis in exchange for a handsome sum and the freedom to choose whomever he wanted as vessels. That night, Balthazar led a group of Ventrue to Modius's haven. Balthazar drove a stake through Alexis' heart, and watched her burn as the place caught fire.

Marc's anger was palpable, and though Balthazar could feel his murderous intentions he couldn't bring himself to dispatch his childe. One day he hoped Marc would come around, and get over the woman who stood between them.

The Primogen respected Balthazar and he gained notoriety under Lodin's reign, younger vampires fearing his ruthless unpredictability. He used this to his advantage and assisted Ballard in the suppression of the city Anarchs. Lodin wielded Balthazar like a sword, using his violence to rid Chicago of anyone he disliked, and he kept the Brujah placated with every debased luxury he could desire.

Chicago's Brujah universally developed hatred toward Balthazar, calling him "traitor" to his face. Even the Hellenes, Critias and Damien, call Balthazar "Caitiff." Every time he hears an insult, he hates himself just a little bit more and remembers betraying his sire, and that self-hatred gets doubly projected on the victims of his next violent spree.

Once Prince Jackson took Chicago, Balthazar's unlife became difficult. He was ousted from the inner circle, Jackson wanting nothing to do with this violent, racist Brujah. He's now barely tolerated by most in power, although some Primogen secretly still communicate with Balthazar and keep him in the loop. It's only a matter of time before someone else wields this violent Brujah for their own ends, or he does something stupidly destructive.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Modern Pirate:** Balthazar lost all the money he was once given while Lodin supported him. He needs to find some kind of patron or he's going to start up his old habits of raiding for wealth again. Since raiding could be a Masquerade breach, he'll be on the Prince's radar again, which will put him at higher risk. The question of how to control such a loose cannon will be an issue for many Kindred in the city.

- **Brujah War:** Balthazar wouldn't want to kill Marc Levesque if he finds out he survived the War of Chicago, but the conflict between them would be inevitable. Who is the greater evil in this scenario is questionable, and although Marc could be changed for the better, Balthazar is beyond saving.

- **Cabin Fever:** No longer invited to many society events, and unable to take out his anger on the Anarchs, it's just a matter of time until Balthazar does something violent and stupid. He could easily kill the wrong people.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Bedford Park Warehouse (Haven 1, Resources 1)** Since Balthazar's fall from grace in Chicago, he's had to retreat to a poorer lifestyle. He's not one to plan or stockpile money, so most of what he once had is now lost. He spends much time in the most practical of his havens, the basement of an old warehouse in Bedford Park. He'll even couch surf with a fellow Kindred if they'll allow it.

- **Suburban Prey (Herd 1)** Balthazar's now a wanderer in the city, feeding where he can on the outskirts to cause the least hassle for himself. He's outrageously impatient with this situation, and one night or another he'll hunt in a place he's not supposed to be.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **LZ (Contacts 1)** Balthazar has no friends in the city, but there are a few violent criminals he's intimidated into doing menial tasks. Chief among these is LZ, a low-tier gang member and drug dealer. If Balthazar needs any kind of street gossip, random human necessities, or someone to bully, LZ is it.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Kevin Jackson (Hatred)** Balthazar hates almost everything about Prince Jackson. Not only did he strip Balthazar of his power, money, and influence in the city, he doesn't believe a black vampire is fit to run a city. His racism toward the Prince is well known by Jackson himself, and it seems Jackson doesn't mind at all. In fact, Jackson loves lording his power over this fallen Brujah, a vestige of older, more brutal times.

- **Portia (Suspicion)** Balthazar's developed an obsession over the apparently young Toreador based on the sheer number of Kindred he's noticed deferring to her in subtle ways. He's made a map of Kindred he believes owe her something, and keeps it in his back pocket.

WHISPERS:

- **Stick to the Living:** Balthazar has been seen haunting some mortal society events he knows will be void of Kindred.
- **Memories:** He's recently taken to a young mortal woman who looks and acts strikingly like Alexis.
- **Good Graces:** Anarchs have gone missing one by one recently, and while there's no proof, many suspect Balthazar is behind it.
- **Assassin:** Balthazar's hatred of Prince Jackson is well known. Some think he might be plotting to back an outside party in overthrowing him.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Balthazar has a very expressive face that mostly showcases his disappointment with everyone around him. He's only seen smiling in the midst of a violent display.
- Yesterday's well-to-do fashions fit a sturdy frame, and he's got a rugged sort of handsomeness usually obscured by his ruthless nature. He has been seen in one contemporary suit he keeps carefully so that he can maintain an air of aristocracy while out and about.
- Of late there's a wildness about him that could rival a Gangrel. He does little to mask his Kindred nature anymore, which makes him a danger to all around him.
- Balthazar was protected by Lodin and the Primogen for so long, he never needed a mortal guise. Now, he struggles to create one. He is a vampire out of his element.

Sire: Alexis Blanc

Embraced: 1865 (Born 1827)

Ambition: Prove I'm better than the upstart Prince

Convictions: Never hesitate to accept an easy way to riches

Touchstones: LZ, a gang member and drug dealer Balthazar bullies

Humanity: 3

Generation: 8th

Blood Potency: 3

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Composure 2; Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 5

Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl (Dirty Fighting) 4, Drive 2, Firearms 3, Melee 1, Larceny 3, Survival 1; Insight 2, Intimidation (Bullying) 3, Leadership 2, Persuasion 1, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 1; Academics (History) 1, Awareness 3, Investigation 1, Occult 1, Politics (Camarilla) 2

Disciplines: Celerity 2, Fortitude 2, Potence 4, Presence 3

The Furores

The Furores would like for nothing more than to see the high-and-mighty Chicago Camarilla fall, and the right time to act may not be far away. Though Anita Wainwright and Gengis jockey for the Anarch leadership role — at least among the Brujah — they both agree Jackson and the whole Primogen Council needs to fall in a way that doesn't make martyrs of them. They need to look foolish, the Camarilla needs to lose faith in Chicago, and a space needs to be created for anarchy to blossom.

ANITA WAINWRIGHT

Epitaph: Anarch Intelligence Exchange

Quote: *"I know you have this misconception that all Anarchs are mindless thugs. I'm here to convince you otherwise."*

Clan: Brujah

MORTAL DAYS: NATURAL REBEL

Anita Wainwright has been fighting The Man since the 1950s, when she was a student at the University of Illinois. She took several Freedom Rides with mixed-race groups on public buses to Alabama, challenging the enforcement of illegal bus segregation laid down by Morgan v. Virginia. She joined up with the Diggers in New York City and ran a Free Store in Chicago, writing for a local underground newspaper, the *Chicago Seed*. Throughout her young adult life, she flitted from cause to cause, passionately believing in revolution through communal deeds — that helping the common man would lead to the overthrow of the rich and powerful.

During her time as a reporter for the *Seed*, she met a Black Panther named Theodore Dooley. She quickly struck up an intimate relationship with him. The relationship was the final straw for her conservative parents, who disowned her over her refusal to stop seeing Dooley. Spurred by the fight with her parents, she threw herself more fiercely into her activism, which was subtly encouraged by Dooley.

Anita was one of the organizers who helped plan the Vietnam War protests at the Chicago Democratic National Convention in 1968. Police were sent to break up the protests, and Anita lost Dooley in the crowd before she was badly beaten by an officer.

After she recovered, she went looking for Dooley to find out what happened to him. After several days and nights of searching, she eventually found him in the basement of the building acting as the headquarters for the Black Panthers. She stumbled across him drinking the blood of the cop that had beaten her in the protest. At first, she was horrified, but she quickly accepted the situation, even before Dooley had a chance to explain. She saw the act not just as a literal thirst for blood, but a metaphorical one. She was angry and wanted vengeance. They spent a few nights together, and by the end of it, Anita convinced Dooley to Embrace her.

KINDRED NIGHTS: AT THE CUSP

At first, Anita used her newfound Kindred strength to dive more fully into the concerns of the human world. But as the '70s came and went, her involvement in mortal society waned, as she and Dooley turned their attentions to the reformation of Kindred society instead. Her passion for change, and propensity for bloodthirsty revenge, hasn't diminished one iota, however, and she is one of the few Anarchs in Chicago to develop connections all over the country. "Think locally, act globally," she would often say, as she spent countless nights making phone calls, writing letters, and even risking dangerous travel to meet with potential allies in her cause.

By the '90s, Camarilla control over Chicago was stronger than ever, and she was considering moving to one of the Anarch Free States in California. That's when the Lupines attacked, slaughtering many of the local Kindred. She barely managed to avoid the claws of the werewolves herself, but many of her friends were not so lucky — including her sire and lover, Dooley. Her need for revenge intensified, and she swore to find and destroy the Lupines who killed her friends.

Anita stayed in Chicago and carefully planned her next steps. She spent years accumulating information about her foes. Her network of connections increased, as she became less discerning about the allegiance of her Kindred contacts. Anarchs, independents, and even moderately high-ranking members of the sects traded correspondence and phone calls with her, all to accumulate whatever knowledge she could about the Chicago Lupines.

Indeed, it was Anita who received the first rumors about the Lasombra coming to Chicago. She attempted to trade this information to some of her local Camarilla contacts in exchange for the whereabouts of the werewolves (or their descendants), but by the time they came to trust her offer, the Prince announced the arrival of the Lasombra "delegates" to the whole court. Her information was useless, but many of her more-reluctant contacts recognized the quality of her information network. Marc Levesque has also quietly joined her, helping to maintain her network while plotting his own revenge against the Kindred of Chicago.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Solid Ground:** Now, Anita has moved from "occasionally useful" to "extremely useful" in the eyes of many powerful Kindred on all sides, she wants to tread carefully and reinforce her power base before she makes any big moves.

- **Doubtful Connection:** One of her Camarilla contacts is Critias. His well-known sexism worked against Anita for decades, and even though they shared a clan, she saw him as the embodiment of the patriarchal system that held her and her friends down. With the Entelechy School, she sees the potential value the

elder brings to the city. Anita isn't sure if she wants to suck up to the elder (and maybe convince him to join the Anarchs), or arrange to have him killed. She doesn't know about the Eternal Academy or what happens to its failed fledgling students yet.

- **Dark Past:** Anita is still extremely well-connected. She has links to Brujah and Anarchs all over the United States, and she's willing to get anyone in touch with anyone, as long as she trusts them and considers their cause to be worthwhile. She's aware that her list of contacts is valuable, which is why she doesn't disclose it to anyone. No Camarilla Kindred wants to have it known they've collaborated with an Anarch, so the implicit blackmail keeps her safe.

- **Wolf Hunt:** She hasn't lost sight of her true goal: finding the werewolves who killed her friends. She recognizes some of them may be dead after 25 years of looking, so she'd be happy with vengeance against their families or loved ones at this point. She would do almost anything for concrete, firsthand information on how to kill werewolves, or where her enemies live right now.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Riverdale Community (Contacts 3, Haven 2, Herd 3, Influence 2, Resources 1)** Riverdale is one of the areas allotted to the Brujah as feeding ground, back when Ventrue Princes were trying to shaft the clan. Today it's still an area where crime is too high and the average wage is too low. Anita has quietly claimed it for the Anarch cause, and no one has contested her because very few Kindred actually want it.

- **Riverdale Communal Homestead (Allies 4, Contacts 3, Haven 3)** Anita lives in a house that looks condemned, but she has renovated the inside to be quite comfortable, modern, and secure. Several Anarchs use the building as crash space — most notably Marc Levesque, her informal enforcer.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Francis (Retainers 3)** When she started her plans of revenge against the Lupines, she created a ghoul — a young black man named Francis who reminds her of Dooley — to help her with tasks not requiring her direct attention. Now that she's more secure, she plans to Embrace Francis. The problem is, she either needs to get Camarilla permission for the Embrace (thus reducing her standing in the eyes of the Anarchs) or flaunt the Traditions for her own gain (thus reducing her utility in the eyes of her Camarilla contacts, and risking banishment or destruction). She's currently debating Embracing Francis and blaming one of her rivals for "poaching" him.

- **Nation of Islam (Allies 3, Contacts 3, Herd 3)** Anita hides behind mortal protest groups and foundations for the disenfranchised citizens of Chicago and Gary. She's genuinely respected among the Chicago wing of the Nation of Islam, despite her outsider status, and often relies on them for favors such as protecting her haven and tracking her enemies.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Gérard (Problematic)** Marc Levesque is her biggest supporter, and her biggest problem. He is passionately devoted to the Anarchs in general and to her specifically. He is also passionately devoted to kicking the shit out of Balthazar. Balthazar hasn't exactly made a lot of friends within the Camarilla, but he *is* still part of the Ivory Tower, so the optics of a hardcore Anarch killing a hardcore Camarilla Kindred just don't work for her. At the same time, she knows she can only put Gérard off of his murderous plans for so long.

- **Critias (Work in Progress)** Anita is developing a business relationship with Critias, the Brujah Primogen. Recently he's started to display both more rebellious tendencies and a fervent desire to actually help the mortals in Chicago. The big problem is that he doesn't seem to trust her because she's a woman, which rouses her feminist instincts. They perform a careful dance to not set each other off, because both see the value in collaboration.

- **Rosa Hernandez (Potential)** Both women despise werewolves, Anita because they took her love away, Rosa because she feels betrayed by the savagery of their nature. Anita feels the two could form an effective coterie of Lupine hunters, if only she could convince the Gangrel to join the Anarchs.

WHISPERS:

- **National Network:** Anita is the Anarchs' information hub. If you want any Anarch in the United States to know something, you only have to tell her.

- **Big Game:** Anita is a fearsome werewolf hunter, with over a dozen pelts hanging on her wall.

- **The Little Things:** Anita is such a hardcore Chicagoan that she has four stars tattooed on her back.

- **Brujah Blood:** Anita and Marc Levesque are lovers.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Anita is a Caucasian female of moderate size. She stands 5'8" tall, and weighs 125 pounds. She has auburn hair she often dyes or shaves down, and dresses casually in modern styles, although she tends toward a "retro" look that seems to cycle back into fashion from time to time.
- She has a carefully cultivated appearance. Her dress, demeanor, and speech patterns are calibrated to give off the vibe of "young, brash Brujah," but she knows what she's doing. She can dial her revolutionary rhetoric up or down at a moment's notice to suit her audience.
- Anita uses the identity of Patricia Dooley as her Mask, the widow of the deceased Theodore Dooley. Patricia is a private woman who occasionally handles charity work at the city's children's centers, her standoffish behavior enough to prevent most deep questions **(Mask 1)**.

Sire: Theodore Dooley

Embraced: 1968 (Born 1941)

Ambition: Eradicate the Lupines who killed my friends

Convictions: Protect my memory of Dooley

Touchstones: Francis — the ghoul who reminds her of Dooley

Humanity: 8

Generation: 12th

Blood Potency: 2

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5; Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Composure 3; Intelligence 4, Wits 4, Resolve 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 8, Willpower 8

Skills: Athletics 3, Firearms 1, Melee 2, Larceny (Breaking In) 3, Stealth 2; Animal Ken 2, Etiquette 1, Insight 3, Intimidation (Silent Treatment) 1, Persuasion 4; Academics 2, Investigation 2, Medicine 2, Occult (Lupines) 2, Politics (Anarchs) 3, Technology 2

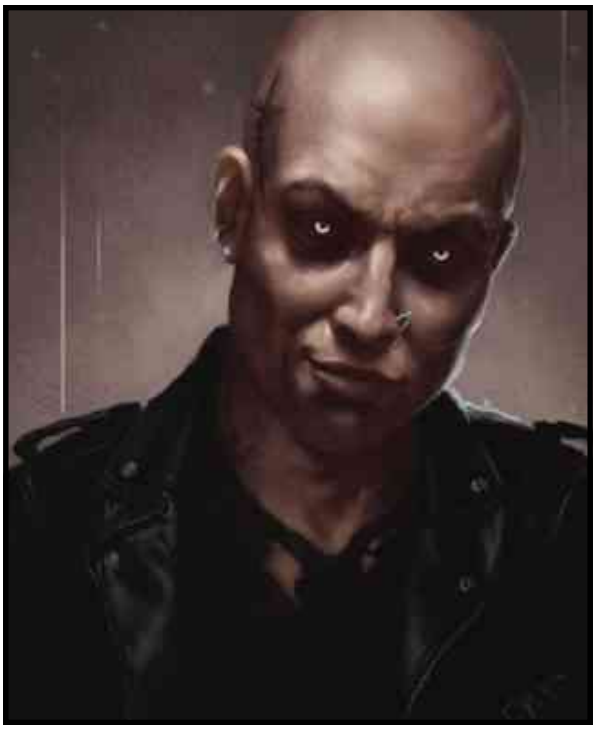
Disciplines: Celerity 3, Fortitude 1, Potence 1, Presence 2

GENGIS

Epitaph: Self-appointed Anarch Visionary

Quote: *"Fuck you very much, Mr. Prince."*

Clan: Brujah



MORTAL DAYS: CHAMPAGNE PUNK

Gengis comes in two shades. The legend and the truth behind it.

Despite being born into a rich family, Gengis was a wild child. He was a part of the punk movement in the Chicago area in the early '70s, dressing and acting the part with leather, tattoos, piercings, and plenty of spikes. His mother disapproved but loved him all the same, calling it a "phase" before making the punk rocker's bed.

He followed garage bands and loved being part of the scene. For the time, he was far out there, and society treated him as such. He got to rebel at night and enjoy fine food and accommodation during the day. It was the perfect mix of hypocrisy that often accompanies youthful rebellion. He and his father would frequently go to Chicago Bulls games together when the team first formed, and despite the incongruous sight of a man in a cardigan sitting next to a pierced hulk of a youth, the two always took courtside seats together.

It was his outlandish style and in-your-face attitude that drew his sire's attention. She forced the Embrace on Gengis, wildly passionate over his Trotskyite speeches at a local dive bar. She only spent a couple of weeks with him, leaving his side when she realized this purported communist was living off an allowance from his bourgeoise parents.

For Gengis' part, he kept up the lifestyle even after his parents passed away and he inherited their property and investments.

KINDRED NIGHTS: THORN IN THE CAMARILLA

Throughout the years, Gengis frequently enjoyed playing the troll when it came to the established Camarilla. He always tried to work toward undermining the elders within the city, though his methods may not have been as covert as he believed them to be. His destructive actions often led to a snowball effect, with Gengis ending up on the losing side of a battle he was unprepared to fight. It was Gengis who pointed Lupines at Lodin's penthouse, hoping a change in leadership would make for equality in the domain of Chicago. Instead, it resulted in a lot of his friends getting killed. Feeling immense guilt, Gengis resolved to never again go off half-cocked.

Turbulence and discord can be an Anarch's best friend, and with the recent ascension of Kevin Jackson along with the Second Inquisition's appearance, Gengis is in his element. Between the Chicago protest marches, as well as many of the elders disappearing, Gengis has turned into a rather charismatic leader, more so out of need than desire.

When the Brujah left the Camarilla, Gengis took many of the Chicago clan members under his protection. Breaking out from his former follower mentality, welcoming his brothers and sisters into the Movement, he helped them get established safely despite Prince Jackson's scrutiny. He helped them acclimate to the drastically different culture of the Anarchs, showing them the ropes and how to fit in. He also makes sure they stay connected if they choose to travel or move.

Gengis' part in the kine's anti-fascist movements have increased his prominence. Chicago has been a central point in the #Resist movement, with frequent protests, rallies, and riots. With his punk lifestyle, counter-culture mentality, and new outlook on leadership, he fits right in with those looking to cause a little chaos. Kevin Jackson is all too aware of this but knows stopping the movement would tilt the Anarchs in his direction. Gengis is therefore allowed a certain amount of freedom, though Jackson's heel grows increasingly close to the Brujah's head.

Gengis continues to remind the Prince he is still in the city, and he is a force to be reckoned with. He frequently uses his pull within the kine to make sure these marches are large and disruptive. It's Gengis' way of letting the Camarilla know they are not the only ones controlling the herd. Whether this will continue to work or not is anyone's guess, but Gengis seems to think this is a good path for him to walk down. He's a hero for the common Anarch.

But of course, by dawn he's back in his penthouse haven, sleeping in silk sheets in one of the most expensive parts of Chicago. It's hard being the leader of the revolution.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Newfound Power:** Gengis is no slouch in wielding influence over the Anarchs and the kine, but he is still unsure of how exactly to best use it. This is all new to him. Until recently he was a poster boy and held little power. Now, with the Brujah defection to the Anarchs, his moves are scrutinized. He mostly follows the trends of the vocal left-wing kine, which has served him well so far, but he wants to meet with like-minded Kindred to come up with some grand plans for the city.

- **Nesting:** Gengis has always kept his penthouse haven within the city, much to the chagrin of his coterie. Gengis likes having a comfortable place to bunk down and relax, which he does often. His coterie encourage him to lease it out to visiting Anarch dignitaries, but Gengis is very possessive over his property. He's weighing up whether to sacrifice his privacy and wealth for the good of the Movement.

- **Stick it to the Man:** Gengis knows very little about the Lasombra, but he does know he doesn't want a strengthened Camarilla. He's tempted to sabotage any upcoming Lasombra visit, or, if he can find some charming Anarchs, try and win any visiting Keepers over to the Anarch Movement instead.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Gold Coast Penthouse (Haven 4, Resources 4)** Gengis keeps a fancy penthouse on the Gold Coast of Chicago, which overlooks the busiest part of the city. It is very clean and modern, not the type of dwelling most would associate with an Anarch. He tries to keep the appearance of being from rougher parts of the city, so he rarely brings any vampires back to his haven.

- **Punk Quarters (Contacts 3, Herd 3, Influence 2)** Gengis spends a lot of time in the old punk quarters of Chicago such as Halsted Street and Clark Street, where his appearance doesn't faze most of the residents. This is also where he feeds, enjoying a clinch with dancing punks and rockers as bodies thrash to screeching music.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Anarch Movement (Allies 4)** Gengis is well-connected within the Anarch Movement and uses those connections to help younger Brujah. Fledgling

Anarchs on the edge of Chicago report to Gengis like he's an iconic warlord, despite him winning no battles. For Gengis, appearances make his reputation.

- **Antifa (Allies 2, Contacts 2, Influence 1, Retainers 2)** Gengis has joined the Antifa movement within the city. While there is no formal organization, he is connected to several of their members who are always glad to send a little mayhem to the oppressive powers that be. He has made one Antifa protestor, D'Arcy Pock, his ghoul. He admires how readily she throws herself into the fray and how unafraid she seems of jail time.

- **Sunburst Execs (Contacts 1, Influence 1)** Gengis at one point had high-society connections, though those have weakened over the years. With the rising gap between upper and lower class, Gengis has found he holds more sway over the latter. He misses his executive friends however, and still receives the occasional invite to go golfing with Sunburst execs.

- **Latin Kings (Allies 2, Contacts 2) Perez (Retainers 1)** Gengis has a strong relationship with some of the local gang members, specifically a young Latino named Perez, of the Latin Kings. Gengis and Perez have worked together on certain projects to help the youth in Chicago. Gengis is aware of the hypocrisy, as Perez deals drugs to these youths' parents when the youths aren't around.

- **Punk Scene (Allies 3, Contacts 2)** Gengis maintains close ties to the aging punk scene in Chicago, hanging out at sites like the Mohawk on North Avenue. He occasionally calls on them to commit acts of petty violence or public disorder.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Chicago Anarchs (Underwhelming)** Gengis loves his fellow Windy City Anarchs but realizes the heady days of Chicago Anarchs are gone. When the Hounds' persecution of Anarchs commenced, many drifted to Milwaukee and Indianapolis. Gengis knows he has to work with the other members of his coterie to strengthen the Anarch Movement in Chicago, but he's restricted to 10 members. He's contemplating a play for Baron, but knows he'll face competition from Anita or Maldavis.

- **Abraham DuSable (Friendly)** Gengis' relationship with DuSable is an odd one, as despite the two of them sitting on either side of the sectarian fence, they both enjoy jazz and still attend clubs together. Gengis embraces what he calls his "bipartisan sensibilities" while DuSable just enjoys the company of a vampire who can appreciate music.

- **Kevin Jackson (Necessary Evil) Bobby Weatherbottom (Necessary Sacrifice)** Gengis made a deal with Kevin Jackson that he's yet to announce to the other Anarchs in the city. As long as the Anarchs don't attack Camarilla Kindred, up to 10 are allowed to remain in Chicago, and will in turn remain unaccosted. Anyone not on the list is fair game for the Sheriff and Hounds. There was an added caveat: Jackson was clear that any Ventrue identifying as Anarch must be handed over to Critias for "re-education." Gengis is eyeing up Bobby Weatherbottom and wondering how dirty he's willing to get his hands in exchange for 10 unassailable Anarch spots in the city.

WHISPERS:

- **Warlock Slave:** The Tremere frequently use Gengis as a pawn, planting commands into his psyche and making him behave against Anarch interests.

- **Wanted Man:** Critias and Damien, possibly the last true Camarilla Brujah in Chicago, have Gengis marked for death. They believe he represents everything wrong with their clan.

- **Sowing Bloody Oats:** Gengis has created several childer over the years, few of whom knew Gengis was their sire until recently. Gengis has been slowly contacting those childer in hopes of expanding his influence and power.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Gengis appears to be influenced by the punk-rock era of the '80s and '90s, complete with the leather jacket, dagger tattoo over his right ear, and safety pin through his nose. He completes his look with a shaved head, which gives him a rather intimidating appearance. He hasn't changed this look in over two decades. When participating in riots, he frequently wears a black bandana around his mouth, evoking the Antifa movement.

- Gengis' real name is Rupert Levine, and he still uses it as his Mask. Technically, he should be 50 or so years older than he looks, so he's on the lookout for a Kindred who can fabricate a new member of the Levine family as a fresh Mask **(Mask 1)**.

Sire: Ethrica

Embraced: 1972 (Born 1954)

Ambition: Forge a permanent place for the Anarchs in Chicago

Convictions: Always fight oppression

Touchstones: Perez — Latin Kings gang member and lookout for the Anarchs

Humanity: 7

Generation: 12th

Blood Potency: 1

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 2; Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 4

Skills: Athletics (Basketball) 3, Brawl 2, Drive 2, Firearms (Handgun) 3, Larceny 2; Etiquette 2, Insight 2, Intimidation (Size) 2, Leadership 2, Persuasion (Oratory) 2, Streetwise (Antifa) 3, Subterfuge 2; Awareness 2, Investigation 1, Politics (Anarchs, Communism) 2, Technology 1

Disciplines: Celerity 2, Fortitude 1, Potence 2, Presence 3

"GÉRARD" MARC LEVESQUE

Epitaph: Scarred Brujah Firebrand

Quote: *"Non sire, ce n'est pas une révolte, c'est une révolution."*

Clan: Brujah

MORTAL DAYS: FROM VANDAL TO BOMBER

Levesque is a proud French Canadian, from a long line of proud French Canadians. As a radical Québécois, he longs for independence for Quebec. Such a movement wasn't well organized in the late 1860s when he was growing up, but he was still fiercely devoted to the cause.

His first rebellious act was to paint a mustache on a bust of Queen Victoria at the tender age of 12. As he matured, his plans grew more sophisticated, such as throwing paint or acid on English citizens, or bombing their homes and businesses at night.

During a trip to Quebec to recruit soldiers for the Confederate cause, Thomas Ewell met Levesque, and Ewell was attracted to the Québécois' revolutionary fervor. The two became friends, and when the American Civil War broke out, Levesque helped Ewell acquire supplies and explosives to send back south. After Ewell was Embraced as a vampire, the two maintained a regular, friendly correspondence.

In 1870, Ewell helped Levesque plan his most daring act of sabotage yet: the bombing of a post office. The plan was foolproof, but things went wrong when Levesque's companion tripped while throwing a bundle of lit dynamite. The Québécois barely managed to dive behind a carriage before the explosion killed his compatriot. While Levesque survived, he was badly injured. Not wanting to seek medical treatment and risk arrest, he managed to limp and crawl his way back to the basement of his hideout. Levesque was on the brink of death when Ewell discovered him several nights later.

KINDRED NIGHTS: BURNED IN MANY WAYS

The two slept in the basement, and the following evening Ewell — named "Balthazar" in his immortal state — took his new childe Levesque to meet Balthazar's sire, Alexis Blanc. Within moments Levesque was smitten by the beautiful French vampire, but the woman was angry. It wasn't until much later that Levesque learned he had been Embraced without Alexis' knowledge or permission. Balthazar was sent away, and Alexis offered her vitae to Levesque over the next three nights. During that time, she was comforting, witty, and elegant, and Levesque feel deeply in love with her. Eventually Balthazar was forgiven, and the three of them became fast friends.

They talked a lot about uprisings, politics, and the creation of a Brujah state, but Levesque didn't need to be sold. His sire was his friend, and his grand-sire was the love of his life — for them, he would go anywhere.

Then, it all went wrong.

He was lying next to his true love, his grand-sire, becoming sleepy as the sun threatened to peek over the horizon. One moment his eyes were closed as he enjoyed the gentle pull into torpid slumber, and the next he heard a scream. He turned to see Alexis with a stake buried in her chest, and Balthazar holding it. Levesque could smell smoke and hear the crackle of flames as their haven was put to the torch. Balthazar grabbed his childe and threw him out the back door, telling him to run. With the first rays of the sun peeking over the horizon, Levesque had little choice.

It wasn't until months later that Levesque learned what had happened: Balthazar sold them out to the Ventrue in exchange for money and a comfortable position within the Camarilla. For several years the mere mention of Balthazar's name spurred Levesque into frenzy. Levesque also learned about the Blood Bond, but refused to believe that what he shared with Alexis was anything but pure and spiritual love. He continued to collaborate with the local Anarchs, particularly Anita Wainwright and her lover and sire, Dooley.

The Lupines attacked in the '90s. Havens and Elysia were all raided by the werewolves, and many Kindred died in the conflict. Anita's Anarch group was hit as well, and Levesque managed to help Anita get to safety before he fell under their claws. He spent the last of his blood to merge with the Earth, but not before the sun had started to burn his flesh, leaving the grass covered in ash.

Levesque spent years in torpor under the ground, recovering. Eventually the ground ejected him near a group of mortals looking for a geocache. Without thinking, Levesque murdered all of them and drank their blood, before slipping away. He wandered aimlessly until he found a basement in an abandoned building. A glance in a broken mirror over a rusty sink told him the claws of the Lupines added even more scars to his face. Once again, he escaped a burning building. Once again, he was horribly injured and scarred. Once again, he recovered in a basement.

By the time he had fully recovered, he learned the Kindred of the city believed him to be dead, but his hated sire was still alive. Hiding his face and going by the name "Gérard," after the poet Gérard de Nerval, he claimed to be a Caitiff new to the city. Learning Anita also survived but also lost her lover, Gérard spent several months proving she was trustworthy before revealing himself to her. Now the two Anarchs plot and scheme, but at cross purposes. Anita is trying to play all sides against each other to further the cause, but Gérard only wants one thing: to kill Balthazar with his own hands.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Aggressive Outbursts:** Gérard isn't good at keeping a low profile. Sure, he's diligent about keeping his face covered, and over the years he's gotten used to being called "Gérard" instead of "Frenchie," but he doesn't have the temperament to keep his head down. Instead, he's prone to rash acts of destruction and violence. More than once he's nearly taken a swing at Balthazar or people who mention Balthazar's name, so he seeks a way of retaining self-control.

- **Governed by Impulse:** If the Anarchs come to Gérard and ask him to plan the bombing of an art gallery, he can do it with no problem. But if they asked him to plan a long-term revolution against the local Camarilla, he'll get frustrated a few weeks in and end up just jumping someone. He's looking for a potential Mawla who could teach him the benefits of patience and tactical planning.

- **Time to Plan:** Much of Gérard's plans fall into two groups: "whatever Anita needs from me" and "anything to get back at that asshole Balthazar." Anything that doesn't lead to one of those two avenues won't hold his attention for long. That said, Gérard *can* think more than one step ahead, and has some vague ideas of how to use the recent arrival of the Lasombra to try and get back at Balthazar.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Riverdale Communal Homestead (Haven 1)** Gérard doesn't hold any domain, and he doesn't have a haven. Most nights, he sleeps in Anita's basement. He goes hunting on his own, feeding quietly on whatever mortal opportunity provides. Half the Brujah in the city joke he's more Gangrel or Nosferatu as a result; half the Brujah in the city also get punched a lot.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Genevieve McCallister (Contacts 1, Retainers 1)** Genevieve is an outspoken feminist and activist. Gérard met her at a punk club in West Town, and the two hit it off after she kicked him in the balls for thinking he was hitting on her. She's drawn to his unconventional good looks, and he's drawn to her outspoken nature. She looks a bit like Anita, too, but he hasn't realized that consciously.

- **Toby (Allies 1, Retainers 2)** Toby is Gérard's ghoul and general gofer. They have a knack for finding things and blending in anywhere, even with mul-

ti-colored hair and a wide variety of tattoos. Gérard once called them a bloodhound, making a reference to the dog in *The Sign of the Four*, but Toby didn't get the joke.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Anita Wainwright (Mawla 2, Worried)** Gérard supports Anita, and does whatever she needs him to do in the name of the cause. Lately he's become concerned about how much she's been cozying up to Critias, the Brujah Primogen. She claims that she's working to convert him to the Anarchs, but Gérard isn't sure that any Camarilla vampire is worth this much effort. But she's the boss.
- **Balthazar (Revulsion)** Fuck Balthazar. Just... just fuck that ignorant racist asshole so god-damned much.

WHISPERS:

- **Hired Gun:** Gérard is Anita's assassin, willing to kill anyone who works against her.
- **Fast Temper:** Don't ever mention Balthazar around Gérard. He gets *really* angry if you do.
- **Way Back:** Gérard used to be a big deal in Chicago, from around Lodin's time.
- **Aren't You...?** Gérard's struggling to maintain his false identity, and longs for the night where he can once again call himself Marc Levesque.

MASK AND MIEN:

- At one time, Gérard looked like a dashing young French-Canadian. Upon his Embrace, he gained several scars all over his body, including his face, but they simply added to his roguish charm, making him appear dangerous. After the Lupine attack, even more scars cover his face, making him almost unrecognizable.
- These nights, Gérard tends to wear hoodies, balaclavas, bandanas, fashionable medical masks, or other items of clothing to hide his face. He claims it's to keep people from being disgusted with his scars, but in truth it's to make sure no one recognizes him.
- Gérard *is* the Mask. When he has to pose as a mortal, he adopts the guise of a war veteran, an international student, or a tourist recently involved in a car accident **(Mask 1)**.

Sire: Thomas Ewell "Balthazar"

Embraced: 1870 (Born 1850)

Ambition: Launch a devastating attack that humiliates the Camarilla

Convictions: Always take an eye for an eye

Touchstones: Genevieve McCallister — the woman who reminds him why he's so angry

Humanity: 5

Generation: 9th

Blood Potency: 3

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3; Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Composure 3; Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 5

Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl (Boxing) 3, Drive 1, Firearms 3, Larceny (Vandalism) 2, Stealth 2; Insight 2, Streetwise 2; Awareness 3, Investigation 2, Politics (Anarchy) 2, Science 2, Technology (Bombs) 2

Disciplines: Celerity 3, Potence 4, Presence 2, Protean 1

the CAITIFF

"We should have stayed hidden. Being recognized by the Camarilla is the worst thing that could have happened to us."

— Dickie Fulcher, Caitiff Anarch of Chicago, now believed to be in torpor or destroyed

During Lodin's reign, a surprisingly high number of clanless vampires emerged in the city, either through migration or Embrace within the city limits. The prevailing theory was that due to Lodin's strict Embrace laws (except when it came to his own brood), vampires of other clans created childer and simply refused to formally adopt them, therefore creating a flurry of Caitiff.

The Caitiff of tonight lean heavily toward the Anarchs, resulting in Kevin Jackson pursuing a quiet campaign of elimination against the city's clanless. Few of the infamous Caitiff of decades past remain in Chicago now, with only Maldavis to carry forward their memory. Nerissa Blackwater meanwhile stands aloof from the clanless, believing herself to be something entirely other than Kindred.

"MALDAVIS" CAROL DAVIS

Epitaph: Revitalized Anarch Organizer

Quote: *"It's not enough to topple the Ivory Tower. We'll smash it, and let them writhe in the dust."*

Clan: Caitiff

MORTAL DAYS: BETRAYED BY BLOOD

The first time Carol had ever laid eyes on her great-uncle was in the old family photos she helped her grandmother archive. The second time was a few days later in a jazz club. Her boyfriend and close friends were enjoying the atmosphere, but all she could focus on was the well-dressed gentleman sitting alone in the corner table, lost in the intricate music. The family had told her that Abraham DuSable had been killed by the Ku Klux Klan not long after World War I but there he was, admiring the house band's take on Thelonious Monk's "Brilliant Corners."

She approached him on a whim. Carol expected an awkward moment and a fun story to bring back to her group. What she hadn't prepared for was the sheer look of terror on the man's face when she brought up his name, his confession that he *was* her great-uncle, and the desperate pleas he gave her to come outside with him, right now, so he could explain everything. Before she could answer, he grabbed her by the arm and dragged her away, from the club, and from her mortal life.

KINDRED NIGHTS: LEVELLING THE ESTABLISHMENT

Abraham's blood was not strong enough to fully reanimate his descendant. If it weren't for the intervention of two Caitiff, Valerie and Dickie, she would have burned in the rising sun. Carol adjusted to unlife, taking the name "Maldavis."

Meanwhile, Prince Lodin's corruption reached its height, and some of the Primogen of Chicago plotted against him. They needed someone who could come from nowhere, rally the Anarchs, and install governance similar enough to the status quo to stay alive. Maldavis, well-primed to rebel by her coterie, was the perfect false flag.

The Primogen rebels secretly fed Maldavis their blood, granting her unique capabilities the Anarchs had never seen. She believed her powers came from the mixture of her Caitiff nature and her Tremere heritage. Emboldened, she carved out her own influence sphere among the city's politicians, working outside the city's established political machines. She had never felt more powerful, alive or dead, and in a rush of vigor, she tracked down and Embraced her old boyfriend, turning him into the vampire Uriah.

The Anarchs coalesced around her, becoming a true movement for the first time in decades. Maldavis aided Harold Washington in his bid to become mayor in the 1983 election, and ensured that no vampire, including herself, could influence him or his administration. This enraged Prince Lodin, and set off a series of violent retaliations and street battles later known as the Council Wars.

Maldavis was sure victory was in sight, but two unforeseen events drove her into obscurity.

Lodin discovered who backed Maldavis' rebellion and begged forgiveness. Soon after, a "serendipitous" assault on Uriah's reconnaissance party gave Lodin the opportunity to mentally subjugate him and reveal the location of Maldavis' stronghold. He assaulted it days later. Some of her closest allies sacrificed themselves to sneak her out of her headquarters. This included Valerie, who had never stopped believing that Maldavis could change the city. Horatio Ballard and his ghouls had her staked on the top of the Willis tower and left her to burn in the sunrise.

Lodin's army found her running in the streets. To her surprise, armed men escorted her to a safe house outside of the city. To this day, she has no idea who rescued her from certain death.

Then, the War of Chicago broke out. The combined assault of the Sabbat and the Lupines wiped out most of the remainder of her support, including Uriah. The remaining Anarchs rallied under Juggler, an Anarch from nearby Gary.

Maldavis spent decades at her absolute lowest. Her guilt and self-doubt sabotaged her time and time again, making sure that every attempt to draw the Anarchs to her cause failed. She came to believe that she was nothing more than a has-been. This feeling was made worse when her sometime mentor, Tyler, abandoned the city citing "a call from across the ocean."

Now, Maldavis sees an opportunity. The ascendency of Prince Jackson electrified the city's Anarchs back into action, but a leader has yet to arise. Free from the influence of Camarilla malcontents, Maldavis developed a new vision to bring to the directionless Anarchs: a completely leveled hierarchy. No more Princes, Barons, or Archbishops, and an end to generational snobbery. If the Kindred want to escape the eye of the Second Inquisition, it must become a society of equals. If that means setting off a new Council War for that to happen, so be it.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Destroy the Line:** Maldavis wants to bring Prince Jackson down. While she was too wrapped up in her grief to strike back, she always hoped she would one day have a chance to take vengeance on Prince Lodin. The War of Chicago took that from her, so his childe will have to do.

- **Let Them Come:** She reaches out to anyone of any background who is open to her idea of a horizontal leadership for the city, even the thin-bloods. She believes that most Kindred who seek entrance into a sect do so because they have no other options, and cannot imagine a better way to run the undead. She'll give them one.

- **The Price:** Maldavis has been offered an opportunity to gain long-denied power, but at a terrible price. House Carna has recognized flashes of their kind within her. With her heritage and the remains of older blood running through her veins, she may have been molded into something far more powerful than anyone realizes. The House promises to teach her Blood Sorcery, if she gives up the Anarch pipe dream and joins them. She's tempted.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Unfortunate Civilians (Herd 1)** Maldavis refuses to settle. She never stays at a haven for more than two months, and does not keep her own herd. She fears that if someone in the Camarilla were to kill her, it would be a dramatic show of legitimacy for the Prince's reign and the Ivory Tower. She depends on her followers for access to food and shelter, but struggles with Dickie Fulcher, her fellow Caitiff Anarch, currently torpid.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **City Government (Contacts 3, Influence 1) Vincent**

Dimard (Allies 2, Retainers 1) Many of the mortal allies she made during the Council Wars still hold positions in the city's government. She's also forging relationships with newly formed progressive activist groups. One of these is Vincent Simard, an EMT and community organizer. His dedication fascinates her.

- **Paige Hall (Potential Influence 4, Retainers 3)** Paige is a politician seeking to be alderman of her local ward. She's passionate, charismatic, and keeps herself free of machine politics. Maldavis believes she's destined for bigger things, if only someone guided her. Maybe someday, she'll be mayor.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Abraham DuSable (Mutually Damned)** Maldavis has a complex relationship with her sire, DuSable. On the one hand, he stole her life away, and was unwilling to take responsibility for his actions. On the other, becoming Kindred has given her a purpose she knows she would never have as a mortal. She helps him hide the truth of her ancestry to protect herself, and to protect him.

- **Alexa Santos (Threat)** Santos is one of her greatest threats. They're a competent Hound with unshakeable loyalty to the Camarilla, and that means trouble. They also run in similar social circles, so Alexa would have one of the first shots at Maldavis if someone in the Ivory Tower wanted her dead.

- **Chicago Anarchs (Loyalty) Anita Wainwright (Dupe)** Maldavis realizes she's an icon to some of the city Anarchs, and she may be the most competent vampire to instruct the Movement, though she desires no position of power. She's split between taking the reins, as she knows she can do so, or throwing her full support behind Anita. At least if Anita fails, Maldavis will still have her hide.

- **Portia (Grateful)** The neonate named Portia has been very helpful to Maldavis in her plotting against Kevin Jackson. What Maldavis doesn't know is that Helena is feeding the Caitiff with false information. The methuselah wants the Prince to remain in place and for the Anarch to fail catastrophically.

WHISPERS:

- **Somebody's Puppet:** Maldavis is controlled opposition. Her revolt and her mysterious rescue were planned from the beginning, maybe by Jackson before he was Prince.

- **Close Ties:** Maldavis and DuSable have this weird closeness with each other. Maybe they're Blood Bonded?

- **Desperate Measures:** Members of House Carna have been seen talking to Maldavis. How sad; they must be so desperate for members they're reaching out to Caitiff now.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Maldavis is a rail-thin woman who appears to be in her mid-20s. Her skin has a yellow-brownish color. Her dark brown eyes have a commanding gaze. Her hair is straight and short. She keeps her wardrobe simple, just jeans and band T-shirts.

- When she needs to disguise herself among mortals, she takes on the identity of Jasmine Hopper. Jasmine's falsified records claim that she's a night-shift waitress at Charlotte's Diner, one of the last jobs Maldavis held before her Embrace. She uses her false identity to gain sympathy in the activist groups she joins **(Mask 2)**.

- With the Blush of Life, her skin darkens to a reddish-brown. When the Beast overcomes her, her eyes take on a golden-brown color.

Sire: Abraham DuSable

Embraced: 1980 (Born 1955)

Ambition: Destroy Prince Jackson and don't allow him to become a martyr

Convictions: I will always oppose tyranny; never abandon an ally in need

Touchstones: Paige Hall — promising political candidate; Vincent Simard — valiant street medic

Humanity: 8

Generation: 8th

Blood Potency: 3

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4; Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Composure 3; Intelligence 4, Wits 4, Resolve 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 8

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Drive 2, Firearms 1, Stealth (Stalking) 3; Etiquette 1, Intimidation 2, Leadership (Revolution) 5, Streetwise (Outcasts) 2; Awareness 1, Investigation (Elysium) 4, Politics 5, Science 1, Technology 3

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

BENNETT STEADMAN

Epitaph: Host of Red No⁹ 5, The Heir Apparent

Quote: *"The Asylum is for tourists. Red No⁹ 5 is where the real children of the night reside."*

Clan: Caitiff

MORTAL DAYS: HOPES WERE HIGH

Bennett was blessed with a quick mind and an innately logical "street sense," which served him well as he sold drugs to help pay the bills his two-job mother could barely field. Bennett made sure he maintained a high grade-point average and attendance record as a cover that would put doubt to any nefarious deeds he might be caught doing. But, it was athletics that got him out of the 'hood. He played basketball for Northwestern University and had plans to enter the NBA once he graduated. Unfortunately, a torn ACL derailed those plans. He graduated in 1996 with his MBA and, using money from selling drugs to his fellow college students, opened his first club.

In 1998, Bennett Steadman had a vision. He wanted to create a club that encompassed the best Chicago had to offer in terms of nightlife. Red No⁹ 5 would be the culmination of Bennett's goal of nightclub domination. However, the cost to realize his dream was steep. He didn't want to give up his other clubs, but they didn't make enough money to offset the cost of renovation. In order to make his vision a reality, he would swallow his pride and look for a business partner.

Some wanted to buy the other clubs outright and hire Bennett as a consultant. Some didn't offer enough money in comparison to what they were asking upon financial return. They treated Bennett as some young punk who got lucky with a couple of clubs that attracted a clientele the investors did not deem "ideal."

As he left Slick's, feeling frustrated, a limo cut across his path. The back window rolled down and a plume of smoke rose released from the confines of the limo.

"I got a proposition for you. You know who I am?"

"Adze, right? You're the O.G. who held the Warehouse back in the day. Yeah, I heard 'o you."

The car interior smelled like Isaac Hayes and old Donald Goines novels. It exuded a history of the "game" that seeped into the crimson velvet padding on the rich, dark brown leather seats. Bennett stared at the gaunt, dark figure in a purple and black three-piece suit topped with a mustard-yellow herringbone pea coat before him. He noticed Adze's thin fingers accentuated with French-manicured long nails as the O.G. took a slow

drag from the clove cigarette he smoked.

Adze explained he needed a face and a front for his operation, and Bennett's club idea solved his quandary. The Nosferatu offered to put up the money and connections to make the Red No⁹ 5 thing happen if Bennett's other businesses acted as Adze's criminal fronts. Seeing Bennett suddenly become flustered as he tried to explain himself amused the vampire.

"It's cool, Youngblood. I understand. A true businessman would weigh his pros and cons. I'll give you 24 hours, cool? Now, get the fuck out my car."

KINDRED NIGHTS: STALKING HORSE

"Yo, you Bennett Steadman?"

Bennett didn't recognize the voice that called his name as he parked in his condominium's underground garage. He pulled the Glock from the glove compartment and slowly got out of the car.

The bullets had no effect as his assailant was on Bennett in a matter of seconds. As the vampire sunk their fangs into Bennett's neck, his last thought was the memory of his father's violent death before he blacked out. He barely felt the drops of blood that fell on his lips as the vampire bit its own wrist, giving Bennett the nourishment for his transformation.

Bennett Steadman woke up in his own bed. It was 24 hours to the minute when he was supposed to meet Adze and give him his answer concerning their potential partnership and he was thirsty, so very thirsty. Bennett

was more than a little surprised to see Adze sitting at the foot of his bed, flanked by two large bodyguards. But, he wasn't frightened of Adze anymore as Bennett ran his tongue across his new, razor-sharp incisors.

They were now the same. Adze offered a bodyguard to drink from, and demanded an answer to his proposal.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Hungry for Power:** Bennett is Adze's successor, heir apparent to the Nosferatu's businesses, if the deal comes to fruition. But, he's growing impatient. The transfer of power is happening too slowly for Steadman's tastes. And, it doesn't help that vampires like Alan Sovereign are in his ear fanning the flames of dissent. Steadman wants the club for himself and will do what it takes to achieve that goal.

- **Puppy Love:** Bennett has also started seeing Erzulie's protégé, Bianca Maldonado. He is developing feelings for Bianca and wants to Embrace the fashion designer, much to Erzulie's chagrin.

- **Mortal Ties:** Only a fledgling, Bennett's connection to his mom and his mortal friends is still strong. He still feels a vital link to his own businesses and he feels pain whenever he sees Adze about to run an illegal operation through one of them. He's still young to this game, but already wishes he hadn't got into bed with the Nosferatu. He's looking for someone who might help him break free.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Red No⁹ 5 (Contacts 3, Haven 3, Influence 4, Resources 3, Retainers 3) Slick's (Allies 3, Contacts 3, Influence 4, Resources 2) South Loop Condominium (Haven 3)** Bennett Steadman is the face of Red No⁹ 5. Being African-American and Embraced recently has its benefits, not least of which is a mainline into fashion and mortal trends. He spends most of his time at the club, though he can be found at his other club, Slick's, on Tuesdays for "Industry Night." His lair is a handsomely decorated three-bedroom condominium on 14th Street and Michigan in Chicago's South Loop.

- **Club Patrons (Herd 3)** Steadman isn't wise enough to avoid feeding on his own turf, still unaware of the dangers scrutiny might bring. He lures victims to him, feeding from them in the upper tiers of the club. The only restriction Steadman places on his hunting is that he never brings a meal home and will never drink from his own family.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Love Interests (Herd 2, Retainers 1)** Steadman has a rotating "stable" of lovers and is often seen with at least two women. They act as lovers and sources of nourishment.

- **Phoenix (Retainers 1)** Though a womanizer, Steadman never shits where he eats. Bennett has recently taken to Phoenix, a server at Red No⁹ 5. Statuesque at 6'0" with dark, golden skin and close-cropped blonde-dyed hair, Phoenix would turn any man's head. But it is her no-nonsense attitude and business acumen that's caught Bennett's attention. He aims to bring Phoenix deeper into the business dealings of Red No⁹ 5, making her the human front for the club.

- **Mariah Steadman (Allies 1)** Bennett still maintains a close relationship with his mother, Mariah, who is in the early stages of Parkinson's Disease. He refuses to Embrace her. He believes the best way to honor his mother is to let her live, and die, as a human.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Adze (Mawla 4, Mixed Emotions)** Adze is Steadman's Mawla and surrogate father. Adze was a myth on the streets as few people ever met him person. The Nosferatu's legend cast a very long shadow. To have such a man take interest in your affairs, good or bad, meant that you were doing something right. Steadman has the utmost respect for Adze...and a healthy fear for the old vampire as well.

- **Alan Sovereign (Tempting)** Sovereign made his way to the Red No⁹ 5 recently with offers of investment and Ventrue allegiance. Bennett told the Blue Blood he'd consider the offer, and has yet to report it back to Adze.

WHISPERS:

- **Deeper Links:** Bennett is Adze's blood relative, one of his grandchildren born from a descendant during slavery. Adze killed Steadman's father by mistake during a frenzy, in an act the young Bennett witnessed and suppressed.

- **Chantry Guest:** Bennett's Embrace was not random. Adze paid Sun Che of Clan Tremere well to set upon Bennett and Embrace him, as Adze did not want to curse his family with a Nosferatu's afflictions.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Bennett Steadman appears as a 6'1" African American man with an athletic build. He has brown skin and light brown eyes. He is always meticulously groomed with a low-faded haircut and goatee.
- Steadman wears simple platinum hoop earrings and clean-smelling cologne with a sandalwood finish. He always walks with a confident swagger and is definite with his speech and actions. Steadman has a deep velvet voice and is adept at code switching from "educated" to "hood" in his speech. Combined with a natural charm, women are often attracted to him, which makes it very easy to feed.
- He has a very casual, yet impeccable style of dress with a preference for crisp jeans, spotless sneakers, and black T-shirts with various logos and designs. Under Adze's tutelage however, Steadman has taken to tailored suits made with expensive fabrics.
- Steadman has yet to form an alternate identity, due to his Embrace only taking place in the last few months.

Sire: Sun Che

Embraced: 2018 (Born 1994)

Ambition: Be my own man outside the Nosferatu's grasp

Convictions: All actions must solidify my position; Always keep my mom safe

Touchstones: Phoenix — Modelesque server at Red No° 5; Mariah Steadman — Mother suffering from Parkinson's Disease

Humanity: 7

Generation: 13th

Blood Potency: 1

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3; Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Composure 4; Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 8

Skills: Athletics (MMA) 4, Brawl 2, Drive 3, Firearms 1, Larceny 2; Etiquette 2, Insight 1, Intimidation 2, Leadership (Business) 2, Persuasion (Seduction) 3, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 2; Awareness 3, Finance (Nightclubs) 3, Investigation 1, Politics 1

Disciplines: Auspex 2, Dominate 1

FRANCOIS MAMUWALDE

Epitaph: Mother to the House of Mamuwalde, MC of the Blood Disco

Quote: *"I am the first member of the legendary House of Lilith. I am the Mother of the legendary House of Mamuwalde and the fiercest bitch in all of the goddess' creation. I am Francois Mamuwalde, but you can call me Buffy because I am here to slay all y'all muthafuckas!"*

Clan: Caitiff

MORTAL DAYS: LIFE ON THE OUTSIDE

Clarence knew he was different from a very young age. His sisters would dress him up like a little girl. He would walk in his mother's shoes, put on her jewelry and wear her wigs. He loved every second of it. Playing dress up was his thing. Clarence was enamored by his mother's beauty and wanted to look just like her.

His parents didn't approve of his orientation and ruthlessly tormented him in the hopes of changing his ways. Clarence ran away from home in '68 to become a famous performer and even now struggles to look back without welling up.

Clarence found himself on the streets of Greenwich Village black, gay, and homeless. He had to fight off the bums who would try and steal his things when he slept on the park benches. He had to run from cops who were

cracking down on the "perverts" bringing down society. Clarence became a prostitute, selling his mouth and ass on the street for rent money and cigarettes.

Clarence was at the Stonewall when the riot started that Saturday night in June of '69. The riots were an inspiration. He knew he had to get his shit together. He started telling jokes on the corner for spare change. He was able to "mop" some dresses, wigs, and makeup to become someone new...something new.

His first drag persona was "Baby Love," with Clarence performing in bathhouses and clubs from 1970 on. He was also a big fan of horror movies, often sneaking into theaters to catch the dollar show, occasionally pleasing a client in the back row.

August 25, 1972. A new vampire movie called *Blacula* opened. As Clarence enjoyed the performances of William Marshall and Vonetta McGee, he noticed a broad-shouldered, longhaired man sitting three seats away. He was staring in Clarence's direction while rubbing his crotch. Understanding the signal, Clarence moved to the seat next to him and replaced the hand on the man's crotch with his. He was about to get busy when the man yanked his head up and bit Clarence's neck.

KINDRED NIGHTS: UNDEATH AS TRUE LIFE

Clarence woke up under a pile of garbage in a dumpster the next evening. Ha was abandoned and thirsty, he had fangs and couldn't walk out in the middle of the day anymore.

Clarence was a mess.

He tried to learn about his new condition as best he could, but vampire movies are not educational films. At least he could see himself in the mirror to fix his face, but the rest of it was a sad state of affairs. He resorted to feeding on rats, cats, and dogs, scared he would turn anyone he bit. The stress affected Clarence's performances, which also meant it was messing with his money. Clarence was bombing on stage, singing sad-ass songs; people were starting to hate Baby Love.

Clarence became so depressed that he contemplated suicide. It was New Year's Eve and he decided that after his last show at the bathhouse, he would stand in the middle of the Village and watch the sunrise. Clarence opened with "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face" by Roberta Flack. As he looked out into the sea of bored faces, he saw Erzulie in the crowd. A legend in the scene, Clarence thought his mind was playing tricks. Then, Erzulie started moving closer until she got up to the front. Child, the goddess was real! Clarence felt the spirit come back and proceeded to bring the house down...Baby Love was back!

But, that was only the beginning. After the show, Erzulie came up to Baby Love and gave Clarence a hug. Erzulie took Clarence in and gave him a home, becoming Baby Love's mentor and his friend. In return, Clarence pledged his eternal devotion and became the first member of what would become the House of Lilith.

That night, Baby Love died, only to be reborn as Francois Mamuwalde.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Dangerous Temptations:** There are many who want to take over the Blood Disco, Francois' moving sanctuary for the clanless. Though most vampires dismiss the Caitiff, they realize the organization is a force to be reckoned with and make overtures to Caitiff for clan inclusion in exchange for information. The Ministry sees the Blood Disco as a huge opportunity to expand their drug empire and has sent Marcel to seduce Francois into giving up the Disco's secrets.

- **Keen Eye:** Mamuwalde is aware of the tension brewing between Erzulie's companion, Adze, and his heir apparent, Bennett Steadman. Francois wants to find someone who will keep an eye on the situation to make sure that her "Mama" Erzulie doesn't get caught in the potential crossfire.

- **Missionary:** Mamuwalde is the official MC of the Blood Disco with her status and reputation only second to Erzulie's. A true believer in Erzulie's vision, Mamuwalde is also Erzulie's top lieutenant. Under the guise of a tour schedule, she often travels to other cities recruiting Caitiff to Erzulie's cause. She's looking to indoctrinate some new Caitiff into the Blood Disco now, in fact.

- **Pulse of the Nightlife:** Simple as it seems, Francois wants to have a good time. Vampirism has gifted the queen a second chance to be whatever she chooses to be, so she pursues any given opportunity to party, indulge, and set the tone for the city.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **House of Mamuwalde (Allies 3, Contacts 3, Haven 2, Herd 3, Influence 4, Resources 2)** Francois is the "Mother" of the House of Mamuwalde, a predominately African-American Kindred drag house. Composed of Caitiff, the House of Mamuwalde members have adopted pseudo-Tremere affectations to help define their House culture. Their lair is an old brownstone, which houses the 20 members of Mamuwalde on 45th and Drexel Boulevard in Chicago's "Bronzeville" neighborhood.

- **Jeffery Pub (Herd 1) Club Escape (Herd 2)** Francois Mamuwalde is one of the most in-demand drag

queens in Chicago. However, she spends little time in "Boystown," as she calls the community in that neighborhood pretentious. She prefers bars that cater to the African-American LGBTQ+ community, frequenting the Jeffery Pub and performing at Club Escape in Chicago's Hyde Park neighborhood.

- Mamuwalde prefers to feed on African-American men who drink cognac and Crown Royal. Because of this, many (including her own "children") call her a lush...behind her back, of course.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Performer Cultists (Contacts 2, Retainers 2)** Some of the House of Mamuwalde's performers are human runaways. They must first perform the day-to-day tasks of maintaining the House as an initiation period before becoming a full member through thralldom or, if Francois take a shine to them, an illicit Embrace.
- **LaVell Stevens (Retainers 2)** Mamuwalde's current ghoul is LaVell Stevens, a flamboyant 18-year old. LaVell's brazen nature gets on Mamuwalde's nerves, but she sees much of herself in LaVell. The "parent's curse" of having children just like you is real in this relationship.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Erzulie (Devotion)** Francois Mamuwalde is completely devoted to Erzulie, whom she affectionately calls "Mother." She is the only vampire Francois would ever defer to.
- **Chi Chi (Rivalry)** Francois Mamuwalde has a long-standing rivalry with Chi Chi, the Mother of the House of Villalobos in Milwaukee. Both original members of the House of Lilith, Francois and Chi Chi battle for dominance in the Blood Disco with both houses equally matched in talent and the number of trophies acquired.

WHISPERS:

- **Messy Feeder:** Mamuwalde has been drinking too much. She's been getting sloppy and has left a trail of Masquerade breaches throughout the city's drag scene.
- **Cult Insurrection:** Someone is plotting a coup in the House of Mamuwalde. If Mamuwalde isn't careful, her children might abandon her for a new "Mother."
- **Infernal Masters:** Francois pretends her intentions are shallow and affectless, but truly the Kindred drag queen has intentions of plunging the city's Kindred into a pit of decadent apocalypse.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Francois Mamuwalde has no Mask. Francois Mamuwalde *is* the Mask. She has built a successful career as MC and recording artist with a number of hits in the dance music arena **(Mask 2)**.
- Francois Mamuwalde is a 6'2" barrel-chested African American with caramel skin and almond eyes. As Clarence Wilks, Francois is a well-dressed man with a "club casual" style, often wearing skinny jeans (a little too skinny) with crisp button-down shirts, sweaters, dress shoes, and hats for every occasion.
- In his Mamuwalde persona, Clarence is "cinched to the gods" giving Francois an hourglass figure. Her looks are "almost there," but something is never quite right. Some of her looks include "Power to the People while running B613 Realness": a mash-up of Mamuwalde's fashion icons Olivia Pope and Angela Davis. Another look, "Presidential Hip Hop Realness," is the combination of former president of Liberia Ellen Johnson's African-inspired fashion with the swagger of Hip Hop diva Remy Ma, all with a purple wig.
- Francois Mamuwalde is a loud bitch. Aggressive and absolutely hilarious, Mamuwalde is quick to "tell people about themselves." Her voice is slightly higher than the average black man with an almost stereotypical "sassy" effeminate twang.

Sire: Gordon Keaton

Embraced: 1972 (Born 1945)

Ambition: Earn respect from the elite

Convictions: I will make you respect my name

Touchstones: LaVell Stevens — 18-year old African American flamboyant ghoul

Humanity: 5

Generation: 11th

Blood Potency: 2

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3; Charisma 5, Manipulation 3, Composure 1; Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 6

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Firearms 1, Stealth 3; Etiquette (Bar Scene) 4, Insight 2, Intimidation 3, Leadership (Cult) 4, Persuasion 3, Streetwise (Drag Scene) 2, Subterfuge 2; Academics 1, Awareness (Theft) 3, Finance 1, Investigation 3, Occult 2, Politics 1

Disciplines: Animalism 2, Auspex 2

THE HOUSE OF MAMUWALDE

Ten or more Caitiff have joined Francois Mamuwalde's "House" in Chicago to participate in the Blood Disco, finding acceptance in the Embrace and protection from the rest of the city's ills. Francois protects the clanless fiercely, even as he slowly brainwashes them into worship of the Dark Mother, Lilith, to whom the House of Mamuwalde's every dance, song, orgy, and blood bath is dedicated.

NICKOLAS "SWEETIE PEPPER" WHITE

Epitaph: Rebel without any fucks

Quote: *"Compromise is the word used to disguise the fact one has given up. It's one of the White Man's best poisons."*

Clan: Caitiff

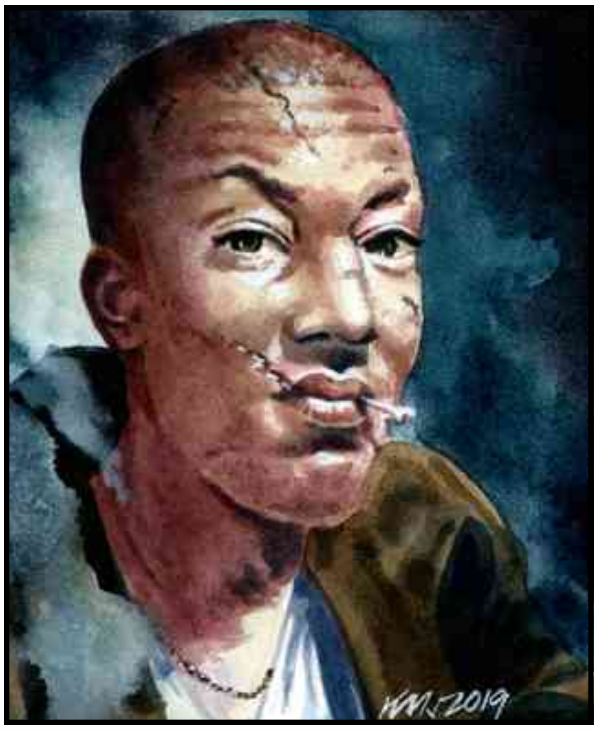
MORTAL DAYS: TERROR ON THE STREETS

Nickolas White always seemed to draw the short straw when it came to opportunities. His parents had moved into the Jane Adams Homes on the near West Side of the city as soon as they began to start allowing blacks into those projects.

He hated that place, and its only saving grace was its proximity to Maxwell Street. If his dad had a good work week, and enough money was saved up, Nickolas' parents would walk him to the market. He'd see street vendors, jazz and blues musicians playing in the alleys and parking lots, and his dad would buy him an Italian beef sandwich. Nickolas always wanted lots of sweet peppers on his sandwich, earning him the nickname "Sweetie Pepper."

By the time Nickolas started going to school, the area was already a hotbed of racial gangs, each group protecting their own neighborhood from interlopers. Nickolas' mother and father urged him to stay clear of the fighting, but he quickly became embroiled in street politics.

Nickolas insisted he had to continue because he was fighting for his people. The truth of it though was



he just loved the thrill of the fight. Having a family of brothers at his side who would come fight with him at a moment's notice meant he was somebody on the streets. One day, Nickolas and two of his friends were victims of a drive-by shooting as they were coming out of a liquor store. Nickolas survived, the others did not.

While he proclaimed he would get revenge for his friends, in truth, he cared more about the insult to his reputation. He tied his sense of reputation to his support of the cause of blackness. He saw everything in terms of white vs. black and felt any attack was an attack on blackness itself. He just wanted to hurt the people who made him look bad. When he found the ringleader of the shooters, Amadeo Carluccio, he beat and strangled Amadeo and his girlfriend.

Nickolas garnered the attention of every cop and mobster and became a legend in his own streets. Shoot out after shoot out, Nickolas stayed one step ahead. Then, the Italians killed his parents. After that, Sweetie Pepper led a one-man war against them (and any non-blacks who managed to get in his way). As he fought, he made more enemies. The cops were coming down harder on black gangs and the Mafia had gotten involved. At this point he had drawn the attention of local Kindred influences in the area. Most of them wanted Sweetie Pepper dealt with as he was drawing far too much attention to a good, politically ignored, hunting ground.

Sweetie Pepper was eventually drawn into an ambush where he lost the fight and would have died. As his

vision faded and he was bleeding out, the vampire hitman laughed and said it would be a shame for him to go out in this fashion, as he descended with fangs exposed.

KINDRED NIGHTS: THE PROMISE OF DESTRUCTION

The Embrace turned Sweetie Pepper's world upside down. The vampire who Embraced him took great pleasure in showing him how little his ideas of reputation and race wars mattered. He showed him how much of the world he thought he was protecting benefitted powerful vampires who were mostly white. He showed him how so many of his targets had been selected by Ventrue and the Camarilla. Then his sire removed all trace of his face and name from Pepper's memory.

Sweetie Pepper reconnected under a different alias with the various Black Nationalist movements but grew enraged when he saw them fighting against each other, killing more blacks than anyone else. He realized it was all ridiculous games being played by monsters and now he was one of them. There were systems on top of systems to keep those on top on top, and those on the bottom on the bottom.

That knowledge pushed him over the edge and he started killing again. At first, he told himself he'd do better, only killing bad people. He tried informing people about the truth and helping to instigate race riots. He started feeding off drug dealers, dope fiends, and crooked cops. It didn't matter that they were someone's child, or husband, or wife. He liked the rush of the kill too much and started killing indiscriminately. Again, he brought attention to the impoverished feeding grounds of the city. Lodin, in an uproar, demanded his head. Many vampires came out to claim it. This caused him to switch his killing to the Kindred. He hated Chicago. He hated what he was, what had been done to him, and what they could do.

Where once he had been a legend of the impoverished black communities, he was now becoming a legend of anarchy among Kindred. Some Anarchs secretly love the trouble he stirs up in the city, but they are not immune to his murderous pursuits. Juggler recently secreted him out of the city only to find his haven burned down as a receipt. Sweetie Pepper didn't want to leave. He may despise Chicago, but he's not finished with the city.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Dangerous Manipulations:** Sweetie Pepper has returned to Chicago. Nickolas is walking among the black communities and pressing gangs to act up, running guns, and working his way into the underworld on the West and South Sides of the city.
- **Foment Chaos:** Pepper's mobilizing an army, building up a coterie of young men and women who crave violence. Maldavis and the other Anarchs think Sweetie Pepper is coming to attack the Camarilla. The truth is a different story.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **The Tunnels (Haven 3)** Sweetie Pepper calls the Near West Side of the city home. It has changed significantly since his Embrace but the remnants of the Jane Adams projects are still there. Beneath them run a network of tunnels connecting all of the old, bricked up, forgotten incinerators. He uses these as a haven and branches out making sure he can't be traced back to his lair.
- **Abandoned Properties (Contacts 1, Haven 1, Herd 2, Influence 2)** He holds court with young revolutionaries in abandoned properties on the West Side. Mostly old stores and storefront churches. From there, he teaches a new generation of disaffected youth how to fight and upend the systems holding them down.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Disaffected Youths (Allies 3, Contacts 3, Fame 1)** Sweetie Pepper is calling young men and women together to teach them how to systematically disrupt the system. He teaches them everything from Sun Tzu to Machiavelli to Chavez, suggesting that things have to be broken at all levels.
- **Vexed Vitae Gang (Retainers 3)** White has revealed his Kindred nature to his innermost circle of young gangers. These kids he calls the "Vexed Vitae" are becoming a quiet movement of hunters who assist him on special missions.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Kevin Jackson (Hostile)** Sweetie Pepper does not give a fuck about the Camarilla and he regularly lets everyone know it. He doesn't like Jackson but respects that he is a man of his word. Jackson hasn't sent the Sheriff after Nickolas yet and Nickolas knows it's only a matter of time before this happens.
- **Clan Brujah (Pitiful)** Nickolas is at odds with the Brujah and any calling themselves Anarchs. He feels their brand of anarchy is based around bringing freedom to a privileged set and building new hierarchies. He has made it no secret that, given the chance, he will take Critias' head.

WHISPERS:

- **Homicidal Maniac:** Nickolas, while respected among Caitiff, is not trusted. Some find it concerning how often his coterie-mates have accidents when they go on missions with him.
- **Let Them Fight:** Word on the street is that Sweetie Pepper is about to make a move on Balthazar, and few feel inclined to stop him.
- **Daddy?** Pepper might cool down a little if he could only find his sire, but there's conjecture over who that might be. He remembers a white man with dispassionate eyes, but that's all.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Nickolas is a gangly man. His arms seem just a little too long for his body. His face is long and narrow, and he appears to be in his late 20s but bears the wear and scars of a hard life of fighting in the streets.
- White is old school and simple in terms of clothes. He most often wears pleated slacks, well-polished leather shoes, V-neck T-shirts, and a gold chain. He is clean shaven with his hair in a close-cropped afro. He always smells of cigarettes and whiskey and is prone to playing with a bone toothpick between his teeth.
- White wears a Mask as a street rapper and drug dealer named Incognito. He has a small mortal following, but his last musical performance was over three years ago, eroding the value of this identity **(Mask 1)**.

Sire: Alphonse Gabriel Capone

Embraced: 1971 (Born 1942)

Ambition: Take control of the Almighty Black P. Stone Nation gang

Convictions: I will break everyone who gets in my way

Touchstones: Loretta James — A member of the Vexed Vitae training to join the police department to be his eyes and ears in the CPD

Humanity: 3

Generation: 9th

Blood Potency: 2

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4; Charisma 2, Manipulation 1, Composure 2; Intelligence 2, Wits 4, Resolve 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 5

Skills: Athletics 4, Brawl (Cheap Shot) 5, Drive 3, Firearms (Drive-by) 4, Larceny 3, Melee (Shiv) 4, Stealth 3, Survival 1; Insight 3, Intimidation 2, Leadership 2, Performance (Rap) 3, Streetwise (Drug Dealers) 4, Subterfuge 2; Awareness 2, Investigation 1, Politics 1, Science 2, Technology 1

Disciplines: Dominate 1, Fortitude 2, Potence 3

MERCY VALDEZ

Epitaph: Friendly Neighborhood Vampire Social Worker

Quote: *"If I see you lay hands on that child again, I will tear your arms off. Fair warning."*

Clan: Caitiff

MORTAL DAYS: THRUST INTO RESPONSIBILITY

Mercy was the designated "third parent" in the household, three years older than her middle brother and six years older than the youngest. Serious and sober-minded to a fault, she recognized early on the sacrifices her parents were making on their behalf and was determined not to waste them, earning scholarships for the quality of her academics and athletics. She filled her few idle hours with volunteering at the local church-run food pantry, assorted library branches, and the parish youth group, and an insatiable appetite for fantasy and science-fiction novels. By the time she graduated at the top of her class from St. Ignatius, she had already been accepted into an ambitious, five-year, combined Bachelor of Social Work and Master of Social Work program.

Her life was not without its problems. Her middle brother, Gabriel, resentful of his "invisible" place in the family, grew rebellious as he got older, eventually choosing to enter the military instead of following his sister into academia, moving as far from the strangling confines of their tight-knit family as he could. Less than a year later, during Mercy's fourth year in school, their father died of a massive heart attack. Gabriel refused to return for the funeral.

Taking an academic leave of absence to support her mother and youngest brother, Abe, through the aftermath, she found herself in the position of parent again as her mother's grief and depression deepened. When Mercy graduated, she moved back into the family home to help care for her mother while building her career as a specialist in educational social work.

Between caring for the needs of her mother and cheerleading her younger brother through his own demanding mechanical-engineering program in college, she

continued her lifelong custom of volunteering, working with at-risk youth through the local parish, library branches, and CAP groups. Her colleagues despaired of getting her to go out for a drink after work or a movie, not realizing it was her focus on helping others cope with their distress that was keeping her own at bay.

KINDRED NIGHTS: LOCALIZED HUNGER

It was Mercy's dedication to service, to lifting up the community in which she had lived her entire life, that attracted the attention of her sire. Or, at the very least, that's the impression she got from the garbled, incoherent memories she retains of a half-familiar face hanging over hers, someone she knew from one of the educational support groups that only met in the evening, telling her in a mix of English and Spanish that a world bigger than the one she knows needed her. Mercy woke to her new condition crammed under a dumpster, surrounded by garbage bags to keep stray sunlight from finding her during the day.

Digging herself out, she staggered home, still in shock. Her first hunger frenzy was followed closely by her first anger frenzy, when the pendejo who turned her into a monster appeared and offered to help her dispose of her mother's corpse. Shortly thereafter she had *two* corpses, one of which turned into a partially decomposed mess with unnatural speed, on her hands. Her younger brother helped her bury their mother quietly, and Mercy set to investigating this new society of which she was a part. Meanwhile, Mercy had to reorganize her entire life around her new condition, managing the mental, emotional, and financial fallout from their mother's death, and making sure Abe actually graduated from college.

Her investigation attracted attention from at least two directions: the Nosferatu warren of Chicago, who made a point of monitoring excessive and focused interest in matters related to the undead, and the local Anarch community, who were searching for a missing member. The Anarchs found her first. They told her about Caine. They told her about the clans, about elders and neonates, and the bonds of blood tying them all together. They told her the clanless blood running in her veins would make her a perpetual outsider in the world of the Kindred, whether she wants to be or not, and that she should join them.

Mercy found their ethics and tactics severely lacking in terms of genuine community building and told them so, at length, inviting them to leave her alone and to keep themselves out of the neighborhood she considered hers. Her request has been honored, at least by the Anarchs, who are perfectly willing to let her get chewed up and spit out by the Chicago licks if it'll distract from their own activities for a while.

Mercy continues to solidify a rather tiny power base of a couple of city blocks where the locals all know and love her, aware there are greater freakish forces at work in her hometown that could crush her like a bug.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

Mercy doesn't think she has any plots or schemes — she has *goals*. Those goals, in order of personal importance, are:

- **Away from Danger:** Get her brother Abe out of Chicago as soon as possible, preferably by sending him to graduate school on the far side of the country.
- **Fleeing Brutality:** Figure out how to get in touch with a more civilized group of vampires than these "Anarch" thugs and figure out how best to protect her people if there *aren't* more civilized vampires out there, which is starting to look like a rather depressingly real possibility.
- **The Dirt:** Mercy is aware she has a certain amount of information about the Anarchs, their goals and, most crucially, how to contact them should she change her mind about joining their ranks. And information, in any world, can be both currency and power.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Lower West Side Bungalow (Haven 2, Retainers 1)** Mercy's haven is the little, fully paid-off brick bungalow on the Lower West Side she inherited from her parents. Abe, who also lives there, helped her convert their father's basement workshop into a lightproof sleeping space for her.
- **Pilsen (Influence 2)** Her domain, such as it is, is the couple of square blocks that comprises the neighborhood she grew up in and still considers hers. She makes a point of not hunting there.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- Mercy has no thralls; she hasn't figured out the mechanics yet and they weren't part of the truncated recruitment pitch her late sire's confederates pitched at her.
- **Abe Valdez (Retainers 1) Abe's Friends (Allies 1)** Her brother Abe is her partner in figuring out how to manage her increasingly ridiculous life, much to her dismay, and he's recruited some of his college friends to help *him* out. Thus far, this has consisted of acquiring blood bags for Mercy to drink from in emergencies and escorting her or acting as her lookout on those occasions. His logical approach to managing his sister's vampirism ("Just until we can figure out how to fix this, Mers.") has been a boon to her mental state, but also puts him in danger.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Chicago Anarchs (Bullies)** Mercy did not receive a good first impression from the Anarchs, whose willingness to brush aside the whole fact that she didn't *consent* to any of this did absolutely nothing to endear her to their cause. If the choice came down between preserving the safety of her family and her neighborhood and preserving the safety of a bunch of self-serving freaks who turned her into a monster...well.
- **Nathaniel Bordruff (Unease)** Mercy has had a couple encounters with Nathaniel, whom she correctly believes is stalking her. This does nothing whatsoever for her peace of mind.

WHISPERS:

- **Legend Grows:** A few Kindred are talking about the territorial young vampire in Pilsen, and wondering to which sect she claims allegiance.
- **Potential Mawla:** Nathaniel Bordruff is aware of the depth of her ties to the local Catholic parish and even now considers the possibility of recruiting her to the cause of eradicating the scourge of vampirekind.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Mercy is not a tall woman, standing just over five feet, and well-rounded in the shaped-like-a-pear sense of the term. Her mixed Afro-Latina heritage has graced her with dark skin that has not yet started to go ashy with age or undeath and, given the thinness of her blood, it might not ever. Her eyes are a startlingly vivid green. She wears her long black hair in neat box braids that she frequently draws back into a loose tail or up into a bun or decorates with beads, cording, and occasional colorful streaks.
- Mercy favors comfortable, everyday clothes the vast majority of the time. She has a vast collection of smart "office casual" clothes she breaks out when she needs to present a picture of reasonable authority among younger licks still susceptible to such presentation and to the people of her neighborhood. She owns one bespoke tailored suit she got when she regularly attended (legal) court proceedings that she can and will break out in the event that she's ever summoned to a Kindred social or political function.
- Mercy's Mask is her younger brother Abe, though she hates using him in such a way. To date, she hasn't faked her own death or disappeared off society's radar **(Mask 2)**.

Sire: Sketch

Embraced: 2018 (Born 1994)

Ambition: Understand the Kindred world

Convictions: I must protect my neighborhood

Touchstones: Abe Valdez — Her youngest brother and current partner in keeping a grip on her night-to-night existence

Humanity: 7

Generation: 13th

Blood Potency: 1

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 1, Stamina 2; Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 2; Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 5

Skills: Athletics 1, Drive 1; Etiquette 2, Insight 3, Investigation (Secret Societies) 2, Leadership (Volunteers) 2, Persuasion 3, Streetwise 2; Academics (Social Work) 4, Politics (Community) 3, Technology 1

Disciplines: Auspex 2, Potence 1

NERISSA BLACKWATER

Epitaph: The Interlocutor, First Daughter, Matriarch of the Blackwater

Quote: *"You have treated this land as if it is your own for far, far too long."*

Clan: Unknown

MORTAL DAYS: MYTHOLOGICAL MEMORY

In a time so distant even *her* long memory fails, the creature now known as Nerissa Blackwater came alone to the edge of the great waters that later inhabitants of this land would call Michigami just as the last angry, orange bars of sunlight were swallowed by the black earth to the west. With trepidation and a sliver of excitement, she waited for the Ancestor to emerge out of the murk, to speak the sacred truths of her people and this land. Rise, the Ancestor did, a massive, powerful creature, taller than any mortal being, vaguely human, its muscled limbs, sculpted body, and long, wild hair oozing with mud, fierce eyes glittering like flint in the semi-darkness. Thus, the ritual began.

For a full turning of the seasons, the Ancestor came by night and whispered stories into the secret places of her mind of a world lush with gardens full of flourishing plants and creatures, cared for by the Mother of Seeds and protected from the heat of an angry sun by Her shawl of midnight — a gift from the Father of Stars. Just before the break of each day, the Ancestor sank back into the lake and, as she had been told she must, Nerissa lay naked and still upon the shore, scorched by the sun, pelted by needles of rain, scourged by relentless winds, and nearly buried by freezing sleet or soft falling snow. She knew only discomfort, pain, hunger, and profound loneliness, for none among her people dared approach the lake while she suffered her ordeal. Every harrowing moment filled her with a desperate longing for the night to swallow the sun at last, for the Ancestor to rise again, its great hands gentle as it soothed her raw, exposed skin with cool mud, as it slaked her thirst with fresh water, and as it sated her hunger with a thick, glorious liquid that burned her throat but warmed her belly.

The Ancestor imparted unto her the Mother's mysteries: the coming of the cannibal monster, Eemamoowia, the fall of the Garden, and the terrible affliction passed on to all the victims of that vicious attack. Nerissa would become an interlocutor between the mortal descendants of the

Father of Stars and the Mother of Seeds and the Ancestors, their half-dead children, so horrified by the cursed abominations they had become that they dared never show their faces in the light of the sun. She would experience the pain of Eemamoowia's attack, die, and be reborn into living death by the blood of the Mother — the same blood that had been her sustenance for a full turning of seasons.

Nerissa recoiled at the thought. Why had her elders not told her? How could they have convinced her to make such an abysmal sacrifice? But in exchange, all her people would honor her, for she served as an admonition to never forget the crimes of Eemamoowia. For her sake, they would willingly give of their own blood, their own pain and suffering, lest she succumb to the cannibal curse and become a Beast. Standing with one foot in the lands of death and the other in the lands of the living, a nectar unknown to any on Earth passed her lips, and she was reborn, wise and full of conviction.

IMMORTAL NIGHTS: POISED TO TURN THE TABLE

Time is meaningless to one who understands that it does not truly exist. Nerissa supposes that at least six millennia have passed since last she looked upon the sun. Before the white men came, she spent centuries at a time in slumber with the Ancestor beneath the waters of the lake, arising when her mortal descendants had need of her or were threatened in any way. Things have become more interesting over the past five centuries. In these modern nights, the descendants of Eemamoowia — wretched creatures who call

themselves Kindred of Caine — presume to claim ownership over the Mother's land and her people. Unbeknownst to them, Nerissa and her people work in silence like twining roots and vines to choke out these Cannibal weeds, all in anticipation of the Mother's imminent return.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Growing the Garden:** The Cannibals are in chaos, which is a boon. Nerissa is taking advantage of the transition of power and the arrival of the Lasombra embassage to welcome in new Cultivars who have operated unnoticed behind their Kindred masks. Of course, more are needed. Edith Beaubien, one of the first Cultivars Nerissa recruited, draws the most influential Cannibals to her salons of torture and delight. If she can tempt Erichtho and others like her, Nerissa will have another strong seed to plant in the Mother's Garden.

- **Lilith's Brood:** The Cannibal sect known as the Bahari intrigues Nerissa. She believes their tales of a Dark Mother are wildly distorted, "whitewashed" versions of sacred lore, but there are too many uncanny similarities to dismiss the Lilith followers entirely. If whispers from the Wolf Kin are true, members of the notorious Cult of Isis are soon to pass through Chicago with the artifacts they stole from House Carna in Milwaukee. Acquiring both cultists and trinkets could prove useful to the Cultivars in the long term.

- **Ancient Enemy:** Helena must be dealt with. The Ancestor has long plucked at the strings binding that one to her monstrous, sleeping sire. If such subtle methods fail to oust her from her lair, more direct pressure from Nerissa and her powerful mortal family must be brought to bear. Then again, it might be amusing to see what happens when the Mother Herself returns.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **North Burling Apartments (Haven 4)** With the exception of Edith Beaubien, Nerissa is unknown to Chicago's Kindred. As for the indigenous people who revere her, some mistake her powers for ancestor spirits and natural blessings, while others with a little more knowledge suspect she spends her days and nights in a vast, subterranean complex of apartments built beneath an opulent mansion on North Burling Street in Lincoln Park. The property was built by extended members of the Blackwater family and purchased by Mavis Blackwater just this year. Of course, such murmurs are firmly in the realm of deep rumor and are wholly unconfirmed. Those closest to her simply assume she rests with the Ancestor beneath Lake Michigan as she has always done, emerging only when it suits her.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Cultivar Cult (Allies 3, Contacts 3, Retainers 3)** Nerissa commands a small-but-growing coterie of loyal Cultivars — Kindred who have renounced their Cainite heritage and are now bound by blood to the Ancestor.

- **Blackwater Family (Allies 3, Contacts 4, Influence 5, Resources 2)** As matriarch of the prominent Blackwater family and through her protege and mouthpiece Mavis Blackwater, she silently works her whisper-subtle influence into the cracks of Chicago's Camarilla society, into the causes and activism of the city's Anarchs and Caitiff, even, it is rumored, into the affairs of the Lupines that range in the wild and inhospitable places outside the city limits. It is this last connection that could prove to be Nerissa's most lethal tool in her crusade against the Cannibals.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Edith Beaubien (Pride)** Edith is the primary Cultivar in Chicago and Nerissa's link to Kindred affairs in the city. Nerissa is fond of Edith, in a patronizing, pet-like way. She won't see Edith come to any harm, but is firm with the limits of what she is allowed to know.

- **Khalid (Horror)** Unknown to Edith or any of the other Kindred, Nerissa recently crossed paths with the Nosferatu, Khalid. What became of him following this meeting is a mystery, but he has not been seen since.

WHISPERS:

- **Unknown Danger:** If any whispers worth hearing have reached the ears of Chicago Kindred, only the Nosferatu know of them. For now, the Monsters maintain silence.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Those who glimpse Nerissa from a distance assume she is a mortal, indigenous woman of about 25, lithe and small in stature with copper-brown skin, dark eyes, and a handsomely beautiful face. Her heavy black hair is worn in elaborately woven braids sprinkled with glittering hairpins shaped to look like tiny flowers.

- Nerissa wears impeccably tailored bespoke clothing in fashion-forward, flowing lines cut from soft, sheer fabrics in shades of green, brown, and blue. Always present somewhere on her person is a brooch resembling a flowering vine, or maybe it is a fruit-bearing tree. Whatever it is, nothing like it exists on Earth in modern times.

- Any Kindred who come into close proximity with her experience a profound uneasiness, even dread. None but Edith and Khalid have met her face to face, and Khalid has since vanished while the ordinarily loquacious tattooist refuses to speak of her meetings with the Interlocutor.
- Nerissa's Mask is her persona as Nerissa, which is far from her original identity. She cannot even recall her birth name.

Sire: Unknown

Embraced: Circa 4000 BCE or far more recent

Ambition: Erode Helena's influence over the city

Convictions: Always aim to restore the Mother's Garden

Touchstones: Mavis Blackwater — descendant and keeper of her people

Humanity: 8

Generation: Effectively 4th

Blood Potency: 6

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5; Charisma 3, Manipulation 5, Composure 5; Intelligence 5; Wits 4; Resolve 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 8, Willpower 9

Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 4, Melee 2, Stealth (Plain Sight) 4, Survival (Underwater) 5; Animal Ken (Birds) 5, Etiquette 3, Insight 3, Intimidation (Age) 5, Leadership (Cultivars) 5, Persuasion 4, Subterfuge 5; Awareness 4, Medicine (Fertility) 4, Occult (Lilith) 5, Politics 3

Disciplines: Auspex 5, Celerity 4, Dominate 3, Fortitude 5, Presence 4, Blood Sorcery 5

WHAT IS NERISSA BLACKWATER?

Nerissa considers herself distinct from Kindred society, and certainly not of Caine's lineage. While she has entertained the notion that her ancestry might trace back to Lilith, it's a fleeting thought; Nerissa's people predate stories written into the Book of Nod.

Are Nerissa and her sire therefore not vampires as we know them? It's one possibility, but unlikely. She shares the same flaws and powers as other Kindred, even if she expresses them in different ways. Here are a few options for what Nerissa and the Ancestor *could* be:

- Nerissa is insane. The victim of Blood-Bond conditioning and repeated indoctrination to believe she's ancient, her sire is something non-Cainite, and she serves some grand purpose, the tragic truth is she's a Caitiff neonate who's gorged on methuselah vitae and serves the will of the absent Menele. How are her powers so immense? Perhaps she diablerized the Brujah methuselah by his consent.
- Nerissa is correct and she isn't a Cainite. Knowing the legends of the so-called "Drowned" in other parts of the world, she believes her line is more akin to predatory chameleons who adopt the strengths and curses of the dominant monster in the area. She is immortal rather than undead.
- Nerissa is one of the oldest Caitiff in the world. This explains her confused origins, but begs the question: who is the Ancestor? It's possible one of the clan founders or their eldest descendants Embraced and abandoned childer such as Nerissa for ritual purposes, or even through fear of their actions. When they were neonates, even the Antediluvians possessed mortal mores. In this case, the Ancestor could be a vampire of great age and close proximity in Generation to Caine.
- The similarities between the Cultivars and the Bahari are no coincidence: They are both Lilith cults, and Nerissa is a descendant of Lilith's line. Defying easy categorization and not suffering a bane as the known clans do, Nerissa is unknowingly one of the few vampires who can trace her line back to the Dark Mother. Does this make the Ancestor Lilith, or one of her rumored childer? When Caine cast Lilith aside, she is said to have traveled far, and the Americas were untouched by Caine's line at the time.
- Nerissa has fallen prey to the same mental manipulations as many vampires, being fed a story of great portents and mandated destiny. She is an ancient Ventrue or Toreador, possibly the childe of one of those clan's founders, but so drunk on their vitae and subject to their thrall that she unquestioningly believes otherwise. The Ancestor may well be the torpid Antediluvian of one of those clans, now stirring to wakefulness due to the Gehenna Crusade's mass spilling of rich blood and the Beckoning's clarion call. Of course, if the Beckoning affects Antediluvians, too, there's still the question of who's emitting the call...

GANGREL

"I tire of wearing a fancy dress and pretending to be among the elite. We are Gangrel. It is time we embraced our nature."

— Inyanga, Former Gangrel Primogen, recently succumbed to the Beckoning

These nights see the Gangrel as one of the smallest clans in the Chicago area, with the former Primogen Inyanga Beckoned overseas, the Wolf Pack of Camarilla Archons traveling out west at Prince Jackson's behest, and Doyle Fincher having disappeared into a blood cult or been slain by the Second Inquisition, depending on who you ask.

The situation leaves Clan Gangrel as a weak screw in the Camarilla machine, the majority of the Primogen now murmuring about how they might as well absorb the Animals' council seat or award it to a Child of Haqim, a Minister, or even a Lasombra. Rosa Hernandez stands as Primogen but her clanmates rarely consult her, falling more in line with Anarch thought than Camarilla hegemony.

One rumor holds that Kevin Jackson ordered the Wolf Pack away and slew Fincher personally, exactly for the reason of removing the Gangrel from the city equation.

ROSA HERNANDEZ

Epitaph: The Warden at the Gate

Quote: *"Guilty? Innocent? I don't care. You're a Lupine butcher! You're dead!"*

Clan: Gangrel

MORTAL DAYS: ONE WITH THE ANIMALS

Rosa grew up on a Montana farm, spending more time with animals than people. She could ride a horse by seven, vault-mount it by nine, and diagnose most illnesses in her four-legged friends by 12. Everyone thought she would become a veterinarian, and she played with the idea herself. Ultimately, she followed in the footsteps of her uncle Luis, and pursued law. He was friendly with Edward Hirsch Levi, the new President at the University of Chicago, and called in a favor to get her enrolled. She would fight for the ethical treatment and rights of animals in a more lasting way.

She excelled at her studies, and became one of the prominent and active members of Chicago's fledgling animal-rights movement. Her name quickly became a rallying cry for the campaign, and caught the eye of Doyle Fincher. Doyle watched her from the shadows at night for over a year in wolf form. Rosa occasionally caught glimpses of the wolf at a distance before it faded away into the night. He saw her freeing animals, confusing police with her budding legal skills and fearlessness. Inspired by her, Fincher went to Prince Lodin and petitioned for permission to Embrace Rosa.

Once permission was granted, Fincher (in wolf form) tracked Rosa down. He found her in the Lincoln Park Zoo after she had set most of the animals free. She had just freed the lions and was moving toward the bear cage, taking a swig from a bottle of gin. Four other animal-rights activists were in tow behind her, releasing more animals. Fincher darkened the shadows around her crew of friends, and instilled a sense of fear, sending them fleeing from the zoo. Once she was alone, he advanced on her in wolf form.

Rosa, drunk, saw the wolf that had been her guardian angel for more than a year — and smiled. She kneeled down and extended a hand, calling on her childhood practice of befriending animals. She instantly noticed the wolf move differently; its fur was not quite right, and the intelligence in its eyes was more malevolent than she would expect from a natural wolf. Fincher transformed before her eyes, and offered her the opportunity to become one with animals. Rosa asked countless questions of the Gangrel, and he spoke his truth. The thought of being able to become an animal to understand better these creatures she loved was too appealing, and she accepted.

KINDRED NIGHTS: HUNTER OF WOLVES

Afterward, the two turned into wolves and ran from the zoo out into the night. Open cages, free-roaming animals, and her old life were all left behind. At first, it was exhilarating to discover her new abilities and learn of Kindred society. Then she learned what Fincher's "one with animals" line meant, during their first hunt. It was a brutal kill of a couple and their dog, who were all out for a stroll. Rosa watched Fincher revel in the kill, and was disgusted. She attacked him, but was bested by the more experienced vampire, and she swore to end his evil ways.

The passing of years saw her revenge against Fincher lessen as she grew to accept the nature of the Beast. She refused to feed on animals, and only targeted humans. She preferred to feed on corporate drones or scientists who performed or funded animal testing. After she learned of Lupines, Rosa began researching and trying to locate them. She viewed them as the truest combination of animals and humans, as they were born with the ability to change, and did not require blood.

Then, the War of Chicago began with the Lupines attacking the city. Camarilla Kindred were massacred in droves while Rosa watched from safety, appalled by her underestimation of Lupine ferocity. What she assumed were noble beasts were more savage, cruel, and destructive than any Kindred she had encountered. Revolted, her own naive hope galvanized her into action, leading the push back against the invading werewolf packs.

In recent years, Rosa was disgusted when she learned Inyanga, the Gangrel Primogen, had renegotiated a peace with the werewolves. She vented at the elder woman before her clan and was surprised not to have been killed. Rosa tried to convince them that the death of Prince Lodin was a move that could not be forgiven. But the uneasy peace remained; werewolves would be permitted to hunt in a strictly bordered part of the domain, unharmed by Kindred. After Inyanga left the city, Rosa became the new Gangrel Primogen, leader of a clan hardly recognized as Camarilla. She immediately broke Inyanga's weak treaty, commanding the Gangrel Wolf Pack to burn out half a dozen werewolf lairs.

Rosa hates the Lupines and will do anything to destroy them. She once again studies, learning about werewolves just as she researched mundane animals in her mortal days. That studying, supplemented financially and with resources by a private sponsor named Francesco, informed her of their strengths and weaknesses. It was not academic books she sought, but folklore and legends to learn their ways and how to track them. Like any hunter, she needed weapons, knowledge, and bait. During the years of learning, Francesco drip-feeding her tasty morsels, she earned her law degree and began investing in small businesses around town. She now owns six such businesses, ranging from a veterinary clinic to a successful vegan restaurant.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Sniff out the Lupines:** Rosa has developed an ability to sense kinfolk and Lupines through a mix of Animalism and Auspex. This has allowed her to better track their movements and set up traps. Rosa plans to turn kinfolk and release them near their werewolf counterparts to study their reactions. She hopes the response is to attack, which will provide her a chance to study their tactics from afar.

- **The Prince and the Pack:** Prince Jackson has some kind of deal with the local Lupines. She does not know what game he is playing, as Ventrue are always playing one. For the moment, she will watch and try to find a weakness to be exploited, but she may recruit someone to spy on Jackson for her.

- **Protect the Unaware:** Any vampires who run afoul of the Lupines may be surprised to have the Gangrel Primogen aid them in battle and become an ally. Wolves under her control may intervene to help a fellow Kindred, or she herself may intercede to test her new combat tactics.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Hernandez and Associates (Contacts 3, Haven 2, Resources 3, Retainers 3)** Her crowning business achievement came after passing the bar; she opened Hernandez and Associates in downtown Chicago, a law firm specializing in animal rights. The 20-person office is known for its efficiency, and for the reclusive owner who allows her senior staff to execute daily operations. Rosa uses her locked office as a haven by melding into the earth beneath a rug in her closet.

- **Villa District Bungalow (Haven 3)** Rosa has a secondary haven in the Villa district under the name Carla Reece. The Prairie-architectural-style bungalow has a lush garden, a waist-high wooden fence surrounding it, and half a dozen dogs in the yard.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Legal Community (Contacts 3, Influence 3) Political Activists (Contacts 3, Influence 2)** Rosa has substantial influence in the legal and activist community, with Hernandez and Associates paying for many of their lawyers and interns to qualify further in law in exchange for extended, unbreakable contracts with the company.

- **Wolf Pack (Retainers 3)** Rosa has made nearly two dozen wolves that roam the city into her ghouls. She prefers not to have them fight, but has allowed it twice before, to kill a lone werewolf to test its combat prowess. She had to recruit eight new wolves after the battle. The wolves resemble slightly larger-than-usual dogs, show an advanced intelligence, and hide when spying.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Anita Wainwright (Respect)** Rosa has started trying to befriend Anita. She has heard rumors of the woman's processes battling Lupines and believes the two would fare better together.

- **Noah "Flyboy" Grewal (Rival)** Rosa wants control of the airport to better identify and control the easiest route allowing Lupines into the city. She is prepared to crush Noah to achieve this. She accepted one of his invitations to visit and has two wolves stationed close to the airport.

- **Primogen Council (Strained) Critias (Ally)** Rosa's relationship with the rest of the Primogen is strained, as all but Critias see the Gangrel presence in the city as barely tolerable. Since the clan's confirmed turn to the Anarchs, Rosa works hard to prove her clan's loyalty to the Ivory Tower.

- **Helena (Benefactor)** Rosa doesn't know it, but Helena has been pushing her into war with the Lupines due to the werewolves' dedication to hunting and destroying the Toreador methuselah. Helena is intent on keeping her Gangrel chess piece in play.

WHISPERS:

- **Rebuild from the Ashes:** Rosa is working with the Lupines to plan another attack on the city, and turn it into an Anarch haven during the chaos. This is why she's been frequenting all the areas the werewolves attacked in the '90s.

- **Domain Grab:** Rosa is making a play to gain control of the airport. Hernandez and Associates are working with federal law enforcement to stop some illegal trafficking of animals through the airport.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Rosa is masquerading as her own daughter, "Sofía." She had false papers drawn up, accounts created, and photos taken of her gray-haired "mother" who moved out of the country **(Mask 2)**.

- Rosa is a tall, muscular Latina woman. She has the air of someone to be reckoned with and respected. Her long, black hair is pulled back into a ponytail with an exquisitely carved silver clasp. She dresses in a dark-brown flannel shirt, dark blue jeans, and mountain-hiking boots.

Sire: Doyle "Sledgehammer" Fincher

Embraced: 1974 (Born 1953)

Ambition: Drive every Lupine out of Chicago

Convictions: Do not suffer a werewolf to live

Touchstones: Arnold Whitmore — Iraq veteran with service animal

Humanity: 6

Generation: 8th

Blood Potency: 2

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4; Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 4; Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 8

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl (Claws) 4, Drive 3, Stealth (Urban, Wilderness) 5; Animal Ken 4, Intimidation 3, Persuasion 2, Leadership 3; Academics (Law) 3, Awareness 4, Politics 1, Science (Zoology) 4, Survival (Tracking) 3

Disciplines: Animalism 3, Auspex 2 Fortitude 1, Protean 3, Celerity 2

LESTER KNIFE

Epitaph: Flustered Caretaker

Quote: *"Hey it's funny that animals are talkin' all the time but they don't say nearly as much dumb shit as humans."*

Clan: Gangrel

MORTAL DAYS: NO PEOPLE TO CALL HIS OWN

Born in 1940s on the Rocky Boy Indian Reservation in Montana, Lester's family struggled with poverty on an already-poor reservation. It was hard finding work and Lester's generally reclusive, mildly misanthropic nature made things tougher and tougher for them. When the Indian Relocation Act of 1956 came into full power, Lester's immediate family urged him to take the opportunity offered.

Lester decided that anywhere was better than life in the dirt in Rocky Boy so he left and went to Chicago. Work was promised for him there and so was a place to stay. When he arrived, he found there was neither and life on the streets of Chicago began immediately.

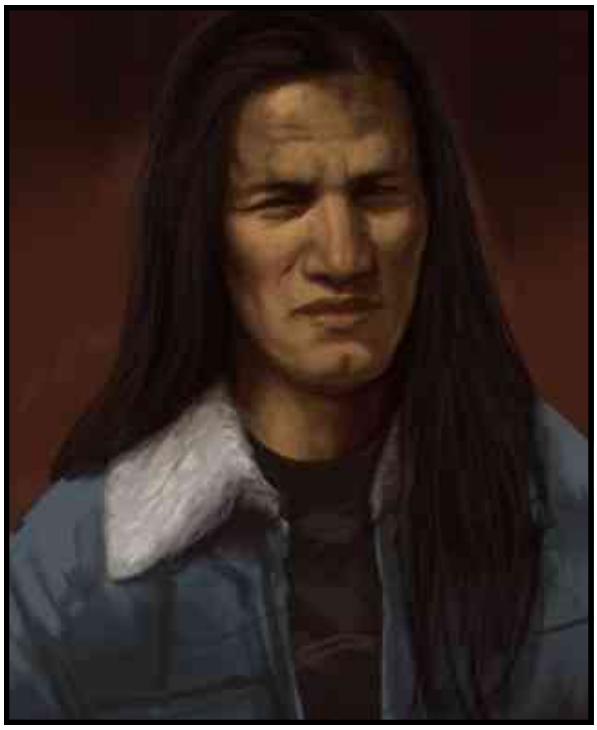
Rather than visit the American Indigenous Center of Chicago, his errant ways introduced him to Native gangbangers and street hustlers. He fell deep into that crowd and by the time he connected with the AIC he already had a reputation.

There was talk about moving the AIC out of the storefront they were in and into a new building, and an elder named Ernie was promising labor contracts to those who would help renovate an old Masonic temple as their new home. Ernie's money put him in a space of control, and Lester couldn't help but watch as the older man abused his power, molesting fellow members and siphoning off cash. When a young girl and her brother turned up dead, Lester called Ernie out as the monster that had raped and killed them both. Despite the evidence, a host of elders defended Ernie and banned Lester from the AIC, citing his previous crimes.

Lester warned Ernie that his time would come. One night, half drunk at a bar called "Twisters" in Ravenswood, frequented by bikers, truckers, blacks, and Natives, Lester went on a tirade about how somebody needed to hunt Ernie down and gut him. An old biker came up to him and sat with him for a while, listening to his tirade. He got Lester dangerously drunk that night and offered to give him the power to take revenge for his friends. Lester jumped at the chance and the biker, a Gangrel by the name of Tyrus, Embraced Lester.

KINDRED NIGHTS: ONE STEP FROM APOCALYPSE

Lester rode with Tyrus and his crew for about a year before he came back to Chicago. The AIC had already



moved into its new building and Ernie was an important member of the Board of Directors.

Lester watched Ernie for a while and, when the opportunity presented itself, he caught Ernie late one night after a board meeting. Ernie had stayed behind to do some paperwork. Paperwork was his euphemism for working a laundering deal in the basement with some local gangsters. Lester came in and attacked the whole miserable lot, though Ernie somehow escaped. To his surprise, he was not able to feed that night. The shadows of the building seemed to come to life and consume all the dead bodies. There was something else here. It was beneath the building and hungry for blood.

At first, he thought it was Kindred, but he wasn't so sure. All that he knew was that it was convenient. So, he fed it the remains of his kills. It spoke to him in whispers and he began to kill more frequently for it.

He soon realized there was more than one entity in the building and they grew restless. He tried to stop feeding them, but then accidents started happening to the people in the building. The entities were active and hungry.

He turned to his Gangrel brothers, who investigated and confirmed Lester was right that something old and powerful was deep beneath the building. Its anxieties and urges bled out into the community and brought everyone into a state of chaos and disarray.

The Gangrel decided to keep it secret from the Prince and tasked Lester with keeping an eye on it and keeping it fed. Lester became a volunteer maintenance person for

the building once the community agreed to let him come around again. Lester has managed so far to keep the entities under control, though recently the community decided to leave the building, after over 50 years of occupying it. This has left Lester in the predicament of not having easy access to feeding stock. Lester is nervous about what may happen with the entities if they grow hungry enough to reach out. He does what he can to get access to the building and feed the entities, but time is running out.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Buried Secrets:** Lester is concerned with the creatures lurking in the old building. While he has informed his sire and other Gangrel about their existence, he has not told them all his suspicions. The entities whisper about being part of the land, older than America's Gangrel, and ready to take back the lands around the lake. Poor Lester feels compelled to serve.

- **Resident Magi:** Lester isn't the only one who has been managing the entities that lurk beneath the old Masonic building. Numerous Native elders from different magical traditions have stumbled across it and Lester as well. They were instrumental in urging the people to leave the building. While they are generally hostile to vampires, they understand Lester's situation and have become tenuous friends with him. They have told him the earth entities are at war with those beneath the water. He now wishes to research everything about dangerous cryptids that exist in the different environments.

- **The Open Road:** It's been some time since Lester jumped on a motorbike and just rode into the night, but the prospect sure is tempting. The Wolf Pack has abandoned the city though, and Lester is too afraid to flee a Camarilla domain alone. He needs protection and a caretaker to take his place.

DOMAIN AND HAVENS:

- **Bedsit (Haven 1)** For a long time, the AIC doubled as Lester's haven. Now he has taken a room at a local, single-room-occupancy building. He doesn't have much in the way of resources, though he takes jobs from some local Kindred from time to time. He's trying to keep from being noticed too much so that people won't start asking what he does with his nights and why he's still hanging around the old AIC building.

- **The Lost (Herd 1)** Lester's hunt is a dismal experience of preying on vagrants and tourists lost in this part of the city. He dopes them up with drugs after feeding to confuse their memories of the experience.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Bestial Companions (Retainers 2)** Lester has enslaved a number of urban scavengers such as raccoons, coyotes, pigeons, and possums with drops of his vitae. He enjoys the escapism of seeing through their eyes and listening to their chirps and natters.

- **Ernie Head (Potential Contacts 1)** Though his connection to the indigenous people of this area is weak, Lester feels a strong bond of hatred toward Ernie Head, though the abusive mortal hasn't been seen in some time. Lester knows he's alive and still wants to punish him, but also feels if he can compel Ernie to admit to his crimes it could act as a way of calming the waters between Lester and the other members of the AIC.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Clan Gangrel (Neglected)** While Lester generally has some respect from the Gangrel of the area, most people really don't notice him. For a while there was a rumor he had died when the Lupines came through town. In truth, the Lupines who found him didn't see him as much of a threat and left him alone.

- **Maldavis (Captive Audience) Edith Beaubien (Believer)** Maldavis and Edith listen intently to Lester's strange ramblings, when they're around to hear them.

- **Sylvia Roanhorse (Sympathy)** He likes to hang with Sylvia because she's one of the few Natives he knows, but she's so young and thin-blooded it's hard for him to connect with her.

WHISPERS:

- **Drowned in Myth:** The Masonic building covers the resting place of a handful of vampires calling themselves "the Drowned." This rumor didn't originate from Lester, but it's spoken of quietly among other Natives.

- **Bill of Goods:** Lester has reached out to Neally with an offer to purchase the building and make it his own domain, not telling the Ventrue about what lurks beneath.

- **What Lurks Beneath:** The things in the building have slipped out from time to time and hunted up north. Luckily, Lester's been able to get them to follow him back to the AIC and he's been able to cover the evidence of the hunt. He knows he can't keep this up on his own.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Lester appears to be a Native man in his 30s or 40s. It's hard to tell because it's obvious there has been a lot of road and hard drinking in his life. His hair is long and black and hangs to mid back.
- Mostly dressed in jeans and high tops, he makes his way around the Ravenswood and Edgewater areas of the city.
- Lester takes the name Arthur Ford when asked about his role as caretaker of the Masonic building, claiming with a wary smile to earn minimum wage and be satisfied with his lot. He dislikes his fabricated persona, believing it a little too close to the real thing **(Mask 1)**.

Sire: Tyrus

Embraced: 1983 (Born 1942)

Ambition: Don't allow the masters beneath the ground to wake

Convictions: Always keep the masters fed

Touchstones: Ernie Head — an abusive Native elder to whom Lester is painfully linked

Humanity: 6

Generation: 8th

Blood Potency: 1

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2; Charisma 1, Manipulation 3, Composure 3; Intelligence 1, Wits 4, Resolve 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 6

Skills: Brawl 2, Drive (Motorbike) 3, Firearms 1, Larceny (Bypassing Security) 3, Stealth 1, Survival (Homeless) 4; Animal Ken (Urban Scavengers) 4, Intimidation (Stickups) 2, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 2; Awareness 2, Investigation 1, Occult 3, Science 1, Technology (Repair) 3

Disciplines: Animalism 4

SGT. DUNCAN MACTAVISH

Epitaph: SAS Soldier and Anarch Enforcer

Quote: *"Be alive tomorrow. That's the only rule to live by."*

Clan: Gangrel

MORTAL DAYS: WHAT THE ARMY CAN DO FOR YOU

MacTavish's favorite childhood activity was guarding his father's chicken runs from foxes. He was content to sit quietly, holding his old man's shotgun in his lap, his eyes swiveling and searching for any sign of foxes or badgers. Eventually, he started stalking the woods in the early evening, seeking out their hides and holes to lie in wait for them to emerge. The idea of having something to protect pleased him.

One night, he was lurking outside a fox den when he heard a commotion from back at the farm. Rushing back, he found that while he was off on his hunt, something had gotten into the run and snatched a couple of the hens. His father was furious with him for wandering off the grounds and beat him with his belt as punishment. This was a regular feature of his upbringing; while most would call it abusive, Duncan would say it was "the kick up the arse I needed."

The first of his bombs erupted in the woods in the early morning. Just around the time, he suspected, those filthy animals would be settling down to sleep off the meal they'd made of his wards. He hit every hole and den he knew about and woke up the sleeping wood with the blasts of his devices and the acrid smoke of the burning petroleum that spilled through the subterranean tunnels.

Duncan was encouraged to join the military. Not only was the strict discipline and isolation a sort of

homecoming for him, but there was finally a place for him that allowed him to defend not just a small bunch of stupid chickens, but a nation. A people asleep at night, ignorant of the armed man in the chair watching over them. Duncan excelled in military service, first being offered training as a paratrooper and then being picked to join the Special Air Service.

Sergeant MacTavish was placed on assignment to attack the compound of a group of dissident terrorists in El Salvador. This scheme brought Duncan into the clutches of a vampire with pull in the military, positioning the burly Scotsman as one of her potential childer candidates.

With their operation compromised from the start, Duncan's team was slaughtered, save for him. When his mysterious benefactor finally came, she staged a daring rescue of her erstwhile progeny and earned his immediate loyalty, emancipating him from his captors. Starving, tired, and having endured numerous beatings over a fortnight of captivity, Duncan was easy prey.

KINDRED NIGHTS: SHEPHERDING THE FLOCK

Duncan awoke in a jungle clearing at night, his kit restored to him and a small handful of powerful torches providing light. The mysterious woman who rescued him made him an offer, handing him a dossier with photographs and files of three men, each dressed in the garb of a different military. Duncan recognized Navy SEALs, Spetsnaz, and Mossad.

"Your mission is to proceed on foot to Gary, Indiana, USA as quickly as you are able."

A monumental task on its own, it was further complicated by the stipulation that he would only be permitted to enter the city if he first eliminated the other three men in his file.

The journey was fraught with peril, each danger compounded by the threat of the three faces hunting him each night and the implacable sun pinning him down by day.

Duncan alone reached Gary and entered, bearing the dog tags of the other three men and samples of their ash as stipulated. The story of how he bested them is one he rarely tells, and when he does it changes with each telling. Many are unsure if he killed them at all. Duncan is never drawn on the matter. All that is certain is that none of the others ever came to Gary. He alone took on the role of his sire's enforcer.

With the secession of the Gangrel from the Camarilla to the Anarchs, Duncan has been tasked with remaining on the outskirts of Chicago, protecting his clanmates who wish to defect to the domains of Fort Wayne or Indianapolis, eliminate any threats to the cause, and to monitor the comings and goings of the Camarilla's crown jewel. To the Camarilla Kindred of the city, the name MacTavish is spoken like that of a bogeyman or old wives' tale. To the Anarchs, he is treated with some quiet reverence as a stalwart sentinel that defends them. Each Anarch knows that to cross the will of Juggler, the Baron of Gary, will put them in the sights of Sergeant Duncan MacTavish.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Eyes, Ears, and Fists:** Duncan was raised in settings where strict instructions were the order of the day. His current assignment has him watching the comings and goings of Chicago, entering only occasionally to interfere with or terminate specifically selected targets.

- **High-Profile Targets:** One of the chief concerns of the Camarilla is silence regarding the upcoming summit. If Duncan was to become aware of the Lasombra's intent, he may do something to sabotage it, even without orders. Leading members of the negotiating parties of either side could become targets for "assassination," where he very publicly shoots them to render them dead in the public eye, hindering their movements.

- **Clear the Area:** Duncan has also planted crude devices in populated areas and is unafraid of phoning in bomb threats to close key roads or civic buildings.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Bolt-Holes and Safehouses (Haven 1) Chicago Anarchs (Allies 3, Contacts 3)** Constantly on the move, Duncan tends to stick to the outskirts of the city. When he comes in, he generally sticks to abandoned warehouses and old, crumbling buildings. Places with access to earth with which he can meld. He can occasionally be found in Gary, when he comes in to be briefed by his Anarch employers.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- Duncan takes a very dim view of the idea of thralls in general. He abhors the practice of creating ghouls most of all. The idea of being addicted to another person is anathema to him. He prefers to work alone.

- **Christine Summers (Retainers 1)** Duncan begrudgingly took in the child of a family he executed and now schools her in firearms and survival. He isn't sure why he hasn't just abandoned this girl, Christine, but he keeps her close despite her hatred for him.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Nathaniel Bordruff (Awe)** Bordruff, as far as Duncan is concerned, is his opposite and a worthy adversary. He has a quiet respect for him.
- **Bobby Weatherbottom (Friendship)** The Kindred most likely to interact with Duncan is Bobby, who points Duncan in the direction of his targets from within the Camarilla. Duncan refers to him as "the wee man" and regularly, in jest, threatens to kill him.
- **Maldavis (Treacherous)** Duncan has absolutely no trust for Maldavis. She is a traitor to her own blood, which is the worst kind of rat.

WHISPERS:

- **Walking the Line:** Anarchs talk of him as a hero of the Movement, who sacrifices his nights to protect the cause and defend their freedoms. Others see him as little more than a necessary evil, a watchman against the machinations and the corruption of the Ivory Tower.
- **Bogeyman:** Some Animals pour out an extra drink for him when celebrating their hard-won freedom, as the man they see as fighting to preserve it. In this way, he becomes a bogeyman for the Camarilla, legend among Anarchs, and folk hero within his clan.
- **One-Man Army:** Duncan is several killers, assassins, terrorists, and bombers that have struck the city over the past year or so. While his moves are clearly not the work of one man, FIRSTLIGHT suspects a guiding Kindred hand behind these events.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Duncan finds it easiest to live completely off the grid. Though he is known in the media by several names for different assassinations and bombings he has carried out, none of them are of his making.
- Duncan is an unkempt and dirty white man with a mop of shaggy, matted brown hair that has spent too long inside helmets and balaclavas, and a beard containing almost as much wildlife as the average woodland. His cold, gray eyes are permanently bloodshot, and this is more pronounced when he is well fed. He is well built, tall, and has a scowling face at rest. His voice is rarely raised and almost never shows a flicker of emotion.
- Ordinarily, Duncan remains in hiding and wears camouflage paint to hide his appearance. He has, at times, been mistaken for an agent of the Second Inquisition due to his military garb and equipment.
- Of particular note is that, despite his many murderous and violent acts, he shows no animal features of any kind, normally well-established among his clanmates. The wise among the Kindred realize, to their horror, that this implies that Duncan has never been out of control, even while murdering people.

Sire: Atlacoya

Embraced: 2005 (Born 1968)

Ambition: Revisit any action against the Anarchs with fire and fury

Convictions: Protect the Flock

Touchstones: Christine Summers — Schoolkid he is teaching shooting and survival

Humanity: 4

Generation: 11th

Blood Potency: 2

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5; Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 4; Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 8, Willpower 9

Skills: Athletics 4, Brawl 4, Craft (IEDs) 3, Drive (Helicopters) 3, Firearms (Rifles) 5, Melee 4, Larceny 2, Stealth 4, Survival 5; Animal Ken (Farm Animals) 2, Insight 1, Intimidation 3, Leadership 1, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 1; Awareness 1, Investigation 3, Medicine (Field Medic) 2, Politics 1, Science 2, Technology (Military Hardware) 3

Disciplines: Fortitude 2, Protean 4

LASOMBRA

"They will ask you for the impossible and you will deliver it.
You will show them the Magisters are sincere and devoted to forming a new Camarilla."

— Talley, the Amici Noctis Legate, in conversation with his childe Sierra Van Burrace

The Lasombra are faced with a seemingly impossible task: Convince the Camarilla of their honest intentions of joining and strengthening the sect.

The first action they took, unknown to Kevin Jackson or Sheriff Damien, was the purge of all historic Lasombra in or around the domain, whether or not they identified as Camarilla, Anarch, or Sabbat. Talley wanted to leave no room for insurrection or sabotage. His murderous campaign fell short of destroying the recently Embraced Araceli Rivera and the Rabbi Michalis Basaras. The former he knows nothing about; the latter he believes is under separate instructions from the Friends of the Night.

Secondly, under the Amici Noctis' direction, Talley instructed his childer Sierra Van Burrace and Malenkov (see Chapter XX, the Chicago Chronicle) to impress upon the Prince they would do anything within their power to prove the clan's intentions are true.

Now, the clan must make every effort at diplomacy without displaying weakness. They must show respect without groveling. They must impress without appearing monstrous.

SIERRA VAN BURRACE

Epitaph: Ruthless Negotiator

Quote: *"So let's get down to brass tacks, shall we? I have money and your business is failing. Drop your posturing masculinity and let's discuss how you are going to help me profit."*

Clan: Lasombra

MORTAL DAYS: IN A MAN'S WORLD

From a young age, Lucy enjoyed spending time with movers and shakers, attending galas and social events. When Lucy's father Shinji emigrated to Chicago to continue running their international hotel chain from there, she found herself frequently traveling back and forth between Japan and America, staying with her dad whenever possible.

During their time together, Lucy's father trained her on the delicate balance of running a successful company. He allowed her to sit in on meetings, introduced her to his business partners, and frequently allowed her to negotiate deals on his behalf. She was a natural diplomat and salesperson, helping the company grow exponentially. Shinji quickly grew to consider her one of his trusted business advisors, taking pride in his daughter's accomplishments.

When Lucy's father passed away, she took over the family business. She knew how to make profitable business deals, but also to not bend easily when faced with adversity. Lucy ruthlessly negotiated large-scale acquisitions for her company, a task not easily completed due to the ingrained prejudice she met every day. She was a woman and she had inherited her role. Lucy constantly

called out those business owners who used her gender against her, publicly shaming them. While her vocal attitude dismayed some potential partners, she never let it stop her from meeting her ambitions.

Lucy fended off many attempts to buy her out, wed her, or take over her business, but when a colleague aggressively solicited Lucy for sex, she lost her temper. Years of suffering peer underestimation made her lash out. She swung a marble paperweight and killed him instantly. Following the act, she coolly put his clothes in a black bag, kept his jewelry, wallet, and other identifying baubles separate, and took a shower. Only then did she contemplate what to do with the body. A few hours after the murder, she'd paid a hefty sum to the pimp of some of the escorts who used her hotels to make the body disappear.

KINDRED NIGHTS: SEA OF MANIACS

It was her skills as a ruthless negotiator and her refusal to let anyone diminish her self-worth that caught the attention of a Lasombra admirer. Lucy demonstrated a strong conviction that this vampire, named Talley, found intriguing. He took Lucy under his tutelage as a ghoul for a while, allowing her enough time to transition the company into the ownership of a prefabricated Mask named Sierra Van Burrace. She had the board take over day-to-day running of the business once she could not safely continue her position, but Sierra acted as majority shareholder. Lucy continued to conduct operations from the shadows, using it as a way to help her sire.

Talley eventually Embraced Lucy, inducting her into the horrors of the Sabbat. As far as the mortal world was concerned, Lucy Asako died when her car went off the Wells Street Bridge in a well-publicized accident. She only had one mortal relative remaining at the time of her "death" — her nearly 100-year-old grandmother, Aiko. In a care home and possessing little contact with the outside world, Aiko is the only person to whom Sierra is still Lucy.

For all the bloodlust and carnage the Sabbat embodied, Sierra remained out of the fray, choosing to align herself with those who showed restraint. Sierra wasn't a street-fighting fool; her sire kept her mind unclouded while encouraging self-control. She was bound to a pack, but he was never far from her ear. Sierra spent many nights gathering influences and pulling strings to assist in the agendas of the Amici Noctis, via her sire.

When Talley informed her she and her brother-in-vitae, the Camarilla-Sabbat war hero Preston Malenkov, would be leading the clan defection to the Camarilla in Chicago, Sierra saw new opportunity for growth. She never thought much of her pack, the Dirty Titans, using them more as shields and lackeys. When the time came for her to return to Chicago for the first time in years, she sent the Titans ahead, deliberately setting them in the path of the city's Gangrel Wolf Pack, leaving them to die on the battlefield. Sierra still has nightmares about it.

She doesn't agree with the demands the Camarilla will put on her clan, and is working to try and lessen some of those requirements. She worries her clan will be left without upper leadership and guidance, and that may cause a fall from grace for the Lasombra.

Sierra is aware her appointment as ambassador is likely because she is more expendable than any vampire much older, so Sierra remains calculated in her efforts. She knows there is a lot of pressure on her, so she travels to Chicago focused and ready. She doesn't know Malenkov's intentions, but is determined not to be outshined by her older sibling.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Chosen Delegate:** Sierra has been sent to Chicago by her elders as a point of contact with the Camarilla. She is to continue negotiations with those in Chicago who would be integral to the transition of Clan Lasombra to the sect. She fully intends to deliver on the Amici Noctis' will, no matter the cost.

- **Rooms Without a View:** Sierra has a personal goal within the city of Chicago as well. She wants to expand her hotel chain, which her pack-mates never rated as an investment of value. If she can successfully integrate into the Camarilla it will open up multiple doors for her business, as hotel rooms doubling as temporary vampire havens could earn her a fortune. The Ventrue and Toreador have a tight grip on the service industry in Chicago, but she is confident she can work out an agreement.

- **Gathering Dirt:** Sierra knows there are several Chicago Camarilla with questionable loyalties. She has been looking for any information she might be able to use to gain leverage for her clan. She does not hesitate to use her connections to gather this information, and is close to pinpointing a few of these Kindred. She has been careful to cover her tracks, knowing she could easily disappear. She currently seeks incriminating information on Jason Newberry, if any is available, and he has grown wise to her probing, positioning the Malkavian Primogen completely against Lasombra admission to the city, let alone the sect.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Diamond Yama Hotel (Haven 3, Resources 3)** Sierra intends to keep her haven in one of her family's five-star hotels in downtown Chicago, the Diamond Yama Hotel off Michigan Avenue. This was her father's first hotel in America, and though she'll be checking in under the name of Sierra Van Burrace, she intends to use her shareholder privileges to book out an entire floor indefinitely.

- **Japanese Business Interests (Contacts 2, Influence 2, Resources 3)** Sierra already supports many of the Japanese-owned businesses in the Chicago area and intends to meet her contacts there once the diplomatic situation has calmed. She has no connection to the Yoshitomi Group Yakuza ring present in Chicago, and personally deplores their activities. To this end, she strives to keep all her businesses legitimate and feeds primarily from criminals of her ethnicity.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Yoshinori Tsukioka (Allies 1, Influence 2, Retainers 1)** Sierra frequently enthralls men who believe they are better than her. She still holds no tolerance for men who use her gender against her, but has no qualms about using their underestimation against them. On the Yama Hotels board, she only permits women and respectful men seats. Yoshinori Tsukioka, a young business powerhouse over from Endron International, acts as the chairman. Sierra holds a lot of respect for Yoshinori, not least because she's found no dirt on him, he insists on a company without secrets, and keeps his hair, suit, and smile perfectly pristine at all times.

- **Asako Aiko (Contacts 1)** Sierra moved her grandmother Aiko to a new care facility in Chicago in advance of her arrival. Even when in the thick of the Sabbat vaulderie, Sierra has never been able to fully decouple from her mortal roots. She knows Aiko will likely die within the decade, and greatly fears the loss to the last of her mortality.

- **Mr. Beazley and Mr. Warde (Retainers 2)** Sierra keeps two ghouls — Mr. Beazley and Mr. Warde — the former acting as her driver, the latter as her bodyguard, though both are capable of either task. They were attached to her pack before and never shied from Sabbat excess, so they see the idea of defecting to the Camarilla as quite amusing.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Talley (Mawla 4, Respect)** Sierra's closest relationship is with her sire, Talley. While he lurks on Chicago's periphery, she doesn't believe he'll be entering the negotiations. She respects his cool pragmatism and ability to adapt when survival is at stake, and while unbound, would still act to defend his life if it were at risk.

- **Malenkov (Rivalry)** Sierra cannot stand Talley's other childe, Malenkov. He brags about his "single-handed" assault on New York that left the Camarilla in pieces, and his subsequent defense of the domain that would have succeeded had "Polonia not gotten cold feet." She mockingly refers to him as Leonidas due to his pomposity, and seriously worries his ego might cost the Lasombra their chance with the Ivory Tower.

- **Jason Newberry (Target)** In her attempts to put hooks in Chicago ahead of her arrival, Sierra's been digging in to some of Jason Newberry's crimes. His activities appall even her, but she requires evidence before presenting her findings to Prince Jackson.

- **Kevin Jackson (Formal)** Sierra reached out to Prince Jackson before traveling to Chicago and was met with a cordial, curious response she believes Alan Sovereign penned. She believes she knows how to win Jackson's favor, but doubts she'll get more than a single shot.

WHISPERS:

- **Elitist:** Apparently, she already believes herself a member of a "High Clan." Sierra only mixes with prestigious members of city courts.

- **Dirty Rumors:** Rumor has it, Sierra is already Prince Jackson's lover and attempts to manipulate him using more than her words.

- **Quick Retribution:** Sierra does not appreciate being told to smile or being looked down upon for being a woman. Stories of her retaliation against such requests are widespread.

- **Fall Guy:** Many Kindred believe Sierra is important only because she thinks she's important. She has no real authority or power.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Sierra is a young Japanese-American woman in her 20s. She prefers flowing gowns and dresses over business wear, but also wears patterns common to

her heritage in a unique merging of her background. She intends to always look striking, if not fashionable. First impressions matter.

- As a former member of the Sabbat, Sierra tends to make others uncomfortable by forgetting to imitate breathing, failing to blink, or feeding with a little too much gusto. She has been working on these things at her sire's order.
- Sierra is a walking Mask, her original identity considered dead for the last decade. She pays taxes, appears on the census, and votes. As far as Sierra's concerned, she does the Masquerade better than most Camarilla Kindred **(Mask 2)**.

Sire: Talley

Embraced: 1998 (Born 1970)

Ambition: Have the Lasombra accepted within the Camarilla of Chicago

Convictions: I will never show weakness

Touchstones: Asako Aiko — beloved grandmother residing in the Autumn Health Retirement Community

Humanity: 4

Generation: 8th

Blood Potency: 2

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2; Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Composure 2; Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 6

Skills: Firearms 2, Larceny 2, Melee 1; Etiquette (Boardroom) 4, Insight 4, Intimidation 3, Leadership 3, Persuasion (Negotiation) 4, Subterfuge 2; Awareness 2, Finance (Hotel Operation) 4, Occult 1, Politics (Amici Noctis, Camarilla Court) 2

Disciplines: Dominate 2, Fortitude 3, Oblivion 2, Presence 2

"CELIA" ARACELI RIVERA

Epitaph: Spanner in the Works

Quote: *"You should be afraid of the dark. I know I am."*

Clan: Lasombra

MORTAL DAYS: JUST ANOTHER STATISTIC

Araceli Rivera grew up in a peaceful, wealthy household. Her parents were the masterminds of *Pulso del Mundo*, a Spanish-language multimedia empire dedicated to fashion, cuisine, and gonzo journalism. Though it was sold

to the Omni Media Group years ago, the family still had a say in how the company was run, and primed Araceli, better known as "Celia," to take the reins.

She had other ideas. Growing up in the 2000s made her concerned for the state of the world, and she wanted to do something more than sit in a boardroom for the rest of her life. They came to a compromise: She would study public policy and, if she didn't like it, she'd switch to business and take her place in the company. Celia studied at the University of Chicago and fell in love with her academic work, to her parents' dismay. After graduating, she enrolled in the university's doctorate program.

She wouldn't live to see the first day of the next semester.

Three weeks ago, Araceli Rivera went missing. She was last seen at the university campus, attending an orientation session. Her two roommates, Liz Boucher and Eve Kelly, were found dead in their apartment. Both were exsanguinated, with large, visible incisions on their necks. Araceli's room held signs of a struggle, and detectives identified a mixture of the three women's blood staining the walls. The news was a national sensation and a brand-new headache for the Kindred of Chicago.

Celia still isn't sure what happened to her. The first time she suspected something was wrong was when she noticed the shadows at night grew deeper than they should. Then there was the feeling someone was standing over her. She laughed it off as just pre-semester nerves, at least until she looked into the shadows and saw a pair

of pale blue eyes. Celia didn't tell anyone about what she saw. She wasn't sure if anyone would believe her, and she also hoped that if she just focused on preparing for school, the problem would go away on its own.

The last thing she remembered was taking the Blue Line and preparing to transfer, when she felt someone come up behind her. Everything after that was a series of intense, mindless sensations: darkness, pain, pleasure, numbness, nothing, burning, hunger, nausea, rage, relief. When she could finally think again, the first things she saw were the bodies of the friends she made in undergrad, their throats torn open. She fled into the night. She wanted to speak to the police, but a sensation of primal fear kept her running. She found an abandoned house somewhere near Forest Park, where she slept off her first day.

KINDRED NIGHTS: A FLICKERING EMBER

The past three weeks have been a nightmare for Celia. She quickly learned to feed without killing, despite the growing desire to keep killing for food. Her connection to her clan's inner darkness developed during the second week. She surrounded herself in shadow, only emerging to hunt.

During the third week, a voice within the void spoke to her, speaking of a great legacy of which she was now a part, and of a great work she must accomplish. It was not the darkness speaking to her; it was the twisted culture in her vitae. From the first Lasombra to the last, a sense of manifest destiny inspires from within. She escaped from the darkness, but the voice remained. Her willpower functions like a perverse guardian angel. Against all odds, it makes her feel as if she can triumph over her condition and place in society.

Now, Celia is on the run. She runs from the police, as well as the Kindred who seek her out, and takes solace in her mantra of "I can be great. I will be great. I will beat this." Humanity feels more like a distant dream now. The only comforts left to her are the blissful moments when she drinks blood. Her increasing acts of violence are flagrant, and if nothing is done, her crimes may sink the Lasombra deal just through the poor luck of sharing a clan.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Feeling Lonely:** Celia wants to find others like her. She knows they must exist, and they understand what's going on. If nothing else, maybe they're just as scared as she is. She believes she's found some, but isn't yet prepared to take the plunge. If she's allowed to live and form a coterie, she would prefer to be with others of her clan.
- **Trophy Collector:** Celia wants to make amends for what she's done. She doesn't know how to do that yet, but if oriented into Chicago's vampires, it would be her highest priority. When she hunts, she keeps the IDs of the people from whom she feeds, and collects the collars of pets she kills. She has the names, numbers, and addresses set out on a to-do list. Once all this is over, she'll find a way to repay them.
- **Intrigued by the Darkness:** Something within the void keeps her alive, and Celia feels she owes it a great debt. Once she's in a more stable situation, she will study the mysteries of Oblivion. Her studies would be secret, known only to her coterie.
- **Influence Opportunities:** She doesn't know it yet, but with the vacuum in Kindred-manipulated media Joseph Peterson left, her links to *Pulso del Mundo* could lead to her taking a position of some power in the city, especially among Spanish speakers.
- **Domain and Haven:**
- **Harlem Flophouse (Haven 1)** Celia's makeshift haven is an empty one-story house in Harlem. She leaves the house untouched, save for the basement. There, she either sleeps or feeds on an injured person she's dragged back to her haven. She has no cash and no access to her bank account, so the basement will have to do for now. Everything that would identify her is either taped off at the scene of the crime or kept in the evidence locker at the police station.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Spanish-Language Media (Potential Influence 3)** Currently, Celia has no servants or powerbase to speak of. However, if Celia can be successfully introduced to Kindred society, she would find herself with a lot of options. The offer to take the reins of *Pulso del Mundo* still stands. If she were to change her mind, she would have access to one of the largest Spanish-language media properties on the planet.
- **Inheritance (Potential Resources 4)** Even without access to *Pulso del Mundo*, she would still be a very rich woman. With her newfound immortality, she could take her assets and move them into whatever sphere of influence she wished. Given her interest in politics and law, it's very likely that she would fall in with either Maldavis' uprising or with one of Ballard's law firms.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Sun Che (Curiosity)** Sometimes she sees a woman in the city, someone with a proud bearing, a sad demeanor—and the sensation of something evil within her. She hasn't reached out to Sun Che yet, but she wonders if she may have found a kindred spirit.
- **Cedrick Calhoun (Fear)** She only saw the man once, but it was enough to terrify her as she saw his face changing shape. She doesn't know who Calhoun is, but he's played a starring role in her nightmares ever since.
- **Helena (Puppeteer)** Celia doesn't know it, but Helena has taken an interest in her as a plaything. She plans to make Celia's existence a tormented one in an effort to draw Talley's attention.

WHISPERS:

- **Haunted in Harlem:** There's an old house outside the city that's always in shadow. Anyone who checks it out doesn't come back for a while, or doesn't come back at all.
- **Discrediting the Clan:** The rogue Lasombra attacks are a ploy by the Church of Caine. They're trying to blackmail the Magisters into cancelling their deal with the Camarilla.
- **Wildfire:** The attacks were engineered by the Lasombra themselves. They're trying to prove their usefulness to the Camarilla, and things might have gotten way out of hand.
- **Denied Sire:** A vampire traveled from Mexico City and wants to meet the Prince. Someone stole her promised chide, and she's *furious*.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Celia is a short, stout woman in her early 20s. Her skin is almost completely gray. She has long, straight black hair that reaches to mid-back, with side-swept bangs. She wears the same blouse and skirt she had on the night of her Embrace, and it's starting to show wear and tear.
- She has no mortal identity, and doesn't yet have the foresight to create one.
- She has yet to discover the Blush of Life, but once she does, her skin will return to the rich, tawny color she had in life. The Beast overtakes her often, and when it does, her brown eyes are hidden by shadow. The shadows around her come alive in frenzy, and witnesses feel the sensation that someone is standing over her.

Sire: Clova Haines

Embraced: 2019 (Born 1997)

Ambition: Overcome this condition

Convictions: I will never be the victim; always atone for my sins

Touchstones: Marisol Rivera — Mother; Nailea "Conejo" Alvarez — Internet pen-pal

Humanity: 6

Generation: 13th

Blood Potency: 1

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 1, Stamina 3; Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 2; Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 7

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 1, Craft (Gadgets) 2, Larceny 1, Stealth 1; Animal Ken 1, Etiquette 3, Persuasion (Innocence) 2, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 2; Academics (Media Studies) 3, Finance 1, Politics 3, Science 2, Technology (Broadcasting) 3

Disciplines: Oblivion 2, Potence 1

RABBI MICHALIS BASARAS

Epitaph: Nihilistic Theologian

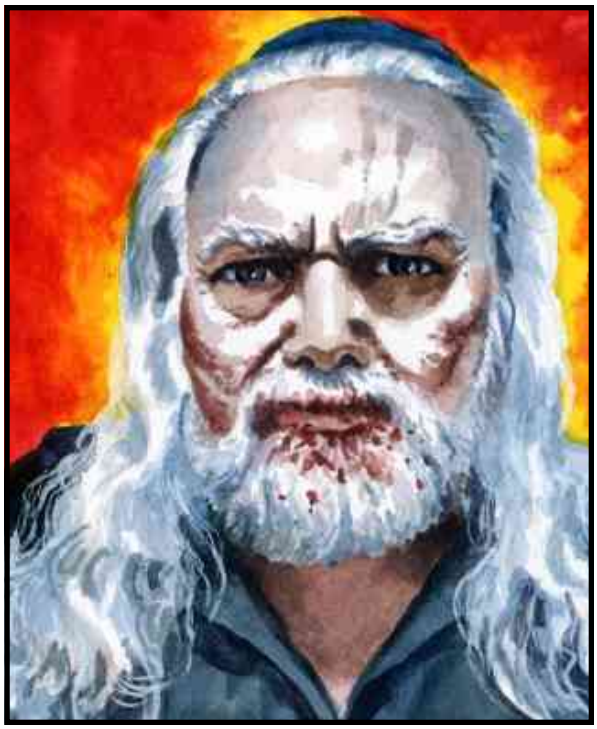
Quote: *"Shamayim is a place without feeling. The wisest scholars and theologians have all taught us to embrace oblivion."*

Clan: Lasombra

MORTAL DAYS: FAITH BROKEN

Michalis was born in Limassol, Cyprus. As the son of a Jewish family at the end of World War I, he grew up knowing his fair due of hardships. British rule was strict and neither the Turkish nor Greek Cypriot communities truly embraced them. His father was a fisherman who was at sea for most of the day, leaving young Michalis in the care of his mother, who taught him to read and recite the Torah while his father worked. When the Israeli state was established in 1948, he urged his mother and father to board their fishing boat and sail at once for the promised Eden, but they would not heed his wishes.

Michalis resigned himself to traveling to the nascent country alone and enrolled in the new seminary in Jerusalem. He hoped this would be a fresh chapter in his life, finally striking out alone to pursue the deeper mysteries of the world and to engage with his true people. What he found was the ongoing violence and chaos of the Middle East. In his studies, he tried to make sense of it.



He longed for a oneness and a unity that it seemed his state of humanity did not afford him.

His return to Limassol, to take charge of the local synagogue, should have been the homecoming for which he longed. Instead, he found his mother had committed suicide. The woman who raised him was gone, victim of the dual losses of her son and the husband who, apparently, had been taking many mistresses on his vessel for years in exchange for ferry passage to the mainland ports during the wars. He pondered the meaninglessness of her death and the absences that caused it. Truly, there was no place for a man in this world save that he imagined for himself. A creation of small minds seeking desperately to imprint a human destiny on a divine plan far larger than themselves.

He continued to carry out his duties as best he could, but he only felt alive during his introspection. Everything else was an act to keep a chaotic and hate-filled world at bay. That is when he was approached by a gaunt man who seemed to share his view.

KINDRED NIGHTS: PROPHET OF SHALIM

Michalis accepted the vitae of Giangaleazzo and traveled at once to Milan, seeking purpose at his sire's side.

His introduction to Kindred society was mixed. The cruelty of the Sabbat packs and their mindless zeal was abhorrent to the new childe, and yet he found peace in the tutelage of his sire, who seemed as disgusted with the rabble as Michalis. Giangaleazzo's questions regularly turned to Michalis' time in Israel, of his dreams while he was there, voices he may have heard in his meditations. Michalis answered as best he could and, at his sire's compelling, regularly wrote letters to former associates of his who were still present there to seek answers. The Archbishop of Milan seemingly sought the same answers the fledgling Michalis did.

Michalis became his vizier, offering insight to the philosophical quandaries that plagued his sire's mind. He also took letters from his agents abroad and it became clear the Middle East held special interest for his sire. It was one such letter that changed everything. An agent who had traveled to Iraq with the American invasion force wrote of an urging felt throughout their bloodline. Giangaleazzo, upon reading this letter, simply stated, "The time has come."

Michalis was instructed to leave Milan and return to his home to await instruction, and so he did.

He was not present for the night of fire when Giangaleazzo, the Traitor Prince, so spectacularly turned his allegiance to the Camarilla. Michalis, in truth, was pleased. For all the religious, pseudo-Christian prattle of the Sabbat about the evil of the elders, it seemed to Michalis they possessed the patience and contemplative nature necessary to seek real truth in this world. He wrote letters to his sire, praising his decision and pledging renewed fealty to him, but received no response.

Another father had abandoned him, and here he was back at his childhood home. The return of the fishing ships each night was a reminder of the emptiness of his soul as he watched the men embracing their families at the harborside. If there was something calling his blood to the east, he was numb to it; he was alone.

In despair, Michalis resolved to walk into the sea and there find solitude at last. And that is where he encountered it: the great black creature calling itself "The Traveler." It spoke in soothing tones, straight into his troubled mind, of an entity called Shalim. Shalim was its progenitor, and the being from whom all Lasombra descended, that promised to end all suffering and bring the world to its true state of oneness in the Abyss. It whispered to him of his sire and that his change of heart would soon catch hold throughout the line of Shalim.

Michalis was hardly expert in Camarilla politics, but he was aware he could not return to Milan without the Prince's invitation. America was the most logical destination, and Chicago would be the place that any real whispers could be heard of the coming movements of his clan. He gained an assignment at a small, progressive synagogue in Dearborn, and there he waits.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **The Secret Letters:** Michalis has done his best to keep his head down in polite society. He continues to write letters to "Giangaleazzo of Milan" and will occasionally boast to anyone who encounters him of his heritage as the scion of a Prince. His letters are both in Hebrew and written in code to befuddle anyone trying to intercept the messages, actually intended for the Cult of Shalim. His messages inform others of the political situation in Chicago, but he also wishes to draw the eyes of his fellow cultists to the gaping spiritual void at Chicago's heart and bring them to his side. Were fellow mystics to arrive he would lead the pogrom, annihilating those unworthy of life.

- **Unite in Emptiness:** Michalis is regarded as a powerful cantor and highly progressive mensch in his community. He preaches the values of unity and oneness among all and points to the teachings of various scholars urging all mankind to come together. Beneath that veil lurks the truth of his nihilistic intent. In emptiness, all are equal and all are one. He seeks to recruit a cult of mortals, disaffected Anarchs, and abandoned fledglings who might join in his philosophy. By acting as a leveler of hierarchy and counselor to others, he wishes to get into the heads of his cultists and form a loyal, suicidal army.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Dearborn Synagogue (Haven 2, Herd 4)** Michalis resides in a modest apartment in the synagogue in Dearborn. He spreads his feeding broadly between the congregation there and the staff that maintains the building, as well as the transients and poor attending their outreach events. However, on odd nights when the fancy takes him, he is fond of hunting and preying on local fishermen who trawl the lake.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **The Faithful (Allies 2)** As a well-regarded Rabbi, Michalis has the trust and limited protection of his synagogue's attendees.

- **Believers of Chicago (Influence 2)** Michalis' firm belief is that all faiths preach a return to the oblivion of nothingness, from which all creation sprung. As the Lasombra embody that oblivion, are they not like all creators of legend? He will seek to reach out to all religious communities and bring them under his sway.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Alan Sovereign (Friendly)** Alan Sovereign is one of the few Kindred who has reached out to Michalis and they maintain a friendly relationship. Michalis sees him as a key to the more important Kindred of the city, Alan simply enjoys investing the earnings of the synagogue for a healthy commission.

- **Adze (Useful Contact)** Michalis enjoys the company of Adze, for both the tidbits of information and the access to young, impressionable Kindred it brings.

WHISPERS:

- **Progressive Preacher:** Michalis is welcoming of all into his congregation and, indeed, teaches women the same as men in his Jewish faith, as "All are equal under the creator, and who are we to say what it is?"

- **Friend of Milan:** The city courtiers say Michalis is a friend of the Prince of Milan and one of the few who still receives correspondence from that enigmatic Kindred.

- **Lakeside Sorrow:** When he is not disposed at his study and preaching, Michalis is regularly seen by the Great Lake, watching fishing vessels come and go. Some have witnessed him shedding a bloody tear as he regards the boats coming and going from their berths.

MASK AND MIEN:

- As a relative newcomer to the city, Michalis is content to maintain his own identity. He believes one of the benefits of looking old is avoiding the appearance of eternal youth.

- As is befitting his station, Rabbi Basaras tends to dress in black with a yarmulke. He has a weather-beaten face with deep lines around his often-furrowed brow and a thick, graying beard. His skin is olive colored and his eyes are a dark brown that often appears black. He almost never seems to blink.

- Michalis regularly carries a small, brown satchel in which he keeps books, paper, and pens. He writes carefully and calligraphically with great attention to what he is doing.

- He wears a necklace with two pendants, a Star of David and a crude metal outline of a man with a circular hollow cut from the center of his chest.

Sire: Giangaleazzo

Embraced: 1978 (Born 1917)

Ambition: Establish a cult of enlightenment

Convictions: Never abandon a trusted companion

Touchstones: Farah Yussuf — Palestinian Convert

Humanity: 4

Generation: 8th

Blood Potency: 3

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2; Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Composure 3; Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 6

Skills: Drive 2, Stealth 1; Animal Ken (Fish) 2, Etiquette (Court) 3, Insight 3, Intimidation 2, Leadership (Oratory) 4, Performance (Cantor) 4, Persuasion 3, Subterfuge 2; Academics (Jewish Seminary) 3, Finance 2, Occult 3, Politics 2, Technology 1

Disciplines: Dominate 2, Oblivion 3, Potence 1

TALLEY

Epitaph: The Black Knight

Quote: *"Our clan is all about survival and victory, old boy. I aim to survive. I aim to win."*

Clan: Lasombra

MORTAL DAYS: A LIFETIME OF GLORIOUS BATTLE

Talley was born as kin to Lupines, from a family of aberrant and foul werewolves dedicated to despoilment and savagery. Though his blood was that of shapeshifters, he never possessed such a gift. In fact, he was adopted by the human side of his family, a cadet house in service to King Edward II of England. He was raised to learn the language of battle, of noble service, and the art of diplomacy. Though a bastard, the young Talley — named Edmund Fitzhenry at the time — was well-regarded as a loyal warrior and accomplished hunter. When not fighting in England's many battles with the House of Valois, he took men into the wildest of rural areas to hunt fierce game, purportedly including Lupines, which he trapped and slew with relish.

Sir Edmund served the House of Plantagenet as a decorated knight, fighting for King Edward III in the Hundred Years' War. He excelled at his craft, commanding foot soldiers and bowmen, accomplishing great victories for his king, razing French towns, killing their men, and claiming their territory. His name was recorded in history books as one of the most tactically brilliant soldiers of his age, but according to those same history books, he succumbed to the Black Death in France and his body was lost.

KINDRED NIGHTS: SERVITUDE IS NO HARDSHIP

Valdemar was seeking a childe capable of marshaling men and commanding ghouls, and Talley seemed an obvious choice. He never gave the knight an option, stealing him from life as he slept and feeding him sufficient vitae to set him on a bloody purge of an inn's occupants. Talley awoke into lucidity as a vampire and found it a state of being with which he was eminently comfortable.

From that point on, Talley acted as bodyguard to notable Magisters including his ancient ancestor Boukephos, followed the clan in its journey to the Sabbat, and even served Archbishops and Cardinals in whichever vile and inhumane ways they directed. Talley never questioned; Talley served until his master fell, his contract concluded, or he was stolen by a more powerful Keeper. Some underestimated him for this reason. They asked "what is Talley, a man or a hound?" He wryly adopted the nickname "the Hound" from that point on, only dropping it when it entered into parlance as a Camarilla title.

Service came with rewards. Many a time, Talley was awarded the title of Bishop, only to decline in favor of remaining mercenary. Eventually he was bestowed the title of Templar, designated to root out all failures and embarrassments from within the clan. This rank came from the Amici Noctis — Clan Lasombra's council, responsible for governing internal matters. He could not decline. Once again, Talley was a knight.

The reason behind Talley's centuries of servitude was one of pragmatism. He saw what happened when vampires claimed thrones. Within months or years, someone inevitably came to steal their position. His sire met final death in a reach for tremendous status. Material and political influence never appealed to him, as he felt anything he could desire would be attainable through diligent service, and he was often right. He Embraced when he wanted to, claimed vessels when he needed to, and spent as much coin as he had to. Talley was one of the Sword of Caine's most honored and revered blades, known for his ruthless ability on the battlefield and in close quarters. He would have made a fine soldier in the Gehenna Crusade.

That's where things changed. In the early 21st century, Talley entered the service of Marcus Vitel, the Lasombra ruler of Washington, D.C. Vitel wasn't interested in the Gehenna Crusade and cautioned Talley to remain aloof from Sabbat politics. Though rare for him to do so,

Talley checked with the Amici Noctis in case his services were required elsewhere. They told him to stand by for more important arrangements, and so he did Vitel's bidding, defended a select few Lasombra powerbases around the world, and furthered his clan's more arcane plans while many of his clanmates fell to slaughter in North Africa and the Middle East.

Only in the last year did Talley receive a new assignment from the Friends of the Night: he was responsible for selecting Lasombra delegates to parley with the Camarilla and negotiate the clan's entry into that sect. He was trusted, as he had loyally served the clan for half a millennium and he hadn't fallen to savagery like many of his fellow Keepers. He was the man possessing the greatest familiarity with North American Lasombra activities and personalities, and he would be the one responsible for planning out their offerings, even if it required the spilling of blood.

Some Lasombra would have rebuked the instruction, declared their elders traitors to the Blood, and rallied a new clan rebellion. Not Talley. He left Emperor Vitel's service to accomplish his clan's aims, handpicking his childer Sierra and Malenkov for the task in Chicago, and choosing a dozen other Magisters for domains including L.A., Seattle, Houston, and Philadelphia. He feels unrattled by the news that he will soon belong to a new sect.

Talley serves. He serves with a smile. He intends for his clan to survive all others and for him to win, and has an unerring sense for the way the tide is rolling.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Diplomacy:** If Talley is able to pull off the acceptance of Lasombra vampires in even half the domains to which he's been assigned, he will become known as the peacemaker between Lasombra and Ventrue. At that point, anything he asks for from the Amici Noctis is likely a reality. He strives to make the deals a success, going so far as to sabotage domains to make the Lasombra seem more vital to the Camarilla cause. Already, he leaks words to law enforcement agencies regarding Kindred havens and activities. He cares little for their fates, except to highlight that even the subtlest of vampires isn't safe from the Second Inquisition. On the back of this, he encourages his Legates — the title his diplomats use — to emphasize how effective the Lasombra could be at strangling or deflecting scrutiny from the Church or the government.

- **No Compete Clause:** Talley hasn't stopped serving Vitel, though Vitel does not serve the Amici Noctis. Talley is playing a dangerous game, weighing up the threat of betraying either party. He's not given to breaking a contract, but is aware of how Vitel is successfully plugged in to many mortal intelligence agencies, while the Amici Noctis concern themselves more with Kindred affairs. Talley needs to decide whether it's possible to continue serving both and who it benefits to move one way or the other.

- **Fresh Meat:** Talley intends to stay on the periphery of Chicago affairs while his childer do the legwork, but knows there's a largely subdued sept of werewolves in the city. It's been some time since he went hunting, and the anarchic part of his soul pushes him to rile them up with a murdered Lupine here, a tortured kinfolk there, and maybe a wolf pelt displayed somewhere vulgar. Hunting has always been his vice. Talley's never been able to say no to the chance of a challenging fight.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Washington, D.C. (Allies 4, Contacts 3, Haven 5, Herd 4, Influence 2)** Though distant from his home base, Talley represents not only his clan, but also the domain of Washington, D.C. Where he goes, most government agents look the other way. Such is the power of his patron, the capital's Emperor. He doesn't have access to all his materiel, vessels, and allies immediately, but if his existence was compromised and he couldn't handle the situation personally, he'd call in the big guns and say "fuck Chicago."

- **Motel 46 (Allies 4, Contacts 3, Haven 1, Herd 2)** Talley stays in a motel near Midway Airport and has quickly gotten into the heads of staff and guests to ensure he is not disturbed unless in case of an emergency, in which case they are to serve as his human shields. He has no issues regarding his squalid accommodation.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Vitel's Credit (Resources 4)** Talley has access to a credit line from Marcus Vitel, along with a plane under Vitel's ownership currently kept in a hangar at Midway Airport. His main reticence against spending too much money is he doesn't like Vitel to know everywhere he's been.
- **Revenant Spies (Retainers 3)** Talley liberated a handful of ghouls from a vampire pack that once inhabited a strip club in D.C. He keeps these bouncers and bodyguards armed but at a distance, and has no desire to speak with any of them except in the form of orders.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Sierra Van Burrace (Trust)** Talley possesses a real affection for his childe, Sierra. He admires the way she grew in an adverse environment, her choices of when to strike out, and her loyalty to the clan. If she was in danger, he would feel inclined to step in.
- **Damien (Pity):** Talley feels an odd sense of kinship with the Sheriff, Damien. The sense of obligation the Brujah feels to serve is similar to what Talley feels, only from the outside looking in, Talley can see how easily such blind servitude erodes morality and free will.
- **Rabbi Michalis Basaras (Resentment)** Talley doesn't like the cultist Keeper one bit. In his groundwork for the diplomatic mission, he personally scoured Chicago clean of Lasombra who might cast his Legates in a bad light, but the Amici Noctis specifically said to keep Basaras around, without clarification as to why.
- **Helena (Intrigued)** Vitel told Talley of a pair of warring ancients in Chicago and he's followed the clues back to Helena. He has no issue with the Toreador methuselah, but is conscious she may attempt to interfere with his plans.
- **Kevin Jackson (Cynical)** There's something admirable about Jackson, but Talley struggles to find it beneath his coat of slime. Talley's frank about his intent in most things, but finds Jackson's "appeal to the Camarilla, execute those who don't appeal to me" philosophy disappointing.

WHISPERS:

- **The Hound:** They say Jackson's appointed a new Hound, this one from Clan Lasombra.
- **The Templar:** There's word on the street of a Lasombra Templar stalking other Magisters, reducing the clan's numbers in Chicago to a small handful.
- **Puppetmaster:** Talley's entire plan is to see the Camarilla fall in Chicago, when they stupidly accept Keepers into their ranks.
- **To Serve:** Talley's a simple being: His masters command and he obeys. He always gets something out of it though, and few realize the extent of his grasp, should he wish to exert it.
- **Chink in the Armor:** Talley's bored of servitude and finally wants to lay claim to a domain of his own.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Talley still considers himself nobility on some level, and so always dresses to impress. One of his rare indulgences comes in the form of designer suits, shoes, and watches. He has a tailor on retainer, but has yet to summon this ghoul to Chicago.
- Talley's a slender, white male appearing in his early 30s. His short, thin white-gray hair complements his pale skin and blue eyes. The most striking thing about Talley is the tattoo on the top of his head, visible through his hair. This spiraling sigil is in fact a brand. Soot was rubbed into the wound to make it scar and turn a vivid black.
- Talley speaks in a cultured British accent, which is affected. He often laces sentences with warm familiarities, such as "old boy" or "dear woman," just to offset his cold appearance. His general manner is one of charm and sarcasm, concealing his ability to kill with just about any apparatus.
- Talley's sense of humor leads him to don several Masks made from the identities of deceased serial killers. He's used identities such as Herman

Mudgett, Carl Panzram, and Fred West. His current epithet is Hawley Crippen, pharmacist, and he carries a case of drug samples to back it up **(Mask 1)**.

Sire: Leopold Valdemar

Embraced: 1355 (Born 1324)

Ambition: Shepherd the Lasombra transition into the Camarilla

Convictions: None

Touchstones: None

Humanity: 4

Generation: 7th

Blood Potency: 6

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4; Charisma 3, Manipulation 5, Composure 5; Intelligence 4, Wits 5, Resolve 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 9

Skills: Athletics 4, Brawl (Dirty Fighting, Weak Spots) 5, Drive 3, Firearms 4, Melee (Daggers, Swords) 5, Stealth (Shadows) 4, Survival 4; Etiquette (Court) 4, Insight 3, Intimidation 3, Leadership 2, Persuasion 3, Subterfuge 1; Academics (History) 3, Awareness 4, Finance 1, Investigation 4, Medicine 2, Occult (Oblivion) 2, Politics (Amici Noctis) 3, Technology 2

Disciplines: Celerity 2, Dominate 4, Fortitude 3, Obfuscate 1, Oblivion 5, Potence 4

MALKAVIAN

"You can't do this to me! I'm your blood!"

— Corbin, childe and rival of Bronwyn,
while being systematically drained of vitae for sale through the Circulatory System

The Chicago Malkavians excel at misdirection. They thrust Evan Klein forward so their rivals see them as gibbering fools and broken artists, all while Newberry solidifies his grip on the Primogen Council, Bronwyn reaps the rewards of overseeing the blood trade, and Santos serves Kevin Jackson's every deadly whim.

Their position as the city's Camarilla bulwark serves them in court, but Newberry fears the Lasombra arrival threatens their powerbase. He correctly believes the Magisters seek to undermine the clan through exposure of their unpleasant secrets, the Lasombra identifying the Malkavians as the easiest clan to break and turn against its own number. If the Magisters can show the Malkavians up as unreliable compared to a united Clan Lasombra, they may be able to turn Kevin Jackson's executioners against the Lunatics.

Though Jason believed the time was coming when he might ascend to the throne, ushering in a new era for the clan in this city, he now attempts to direct all Chicago Malkavians to disrupt Lasombra ambition in the domain.

JASON "SON" NEWBERRY

Epitaph: Malkavian Primogen, Monster in Wolf's Clothing

Quote: *"There are such nasty things out there about me, and all of them are true to a point. We should go somewhere quiet and talk about it."*

Clan: Malkavian

MORTAL DAYS: SIN INCARNATE

Sometimes, mortals are worse than most vampires.

Jason Newberry was born a monster, though his parents worked hard to try and help him. He started with torturing small animals and insects. His curiosity with death and torture continued on to his classmates, and it led him to poke another child's eye out with a stick. It was a troubled upbringing, though Newberry didn't show it. He enjoyed the thrill of violence, the attention accompanying it, and the challenge of the next act in his long sadistic play.

Newberry's parents were wealthy, and were able to keep him from going to jail by sending him to an institution. While incarcerated, he caught the attention of his soon-to-be sire, who was intrigued by his unabashed curiosity. It wasn't until Jason murdered his parents and dismembered them that she Embraced him, his parents' rotting corpses next to him.

KINDRED NIGHTS: JUST BOILING OVER

"Son" was born into the world, so renamed by his sire, and his bloodlust grew. Son was one of the instigators of the Great Fire of Chicago, working with Lodin to oust Maxwell in the chaos. As repayment, Lodin turned a blind eye to Son's future activities, letting him do as he pleased, no matter how depraved.

Son developed a curiosity regarding the vampiric condition as the 20th century wore in, and found the perfect vampire on which to perform some experiments. During the War of Chicago, Son convinced a fledgling Caitiff named Neon that he was able to protect him from harm. Neon soon disappeared. Son kept this Caitiff in seclusion, torturing him constantly to the point of insanity. Once the Caitiff's mind broke, Son consumed Neon's soul slowly, allowing himself to indulge in the feeling of heart's blood entering his soul. Son has indulged in diablerie twice more since then, and has no regret surrounding his cannibalistic urges.

Son's latest atrocity involved the death of his sire and former Malkavian Primogen, Maureen O'Leary. Tired of his sire's lamenting over her failure to kill herself, he plotted to take her soul, if only to indulge his own interest in the experience. When O'Leary resisted and begged for him to stop, he hesitated, perhaps because no matter what monstrous acts he performed, she always accepted him and loved him as a son. In that moment, she crumbled to ash, and Jason was denied the diablerie. Son knows he will now never know what it's like to consume his own sire, and so he continues to escalate his aspirations, finding other ways to possibly experience that moment.

With his sire dead and no other Malkavians angling for the Primogen role, Son beseeched the Primogen Council and his clanmates to permit his appointment. Though support was slim, objection was slimmer, so Son took the clan's seat. Despite every sin he'd committed, only O'Leary and Lodin knew the whole truth of his crimes. The former was dead and the latter was supposed to be so. To the rest of the city, Son was a charming young man with good manners and a calmer disposition than most Malkavians.

Son builds up support for himself within the city, outshining his sire in his competence. He has proven his use to several others within the court of Chicago, and so his actions in private continue to get overlooked. While many within the city are suspicious of his true intent, not many want to go looking too deep, fearing he will strike out ruthlessly against them.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Diablerie Addict:** Son has one true, driving goal, and that is to continue indulging his thirst for Kindred blood. It has turned into a bit of an experiment for him that he wants to continue exploring, which is risky but informative. Son will not hesitate to take advantage of a moment of weakness in a vampire and use that to procure another victim.
- **It All Flows Down:** In his new, influential role, Son attempts to control Clan Malkavian by commanding them to share territory, havens, information, and weaknesses, mandating obligatory group counseling with him as the therapist. His actions have impressed the other Primogen, who see him as a guiding force for an often-disunited clan. In fact, Son just wants his clanmates weak so he can easily torment them.
- **Keep My Secrets:** Blood is on his hands and Son knows the implications. He will seek to destroy any Kindred who find out his secrets. Should any Kindred discover he is a diablerist or that he was the one who ended his sire, Son will not rest until they are ashes.
- **Warm and Friendly Welcome:** Son will try and make friends with any Kindred within the city, especially new Kindred, though his intention is not kindness. Much like a predator, Son is sizing up new faces in the domain and searching for weaknesses. Outwardly, he works on sowing seeds of doubt within other Kindred that he might be doing something wrong. It's a delicate balance, but one that Son considers necessary "seasoning" of upcoming meals.
- **Their Loss is My Gain:** Son has no trade or business acumen, so the way he enriches himself is through the blackmail of other prominent vampires. He has already forced Horatio Ballard and Kathy Glens into acts of public humiliation followed by demands for hush money. The Kindred don't know who their blackmailer is yet, but if they find out, Son may find his tenure as Primogen shortened.
- **The Lasombra Must be Stopped:** Son has heard about a band of Lasombra delegates seeking sanctuary in his city. He wouldn't care, except that 10 or so years back a Lasombra-led pack called the Nomads caught him committing diablerie and assumed he was a Sabbat infiltrator. He's now deathly paranoid this information has spread among other Lasombra, unaware of how close-knit that clan is, and will oppose any Lasombra actions in Chicago as a means of self-preservation.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Family Home (Haven 1)** Son still keeps a haven in the small house in which he grew up, in the Skokie area of Chicago. This suburban retreat blends in with the rest of the houses on the street, with paint peeling off the walls, an overgrown lawn, and even some graffiti on his front door. Son cares little, seeing the building as more important for its symbolism than its comfort. A monster was born here, and lives here still.

- **Lakeshore Hospital (Herd 3, Influence 2) Chicago-Read Mental Health Center (Haven 3, Herd 3, Influence 2)** Son's preferred feeding grounds are Lakeshore Hospital and Chicago-Read Mental Health Center. He inherited the hunting territory from his "disappeared" sire, without objection from the Prince or the others on the Primogen Council. Depending on his mood, he feeds from the comatose or on those from whom he can savor the screams.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Harry Magnotta (Allies 1, Retainers 1)** Son keeps several of the orderlies and nurses in various mental hospitals under his sway so he can move freely in their establishments. Harry Magnotta is a cruel, brutal nurse with whom he has cultivated a relationship over the years. Harry's approach to dealing with the residents in his hospital has captured Son's interest.

- **Coya Dream (Contacts 2)** Son has learned to recognize when someone has been misdiagnosed and mistreated, and has started to draw those individuals under his influence. One such individual is Coya Dream, a drag performer from the Red No° 5 who was forced through conversion therapy. Son stepped in, took Coya, and tortured the doctor. Coya now helps Son find doctors who are doing the same.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Horatio Ballard (Victim)** Son has made a habit of tormenting Ballard with blackmail. He frequently orders Horatio to do some humiliating task, and if he refuses, Son threatens to destabilize his businesses. Recently, Son upped the ante. He threatened Ballard that if he didn't break into Six Flags and ride the Superman rollercoaster nude, he'd let FIRSTLIGHT know all about Ballard Industries and its vampiric master. Ballard has a week to work out who the source of this blackmail is, and is even tempted to go to the Prince to beseech his aid.

- **Alexa Santos (Toy)** Son has outwardly befriended Alexa Santos, a Malkavian new to the area. Whether they serve as a tool or he diablerizes them when their guard is down doesn't matter to him. Either way, he profits.

- **Kevin Jackson (Fool)** Prince Jackson keeps Son at arm's length, if only because he is suspicious of Son's activities. Kevin only has contact with Son when necessary, sometimes "forgetting" to invite him to court. Prince Jackson knows Son is not to be trusted, and yet, Son continues to position himself advantageously among the Primogen Council.

- **Edward Neally (Memory)** In a bizarre twist of fate, the mental institution in which the mortal Jason Newberry was imprisoned was the same one in which Edward Neally was locked up for his drug problems and neuroses, and the two were in the same ward at the same time. Neither remembers the other offhand, but if Neally were to see Newberry hurt someone, memories of Son's sadistic bragging would flood back. Likewise, if Son saw Newberry in an intoxicated state, he'd recognize the failed Seneschal as a former junkie.

- **"Celia" Araceli Rivera (Target)** Son knows there's a fledgling Lasombra hiding in the city and he doesn't like it one bit. He's on the hunt for Araceli Rivera, despite her never having heard of Jason Newberry.

WHISPERS:

- **Pyromaniac:** Some vampires whisper about how Son is looking to burn down the city, reigniting the inferno started over a century before. They think he has a real psychotic streak.

- **The Mask is Working:** A few deluded vampires whisper about how upright Son is, and how he would have made a better Prince than this upstart Kevin Jackson.

- **A Son in Mourning:** It's such a shame Maureen disappeared so suddenly, but even more shameful is the fact that Son doesn't appear to be affected by it at all.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Son has the appearance of an 18-year-old, good-looking male, with swept-back blonde hair, clear blue eyes, and tidy, sharp clothing buttoned up to the neck. He is generally well dressed when in public and is very polite to everyone.

- Son's favorite Mask is as Dr. Loomis, so named for the character from the *Halloween* movies. As Dr. Donald Loomis, Son visits hospitals and "treats" patients with mental disorders, finding excuses to isolate them, torment them, and feed from them **(Mask 1)**.
- High-Humanity vampires are uneasy around him, though they will not be able to pinpoint why.

Sire: Maureen O'Leary

Embraced: 1893 (Born 1877)

Ambition: Prevent Lasombra entry into the Chicago Camarilla

Convictions: Make sure they know you're better than them

Touchstones: Harry Magnotta — sadistic nurse at Lakeshore Hospital

Humanity: 2

Generation: 8th

Blood Potency: 3

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2; Charisma 5, Manipulation 4, Composure 3; Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 6

Skills: Melee 1, Stealth 4; Etiquette 4, Insight (Fears) 3, Intimidation 3, Performance (Acting) 5, Persuasion 2, Subterfuge (Sincerity) 4; Awareness 2, Investigation 2, Medicine (Psychological Treatment) 3, Politics 2

Disciplines: Auspex 3, Dominate 4, Obfuscate 3, Presence 1

BRONWYN

Epithet: The Spider in Her Web

Quote: *"You place your order like everyone else and I'll get you exactly what you need."*

Clan: Malkavian

MORTAL DAYS: DESTINY DENIED HER

Bronwyn was born in 1454 to a pair of innkeepers in a small Scottish town. They co-owned the inn with the McDonoughs, whose daughter Corbin was Bronwyn's age. When Bronwyn's parents died, the McDonoughs took her in and raised her as their own. Bronwyn and Corbin grew up close as sisters and thick as thieves.

When the girls were older, the handsome Sir Edward Warren stopped at the inn. He was charming, and

Bronwyn found herself quite smitten. When Sir Edward proposed to Bronwyn, her father approved of the match, and that night opened their finest wine to toast the couple. Corbin served them herself, and was the first to raise a glass. Shortly after, Bronwyn felt her eyes grow heavy. She remembered being helped up to bed, then nothing until a commotion the next morning woke her. Rushing to see what had happened, she found several people in her betrothed's room, where Sir Edward and Corbin lay entwined, the evidence of her friend's lost virginity staining the sheets.

Corbin's father insisted Sir Edward had no other course but to marry his daughter. Unable to bear her friend's triumphant smile, Bronwyn fled deep into the Highlands

She wandered aimlessly in her grief, until hunger and exhaustion forced her to rest. A gentle-voiced man emerged from the shadows, telling her not to cry. He introduced himself as Bryan and asked for her story. Telling the tale made her feel a little better, like draining poison from a wound.

KINDRED NIGHTS: INFORMATION, SPIES, SHADOWS, AND BLOOD

Bryan spoke about the tranquility he'd found in undeath, and offered her the gift of it. She accepted, not realizing it would rip her so harshly from life. Corbin's betrayal was never far from Bronwyn's mind despite Bryan's promises of peace and calm, and she often imagined exacting her revenge. The time came when she felt strong

enough to carry it out. After a fraught reunion, Brownyn killed Sir Edward and Embraced Corbin, leaving her rival to deal with the guilt and grief.

Over the next two centuries, Brownyn traveled through Europe, where she learned the nuances of Kindred politics and kept company with nobles. In the 18th century, rising Kindred tensions in Europe caused Bronwyn to seek another new start and sail to the New World. She settled in Chicago in the early 19th century. She helped Lawrence Ballard destroy Gary's steel industry, which convinced Lodin to agree to help her keep her presence in Chicago a secret.

In 1972, Bronwyn founded the Blue Velvet nightclub. At times, Blue Velvet threatened to rival the Succubus Club as Chicago's premier Kindred establishment, though the other business stayed slightly ahead until its destruction in 1993. Rumors swirled about Blue Velvet's anonymous owner, but Bronwyn refused to reveal herself until Prince Jackson took the throne in Chicago. Bronwyn was pleased at the popularity her reveal garnered, but simultaneously found the limelight distasteful. Even now, after five years as a public figure, Bronwyn struggles with social anxiety and rarely trusts another vampire's purported motives.

Bronwyn's desperation to overcome her anxiety forced her into a new business arrangement taking the Kindred world of tonight by storm. With five other Kindred, Bronwyn co-founded the Circulatory System. The group traffics vessels of rare or sought-after vintage throughout Chicago and beyond. She holds tastings at exclusive, invite-only parties at Blue Velvet, storing a herd in its cellar, and selling the blood to the highest bidders. Though she keeps a lower profile than some of her fellow System operators, her paranoia over the trafficking's possible failure compels her to sometimes attend a tasting or accompany the cattle on their way to the slaughter.

Of greatest concern to Bronwyn is the rumor of Corbin hiding in Chicago, waiting to disrupt her careful operation. If she interferes with the club, the trafficking, or any of Bronwyn's business interests, the Malkavian may destroy her rival once and for all.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Secret Keeper:** While Bronwyn is certainly old enough to make a play for a spot on the Primogen Council, she prefers to wield power behind the scenes. She's amassed quite the collection of secrets about other Kindred in the city. They range from minor scandalous gossip to long-buried skeletons whose exhumation could throw entire clans into disarray. Over the years, she's unleashed them sparingly, when she's needed to influence an agenda. She only has a few good scoops on the Lasombra, and is eager to add a few more to her arsenal.

- **Manipulated Spymaster:** Between the Prince's purges and elders following the Beckoning east, several positions of power in Chicago sit empty. Some of them are supposed to be up to their respective clans to appoint, but the clan elders and Primogen prefer to wait for Bronwyn's reports before they make anything formal. She's become the unofficial spymaster for the city's Camarilla, and even the occasional Anarch leader comes asking for her help. Unknown to Bronwyn, Helena sometimes exerts her influence, making the Malkavian approve someone with a shady past, or reject a perfectly clean candidate.

- **Supply and Demand:** With her role in the Circulatory System, Bronwyn's been able to collect information on the particular tastes and drinking habits of prominent Kindred. Though she assures her buyers their transactions will be discreet and anonymous, she's managed to put some pieces together. Bronwyn knows selling this information would ruin her reputation and see her removed from the System. However, she's been able to arrange rare vessels for delicate meetings, or dropped a hint to a nervous fledgling whose sire needed appeasing. The Circulatory System deals exclusively in *human* vessels, but Bronwyn's received several whispered queries wondering whether the System's administrators have ever considered blood from more... potent sources. She's heard the lengths some of her fellow elders have gone to in order to quiet the Beckoning, and is now looking into how to supply vitae as well as blood.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Blue Velvet (Haven 4, Herd 4, Influence 5, Resources 3)** In addition to her apartment above Blue Velvet, Bronwyn rents out a workspace in the Loop for her dealings with the Circulatory System. The site manager cut her a deal, as she only requires the office during off-hours, and pays in cash and on time.

- **Circulatory System (Allies 3, Contacts 3, Herd 5, Resources 4)** Bronwyn is considering migrating the herd doped up beneath Blue Velvet to another, less-prominent location, in case the rumors of Corbin's presence are true. Moving that many enslaved vessels will be quite the operation, however.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Ian Gibson (Retainers 2)** Ian Gibson, a ghoul sent to Bronwyn by her sire Bryan, helped Blue Velvet open its doors, and acts as both the club's bouncer and hiring manager in modern nights. She trusts Ian's capable stewardship, which puts him in a rare position as Bronwyn trusts remarkably few Kindred or kine.

- **Nina Rowland (Retainer 1)** Bronwyn's personal assistant, Nina Rowland, keeps her calendar and handles the club's daytime operations. She doesn't ask too many questions, which is how Bronwyn prefers it. If she can keep all her employees and associates in the dark, Bronwyn feels content.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Bennett Steadman (Respect) Adze (Worry)** Bronwyn keeps tabs on other Kindred clubs in town. She was pleased to hear of the Succubus Club's resurgence, and is intrigued by Red No⁹ 5. Its owner, Bennett Steadman, strikes her as a solid businessman. His business partner Adze's relationship with the Camarilla concerns Bronwyn, but he's been in the city as long as Bronwyn herself has, and has been massively influential over its entertainment scene.

- **Jason Newberry (Dangerous)** Bronwyn's whisper network frequently brings her disturbing rumors about her clan's Primogen, Son. She avoids him as best she can, but it's not always possible when he calls the clan's members for "group therapy." If anything could compel her to take a political role, it would be Son's excesses.

WHISPERS:

- **The Prince's Ear:** The last time the Prince visited Blue Velvet, he spent over an hour in Bronwyn's office. The next day he called for a Blood Hunt on several Kindred who'd otherwise been thought clean.

- **Sororicide:** Corbin hasn't been seen in Chicago for several years. Rumor has it, she didn't leave; Bronwyn had her killed.

- **Redirected Rage:** Some claim Blue Velvet was originally one of the targets for the Lupine attacks, but Bronwyn learned of the plan ahead of time and paid the Lupines to attack the Succubus Club instead.

- **A Question of Taste:** Bronwyn and Annabelle exchanged heated words over a name on a guest list recently. The argument ended quickly, but Annabelle hasn't returned to Blue Velvet and publicly slams the Circulatory System's practices.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Bronwyn's mask is that of Elinor Hewitt, the manager of several bed-and-breakfast properties throughout the city. Her profile boasts a five-star rating, thanks to Bronwyn bringing her skills as an innkeeper into modern nights **(Mask 2)**.

- Bronwyn is a white woman in her early 20s. She's small and slight, but sturdily built. Her dark brown hair falls to her waist, though she tends to braid it into a thick plait to keep it out of the way. She favors smartly cut business suits and prefers pants to skirts.

- She speaks with confidence and conviction, which can sometimes read as bluntness. She won't apologize for it. While she's certainly not timid, Bronwyn has a standoffishness about her upon meeting new people.

Sire: Bryan

Embraced: 1452 (Born 1437)

Ambition: Become the center of Kindred intelligence in Chicago

Convictions: Make others earn your trust

Touchstones: Ian Gibson — ghoul and Blue Velvet bouncer

Humanity: 5

Generation: 8th

Blood Potency: 5

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 5, Stamina 4; Charisma 4, Manipulation 5, Composure 3; Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 8

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Survival (Rural Environment) 3; Animal Ken 1, Etiquette (Bars) 4, Insight (Needs) 3, Leadership 2, Performance 1, Persuasion 2, Subterfuge 2; Awareness 3, Finance 3, Investigation 2, Medicine (Blood) 4, Occult (Vitae) 3, Politics 3

Disciplines: Auspex 4, Dominate 4, Obfuscate 2, Protean 2

ALEXA SANTOS

Epitaph: The Unquestioning Blade

Quote: *"Your eyes tell me you still want to live."*

Clan: Malkavian

MORTAL DAYS: DETACHED SINCE BIRTH

Alexa was always one of those people interested in the macabre. As a child, they traveled with their mother and uncle, both anthropologists, around the world to study how different cultures celebrated death. Alexa never found it odd. They expressed to their mother on multiple occasions that they wanted to actually learn burial rituals, to which she obliged. Wherever they traveled, Alexa's mother allowed them to observe and study with the family.

When Alexa turned 16, their grandparents requested that Alexa come home to find them a suitable husband. Their mother agreed it was time for them to head back and move on with their life. Alexa became furious, and one night attacked their mother with a machete. Terrified, Alexa dragged her body into the wild and left it there. She was found several days later and Alexa performed the death rites before she was buried, with their uncle quietly observing.

Alexa returned home to Catalonia, where their grandparents insisted on taking care of the youth. They treated Alexa like a baby, driving their strong-willed grandchild to increasingly want no part of their customs or society. They frequently left their estate dressed as a boy, and wandered around the streets alone, an act that infuriated their grandparents. Grandfather died in the middle of an argument with Alexa, his heart giving out. Alexa was delighted. The night after his funeral, Alexa smothered their grandmother with a pillow. The last family member remaining was their uncle, who embarked on a study trip to the United States. He disappeared without a trace six months later, his final communication to Alexa being a letter filled with gibberish about monsters and madness.

Alexa was now free to do what they wanted. They inherited the estate of their grandparents, along with their mother's fortune. They then continued their studies without care. Suitors would frequently visit Alexa with aims of accessing their fortunes, but they turned them all away, finding no interest in the idea of courtship.

KINDRED NIGHTS: DETACHED FROM LIFE

Alexa knows one day they were mortal, and one night they were not, but has no recollection of the event that turned them. Death came to Alexa fleetingly, disappointing the morbid Malkavian. Their deep-seated moral vacancy allowed Alexa to adjust to vampirism without difficulty. Their mysterious sire, whose face constantly changed, visited Alexa a week after the Embrace and gave them the freedoms to become an avid student of death, teaching them the rituals of many different cultures as well as schooling Alexa on the states of decomposition.

Shortly after they became a vampire, Alexa met a blind gentleman who took an interest in their knowledge and ritual work. They got into a debate and Aluc Romas de Leon, the gentleman, tried to win Alexa over to his side with charm and seduction, which failed spectacularly. The feud continued for several weeks. When they finally resolved their quarrel, Alexa and Aluc ended up forming a bond that neither expected. Alexa felt a kinship with him they never felt with their sire or mother. He gave Alexa a sense of stability and comfort. Aluc allowed Alexa to channel their morbid interests into his shocking art shows and parties, where they could supply trophies, bones, and ritual trappings, and he could present them in fascinating ways. They shared each other's vitae to cement a union.

Even with Aluc at their side, Alexa maintained a dispassionate view on life, which deepened following their transition to undeath. Alexa found it easy to embrace their Beast, enjoying the rare thrills and bursts of energy that accompany their feral state. Their greatest pleasure in these nights comes, as it ever has with Alexa, in the observation of death; the fading of light from a victim's eyes, the slow rot of the body, and the emotions mourners

display as they bedeck coffins in wreaths, write letters that will never be read, and erect marble statues in memoriam. Alexa is not delusional: They know this fascination is unhealthy and will constantly compel them to pursue dark deeds. The issue is there's an absence where restraint should be. Alexa cares little for consequences.

Alexa's morbid obsessions gained Prince Peterson's attentions in his short reign, leading him to appoint the Malkavian as one of his Hounds. Their transition to Prince Jackson's employ was seamless. After all, death is death, no matter who is steering the blade. Alexa delights in taking the lives of those who deserve it and shows no remorse for the act. Aluc tempers Alexa's personal desires for murder, encouraging them to only go hunting when the Camarilla is in danger or if Aluc is threatened.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Dead-Eyed Hound:** Alexa is convinced the Camarilla are right, and works to protect the interests of the sect. Alexa is known to accept occasional contract work to take someone out, though if it is not in the interest of the Camarilla, they are often not interested. Sometimes, the dirty work needs to be done by someone who has no issues with their morality.

- **Friend to the Fringe:** Alexa continues to build their influences within the city, working through ghouls to achieve their goals. Alexa continually finds allies within the LGBTQ+ community, and sees them as their own. Should anyone start messing with that community, Alexa will have words with them, usually punctuated by a blade to the throat.

- **Corrosive Network:** Jackson uses Alexa as a Hound of the city, using them as an enforcer when needed. Alexa works closely with Aluc on these matters and coordinates actions so as to efficiently strike at whatever their target might be. If someone is better brought down through social humiliation, Alexa informs Aluc about all the target's foibles, and the Minister in turn spreads gossip and innuendo throughout the court.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Gold Coast Condominium (Haven 4, Resources 2)** Alexa and Aluc share a condo on the Gold Coast, overlooking the lake front. Their haven is an exercise in contrasts, bearing the coldness of death and morbid trophies, along with avant-garde creations Aluc enjoys hosting on plinths and walls. Their haven is only a 10-minute walk from Gengis', though the three rarely have cause to meet.

- **City Cemeteries (Herd 1, Influence 1)** Alexa spends much of their time exploring the city, finding Chicago's long-forgotten alleyways and cemeteries. They make a habit of lurking in cemeteries when Hunger rises to the fore, feeding from gravediggers, solitary mourners, or the occasional drunk who stumbles in to take a leak. Alexa has recently started taking their feeds too far, stuffing drained bodies in coffins and mausolea alongside the recently interred.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Ambrosio Valdez (Contacts 1, Retainers 1)** Alexa still attends masses at St. Patrick's Church, where they met a priest from their hometown in Catalan. Father Ambrosio Valdez is unaware of what Alexa is and treats them the same as any other worshipper. Father Ambrosio is the only individual capable of getting Alexa to reveal their feelings of sorrow and twisted guilt.

- **Anton Carrillo (Potential Retainers 1)** Anton Carrillo is a stalker of Alexa's living in Arlington Heights. Alexa enthralls him and he knows what they are. He frequently expresses dismay at Alexa's inhumanity and tries to help bring them back onto a less-violent path. Alexa would snuff out the pest, but Anton has threatened to release footage of their hunting and feeding in a dead-man's-switch deal.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Aluc Romas de Leon (Friendship)** Alexa's closest relationship is with Aluc, with whom they share a weak Blood Bond. Aluc is one of the few individuals that Alexa would hesitate to kill, as he acts as their counsel, their enabler, and their friend in all things.

- **Jason Newberry (Mawla 2, Revulsion)** Alexa finds it disturbing that Son is reaching out frequently, citing "common mindsets" and "mutual understanding." Alexa doesn't think they are depraved on Son's level, and at least isn't as sadistic. They are frightened and concerned that others may compare them to their Primogen.

- **Kevin Jackson (Offended)** Prince Jackson keeps Alexa at arm's length despite their doing everything the Prince commands. The Prince's distrust offends Alexa, but Aluc has cautioned against any confrontation for now.

WHISPERS:

- **Not What They Seem:** Whispers have been going around that Alexa may not actually be Malkavian. Death obsesses them, leading to many describing them as one of the Hecata.

- **Test Subject:** Some claim Aluc is using and studying Alexa to see how far a vampire can fall before the Beast takes over.
- **Taking Out the Chief:** According to Ballard and Naomi, Alexa murdered Capone at Jackson's behest.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Alexa is Catalonian, so their skin has olive tones. Each night, Alexa wakes up with long hair they sweep out of the way. Recently, they've started shaving it out of frustration.
- Alexa has flexible tastes in clothing depending on what they are doing at the time, though they always wear skulls and other death imagery.
- Alexa's Mask is as a Puerto-Rican girl named Gina Sanchez, who works at the Cook County Morgue as an assistant. Through online courses, Alexa has gained qualifications allowing them to work in this arm of the medical profession, putting them exactly where they want to be **(Mask 2)**.

Sire: Licero

Embraced: 1886 (Born 1851)

Ambition: Disable the city's Anarchs

Convictions: Never fail to study death as it occurs

Touchstones: Father Ambrosio Valdez — priest and confessor

Humanity: 2

Generation: 10th

Blood Potency: 2

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2; Charisma 2, Manipulation 4, Composure 2; Intelligence 3, Wits 2, Resolve 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 5

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 1, Craft (Embalming) 3, Drive 2, Firearms 2, Melee (Scalpel) 3, Survival 2; Insight 2, Intimidation 2; Academics (Death Rites) 3, Awareness 1, Investigation 3, Medicine (Pathology) 3, Occult (Hecata) 2, Science 3, Streetwise 1, Technology 2

Disciplines: Auspex 3, Obfuscate 2, Oblivion 2

EVAN KLEIN (RAYMOND FALCON, AND MANY MORE)

Epitaph: Shattered Identity

Quote: *"You must have caught me on a good day... night... whatever."*

Clan: Malkavian

MORTAL DAYS: ALL BLENDED, CONFUSED, AND FORGOTTEN

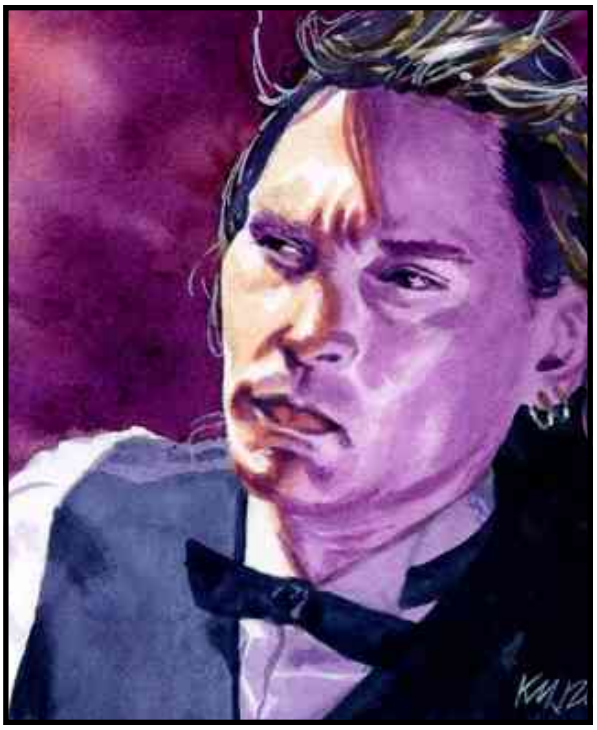
Evan Klein, to himself at least, is a myth buried under the wreckage of a fractured life he pulled down around himself to shield him from the harshness of his reality. Although, if you were to ask him about himself, he would say that Raymond Falcon is one of the best bass players in the world, following in his father's footsteps. Or, Dirk MacGriff joined the police after he witnessed the murder of his father. Or, Tommy Holm is a gay-rights activist, just like the two men who raised him. Lawrence Pierce went into medicine to impress his father who was a world-renowned surgeon but strangely doesn't appear in medical journals of any kind. In fact, Evan is a broken man suffering from dissociative identity disorder and whose identities grow more numerous with age. He has suffered this condition since long before the Embrace to deal with the abuse he suffered at the hands of his own father, though that personal history only comes to him in rare lucid moments.

KINDRED NIGHTS: IN A THOUSAND PIECES

The Malkavian known as Son Embraced Klein after hearing him play at a concert in Grant Park in the guise of Raymond Falcon. The vampire was stunned when Officer Dirk MacGriff then tried to arrest him for assault in the aftermath. For a time, Evan was the favored amusement of his sire, who delighted in the new and interesting people that would emerge from his childe. Evan would never be one of those banal childer who other Kindred become tired with, each night was a new adventure with him as you never knew which of his cast of characters would be joining you for the evening.

So complete are his changes that during the Lupine attack he was able to convince the shapeshifters to leave him alone even as he assumed the personality of a werewolf. This is not a man acting out a fantasy or playing a role, Evan truly becomes those personalities he adopts, taking on wholesale changes to his manner and even, with the powers of Obfuscate, his appearance.

In recent nights, Evan has been withdrawing more and more into those alternative personalities. He has been known to say offensive, hurtful remarks then immediately



demand to know why those he insulted are shunning him. He rants and raves about visions of something he calls "the Moonchild" and prophesies he will be consumed by it. At times, he laughs at this prophesy and suggests maybe Moonchild was who he was supposed to be all along. These mood swings now haunt his every lucid moment.

Some elder Malkavians see method in Son's madness in Embracing Evan, as he is a world for the mind of madness to explore itself. They see in his prophecies a maddened hint at a glorious future for the clan and, for this reason, he is well respected among his clanmates. While, in the mortal world, his personality of Raymond Falcon remains as a popular performer, Evan rarely manifests Raymond in these nights. His band, loyal to a fault, leaves his spot open for whenever he awakes as Raymond. On those rare occasions, he immediately seeks them out, full of enthusiasm for the next performance like a mercurial and flighty artist.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Evidence Wall:** Evan's personalities tend not to have long-term ambitions; however, his lucid self is seeking a way to make sense of the art that is his life. Those who come upon his personal haven will find the walls bedecked with newspaper articles, photographs, and other media pinned to a giant map of the city, marking out areas in which he was recorded appearing during what he sees as his blackouts.
- **Study Me:** Evan may try to recruit young and non-judgmental characters to record his actions and even task them with chronicling his every utterance. Though some might see this as a vain pursuit, those of Clan Malkavian, particularly interested in the lore of the ancient elders, may see it as an opportunity to see through the eyes of madness itself.
- **New Faces:** In current nights, two new personalities have risen to the fore. They are both the hosts and content creators of a pair of conflicting YouTube channels. The first is Tommy Holm, a gay, liberal activist who presents "Vox Populi," a critical analysis of topical subjects through a left-leaning lens. He pours coruscating criticism upon the Republican administration, the President, and other right-leaning regimes around the world. He also heavily criticizes his erstwhile opposite number, Marcus Truman, the white, seemingly well-read, well-dressed, hair-gelled host of "Liberty's Light," a right-wing, "make America great again" fanatic who has a penchant for humorous memes and infographics to back up his arguments.
- **Breach Waiting to Happen:** Holm and Truman have engaged in long-running spats on Twitter and traded videos calling each other out. Truman once charged his followers with writing his phone number in the stalls of male public toilets to encourage Holm to contact him, a remark he was forced to withdraw after his Twitter was shut down for a month. While this conflict may be a risk to the Masquerade and draw attention, it is clear that neither man is aware of their dual nature.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Ravenswood Apartment (Haven 1)** Evan maintains a number of havens, suitable to the means of his personality du jour. Most of these are provided by the Seneschal Alan Sovereign to keep the whimsical Malkavian out of trouble. His own place is a basement apartment in Ravenswood.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Political Supporters (Allies 2, Contacts 2)** Evan is not stable enough to maintain a ghoul and his agenda switches by the day, as does the company he keeps. Holm and Truman both have multiple adherents and supporters who they manipulate and use to further their opposing political agendas.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Jason Newberry (Mawla 2, Father Figure)** Son is the one constant in Evan's fractured state and he will

often be seen talking to him, demanding answers and explanations of what is going on and why the childlike Kindred is following him.

- **Erzulie (Admiration)** Evan personally enjoys Erzulie as he has a soft spot for a Kindred who forges their own idea of identity.

WHISPERS:

- **No More Ridicule:** In court, Evan was once seen as a curiosity. His relationship with other vampires in the city has changed to where many among the court look out for Evan and brutally punish anyone who targets him with ridicule.
- **Movie DID:** Some other vampires with dissociative identity disorder have called Klein's condition into question. His symptoms don't line up to most modern definitions of the disorder, causing some to wonder how much of his condition is natural, and whether it may be some elder Malkavian's enforced bewitchment on the unfortunate Evan Klein.
- **Unreliable Asset:** Negotiators working with the Lasombra are concerned Evan may adopt the personality of one of their agents, or even of an Anarch who reports the whole enterprise to the ever-watchful MacTavish.
- **Ticking Timebomb:** Some Kindred believe Klein, particularly with the fame of his YouTube personalities, is a risk to the Masquerade that cannot be tolerated.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Using his vampiric powers, Evan regularly changes his appearance and even his gender when the fancy takes him. However, some of his personalities appear more than others.
- Evan's own appearance is as a tall, handsome, blonde, white man with high cheekbones and narrow blue eyes. He has a youthful look about him and his skin is porcelain pale, giving him an otherworldly aspect that immediately attracts attention. This appearance also applies to Raymond Falcon, although Raymond is far more outspoken and engaging than Evan's lucid self **(Mask 2)**.
- He often wears a faraway, thoughtful look, but mutters with an inner dialogue at times as though the clamor of voices and personalities is bubbling beneath the surface that is himself.
- Tommy Holm is a biracial man, tall, athletic, with a broad smile and flawless white teeth. He normally wears tight-fitted T-shirts to show off his lean physique and they regularly bear a slogan of whatever movement he is trying to bring attention to at the time. His catchphrases include referring to his political opponents as the "Salt Right," as they often get upset at his confrontational style and many of his T-shirts are emblazoned with those words **(Mask 2)**.
- Marcus Truman projects an image of old-fashioned quality. His hair is black and immaculately styled, his face is clean shaven and his features sharp and angular. He almost always wears smart clothing: suit jackets, button-down shirts, silk ties, expensive watches that he regularly showcases on his channel, and always a collar pin depicting an eagle in flight, holding an American flag in its talons. He is a soft-spoken man in conversation but given to bouts of deliberate trolling **(Mask 2)**.

Sire: Jason Newberry "Son"

Embraced: 1982 (Born 1950)

Ambition: Recruit a team to fully catalogue his personalities and their triggers

Convictions: Always maintain control (rarely upheld)

Touchstones: Klein's Touchstones vary from personality to personality, Storytellers are encouraged to put together a suitable set for any and all personalities that Evan manifests

Humanity: 7

Generation: 9th

Blood Potency: 2

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3; Charisma 4, Manipulation 2, Composure 3; Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 6

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 1, Craft (Instrument Repair) 2, Drive 2, Firearms 2, Larceny 1, Stealth 3; Insight 4, Leadership 2, Performance (Bass Guitar) 4, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 3; Academics 1, Awareness 2, Finance 1, Investigation 2, Medicine 1, Politics 3, Science 1, Technology (Video Production) 2

Disciplines: Auspex 1, Obfuscate 5, Presence 2

Note: Evan's Social stats vary depending on the personality manifesting itself; the stats given above reflect the lucid Evan Klein. Use your discretion to alter the Social stats for each different personality.

THE MINISTRY

"Let us help you appreciate the blood you're tasting by adding a little spice, hm?"

— Aluc Romas de Leon, Host of Hosts, offering a client a mixture of venues, drugs, and blood doll emotions to sweeten the drink

The Ministry, though ostensibly Anarch, fits in well with the Chicago Camarilla. They quietly fill the roles of mediators, hosts, and dilettantes without rubbing other Kindred the wrong way, which eliminates them from Kevin Jackson's "only 10 Anarchs in the city" limit.

Some of the hardline Camarilla vampires, such as Damien, Rosa, and Bronwyn, believe the Ministry may be up to their old tricks of getting under the city's skin only to attempt control when they take hold of everyone's strings. If this is true, the Ministry are playing the long game. The city's respective Ministers have little united power, instead content to observe and manipulate others for personal gain.

MARCEL

Epitaph: The Useful Outsider

Quote: *"Do you think the Camarilla elites of this city are really concerned with your welfare? Let me talk on your behalf and we'll get this sorted out. It won't cost you anything."*

Clan: The Ministry

MORTAL DAYS: PROFIT BY ANY MEANS

There are a lot of secret things in this world, some of them beyond the ken of mortals and some not. The Ministry's vampires are well-versed in the corruption of the soul, but Marcel had already seen plenty of that before he ever heard of the truths harbored by the undead.

The son of a Ghanaian sailor living in Marseilles and an Algerian mother working in the city as a domestic servant, Marcel was exiled from the daylight world from the moment of his birth. He followed in his father's footsteps and started working at the docks from a young age. He never made a decision to become a smuggler, a fence, and a drug trafficker. It just happened as he followed the best opportunities available.

When he turned 18, Marcel became involved in smuggling weapons to the Algerian National Liberation Front. Although the war ended with Algerian independence in 1962, by the end Marcel had been identified by the French secret services. His war-profiteering-funded lavish lifestyle almost led to his death, and Marcel took the lesson for the rest of his life and unlife.

In the winter of 1962, Marcel lay naked on the wet, concrete floor of a secret prison in the south of France. As the interrogators beat him, he fully expected to die. Instead, he was tortured within an inch of his life and left in the care of a mysterious Haitian man who gave him relief from his pain in the form of blood. As Marcel sucked on the wound on the man's wrist, he was vaguely aware he'd discovered yet another layer of the secret world.

KINDRED NIGHTS: SEEMINGLY SIMPLISTIC AIMS

The Haitian Ministry didn't Embrace Marcel immediately. They used his experience with smuggling and the sea to work in the clan's heroin trade, transporting drugs mostly to the U.S. market.

It was during this time Marcel understood his previous operations had been mere dabbling, small-time hustles compared to the global vision of the Ministry. Faced with the challenge of transforming himself from a beaten-down wreck into a useful asset in the Ministry's clandestine war against the other clans, Marcel succeeded and flourished.

The Embrace in 1974 was almost an afterthought, a natural step up in a promising career. As a vampire, he quickly decided to move away from the competitive Ministry scene in Haiti and try his luck in the States. After all, he was already familiar with the territory via his drug-running operations. Settling in Chicago in the wake of the reported death of Prince Lodin, he muscled in on the cocaine trade to provide the financial backing for his goal of increased power in the Camarilla.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Arm's-Length Primogen:** Marcel has been successful at using his outsider status to make himself into an insider. He's always been scrupulous to merely offer his assistance to those in need and use his instinct

for boring through layers of secrecy to provide an accurate picture of what's happening. He has made himself into the person you rely on in the Chicago Primogen when you can't work with any of the established players. While technically he's not a member, he often attends meetings in an advisory capacity or representing someone absent.

- **Pressing the Flesh:** From the perspective of an Anarch or a hapless neonate, Marcel's offer of help can be a surprisingly good deal. His goal is to help outsiders and the dispossessed have a voice in the city, and in the short term these favors come for free. Marcel plans in the long term, accumulating favors, boons, and loyalty. He trusts a few of those he assists will become powerful eventually and that will be the time to ask for a favor in return.

- **Tower Undermined:** Going back to his days as a mortal man, Marcel has always seen clandestine criminal networks and the struggle for liberation as essentially the same. This made him a natural fit for the Ministry's theology of freedom through debasement. It also explains his seemingly contradictory goals and actions: Marcel believes that by making himself integral to the Camarilla's functioning in Chicago, he can turn the city on its head beyond anything a small Ministry temple could achieve.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Riverdale Apartment (Haven 1)** Marcel's havens have always been surprisingly humble, from the apartment he had in the now-demolished Robert Taylor Homes in Bronzeville to the current one in the basement of a nondescript Chinese restaurant in Riverdale. Marcel never brings guests to his home. Instead, when he wants to organize Ministry ceremonies or entertain important contacts, he uses venues available because of his business in the cocaine trade. He's not much for the physical domain, instead using the drug trade to provide the blood he needs.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Deon Adams (Allies 1)** Marcel prefers to control people subtly, without the overt use of blood and Disciplines. Sometimes a little kindness, or perhaps blackmail, goes a long way. An example of the former is Deon, a local high school kid who lives across the street from Marcel's haven. For Deon, Marcel is a kindly man hiding from a criminal past. He often acts as a lookout, calling Marcel if he sees suspicious characters hanging around the restaurant.

- **Imani Singleton (Contacts 3)** Blackmail is Marcel's stock in trade, but Imani is one of his favorite subjects because of the amusing innocence of her sins. She works in a senior position at the Chicago Department of Buildings and cheated on her husband with a colleague once on a work trip. As a veteran of drug-fueled blood ceremonies Marcel finds this quaint, but nevertheless uses it as leverage to provide him with information and access.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Thea Noel-MacCrain (Affection)** Thea is Marcel's childe, Embraced three years ago to provide an agent who could operate among the white, old-money elites of the city. Marcel saw something in Thea that seemed to promise affinity with Ministry doctrine, but Thea took to the moral degeneration of the Ministry and the Kindred with such joy that Marcel is not sure whether he should be proud or concerned.

- **"Erichtho" Tracy Graves (Peer)** Marcel has represented many people on the Primogen Council, the Tremere among them during a recent crisis. As a legacy of this time, he got to know the enlightenment seeker Erichtho and made a hobby of trying to argue philosophy with her with a view to spreading Ministry ideas. In reality, although he doesn't admit it to himself, Marcel is lonely and it's nice to

have someone with similar esoteric interests despite their radically different occupations in unlife.

WHISPERS:

- **Without Repent:** Despite his sweet, helpful aura, Marcel is a stone-cold gangster, trafficker, and a merchant of human misery deeply embedded in the Chicago drug trade.
- **Saint Among Sinners:** Marcel runs a debauched blood cult with himself as the god. Still, in the eyes of many Chicago neonates that's preferable to most of the monsters sitting on the Primogen Council.
- **Revel in Vice:** If you want to understand the endless layers of secrecy and sin in mortal and immortal circles alike, Marcel is the man to ask. Sometimes it almost feels as if he's geeking out on moral turpitude.
- **Who Holds the Deeds?** Marcel has had a longtime interest in the Succubus Club, and wishes to trace the true owner of this legendary establishment.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Marcel doesn't usually bother with aliases, but he has an endless string of poses and personas he adopts in his different circles. In his home neighborhood, he's a mildly eccentric, kindly man. With his minions and underlings in the cocaine business he's intense, charismatic, and relentless. For his contacts among the Anarchs and the Primogen Council alike, he's grace and selflessness personified, dignified and discreet **(Mask 1)**.
- A short, compact black man in his early 30s. As a mortal, Marcel used to be strong because of physical labor in the docks, but he softened a little in the years before his Embrace. His strong eyebrows make him look older if he adopts a fatherly pose.
- When he's feeling comfortable, Marcel wears the kind of dashiki he feels would suit the Ghanaian ancestry of his father. He wants to feel connected to the peoples the Ministry is seeking to liberate. That would be all the peoples, but Marcel doesn't think it wrong to feel sentimental about those to whom he's personally connected. Otherwise, Marcel likes to dress to set himself apart and play on the outsider status his clan gives him. He's very good at the physical simulation of being a mortal and makes a special point of keeping it up in his home neighborhood. Among his drug-trade contacts, he often forgets.

Sire: Goolooboo

Embraced: 1974 (Born 1943)

Ambition: Acquire a major boon from the Prince and another from the Primogen Council

Convictions: Never debase the undeserving

Touchstones: Deon Adams — a neighborhood kid to whom Marcel has taken a sentimental liking

Humanity: 6

Generation: 11th

Blood Potency: 2

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4; Charisma 3, Manipulation 5, Composure 3; Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 6

Skills: Athletics 1, Drive 1, Firearms 2, Larceny 3, Stealth 3, Survival 2; Etiquette 1, Insight (Secret Needs) 4, Intimidation (Mysterious) 4, Leadership 2, Performance 1, Persuasion 4, Streetwise (Dealers) 4, Subterfuge 3; Awareness 1, Finance 1, Investigation 1, Medicine 1, Occult 1, Politics 2

Disciplines: Obfuscate 1, Presence 2, Protean 3

THEA NOEL-MACCRAIN

Epitaph: Corruption Is Just Another Privilege

Quote: *"They say that even as Kindred, we can't hurt people without consequences, but it sure feels as if we can!"*

Clan: The Ministry

MORTAL DAYS: ENTITLEMENT DELIVERED

Thea's mortal life was characterized by layer upon layer of overlapping privileges. Her family is Chicago old money, having originally made their fortune in real estate. Extreme wealth had its perks and she spent her childhood tagging along as her parents deliberated on what they should do with their lives on a yacht in the Bahamas, at the country estate of a family friend in Champagne, France, or in the Chicago Lincoln Park mansion.

Living in this environment, Thea learned to navigate the world of private planes, gated enclaves, top-floor hotel suites, and exclusive schools long before she ever set foot among ordinary people who were not servants of one type or another.

Growing up, Thea's defining trait was a hunger for new experiences. Her mother inherited the family wealth while her father was a trophy husband and a for-

mer Olympic-level swimmer. Unhappy with each other, they were grimly determined to drag Thea and her siblings along to their miserable little dramas of infidelity, alcoholism, drug abuse, spite, cruelty and pettiness.

The youngest of three kids, Thea watched her older brother and sister succumb to the family dysfunction but, somehow, she avoided getting dragged down by it. All it left her was a resolute conviction in the utter worthlessness of her parents.

By the time Thea made it to Yale, she knew her family's connections and money meant she was freed from consequences. A trip to jail for drunk driving was a thrilling story to be shared with friends, not an event that actually meant anything. The more bad things Thea avoided, the more she felt she was invincible, forever free from any sort of backlash.

KINDRED NIGHTS: FAILED EXPERIMENT

In a way, the Embrace proved her right. Others lose their money, health, friends, future. All dissolution and arrogance brought for Thea was immortality at the tender age of 20.

Embraced three years ago to serve the Ministry in an attempt to make inroads into the Chicago upper-class market for illegal narcotics, Thea took to undeath with glee. The Ministry's Marcel botched her initiation rites when he assumed he could subvert her soul to his aims by asking her to make her parents into blood slaves. Thea did so of course, but seeing the craven desperation for blood twist the features of her mother and father didn't create the hoped-for collapse of her personality so it could be molded to serve the Ministry ideal. Instead, Thea learned to use the vitae the same way she had used power and connections all her life.

Despite her Embrace, Thea still maintains her mortal identity and social network, although this is becoming more difficult due to the unsettling mien created by her plunge into moral collapse. She wasn't humane even as a human, and much less so now that she's Kindred. Instead of liberation through corruption for all the people, she believes in liberation through corruption for herself.

From the Ministry's perspective, Thea is out of control. She's not interested in working to build up criminal connections with high-value clients or gathering blackmail material among the city's elite. Instead, she revels in the risks she can now take with her new vampiric body.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Pleasure Seeker:** For a self-centered person, Thea is surprisingly helpful toward friends and strangers alike. She wants to experience new things, meet people, and go to places she's never been before. She's always up for it, whatever it is. She seems to have little sense of self-preservation but in reality, she's quite gifted at making sure someone else takes the blame. Usually someone less wealthy and white than she is.

- **The Higher the Stakes:** Watching people make bad decisions and destroy their lives for the sake of desperate gambles is always fun. If you're planning something stupid, odds are Thea will be there to tell you you're a genius and sure to succeed. In some vague way, this might help with Thea's Ministry-mandated religious mission, but her real reason for doing it is aesthetic. She likes drama, and it's not really satisfying if nobody gets destroyed.

- **Loyal to None:** After three years of exploring the vampiric condition, Thea is starting to understand the larger Camarilla system of hidden power. She needs patrons and supporters for the night when she decides what she really wants. She's very ecumenical about who to ally with and places no importance in the mutual compatibility of her friends. She's happy to go to an Anarch meeting one night and the Elysium the next.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **MacCrain Manor (Haven 4, Herd 2)** Thea still lives in her childhood home, a Lincoln Park mansion,

with her mortal family. Unwilling to move from her old rooms to a safer basement space, she's had the windows fitted with heavy lightproof security blinds. She doesn't entirely understand the concept of domain yet, but her natural herd consists of all the wealthy elites she knows and among them, she's an invisible predator. Everybody knows who she is and she's too young to raise questions about why she doesn't age.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Philippa Noel-MacCrain (Retainers 2)** Thea has Blood Bound her mother and made her into a debased junkie. As a child, Thea rarely remembered to feed her pets, leaving that to the staff. The same absentminded approach continues with her mother, often leaving the older Noel-MacCrain insane with the need for vitae. So far, Thea has found it amusing to leverage her newfound power to inflict all kinds of humiliations on her family.

- **Colin Whitfield (Retainers 1)** Colin is Thea's boyfriend from before her Embrace, also a Yale student from a wealthy family. After her Embrace turned her behavior increasingly erratic, Colin tried to end the relationship. Thea reacted by promptly forcing the Blood Bond on him. As a result, Colin remains in a state of tortured obsession with Thea, who now regrets the whole thing because she's grown bored.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Kevin Jackson (Lust)** Thea has a crush of sorts on the Ventrue Kevin Jackson. She likes the fact he's a Ventrue and involved in many of the power plays in the city. She feels the Ministry is a good fit for her but at the same time, it's the first time in her life she's not part of the privileged elite by birth. For this reason, the Ventrue fascinate her, unless they're too tedious to be interesting. Jackson isn't, and that's why Thea likes to involve herself with his affairs.

- **Marcel (Mawla 2, Stuffy)** Embraced by Marcel, Thea has a complicated relationship with her sire. She likes Marcel's theatrical style and sense of ritual but at the same time, there's something embarrassingly provincial about the older vampire. Thea eagerly adopts the ideas Marcel tries to teach her about the purpose of the Ministry, but she always twists them to suit herself. She's vaguely aware that Marcel intended for her to serve in his drug-trade operations, but she chose to simply ignore this and so far, her sire has been unable or unwilling to enforce his will.

WHISPERS:

- **Sensation:** If you want to experience the most fucked-up, morally turgid night out on the town of your entire unlife, ask Thea to be your guide. Come morning, you'll have experienced joys so sickening, you'll never be able to forget them.

- **Confusing Bloodline:** Although she seems like a Ventrue or a Toreador stereotype, Thea is actually a member of the mysterious Ministry, rare in Chicago.

- **She's a Boon:** Marcel was able to Embrace Thea with the blessings of the Camarilla because of the favors he'd accumulated while representing the Tremere on the Primogen Council.

- **In the Web:** Thea has already broken at least one Tradition but the Camarilla establishment hesitates to come after her because of her recklessly tangled net of favors, ones that she owes and ones owed to her.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Thea's behavior as a human was already so erratic, her Embrace failed to cause suspicion among her friends and acquaintances. She's still the same Thea they always knew, sleeping unusually late and partying until dawn. They assume she'll grow out of it and marry or perhaps start a career in media, politics, or finance.

- Thea shifts her hairstyle and makeup choices regularly, but always maintains the nose, ear, and medusa piercings she acquired during her last few mortal days. She does however change up the precious metals and jewels on display in these piercings.

- Modern, cutting-edge designer fashion is Thea's normal wardrobe. If a scarf didn't cost more than a normal person's monthly salary, it's not worth wearing. The exception is when Thea is blending into a new social environment. She delights in researching how to dress appropriately to the scene, although not being stylish is beyond her abilities.

Sire: Marcel

Embraced: 2016 (Born 1996)

Ambition: Experience something new every night

Convictions: Never accept a master

Touchstones: Thea's parents — their degradation belongs to her alone

Humanity: 5

Generation: 12th

Blood Potency: 1

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 1; Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Composure 1; Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 4, Willpower 4

Skills: Drive 1, Larceny 3, Stealth 3; Etiquette (The Elite) 4, Insight 4, Intimidation 1, Leadership 1, Performance 2, Persuasion (Hedonist) 4, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge (Sincerity) 3; Academics 2, Awareness (Fashion) 3, Finance 1, Politics 1, Science 1

Disciplines: Potence 1, Presence 2

ALUC ROMAS DE LEON

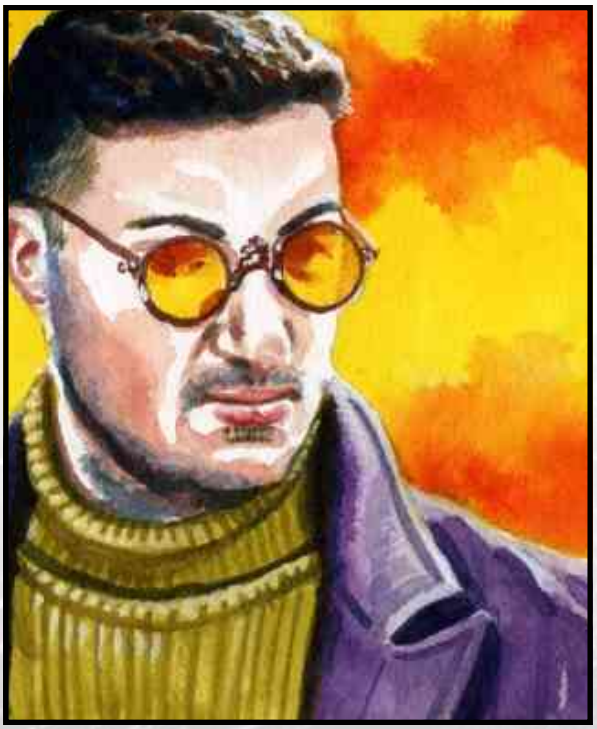
Epitaph: Art Collector, Artist Patron

Quote: *"My dear, you don't give yourself nearly enough credit. You are a fantastic artist. Please, come showcase at my gallery, I promise it will be worth your while."*

Clan: The Ministry

MORTAL DAYS: THE BLIND LIBERTINE

Aluc lived his mortal life as a hedonist in Spain, enjoying the love of counts and countesses while exerting subtle influences on their political aims. For his entire life he'd never been ashamed of getting dirty to get close to the powerful and the privileged. He'd grown up the son of a wealthy Don, and used his access to others of title to maneuver them into actions he wouldn't ever put his own name to. It wasn't a difficult play, as people were drawn to him because he was a curiosity: blind since birth, dashingly handsome, and coated in a reputation for devilish behavior.



Aluc enjoyed his mortality, indulging in every vice available to him. Unable to see, he indulged every other sense. He never grew jaded, pushing just a little bit more in every direction to taste a new experience whenever he could. All the while his star rose in the court, as vampires aware of and amused by the decadent mortal watched intently.

As Aluc reveled in excess, his eventual sire addicted him to his vitae and made him a ghoul, grooming him to control the aristocracy on behalf of the Followers of Set. Unexpectedly, Aluc's ability plummeted, as thralldom stifled his creative freedom. His wiles against nobles suddenly failed catastrophically, leading to his departure from Spain under a cloud of infamy. Out of desperation, his sire Embraced Aluc in the hope it might revive his spark.

KINDRED NIGHTS: HOST OF HOSTS

The plan worked, in a sense. Aluc found new focus, but did not embrace the role of political snake again for some time. Instead, he saw immortality as a grand opportunity to indulge in new experiences. He didn't gain the use of his eyes through the Embrace, but this did not slow his love of artistic expression. He became a patron of the arts in Paris, London, and eventually Chicago, developing a passion for supporting those who create beautiful and provocative works of art. His choices were always risqué, because he was unafraid to step outside of propriety. He gauged the artistic quality through touching it and listening to the emotion in other admirers' voices. If art evoked a strong response, he procured it.

Aluc started hosting decadent gatherings as he found his feet in the arts and passions scene. His parties were a spectacle, combining performance, artistic display, and hospitality. He became well known for ensuring his guests always left satisfied. Aluc saw hosting as an art form, the perfect means of expression and obtaining of secrets. He never claimed to be an artist of any sort, but took great pride and care in his skills as a party leader. His clan elders forbade him from taking on an official title like Keeper of Elysium, but he was known in Chicago as the man to ask when a good party was needed.

It was a century ago when Aluc met Alexa. Alexa confronted him about a vulgar art installation and did not succumb to his charm. Few could hold their ground

with the supreme host, but the fact that Alexa did so without hesitation caught his attention. Alexa remained amused by him, and so began a depraved relationship where the two agreed to try and find a new way to shock each other every month. The two continue their gambit to this night.

During the recent convention of Camarilla Justicars held in Chicago, Portia invited Aluc to play host at the Succubus Club. While the seriousness of the political event was not lost on Aluc, he tried to offer a reprieve from the diplomatic sparring with raucous entertainments. The event reignited his lust for political maneuvering, which he had long put aside.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **The Red Mist:** Clinging to his Humanity is a weary chore for Aluc, who does enjoy killing when the mood hits him. He normally keeps his bloodlust in check and is able to control his Beast, but sometimes the urge inside him is just too strong. Stealing a page from Alexa, Aluc occasionally allows his Beast to indulge. He always cleans up after himself, but his degeneration may come quickly.

- **Weaponized Degeneracy:** Aluc frequently uses Alexa's inhumanity to have their carry out foul acts. It weighs on him and he feels guilty about doing so, but it is the only way he can fully accomplish his political and social goals. Aluc does care about Alexa, and will continue to help their keep from falling to their Beast, but the continued strain is difficult to manage.

- **The Future Prince:** Unlikely as it seems, Aluc plans to step up to Prince Jackson's seat if the Ventrue falls, and is already working on gaining the trust of the Primogen Council as a vampire who knows his politics, knows what the city's Kindred want, and is independent enough to deliver. He considers his clan's low status in the Camarilla a minor obstacle.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Gold Coast Condominium (Haven 2, Resources 2)** Alexa and Aluc share a large condominium overlooking the lakefront. It is elaborately decorated with strange art pieces, all Kindred-created. Aluc has obtained a wide array of art from members of Clan Toreador and artists of other bloodlines, but his favorite are those icons built by members of his own clan.

- **Gallery Spaces (Resources 3, Fame 3)** Aluc owns several small galleries around the city, but when he hosts a party it's always on someone else's turf. He doesn't own a club and doesn't want to, bringing his entertainment to the venues of other Kindred.

- **Sexual Partners (Herd 2)** Aluc enjoys feeding from sexual partners he takes back to his condo, never having given up the libertine lifestyle of his mortal days. Sometimes however, Aluc feels the urge to let the Beast out to play. He enters gang territory, pours blood over his head, and burns his flesh repeatedly until he feels the urge to fly into a Hunger frenzy.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Chicago Artists (Influence 3) Rhys Warren (Retainers 1)** Aluc holds ties to many artists and performers in the Chicago area. Aluc uses these connections when he needs information or sway among the classy and the cultured. He has specific ties to a burlesque performer named Rhys who performs in a raunchy-yet-teasing style Aluc adores. He keeps Rhys as both a lover and a conversation companion, as the performer has a Masters in the History of Art.

- **Workers' Unions (Allies 3, Influence 2)** Aluc's recent outreach into politics has formed ties to construction workers, garbage men, and landlords. Aluc isn't stupid. He knows to gain true control you have to start at the bottom, and he doubts any other Kindred would deign to lower themselves from the skyscrapers to the gutter.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Alexa Santos (Paramour)** Aluc and Alexa share a Blood Bond. Alexa is much more the monster then Aluc is, and that often wears Aluc down. Their relationship is confusing to everyone else but them, as they take multiple lovers, both Kindred and mortal, but it does not appear to impact their relationship.

- **Primogen Council (Friendly)** Aluc enjoys spending time with the Primogen and other court members within the city, frequently hosting in their honor or dedicating certain performances to them. He particularly enjoys finding time to learn about Ancient Greek excess from Critias, and finds it amusing to horrify Annabelle with a controversial art piece. He's attempting to crack Rosa and find out what brings her happiness, but so far has found little luck.

- **Marcel (Disappointing)** Marcel makes Aluc want to scream. He is everything the other clans hate about

the Ministry, from his swagger to his illicit dealings in the criminal underworld. Aluc embraces the moniker of Minister if it means he can step away from "Serpent" or "Snake." He despairs when he hears Marcel still living up to old stereotypes.

WHISPERS:

- **Unholy Union:** Aluc shares a deeper relationship with Alexa than mere "love." After all, they each take lovers of any orientation and don't seem to care for indiscretions.
- **Up the Chain:** Aluc killed his sire out of fear of the Beckoning, as he secretly carries potent blood in his veins. He's told some Kindred that murdering your sire is all it takes to stop the call.
- **Unknown Clan:** Aluc is in fact a Toreador, though why a Degenerate would claim to be a Serpent is unknown. Could he have wronged his true clan so badly?

MASK AND MIEN:

- Aluc is a handsome-looking Spaniard in his 30s. While paler now than when he was alive, he still keeps his olive complexion and tan more than vampires normally do. His hair is generally tied back into a ponytail and he keeps his accent in all Kindred conversations.
- He generally wears men's designer clothing from Spain. It doesn't matter if he is wearing a suit or dressed casually, the image Aluc puts forth is one of elegance and intention.
- As an art critic and gallery owner, Aluc is known under the nom de plume of Hector Segura. When appearing as Hector, Aluc drops his accent and has his hair cut short, but continues to dress up. He can't let that part of his style slip **(Mask 1)**.

Sire: Andreas Aegyptus "Ankhesenaten"

Embraced: 1835 (Born 1799)

Ambition: Build support for a praxis claim

Convictions: Always try to experience something new

Touchstones: Rhys Warren — burlesque performer and fellow art scholar

Humanity: 6

Generation: 12th

Blood Potency: 3

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3; Charisma 5, Manipulation 4, Composure 3; Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 2

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 5

Skills: Drive 1, Melee 2, Survival 1; Etiquette (Hosting) 5, Insight 3, Intimidation 2, Leadership 2, Performance (Acting) 4, Persuasion (Seduction) 5, Subterfuge 1; Academics (Art History) 2, Awareness 3, Finance 2, Politics 3, Technology 1

Disciplines: Auspex 2, Obfuscate 2, Presence 4, Protean 1

Nosferatu

"The city's Nosferatu support you one hundred percent, Prince Jackson. You can depend on all of us."

— Primogen "Khalid" addressing Prince Jackson in court while the rest of the clan is absent

One of the most populous clans in Chicago, the Nosferatu present a front of solidarity with the new Prince and the Camarilla, but exist on the brink of destroying the existing hierarchy of the city through their deceptions, allegiances, and ambitions. Though some have Anarch inclinations, Chicago's Sewer Rats are driven by individual agendas rather than grand, sectarian aims. The idea of Nosferatu solidarity extends as far as Nosferatu defending each other, but goes little further than that. Even Nathaniel Bordruff, a homicidal vampire at the best of times, would see the rest of the city burn before turning on his clanmates. He would then turn on them, however.

Prince Jackson presents the Chicago Nosferatu as the perfect example of how a Camarilla city should treat its walking Masquerade breaches. Give them each a little territory in low-income parts of the city, ensure they each maintain a strong Mask, and punish the clan's breaches severely. Steadily, the Sewer Rats bristle at Jackson's persecution of their line, wondering if the Ventrue thinks them as low as Caitiff and thin-bloods.

CEDRICK CALHOUN "KHALID"

Epithet: Nosferatu Visionary and Impostor

Quote: *"I can protect you. I must protect you."*

Clan: Nosferatu

MORTAL DAYS: HOPE OF ESCAPE

When Cedrick Calhoun was born in 1902, the social mores of the time dictated that his cleft lip, withered left arm, and other physical disabilities precluded him from being part of his family's Illinois political dynasty. His uncle, with whom all major Calhoun decisions rested, shipped 13-year-old Cedrick off to a school in the Colorado Rockies where he'd be out of the public eye.

While he studied in the school's meager library, he plotted his escape. The plan took a year to perfect, plus another two for him to gather the necessary supplies. Cedrick broke out with little trouble. He couldn't shake the suspicion that someone was following him, however, and on the third night he set a snare trap and lay in wait. When the trap was sprung, the rope went taut, but he saw nothing suspended from the branch.

Rasping laughter alerted Cedrick to yet another presence. What he saw both horrified and fascinated him: a monstrous figure leaned against the tree, laughing. His amusement was cut short when the rope snapped, and the ensnared figure materialized. It lunged for Cedrick, but the monster — now snarling rather

than laughing — rushed to meet it. The laughing horror tore out the stalker's throat and drank from the wound. When he finished, Cedrick watched with dread fascination as his savior's wounds closed. The ghastly man introducing himself as Tommy, then Cedrick fainted as the strangeness of it all caught up to him.

He woke the next evening in a cave, where Tommy had brought him. The other man explained he was a Nosferatu, and he'd been tracking another vampire in the mountains. His victim, a Malkavian, had made his haven at the very school Cedrick had fled.

KINDRED NIGHTS: ETERNAL GUILT

Tommy made Cedrick his ghoul and, when the young man reached adulthood, Embraced him. Cedrick joined Tommy in diablerie, until the night they encountered Gangrel Archon, Nathaniel Simmons. The vampire killed Tommy and Cedrick barely managed to escape. He fled home to Illinois.

There, he found his younger brother enjoying the political career that ought to have been Cedrick's. Furious, Cedrick broke into his brother's house. He demanded information — bank-account numbers, safe combinations, real-estate holdings. Then the Nosferatu sank his teeth into his former kin, savoring the sharp tang of fear in his blood.

Reading his diary, Cedrick realized his brother wasn't a corrupt politician. His words at the memorial weren't hollow platitudes. He was a single father raising two children, grieving his lost brother, and trying to change Illinois for the better.

And Cedrick had murdered him.

He gave in to the Beast. When he finally felt he could face the world again, he emerged with two missions. First, Cedrick dedicated 20 years to providing for his niece and nephew, setting up a trust fund so they'd never lack for material comforts. He watched from the shadows as they grew.

Then Cedrick turned to his second mission. Though he couldn't bring his brother back, Cedrick was determined to carry on his legacy. He traveled widely, seeking those in need of protection. Over the years, he decided every corrupt, murderous path led back to the Kindred.

With Prince Lodin dead in the Lupine attacks in 1993, the Nosferatu set his sights on the throne. His earnest, optimistic attitude earned him an almost universal distrust. Cedrick never became Prince, but he won the respect of Chicago's vampires.

In recent nights, he's risen through the ranks, though under deceptive circumstances. Khalid, the Nosferatu Primogen, had an encounter with powerful forces that sent him into hiding. Cedrick knows little more than that, but the loss of a prominent Nosferatu in a time of upheaval troubles him. To help maintain order, he's begun masquerading as Khalid on the Primogen council. So far, the ruse has held, but Cedrick worries it's just a matter of time before he gets exposed as a fraud.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **The Good Shepherd:** With his authority as "Khalid," Cedrick pursues his original goal of lessening the horrors Kindred visit upon kine. He's careful to word policy proposals as Khalid would have, and defends his logic if he votes counter to the former Primogen's known stances on an issue. On the matter of the Lasombra joining the Camarilla, Cedrick's had to do a lot of dissembling while he figures out the best course of action.

- **Paranoid Impostor:** Leading a double life is exhausting. Cedrick's managed to keep the illusion going longer than he anticipated needing to, but he's had a few close calls. Last year, a neonate accused him of diablerizing Khalid and taking his place. Instead of paying the requested hush money, Cedrick killed his would-be blackmailer. Since then, he's paid a mortal hacker to dig into the connection between himself and Khalid on a monthly basis, to see if there's any chatter. He Dominates her to make her forget her research, though he always pays in full.

- **Self-Promotion:** In the short term, Cedrick finds using Khalid's influence convenient. He lays the groundwork for his own plans, leveraging them with the authority acting as Primogen grants him. However, he wants to get the credit for creating a better world as Cedrick Calhoun. Therefore, as Khalid, he's begun dropping hints to other Nosferatu that Cedrick would be an admirable choice for Primogen, hoping he can hold on to the position when pretending to be Khalid stops being feasible.

- **Eyes Opened:** While investigating Khalid's disappearance, Cedrick discovered the elder's suspicions about two methuselahs fighting for control of Chicago's Kindred. His notes reflected his paranoia: Many of the pages were written in code, some torn out and stashed in various hiding places. Cedrick is fairly certain he's not under anyone's control himself, though his name didn't appear on Khalid's list of independent vampires. He intends to meet with some of those named, to suss out what they know.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Sewer Office (Haven 1)** Cedrick keeps his haven in the sewers of Chicago. He's set up an office in a utility

room that hasn't been used since the flood. It's as cozy as a damp, stone-walled room belowground can be.

- **Morgan's Steakhouse (Contacts 3)** Politicians love Morgan's, occupying several tables on any given night. Cedrick sits among them, a nondescript diner, listening to their conversations as he selects which will be his meal for the evening.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Rufus Burri (Retainers 1)** Rufus Burri is a local politician trying to do good. Burri's goals mostly match up with Cedrick's own, but when they don't, Cedrick Dominates him to bring his views in line.
- **Political Activists (Allies 3, Influence 2)** Cedrick has influence over several grassroots groups and nonprofits dedicated to making people's lives better.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Wauneka (Reliance)** Cedrick counts on Wauneka's dedication, and relies heavily on the information his childe provides. He keeps his double identity away even from him, afraid of how he might react if the deception became apparent.
- **Nathaniel Bordruff (Terror)** Nathaniel terrifies Cedrick. If anyone's likely to work out Calhoun's fraud, it's him, and his punishment will be excruciating.
- **Primogen Council (Mixed Fortunes)** Calhoun manages well with Newberry, Hernandez, and Jackson, but other members of the Kindred government, Critias and Annabelle, worry him. He tries to talk with them as little as possible in case they engage him on some historic issue about which Cedrick knows nothing.

WHISPERS:

- **The Tenuous Lie:** Kindred are starting to ask if anyone has seen Cedrick and Khalid in the same room together in the last year or so. Cracks in Cedrick's façade are starting to show.
- **Baby Kisser:** Cedrick is a staple at Steadman's parties. He's not really a music aficionado, but watch how he's shaking hands and slapping backs. He must be campaigning for something.
- **Creature of Habit:** Cedrick patronizes the same restaurant the first Sunday of every month. He sits in the same booth, alone with his glass of wine. He's been on page 56 of *The Great Gatsby* for half a century.
- **Time's Up:** The other night, all the Primogen met at the opera house. *All* of them. And yet one of the Malkavians swears she spotted Khalid in the tunnels.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Cedrick is exceedingly dapper. Though his double-breasted suits and bowler hats evoke a different era, he brings a certain charm to the style. He's acquired quite the collection of pocket watches, and always has a chain peeking out from his vest.
- His silver cane is not merely decorative; a wooden stake is embedded in the handle and available.
- For all his dashing looks, he is still a Nosferatu. His teeth sit haphazardly in his misshapen mouth, and his left arm hangs limp at his side. Diablerie marks stain his aura, even though the crimes that made them happened long ago.
- As Khalid, he bears the scars of the elder's day in the sun and trades his fine suits for subtler modern clothing.
- Cedrick wears a Mask as mortal political journalist, Patrick Hampton. Doing so, he ingratiates himself with politicians and their staffers. Unintentionally, Calhoun acquires a lot of political gossip in this manner **(Mask 2)**.

Sire: Tommy

Embraced: 1925 (Born 1902)

Ambition: Lay the groundwork for "Cedrick Calhoun, Nosferatu Primogen" to take the place of "Khalid"

Convictions: I will never let my family come to harm; it is our duty to protect the weak

Touchstones: Lana Calhoun — grand-niece; Rufus Burri — Progressive up-and-coming politician

Humanity: 7

Generation: 8th

Blood Potency: 3

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4; Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 2; Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 6

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl (Biting) 4, Larceny 2, Stealth (Disguise) 4, Survival (Sewers) 4; Animal Ken 2, Etiquette 2, Insight 2, Leadership 1, Performance 1, Persuasion 2, Subterfuge (Imitation) 3; Academics (Philosophy) 4, Awareness 1, Finance 2, Investigation 2, Politics 4

Disciplines: Animalism 2, Dominate 3, Obfuscate 4, Potence 1

WAUNEKA

Epitaph: Information Broker

Quote: *"So. How 'bout you tell me what you think you know, and I'll tell you how much of that is bullshit."*

Clan: Nosferatu

MORTAL DAYS: LIFE'S BROKEN PROMISE

He served in Nam. That much he will grudgingly tell anyone who bothers to ask. People call him Wauneka. At least, that is the name embroidered on a fraying patch stubbornly clinging to the faded camouflage jacket. His story, it can be assumed, is no different from that of so many homeless veterans: indescribable horrors lurking in the jungle, unspeakable acts of violence, the smell of burning napalm and bubbling flesh, platoon mates reduced to a collection of ragged, bloody stumps, the endless search for weed, coke, heroin, PCP, LSD, even combinations of these to make the memories go away, the slow attrition of money, friends, family, and hope. A life absent of joy in the tent city of Lake Shore Drive. Wauneka refused to burden a shelter with his woes.

One night, he thought he saw a tall, bone-white man wearing a double-breasted suit and a bowler hat. A dense fog surrounded the man, but for one instant it cleared, revealing a twisted visage and a mouth full of long, sharp teeth. When he opened his eyes again, the man was still there, white as a ghost, but his face looked normal, even friendly.

The dapper man — Cedrick Calhoun — offered Wauneka a job: agree to be at a predetermined place at a specific time, watch and listen, then report back to the diner. In exchange, Calhoun would ensure he had enough methadone to help him manage his drug habit and a place to eat, sleep, shower, and keep secure what few belongings he had. The same offer extended to his street family and any others in Wauneka's network who elected to join in on the enterprise. How could he say no? Life as a paid informant was better than the slow, miserable death he'd been courting. He might still die, but at least it wouldn't be of hunger, exposure, or an OD on "El Diablo." To seal the deal, Calhoun offered the homeless man a drink from a tiny flask he produced from inside his jacket.

Often, Calhoun's instructions were "do enough dope to relax your body but leave your observational faculties intact while you lay covered in garbage bags and bits of newspaper under park benches or doorways." The things he heard and saw made no sense to him. Calhoun, however, was always able to extract information and rewarded Wauneka with more contents from

his flask. He learned how to travel beneath the streets, listening from grates. He taught other vets in his network, especially others who had lived through the hell of Vietnam only to return to Chicago, haunted and unable to reintegrate into a society that vilified them. Some of the guys swore there were monsters down there in the dark, but Wauneka assumed they were high on something. They'd usually turn up dead a few days later.

KINDRED NIGHTS: EYES EVERYWHERE

After a decade of loyal service, Calhoun Embraced his informant. The transition from life into living death was more painful than detoxing, especially the twisting of his spine and the tusk-like teeth and fangs that erupted from his jaw. Wauneka didn't speak to Calhoun for weeks — partly because it hurt too much to talk, but mainly because he was angry as fuck. The vampire never left his side, though, guiding him, teaching him to hunt. He reveled in the ability to erupt out of shadows, snatch up the human predators that plagued the streets, and devour them in an instant. He could still protect his street family. He could even get high if he drank from addicts on the edge of overdose. Calhoun's one goal was to make Chicago a better place for both Kindred and mortals. To do that, he needed an information network, and Wauneka was the key.

Mistrustful of computer technology, Wauneka chooses to work the way he knows best: word of mouth and an army of eyes and ears, both mortal and immortal. Folks never really notice bums on the street — the mut-

tering, jittery, smelly refuse of humanity. A dude could be lying on a park bench right next to them, and they'd still carry on, yapping away, oblivious to the watchers and listeners all around them. The Kindred, at least, are a little more circumspect, though not by much. Getting information out of them is more difficult, but Wauneka's patient.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Punish the Weak:** Wauneka's network of spies and informants grows exponentially. The young Nosferatu doesn't want to become spymaster for the city, desiring no conflict with Bronwyn, but is planning on using information procured to blackmail what he calls the city's "failed Cams" such as Ballard, Newberry, and Neally, so he can release their cash and investments among his homeless allies.

- **Burdened:** Nosferatu in Wauneka's network have mentioned seeing Khalid in the sewers at the same time he was supposed to be in a highly visible meeting at the opera. He doesn't know what's going on, but he's sure Calhoun will want him to get to the bottom of it. That means talking to Edith, and she's been acting strange lately. Well, stranger than usual.

- **City Hound:** Wauneka has few aspirations to power, but fiercely protects the Camarilla's Traditions. He just sees them as common sense. He's been appointed as one of Prince Jackson's Hounds, and intends to prove his worth to the Ivory Tower. More importantly, he wants to prove to himself that he can be a soldier again.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Magadon Building Basement (Haven 2)** The streets, the subway, dark alleys, tunnels, and sewers are all known to Wauneka. While he could sleep anywhere, he's found a private retreat in a sub-sub-basement of a Magadon Pharmaceutical building downtown that he uses for day rest and hiding things of value.

- **Lake Shore Drive Tent Cities (Contacts 3, Haven 2, Herd 4)** According to Prince Jackson, Wauneka's official territory and feeding grounds consist of "any kine fool enough to sleep under a tent in Chicago." Jackson was being flippant about the city's homeless community, but Wauneka's taken the declaration to heart. He considers the various tent cities across the city in vacant parking lots and under bridges his domain, but holds Lake Shore Drive in Uptown close to his heart. It's where he lived for a long time following his discharge.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Rip Eldon (Allies 1) Karla Mazlienski (Contacts 1)** Wauneka doesn't much like the idea of thralls, mainly because he was one. He's found it useful over the years to keep a few members of his mortal network "in his back pocket" so to speak, but has not fed them his vitae. These include a handful of the homeless kids under his protection, his old war buddy Rip, and an undercover cop named Karla. They each help root his Humanity and keep him sane.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Cedrick Calhoun (Mawla 4, Trust)** Wauneka knows he would have died in a pool of his own vomit had it not been for Cedrick Calhoun. For that reason alone, he will follow his sire into the sun if it comes to it. He's wary of Jackson, but if Calhoun supports him, it means he trusts the new Prince to clean up the corruption that spread under Lodin.

- **Olaf (Suspicion)** Word from Wauneka's network is there's a new vampire on the street harassing the homeless, going by the name of Olaf. Calhoun often told him in private how he thought Lodin was too crafty for final death. Wauneka's a pretty good judge of character, and is beginning to connect the dots.

- **Duncan MacTavish (Challenge)** Wauneka has heard tell of MacTavish's activities on behalf of the Anarchs. The thought of opposing this fellow soldier-turned-vampire reignites a flame in Wauneka, leading to him planning strategies and contingencies against the Gangrel. He craves the possibility of a new war.

WHISPERS:

- **Resentful:** Some of the city's Kindred call Wauneka "Calhoun's dog." Rumor has it, he tore out the throat of the last person to make the remark to his face.

- **Underworld Legend:** If a vampire can tolerate stepping through garbage, unwashed kine, and dozens of flapping tents, they might find Wauneka holding court among the homeless as the Beggar Prince.

- **Mistaken Identity:** Due to their similarly downtrodden states, some Kindred believe Wauneka and Olaf are the same person.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Wauneka's a solidly built guy who looks like he's mixed with a bit of everything: Native, African, Asian, Latino, you name it. He's the lump of rags

and garbage lying inert in the mouth of an alleyway, huddled into the meager shelter of a door front, underneath a bench. His face, when it's not covered by a balaclava or concealed within the depths of his hoodie, is all ruined nose and protruding fangs, especially those that jut, tusk-like, from his lower jaw.

- Other street rats call him Spook on account of his ability to skulk in dark corners and alleyways, making hardly any noise and leaving little trace save the ubiquitous smell of hot, stale piss and unwashed flesh.
- Wauneka has no constructed Mask, honest in his appearance and lifestyle as a down-and-out war veteran.

Sire: Cedrick Calhoun

Embraced: 2005 (Born 1938)

Ambition: Financially ruin the "failed Cams"

Convictions: Always remain loyal to your superiors

Touchstones: Rip Eldon — former private and similarly homeless veteran, who does not judge or question Wauneka's horrifying devolution in appearance

Humanity: 7

Generation: 9th

Blood Potency: 1

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4; Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Composure 2; Intelligence 2, Wits 4, Resolve 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 6

Skills: Brawl 2, Firearms (Rifle) 3, Melee 1, Larceny (Surveillance) 3, Stealth (Camouflage) 4, Survival (Warzones) 4; Insight 3, Intimidation 2, Streetwise (Homeless Community) 4, Subterfuge 2; Awareness (Listening) 4, Investigation 2, Medicine 2

Disciplines: Auspex 1, Animalism 1, Potence 3

EDITH BEAUBIEN

Epitaph: The Painted Lady, Mistress of the Coil, Cultivar

Quote: *"Beauty is a prison, my dear, but pain is liberation."*

Clan: Nosferatu

MORTAL DAYS: AWAY WITH THE CIRCUS

Upon her formal debut in the summer of 1889, the only thing connecting Edith Beaubien to her Native

ancestors was an album of faded photographs hidden in the attic of her *Métis* family's Prairie Avenue mansion. The belle of Chicago, her suitors were scions of powerful men. The only other young woman who could rival her in beauty, charm, and accomplishments was her best friend Mavis, heiress-apparent of the Blackwaters, another old *Métis* family whose wealth was built upon trade. All the land surrounding the Great Lakes belonged to their people, Mavis told her, and someday, according to Grandmother Nerissa, it would all belong to them again.

The line of respectable men waiting to wed her bored Edith rigid and her family offered little entertainment. The recently arrived carnival provided the perfect excuse to avoid her obligations and slip away with Mavis to partake in all the delights promised by the traveling show.

The tattooed lady, with her neck, chest, arms, and legs covered in bold black outlines and riotously colored designs, captivated her attention. The woman radiated confidence and power, and when she spoke, she did so with educated eloquence. Edith watched with equal parts horror and fascination as the tattooist, a beautiful young man with dark eyes and an easy smile named Lau Fu, tapped rhythmically on the long, needle-tipped stick delivering ink into the woman's flesh. It was an arresting act of defiance and liberty that allured Edith. The night before the carnival left town, Edith packed a small bag and slipped out of the servants' entrance.

It was naivete on her part, thinking that her parents would simply let her vanish with a foreign lover. It took

five years for the Pinkertons to find her and Lau Fu. They murdered him in front of her — all of it was something out of a terrible nightmare. Bleeding, sobbing, she struggled to reach Lau Fu, to kiss him one last time before the light left his eyes forever. The vampire who found her in this way didn't know why he felt the call to Embrace her, but couldn't stop himself from doing so.

KINDRED NIGHTS: SUBMERGED IN BLOOD

While Edith plumbed the depths of grief for Lau Fu, sharp spurs of bone erupted down her spine, her fingernails extended into claws, and her bicuspids became fangs. She was hideous. Yet, despite the empty ache in her heart, Edith felt *bliss*. Khalid, the wise, old vampire who sired her, proved to be a worthy Mawla who pushed her to expand the horizons of her learning. She traveled far and wide, settling for a while in San Francisco, where the influx of immigrants from Asia brought methods of tattooing heretofore unknown in the United States. After the great earthquake of 1907, she rejoined Khalid in Chicago, established her own tattoo parlor, and settled into the rhythms of unlife.

During the Lupine attack, Edith sustained grave injuries but managed to escape beneath the surface of Lake Michigan where she drifted in and out of torpor, experiencing electrifying visions of a vast garden overgrowing the entire Great Lakes region. In her dreams, beautiful and terrible figures slumbered in the muddy depths, and like the slip of a distant melody, they cried softly to their Mother.

Edith emerged from the water to find all her tattoos and deformities vanished, a condition that persisted for a full night and a day of sleep. Waiting on the shore was Mavis, impossibly unaged and in the company of a small, handsome woman with eyes like the night sky. Edith was transformed beneath the lake and bound in service to the submerged Ancestor. Her deformities and body modifications eventually returned, but her mind now belonged to the Mother.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Herald of the Mother:** Edith is currently ignorant to the power the slumbering Ancestor possesses, but she wishes to know more. At this time, Edith acts as the herald to something all Kindred but her would deem nightmarish.

- **Potential Converts:** The recent activities of the Cult of Isis, who raided the Milwaukee Chantry when Carna fled, are of keen interest to Edith. These so-called Bahari put their frenzied faith in a twisted distortion of the Great Mother's story, though there are enough seeds of truth within their Revelation to make them worth pursuing.

- **The Truth About Khalid:** Something happened to Khalid. The vampire impersonating him is not Edith's sire, but thus far, no one else seems to suspect. Edith has no plans to divulge this information yet, though she could be convinced if the Mother wished it.

- **Masochism:** While Hunger pricks Edith, she finds a way to sate it through pain — the kind inflicted upon her as well as that she inflicts upon others. Inspection of a few thin-blood mercurial marks led her to the creation of a store of inks composed of vitae, natural pigments, and strange plants culled from Mavis Blackwater's personal garden. Each concoction evokes its own sublime flavor of agony and stimulates the humours in a victim.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **The Painted Lady (Haven 2, Herd 3, Resources 2)** Shortly after the First World War, Edith returned to Chicago and purchased several pieces of prime real estate in what is now known as Old Town. In historical properties on Ogden Avenue, she established The Painted Lady, a tattoo salon for exclusive mortal clients, and now a BDSM dungeon for the more adventurous. She even offers Kindred a reliable source of blood if they enjoy mixing pleasure and pain in their feeding.

- **Old Town (Influence 3, Herd 4)** Edith controls the Old Town territory and feeds subtly on its residents, stalking drunks on the way back from bars, pouncing on unaware vagrants, and waiting until she and a victim are the only two folks left at the bus stop before going for the bite. Many mortals treat her warily due to her heavily tattooed and pierced shriveled body, but she strikes with surprising force.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **The Bells (Retainers 2)** During Edith's lakebed torpor, her mortal business partners Cathy and Lou Bell continued managing her properties and keeping her tattoo parlor running without interruption, though customers reduced in number with her absence. Her reappearance after two decades surprised the couple, and Edith now wonders if they have been taking too hefty a cut from her finances. The Bells seem very nervous about Edith's sudden assertion of interest.

- **Jo Dillon (Retainers 1)** Edith employs a young lady named Jo Dillon to act as her daytime tattoo artist. Jo was hired along with many others, but only Dillon has stuck out the weirdness of The Painted Lady's patrons. She continues to create fantastic

new tattoo designs, and is the only artist Edith trusts with marking her body these nights.

- **Mavis Blackwater (Allies 3)** Edith doesn't know what Mavis Blackwater is, but she's still her friend from childhood and frequent confidante. Edith defers to Mavis, despite her apparently mortal (though long-lived) nature.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Nerissa Blackwater (Mawla 5, Mistress)** Nerissa Blackwater bewitches Edith. If Nerissa commanded her to jump into a burning building, Edith would likely try. There is no Blood Bond between the two, but Edith's experience in the lake has altered her mental state significantly enough to compel fealty.
- **Cedrick Calhoun (Suspicion)** Edith knows "Khalid" is not Khalid, but hasn't yet realized it's Cedrick Calhoun behind the illusion. She's concerned about her sire's actual whereabouts and is misguidedly considering utilizing Nathaniel Bordruff or Charles Dawson to find him.
- **Clan Ventrue (Rivals)** Edith claims a lot of territory but few allies. Influence-hungry Ventrue such as Neally and Ballard wonder how easy it would be to eliminate Edith and claim Old Town as their own.

WHISPERS:

- **Sated Appetite:** All vampires enjoy their privacy, but not one Kindred has witnessed Edith feed since she emerged from Lake Michigan.
- **Strange Cult:** Edith favors a vampire group she calls "the Cultivars." She's personally tattooed every single one of them, and strangely their tattoos don't fade after a day's slumber.
- **Not of Caine:** Some claim Edith is a follower of Lilith and drank from her chalice.
- **Unwelcome Witness:** Evan Klein as police officer Dirk MacGriff saw Edith when her Nosferatu bane abated for a single night, but nobody believes him.

MASK AND MIEN:

- On the rare occasions when she chooses to utilize Impostor's Guise, Edith resembles the sort of curvy, sensual beauty one might find in a Mucha lithograph: creamy skin with a chaste blush, beckoning hazel eyes, and tumbling waves of thick black hair. She calls herself Athena Goldacre, and points at her name on the deed to The Painted Lady tattoo parlor, next to Lou and Cathy Bell **(Mask 2)**.
- Most nights, Edith appears as the creature she is: tall, lean, and powerfully built with distinctive spiky bone spurs protruding from each vertebra and from the tips of her shoulders. She is bald and her unsettling acid-green eyes glow above sharp fangs that extend down past her red-glossed lips.
- Elaborate tattoos of lush vegetation — flowers, vines, trees, grasses, herbs, etc. — in screamingly vivid hues cover every visible inch of her skin. Because she takes great pride in her body art, she wears clothing that allows her ink to be seen.

Sire: Khalid

Embraced: 1895 (Born 1871)

Ambition: Find new methods to sate my Hunger

Convictions: Experience a new pain each night

Touchstones: Mavis Blackwater — object of obsession

Humanity: 7

Generation: 7th

Blood Potency: 3

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5; Charisma 1, Manipulation 2, Composure 4; Intelligence 4, Wits 2, Resolve 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 8, Willpower 8

Skills: Brawl 1, Craft (Body Art) 5, Stealth 2; Etiquette 4, Insight 3, Performance (Live Art) 3, Persuasion 3, Subterfuge 2; Academics (Native American Tribes) 3, Awareness 3, Finance 2, Medicine (Biology) 2, Occult 2, Politics 2, Science 3, Technology 3

Disciplines: Obfuscate 5, Potence 2

NATHANIEL BORDRUFF

Epitaph: The scourge sent to end Kindred wickedness

Quote: *"The time is coming, brothers and sisters. Have you the armor of your righteousness ready to hand?"*

Clan: Nosferatu

MORTAL DAYS: ARROGANT BELIEF

Born into the family of a Pentecostal preacher and raised to become the same, Nathaniel brought the word of Christ wherever he traveled. His family came to settle in a little town north of New Orleans when Nathaniel was 15 years old. Every day, his father inveighed against

the swelling depravity of that cesspit of a city, both around the kitchen table and beneath the Revival tent. Unusually, to Nathaniel's observation, he stopped short of encouraging the righteous to go among their fellow men and rescue their souls from Perdition, a thing that struck him as odd. He was told that he would be given to understand in time but that time had not yet come.

It arrived on a sweltering summer evening, in the bed of a horse-drawn wagon stinking of blood, piss, and mortal terror. Nathaniel woke from a restless, nightmare-haunted sleep by voices raised in agitation and he crept downstairs to investigate. Outside, he found his father, the church elders, and a man he did not know, all gathered around the wagon and the young man inside it, bloody and begging for the salvation of his soul. To Nathaniel's shock, they struck off his head with an axe and drove one of the stakes used to hold the revival-tent guy-ropes through his chest. Nathaniel was summoned into the circle of his elders and initiated into the secret of his father's travels: He was not only a preacher of the Lord's word but also a soldier in a war against Satan's minions.

Nathaniel took to the art of vampire hunting like a fish to water, mastering the skills necessary to stalk the creatures and end their unholy lives with stake and fire. Where his master was deliberate and cautious, Nathaniel was fierce with the righteousness of his cause and the glory of the Lord. A new way was in order, particularly if the ultimate goal was to cleanse New Orleans of a bloodsucking infestation. Master and apprentice quarreled frequently and parted ways.

With Nathaniel's leash unclipped he took the war to the leeches battening on the greatest city in the south. For a handful of years, he was the terror that stalked them even as they hunted the night, bringing proof of his kills back to his elders for their approval and the adulation of those who knew of his holy task. Even he is not certain when the fire of doing the Lord's work was replaced by the desire for praise in his breast, but he blames it for his fall from grace: the terrible and foolish hour he pursued the unholy beasts deep into the bayous and there was taken and transformed into that which he most loathed.

KINDRED NIGHTS: HATRED FOR ALL

Even undeath has not quenched Nathiel's desire to end the cursed existence of all vampires. His initial failures at that pursuit have fueled his efforts since. Serving Lodin allowed him to vent his hatred on the tattered remnants of the Anarch insurgency. Serving Khalid allowed him to advance his own schemes against the Prince and the structures of undead power. All of these have served his own wounded pride and ego, the belief

that he deserved the glory of the Lord for his service to mankind and the recognition and exaltation of men. Never before has the chance to seize all that he desires rested closer to his hands.

With the advent of the Second Inquisition, more than just a handful of godly men and women know of vampires now: The Masquerade is cracked, and it requires only a few well-placed blows to break it entirely. It requires only the hands willing to deliver those blows because the necessary tools to do so are already there. Nathaniel has made a point of learning all there is to learn about mankind's new champions, the government-trained and employed vampire hunters called, ironically enough, FIRSTLIGHT. He subtly thwarts attempts to subvert the suspected local agents to any cause but his own. He *will* see the Kindred brought to the fire, he *will* see all they have built burn to ashes, and even if he dies in the attempt, he *will* hear his name spoken as the one who achieved what generations of hunters before him could not accomplish.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Fire for All:** *Nathaniel Bordruff hates everything.* All of his schemes and desires revolve around bringing an end to the Kindred as a whole. He keeps close track of the activities of local government agents and agencies that could be acting as FIRSTLIGHT fronts with the intent of using them to expose the Kindred of Chicago as the Kindred of London were exposed.

He has discovered a suspected FIRSTLIGHT operative, Gabriel Valdez, may be related to a recently Embraced Caitiff in the Lower West Side of the city.

- **Crisis of Conscience:** Nathaniel doesn't believe for a second that "Khalid" is Khalid, and makes a desultory effort at "searching" for the former Primogen, whose mealy-mouthed maunderings about "Golconda" and "the salvation of the Cainite soul" would make Nathaniel vomit if it were physically possible. He pretends solicitation for his elder's distress and desire for peace but secretly holds him and his pretentions toward morality beneath contempt, not least because they sometimes seem so damned *sincere.* Khalid may be an utter failure at the pursuit of forgiveness and enlightenment but his willingness to *keep trying* gnaws at the part of Nathaniel's mind and soul.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Church of Christ (Haven 2, Retainers 3)** Nathaniel keeps his haven in the basement of a freshly rehabbed Church of Christ on the South Side. The church custodial staff, the entire consistory, and certain select members of the congregation are his retainers.

- **Clan Nosferatu (Contacts 2)** Nathaniel's domain is greatly reduced from the days when he was Lodin's personal hammer deployed against the Anarchs. He wields a little influence over the Nosferatu in the city but nowhere near as much as Calhoun-as-Khalid, a fact that galls him.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Church Congregation (Retainers 3)** Nathaniel's principal retainers are the staff and certain select members of the congregation of the CoC building he calls his home. The janitor and several of the elders and deacons are his daytime protectors and errand runners.

- **Reverend Doctor Jefferson Taylor (Retainers 3)** Minister Taylor is Nathaniel's ghoul and mouthpiece. A competent theological scholar, Taylor nonetheless lacked a *certain something* in the oratorial department until Nathaniel started operating him like a glove puppet.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **All Kindred (Utter Loathing)** Bordruff hates everyone. He is actively plotting the final deaths of every lick in Chicago, preferably every lick everywhere, and he barely troubles to hide it half the time.

- **Kevin Jackson (Most Hated)** He particularly loathes Jackson (whom he perceives as having stolen the throne from him, no matter how unlikely his ability to take and hold that throne might have been), Damien (because *he* should be sheriff), and Khalid (see: Primogen, should have been).

- **Mercy Valdez (Useful)** Nathaniel has distinctly unwholesome designs on Mercy. Despite the fact she's a damned Papist, the pathetic little thing seems to have an instinctual grasp on the inherently loathsome nature of the Kindred, a thing of which he approves. He approves still more of her strong ties to her church, ties he'd very much like to employ to his own ends.

WHISPERS:

- **No Friends:** Nathaniel's position as one of Lodin's favored Anarch-hunting lapdogs has not won him many favors over the years, especially among those Kindred who favor the Anarch cause in both theory and practice. Nor has the relish with which he ends the unlives of other vampires gone unremarked.

- **Welcome Solitude:** Despite the absence of diablerie scars in his aura, there are few who trust him, none who like him, and almost no one who wishes to be publicly associated with him as an ally. This does not disturb him anywhere near as much as it should.

- **Cover Blown:** Some sharp-eared licks have begun drawing the connections between some of Nathaniel's signature turns of phrase in Elysium and a South Side preacher whose sermons lately have taken a rather distinctly on-the-nose bent when it comes to matters near and dear to the Kindred.

MASK AND MIEN:

- An enormously tall man in life, in undeath Nathaniel is a gaunt, cadaverous, preying mantis of a vampire, all unnaturally long limbs that look vaguely sharp at certain angles, a spindly stalk of a neck with a perfectly egg-shaped bald head atop it. He has lately taken to stealing plain black suits, white dress shirts, and black silk ties from big-and-tall men's apparel shops, in a doomed effort to look somewhat more presentable to potential human allies.

- Nathaniel uses Reverend Taylor as his Mask among the kine, as he has no desire to construct a false identity, take on a profession to pay the bills, or as-

sociate closely with the herd. Taylor follows his every instruction and acts as fine camouflage **(Mask 2)**.

Sire: Virginia the Hag

Embraced: 1926 (Born 1891)

Ambition: Destroy Prince Jackson's stable regime

Convictions: I will show Kindred the light of God

Touchstones: Dr. Jeffrey Taylor — his voice in the daylit world, sounding a warning to the living

Humanity: 2

Generation: 8th

Blood Potency: 3

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5; Charisma 5, Manipulation 4, Composure 4; Intelligence 3, Wits 2, Resolve 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 8, Willpower 8

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Firearms 1, Melee (Stake) 4, Stealth 2, Survival 1; Etiquette (Church) 3, Insight 3, Intimidation (Size) 3, Leadership 2, Persuasion (Preaching) 3, Subterfuge 4; Academics (Theology) 4, Awareness 3, Investigation 2, Occult 3, Technology 1

Disciplines: Dominate 3, Obfuscate 4, Potence 4

CHARLES "CROOK" DAWSON

Epitaph: Happy-Go-Lucky Killer

Quote: *"You ain't from around here? They call me Crook, but don't let that scare you. Buy me a drink and I'll help you get set up so you can find your way around."*

Clan: Nosferatu

MORTAL DAYS: THEY KEEP BURNING

Charles was a Depression-era kid of mixed Oneida and Afro-American heritage. Born with a multitude of health issues, severe problems with his legs and back gave him a hunch, a distinctive limp, and an overly large head. Despite his disabilities, Charles was a person of good spirits. The result was that most people took a liking to Charles, almost immediately, and dropped their guard around him. He became a ward of the state at five years old when the small house his family was living in burned down in a surprise fire. Most considered it a hate crime; his parents were Native and black day laborers in Madison, Wisconsin at a time when all those things were looked down upon. Charles didn't seem to lose his happy demeanor.

Once on the street, he connected with two traveling hucksters by the name of Claude and Poe. They bought him some food and showed him how to play pool. Claude recognized Charles' demeanor and disabilities were a huge asset to their con. In pool it was very effective, because most folks weren't on their A game when playing Charles and didn't fight him because of how bad it looked to fight a person unable to defend himself.

It was Charles' disarming nature that earned him the nickname "Crook," as folks claimed every time he smiled you lost some money.

The hucksters found themselves in Chicago in the '50s where they worked many of the local black clubs and lounges on the South Side and West Side. Claude had a daughter, Ina Miller, and swore he'd quit the game. Unfortunately, the game didn't quit him. Some thugs he'd scammed caught up with him and it ended badly for the pool shark.

Charles wanted to get payback for Claude, the only person who'd ever really treated him like a brother. The always-quiet Poe slipped Charles the info he needed to track down one of Claude's killers. He was a thug by the name of Curtis. Curtis worked at a gas station near 75th and Exchange. Poe waited to see what Crook would do.

Charles found the man, barred the doors, poured gasoline all around, and set a fire. The gas station exploded, and his quarry burned to death. Charles sat and watched it. It reminded him of the fire he'd caused when he was a boy. His parents hadn't screamed the same way old Curtis did.

When he got back to Poe's lounge, the twisted old man was there waiting for him. Poe said he knew everything. He congratulated Charles for acting. He told Charles that broken people like he and Charles needed to take what they needed from the world.

KINDRED NIGHTS: UNQUENCHABLE FLAME

Charles' change from mortal to Nosferatu didn't alter his appearance much, though his skin darkened and twisted as though he were badly burned. Poe and he found and tied up the remaining thugs and kept them in the lounge basement as feeding stock.

As he entered Kindred society, Charles maintained his normal charming demeanor despite the transformations to his skin. He made many friends among the Nosferatu as well as a few enemies. There were those who found his happy-go-lucky way disingenuous and noted his penchant for solving problems with fire. He eventually attracted the attention of Nathaniel Bordruff, who offered him a chance to work with him, bringing fire to all Kindred in the name of the Lord. Charles turned down the offer, killed some of the older Sewer Rat's servants, and spent considerable effort undermining Bordruff's schemes. This earned him Bordruff's enmity and the respect of quite a few Kindred.

Charles' goal is survival and entertaining himself. Skulking the South Side streets, he preys on church folks who take pity on him. Those he doesn't feed on he uses to get access to myriad small havens across the North and South Sides of the city. He is so good at it that he finds he has a surplus of victims and hidey-holes. At Poe's urging, he offers meals and places to rest to other vampires for the cost of favors, resources, and protection.

Charles recently came to realize that Poe was one of Nathaniel Bordruff's childer. At the end of the '90s, Poe ran afoul a pack of nasty Lupines active on the South Side. He was slain, and Charles inherited many of his connections. He closed Poe's lounge on the South Side and opened his own, named "Crooks," in Rogers Park on the North Side of the city.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Master Carouser:** Crook is a fount of information. He knows how to spin a yarn that compels others to divulge their woes and secrets. He is relatable in his obvious physical suffering. Later, whatever information he has obtained prompts new questions from the friendly Charles, and his guests just pour out their innermost feelings.

- **Game Master:** Charles has a decidedly dark side that most people don't see coming until it's too late. Sometimes he gets bored. When he gets bored, he schemes. He learned the art of the long con from Claude. Sometimes he'll orchestrate a conflict just to see what secrets spill out as people rush to resolve it. He thinks of it as beating the bushes to see what drops. He likes to be at the center of things. He works to be important enough to be sought out, but not so much as to seem a threat.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Crooks' Lounge (Haven 2, Resources 3)** Crooks, the lounge Charles opened in the '90s, has expanded to become a franchise with five locations across the city: two on the North Side, two on the South Side, and one on the West Side. While they have the appearances of dive bars with built-in liquor stores, they have subbasements that hold victims and provide havens for free-roaming vampires much like a Depression-era flophouse.

- **Churchgoer Herd (Herd 2)** For his part, Charles never feeds in his lounges. He enjoys the hunt, especially in taking blood from charitable types. His bitterness is deeply buried beneath a warm smile, but he truly detests the pity shown to him by churchgoers.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Bar Owners (Allies 3)** Charles loves a good seedy bar and keeps his lounges relatively invisible by making sure there are always a couple more bars in his neighborhoods that are seedier. To this end he is a silent partner with many small bar owners and the principal reason why most of them never closed.

- **Ina Miller (Retainers 2)** One of his barkeeps is the daughter of his old partner. Ina Miller, now in her 60s, runs the bar called the Steel Horse Lounge in Albany Park. She recognizes Charles as a friend who always keeps an eye out for her.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Chicago Camarilla (Marriage of Convenience)** Charles has little care for the politics of the Camarilla. He identifies as Camarilla because it's the most convenient association, but he does what he wants to whom he wants, and usually finds a way to scoot under the radar so he doesn't draw too much attention from any one Kindred of means or power.

- **Nathaniel Bordruff (Sabotage)** Charles has a weak spot for Nathaniel, however. He loves to fuck with him and his plans whenever he gets a chance. Main-

ly this is because he sees him as a self-righteous idiot and it bugs Charles that this ridiculous creature, who can't appreciate the gifts of being Kindred, is his grandsire. Whenever he can, Charles uses the local police to inform on Bordruff's activities.

WHISPERS:

- **Friends in Low Places:** The Caitiff like Charles; they all say he's a sweetheart. He has been accruing favors among them for years now by helping them to track down their sires. He's said to more than a few people that he will trace a Caitiff's lineage for a price.
- **Arson Attack:** When Charles gets bored he sets fires. Word among the Malkavians that hang at his lounges is he often talks about starting a new Great Fire in Chicago, fit to consume the city. Some say he's a Sabbat agent, waiting to light a spark for the Sword of Caine.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Charles' Mask is a homeless man by the name of Raymond Hattie. Hattie is connected to the back streets and slum bars and will steal your shorts in a game of pool **(Mask 1)**.
- Charles has a slight hunch and one leg is slightly shorter than the other, giving him a limp he has worked into a well-known signature stride. His skin is dark and twisted like burned leather giving the appearance, at first glance, of a full-body burn victim.
- Crook's a finger popping, hip stepping, fun guy who always has a smile on his face and catchy song on his lips. His favorite is "Spinning Top" by XTC from the 1970s.

Sire: Poe

Embraced: 1958 (Born 1923)

Ambition: Burn Bordruff down to his skeleton

Convictions: Never allow myself to become the victim of a con

Touchstones: Ina Miller – Owner of the Steel Horse Lounge

Humanity: 4

Generation: 10th

Blood Potency: 1

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3; Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Composure 2; Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 5

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 4, Firearms 1, Melee (Pool Cue) 3, Stealth 4, Survival 3; Etiquette 1, Insight 3, Intimidation 2, Leadership 3, Persuasion (Pity) 4, Streetwise 4, Subterfuge (The Long Con) 5; Awareness 3, Finance 2, Intimidation 2, Investigation (Fraud) 2, Politics 3

Disciplines: Fortitude 1, Obfuscate 1, Potence 3

ROWAN

Epitaph: Change is Inevitable

Quote: *"Where there's life, there's always a little inner chaos."*

Clan: Nosferatu

MORTAL DAYS: UNORDERED FLESH

Rowan was never very comfortable with the body they were in. As a teen they tried every manner of masking it: tattoos, piercings, different styles of clothing designed to hide more than expose. It never really worked. The shape of it, the gender, the way people reacted to their black skin or called them a guy. None of these ever felt right but Rowan didn't really know what to do about it. It was a struggle and a source of depression and dysphoria for many years and Rowan just tolerated it as the way they were.

Rowan was a festival kid and got real into the local burner culture in Chicago, fitting in with the other outsiders there and getting into hallucinogens. They started to love themselves no matter what their body was, and grow comfortable with the idea of whatever body shape or gender they had. It was at the burns Rowan finally accepted their queer nonbinary trans identity, and was accepted by the others there, too.

It was at one such summer burn that Rowan met Kamilah. Her face seemed to look kind of... frog-like? There was no other way to describe it, her eyes were round and swiveling, her tongue slightly too large for her wide, toothed mouth. Rowan didn't judge when she revealed it in the darkness of the acid-tripping tent. They were intrigued more than anything, and Kamilah confided she was something more than human. The two of them talked long into the night, bonding over feeling like outsiders in their own bodies. Kamilah said she never felt like herself until after she became a vampire. She offered to turn Rowan into a vampire, and in Rowan's innocence and tripped-out mind they agreed.

When Rowan awoke later that night, Kamilah was gone, disappearing into the festival circuit. Their body had transformed, growing longer and lankier, and they

could feel their bristled ears and sunken eyes. Their fingers felt like elongated claws. Had they become an animal? It took a while for Rowan to understand. They began to integrate minimally with Kindred culture, learning who the Nosferatu in Chicago were and joining the Camarilla for the sake of safety, but never really fitting in.

KINDRED NIGHTS: ACCEPTING THE MONSTER

Although Kamilah thought vampires could be confirming for Rowan, they felt even more like an outsider amidst these monsters. While Rowan is a member of the Camarilla, they mostly stay out of vampire politics, finding no room for them or their opinions, and never fully being introduced to the sect's politics.

Rowan's closest family was the burners, and that is still true. In order to still maintain their place in burner culture Rowan transitioned to be a performer, using their bat-like looks as a double disguise to keep their vampire identity hidden from the mortal burners. The performances are a combination of a horror show and body manipulation dance, where Rowan moves around in creepy contortions and utilizes their appearance to shock and awe the audience. There aren't too many vampires in the Chicago burner culture; usually the other ones who show up at events are there as tourists or wanderers looking for a meal, leading to Rowan coming to know the occasional passing Gangrel or Ravnos. Rowan keeps the burners as a small herd for safety and feeding off of, with full consent, though they're not completely aware *why* Rowan drinks their blood. It's possible that with any amount of manipulation a different vampire could control Rowan's herd, or Rowan themselves. They're a neonate Nosferatu, and rather vulnerable.

Sometimes, Rowan misses their old body. It wasn't perfect, but they had made a kind of peace with the way things were. Now they are more permanently changed. Rowan is gaining more control over it by the night, and learning the new things their body can do, but in the last five years since their Embrace they occasionally fall to despair. Rowan has decided that being an outsider means they have to accept change, and that the chaos of life is abundant with it. It's not an easy thing to accept, however. Rowan incorporates these ideas in their performance at the burns, and speaks to it openly with human and Kindred friends alike.

Rowan is sometimes a huge mystery to the older Kindred of the city, who don't understand new generations of humans let alone the newer generations of Kindred. The fact that Rowan has outwardly accepted themselves as a Nosferatu monster is disliked by many traditionalists... they'd prefer Rowan had more self-loathing than they do. Additionally, newer concepts of queerness and transness, even among vampires, is confusing. Rowan is a window into youth culture, and some Kindred intend to use that knowledge to their advantage.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Reluctant Politician:** Rowan intends to mostly stay out of Kindred politics, but is inevitably brought back in by the Nosferatu clan. They do not want to be a part of any violence, but if forced it would be a difficult decision of what to do in order to survive.

- **Deep Attachment:** Rowan considers the burners their family, and if anything should happen to them it could potentially do great damage to Rowan. They might react violently or change their persona entirely, searching for revenge or retreating in sorrow. They're definitely Rowan's weakness and strength.

- **Marked for Destruction:** Rowan wants to maintain their identity as a performer at the burns, but with that comes risk. They try to stay far away from the fire performers, but accidents do happen. Nathaniel is aware of Rowan's activities at these little festivals and has put his mind to putting this deviant down "for the good of the Camarilla," with a little Charles Dawson-given arson.

- **Seeking Modernity:** Rowan wants to solidify their friendship with Wauneka, hoping to perhaps shore up the queer Nosferatu support in the city. Rowan is hopeful they can begin to create change in the Kindred and their outdated ways if they work to-

gether. Rowan is completely unaware of how most elder vampires fail to recognize gender, sexuality, or mortal identity after several centuries of existence.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Artistic Communes (Haven 1, Herd 2, Influence 1)** Rowan spends most of their time in the vicinity of various burner communes in the city. These communes are usually large houses rented by 10 or so people who are performers and artists at the local burns. Occasionally Rowan sleeps at these places, and since they are already filled with drifters and outsiders Rowan blends in reasonably well.
- **Glen Ellyn (Haven 1, Herd 1)** They often finds themselves in communes in the village of Glen Ellyn. Rowan finds a little thrill in breaking into houses in the suburbs and feeding from kine as they sleep.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Basil (Allies 1)** Basil is a local burner who organizes one of the larger groups of artists and entertainers at their communal house. She acts as a friend and supporter to Rowan, especially when they're feeling down about the way they look or their gender identity. It's her house in Glen Ellyn where Rowan spends the most amount of their time.
- **Commune Dwellers (Allies 2)** Rowan has no knowledge of ghouls or revenants, or anything to do with the potential power of vitae. For now, the mortals in their retinue are friends and colleagues, though they do wonder at the illness Rowan must possess to make them look that way.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Wauneka (Mawla 1, Respect)** Rowan sees Wauneka as an elder they can actually look up to. They try to spend as much time getting on Wauneka's good side as possible, and the two seem to get on okay. Wauneka's warming up to this youngster, though they have vastly different perspectives on queer community and language.
- **Nathaniel Bordruff (Bogeyman)** Bordruff terrifies Rowan, and they mostly try to stay out of his way. It's hard to avoid the sire of your sire forever though. They are tied by blood, and Nathaniel has convinced Rowan that they are obligated to do whatever the older Nosferatu might want.

WHISPERS:

- **Mercenary Agent:** Rowan is one of Prince Jackson's spies and can't be trusted by any group aside from the Camarilla. Rowan is removed from politics, but that removal makes them suspicious to the Kindred who are embedded in the hierarchy.
- **Carnival Freak:** Rowan has often been seen at the local burns and has become somewhat of an urban legend. Children tell tales of "the batman" (a name Rowan hates) and teenagers place bets on who can best rattle the bat's cage.
- **Urban Legend:** Rowan is actually a cryptid and not a vampire at all. Rowan does bear a striking resemblance to some of Chicago's persevering urban legends about bat and rat people.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Rowan is 6'2" and a lanky, beastly version of a vampire. Their ears and fingers come to points, their stomach sunken, ribs pronounced, eyes depressed, and skin rubbery.
- They are covered in tattoos and piercings from their mortal life. Rowan tends to wear genderqueer alternative-culture clothes like shiny black leggings and flower-print button-down shirts.
- Rowan has no mortal cover identity at this time, which could severely harm them if the burners ever abandon them.

Sire: Kamilah

Embraced: 2010 (Born 1993)

Ambition: I will claim the burners as my herd and mine alone

Convictions: Never blindly follow orders

Touchstones: Basil — a local burner who has welcomed Rowan into her tribe

Humanity: 7

Generation: 10th

Blood Potency: 1

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4; Charisma 3, Manipulation 1, Composure 2; Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 6

Skills: Athletics (Climbing) 4, Brawl 1, Drive 2, Larceny 1, Stealth (Camouflage) 3, Survival 3; Animal Ken (Bats) 4, Insight 2, Intimidation 2, Performance (Contortion) 4, Persuasion 3, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 1; Awareness 3, Medicine 1, Science 1

Disciplines: Animalism 3, Potence 1

ADZE

Epitaph: Owner of Red No° 5, Father-Above-All of the Blood Disco

Quote: *"I've got three strikes against me: I'm black, vampire, and Nosferatu. Yet, all of you want to be me because I run shit... And I still shine."*

Clan: Nosferatu

MORTAL DAYS: THE TALE OF MANY

Adze was a Wolof boy who was captured and sold into slavery. "Seasoned" in Jamaica, the young man was delivered to the United States in 1806, two years before the United States Constitution Ban. Tall and lanky, yet strong, the boy — now called "Silas" — was sold to the Ward Plantation in Georgetown, South Carolina. First used as a breeding "stud" before being sent to work in the fields, "Silas" frequently attempted to escape the cruelty and brutality of servitude. The last time he was caught, the overseer's whip licked the right side of his face, causing partial blindness in his right eye.

Imogene worked in the big house. A beautiful light-skinned "house Negro," Imogene caught the eye of slave, overseer, and master alike. But it was "Silas," now a young man, she gave her attention to. Imogene's dreams of freedom matched "Silas'" and, in 1822, they fled the Ward Plantation to join Denmark Vesey's rebellion in Charleston. They were heading north to Indiana when they were caught, sodomized, and beaten.

As night fell, so did "Silas." His wounds were too great for his rage to sustain his beating heart. The smell of his blood brought the predators out. Among them was Adahy, a Catawba Nosferatu who developed a taste for runaway slaves. Upon seeing "Silas" passed out, strung up like a scarecrow, Adahy thought "Silas" was dead, a cruel trick played upon a hungry vampire. Adahy was about to leave when "Silas" coughed. Delirious, "Silas" babbled on about the slave patrol, Imogene, and his desire for justice. Adahy cut "Silas" down from the tree and decided to Embrace him, burying him in the ground as he changed.

KINDRED NIGHTS: NOBODY'S SLAVE

When "Silas" emerged a new childe, the rage in his heart matched his hunger. Imogene watched in horror as "Silas" approached her, thinking that she would be his victim. He tried to calm her as he cut her ropes. But, "Silas" was no longer the man Imogene fell in love with. She did not recognize the beast that stood before her. This was the beast of legend the folks fresh from Africa used to talk about. "Adze!" she screamed as she ran away from the new vampire.

Adze's anger towards his former tormentors, and all that looked like them, knew no bounds. He targeted slave patrols during his hunts, killing without compunction or restraint. He was reckless and allowed the Beast to rule his actions. Adahy educated his new childe on the rules of survival this new life, but Adze did not want to hide in the shadows.

Adze found the structure of Kindred society just as restrictive as the slavery he escaped. He existed on his own terms and by his own code. He used the Masquerade to build a secret empire, operating a number of speakeasies and whorehouses near the Union Stock Yards, waging a quiet war against a Ventrue named Drummond.

As the 19th century made way for the 20th century, Adze found much success with his nocturnal entertainment endeavors. Speakeasies gave way to nightclubs in the Jazz Age, which increased Adze's fortune and influence in Chicago. This made many Kindred uncomfortable, especially Lodin's lieutenants Capone and Horatio Ballard. Both men attempted to take control of Adze's operation, but Adze would not be moved.

As a silent financier of the Warehouse in 1977, Adze was instrumental in giving roots to the emerging house-music scene. In 1982, Adze spotted a young woman controlling the dance floor, entranced by DJ Ron Hardy's set. He couldn't take his eyes off of her. She reminded him of his beloved Imogene. But she was Toreador and would never look at him twice, he thought. He

was surprised when she stared back at him. He was more surprised when she approached him to speak. Erzulie was her name and Adze, as they say, was sprung. Already a legend among the Caitiff, she was a mother to the lost and sireless as many of them were LGBTQ+ of color. She saw a world free from labels and roles. She saw a world where the Caitiff would become the face of the Kindred. This would be a new vampire kingdom with Adze and Erzulie as king and queen.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Elders' Ire:** It's no secret the Camarilla begrudgingly tolerate Adze's presence in Chicago. He offers no true allegiance to the sect. The other Nosferatu especially feel he looks upon them with disdain, that he is too vain, reaches too far, and is too visible. Adze intends to break free from the Nosferatu stereotype of backroom dealer and underground broker, believing he can bring the clan to the same, or better, heights than the loathed Toreador and Ventrue.

- **Unworthy of Power:** The Ventrue think Adze is making a political move to become the new Prince. Caitiff are beginning to outnumber the "Legitimately Sired." With the Blood Disco his allies Erzulie and Mamuwalde run, the disenfranchised are becoming a united community. This burgeoning community, with no loyalty to sect or clan save the ones they create, challenge the essence of the Kindred itself. Jackson wants to control the power base Adze and Erzulie have created.

- **Toe-to-Toe with the Greatest:** Red No^{9} 5 booms in popularity, members of all clans attending the club for its sweet tunes, pulsating herd, and vital atmosphere. Adze makes no secret that he wants his club to crush the Succubus, calling it "a Ventrue's idea of nostalgia."

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Avalon Park Garage (Haven 1) Sadie Newman (Retainers 2)** Adze is rarely found unless he wants to be seen, spending many nights rolling around the city in one of his cars, driven by a ghoul named Sadie Newman, for whom he has no affection. He often spends his days in a cellar beneath his apartment-complex garage near Avalon Park.

- **Red No^{9} 5 (Contacts 3, Haven 3, Influence 5, Resources 4, Retainers 3)** Adze enjoys observing the dancing and drinking patrons from his balcony seat in Red No^{9} 5, often accompanied by Erzulie. He has mortal workers bring up customers, rarely taking more than a mouthful from each. Adze favors prey with a rush of "fire blood" as he calls it, referring to mortals with strong choleric humours.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Barney Hubbard (Allies 1)** Adze makes common cause with many among the black homeless community. While a cynical vampire would look upon Adze's charity as a way to easily access a herd, he instead uses his proximity to the homeless kine as a way to root his humanity, bonding in particular with a boy named Barney who he mentors in business and black pride.

- **Delilah Supreme (Allies 2, Contacts 1)** Adze enjoys taking a personal hand in the entertainments hosted at Red No^{9} 5, bonding in particular with the drag act named Delilah Supreme. The Nosferatu has an affection for the larger-than-life mortal, but more than that, she acts as an excellent spy for keeping tabs on his business associates and her brother, a Chicago cop named Lewis Robertson.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Chicago Camarilla (Distant)** Adze self-describes as a "Cammie" and then sucks his teeth in disdain. Any politically motivated Kindred in Chicago believe he's an Autarkis. The truth is he does wish to ascend the Camarilla's ladder, but he wants to reshape the ladder before climbing it. He takes the role of Keeper of Elysium if only to ensure no violence takes place in his club.

- **Kevin Jackson (Entitled) Primogen Council (Flawed)** Adze's respect for Kevin Jackson is limited to racial issues. The Nosferatu believes all Ventrue are handed their wealth and position, and none have struggled like the Banu Haqim, Nosferatu, and Malkavians. For this combination of reasons, he finds Cedrick Calhoun and even Jason Newberry palatable company from time to time, but charges any members of clans Ventrue or Tremere extra for admittance to his club.

- **Erzulie (Love)** Adze's closest Kindred relationship is with Erzulie. His bond with the Toreador is as close to love as vampires can feel without the Blood Bond. He would tear the city apart if anything befell her.

WHISPERS:

- **Trouble in Paradise:** It's been said that Erzulie is only using Adze for his connections and resources,

that she's plotting a revolution on Adze's back and will feed him to the wolves if shit gets hectic.

- **The Staff are Revolting:** The transfer of ownership for Red No° 5 is taking too long for Steadman's taste. They are saying this year's Blood Disco is going to reveal a lot of things. If Adze isn't careful, he may lose his kingdom...

MASK AND MIEN:

- Adze's Mask is as a Yardie named Chris Chung, a legitimate business owner with criminal ties to the Afro-Caribbean underworld in Chicago. While Chung's name isn't on the club, his signature is on a lot of alcohol and entertainment orders **(Mask 2)**.
- Adze is extremely dark-skinned, almost "blue-black." The curse of being Nosferatu extended his cranium and elongated his features, including sunken cheeks with a sharp, yet broad nose and thick lips. He has the appearance of walking African art.
- Adze wears black round-rimmed glasses to hide the deformity of his blinded right eye. Adze takes great pride in his appearance, offsetting his Nosferatu features and dark skin tone with crisp, tailored three-piece suits with contemporary African flourishes such as vests made of hand-woven kente or mudcloth.
- His voice is a hoarse whisper akin to a muffled trumpet with a rhythmic cadence like jazz and peppered with the slang of over 200 years.

Sire: Adahy

Embraced: 1822 (Born 1793)

Ambition: Implement a new order in this city

Convictions: Always provide a home to those without

Touchstones: Barney Hubbard — Lost child, offered a place to stay at Red No° 5

Humanity: 5

Generation: 7th

Blood Potency: 3

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Composure 4; Intelligence 4, Wits 4, Resolve 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 9

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Firearms 2, Melee 2, Stealth 2; Animal Ken 2, Etiquette 4, Insight 3, Intimidation 4, Leadership 4, Persuasion 2, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 5; Academics 3, Awareness 3, Finance 3, Investigation 2, Occult 2, Politics 4

Disciplines: Animalism 2, Obfuscate 4, Potence 3, Presence 2

the THIN-BLOODS

"We are the future, and the sooner the Camarilla accepts that and us, the sooner we'll stop endangering their precious 'Masquerade'"

— Ben Galura, Thin-Blood Oracle in a conversation with **Sylvia** Roanhorse

Thin-bloods are still seen in some quarters as a sign of Gehenna, while more cynical Kindred view them as pests vying for power they can never keep hold of. Chicago's thin-bloods grasp at positions such as the Prince's right hand or territories such as O'Hare Airport while the city's other Kindred dismiss them as bugs to receive a swatting when the time comes.

Only a handful of the city's vampires have heard the tales of thin-bloods diablerizing their elders to ascend into the ranks of their ancestor clans. Though none of the Duskborn in Chicago have exhibited such an urge, it will only take one whisper about the Amaranth to reach them before the possibility of cannibal Kindred becomes a reality.

BEN GALURA

Epitaph: The Chicago Cassandra

Quote: *"Mock me at your peril. Lodin did. Look what happened to him!"*

Clan: Thin-Blood

MORTAL DAYS: A NATURAL PROPHET

As an orphan on the streets of Manila, Ben charmed his way into the sympathetic hearts of old ladies with his big eyes and waif-like frame. At 14, he was taken in by Tia Gloria, a lady who ran a reasonably lucrative racket in fortune telling. She taught him how to spot an easy mark and how to probe customers for enough information to build a convincing — albeit false — narrative from "the beyond."

A malaria epidemic sweeping through the steamy Manila slums left Ben bedridden for a week, visions skittering across the surface of his consciousness, strange voices whispering in his ears. Before this illness, Tia Gloria treated him like a scruffy-but-likeable mutt. Following his recovery, she gazed at him with an awestruck reverence. During his fever dreams his babbling had successfully predicted several newsworthy events.

Tia Gloria taught the recovered Ben palmistry, tarot and Lenormand, how to read stones and bones, fire, and crystal gazing. Ben took on Tia's most loyal customers, and as word spread of his increasingly accurate readings and predictions, wealthier, more eccentric clients made their way to pay them a visit. The Fat Man — a customer who never used his real name but insisted upon seeing Ben at the stroke of midnight — was surrounded by visions and voices like nothing Ben had seen. He took Ben into his private employ, giving readings for his equally strange and nocturnal friends.

Two years into his employment, Ben had a blinding vision of the newly elected president, Ferdinand Marcos, and his wife luxuriating beside a swimming pool filled with bloated, dead bodies on chairs made of human bones. High gates surrounded their luxurious retreat patrolled by army generals in full dress uniforms. Outside, men, women, and children were forced into a giant machine that crushed them into a dark ichor, which flowed into the ink reserves of a massive printing press churning out billions upon billions of pesos. The Fat Man appeared wholly unconcerned by such an obvious and dire warning, but within a week he Embraced Ben, liquidated their considerable assets, and booked passage to the U.S.

KINDRED NIGHTS: THE STARS ALIGN

Ben emerged from the wrenching throes of his first nights pleasantly surprised to learn his sire's vitae had sharpened his prophetic sight. He would, he was told, develop a liberating lunacy, making his predictions more powerful and profound than he could possibly imagine. The latter proved to be quite true; the former, however, never manifested. Ben's mind remained as lucid as it had ever been, much to the great agitation and dismay of his sire. Something in him told him to leave, to take

nothing with him but Tia Gloria's old cards and follow his visions wherever they might lead him.

As said visions flowed, a pattern of regularly occurring symbols developed: a pyramid crumbling to dust, a flock of red birds bursting forth from a cathedral, a Viking sitting on a throne beside an inland sea, beset by wolves. The Viking was the clearest and seemed to match the description of Lodin, the Prince of Chicago. The vision was clear. The Prince would fall and soon, unless Ben could be positioned to warn him. As it happened, Lodin was quite receptive to the young seer, welcoming him to Chicago's Elysium and granting Ben a good deal of prestige and status. However, when the young man failed to prophesy anything other than a rising force of Anarchs spelling peril, doom, and destruction for Chicago's Kindred, the Prince's favor soured. Unwilling to believe or heed the ever-louder cries of downfall, Lodin publicly shunned him.

Even now that Lodin has supposedly met his final death and a new Prince reigns, Camarilla vampires continue to ridicule Ben. Chicago's Anarchs, Duskborn, and Caitiff often visit him for word of the nights ahead, but the city's Ivory Tower is content to belittle and underestimate the seer.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **The Danger of Prophecy:** Lately Ben's pre-dawn visions have featured a young black man with broken manacles on his wrists and a crown upon his head who stands at the edge of a lake. Something huge, ancient, and powerful stirs the black waters, but the young man is oblivious. Other new symbols include the winged goddess Isis with a box held protectively in her hands, a deep fissure forming in cracked dry earth from which issues forth ominous black smoke, and — most alarming to him — the Viking, ragged and gaunt, clawing his way up from a deep pit.

- **Hopes of Enlightenment:** Even though he correctly predicted the fall of the Pyramid in Vienna, the routing of the Sabbat in Mexico City, and the rise of the Second Inquisition, few Chicago Kindred who matter will even look at him, let alone listen to his warnings. Jackson, however, is a different kind of Prince, and unlike the Viking, Kevin is unchecked by an overbearing council of Primogen. If he can just make Jackson see....

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Tia Maria's (Haven 2, Resources 1)** Galura has a shop on the South Side — Tia Maria's: Palmistry, Tarot, and Fortunes Told — and employs a reasonably skilled old fraud named Ching-He Ni to scam the kine out of their money during daylight hours. After dark, he personally handles his clientele: mortals, Kindred, even other, stranger individuals about whom he doesn't ask too many questions. Though the address is sketchy, the interior boasts fine furnishings with classic lines and luxurious upholstery, more like the living room of an old-money Chicago socialite than the stereotypical fortune-teller's parlor.

- **Tourist Feeding Stock (Herd 2)** Ben receives a steady drip-feed of tourists in his shop. It's these wanderers who make up his feeding stock. He often subdues them using gas pumped in to the parlor, feeds from them, then brings them back to consciousness telling them they entered a trance and he didn't want to disturb them.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Ching-He Ni (Retainers 1)** Despite his weak vitae, Ben feels and acts hopeless and out of his depth around most kine. Only his employee Ching-He Ni is a reliable asset, and only because he watches the shop (and therefore Ben's haven) during the day.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Wauneka (Respect)** Wauneka, the spooky, reticent Nosferatu with the thousand-mile stare and a penchant for helping gutter rats, often darkens Ben's door.

He rarely pays for readings in cash, but his information is more precious than vitae. Wauneka *believes*. He listens and heeds the warnings. He knows a maelstrom is coming, and he values Ben's visions and insights.

- **Nerissa Blackwater (Terror)** Ben doesn't know who the petite and handsome Native woman was who came in the car with the teenaged Blackwater twins, but he knows he never wants to make eye contact with her ever again. The moment was fleeting, but the soul-shriveling terror and the force of visions that flooded his mind overwhelmed him, leaving him shaken and unable to focus for three nights running. Nothing the Blackwaters have is worth the risk of coming into contact with *that* thing ever again!

- **Clan Malkavian (Irritation)** Ben believes his sire is of Clan Malkavian, but none of the Chicago Lunatics claim to know him. Ben believes they're hiding something regarding the Fat Man, and continues to press Jason and Alexa to the point of annoyance.

WHISPERS:

- **Gehenna Maniac:** A fraud, a sham, and a laughingstock! If any of his predictions were true, the entire world of Kindred ought to have met final death five times over by now.

- **A Way Back:** Lodin shunned him from court society, but Ben wasn't wrong, was he? Mexico City no longer belongs to the Sabbat. There's a Second Inquisition. To welcome him back with open arms might be a step too far, but some Camarilla advocate reaching out and listening to what he has to say.

- **Confused Origins:** Some Kindred don't even know Ben is a thin-blood, leading to the widespread rumor he's Malkavian or Caitiff.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Ben is a lean, handsome Filipino man of 28 years with black hair and soulful brown eyes. He is always smartly dressed, usually in a three-piece suit, in shades of white, cream, ivory, and bone. He wears several, large amber rings as well as amber cufflinks.

- Ben is proud of his nearly flawless English, only slightly accented, and carries himself as if he is a high priest of the unseen, with all the weight, gravity, and self-importance that suggests. However, beneath the commanding persona he projects lies the charming, teenaged waif who used to snooker old widows out of their pension money with a flash of straight white teeth and a caress of the hand.

- Ben seems cool, distant, and mysterious to those who do not know him well, but he greets his friends with warmth and kindness. Nevertheless, he is ruthlessly ambitious, and will sacrifice both enemies *and* friends in pursuit of his ultimate goals.

- Ben has an effective Mask in the form of Fernando Velasquez, owner of Tia Maria's. "Fernando" is a popular member of the local community, contributing to and running fundraisers for homeless people and the troubled youths of the South Side, all while offering a business to which many flock when grieving or unsure of their path **(Mask 2)**.

Sire: The Fat Man

Embraced: 1985 (Born 1957)

Ambition: Make Prince Jackson see my uses

Convictions: Always weather ridicule

Touchstones: Ching-He Ni — fortune teller and friend who operates Ben's business during the day

Humanity: 7

Generation: 14th

Blood Potency: 0

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3; Charisma 2, Manipulation 4, Composure 3; Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 1

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 4

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 1, Drive 2; Etiquette 2, Insight (Mental Fragility) 5, Performance (Cartomancy, Palmistry) 5, Persuasion 3, Subterfuge (What They Want To Hear) 3; Academics 2, Awareness 3, Finance 1, Occult (Tarot) 3

Disciplines: Blood Alchemy 3

"FLYBOY" NOAH GREWAL

Epitaph: The Enemy Within

Quote: *"Of course I want it all. Why else would I become immortal?"*

Clan: Thin-Blood

MORTAL DAYS: CODE BLACK

Flyboy's history is divided between two men: Raphael de la Pole and Noah Grewal.

Raphael de la Pole enlisted in the Marines for the free college, but got caught up in something bigger. His

exceptional performance overseas caught the attention of a CIA recruiter, who tapped him after a tour of duty to take part in a blacker-than-black operation. Raphael was skeptical, but video evidence of the "blankbody" phenomenon convinced him to take part.

He knew he would need to be declared Killed in Action to take on the mission, but he hadn't expected that he needed to *actually die*. The procedure, logged as a "total blood transfusion," was an agonizing 18-hour process where Raphael's blood was completely drained from his body and replaced with 12cc of "preserved abnormal hemoglobin-based solution." He should have died, but instead became a thin-blood.

After an intense, messy orientation, he was granted a handler and a cover identity: Noah Grewal. He was deployed outside of Chicago, ordered to infiltrate the city's blankbody community and perform reconnaissance.

KINDRED NIGHTS: WAITING TO DETONATE

The first recorded appearance of Noah Grewal dates to 2009, when he begged for his life before the Primogen Council. Portia had discovered Noah on her assigned feeding grounds, slicing open an unconscious victim's arm (in reality, Noah's handler) with a fillet knife. The Toreador had him staked and presented for judgement.

Noah told the Primogen that he was a Marine who fell on hard times after an honorable discharge, records of which the Prince's information security team discovered easily. He came to Chicago looking for work, and ran afoul of a man stalking people at a rest stop outside the city. The man subdued and Embraced Noah, and he has fed outside the city ever since.

Portia saw a potential pawn in Noah, and seconded his pleas for clemency, surprising everyone. The Prince obliged, and Noah was branded with the mark of the crescent moon. He fell in with the thin-bloods, and resumed contact with those he knew in life. To this day, the Camarilla reads everything he texts, save for a few encrypted accounts he keeps to himself.

Under the Camarilla's watchful eye, he flourished. Portia mentored him in secret, and the thin-bloods taught him alchemy. He took an interest in Kindred politics, and recorded the highlights in a diary.

He took a night job at O'Hare Airport, where he learned of Tyler, the infamous Brujah who ruled the city's air-travel system. He became fascinated, and learned what he could from those who once served her. They told him that sometimes before Noah's arrival, the woman left Chicago with little warning, at the side of an infamous Kindred named Theo Bell. Her departure left an immense power vacuum, one other Kindred tried to fill to no avail.

For the first time, Noah understood what it meant to be a vampire. He had all the time in the world to make a legacy, and unlike other vampires, he could appear human nearly anywhere. When he discovered the gifts his blood allowed him, he knew what he had to do. He vowed to take the Windy City's skies for himself, and took the name "Flyboy."

Over the next decade, Flyboy played his hand carefully. He discovered his blood cannot bond others, but money can, bringing some of Tyler's old power base into the fold. Tapping into an "undisclosed inheritance" brought others under his banner. He became the first point of contact for Kindred traveling by air.

Six months ago, a furious Jacob Schumpeter cornered Flyboy at Elysium, calling him a worthless thin-blood, and Prince Jackson a fool, blind to Masquerade breaches. A few days later, Jacob's haven was raided by a SWAT team. No one has seen him since, and no one is sure if the raid was Prince Jackson's doing, or Flyboy's. Since then, he has had an uneasy, but tolerated, presence in Chicago's Camarilla.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Secret Agent:** Flyboy's mission hasn't changed. He observes Chicago's Kindred, notes behaviors and power structures, and reports them back to his handler via daytime dead drops. The operation is highly illegal, extremely unethical, and will absolutely cause a rift in the CIA Directorate of Operations

if discovered. His thin-blooded nature keeps him at arm's length from the inner workings of the city, making the information he brings back barely useful. Still, the agency is patient.

- **Aspirations Toward Power:** Unfortunately for his superiors, Noah's desire to control Chicago's air transportation is genuine. He's pitched it as a means to get closer to the inner circle, but that's just to gain funding. What's important is that it snatches a highly treasured sphere of influence from the ancillae and elders. Their visible discomfort sustains him, especially when he's the only Duskborn in a Camarilla VIP room.

- **Amateur Historian:** In his free time, Flyboy writes a history of Chicago's Kindred. Aside from its potential usefulness to the intelligence community, he feels the Beckoning wiped away important stories and lessons from vampire culture, and that his book will preserve what he can glean for future generations. The book won't ever see the light of day, but he enjoys the research.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **O'Hare International Airport (Haven 5, Herd 5, Influence 4, Resources 3)** Flyboy discovered Tyler's old haven in the airport and remodeled it to his needs. He's hoping to find notes and documents that will help him gain a tighter hold over air transportation. His handler is far more interested in the prospect of locating an incredibly ancient blankbody. He feeds on the airport's travelers, specifically those laid over for extended periods of time. Since he has no fangs, he must resort to cutting them open with a fillet knife and feeding from the wound. He claims that the knife holds on to the resonance of its last victim. No one knows if he's joking.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Felicity Miller (Contacts 1) DoA Executive Team (Contacts 2)** Unlike O'Hare's last master, Flyboy influences the airport publicly and privately. Officially, he's on the Department of Aviation's executive team, and answers to Felicity Miller, its commissioner. He's well liked among the team, and it's not just because he bribes them. Flyboy is driven to make O'Hare the best airport in the country for the living and the dead.

- **CIA (Allies 3, Contacts 2, Resources 2)** As a CIA agent, Noah receives funding and official identification papers from the agency's undisclosed escrow accounts. Whenever he feels threatened, he can request assistance, summoning law enforcement to unknowingly do his dirty work. He gets all this through his handler, a case officer living under the cover "Daniel Bailey." As long as the information keeps flowing, Noah has the power to force his way up the Kindred social ladder.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Sierra Van Burrace (Interested)** Flyboy's trying to get to know Sierra Van Burrace better. Not only is it important to the mission that he keep tabs on Clan Lasombra joining the Camarilla, her hotel connections seem like a natural fit with his control over the airport. He hopes that one day, they'll make a great partnership.

- **Rosa Hernandez (Rivalry)** Noah's heard the rumors that Rosa Hernandez is coming for the airport, and it scares him. Unlike other would-be rivals, Rosa has the power and connections to throw him out of his hard-earned prize. He's cordial with her like he is with all the Primogen, but he keeps an eye on her, hoping to find a weakness he can exploit.

WHISPERS:

- **Poisonous Blood:** Never drink blood from Noah, no matter how desperate you might be. If he's offering himself to you, it means he thinks he can use you for something.

- **Poor Meets Rich:** Flyboy's taking Portia for a ride. She's furious, and looking for anyone who'll find some good dirt on him.

- **A Dangerous Enemy:** Everyone who gets close to figuring out Noah's deal gets harassed by the law. Sometimes it's a lawsuit, sometimes it's a cop breaking into your haven mid-day.

- **Damning Dossier:** Someone's spreading around records of a "Project HARKER," some government program that makes things called "enhanced assets." It's heavily redacted, but Flyboy's picture is in it.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Flyboy is a broad, muscular man in his late-30s. His thin blood hasn't given him the pallor of death, so his black skin keeps its warm, rosy undertones. His hair is in a high-and-tight hairstyle, with very short hair at the top of his head. He prefers sensible and moderately expensive clothing, and always wears a pair of green-tinted mirror shades.

- Thanks to the CIA's protection, Noah uses his identity among Kindred and kine. That said, two oddities threaten to give him away among humans. The first is the filet knife he carries with him. It's a cheap piece of metal, but he keeps it peeking out from his pants pocket at all times. The second is the occult formulae tattooed on his biceps, making his body an alchemical furnace **(Mask 2)**.
- The Beast is alive within him, and when he falls into frenzy, his eyes become bloodshot. Every vein in his body rises to the surface of his skin.

Sire: Subject L9

Embraced: 2008 (Born 1969)

Ambition: Secure O'Hare Airport as my own, unshared territory

Convictions: I must always rise to the top; I will always see the mission through

Touchstones: Felicity Miller — Aviation commissioner and "boss"; Daniel Bailey — CIA handler

Humanity: 6

Generation: 16th

Blood Potency: 0

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 1; Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Composure 3; Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2

Secondary Attributes: Health 4, Willpower 5

Skills: Athletics 3, Melee (Dagger) 2, Firearms (Rifle) 3, Stealth 2, Survival 2; Etiquette 2, Leadership 3, Persuasion 2, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge (False Identity) 4; Awareness 3, Finance 2, Investigation 2, Politics 4, Technology (Surveillance, Transit Schedules) 3

Disciplines: Blood Alchemy 2

SYLVIA ROANHORSE

Epitaph: Vengeful Revolutionary

Quote: *"And seriously, what IS it with colonizers, blood quantum, and social hierarchies?"*

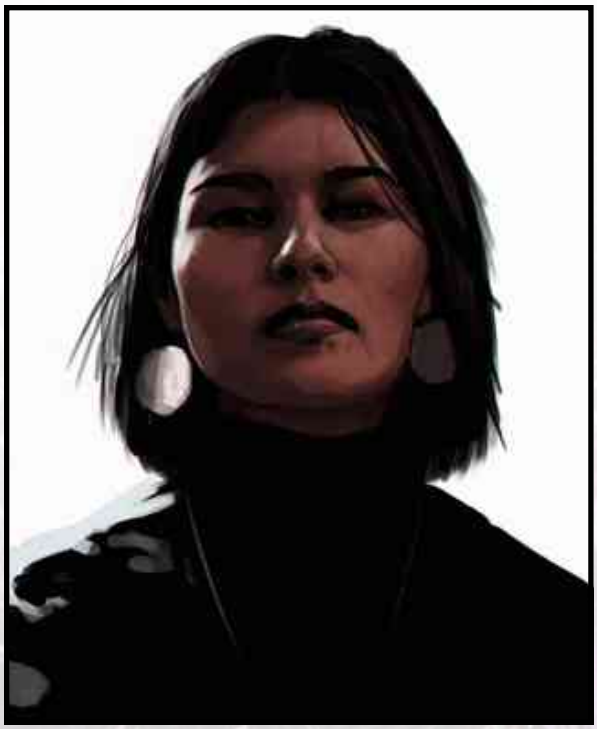
Clan: Thin-Blood

MORTAL DAYS: UNWILLING ABETTOR

Sylvia ought to have known that her violent, brutish lunk of a cousin and his equally awful friends would start some shit. She ought to have known that said shit would land her in even worse trouble. That's the way it'd always been, ever since she was little. Mark Roanhorse made mess after bloody mess, and Sylvia was expected to clean it up. Her father even wanted her to marry that asshole. Said it would be an honor for all the family.

The American Indian Center in Chicago frequently held gatherings. Some they'd be at the Center; others took place a ways out into the suburbs and surrounding rural areas. On the night her life changed forever, the gathering was at a park in Rosemont. Lots of folks were drinking, but only Mark and his little gang of friends were visibly drunk. Angry voices broke frequently into the air, and by the time the wee hours rolled around, those few shouts and grunts evolved into a full-on raging mob of belligerent people who didn't seem quite so drunk anymore. Mark grabbed her by the arm, tossed her purse at her chest, and snarled at her to start the truck. She was driving them into the city, he said. "It was time to squash a few leeches," he said. Leeches. It was a word he'd used ever since he was 18 or so, mainly about an obscure subgroup of supposedly undeserving, corrupt colonizers.

Sylvia drove to the address Mark barked out at her, kept her eyes closed and the engine running, and waited while he and his bros burst into the old warehouse. After a few minutes, she felt the lurching shift in weight and heard the three heavy taps on the cab roof that told her Mark had returned and was ready to go. Four such raids went off without a hitch, but on the fifth, something went wrong. Seconds after Mark and the gang disappeared into the darkness, something dragged her



out the truck so fast she blacked out. When she came to, she was flattened against a wall by something cold, immovable, and hard as stone, the most blissful feeling of euphoria enveloping her. Sylvia drifted downward into the sensation, observing with an amused disinterest that her heartbeat was slowing.

She was dying. She couldn't move. At last, gentle arms gathered her body up and something warm and sharp tasting passed her lips. It was the most incredible thing she'd ever tasted. Then shit got creepy and weird real fast. The girl — she couldn't have been more than 17 years old, short, spiky hair framing an alabaster face — said some nonsense about vampires, hiding, staying away from Prince (the musician?), and not killing people. Then the weird girl wished her good luck and vanished. Sylvia stumbled to her feet, looked for the truck — now doorless, but still idling — got in, and closed her eyes. She'd just wait for Mark like she always did. *Just. Wait. For. Mark.* As she did, trembling and silent, the rest of what the girl had said came flooding back: *Your friends will kill you if they find you here. Lupines hate the Kindred. Call us "leeches." If you want to live, then run. Get the hell out of the city. Just run.*

KINDRED NIGHTS: REVOLUTION APPROACHES

Emergence into even the periphery of Kindred society has been a revelatory experience for Sylvia. So many powerful figures in Chicago's political and social hierarchy are either vampires themselves or in some way connected to the undead. Then again, given where she fits in the social structure of the Kindred, that amounts to fuck-all for her. Naturally, she is pissed as hell. Leave it to her to get bitten by a half-assed, cut-rate vampire! Even as a member of the glamorous, mysterious undead, she's still just as marginalized as ever.

What hurts the worst, what makes her want to burn them all to ashes, is that the vampire who did this effectively robbed her of her community, her culture, and her people. She can never show her face anywhere she might be seen by her family or any of Mark's crew. They'll kill her and tell themselves it's for the family honor. But Sylvia is determined *not* to be a victim. She's even noticed there are benefits to being able to walk around just before sunset and just after dawn, or even earlier if it's a cloudy day. Besides which, Chicago's other thin-bloods seem to be just as angry and spoiling for a fight as she is. The current lemons may be weirder than the normal variety, but damned if she isn't going to make some kickass lemonade.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Forming a Coterie:** Mark and his crew have had it coming for a while now, and as far as Sylvia is concerned, they're responsible for her current situation. None of the inner-circle Kindred will give her the time of day, but maybe others like her — or maybe those Anarchs — can be convinced to team up with her to teach the asshole a lesson or two.

- **Tracing Her Roots:** While the majority of powerful Kindred in Chicago are colonizers, Sylvia has heard rumors of other sects with Native roots. She wants to find out more about them, to see how their agenda compares with that of these Camarilla people who seem to think vampires like her are less than trash. She might be dead to her own people, but maybe she can find a new home with these others.

- **Who is the Alpha?** Sylvia's heard tell of a truce between Kindred and Lupines, but if her experience is anything to go by, not all werewolves are upholding their end of the deal. She wants to find out if those Lupines were directed by a powerful vampire like the Prince, or if the supposed peace pact is collapsing all on its own.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Chicago Tribune Office (Haven 1, Influence 1)** Sylvia made a temporary haven for herself in a storage closet deep in the basement of Tribune Tower until she could find a safer, more permanent daytime resting place. In the paper's big move, Sylvia lost her old office, but negotiated for a larger interior office space in the new building. Most days she locks the door and sleeps under her desk.

- **Animal Herd (Herd 1) Chicago Zoo (Potential Haven 2, Potential Herd 2)** Sylvia only feeds from animals for now, occupying gardens and coaxing house pets into her hands. She's heard the vampire occupant of the Chicago Zoo has fled the city, and is considering claiming that ripe ground as territory.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **City Press (Contacts 2, Influence 2)** As a thin-blood, Sylvia is hardly in any position to hold anyone in her thrall. She sees an advantage in her position as a staff writer for the Chicago Tribune. Her access to the press gives her significant leverage to cast light upon things that other Kindred might want left in the dark or investigate new vampires in the city. Two junior writers, Mark Ennis and Jay Burridge, are her roving journalists, the three of them spending every Friday night in Andy's Jazz Bar to discuss the dirt they've found and take in some tunes.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Gengis (Curiosity)** Sylvia knows very few Kindred, but has encountered Gengis before at raves and jazz bars. It came as a shock to her when she discovered the thoughtful brute is in fact a vampire. She hasn't approached him since discovering his true nature, but knows a lot about his tastes and habits, or at least those he exhibits via his Mask.
- **Wauneka, Lester Knife, Edith Beaubien (Kinship)** Sylvia commonly associates with Wauneka, Lester, and Edith because of their mutual position as Native peoples. She enjoys their company, but more feels a sense of social obligation to keep them working together and watching each other's backs. She doesn't know about Nerissa Blackwater yet, and would be hugely disconcerted if she discovered such an ancient monster trying to exert control over her people.

WHISPERS:

- **True Heritage:** Rumor is, Sylvia possesses a terrible rage not dissimilar to the Brujah.
- **Route to Influence:** Her reach is pretty slim, but a vampire who writes news could in a pinch help another Kindred patch up a Masquerade breach.
- **Wanted Woman:** A couple of vampires have asked Jackson to call a Blood Hunt on her and whoever sired her. If she really is connected to the Lupines, she's a ticking time bomb, and her creation broke the truce.

MASK AND MIEN:

- A young Native woman in her mid-20s with shoulder-length chestnut hair and questioning eyes. She frequently scowls. Sylvia often looks as if she's calculating ways to make everyone pay for her trauma, but there are moments when she simply looks exhausted, sad, and a little bit scared.
- Sylvia exists on the bleeding edge of righteous indigenous rage, volunteering to cover protest movements and other events in the local Native community where she can document injustice as it happens and expose the lingering after-effects of colonization.
- Sylvia doesn't see the need for a mortal Mask so soon into her undeath, but has already bought up some fake identities under names such as Sarah Upham, Mickie Brookes, and Megan Cornell of the Potawatomi.

Sire: Olivia Myers

Embraced: 2017 (Born 1994)

Ambition: Form a coterie with other vampires like me

Convictions: I will never be a victim again

Touchstones: Jay Burridge — ex-boyfriend and frequent collaborator at the Tribune

Humanity: 8

Generation: 15th

Blood Potency: 0

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 1; Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 4

Skills: Craft (Writing) 3, Drive 2, Stealth 1, Survival 2; Insight 3, Leadership 2, Persuasion 1, Subterfuge 2; Academics (Journalism) 2, Investigation (Secrets) 4, Occult (Lupines) 1, Politics 3

Disciplines: Blood Alchemy 1

Toreador

"Yes, Chicago is a pretty little jewel. Were we to rule in the place of those stuffy Ventrue, however, it would gleam like a diamond."

— Annabelle, Toreador Primogen, in a private meeting with Bret Stryker and Portia

For decades Chicago's Toreador have been underestimated, all while a methuselah of their clan manipulated half the city to fight her war, one of their elders acted as the deciding vote for the Primogen Council, and others of their clan controlled the flow of information via Herald and Harpies. Other Kindred find it easy to dismiss the Degenerates as artistic hacks obsessed with hedonistic revelry, but the Toreador know diplomacy, they play the long game, and they're just waiting for the right time to start the greatest, longest party of all: Toreador rule over the Camarilla's American throne.

If the city's Toreador were to have their way, Annabelle would take her rightful place as Prince in the wake of Ventrue failure. All they need to do is push the Ventrue so far and show how much better the Clan of the Rose can handle the subtleties of Masquerade. Ask Nero, Kathy, Erzulie, and Bret, and they'll all agree the Masquerade is served better through rubbing shoulders and skin with the kine. Certainly, it makes for a more enjoyable existence than hiding behind layers of accounts, paperwork, and ghouls.

As the Toreador position themselves for a celebrated coup, Helena hides in plain sight as the shy artist and amateur model, Portia. The ancient vampire pulls the strings of Degenerates across North America, and members of other clans besides. She believes that with the disappearance of her eternal opponent Menele, the time for a Toreador kingdom has arrived. She just needs to establish it without toppling the Camarilla applecart, and has no designs on praxis herself.

ANNABELLE

Epithet: Toreador Primogen, High-Society Host

Quote: *"You don't have to know art. I will tell you what's good and what's bad."*

Clan: Toreador

MORTAL DAYS: HANDPICKED FOR GREATNESS

Annabelle was born at the turn of the 18th century, the daughter of a musician and a Parisian sex worker.

Though the couple attempted to provide their child with stability and material comforts, neither of their professions guaranteed a steady income. When her father was between patrons and the authorities threw her mother in jail, Annabelle knew what it was like to go hungry.

Her father spent a brief period as one of King Louis XV's musicians, and brought Annabelle to court. It was there she determined to make a noble match for herself, so she'd never again have to worry about money. She soon found herself welcome in courtiers' ballrooms and bedchambers, but her prospects at marriage dwindled.

Then, in 1722, a Spanish noblewoman named Maria visited the court. She took particular note of Annabelle's father, and was delighted to learn his lovely daughter had inherited some of his musical skills. She confessed her secret nature to Annabelle, offering the chance to stay young forever and live out her nights surrounded by wealth and beauty. Annabelle accepted the Embrace, and Maria brought Annabelle to the New World as her student. Though neither knew it, Maria operated under her sire Helena's control, tasked with finding suitable women from whom the methuselah could feed.

KINDRED NIGHTS: PUPPET WITH TOO MANY MASTERS

Maria and Annabelle roamed the New World for 200 years, arriving in Chicago at the height of the Jazz Age. As one of the oldest Toreador in the domain, Maria could have claimed the title of Primogen. However, she refused the position. Annabelle saw the chance to wield the type of power she'd dreamed of as a girl, and pursued it.

Annabelle's power plays yielded little success until, in 1983, a dispute with Lodin caused her to switch sides on the Primogen Council. Her support of the Anarch Maldavis kicked off the Council Wars, which strengthened both the Anarchs' power and Annabelle's own. In the end, she switched her vote back to Lodin's side, but only after he made several hidden concessions.

Since becoming Primogen, Annabelle's balls and parties became the must-attend events of Kindred society, drawing established creatives and promising innovators. As much business gets done at the Primogen's parties as it does at Elysium, and Annabelle has a reputation for both shrewd dealmaking and subtle betrayal. For neonates, spending time in Annabelle's entourage gives them an insight into Kindred politics.

It's an open secret Annabelle backed Gary's Prince Modius and played him against Lodin, though few know Annabelle was Modius' sire. She's Embraced several childer, though only Bret Stryker, the clan's aspiring Herald, still remains. The others have all died their final deaths or disappeared.

Annabelle spent decades in a psychic tug-of-war between Helena and Menele. Though Helena controlled her first, toward the end of the 20th century Menele gained control — without his enemy catching on. When he succumbed to the Beckoning, his grip on Annabelle snapped. What freedom she might have enjoyed was fleeting: Helena's formidable will slipped right back into place, and her recent actions are once again guided by Helena's plans.

Recently, letters have surfaced implicating Annabelle and the Brujah Primogen Critias as Maldavis' supporters in the Council Wars. This is a potential PR disaster, unless Annabelle can find a way to refute or discredit the letters...or spin the narrative to make her look like a tactical genius to the Camarilla.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Many Veils:** Annabelle is well aware some Kindred find her artistic tastes lacking and view her musical talents as nonexistent. She lets them underestimate her, occasionally playing into their expectations to reinforce the image. After all, if they're busy talking about how her latest protege can't carry a note in an autotuned bucket, they're not watching Annabelle maneuvering mortal politicians. In a self-destructive fashion, she intends for everyone to think her the fool before she reveals something startlingly profound and informed.

- **A Sliver of Light:** For a short time after Menele's death, Annabelle was no longer under a methuselah's control. Helena had yet to reassert her will, and Annabelle felt her freedom ebbing back. Though Helena's influence soon returned and set Annabelle back on the intended path, those inklings of doubt remain and she now wishes to know the truth. She isn't yet aware of Critias' own epiphany in this regard, but should she find out, the two have some interesting notes to compare.

- **The Eldest Toreador:** Many blamed Annabelle when Maria disappeared. She's quietly started investigating Maria's last known movements; though much of that information is three decades old, she has a few leads. In recent nights, another Toreador, Eletria, has gone missing. The circumstances of that case bear a striking similarity to what Annabelle's learned of Maria's habits. She wants to hire a coterie to discover what befell these two Toreador, but finds herself struggling to make a deal.

- **The Power of the Media:** Annabelle's looking for potential media outlets into which to insert herself, especially now Joseph Peterson has flown the coop with his news network contacts. She recognizes the need for caution, as so many modern kine get their news online — where the Second Inquisition's

always watching. She's looking to scoop up a set of foreign language stations including *Pulso del Mundo*, and wants someone to make the introductions.

- **Deciding Vote:** Annabelle's calendar has been full of meetings regarding the Lasombra petition to join the Camarilla. Should the Camarilla accept, adding a Lasombra Primogen could either split the Council's votes evenly, or stack them. She's been the Primogen's swing vote for 30 years, and used that to her political advantage. Now, that position is threatened. Annabelle's not entirely against the balance shifting, as long as she can ensure she'll benefit. She is going to actively manipulate the Lasombra negotiations to put her in a stronger position, even if it means denying them entry to the city or allowing one of them to join the council.

- **Siren's Call:** Annabelle hears the Beckoning calling her just before dawn, but it abates by the time she rises again at night. Unknown to her, the vitae Helena feeds her is currently sufficient to keep the Toreador Primogen grounded in Chicago. She wants to know who is cutting the call, which she finds oh, so tempting.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Stanley-Greer House (Haven 3, Herd 2, Resources 2, Retainers 2)** Annabelle maintains the sprawling Stanley-Greer House in one of Chicago's posh North Side neighborhoods, often using it as the venue for her lavish parties. She rarely sleeps there, but when not at Elysium, enjoys dressing the place up for her next show.

- **Succubus Club (Herd 4)** Annabelle feels the call to the renovated Succubus Club just before dawn, sleeping in the labyrinthine basement there with Helena during the day. She never remembers or questions her sleeping arrangements, nor how her Hunger is rarely pressing.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Neil Russo (Allies 1, Retainer 1) City Artists (Contacts 3)** Annabelle has considerable influence in Chicago's mortal art world. A pop-up gallery comprising the work of a dozen or so art students has really grabbed her recently, with their demonstrations of blood and other bodily fluids on canvas, sheets, and blotting paper. The leader of this artistic troupe is a young man named Neil Russo, with whom she carries on a clandestine affair.

- **John Greer (Contacts 2, Resources 3)** Annabelle has a loose grasp over local media via her recent marriage to retired newspaper publisher John Greer. She's considering whether to encourage her husband back into the business, but to concentrate on online venues.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Bret Stryker (Divided)** Annabelle's noticed Stryker's waning adoration, and she's not pleased. She's split between letting him off the leash to see what he can accomplish on this own, hopeful he'll fail dismally, but equally drawn to reinforcing the Blood Bond and guaranteeing his undying adoration.

- **Aluc Romas de Leon (Admired)** As a fellow patron of the arts, Aluc has earned Annabelle's admiration. However, his parties make him a rival for new talent and influence within Kindred society. She hasn't yet decided whether he's an ally she should cultivate or an enemy to crush.

- **Primogen Council (Unworthy)** Annabelle doesn't consider any of the other Primogen her equal. Critias is too lost in his own head these nights, Rosa is insignificant, "Khalid" is increasingly quiet, and Son is more concerned with individual issues than Kindred society. She's tempted to encourage the rise of a Ventrue Primogen — perhaps Ballard or Naomi Stewart — just to give her some competition.

- **Helena (Mawla 4, Nightmare)** Though unaware of her ancestor's patronage, Helena keeps Annabelle safe and positions her in places of Kindred influence, for now anyway. Just as Annabelle's attention on Bret has frayed, so does Helena's for Annabelle.

WHISPERS:

- **She Wrote the List:** When Kevin Jackson took power, Annabelle suggested a few names of Tradition-breakers for his purges. Most of them were guilty. A few were merely political thorns in her side she wished to be rid of. So long, Andrei. Au revoir, Tammy.

- **Shared Mawla:** Maldavis wields abilities beyond what her questionable Caitiff blood should allow. Those who've felt the weight of her Presence and Annabelle's have noticed an eerie similarity in the feelings of awe the two women evoke.

- **Another Failed Party:** Previews from a gallery opening Annabelle's sponsoring suggest the show's going to be *godawful.* Ticket sales are flying as everyone wants a ringside seat for the disaster.

- **Earworm:** The song "Kiss-a-belle" is tearing up local music charts. The woman described in the ridiculously catchy song's chorus could easily be Annabelle, and social media places the singer at several of the Primogen's parties in the months before the album release.

MASK AND MIEN:

- In the 1960s, Annabelle began appearing in the society pages as Ellen Stanley-Greer, wife of Sentinel newspaper publisher John Greer. The Sentinel closed its doors in the late 1990s. In 2003, papers covered John and Ellen's move to the Chicago suburbs, with a footnote that their home near downtown had passed into the hands of Ellen's niece Jacqueline — a woman who bears a striking resemblance to her aunt **(Mask 2)**.

- Annabelle is a white woman who appears to be in her mid-20s. Her stunning good looks would be at home on a runway, and her connections to (and sponsorship of) top fashion designers keep her in couture year round. She keeps her ash-blonde hair shoulder length, though the style varies with current trends. Aspiring poets have penned odes to her piercing blue eyes, or commented on the fullness of her mouth.

Sire: Maria

Embraced: 1722 (Born 1698)

Ambition: Be the final decider on the Lasombra proposal

Convictions: Art is essential and must be supported

Touchstones: John Greer — husband, for whom she has a real affection

Humanity: 6

Generation: 6th

Blood Potency: 4

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 5, Stamina 3; Charisma 5, Manipulation 4, Composure 4; Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 8

Skills: Athletics 4, Brawl 1, Craft (Portraiture, Sculpture) 3, Melee 2; Etiquette (Social Events) 5, Insight 3, Intimidation 2, Leadership 3, Performance (Dancing, Harp, Singing) 3, Persuasion (Negotiation) 5, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge (Bluff) 5; Academics (Art) 4, Awareness 3, Finance 2, Occult 3, Politics 4

Disciplines: Auspex 4, Celerity 4, Dominate 2, Fortitude 2, Presence 5

BRET STRYKER

Epitaph: Excess is the best drug

Quote: *"Any sucker who tries to get you down about being immortal is a fucking twat, yeah?"*

Clan: Toreador

MORTAL DAYS: A PRETTY FORM OF DYSFUNCTION

Bret was born incredibly handsome, but this combined with some feminine behavior at a young age meant he was bullied hard by his peers. When he was repeatedly called various shades of gay he fought back hard, discovering a nasty streak as he enjoyed breaking bullies' noses and ripping their earlobes a little too much. As a teen in the '70s he began bodybuilding, spending time at the gym to escape his so-called "sissy femininity." Ironically, he found a community at the gym within which his extrovert nature felt at home, but he rejected the affection and attention he received there. He couldn't come to terms with what he wanted, his bisexual nature, or his emotional vulnerability.

Bret's perfect body and natural grace led him to the life of a professional dancer, courting public shows during the day and turning on tables at clubs come nighttime. He loved the attention and the notoriety it brought him, and for a while he truly felt beautiful instead of just looking the part. The show scene called him "the bad boy

of ballet" while several of his night patrons hired him for their private parties, taking care of him in exchange for part-time sex work. Bret wasn't very good at taking care of himself, easily falling into a destructive cocaine habit.

When Bret met the gorgeous Annabelle at a private party, he was astounded by her beauty. It was easy to fall under Annabelle's spell. Bret somehow knew he was her prey, but didn't care. To be desired like Annabelle desired him, compelled to let down his guard, was all he ever wanted. When she offered him eternity, he saw an escape from his powerless life, and finally a chance to be something more. He was in a love so deep and obsessed that he couldn't imagine any life besides one with Annabelle. She turned him, and he became her childe.

KINDRED NIGHTS: BROKEN HEARTS

For a while, it seemed Annabelle was truly in love, too. They were inseparable, seen at every Kindred society event; Bret performed when he desired instead of for a buck or a room for the night. The two vampires seemed happy in their excesses, taking mortal couples into their bed and feasting in every possible way. It was exciting. It was them against the world. As any vampire watching from the outside could've predicted though, Annabelle grew tired of him. She wanted to focus on her Primogeniture, and Bret's neediness was just standing in her way. Bret was devastated, and to this day is still trying to win back her affections, since he is still Blood Bound to her. Annabelle uses this to her advantage, as she has made him swear to protect her.

Bret maintains a good connection with his herd, which tends to consist of club kids and the patrons of strip clubs where he still sometimes dances. It's as though he's stuck in a limbo, at the stage in his life when Annabelle turned him, and cannot progress. He does all the things he used to do with Annabelle by himself, and no matter how many other Kindred or mortals he tries to love, nothing ever compares. He wishes for some kind of escape, and plots numerous ways he could try to get Annabelle back.

He's required to attend Annabelle's parties still, and usually watches her sullenly from the shadows of whatever grand environs they're in. It was at one of these parties that he met the neonate Portia, and the two of them seemed to connect. Portia grew to trust him, and she revealed to Bret her true power and glory. Bret procures people from his herd, turns them into vampires, and then brings them back to the Succubus Club for Helena to feed on. It's the only thing that brings him excitement now, and he is mostly content in their relationship. The Blood Bond to Annabelle has not completely faded yet, however, meaning he could become a bone of contention between the two older Toreador.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Unrequited Obsession:** Bret's love for Annabelle has turned into an abiding bitterness. Love and hate, after all, are never far from each other. He wants revenge, but still loves her and is Blood Bound to her. He is trapped and unable to come up with a workable plan. If someone could ever help him, he might get what he actually wants. He's desperate to find someone who can break the bond, and would repay them in any way he could.

- **Forgoing Protection:** Bret gets the attention he needs from Helena, though he has to do terrible things for it. Bret doesn't really mind Embracing people anymore, and in fact might be becoming addicted to creating vampires. It's a thrill for him and he's getting sloppy. He's aware of the risks and is contemplating hunting down his loose childer to save himself.

- **Surprising Patron:** Bret works toward helping other young dancers by supporting them monetarily. He is the patron of a number of burgeoning dance studios, one for kids from lower-income households, one for aspiring ballet dancers, and another for pole dancing and strip acts. He hopes to form a herd or batch of loyal servants from these grateful kine.

- **Claims to Title:** Bret desperately wants to be Keeper of Elysium to earn himself recognition and respect, but his political moves are somewhat obvious to anyone paying attention. He's not the subtlest of Kindred, leading to his constant derision from vampires such as Bronwyn and Mamuwalde, who successfully run nightspots in the city.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Annabelle's Parties (Herd 3, Influence 1)** Annabelle's parties are the number-one place to find Bret most nights. Bret prefers to feed at these parties rather than in his own territory, as his passive-aggressive way of getting back at Annabelle.

- **Backtrack Club (Contacts 1, Haven 2, Influence 2, Resources 2)** Bret makes his haven in the basement of a gay club called Backtrack. The club is a popular venue in downtown Chicago, overlooking the lake. He used to dance at the club in its infancy and still holds it dear. If he ever becomes Keeper of Elysium, he wants to nominate his haven as his neutral ground of choice.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Dancer Community (Contacts 3)** Bret has a surprising amount of connections to the club kids and the patrons of the strip clubs at which he still sometimes dances. He's a mysterious but regular figure at many of these places, allowing enough time to pass between when he was a kid dancing there and when he attends now. His fashion and looks have changed radically over time, although occasionally an older patron will recognize him.

- **Taryn (Allies 1, Contacts 1)** One of the current dancers at Backtrack is Taryn, a kid who reminds Bret a lot of himself at that age. Bret isn't really mature enough to be a mentor to anyone, but he hangs out with Taryn, shares a lot of his personal angst with them, and lives vicariously through the experiences and friendships Taryn maintains in the community. Taryn is a good friend to Bret, and wonders where he's been if he's ever incommunicado for a few days.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Annabelle (Obsessed)** Bret's relationship with Annabelle is legendary in the Kindred scene of Chicago. Everybody knows almost all the details of their relationship since they're both such drama queens and talk endlessly about their relationship problems. Annabelle is clearly the one in control, and while Bret wants out of that he can't help but continue to adore her.

- **Helena (Enslaved)** Helena is an exciting out for Bret, at the least a distraction from lovelorn feelings surrounding Annabelle, and at most a powerful new friendship that could gain him access to all kinds of freedom. He's trying unusually hard to stay in her good graces, and keep their particular bond as strong as possible.

- **Bronwyn (Rival) Adze (Dismissive)** Bret's political aspirations bring him into proximity to social powerhouses such as Bronwyn and Adze, among other Elysium hosts. They don't see Bret as a danger to their territory, but keep a close eye on the naïve Toreador in case he tries something daring.

WHISPERS:

- **Strike, You're Out:** Bret once killed a man by ripping his head off his body. Chicago's Kindred know he's strong, but is he *that* strong?

- **Never Had the Makings:** Bret's making moves to rise higher in the city's political ranks. Some think he's daft enough to go for Herald, but nobody thinks he's competent enough to actually hold any position of power.

- **Claim to Fame:** Bret was once David Bowie's lover. Bizarrely, this might be true, though rumors about Bret's lovers are popular and endless.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Bret is gorgeous by any century's standards, though he does fit the classic, white, blonde status quo of American beauty. He gets clocked by all kinds of people and genders, and he loves the attention.

- He dresses more androgynously in his old age, flaunting his flexible preferences loudly. Everything he owns is fashionable to the week, and his hair is always perfect.

- Bret's favorite pseudonyms are as Nigel McGrew, mature student (and the name under which he rents the Backtrack basement), and Gary Riverboat, barman at the Drop Top Titty Tipping Bar in Elk Grove. He rarely goes to the trouble of maintaining a cover identity, erecting a new one whenever the need arises **(Mask 1)**.

Sire: Annabelle

Embraced: 1983 (Born 1961)

Ambition: Discover how to break the Blood Bond

Convictions: Reject all those who would make me a puppet

Touchstones: Taryn — a friend and confidante, and new dancer at Backtrack

Humanity: 4

Generation: 7th

Blood Potency: 2

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4; Charisma 4, Manipulation 2, Composure 2; Intelligence 2, Wits 1, Resolve 2

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 4

Skills: Athletics (Weightlifting) 4, Brawl 2, Drive 4, Firearms 3, Larceny 2, Stealth 2; Etiquette 3, Performance (Dancing, Stripping) 4, Persuasion (Seduction) 2, Subterfuge 3; Awareness 2, Politics 1

Disciplines: Celerity 3, Presence 3

TAMOSZIUS "NERO"

Epitaph: Playing as Chicago shimmers on the edge of inferno

Quote: *"Did you hear that? It is the sound of the future. And, yes, I am also afraid."*

Clan: Toreador

MORTAL DAYS: MUSIC IN HIS SOUL

Tamoszius has always heard the music. Even as a child, growing up underfed and overworked, in grinding poverty, he heard it. Sometimes there was even a voice that sang words to him, which gave him more comfort than his mother's always-angry croaking or his father's harsh bitterness.

It was that voice that led him to the dumpster where he found his first instrument, the discarded fiddle with worn tuning pegs, elderly strings, and a bow that had seen far, far better days — but was whole enough for him to play, to coax the vivid notes he heard inside his mind out into the open air where all could hear them and be amazed. Soon Tamoszius' fame spread. None could deny the glory of his music but many whispered behind their hands about his ragged tatterdemalion appearance, a tiny wild scarecrow of a young man, the mania that seemed to grip and transport him when he was in the grip of his art, and the twisted, almost pained mask of his face, with blank and unseeing eyes.

Eventually, word of him reached far beyond the coastal towns and villages where he played on corners and fair stages for his bread, through the dark forests and into the mountains where dwelt the creature that would change his life forever. He saw her first at the very edge of the firelight as he played for the dancers at a midsummer festival: a tall woman with long blonde hair dressed in a gown of fabulous richness, whom no one else seemed to notice or speak to and whose eyes never left him.

The woman, whose name was Natasha, spoke passionately to him about her love of his music, of the spirit of creation that seemed to possess him as he played, the extent to which he had grown and improved in his playing over the course of even three short seasons. And he had grown, he had improved — there were murmurs among his neighbors and even his family that he should leave their tiny world, travel to one of the great cities and seek admission to a conservatory where his gift could be nourished. "No," said Natasha, her dark eyes shining, her hand cold on his own. Such a gift as he possessed demanded the transcendence of pure inspiration pursued to its natural end.

KINDRED NIGHTS: MUSIC IN HIS BLOOD

Despite the grief it caused them both, he eventually parted with his sire. Arriving in New York, he followed the migration of his people westward to Chicago, where he came to rest and has abided ever since. He rapidly became well-known for his artistry in both Elysium and the local mortal music scene. Tamoszius built himself a sturdy but unostentatious house at the edge of Marquette Park, where he frequently wandered by night to play alone or in the company of other busking musicians.

Gradually, however, his muse turned away from him. The music that had sung through his mind and soul for decades thinned and faded, sometimes vanishing entirely for whole weeks at a time. Whenever it returned, he locked himself in his soundproofed basement and attempted to court it with weeklong frenzies of manic creation during which he neglected the needs of his body. "Inviting" eminent local violinists to his home to attend these sessions resulted in hideous bloodshed that shocked his artist's soul when he returned to himself and realized the beauty he had destroyed.

During the course of one of these expeditions he met a young woman, Kathy Glens, the guitarist in a local rock band, whose virtuosity with her chosen instrument moved him. He offered to her the same gift given to him and she accepted with enthusiasm, coaxing him into turning some of the unused rooms in his house into a home recording studio. Nonetheless, his own music remained silent and he surrendered to torpor during the

Lupine assault on the city, his childe locking him in his lightproof basement.

When he woke, it was to a sudden burst of song, a cascading symphony that cried out in agony and terror and jarred him from his rest with the intensity of its call. When Kathy made her weekly check on him, she found him hunched over his desk, scribbling notations on pages of composition paper. Kathy dutifully brought him reams of sheet music, and a handful of willing groupie blood dolls from whom he could drink, and escorted him out into a much-changed world where the Sabbat was crumbling, the Anarchs were resurgent, and the Inquisition, a dark fairy tale of his youth, hunted the Kindred in their lairs. He realized his music reflected all of this, in its own way, and his heart sang with joy. But how had it reached him, deep in the sleep of ages?

Taking the name "Nero," he has gone forth into the world for the first time in years to seek not only his music but answers, as well. Something summoned him back from the cold and silent dark to be the voice of a new age, and he would know who and what that was.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Historically Apolitical:** Under the reign of Lodin, Tamoszius survived in the pressure cooker of Chicago Kindred politics by observing a policy of strict neutrality in the games and schemes of others, while having no noticeable games or schemes of his own. This has served him well in the past but all things change. A part of him is now drawn to the Anarch fire, though he's aware of the purported "list of ten."

- **Unknown Patron:** Nero firmly believes something, some outside supernatural force, woke him from torpor to bear witness and give voice to this dark new future of terror and uncertainty facing the Kindred. He has no idea who or what that force might be, and he is inexpertly seeking sources of legitimate occult knowledge.

- **Beyond the Clan:** He has never particularly cared for the Toreador Primogen, Annabelle, or her brood of shallow sycophants, but also realistically assessed his own lack of political heft. Since his awakening, he has, however, made the acquaintance of Aluc Romas de Leon, whose social and political significance among the Kindred is on the rise. He believes Aluc would make an infinitely superior representative to the Primogen Council, and it's not unknown for a member of the Ministry to represent another clan in absence of its own Primogen.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Marquette Park Residence (Haven 2, Retainer 1)** Tamoszius owns a house on the edge of Marquette Park, purpose-built to serve as both his haven and musical conservatory. The basement levels house his lightproof sleeping quarters and personal study, and a small apartment for his childe Kathy and her bandmates to make use of should they require. The upstairs contains a music room and performance space, a small home recording studio, and the quarters of the woman Kathy hired and Blood Bound to act as his protector, chauffeur, and housekeeper when she's not available to perform those tasks.

- **Live Music Scene (Influence 1, Resources 1)** He has only recently awoken from torpor and is only just rebuilding his presence in the local musical scene. He spends much of his time performing, and when not performing, is holed up in his study feverishly writing down the music that accosts him almost daily in his sleep.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Buskers (Contacts 1, Retainers 1)** At one time, Tamoszius had numerous retainers among the mortal independent musicians of the city, particularly the buskers who roamed the parks and played local ethnic musical festivals. Most of those ties have decayed over time but he is in the process of rebuilding them.

- **Tatar Fall, Lithuanian Folk Band (Herd 1, Influence 1)** He has in particular taken under his wing the members of a small Lithuanian folk band, who perform music from Nero's mortal youth. He sees in their lead violinist, a waifish young woman, an echo of himself.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Annabelle (Antipathy)** Tamoszius regards his Primogen and her brood with the passive-aggressive antipathy of a political featherweight who possesses neither the social heft nor the actual interest in seizing power for himself. Annabelle is aware of this feeling and vaguely irritated by it, but not so much she feels the need to punish it...yet.

- **Kathy Glens (Trust)** Unlike many sire-childe pairs, he and Kathy Glens, his only childe, enjoy a close and functional relationship. Kathy watched over him faithfully while he was in torpor and goes to considerable effort to reintegrate him into the local Kindred community now that he's awake again.

- **Natasha Pleskyte (Potential Mawla 3)** He has not seen his sire, Natasha, in decades. More often of late, his thoughts turn to her, where she might be now, or if she even still walks the night.

WHISPERS:

- **Suspected Diablerist:** Several vampires wonder at Nero's burst of energy since waking, wondering if he's the same vampire who fell into torpor or another masquerading as him.
- **Prophecies of Doom:** Some are drawing a connection between Tamoszius' awakening as a musical prophet and the apparently visionary street prophet Max Galura surfacing in Chicago around the same time.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Tamoszius grew up poor and frequently malnourished and it shows, standing barely five feet tall and tragically scrawny, with thinning silver-gray hair and startlingly intense blue-green eyes. His hands are obviously those of a musician, long-fingered and sensitive, with a violinist's calluses forever preserved by the Embrace.
- His childe has managed to coax him out of the carbon-dated wardrobe he wore for decades and he has instead traded up to a sort of thrift-store-originating shabby chic, instead of just shabby.
- Nero lacks a fully fleshed out Mask, as he's only recently awoken. Kathy is building a personality for him as an immigrant musician, not far from the real thing.

Sire: Natasha Pleskyte

Embraced: 1885 (Born 1848)

Ambition: I will rediscover my humanity through my music

Convictions: I must make music from every joy and every tragedy

Touchstones: Rozele Vaitekunas — a local Lithuanian folk musician, who is rapidly becoming his muse

Humanity: 4

Generation: 9th

Blood Potency: 3

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 5, Stamina 3; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 3; Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 8

Skills: Athletics 1, Craft (Musical Instruments) 2, Survival 1; Etiquette 4, Insight (Mood) 5, Performance (Music) 5, Persuasion (Passion) 3, Streetwise 2; Awareness 1, Investigation 1, Occult 1, Politics 1, Technology 2

Disciplines: Auspex 2, Celerity 3, Presence 4

KATHY GLENS

Epitaph: Enlightenment through music and actions

Quote: *"Do you hear the light? No. You don't understand yet. Just sit. Listen. Learn. Grow."*

Clan: Toreador

MORTAL DAYS: THE PRODIGY

Sravya Kathy was born one of two twins, her parents fiercely pushing the siblings toward educational pursuits from the age of three. By 10, both children had fallen in love with their passions; Gagandeep could always be found learning about automobiles, while Sravya had one love: music.

Her walls were covered in pictures of Mary Ford, Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton, Robert Johnson, and Elizabeth Cotton. Stacks of slim crates filled with records lined the lower half of all the walls. Any free moment was a deep dive into music. The words were nice, but it was the power of the guitars that reverberated in her brain. Eventually she saved enough money from birthday presents, summer housework earnings, and allowances to buy a 1963 Harmony Rocket H59.

Two key events in 1968 changed Sravya's life forever. She saw Jimi Hendrix perform in Chicago, and the University of Chicago musical program accepted her as protégé on a full scholarship. The moment of enlightenment burned within her, and she adopted her middle name to remember her family while increasing her appeal with American audiences. She then took the last name Glens for the career she was destined to have. Kathy slept through most of her classes, struggling though tests while playing music in clubs at night with her new electric guitar. Her playing left rooms stunned; people asked where she studied, and she waited to hit it big.

Unbeknownst to Kathy, her music converted one fan from a hater of the electric guitar to one who could see the beauty in it. Nero, a Toreador and gifted violinist, followed her for months, watching her talent evolve and adapt in such a short time. One night after a show, he came to the 18-year-old musician and offered the chance to preserve her talent for eternity, refining it with each passing night. Kathy instantly agreed.

KINDRED NIGHTS: CITY PEACEKEEPER

The Embrace of Kathy Glens birthed Baby Chorus, with her as one of the founding members. She knew blues, folk, rock, and when punk emerged, she assaulted it with all her talent. The talent and fury that so many refused to see and elevate to the next level because she was a woman, a child of immigrants, and dark-skinned. But Kathy had talent and skill without peer. Any style that came, she attacked and mastered it. Once mastered, she would weave multiple styles together during her many improvisational hour-long solos, leaving bandmates dancing and her audience captivated.

The War of Chicago raged on in the streets while Baby Chorus entertained the masses packed into the Cave. Kathy saw Damien stage dive, and was feeling the crowd. The cheering grew louder and louder. She struck the first note of her solo, about to draw all eyes on her, when she heard Nero scream in pain. Her blood already flowing for the speed riff, Kathy glanced toward her sire to witness a 10-foot-tall fur-covered nightmare of death ripping Nero to shreds, before a half-dozen more Lupines rushed out into the crowd. In one fluid motion, she dropped the electric guitar and rushed the beast, slicing it dozens of times with razor-sharp guitar strings. The beast dropped, bleeding out, and she turned toward where Nero stood before two Lupines charged her; the rest of the night was only darkness.

Days later, she discovered from Damien what happened and who else died. The left side of her body carried the claw marks of one who survived the Battle of Chicago and the Lupines. The next few years left her shaken and heartbroken. Kathy turned away dozens of requests from Damien to restart the band. Rather than take to the stage, she spent all her time in an abandoned cellar in South Side playing records, editing, and practicing guitar when no one could hear her. She didn't know if these pieces were trash or the next masterpiece, and she did not care.

Slowly Kathy emerged from the trauma and turned back to the religion she had to stop practicing, finding a form of solace in it. She even began hosting a weekly college radio show under the name Cynthia Glens for a few years, until she had to "graduate."

Feeling some semblance of peace, she sought out the now 47-year-old Gagandeep, and found from him more angry than surprised. She vanished decades ago, and left their family crushed. He accused her of being a demon, a devil in the guise of his sister, to torment him. She was a cold and dead thing. The Beast overtook her, and she beat him nearly to death before his eight-year-old daughter, Sravya, cried at her to stop. The Beast barely constrained, she fled knowing she had almost killed the only remaining connection to her old life.

Kathy dived into music, philosophy, and attempts to find a cure for what she had blindly become when Nero offered her eternity. Her quest discovered vague references to something called "Golconda." She spent years trying to learn more about Golconda, to little avail — and eventually decided to be more "human." She believes she has tapped into understanding, and that the power in all Kindred blood may hold answers. Marshall, her former bandmate, had taught them all a few secrets of Blood Sorcery before dying in the Cave decades ago. The band and music need to move us toward something greater and not just be a *symbol* of unity, but unity itself.

One night, she returned home to find Damien waiting outside her haven in Near North Side. Kathy always remembers him smiling when he told her that Baby Chorus was coming back, and she would want in. He had made a deal with the Prince, and they would be the bridge to keep the peace during negotiations with the Lasombra. Their music would bring unity. Kathy Glens agreed instantly.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **The Band Back Together:** Kathy missed Baby Chorus, and that was evident after the first practice session. Playing with the band is slowly replacing everything else in her life. She will do whatever it takes to keep the band together and playing.

- **Approaching Enlightenment:** Kathy is getting closer to her own form of Golconda and fears the violence Damien enforces may doom him from following her. She is hatching a plan to help him by documenting her journey, then finding a way to start him on the same path.
- **Family Ties:** Once a week, she returns to Gagandeep's home to watch him and Sravya from the shadows. Some nights she breaks in to be closer to them and has even played guitar quietly for her sleeping niece.
- **Ravens:** She talks quietly about Golconda and has been searching for more clues, talking to anyone with a scrap of knowledge. She's been a little too eager, and she knows it; a bizarre book on Golconda titled *The One True Way* reached her haven in recent nights.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **West Town Warehouse (Haven 3)** Kathy's haven is an abandoned warehouse in the West Town neighborhood. She doesn't know what it once manufactured or stored, but she believes it may have been asbestos or something similar, as the site is boarded up and chained off in a broad area. She worries it'll be demolished at some point, but the city seems to have little appetite for the expense.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Groupies (Herd 3) Roadies (Retainers 2)** Kathy has a rabid following willing to step up with a single tweet. The band's roadies, Mick and Geoff, are also its biggest fans. They're not ghouls, but are utterly loyal to Baby Chorus.
- **Online Fans (Contacts 2)** Under her guise of Cynthia Glens, Kathy has a loose information network via callers and social media followers. She can find out all about Chicago gossip just by engaging them.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Damien (Care)** Kathy considers Damien a younger brother and wants what is best for him. She worries about his rage and what awaits him since Clan Brujah's departure from the Camarilla, and feels responsible for his degeneration following the band splitting up.
- **Tamoszius "Nero" (Mawla 2, Concern)** Nero has woken up again, and to Kathy's surprise he's more lucid than before. She's keeping a close eye on him, as she's afraid he will descend into his previously homicidal state.
- **Evan Klein (Responsibility)** More and more in the role of den mother, Kathy sees Evan Klein as a surrogate son, troubled and incurable. She wishes she could get through to the Malkavian in some way that might soothe his issues, but as far as she can tell, only the music can do so.

WHISPERS:

- **Going Solo:** Kathy is the reason Baby Chorus is successful, and she is going to leave the band to become a solo act.
- **Baby Chorus Army:** Kathy has multiple havens and one of them is a family home in South Side. She has a family of ghouls at her command.
- **The One True Way:** She's the member of a weird Kindred religious order called "the Ravens" who seem to drive unbalanced Kindred into the arms of the Beast forever.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Kathy is her Mask and Mien. She won't change her name again **(Mask 2)**.
- Kathy intermingles modern Indian and western fashions with a little '60s punk. She wears a salwar kameez with a leather jacket and Doc Martins. Her long, jet-black hair is always untied and in sharp contrast to her death-pallor skin.
- Blush of Life returns her light brown complexion and deepens her black eyes.

Sire: Tamoszius "Nero"

Embraced: 1971 (Born 1953)

Ambition: Discern the truth behind the concept of Golconda

Convictions: Bring peace to those who are troubled; Always move toward enlightenment

Touchstones: Sravya — Unknowing niece; Gagandeep — Distant twin brother

Humanity: 8

Generation: 10th

Blood Potency: 2

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 5, Stamina 4; Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Composure 3; Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 7

Skills: Brawl 3, Craft (Repair, Sound Mixing) 3, Drive 2, Melee 4; Insight (Emotions) 3, Persuasion 2, Performance (Guitar, Improvisational Riffs, Dance) 5; Academics (Music History, Philosophy) 3, Medicine 1, Occult 1, Science 1, Technology 2

Disciplines: Auspex 2, Celerity 3, Presence 3, Blood Sorcery 1

ERZULIE

Epitaph: Vampire activist, Mother-Above-All, founder of the Blood Disco

Quote: *"Blood is fluid in several ways. We are all the children of Lilith."*

Clan: Toreador

MORTAL DAYS: BELLE OF THE BALL

Born in 1888, Emmanuel Rolando was definitely not like the other boys who grew up in the Buena Vista barrio of Bayamon, Puerto Rico. On his 16th birthday, Emmanuel put on the pretty yellow dress he made for this very occasion, which complemented his caramel-dipped skin. He wore a yellow-flecked red maga flower in his usually wild mane of locks, now tamed in a fetching new hairstyle. He stood in front of his family and said: "Mami... Papi...You did not have a son. When I was born on this day, you had a daughter. I am a woman...

and my name is Erzulie."

This did not go over well with Erzulie's Roman Catholic family. Humiliated, Erzulie spent the next two years living on the streets of Bayamon. Abandoned by family and friends alike, she survived by dancing in the streets for pesos to buy cuchuifritos and slept in abandoned bohios to avoid bandits and other predators.

In 1905, Erzulie stowed away on a freighter bound for New York. She made her home in East Harlem where she found work as a seamstress. She made a satisfactory life for herself using her gifts, but she still had to hide her true self. New York, it seemed, was not the paradise of her dreams.

This was the beginning of the Gilded Age. The idle rich were discarding old mores. Wild jazz filled the air as young debutantes canoodled with dashing black musicians. Drag balls became the rage as men dressed in women's clothes for the elite's amusement.

Erzulie made her debut in 1919 at the annual Hamilton Club Lodge Ball at Rockland Palace Casino. The yellow dress from her youth became a jeweled golden gown. She remembered the last time she revealed herself. The memory of that moment almost stopped her from entering the soiree, but she would not let that stop her from being who she was meant to be.

The exotic beauty with the flower in her hair was the belle of the ball. Erzulie was envied and adored. She was the one to see, the one with whom to be seen.

Louis Detonas saw Erzulie as a work of art that must be preserved for all time and the smitten Toreador Embraced Erzulie that very evening.

KINDRED NIGHTS: EVERYONE WANTS TO KNOW HER

Vampirism gave Erzulie a freedom she thought she would never experience. Free to love whoever she wanted, Erzulie took many partners both human and Kindred. Erzulie found acceptance; the Ball became her home and the queens became her family.

Erzulie would also find her place among the creative and political minds of the Harlem Renaissance. To be among the likes of Zora Neale Hurston, Langston Hughes, and W. E. B. DuBois was intoxicating. Erzulie was living a Toreador dream...

But alas, all dreams must come to an end.

The McCarthy era took the fun and freedom out of being...different. Though the Masquerade requires Kindred keep a low profile, Erzulie did not agree with those sentiments. Her community was persecuted and forced underground. The Kindred, many of them Caitiff, were not immune to the cruelty. Erzulie would give them a home. She found them in New York and Philadelphia. She found them in Baltimore, Washington D.C., and other places. They could walk, they could vogue, they could give face...

And they were certainly fierce.

In 1982, Erzulie found herself in Chicago. The burgeoning house music scene took root in a club called the Warehouse, which just happened to be owned, in part, by a vampire. The pulsing lights, the smell of sweat as the people around her jacking with wild abandon put Erzulie in a trance.

She barely noticed Adze, the Nosferatu watching her, until she bumped into him.

Erzulie could see the pain of his former life in Adze's eyes. She shared Adze's passion for freedom from this rigged game called the Masquerade. Erzulie, queen of the world beyond the Camarilla, had found her king. Together, they would give voice to the voiceless and create a new clan from those cast aside. It would all be in service to the Dark Mother, but Adze didn't have to know that.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Desirable Linchpin:** Erzulie is the object of desire in Chicago. Not only is she beautiful, but she has also created a strong power base with the Blood Disco. There are many who would like to drive a wedge between her and Adze. Annabelle, in particular, sees the Blood Disco as an opportunity to strengthen her power base and will attempt to use clan familiarity to bring Erzulie into the fold.

- **Nirvana Awaits:** Erzulie wishes to build a kingdom with Adze. She recognizes the Camarilla's need for secrecy, but believes a life in secret can be a whole hell of a lot more fun than conservative traditions and besuited vampires in board rooms. Erzulie's Camarilla — or "Lilith's Camarilla" as she calls it — is a Masquerade of raves, underground bacchanals, and drug-fueled ecstasy.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Backtrack Club (Contacts 1, Influence 2) Baton Show Lounge (Contacts 2, Influence 1, Resources 1) Humboldt Park Apartment (Haven 1)** Erzulie is a fixture of the Chicago club scene particularly in Boystown, the enclave of the LGBTQ+ community on the north side of Chicago. She can often be found dancing at the Backtrack on Halsted or performing at the Baton Show Lounge in Old Town. Her lair is the garden apartment in a three-flat that she owns in Humboldt Park.

- **Red No⁹ 5 (Contacts 3, Haven 1, Influence 2, Resources 1, Retainers 2)** Erzulie can also be found in the company of Adze at Red No⁹ 5. She prefers to feed there, on the blood of young African-American and Latinx girls in their late teens to early 20s in deference to her belief in Lilith as the vampire goddess. Erzulie usually has two or three such thralls, giving blood freely to their idol.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Blood Disco Cult (Allies 2, Contacts 2, Herd 3, Retainers 3)** Erzulie created the House of Lilith, the first of the Kindred Drag Houses. The community has given Erzulie the title of Mother-Above-All, the highest honor in drag. She also founded the Blood Disco, an annual event that brings Caitiff together to celebrate Lilith, the true sire of the Kindred. This year the Blood Disco will be hosted at Red No⁹ 5 or the House of Mamuwalde — she hasn't decided which.

- **Celebrity Activist (Fame 3, Influence 2)** As the Blood Disco has grown in scope and influence, Erzulie has become a celebrity activist in the LGBTQ+ community. She uses that celebrity as protection from the Camarilla's reprisals.

- **Cornelius Williams (Retainers 1)** Cornelius is the executive assistant for Rolando, Erzulie's fashion company. He is 41-year-old biracial gay man, and Erzulie considers making Cornelius a ghoul. For now, they are both content with Cornelius being her mortal aide-de-camp.

- **Bianca Maldonada (Allies 1)** Bianca, a 19-year-old Puerto Rican fashion-design student, has recently caught Erzulie's eye with her talent and beauty. Hired as an intern, Erzulie is grooming her protégé not only as a future force in the fashion world, but also as her potential childe.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Francois Mamuwalde (Loyal)** Erzulie's most trusted confidante is Francois, the first member of the House of Lilith and mother of the House of Mamuwalde. Francois was instrumental in helping Erzulie build and maintain the Blood Disco. Fiercely loyal, Francois would follow Erzulie to the end of the Earth and protect her "mother" at all costs.

- **Adze (Love)** Adze is Erzulie's man. Normally, Nosferatu are hard to look at. But, with his blue-black skin, exaggerated African features and impeccable style, Erzulie finds him beautiful. Their mutual respect for each other keeps their bond indelible.

- **Cedrick Calhoun (Mark)** Cedrick Calhoun has taken an interest in the Blood Disco. He sees Erzulie as a potential force for good and humane behavior in the city, and hopes to groom her to his philosophy.

- **Bennett Steadman (Neophyte)** He's handsome, has a way with words, and knows his way around a club. Erzulie would just love to be able to make him believe in the Dark Mother.

WHISPERS:

- **Power Play:** Erzulie is making a move to seize power as Toreador Primogen. Annabelle represents the old ways, Erzulie embraces the new.
- **Rivals for Blood:** Bennett Steadman is attracted to Bianca and is getting ready to take his shot. Word is, Erzulie doesn't approve. When the time comes, Bianca will be a Toreador — Erzulie will make sure of that.
- **Naught but a Shell:** When Erzulie takes the wig and the makeup off, she is nothing but a depressed husk of a vampire.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Erzulie's Mask is a fashion designer named Isabel Rolando, in honor of her long-passed mother. The Rolando brand is currently on the rise, having recently designed gowns for several up-and-coming actresses for Hollywood red-carpet events **(Mask 2)**.
- Erzulie has a lithe build, small breasts, and big, brown eyes with flecks of gold that shimmer in the moonlight. She has full lips with a delicate nose and her skin is the color of light bronze. She has some Protean ability from ingesting the blood of a former Tzimisce lover, which she uses to primarily to allow near-complete passage as a cisgender woman. Her slightly boyish frame is the only indication of her former, incorrectly assigned gender.
- Erzulie has been known to wear elegant and elaborate beaded gowns, especially during the Blood Disco. Currently, she has taken to an elevated version of the avant-garde street style popularized by the Afropunk movement.
- Her voice is tender and seductive with a slight Puerto Rican accent as she constantly switches from Spanish to English, often within the same sentence.

Sire: Louis Detonas

Embraced: 1919 (Born 1888)

Ambition: Build a kingdom in Chicago with Adze

Convictions: Protect the innocents from harm; Always give a home to the homeless

Touchstones: Bianca Maldonado — 19-year old college student and intern; Cornelius Williams — 41-year old aide-de-camp

Humanity: 5

Generation: 10th

Blood Potency: 2

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3; Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Composure 4; Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 7

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Craft (Costume) 3, Firearms 1, Stealth 3; Etiquette 4, Insight 2, Intimidation 1, Leadership 4, Persuasion (Seduction) 4, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 3; Awareness 2, Finance (Cash Business) 3, Investigation 1, Occult 1, Politics 3, Technology 1

Disciplines: Auspex 1, Presence 3, Protean 3

HELENA "PORTIA"

Epithet: Methuselah, Ancient Adversary

Quote: *"This existence can be glorious fun, if you let it."*

Clan: Toreador

MORTAL DAYS: A LEGENDARY PAST

Born to an Achaen king in the early 1200s BCE, Helena has always known power. Word of her political acumen and surpassing beauty spread far beyond the Aegean Sea. The whispers attracted the attention of Minos, who visited Argos and sought an audience with the king and his fabled daughter. Helena distrusted the old man immediately. He held an eerie sway over others, and only came skulking about after sundown. She begged her father to drive him out, but the king announced their betrothal.

Helena escaped the palace with her handmaiden and fled south along the shore. When exhaustion demanded they rest, the women sought shelter in a sea cave. At dawn they were discovered by a prince from Asia Minor who was exploring the Aegean coast. The stunning man offered them protection from Minos in his city to the east. Helena and Prias became lovers, and for the next 10 years, she lived peacefully among his noble family.

Minos tracked her to Prias' palace, where the prince and his brothers were no match for the vampire. He left Prias for dead and dragged Helena back to Argos. He

spent the next several months slowly draining her. When he finally Embraced her, he enacted his cruelest punishment: Minos locked his blood-starved childe in a room with one ancient old man, whose warm blood drove her to frenzy. As clarity returned, Helena was horrified to find the ruined corpse sealed in with her was her father's.

KINDRED NIGHTS: IMMORTAL GRUDGES

Defeated, Helena married Minos and crowned him king. Thirteen years into their reign, Prias returned to Argos. He found the vampires where they slept and drove his spear into Minos' heart. Helena, feeling her sire's control weaken, lunged for Minos' throat. Power surged through her as her tormentor died his final death.

Finally free, Helena and Prias ruled Argos. When Helena noticed her lover aging, she offered to Embrace him. Prias refused. However, he accepted an alternative: By drinking Helena's potent vitae, he gained power and longevity without the vampire curse.

They made their way to Brujah-controlled Carthage. When Helena realized she'd never rule, she and Prias defected to Rome. They offered the Ventrue key information leading to the Third City's destruction. In exchange, the Clan of Kings offered Helena Pompeii. One Brujah survived Carthage's fall. Menele swore vengeance, summoning a fire spirit to rage across Pompeii. Menele believed Helena died in the molten rain, yet she and Prias escaped.

Their war raged across centuries, the two using mortal wars and the Inquisition to pursue their vendetta against each other. Eventually they found their way to the New World, meeting in battle on the Chicago River. The sheer violence of their thunderous blows shocked even the most seasoned warriors. Helena drove her claws deep into Menele's chest, while he crushed her skull with his own.

Even in torpor, the two plotted. Helena used her sway over the Malkavians to start the Great Fire, destroying many of Menele's pawns and installing Lodin as the new Prince. For years, Helena ruled through Lodin while she sent her own thralls in search of Menele's resting place.

She awoke from torpor in 1990, killing the prominent Toreador Maria upon rising. Helena disguised herself as the neonate Portia while finding her bearings. The Succubus Club became her haven and Helena made inroads into controlling the city's Anarchs. Three years later, Lupines made the club one of their first targets in the Chicago War. Prias, loyal for over three millennia, died in the battle. The Succubus Club reopened in 2018, and both the original location and franchise branches serve as meeting places for undead movers and shakers, but Helena has yet to move on from Prias' death.

Then came the Beckoning. Helena always believed Menele's death would come at her hands. Yet, her rival succumbed to the call, depriving her of her ancient vengeance. This denial was perhaps his last victory. She felt Menele's silent departure and it hit her like an axe to the spine. She was paralyzed into inaction as her enemy simply slipped through her fingertips.

Helena felt the Beckoning herself, and followed it as far as Tunisia. However, she resisted giving herself over to it completely. She believes she has discovered a way to stave off the urge to submit to the call: by gorging herself on Kindred vitae. She massacred a score of Ashirra delegates in Tunis, who were all awaiting the party of Victoria Ash for the Vermilion Wedding. The Beckoning and her battles had weakened her significantly, leaving her without access to many of her former powers. As she fought, she felt her potency withering, and the suddenly the call *ceased*. Whatever was calling her required her no longer. She made a quick escape, returning to Chicago in recent nights, and is once again moving vampires around like pawns on a chessboard. The game is different without Menele playing against her, but she's more than ready for a new challenger. In fact, she craves one.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Uncontrolled Children:** Helena learned the Nosferatu Primogen Khalid was never under Menele's command. Further, Khalid built a network of other

likewise-unaffected Kindred. This alliance infuriates and intrigues Helena — she hasn't yet decided if she wants to destroy them, control them, or leave their free will intact and compete with them for rule of Chicago.

- **New Games:** The Lasombra bid to join the Camarilla presents new avenues for Helena's machinations. Those Kindred who know about the methuselah in their midst hear conflicting rumors about which way she leans. This is by design: She's watching to see which decision best benefits *her.* She has several Keepers Dominated alongside her Camarilla and Anarch pawns, but hungers for a clash with a vampire such as Talley, or his Mawla in D.C., Marcus Vitel.

- **Cannibalistic Hunt:** Prias' Blood Bond lessened while she lay in torpor. What began as a reluctance to feed from Helena in her weakened state became a way to break free. Prias hunted elder Kindred and drank from them to maintain his longevity and blood-borne powers. Helena possesses his research, using this information both to learn about what schemes Prias set into motion, and to cultivate potential victims to stave off the Beckoning.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Succubus Club (Haven 4, Influence 3, Resources 5)** The Succubus Club serves as Helena's domain and haven. Reopening the club invigorated Helena in the wake of Menele's departure. She controls the VIP list, arranging "chance" meetings for the Kindred she wants to work together, and offering private spaces for them to plan their schemes. She keeps a heavily secured and trap-laden suite of rooms in the sub-basement.

- **Summoned Fledglings (Herd 2)** While Helena's powers allow her the run of the city, she currently draws young vampires to her. Fledglings and neonates lacking coteries often become her meals.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **"Slip Up" (Contacts 1, Retainer 1)** Helena always needs to know who might be plotting against her. She's so far managed to evade Second Inquisition detection. After the century turned, she made sure to have eyes and ears in local law enforcement and intelligence agencies. She has the mortal hacker "Slip Up" Dominated, tasked with keeping mentions of her off the internet. On more than one occasion, she's planted information leading to Helena's enemies.

- **Succubus Club Employees (Allies 2, Contacts 3)** Any mortal working the Succubus Club is in Helena's mental thrall, though she gives them enough autonomy to keep the place buzzing and full of life. She doesn't see the need to give up precious vitae to control them when her natural aura of control seems sufficient.

- **New Lover (Potential Allies 1)** One night soon, Helena might seek out a new lover. She's looking for a strong-willed, independently minded Kindred. Until then, she has the majority of the city's Toreador at her beck and call, though few realize or remember the attentions she visits upon them.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Kevin Jackson (Rivalry)** Jackson's rise to power impressed Helena. She's watching him carefully to see where he intends to take the city. She hasn't Dominated him — yet — and views him as a potentially worthy opponent in Menele's absence. He may not possess the raw power of Menele, but his popularity within the Camarilla seems high.

- **Bret Stryker (Toy)** Stryker's adoration amuses Helena for the moment, and gives her another way to pull Annabelle's strings. She possesses no deep feelings for the Toreador dancer, however. He's just a source of fun for a fleeting moment.

- **"Erichtho" Tracy Graves (Concern)** Few Kindred worry Helena, but Erichtho qualifies. Her mastery of Blood Sorcery is impressive, and her affection for the departed Nicolai puts her at odds with Helena, who was using the former Tremere Primogen. Helena may soon call for Erichtho's elimination or orchestrate it herself, if she fancies a hunt.

- **Critias (Disinterest) Edith Beaubien (Interest)** With Menele vanishing, Helena expected to find Critias consuming her attentions by proxy. Instead, she finds herself constantly surveying Beaubien's every movement. She doesn't know why this Nosferatu reeks of strength, but suspects she has a powerful patron hidden away somewhere.

- **Erzulie (Frustration)** Helena has been studying the so-called "Blood Disco" that has somehow run successfully for years without her notice. She questions how the cult has avoided her attention, whether they *were* pawns of Menele, and whether they're now visible due to his disappearance.

- **Rosa Hernandez (Tool) Annabelle (Plaything)** Two members of the Primogen Council are firmly in her hands, with Rosa as Helena's sword and Annabelle as Helena's social shield. Since Nicolai's departure she's looking for a new tool, one who might plug the research-and-tactics gap the Tremere left.

WHISPERS:

- **Who is She?** A few vampires question "Portia's" absence and return, with the Toreador "neonate" explaining she was on the west coast visiting her sire. Cedrick Calhoun has been investigating the claim and doesn't believe it holds up.
- **The Infernal:** Rumor has it, Helena made deals with demons and fears her next slide into torpor, due to what awaits her in her comatose dreams.
- **Double Trouble:** Over the last quarter century, two neonates calling themselves Portia have appeared in Chicago. One vanished in the last decade, after hinting to friends about dirt she'd gathered on her counterpart.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Helena's beauty is legendary. She's slender, of average height, and has the youthful appearance of a woman in her mid-to-late 20s. Her long, dark hair often remains unbound around her classical Greek features.
- Centuries spent ruling Argos give her a regal bearing; this can come across as aloof or condescending, an impression she rarely bothers to correct. Helena keeps up with modern fashion trends and tailors her look based on who she's meeting. She's equally as elegant in t-shirt, jeans, and a leather jacket for an Anarch gathering as she is in an Elysium-appropriate ballgown.
- As Portia, she gravitates toward a more club-friendly style. Just because she doesn't want to *talk* to other club-goers doesn't mean she doesn't want to be *seen*.

Sire: Minos

Embraced: 1207 BCE (Born 1233 BCE)

Ambition: Find a sure way to stave off the Beckoning

Convictions: Always outsmart your enemies

Touchstones: Trina Dimitriou — distant descendant of Prias

Humanity: 3

Generation: 4th

Blood Potency: 7

Attributes: Strength 5, Dexterity 5, Stamina 4; Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Composure 3; Intelligence 4, Wits 5, Resolve 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 8

Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl (Grappling) 5, Craft (Architecture) 4, Melee 3 (Swords), Stealth 3, Survival 4; Etiquette 4, Insight (Ambitions) 5, Intimidation (Interrogation) 5, Leadership (Command) 5, Performance 3, Persuasion (Rhetoric) 5, Subterfuge (Long Cons) 5; Academics (History) 4, Awareness 3, Occult 4, Politics (Chicago Kindred) 5

Disciplines: Auspex 5, Blood Sorcery 3, Celerity 5, Dominate 5, Fortitude 3, Obfuscate 3, Presence 5

TREMERE

"Do not lose sight of who we are."

— Nicolai, former Tremere Primogen, in his final statement to the Chicago Warlocks

Nobody liked the little prick, but Nicolai was a stabilizing force among the city's Tremere. Possessing great power in his veins and a tight hold over all the other Warlocks in the city, the way he led his clan was a near-perfect representation of how the Pyramid operated at its height.

Then, he left Chicago and never returned from his trip to Vienna. He'd appointed the (at the time) Follower of Set, Marcel, to act as his proxy on the Primogen Council instead of naming one of his childer. He'd never ruled on the clan's opinion of House Carna or the reemerging House Goratrix. He left a gaping hole where a powerful Tremere was required. That vacancy remains there still.

Chicago's Tremere are firmly apolitical in these nights. Apparently lacking direction and often avoiding Prince Jackson's summons, many of the city's vampires wonder what the Warlocks are up to in their Hyde Park mansion. They occasionally emerge to lend their aid against Anarch raids and Second Inquisition scrutiny, but they offer the bare minimum. Some believe their stance would change completely were a new Prince to take the throne.

The Tremere may be forced to action in nights to come, as Abraham DuSable clings to the traditions of House Tremere, Sun Che embraces the new methods of House Carna, and Erichtho attempts to rebuke all methods of control.

ABRAHAM DUSABLE

Epitaph: Father-Turned-Commander of the Tremere

Clan: Tremere

MORTAL DAYS: A SUITABLE TOOL

In 1943, the child-vampire Nicolai was the sole Tremere permanently resident in Chicago. Nicolai wanted a power base, a true Tremere Chantry and most importantly, the credibility he believed had been denied him by his youthful appearance. After surveying the minds and habits of several notable Chicagoans he selected 60-year old Abraham DuSable, an African-American lawyer, to satisfy these practical goals. DuSable was the right age, and Nicolai read in his mind frustration at the racist limits imposed on the man's career and social ambitions. DuSable also feared death. The vampire didn't even need to control his mind; Abraham DuSable submitted to the Embrace out of informed free will.

Of course, Nicolai was blinded by his own biases — something not even telepathy could counter. Nicolai saw a simple fear of death in the man's mind, but DuSable actually felt the complex frustrations of someone who'd realized one life was not enough to learn everything he wanted to know. DuSable's career in law, and his social position between the contractually regulated industrial elite and a multicultural Chicago governed by handshakes and nods, revealed secret patterns in the world,

beyond acknowledged history. DuSable recognized Nicolai was one of the weavers of those patterns.

KINDRED NIGHTS: THE UNAPPOINTED REGENT

After the Embrace, he felt no fear when Nicolai brought him to Vienna, the Prime Chantry, before the burning gazes of the Councilors present — and the empty chair, with its ancient sigil, reserved for the *Primus*.

DuSable rapidly mastered the Art, approaching his sire's ability in a score of years. He was liberated from mortal and vampire distractions. Kine society and its bigotry-flavored desperation bored him. Nor was he especially enamored of Kindred culture with its determination to reproduce mortal flaws and superstitions. DuSable believed immortality provided a way to destroy bias and impulsiveness. With occult insights, myths could be tested. Where legends were true, they could be harvested for power. Where they were false, they could be discarded, burned in the fire of precise intellect.

Meanwhile, Nicolai wasted his time with political games, stagnated as a magus, and in moments of weakness, treated DuSable as a father figure. DuSable's sire had never truly abandoned a child's habits. He was eager to please, and easily influenced by DuSable's surrogate parenting. DuSable would never betray his sire *within* the Tremere hierarchy, but felt his advancement hampered by this relationship. Soon, the throne of Chicago was on his mind. He began preparations and took secret pride in his ability to delay gratification.

Thus, 1980 was his most shameful year. Jazz was one of his few remaining human indulgences, and he exercised it discreetly. The club wasn't a popular one, and the band wasn't even any good. Perhaps that denied him a reverie he might have sunk into, instead of noticing Carol Davis, a beautiful woman, and descendant of his. A glance and smile — and an unexpected result. She *recognized* him as from family photos, as a great-uncle who'd supposedly been killed by the Ku Klux Klan. He dragged her out the door. His discipline shattered against his fear. It led to a wild, irrational moment, and her Embrace.

In time, she called herself "Maldavis," an obvious parody of some occult craft-name. He remains ashamed but still desires her and wonders how much she realizes her early survival depended on a few small moves of his, against the Anarchs he sabotaged. Once she made her bid for power in the '90s, he followed suit, long before the time he selected for himself. They both lost. The Primogen Council prevented anyone from snatching the throne, at least until Peterson made his way onto it in a chance grab for power. As punishment, Nicolai sidelined him by sending him to war.

DuSable endured the horrors of his station. He saw neonates consumed by incomprehensible entities, driven mad by the impossible words in strange tomes, mutilated by inhuman monstrosities, and more. DuSable's had always placed his morality beneath personal discipline, but his experiences stole something vital and pleasant in his heart nonetheless.

Then it was done. The letter had Grimgroth's sigil and said nothing more than *Go home*.

In Chicago, the Chantry stood empty. Erichtho had done nothing to advance the clan and had been "demoted" to Anarch status. Nicolai has been called to Vienna just in time for the Prime Chantry to somehow have its wards and obfuscations fall, revealing it to the Second Inquisition. He was welcomed in Elysium, but he was told that, "most regrettably," the Tremere could no longer count themselves among Chicago's Primogen.

During his time at war, he studied the old lore of the House Militant, the Tremere as they had been before the Camarilla, when, beset by enemies, they formed well-ordered cells, and mastered martial aspects of the Art. He doesn't need to be Prince, anymore. The clan is enough.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Stepping Back:** The purpose of the Tremere is not ascendance in this world, over its cast of fools and monsters. Nor is the House a gathering of mystics and their competing personal truths. The fact is that even though every Prince pretends their throne will last until the flood comes again, history tells a different story. Therefore, the new Tremere of Chicago, *his* Tremere, will support the Camarilla's rational customs, but give up further political striving.

- **The Old Ways:** DuSable's Tremere will also follow the orthodox Art, revealed in the Pyramid, and texts descending from the *Primus* and Council. The physical existence of the eldest Tremere was never as important as their knowledge. DuSable notes how many younger Tremere joined House Carna and believes many of them became ideologically polluted in such circumstances. It's time to convert them back to the old ways.

- **Unification:** DuSable believes in getting his own clan in order before everything else, by transforming it from the politically compromised arm of a now-dead international chain of command into an autonomous organization which must be respected for its capabilities. Of course, there is no power

that isn't tested, but with House Carna so close, Chicago provides many opportunities for instructive conflict.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Hyde Park Chantry (Haven 4, Herd 2, Influence 3, Resources 2)** DuSable resides in the Tremere Chantry, a Hyde Park mansion that's been heavily renovated since the Lupine conflict of the '90s. During the Tremere's little-known battle with mortal magi at the turn of the last century, DuSable sent back advice to fortify the building, and in one of the last acts of a more united House and Clan, the Prime Chantry provided trusted workers to get it done.

- **University of Chicago (Contacts 1, Haven 1, Herd 2, Influence 1)** His personal domain includes the University of Chicago's faculties of medicine and anthropology, along with their facilities. He prefers to feed through impersonal means, such as medical experiments and blood drives.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Freddie Davis (Potential Retainers 2)** DuSable is developing an obsession with Freddie Davis, the granddaughter of Maldavis' mortal brother. Freddie has the mind of an occult philosopher, and looks like her great aunt, circa 1980. DuSable pulled some strings and got Freddie a full scholarship at the University of Chicago but has never made direct contact with her.

- **Karl Stott (Retainers 1)** Nineteen years ago, Karl Stott was the student of a mortal Hermetic magus: a true believer who had yet to open his spirit to their Art. DuSable killed the magus but spared Stott. Stott doesn't know how he came to work for DuSable, and DuSable has no idea *why* he spared Stott and won't bring him into service as a ghoul. A vampire more in touch with their human side might call it "guilt."

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **"Maldavis" Carol Davis (Paternity)** Maldavis is Abraham DuSable's shame and a source of lingering obsession, though with the Tremere fallen from Camarilla recognition, he now finds himself having more in common with her than he once did.

- **"Erichtho" Tracy Graves (Distrust)** He doesn't trust Erichtho, but respects her. She's a vital connection to the world of mortal magi, but is popularly thought to be a Carna sympathizer since during the nights of the Prime Chantry she barely kept her distrust of the Council of Seven within acceptable bounds.

THE MYSTERIOUS GARWOOD MARSHALL

Abraham DuSable supposedly had another childe, Garwood Marshall. Marshall was definitely a Tremere, and DuSable never said he *wasn't* his childe, but it was rumored that Marshall claimed an Embrace in the late 1930s, before DuSable was himself Embraced. Further, Marshall seemed to disobey his "sire" at a whim, with few consequences. And in 1995, he vanished.

In 1997, Joseph Peterson had a hideout Marshall kept in the Fine Arts building searched. His agents found anonymous letters from an individual who wrote as if they were his sire but were not in DuSable's handwriting. One said, "If you fail to do what we have spoken of, I will personally resolve the matter through extreme means." Prince Jackson is aware of these letters, but when asked, DuSable merely said, "He was my direct subordinate in our Pyramid, and he's gone." The Prince is dissatisfied with this response.

WHISPERS:

- **Eyes of the Pyramid:** DuSable went away as a contingency plan against the fracturing of the Tremere, and is only back to act as the eyes of the hidden Seven. Anything he knows, *they* know.

- **In the Family:** That pretense of loyalty to the old order is false. DuSable and Maldavis are co-conspirators and lovers, preparing for her second coming. His past absence was punishment for supporting her, but a new Prince gave him the chance to return.

- **Patricide:** The old man almost certainly killed Nicolai, but who cares? Nicolai was a child vampire, something created in poor taste, if not an abomination. But it demonstrates DuSable can get away with murder.

- **False Face:** That's not even Abraham DuSable! It's a lick named Garwood Marshall, who used to pass himself off as DuSable's childe until someone noticed some of the dates don't add up — Marshall's older. The new face shouldn't fool you. The real DuSable's a staked blood supply for a bunch of Ducheski ghouls, Marshall's allies.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Since returning from his travels, Abraham's left arm seems to have healed, though he always wears a leather glove on his hand.
- Abraham favors a slim-cut modern maroon suit these nights. He doesn't wear glasses anymore, and moves more vigorously than he used to, scanning rooms with a frown as he enters, though he still carries a silver-tipped ebony walking stick. His one concession to Elysium finery is a triangular silver amulet engraved with sigils, which he wears around his neck when there's no need to pretend he's mortal.
- Abraham claims to be a tutor at the university named Oswald Wilson, and has the papers to prove it, but Critias has recently taken exception to the Tremere on what he deems *his* territory **(Mask 1)**.

Sire: Nicolai

Embraced: 1943 (Born 1883)

Ambition: Unify Clan Tremere in Chicago

Convictions: Self-Discipline is the Path to Eternity; Love is the Enemy of Respect

Touchstones: Freddie Davis — Anthropology Student and Descendant; Karl Stott — Occultist Whose Master He Killed

Humanity: 3

Generation: 7th

Blood Potency: 3

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2; Charisma 4, Manipulation 4, Composure 4; Intelligence 5, Wits 4, Resolve 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 9

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Drive 3, Firearms 2, Melee 4, Stealth 2, Etiquette 4, Insight 4, Intimidation 4, Leadership 4, Persuasion 2, Subterfuge 5; Academics 3, Awareness 3, Finance 3, Investigation 2, Occult 5, Politics 4

Disciplines: Auspex 3, Dominate 2, Fortitude 3, Blood Sorcery 5

"ERICHTHO" TRACY GRAVES

Epitaph: Bridge Between Blood Magicians, Wisdom Seeker

Clan: Tremere

MORTAL DAYS: THE TRUE CALL TO ENLIGHTENMENT

Enlightenment! In 1897 they talked about it at all the best parties. Wisdom of the East and all that. Secret masters. For Tracy Graves, it wasn't a fad. By her 20th birthday she'd been to India on a Theosophical junket, interrogating local ascetics about the secret supreme teacher she was sure commanded them. Between her travels and a family that indulged her salons of free-thinkers, Spiritualists, heterodox Masons, and other eccentrics, she became an expert on esoterica, hampered only by Theosophy's strange assumptions — and the fact that, unbeknownst to her at the time, there really *were* secret masters, who were so good at keeping a low profile they stayed out of her way.

At a much less interesting party, hosted by her father, a property lawyer, a pale twosome stood out: a little boy and his father. The father said little and the boy circulated and stared at each guest in turn, until his eyes came to her. This was Nicolai, the old master of Chicago's Tremere. The father was one of his ghouls. The strange little boy called her beautiful, but that was the sort of thing strange children did from time to time. She forgot about it until the next week, when the flowers, poems, and jewelry started coming. Finally, little Nicolai yelled some saccharine poems at her window one night, and she told him he was a silly boy wasting his father's money.

Nicolai appeared again, at a meeting of the Theosophical Society. His short legs dangled from a high chair, and the rest of her clique prostrated themselves before him, like he was an emperor — or a secret master. He showed Tracy miracles: blood dancing in the air and words sculpted from lightning. "The rest will forget we were here," he said, "I have come only to initiate you."

Then pain. An alien will dripping into her. She awoke, dead but moving, a statue of flesh, hollow, dry, and thirsting. She knew spiritual power was in breath — the mystics of the East had made that clear — and now, her breath was gone.

KINDRED NIGHTS: FREE AT LAST

In the following nights, every time she tried to end it — move to the next incarnation, perhaps — Nicolai appeared and stopped her with his monster's paralyzing gaze. So it was, until she went to Vienna, to present herself at the Prime Chantry. If she had been cursed with the opposite of enlightenment, these were the anti-Mahatmas. She attempted to put her neck under the wheels of a moving train, and Nicolai, who repellently called her "Beloved" all the while, put her under the Blood Bond. Thus, she stayed silent and obedient for her presentation. She began her search for Golconda.

Graves learned much, but Golconda eluded her. She returned to Chicago in 1946 with a new name, Erichtho, taken from a witch in Roman mythology. She was relieved Nicolai had Embraced Abraham DuSable, because this saved her from political duties. In the following decades, she continued to correspond with mortal mystics.

Erichtho quietly supported Maldavis' Anarchs, but was still Blood Bound to Nicolai, and unable to act against his interests directly. Even when Nicolai sent DuSable away in the hopes his rival would meet death on some dangerous mission for the clan, he trusted Erichtho to at least moderate her rebellious tendencies.

Then, she felt the bond snap. Nicolai had been in Vienna. She saw news footage of the Prime Chantry burning. She was not only free, but also the only Tremere of consequence in Chicago. When House Carna formed she didn't join but felt immense pleasure at not doing a damn thing to stop them. Princes changed, and she didn't care — not even when one of Jackson's functionaries informed her that her clan was no longer welcome in Elysium.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Enlightenment Within:** Erichtho believes House Carna is another trap for the Kindred spirit, a distraction from the search for enlightenment, but it's better than the old Tremere Pyramid. She provides quiet instruction and practical advice to Carna renegades. Part of her wants Maldavis to join House Carna, to keep the orthodox House Tremere from rising again. Erichtho believes it would be good for the Kindred but bind Maldavis' potential for individual enlightenment. For members of House Carna, Erichtho's mansion provides a brief refuge.

- **Family Obligations:** Even though the Tremere have fallen far, and she was always, at best, a reluctant agent of the clan, a century in Chicago allowed the clan to accumulate numerous assets: buildings, bank accounts, blackmail material — even families sworn to the clan's interests, though most of them only knew they served secret societies with anonymous masters. The one group not subject to this veil of ignorance is the Ducheski family of ghouls, who she protects from exploitation.

- **Stay in Touch:** Erichtho knows mortal magi — the so-called "Awakened" — better than almost any vampire in North America. She's drawn upon their knowledge to develop new Blood Sorcery rituals, particularly in the binding of disincarnate entities. Such spirits guard her Wilmette mansion. She's aware of recent catastrophes among mortal mystics, and monitors a few quiet, dangerous magi who live in Chicago proper. DuSable apparently tangled with magi during his years away and wishes to drive them from their holdings in Chinatown and elsewhere. This is a threat to Erichtho's special influence.

- **The Promised Land:** Her ultimate goal remains Golconda, and perhaps even a return to humanity. There's a greater power beyond the Blood, which God has set aside for mortals. A hefty tome in her possession named *The One True Way* tells her so. That's where her final freedom can be found.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Hyde Park Chantry (Haven 4, Herd 1, Influence 2, Resources 1) Rogers Park Condominium (Haven 1)** Erichtho is free to visit the Chicago Chantry for reasons only known to her and DuSable, considering her association with Carna sympathizers and other past disloyalties. Her personal haven is an innocuous condominium in north Chicago.

- **Chinatown (Contacts 3, Influence 1)** Erichtho is one of the few Kindred who spends significant time in Chicago's Chinatown. Chinatown has always been a dead zone in Kindred influence — and thanks to her advice to stay away, will continue to be so. Her few interactions with Prince Jackson involve personal audiences that have taken place after extended visits

to the area. Her role is assumed to spring from her expertise dealing with mortal occultists.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Ducheski Family (Allies 2, Retainers 3) Arnold Ducheski (Allies 1)** Erichtho despises how the Ducheski family's history and potential have been twisted by the Blood's corruption. So many of them have been made into thralls or born with vitae addiction, their formerly great minds are warped. Any vampire who brings one of the Ducheski into service earns her enmity — even if the Ducheski in question wishes to serve. She has come to feel a deep connection to Arnold Ducheski, an old man who makes beautiful kinetic sculptures out of old machines.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **House Carna (False Promises)** Members of House Carna are of two minds about Erichtho. She provides sanctuary and instruction but denigrates the House as an organization. She seems bent on encouraging Maldavis to join: a possibility some Carna find suspicious.

- **Abraham DuSable (Deference) Maldavis (Informant)** DuSable's back now, and not to be trifled with, but he doesn't interfere with her comings and goings, even though he obviously despises her heterodox approach to Blood Sorcery. Maldavis is the key, a woman DuSable is incapable of harming, so Erichtho relays news and communications between them, to ensure her continued value to him.

- **Sun Che (Intrigue)** Erichtho would love to know what's going on inside Sun Che's head and body. At first, she assumed Sun was deranged, but upon examining her behavior, listening to the voice that sometimes emerges from her mouth, and seeing her raw power up close, Erichtho is starting to wonder what's really going on.

WHISPERS:

- **Not All She Seems:** She's DuSable's agent. Obviously. Talk up Carna around her, and soon enough you'll sprout a new wooden arm from your chest — know what I'm saying?

- **Against Type:** Erichtho is all wrong. Someone her age shouldn't look so *alive*. It looks like she could breathe at any second. She doesn't talk like a Tremere. She's not a vampire. She's a mortal magus using some spell to pretend to be Kindred.

- **Grimoires:** Regardless of her pretenses about enlightenment and individual freedom, she keeps certain Awakened in thrall, and they provide her with grimoires and artifacts: fragments of the heretical text called *The Red Sign*, amulets that call upon the Dark Mother, and others.

- **Puppet House:** Carna doesn't run House Carna. It's Erichtho. It's always *been* Erichtho. Look at what she knows. It only makes sense, since anyone leading a renegade Tremere faction makes themselves a target for unimaginable dangers.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Broad in hip and shoulder, Erichtho peers from beneath severe brown bangs with wide, green eyes. Her gaze is alternately curious and accusative, and her face is so beautiful it could be surrounded with gold leaf in a Klimt painting. Even though it postdates her Embrace, she bases her personal style on flapper fashions, and has been pleased to see them cycle in and out of popular culture.

- Embraced at 22, she often uses her apparent youth to encourage others to underestimate her. This doesn't work with experienced Kindred, but it more than suffices for mortals who find her attractive, who are willing to babble useful information in exchange for a smile and nod. Her laconic habits apply to Kindred as well. She speaks in direct proportion to how much she respects whoever she's talking to.

- Erichtho uses a few Masks depending on what she needs to do. She has an identity as a Humanities student named Jennie Whittingstall, another as a store worker named Sheila Stafford, and a further face as a volunteer nurse named Nigella Ziegler. She believes experiencing humanity's many facets is integral to reaching Golconda **(Mask 2)**.

Sire: Nicolai

Embraced: 1897 (Born 1875)

Ambition: Form a bond with House Carna

Convictions: Enlightenment is the Enemy of the Blood

Touchstones: Arnold Ducheski — Eccentric Tinkerer

Humanity: 8

Generation: 7th

Blood Potency: 3

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5; Charisma 5, Manipulation 4, Composure 5; Intelligence 5, Wits 5, Resolve 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 8, Willpower 9

Skills: Craft (Sculpture) 2, Drive 1, Melee 1, Stealth 1; Etiquette 3, Insight (Body Language, Lip Reading) 5, Persuasion 2, Subterfuge 3; Academics (Sociology) 5, Awareness (Magic Phenomena) 5, Finance 3, Investigation (Decoding) 4, Medicine 3, Occult 5, Politics 2, Science 2

Disciplines: Auspex 5, Dominate 4, Obfuscate 2, Blood Sorcery 5

SUN CHE

Epitaph: A Curse is a Curse

Quote: *"I am the embodiment of the Goddess. You ought to be afraid."*

Clan: Tremere

MORTAL DAYS: THE IDEA OF LIBERTY

Sun grew up in a strictly Catholic Korean-American family. It was in college, in very stereotypical form, that she was finally allowed to rebel. Sun tried every subculture possible, searching for an identity other than the one she grew up with. She fell in love with witchcraft.

Sun's attraction to the occult was more about controlling her world than anything esoteric. Her parents and the Church governed her life, and she desperately wanted to break free. Joining several occult groups in Chicago, Sun met many charismatic, social community leaders who believed in love and freedom. She looked up to them and their healing retreats, and wanted to be like them.

It was during this time Sun was exposed to the idea of polyamory. She quickly moved in with a group of women, all witches, and became a part of their polyam family. It was the happiest time in her life, practicing witchcraft and delighting in all things feminine and love-focused. Sun became known in her community as an up-and-comer, diversifying a white space and adding traditional Korean goddesses to the altars. A changed woman, Sun would never return to her family or their faith.

Sun was about to change even more. On a trip to Toronto to a goddess retreat she met a Tremere named Jennifer Rees. They hooked up after hours and, completely enamored of Sun, Jennifer displayed her practice of blood magic. Sun obsessed over the performance, begging the Regent for an explanation. On Sun's final night in Toronto, Jennifer Embraced her. It did something to Sun, awakening a deep bloodlust that not even Jennifer could have anticipated. There was a massacre at the goddess retreat that weekend, and Jennifer's admiration of Sun diminished. Her attraction had been to her purity, her heart that seemed so full of love. Now it was only

full of lust. Horrified at what she had created, Jennifer fled, leaving Sun to fend for herself.

KINDRED NIGHTS: THE REALITY OF THE BEAST

Sun returned to Chicago and the coven she had left behind. As much as she tried though, she just could not contain her lust. Soon after she came home she fell into a blood rage and murdered every one of her covenmates, drinking them dry. That night, she experienced a vision where a naked woman covered in blood came to her and spoke to her in an ancient tongue. This woman said she was now inside of Sun, and could grant her great power, but sometimes she needed to let Sun give into her and do as she pleased. She would love Sun and protect her, and she didn't need anyone else in her life. Sun woke from the vision covered in blood tears and the innards of her coven.

Years passed, and this blood-drenched woman would sometimes still appear to Sun after a murderous haze. The Tremere of Chicago took her in as one of their own, and Erichtho in particular sympathized with Sun's situation. Although Erichtho's philosophies are similar to Sun's in many ways, both desiring peace, Sun's violent outbursts disturbed the older Tremere. None of the Warlocks could figure out exactly what was going on in Sun's head. Was she really possessed by some entity, or was Sun just permanently mentally damaged by her transformation? All their blood sorcery couldn't figure it out, but Erichtho saw Sun as a useful ally. Two powerful witches were better than one, after all.

Sun became a competent thaumaturge, and currently uses her knowledge to lead a secret cult of worshippers in Chicago, a woman of the coven named Kaitlyn acting as her mortal face and often lover. Sun says it's the bloody demon who guides her, and her cultists all willingly give themselves to her for sacrifice. To her followers, she is the dark goddess who grants them brief powers in exchange for their blood. The Tremere tolerate this because she keeps the cult very secret, and under the guise of her actual status in the occult community of Chicago. She'll still do talks in the community, infamous as the only survivor of her coven's massacre. Sometimes both her and Erichtho will speak at the same event, working the mortal witches in tandem.

There isn't much solace in Sun's life as a vampire. She had her dreams stolen from her by a woman who, in her mind, murdered her and then gave her over to a demonic goddess. Every time the bloody woman takes her over and commits some depraved massacre, Sun gives more of herself to bloodlust. It does, after all, feel incredible every time.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Beast Whisperer:** No amount of research has been able to reveal what's going on within her. If a powerful occultist suddenly became accessible to her, perhaps an older vampire or a werewolf with stranger magics, who knows what they might discover together? Sun is always on the lookout for someone who could give her more insight to her bloody friend.

- **A Different Kind of Unity:** Sun is devoted to stabilizing the Tremere of Chicago. She actively encourages Erichtho and DuSable to introduce new Warlocks to their coven so as to present a stronger front. Despite her care for her Chicago clanmates, Sun is deeply afraid of what Nicolai, the former city Regent, might do with her if he ever returns.

- **Spiritual Guilt:** Sun is in a state of constant atonement for the terrible things she does. She prays to her goddesses every night. However, when the "demon" catches her doing this, it just laughs at her. Sun is in constant struggle with herself. She's not sure how she can truly atone or take revenge against the demon inside, but she will take any action to do either if given the chance.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Edison Park House (Haven 2)** Sun lives with her cult in a fancy old Victorian house off Edison Park, where they masquerade as a rehabilitation center for women with drug addiction. The cult financed the house for her, and all members are devoted to her either via the Blood Bond or genuine admiration. The house contains a library that occupies the entire third floor, in which Sun meets guests. It's rare for Sun to hunt across Chicago, as her cult doubles as a food supply. Therefore, she rarely leaves the house. Most of Chicago's Kindred prefer this, as she's a danger to the Masquerade when she loses control in public.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Sun Cult (Allies 1, Contacts 2, Fame 1, Influence 2, Herd 4)** Sun's cult is her anchor. They have a co-dependent relationship, relying on each other for spiritual and psychological support. The cult, numbering just over 20 adherents, keeps her balanced, the witches occasionally bleeding her to "let forth some of her demons" while making a communion of her vitae.

- **Kaitlyn Hammerstein (Retainers 2)** Kaitlyn acts as the coven's mortal face. She is Sun's ghoul, but even before the Blood Bond set in developed a full love for the troubled Warlock. Kaitlyn knew Sun as a mortal witch, and while she wasn't of the slaughtered coven, does know the reach of her domitor's depravities.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **"Erichtho" Tracy Graves (Mawla 2, Aspiration)** Sun knows that Erichtho is using her for her own purposes, and wishes she had a bit more freedom in their otherwise strong friendship. She deeply resonates with Erichtho's horror at being a vampire, and should she ever find clues toward Golconda, Sun would certainly try to join her in that enlightenment.

- **Annabelle (Patron)** Annabelle loves Sun's demon. She tries to coax it out of her at parties, to create an entertaining slaughter for her guests. As a result, the Toreador Primogen is always keen to get Sun invited to the more decadent underground parties.

WHISPERS:

- **Mad as the Moon:** Sun is a murderous psychopath whose mind fractured when she became a vampire. Any talk of demons is from Sun's own delusion.

- **A Different Bond:** Sun and Erichtho are lovers. If true, this whisper would be far from a scandal, though DuSable may resent a bond such as this among his Tremere. Sun rarely sleeps with any partners beyond Kaitlyn these nights. She lost her taste for sex after she murdered her coven.

- **Avatar of the Council:** Sun is actually the manifestation of an ancient vampire who's trying to take control of her mind and body. A cult beyond her own grows in worship of this broken Tremere.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Sun wears long flowing skirts and blouses with patterns in dark hues. Scarves often bedeck her shoulders, falling quite low on her petite frame.
- Her long, dark hair is often worn loose, and although she's conventionally pretty her expression is often twisted in such concern that it's hard to see.
- When the demon is in control her mannerisms completely change so she seems both wise and bemused. It's quite disturbing when the switch happens.
- Sun's name among the kine is Han Sung-kyung, otherwise known as "the witch mother" among the members of her coven. Han Sung-kyung has the papers to prove she's a professional drug counselor, though she rarely leads a session **(Mask 2)**.

Sire: Jennifer Rees "the Purple Sign"

Embraced: 2003 (Born 1984)

Ambition: Discover the truth of what lurks inside me

Convictions: Protect everyone from myself

Touchstones: Kaitlyn Hammerstein — ghoul and lover

Humanity: 5

Generation: 12th

Blood Potency: 1

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 1; Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 3; Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 4, Willpower 7

Skills: Athletics 1, Stealth 2, Survival 2; Etiquette 2, Insight 3, Intimidation (Unholy Voice) 3, Leadership (Cult) 3, Persuasion 3, Subterfuge 1; Academics (Linguistics) 2, Awareness 3, Medicine 1, Occult (Witchcraft) 5, Politics 3

Disciplines: Auspex 2, Blood Sorcery 3

VENTRUE

"We set the tone for this city. It follows us, and it shall never be the other way around."

— Prince Jackson's statement to Ballard, Sovereign, and Stewart in his exclusive Succubus Club lounge

The Ventrue have held power in Chicago for as long as most vampires remember, with only a brief interregnum abating their grasp on power. Lodin toppled the Brujah Maxwell in 1871 and held the throne for over a century until Lupines destroyed him. Though the Primogen Council ruled without a Prince's presence for a decade, the chaos of the Second Inquisition and the Beckoning allowed Lodin's childe Joseph Peterson to claim the throne with threats and promises of turning the media — a significant part of Peterson's influence — against his enemies. As sanity returned to the city, Kevin Jackson — the youngest of Lodin's surviving childer — used his favors with the Primogen and influence over a multitude of mortal spheres, from education to organized crime, to tip the scales in his favor. Peterson received the gift of exile and Jackson took the crown.

While some of his clanmates disapprove of Jackson's youth, few disagree he possesses the right balance of tyranny, charm, and underworld knowledge of how to remove one's enemies quietly, to act as an effective Prince. The Ventrue are a proud clan. For most of them, it is enough that one of their own claims power. As long as a Blue Blood holds the throne, the rest of the Ventrue benefit.

The Elite

The city's Ventrue fall into two camps with hypothetically interchangeable members. Dubbed "the elite" and "the outsiders" by Jackson himself, the former contains Ventrue in the Prince's favor while the latter is the opposite. Jackson claims faithful service, personal improvement, and adherence to the Traditions is enough to reward a Ventrue with admission into the elite set, often found together at exclusive parties and business meetings. Until recently, Capone and Lorraine were also in this loose coterie, though their recent disappearances have eliminated them from the guest list.

KEVIN JACKSON

Epitaph: Prince of Chicago, The New Face of the Camarilla

Quote: *"Don't forget where you came from but remember your past doesn't define you. It's the change you make and legacy you leave that defines you."*

Clan: Ventrue

MORTAL DAYS: FROM NOTHING, SOMETHING

Major Isaiah and Professor Pamela Jackson were a 1960s, upper-middle-class Chicago family surviving in a poor neighborhood. The couple had tried to move multiple times over the years only to be denied bank loans, not be shown available housing, and suffering under the government-sanctioned industry of redlining. Given little choice, they raised their family of five there and taught them right from wrong, to help people in need and fight for those without a voice. The Jacksons made protest signs, marched for equal rights, and practiced activism every day, ingraining it in their children.

As the children got older, they played family games and practiced school work at night in attempts to keep the kids off the streets. For all the love, warmth, and shelter a family can provide, the real world's crushing weight cannot be avoided. Medgar was tormented, tortured, and terrorized in the neighborhood. He needed allies, a crew to watch his back, and so he made a decision that would protect the family. He joined the Bloods and was followed in short order by Langston when he was old enough. The brothers thrived and rose in rank.

Like his older brothers, Kevin had to make a choice. He knew what his parents would want and they warned him not to be like his brothers, but what did they know? They didn't have to walk to school, ride the bus, and survive in this new world. Medgar and Langston joining

the Bloods made him a target of the Playboys and Crips. It was a no-brainer and he joined the Bloods.

Medgar moved to Los Angeles to become a leader among the west-coast Bloods, while Kevin rose through the Chicago ranks, surpassing Langston. By 1984, Kevin was the most powerful Blood in the Windy City, controlling the cocaine trade. The Jacksons were aware of the three oldest children's activities and sent the younger two abroad, Zora to Paris and Bayard to Ireland. The parents would argue endlessly with Kevin about the damage he was doing to the community, that they did not march with MLK to watch their son destroy the dream. His response was always the same: "What good is the dream if you're dead or a slave? You need the power to make a change and have to do anything to survive."

Lodin, no longer happy with Capone, came to Kevin one night at Cabrini Green. He offered Kevin the Embrace, immortality and a chance to become one of his lieutenants. Kevin saw a chance for real power and accepted. Kevin knew with eternity he could replace Lodin and secure a better Chicago...in time. Until that time, he would be what Lodin and so many others saw, a mindless drone to be ordered around, a disposable black body to be thrown away when no longer useful.

KINDRED NIGHTS: THE FIRST FAMILY OF AMERICAN VENTRUE

During his first year as a vampire, he told his siblings of the Embrace, Kindred society, the power, and his plan. Once they agreed, he turned Medgar, Langston, and Zora into his childer and addicted the rest to his vitae. Medgar went back to lead the west-coast Bloods, Zora began securing a power base in Paris, and Langston headed to Puerto Rico. Kevin addicted vital members of the Chicago Bloods to his vitae, and crushed any opposing gangs. He consolidated his power until he was one of the most powerful Bloods with influence across the United States, France, and Central America. Jackson understood that power was for taking and accumulating. Relying on the hereditary drip feed of Clan Ventrue would not serve.

Kevin did as asked, masquerading as Lodin's enforcer and biding his time while secretly building an army. Maldavis challenged Lodin, and the Prince feared what Kevin would do, but the Caitiff was too unreliable and had unknown backers. Jackson continued to play the long game while watching Maldavis, aiding the Anarchs covertly to secure more allies for himself, while outwardly supporting his sire.

Over the years, Kevin's army was easily triple the size of what anyone knew or saw.

Kevin played his part during the War of Chicago. Suspecting his sire would fall, he headed to the Prince's secured haven to steal Lodin's computer and thus obtain the older Ventrue's assets. Upon entering, he found werewolves killing vampires with a few city elders among them. Unsure of the outcome, he attacked to "save" his Camarilla peers. Kevin grabbed a broadsword off the wall and helped hold off the invading forces. Kevin slew the Sabbat pack leader in battle, but it was the two dozen armed Bloods who saved him. That fight earned him the brief nickname "Paladin," influence, and access to Lodin's old accounts.

In recent years Inyanga, the former Gangrel Primogen, brokered a new peace treaty with the Lupines. This treaty firmly delineated vampire and werewolf territory. When she told the city elders, they demanded to know who gave her the authority. Kevin saw his moment and claimed they decided together. Ventrue and Gangrel silently united and he demanded the Primogen call for a new Prince. The council did not oppose his ascent to praxis, toppling the unsteady Joseph Peterson from his paper reign.

Once in power, Jackson did not forget those endless arguments with his family, who were all named after activists, change makers, and dreamers. His first instinct was to get rid of all the gangs in Chicago. He wasn't ashamed, it was his past, but others did not need to live that life. Kevin loved the idea of it until reality set in. He knew that crime would always exist if there were people in need, and also those who were greedy and wanted

power. He also knew the army of Bloods was his power base and without them his reign would be short. He would need to rule the underworld with a firm hand, taking from Kindred and kine alike.

Kevin believes education is power for both mortals and Kindred, and in these nights fully immerses himself in learning about science and technology. He doesn't want to become an anachronistic Prince over a calcified city, locked in a certain decade or century. His watchword is "STEM." Education for everyone and a chance for success, the American Dream — but enforced. He uses Critias to act as tutor for fledgling Kindred, with many lessons on the sect's laws made mandatory. Failure to succeed in these lessons results in destruction. Jackson's Chicago has no place for failures.

Kevin is determined to make Chicago the North American crown jewel of the Camarilla, containing Kindred with no excuse for ignorance. What started as a reign of hope and upward mobility has swiftly become one where the Prince is all too keen to castrate the Anarch Movement, quietly hunt clanless, independent Kindred and Duskborn, and shut down trouble before it starts by sending his Hounds to burn out entire havens of problematic vampires.

Jackson is the future of the Camarilla. You get one chance to succeed in his domain.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Favor Trading:** Kevin believes in win-win solutions. He would rather an ally owe him a favor than force someone's hand. It is a slow process but it builds loyalty. To that end, he strengthens his ties to clans known for their favor-trading — the Ministry and the Toreador — and has quietly granted Marcel and Annabelle the right to Embrace three times each, or allow others of their clans to do so within Chicago.

- **Spotlight On:** Maldavis is vital to Kevin's plans and he intends to keep her in play for as long as possible. He assigned a squad of Bloods to secretly protect Maldavis. Her "revolt" is needed to pull his enemies out of the shadows and establish who can be trusted.

- **Up-and-Comer:** Jackson may be the youngest Prince in the states, but he uses this to his advantage, describing himself as the new face for the 21st-century Camarilla. He intends to make other Camarilla domains follow his example of a city where vampires either shape up to the modern era or find themselves without Camarilla protection and benefits. He intends to challenge the city Kindred with faux Inquisition, Sabbat, and Lupine raids to keep them on their toes, using his Hounds and Sheriff to implement this permanent state of emergency.

- **Dealing with Beasts:** The Lupine-Kindred alliance is not holding, as it appears Lupines cannot be bought for long with promises of peace, property, and money. Jackson is now on the lookout for a permanent solution. He prefers a deal, but he'll send his Hounds to hunt the werewolves down if he has to.

- **Anarch Purge:** Kevin hates betraying his own blood, and as much as he loathes the majority of the city's Ventrue, they're still his family. Despite that, he's concluded the Hurricane must go. Weatherbottom has too much access to too many Kindred. Kevin has an information-security firm watching Bobby's online movements, but he does not know if his team of hackers can find all the trapdoors the Hurricane has built.

- **Leaning into the Shadows:** The Lasombra deal is important to Kevin. If he can pull this off, making his city the first to accept the Lasombra sacrifice and admit them formally to the Ivory Tower, it establishes him as a diplomat and moves him into a more secure position within America's Camarilla. Currently, he's underestimated as a young Prince in a prominent Camarilla domain. He has called in additional muscle from Medgar, due to arrive in a few weeks.

- **Missing Men:** The Prince meets weekly with the gangs under his control but relies more on secured cellphones and speaking in code for any pressing issues. One gang has missed the last two meetings, but their donations keep coming in. He needs someone to look in on the gang's absence.

- **Family Business:** Jackson sent his siblings to key Camarilla domains around the world for a specific reason: He wants to form a royal Ventrue dynasty. Once he receives recognition for Chicago's success, he will point at his childer and say "they can do the same thing for *your* domains."

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Chicago (Herd 5, Influence 5, Resources 5)** Kevin views the entire city as his domain but feeds exclusively from gang members. Specifically, his feeding preference applies to mortals who have sworn in to a criminal group. For whatever reason, his palate can't tolerate hangers-on. Jackson prefers to feed

from members of the Folk Nation, Tiny Rascal Gang, and Italian or Russian organized-crime outfits, due to their frequent conflicts with his allies among the Bloods.

- **University of Chicago House (Haven 3, Herd 2) Cabrini Green Block (Haven 2, Herd 1) Michigan Avenue Apartments (Haven 4, Herd 2, Resources 3)** Kevin has multiple havens throughout Chicago. His favorite is a secured house at the University of Chicago where he debates the early hours away with Critias. Though he still owns property in Cabrini Green, he rarely visits, keeping his other sleeping hours to plush apartments on Michigan Avenue.

- The Lupines with whom Jackson has allied largely remain beyond the Chicago limits on the basis vampires will not harm their kinfolk within the city. Despite that, the Prince has permitted them to treat all streets below 79th as their territory, stating that vampires below that marker are outside his protection.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Personal Guards (Allies 4, Contacts 3, Retainers 2) Olivia Soto (Retainers 3)** Kevin is always escorted by four armed bodyguards (former Navy SEALs and FBI Agents), two vampires and two ghouls, all dressed in expensive black suits. Though his protective detail is on a rotating shift, he gives its coordination to former federal agent Olivia Soto. If she continues her fine service, Jackson has plans to Embrace the tactical powerhouse.

- **Diversified Investments (Influence 5, Resources 5)** Kevin finds strength in diversifying his influence across technology, the university, the underworld, and city politics. He has servants, informants, and at least one ghoul in each sector. The Prince believes in tyranny as an effective method of government, but only if the tyrant understands his people.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Medgar (Brotherhood) Langston (Loyal) Zora (Love)** Kevin's most important relationship is with his vampire family: Medgar, Langston, and Zora. Though they operate in domains beyond Jackson's reach, he stays in frequent contact with his sibling-childer, always ready to call them back to Chicago to defend the family.

- **Alan Sovereign (Useful) Horatio Ballard (Nobody's Fool)** Kevin values Sovereign's advice but barely trusts him. He weighed up whether to install Sovereign or Ballard as Seneschal, only opting for the former due to Alan's subtlety. He believes both control impressive influence across the city, but doesn't buy Sovereign's meek appearance. To offset his Seneschal's ambition, he's considering moving Ballard into a Primogen role, so the two can fight each other rather than punching toward the city praxis.

- **Primogen Council (Past Its Time)** Since Inyanga's disappearance, Jackson's relationship with the Primogen is mixed. He appreciates Critias' wisdom, but disdains the Brujah's preference for council rule. He understands and respects Annabelle's influence, and courts her favor, but finds her vapid. He looks at "Khalid" as the one reliable gear in the machine, with Newberry and Hernandez so far untested. The Prince understands the need for each clan to have representation, but wonders if he should pick some new representatives to replace Critias and Annabelle. They're unlikely to step down willingly, however.

- **Thomas Ewell "Balthazar" (Racist Jackass) Nickolas "Sweetie Pepper" White (An Example)** Jackson grows to loathe the destructive Kindred such as Balthazar and Sweetie Pepper, and is wondering if now is the time to make them examples of what happens when you don't follow the Camarilla code. Balthazar's death would certainly make an impact.

WHISPERS:

- **Enriched on Souls:** Kevin's naysayers claim he diablerizes Sheriff Damien's staked prisoners. While this may just be a rumor, few of these prisoners are seen again.

- **Taste of the Sabbat:** If rumors are to be believed, Kevin risked his soul for the city by diablerizing a Sabbat Bishop in Lodin's penthouse.

- **Forming the Symbol:** Kevin and his allies are working together to exert control of key Camarilla, Anarch, and Sabbat cities for a larger scheme.

- **Window to the Truth:** Felicia Parker, a Ventrue childe of the destroyed Edgar Drummond, came to Kevin seeking help with dreams about Portia. Felicia claims to have seen her true form and that she is not what she appears to be. Since their meeting, Felicia has vanished.

- **Record Keeper:** Apparently, Kevin keeps a detailed biography of every Kindred in the city on an encrypted laptop with an encrypted jump drive. The laptop has no online access and the passwords are changed every three days. He secures the jump drive in a lock-sealed cylinder kept in a wall safe in his haven.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Kevin currently has one public identity, Bishop Blake, a wealthy philanthropist interested in bettering the inner city. He enjoys the Mask as it allows him to mingle with families he knew back in his youth in parts of the city he can't quite abandon. He can easily have one of his hackers create a replacement if needed, but finds Blake a fun disguise **(Mask 2)**.

- Kevin is an athletic man appearing in his early 20s with a constant look of cool composure. His dark brown skin retains its original color of a man that has spent years outside. He wears a pressed white suit with a light blue shirt, tie, and brown dress boots. He carries a knife, silenced pistol, and different types of ammunition to combat Lupines or Kindred.

Sire: Lodin

Embraced: 1984 (Born 1964)

Ambition: Make Chicago great by cutting away its internal cancers

Convictions: I will make Chicago better for everyone

Touchstones: Bayard — Younger brother and ghoul, maintaining the legitimate side of Jackson's business interests

Humanity: 5

Generation: 8th

Blood Potency: 2

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4; Charisma 3, Manipulation 4, Composure 4; Intelligence 3; Wits 4; Resolve 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 9

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Drive 3, Firearms 4, Larceny 3, Melee 2, Stealth 3; Etiquette 1, Intimidation (Insults) 4, Leadership (Command, Inspiration) 5, Performance (Singing) 1, Persuasion (Bargaining) 3, Streetwise (Bloods) 4, Subterfuge 4; Awareness 2, Politics (Tyranny) 3, Science 2, Technology (Computers) 2

Disciplines: Dominate 3, Fortitude 4, Presence 3

Note: What Kevin Jackson lacks in raw power, he makes up for in potential Backgrounds. Jackson can theoretically call on his Hounds, Sheriff, and mortal accomplices when facing danger, and has access to over a dozen properties in which to plan or hide if necessary. He is a monster built from diversified assets, not merely the potency of his vitae.

HORATIO BALLARD

Epitaph: The Old Guard

Quote: *"Yes, I'm aware of the recent changes in the Directorate's thinking on that matter. Nonetheless, I believe that my plans fall well within acceptable levels of risk."*

Clan: Ventrue

MORTAL DAYS: VORACIOUS HUNGER

Horatio Ballard was hungry growing up in his father's household in Albany, the third of four children. He learned early that nothing he could do would ever please his cold and distant father, a businessman and legislator, who found nothing to favor in his ruthless and scheming younger son.

He was hungry when he came to the Second City, a young man with a sharp mind and a discerning eye for financial opportunities. War profiteering turned to land speculation turned to construction turned to the fine art of manipulating stocks and investors. Horatio Ballard earned his first million before he turned 25 by twisting every penny's worth of profit out of every endeavor to which he turned his hand. He and his uncle, partners in all things, built themselves a mansion with a fraction of their combined wealth, filled it with fine furniture, exquisite art, charming company — and food.

His hunger was not assuaged by the profits he reaped as the sole owner of one of the city's largest construction companies. Canny investments yielded up still more treasure to overflow his coffers and soon he was one of the wealthiest and most prominent citizens of the rapidly expanding city. Nor was his hunger fulfilled by his almost nightly personal banquets. Nothing quite seemed to fill that hollow empty spot inside him, not until his first heart attack, and then his second.

Wild fear of his own mortality was a less than delightful replacement for existential emptiness and he poured millions of dollars into legitimate medical research, seeking any method he could to cheat the Grim Reaper. His frantic search for immortality led him down dark roads but on those roads, he found what he was looking for...after a fashion.

KINDRED NIGHTS: A SLAP TO THE OLD DOG'S NOSE

Ballard served Lodin for decades out of both fear and loyalty, providing his sire with enormous sums of money and vast amounts of local political influence and general logistical support as he solidified his grip on Chicago. He helped fend off Modius' play to deprive Lodin of his throne and entertained the possibility of making a play for the rulership of the city himself, only to back down when it became clear the Primogen would never back such a move. Disappointed but not yet disgruntled, he turned his attention to fully solidifying his own grip on the city's white-collar industries.

The enormity of his personal wealth insulated him from the schemes of Anarchs and the attacks of Lupines. Ballard made some desultory moves in the direction of claiming greater power in the clan following his sire's "death" but found his efforts thwarted by the sheer size of Lodin's former brood. He threw his support behind the praxis claim of his broodmate, Kevin Jackson, in the sure and certain knowledge it was better to have a Prince that owed you a favor than one who doubted your loyalty. Jackson leaned considerably less heavily on the influence that Ballard could bring to bear in the mortal world, preferring his own sources and methods, creating a healthy separation between them.

Then the implosion of the global real-estate markets happened in 2008. Ballard Industries did not suffer thanks to his legitimately careful efforts to protect his business, but Horatio's personal net worth took a massive hit, as did his reputation among the Kindred of the city as a business mastermind, a wizard of money-making whose advice could be trusted.

It took the best part of a decade to stanch the bleeding and slow his own slide into social irrelevancy, and he came out on the other side millions of dollars poorer, tattered in both pride and dignity, and *hungrier* than he has been in *decades.*

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Sire-Childe Friction:** For decades, Horatio Ballard served his sire and his clan as a source of financial support and mortal political influence — not out of any particular sense of altruism or duty, but because he absolutely feared the sort of vengeance Lodin could bring to bear if he failed to execute the terms of their personal deal as required. Now free of his sire, he seeks to make himself the wealthiest vampire in Chicago, playing the role of debt collector instead of that of a Kindred ATM.

- **Reinvestment:** The situation in Chicago is more fluid and riper for genuine change than it has been since the hour of his Embrace and Horatio Ballard is trying to rebuild his reputation and redevelop a power base, an effort that consumes most of his night-to-night attention.

- **Embrace Technology:** The Camarilla's sudden onset antipathy for modern communication methods in general has licks Embraced in the last century scrambling to find alternatives. Ballard is bankrolling the development of several "SchreckNET-lite" projects intended to offer tightly localized, highly secured online communication options. Being a bit of a relic, he doesn't grasp how dangerous this is and his business partners have lowballed the risk in order to gain his support.

- **All Night Taxis:** Ballard recognizes the need for safe transportation options for Kindred migrating to safer climes and whose business requires regular travel. He's trying to get in with one such service, investing heavily in the Ferri taxi company.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Lake Estate (Haven 5, Resources 4, Retainers 3)** Ballard owns an enormous, heavily patrolled private estate on the north shore of Lake Michigan. In addition to his own quarters, he houses a small branch

of his extended family there whom he occasionally allows to dabble in limited business enterprises of their own while they serve as his principal retainers and herd.

- **Ballard Industries Head Office (Fame 4, Haven 4, Resources 4)** His principal domain is the white-collar world of Chicago's high-finance institutions — banks, brokerage firms — and industries such as real estate and construction, where he made his first fortunes. Ballard can obtain nearly any result he desires through the judicious application of pressure, string-pulling, and the mechanisms of internal corruption.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **City CFOs (Contacts 3, Influence 4)** Ballard has retainers occupying significant positions of power in multiple corporate entities headquartered in Chicago, who act as his hands on the levers of financial control in the city. He has even more contacts as the local, state, national, and international levels that offer him significant influence even outside the city. He likes to consider himself the global bank to Sovereign's financial advisor.

- **The Ballard Family (Allies 3, Contacts 3, Retainers 4)** The scions of Horatio's own family serve as his principal retainers, protectors, and food source — he feeds from them obligately and regularly offers younger members of the more estranged branch internships and employment opportunities to tempt them into his web.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Primogen Council (Scum)** As a general rule, Ballard harbors strongly negative feelings for the members of the Primogen Council. Annabelle has everything he wants in terms of social eminence, which he has never really attained and which she has declined to assist in building. Critias irritates the hell out of him with his more-intellectual-than-thou airs.

- **Jason Newberry (Scum) Alan Sovereign (Scum)** If Ballard could arrange for Son and Alan Sovereign to be sealed up together in a 55-gallon drum of cement and dumped in the middle of Lake Michigan, he'd do so in a flat second.

- **Kevin Jackson (Respect)** He genuinely respects the Prince, Kevin Jackson, who much like himself back in the day saw opportunity and seized it. He has no illusions that Jackson respects him in return but at least the Prince doesn't view him as a personal savings fund.

- **The Hecata (Prospect)** The Giovanni of Boston have approached the Ballards of Chicago about becoming a new minor family of the Hecata. As patriarch of the family, Ballard has to weigh up the cost of assigning his mortal line over to the Clan of Death.

WHISPERS:

- **Listen for Applause:** His fall from grace caused more schadenfreude in the hearts of Chicago's licks than he can possibly imagine and watching him flail around trying to recover has caused them even more.

- **Friend to Wolves:** Rumors circulate that Ballard had something to do with making sure Lodin didn't survive the Lupine attacks on the city. Nobody entirely credits this, but it's a useful allegation to float in the event that his usefulness reaches a definitive end.

- **Aggressive Investor:** Some of Ballard's more recent business enterprises have raised eyebrows and opened him to more risk that he fully comprehends. More tech-savvy licks are slowly backing away and advising others to do likewise.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Ballard's Mask is another person: his great-great nephew Christopher Augustus Ballard, who fronts as the official president of Ballard Industries. Christopher is tall, lean, and classically handsome, with a beautiful wife and a houseful of perfect children, most of whom are Blood Bound and some of whom are Dominated to within an inch of their sanity **(Mask 2)**.

- A life of grotesque excess and unrestrained self-indulgence left its mark on Horatio Ballard even before undeath had its way with him. Tall but hugely corpulent in life, with multiple overlapping chins, fingers like sausages, and a total body mass that left spavined horses and broken coach springs in his wake, he now resembles nothing so much as a massive human figure carved entirely from frozen lard. His flesh is corpse white with an unhealthy, waxy sheen and none of his bulk seems to *move* like it should on an ordinary human, a fact that ordinary humans notice rather quickly if they're forced to spend any length of time in his presence.

- He only wastes that much effort on some licks, anyway, generally preferring to use his size for pure purposes of physical intimidation with his lessers, including any and all mortals unfortunate enough to meet his tastes.

Sire: Lodin

Embraced: 1881 (Born 1832)

Ambition: Regain what I lost and take what I never had

Convictions: Never leave money on the table

Touchstones: Christopher Augustus Ballard — favorite nephew and principal retainer, the echo of the man Ballard was before years of excess destroyed his health; Martine Ballard — the most recent arrival from Massachusetts, an intern in Ballard Industries' legal department

Humanity: 4

Generation: 8th

Blood Potency: 3

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4; Charisma 2, Manipulation 5, Composure 1; Intelligence 5, Wits 5, Resolve 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 4

Skills: Brawl (Immovable Object) 4; Etiquette (Dining) 3, Insight 3, Intimidation (Financial) 5, Leadership 2, Persuasion 4, Subterfuge 3; Academics (Law) 3, Finance (Industry) 4, Politics (Bureaucracy, Camarilla, Chicago) 4

Disciplines: Dominate 4, Fortitude 4, Potence 2, Presence 4

ALAN SOVEREIGN

Epitaph: Nervous Financier

Quote: *"When you hurt a city it bleeds green. I can stop the bleeding for a small fee."*

Clan: Ventrue

MORTAL DAYS: THE CITY WAS SOVEREIGN

A self-made millionaire, Sovereign built his fortune on the backs of returning veterans from World War II, particularly from the home loan program. His investments into the field of property garnered him ever more wealth and influence and allowed him the wherewithal to make the move into investment banking. Eventually, he was elected president of a small investment bank. Many of the poorer quarters of the city bear the mark of Alan Sovereign's greed.

Sovereign sees the crashing of the economy as a kind of revenge after the IRS imprisoned him for his many insider trading scandals. His wealth, status, and lifestyle all stripped from him, he was put in a low-security jail with other fraudsters and there merely learned less-sophisticated tricks that would serve him well later on in his career.

On his first night out of jail, he was approached by men in the employ of Horatio Ballard, a corpulent man who promised him revenge against his captors. In exchange, he gave Alan $750,000 to invest with a caveat it be repaid with considerable interest soon after. It was the opportunity Sovereign needed. Within a year, he doubled his stake and was taken as a ghoul by the obese vampire. This arrangement was fruitful for both as Sovereign reclaimed his lost fortune and Ballard raked in ever more wealth than before to maintain his lofty position. The Embrace was almost inevitable as an investment on Ballard's part.

KINDRED NIGHTS: GREEN BLOOD

The first act of the vindictive, fledgling Kindred was to eliminate several IRS agents who had so ably prosecuted his case. However, this was not enough to sate his lust for revenge; the system itself had to suffer.

He continued as Ballard's lieutenant and minded his sizable portfolio with great skill, rising to the position of Seneschal when the Primogen Council steered the city. He made sure to draw political figures and government regulators into his pockets, and those of his friends and allies. Only Kindred minds could devise the long game that drove the financial sector into the wall and profited from it all the same. Sovereign was a willing participant. After all, it was mostly other people's money.

Sovereign did not reckon with his own hubris, or his sire's disdain. The losses he made in driving his former rivals and enemies into the dirt were borne from his own pocket. Ballard's trust in him was shaken and many privileges removed. It was only then that Sovereign came to see he was wholly reliant on the bank accounts of others. This was a state of affairs he could not bear to see continue, and so he took what little he owned and invested with external clan and sect interests among the Famiglia Giovanni. These investments paid off for a time, but recent correspondence to them has not received a reply, which concerns him greatly.

Sovereign now looks for new allies. He understands the nature of globalized finance and the need to

look outside of the city limits, but he desperately seeks friends inside of it. He fears, ultimately, some kind of sting. Whispers of the Second Inquisition fill him with dread. His links to the Giovanni may have been traced and the actions he took upon his Embrace may leave a trail leading to his door. The Sovereign who inhabits Chicago on these nights is a skittish, desperately nervous man, convinced he is being watched or listened to by spooks around every corner and in every tapped phone line.

Alan secretly visits his old business associate Marlon Falcone, who has been committed to a mental hospital since he believes the ghost of his long-dead friend Alan is visiting him. The two discuss the old days but also the future, and his is one of the few opinions on the world Alan truly values and trusts.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Property Magnate:** Alan's current posture is toward investing in the tangible. To that end, he is plunging more and more of his paper wealth into material, especially by investing in artworks and property. In doing so, he hopes to foster good relations with the Toreador, who have an ever-strengthening presence in the city.

- **Dancing with the Stars:** Sovereign shows great kindness and friendship to any Kindred he meets who he feels can get him an in with important members of the court or who have financial contacts outside the city. He not only focuses on making those friends, but on making their friends his friends. He will show great interest in the business of anyone who wishes to talk to him about it and he will seek to indebt them to him either financially or by boon.

- **Dreams of Patricide:** One of his ultimate goals remains to destroy his sire. He has heard tales that drinking the blood of one's sire adds their power to your own and he feels, with the power of Ballard, he could finally make himself safe. He also has enough knowledge of his business empire to assume control, having run large parts of it himself for long enough.

- **The Landlord:** The one thing that hasn't changed is that Alan is a source of easy finance to Kindred and is the landlord for many youthful Kindred and even coteries seeking shelter. While some bold types may think it possible to simply take such a loan lightly due to his less than martial aspect, there are many stories of young Kindred who find themselves weighted down in the bottom of the lake when they awoke one night after failing to make payments.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Evanston Townhouse (Haven 4, Resources 3, Retainers 2)** Alan's haven is a plush, sandstone townhouse in Evanston. He often holds court there for groups of handpicked up-and-coming Kindred and introduces them to the lavish lifestyle that can be theirs as members of the Camarilla, if they but follow his instruction.

- **The Loop (Contacts 3, Influence 4, Resources 4)** Alan sees the Loop as his personal domain, though whether this has been formally recognized by the Prince or not is unclear. In any case, he owns large parts of the finance industry in the area and can walk through the front door of any firm there without question.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Ingrid Fallon (Retainers 3)** Sovereign's personal assistant, Ingrid, is his ghoul and most trusted mortal companion. She maintains many of his public personas and seems to possess an eidetic memory. Alan often says she's the finest acquisition he ever made, but refuses to Embrace her.

- **Hired Hands (Allies 3, Retainers 2)** In his position as both high-society financier and Kindred Seneschal, Alan can call upon a veritable horde of hirelings to do his bidding. From heavy-handed bouncers to respected PR consultants, Alan has goons for every occasion.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Kevin Jackson (Esteem)** Alan's closest and most amiable relationship is with Prince Jackson. He holds the Prince in great esteem for maintaining his position as Seneschal since Lodin's death, and speaks of Jackson almost as a surrogate sire.
- **Aluc Romas de Leon (Business)** Aluc has become a valuable business associate of Sovereign, keeping him apprised of any valuable pieces which become available to invest in.
- **Horatio Ballard (Hatred)** Alan maintains a close watch for any signs of his reclusive sire, Horatio Ballard's return to court. He has worked hard to recover his position and doesn't want the old toad pulling it out from underneath him again. Alan continually briefs the Prince against him, subtly, with tales of his wastefulness.

WHISPERS:

- **Antiques Dealer:** His old, sandstone house in Evanston is lavished in fine décor and priceless artworks. Some have noticed he regularly seems to sell the pieces, as though he has taken on a second job as a dealer.
- **In the Kitchen at Parties:** Alan has become an infrequent visitor at the Succubus Club. Anyone who has seen him there says he looks like a fish out of water, but he keeps coming nonetheless.
- **SI Concerns:** Sovereign himself is one of the chief worriers at court regarding the Second Inquisition and enthusiastically supports any endeavor aimed at curtailing their activities. A couple of the younger Kindred in the city suspect he may have been spooked into turning rat for them.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Alan has a pinched face, drawn in tight around a thin, pointy nose. His skin is sallow and wrinkled and he has been described as looking like a weasel by those who dislike him. His hair is white and combed over from the side to cover his baldness on top. He has several pairs of designer spectacles he takes great care in polishing. He wears expensive suits befitting a man of his purported station. Alan is very concerned with how people talk about him and view him.
- When he speaks, Sovereign's voice is somewhat squeaky, and his words quickly spoken. He gives the impression of someone with high blood pressure and a heart rate to match, rather than a cold and collected Kindred. His fingers are often locked together in front of him as though in constant prayer or reflection and his eyes dart left and right as he talks.
- Through his personal assistant, Sovereign maintains control over several prominent financiers. Bankers and property moguls in the Loop simply refer to him as "the Money" and his identity is a source of water-cooler rumor at the highest levels of companies. As long as the good times keep rolling, the CEOs and directors don't ask difficult questions **(Mask 1)**.

Sire: Horatio Ballard

Embraced: 1959 (Born 1903)

Ambition: Wrest power (and potentially soul) from Horatio Ballard

Convictions: Never kill a vessel; Always remember my origins

Touchstones: Ingrid Fallon — Personal Assistant; Marlon Falcone — Imprisoned former associate

Humanity: 5

Generation: 9th

Blood Potency: 3

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Charisma 3, Manipulation 5, Composure 2; Intelligence 5, Wits 3, Resolve 2

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 4

Skills: Brawl 1, Drive 2, Melee 2, Larceny (Stock Manipulation) 2; Etiquette 3, Insight 2, Intimidation 1, Leadership 3, Persuasion 4, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 4; Academics (Economics) 3, Finance (Stock Market) 5, Investigation 4, Politics 2, Technology (Computers) 2

Disciplines: Auspex 2, Dominate 4, Fortitude 3, Presence 2

NAOMI STEWART

Epitaph: Empowering Matriarch

Quote: *"I'm sorry things haven't been easy for you. I understand. When you are done whining and sniveling there is work to be done."*

Clan: Ventrue

MORTAL DAYS: HUMBLE RESTRAINT

Naomi Abigail Mawu was born into slavery in South Carolina in 1860. In the first 20 years of her life she saw her family separated, one at a time, until she had no knowledge of the well-being of anyone who was a blood relation to her.

One evening, a European aristocrat by the name of Emelian Marculescu came to a gathering held by the Stewarts, the family that owned Naomi. Marculescu, a young Ventrue, came prepared to see a play but he saw in the Stewarts a brutal, twisted, inhumanity he rarely saw outside the Sabbat. He found an opportunity to speak with the slaves afterward and found them to be broken shells, all except for Naomi.

Marculescu used his considerable abilities to slowly drive the sadistic Mrs. Stewart mad and caused the death of Mr. Stewart, but first he made Mr. Stewart present freedom papers for all his slaves.

On the day she received her papers from Mr. Stewart, Marculescu came to visit her . They talked the night away and before the sun rose he again offered her the Embrace. She refused, saying that she had never walked the world as a free woman and would get as much free dirt beneath her feet and between her toes as she could. The next night, Mr. Stewart had a smoking accident, and the Stewart plantation burned to the ground.

Naomi went north to New York where she found getting work as a black woman was difficult to impossible. Marculescu kept in touch with her and promised to help her find her family. He taught her to read and speak multiple languages.

Marculescu managed to locate her older sisters in a mining town called Jefferson Courthouse. Naomi found her sisters held by a white woman who had a brothel of captured women of color. Marculescu offered to intervene for her and she turned down the offer. She went to the brothel, with money, to buy her sisters back, only for the madame to try and capture her. Naomi fought back and choked the woman to death. She offered to free the women and many left, though some preferred to stay, her sisters among them. They asked Naomi to guide them. She stayed and formed Stewart-Freeman house, allowing the women to continue to work as they wished.

She trained them to be businesswomen and taught them to read.

Naomi was a force in suffrage. She had a fire that was threatening to most white women. Others began to speak her words. No matter if they tried to give her credit, she was invisible; the papers only saw the uppity white women.

Eventually, the harsh winters of Chicago took their toll on Naomi. Her fate was to die from consumption, but Marculescu intervened. He offered the Embrace again. He told her it would be a crime if she were to perish like a wretch when she was a queen. He promised he would teach her the ways of Kindred, and she would be free of his control.

KINDRED NIGHTS: MAWLA TO MANY

Marculescu became Naomi's Mawla. He showed her how to kill discreetly and selectively. There were always those who deserved death, she just needed to listen and she would find them. Because she was a black woman, he assured that those who deserved death would reveal themselves to her.

When she was strong and well-connected, Marculescu was true to his word and offered himself to her in a secret ritual of Amaranth. She devoured his soul, offered willingly and with love, prepared to carry the burden that is the mark of diablerie.

Naomi entrenched herself in the politics of the Ventrue, though Lodin refused to recognize her due

to his own racism. Her clanmates could all see why Marculescu adored her. She remained in Chicago and involved herself, quietly, in the various equality struggles. She inherited much of Marculescu's money and the ear of many in Chicago. She established Stewart-Freeman Academy in the Bronzeville neighborhood, where she taught women the skills that had been reserved for men. There was a small sect of women in her inner circle who knew her secret. They spoke for her and carried her words to many politicians. In some cases, they brought back to her those who revealed themselves as people who needed to die.

In the early '60s, Stewart-Freeman Academy opened to all genders, but the focus was on women of color. Many human femme politicians on the South Side of the city have a connection that goes back to Naomi Stewart-Freeman. She now quietly offers tutelage to Caitiff and thin-bloods who wish to make it in the Camarilla, but do not wish to submit to Critias' academy.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Mortal Maneuvering:** Naomi has always been patient. Chicago is a place of tumultuous change. Leadership struggles are in play due to the chaos of the Gangrel and Brujah departures from the Camarilla. She sees this as an opportunity to change the flavor of the entire city. While many Ventrue clamor about various usurpations of traditions, she maneuvers her mortal people into places of political power.

- **Motherhood:** While Naomi has traditionally eschewed creating childer, she wonders if now is the time. She has a scholarship set up, called the Stewart-Freeman Transformational fund, where she invites young women to apply if they are community driven and keen on radical social reform. From the applicants she is picking the top few and judging them under a four-year contract of apprenticeship with her. She intends for these women to make sweeping changes, and for the best to become her childe.

DOMAIN AND HAVENS:

- **The Stewart-Freeman Academy (Haven 3, Fame 2, Influence 2, Resources 2)** The Stewart-Freeman Academy is her domain. The school is small but well respected and well-funded. Students go from ninth grade to an undergrad degree. It originally began as a mansion gifted to her by Marculescu that she redeveloped into a learning institution. The south wing is her private quarters and she watches and grooms the women who come to her from this space. Older women return for mentorship and younger women leave with a competitive skillset.

- **Hate Groups (Herd 2)** Naomi's feeding preference is for bigoted white women. She has struggled to pin down what exactly constitutes a perfect vessel, but believes her prey has to have committed a hateful act based on prejudice within the last full cycle of the moon for their blood to remain palatable.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Merriam Brown (Retainers 3) Graduated Students (Contacts 2)** Naomi is a big believer in personal sovereignty. She has little in the way of thralls save for those who actively choose and request to be put in that place. She instead chooses a path of establishing a sense of familial piety among the women of Stewart-Freeman Academy. Those who leave are forever indebted to Naomi's tutelage and have been slowly infiltrating the politics and systems of the city. Among the women on whom she keeps a close eye, her favorite is Merriam Brown, who is now positioning herself to become mayor of the city, a win that would be phenomenal for the Academy.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Clan Lasombra (Unease) Kevin Jackson (Admiration)** Naomi is very uncomfortable with the growing Lasombra presence in the city, which she voices regularly to Prince Jackson. She is a fan of Jackson and sees what he's trying to do. She is trying to build a closer relationship with him so they can align better and she can help steer him in more productive directions.

- **Thomas Ewell "Balthazar" (Loathing) Abraham DuSable (Unstable)** If Naomi could extinguish one vampire, it would be Balthazar, with his bigotry and brashness still causing trouble even after his fall from power. Lower down the list is DuSable, whose dark magics are, in her opinion, a powder keg waiting to blow. She doesn't fully understand what the Tremere offer the Camarilla.

WHISPERS:

- **A Risk to All:** Some ultra-conservative Camarilla types look at Naomi as an accident waiting to happen. She's so fiery and earnest in her views, it's only a matter of time before she breaks the Masquerade for some "greater good."

- **Punching Up:** Naomi is angling for the role of Ventrue Primogen. Capone held the role before his disappearance and that seat is now vacant.
- **Secret Academy:** There is a rumor floating among the Nosferatu that Naomi has a special class of thin-bloods who she trains to do covert operations for her own power plays.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Always smartly dressed, Naomi has adjusted her look to fit with the times. These days she dresses mostly in elegant, but practical, dresses with relatively little jewelry or makeup but sporting elaborate braids.
- Naomi appears to be a beautiful, ageless older African-American woman with skin like dark cherry wood. Most people's best guess is that she is a well-preserved mid-40s in terms of age.
- Naomi's Mask is under her own name, as she's sold the story of being her own relative many times. Currently, she's her own great-granddaughter **(Mask 1)**.

Sire: Emelian Marculescu

Embraced: 1912 (Born 1860)

Ambition: Manipulate mortal politics to better my position

Convictions: Never settle for the bottom rung

Touchstones: Merriam Brown — City Alderwoman who is positioning herself to become mayor of Chicago in the next election

Humanity: 6

Generation: 12th (through diablerie)

Blood Potency: 3

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 4; Intelligence 2, Wits 4, Resolve 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 9

Skills: Brawl 2, Drive 1, Larceny 2, Survival 3; Etiquette 3, Insight (Prejudice) 4, Intimidation 2, Leadership 3, Persuasion (Victims) 4, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 2; Academics (History) 3, Awareness 3, Finance 2, Investigation (Abuse) 3, Medicine 1, Politics 4, Technology 1

Disciplines: Dominate 3, Fortitude 4, Presence 4

The Outsiders

On the other side of the aisle sit the outsiders, comprising hidden, outcast, and hunted Ventrue. For all the elite's talk of climbing to their level, vampires like Neally know it takes more than good, honest work. He likens it to the hostile atmosphere of an Endron sales room, where only five percent of the employees can get a bonus, and to get that bonus that five percent must screw over their peers. Jacob Schumpeter was an outsider until SWAT raided his haven, and Jackson has officially named Peterson as one. The classification worries those Ventrue who hold it, given the rumors of Prince Jackson's discreet, merciless treatment of enemies and rivals.

SIR OLAF, THE ONE-EYED KING

Epitaph: Fallen Noble, Street Level Kingpin

Quote: *"Truly, the light of my past, burning bright in my mind, is as deadly to mine flesh as is the sun. A tale that, for its majesty, naught but I can tell thee."*

Clan: Ventrue

MORTAL DAYS: THEY SEEM SO LONG AGO

Originally a native of Norway, Olaf came to the new world with high hopes as part of a family of wealthy and influential landowners. His long existence has seen him through wars of both Kindred and kine. Indeed, both worlds could be said to believe him dead.

Olaf came to America in 1830 and gained entry to the West Point Military Academy through the influence of his father. He distinguished himself in the Mexican War, particularly in the Battle of Vera Cruz where his battalion seized the artillery positions overlooking the Bay of Campeche.

His overwhelming confidence and boldness drew the attention of the Toreador Prince of Vera Cruz, Eletria. His position, leadership qualities, education and the influence of his family endeared him to her erstwhile lover, the Ventrue Datura. The Ventrue elder Embraced him at his lover's urging and thus began the Cainite existence of one of the most revered and reviled vampires of his day.

KINDRED NIGHTS: AT THE LOWEST LEVEL

As soon as he left his sire's side, he followed Eletria's advice and came to the growing city of Chicago, intending to make it his domain. He took a new name and started his life anew among the burgeoning city by the lake.

His rise to praxis over Chicago was a monument of blood built on a foundation of ambition and deceit. There are those who believe it was his deposition of his predecessor, Maxwell, which brought about his rampant, all-consuming paranoia. The truth is, its seeds were sown from the very beginning of his undead existence. It is no secret that shortly after departing his sire, he took on the pseudonym by which he became famous, Lodin. The true secret is the safety of his true name, one he vowed never to speak, even to his closest childer.

Scarred and deformed at the hands of Lupines, Anarchs, Sabbat, and his former allies in the Camarilla, Olaf is not even a shadow of what he once was. At first glance, even his own childer would now see nothing more than a broken-down transient. A homeless, half-mad drunkard who rants and raves in badly constructed prose to a rapt audience of dirt and asphalt. His fall left him without his left eye, his face burned and twisted.

Olaf adjusted his palate to the outcast and the desperate of the city. He feeds from those injected with mind-numbing opiates that take him back to visions of his stately past. His influence, which once extended to national media and citywide police operations has been reduced to a large network of street urchins and minor gangs who peddle and traffic the substances he desires to the targets of his feeding.

He elevates those ambitious youths who seek to move forward in the underworld above him. One moment, he beams like a proud father, referring to them by the names of his childer, the next he cuts them down with jagged claws that sprout in bizarre angles from his mangled, broken fingers.

Olaf remembers all too well the trappings of praxis and knows he is a chance Prince Jackson simply cannot take.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Underworld Boss:** Olaf seeks to direct street-level crime in Chicago. The purpose of this seemingly lofty goal is to ensure he always has enough junkies to feed his habit. He especially loves the blood of those influential and wealthy kine who fall from grace and come to the underworld looking for a taste of its filth. Olaf is only too happy to oblige, walking them down the path of destruction.

- **Hated Charity:** Acts of kindness have seen lives destroyed by the man the street thugs call the One-Eyed King. He can often be found slumped outside of operas or in bus shelters near corporate high rises. Olaf takes the measure of those who pass him by. Anyone throwing a quarter into his filthy cup can cause his one good eye to snap open and focus on them. He then systematically destroys the lives of those who pity him, interfering with their place of work, cutting the brake lines on their car, sending threatening letters to their house before kidnapping a member of their family, and sometimes going further still. It's vindictive in the extreme, but an attitude he cannot brook.

- **Watcher in the Dark:** Olaf's primary aim is to maintain his own personal Masquerade. He does not feel inclined to let others know he is Kindred. Olaf watches meetings of the court and the comings and goings of certain individuals very closely. He uses this information to divine the locations of Elysia and new vampire haunts. He listens for mention of his name, and not just for safety. Nothing pleases Olaf more than when Kindred speak of him well, though he often falls into depressions and rages when they speak ill of him or mock him.

- **Preferred Company:** Olaf maintains a soft spot for young, refined, well-spoken women. Tragically, his unhealthy affections push them into lives of vice and drugs. Only one maintains his interest, a young university student by the name of Eleanor. Her attempts to rise from her humble beginnings in Riverdale is an inspirational story to him and he will see no harm done to her. The young black girl

had the misfortune to toss a coin into his cup as she walked home, celebrating her acceptance into law school at the University of Chicago. Any attempts to interfere with her by any Kindred or criminal immediately receive retribution from the One-Eyed King.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Riverdale House (Haven 1) The Loop (Herd 1, Influence 1)** Olaf still sees the city as his domain, however, he is now demoted to residing on its streets. He usually holds his ramshackle court in abandoned housing in Riverdale but occasionally can be found begging in the Loop or other wealthy areas of town, hoping to catch a glimpse of his former protégés.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Crime Lieutenants (Contacts 2, Retainers 2)** More than anything, Olaf seeks trusty followers and subordinates. The lieutenants in his petty crime ring are generally his ghouls, but he has been known to have them kill each other in paranoid rage.

- **Criminal Associates (Allies 2, Contacts 3)** Olaf has a large network of low-level criminals in his circle. His direction has brought them greater prosperity through organization and, for now, they are content to follow his orders.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Bronwyn (Adoration)** Olaf shuns relationships with most Kindred, however, he does correspond as a secret admirer with Bronwyn, who he enjoys flattering with the flowery prose he learned in his youth.

- **Annabelle (Lust)** Olaf also has an affection for Annabelle, despite her closeness to Helena. He refers to her as "Catherine," seeing her as a reborn Catherine de Valois, the wife of King Henry V of England.

WHISPERS:

- **Secret King:** Olaf fears becoming a target for the Kindred if he grows too mighty and so regulates his authority, never seeking to become a true criminal kingpin.

- **Street Name:** His lieutenants and gang members who follow him refer to him as Sir Olaf, the One-Eyed King or, more commonly among themselves, "One-I-Kay." This is due to his noble bearing and strange, regal way of addressing them.

- **Quote the Bard:** Olaf is often given to quote literature to them, especially Shakespeare's *Richard II*. This seemingly charming quirk hides a deranged mind which sees in his closest associates the faces of his once-loyal childer.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Olaf hides behind his various street names and the fact that his real name is not widely known in Kindred circles **(Mask 1)**.

- Hideously mutilated during his betrayal and defeat, Olaf is either unable or unwilling to heal the damage done to him. His previously alabaster skin and sharp features are now lumpy and reddened. Black scars line his cheeks and body, surrounded by scorches and burns. His head is completely bald save for a few stray tufts of his once-fine blond locks and his left eye is a terrifying, lidless gouge that stares blackly into the night. Only his right eye, a piercing blue, shows any sign of his former stature.

- The One-Eyed King carries himself with a lowly, shambling gait, keeping his back doubled to appear as a weak and weary old man. Although, when roused, he draws himself up to his full, impressive height. When angered sufficiently, he may use the Protean Discipline to sprout the claws so often associated with the Gangrel, though even those are mangled and twisted at the end of his broken and disjointed fingers.

- His lieutenants have presented him with a top hat with a paper crown from a Christmas cracker pushed down onto it and he wears the tattered millinery with esteem. The crown is the one pristine part of his clothing as it is renewed every time the old one wears out, though the hat remains tattered and dirty.

- Olaf constantly carries a letter, purportedly from Queen Anne of London, which contains lavish praise for his achievements.

Sire: Datura

Embraced: 1852 (Born 1824)

Ambition: Become the Shadow Prince of Chicago

Convictions: Never succumb to self-pity

Touchstones: Eleanor Freeman – University Law Student and inspiration

Humanity: 3

Generation: 7th

Blood Potency: 5

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5; Charisma 5, Manipulation 5, Composure 5; Intelligence 4, Wits 4, Resolve 4

Secondary Attributes: Health (Due to unhealed damage) 4, Willpower 9

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 3, Firearms 3, Melee 3, Larceny 2, Stealth 3, Survival (Street) 2; Animal Ken (Horses) 2, Etiquette (Camarilla) 4, Insight 3, Intimidation 3, Leadership 4, Persuasion (Carousing) 4, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge (Impeccable Lies) 4; Academics 2, Awareness 1, Finance 2, Investigation 3, Medicine (Drugs) 2, Occult 2, Politics (Camarilla) 5, Technology 1

Disciplines: Dominate 4, Fortitude 3, Potence 1, Presence 3, Protean 3

EDWARD NEALLY

Epitaph: Burned-out Defector

Quote: *"I would do it over if I could, but sin is sin. There are too many bloodstains to wash out."*

Clan: Ventrue

MORTAL DAYS: SELF-LOATHING'S GNAWING TEETH

Neally's was a pained childhood, abandoned at St. Patrick's when his parents realized they couldn't afford to raise him, schooled by nuns and priests who taught him a lot about guilt but not much about joy. His luck changed when a public servant investigating St. Patrick's found the canny lad a willing source of information on the school's scandals. The eventual Senator John Logan took Neally into his home and eventually Logan's affection grew. He never publicly acknowledged his adoption of the boy, records only showing Edward Neally's service in the house scullery, but Neally spent all his time advising the politician, becoming his chief of staff in later years.

Neally befriended a fellow young man in the employ of politicians by the name of Jefferson. The two exchanged partners and even carried out a clandestine affair with each other for a time, Neally only breaking off their union when the guilt grew too much to bear.

Neally found you can't just shut away a childhood of abuse. As he eventually went on to tell many a traumatized vessel, "closure does not exist." With every success came the wash of guilt. With every profit came

the wages of sin. Neally was not religious, but associated every pleasure with self-loathing. In fits of pique he tore apart his wardrobe for his self-perceived "poor taste." He had sex and felt he wasn't good enough. He masturbated and felt physically revolted that he'd put himself through such onanism.

Despite all this, Neally was a highly successful administrator and counsel in mortal politics. The greatest rush came when he accompanied his father figure to Washington. He put aside his feelings of unworthiness, at least until another staffer called him a "jumped-up bogtrotter." That night, Neally took his first opium hit. He enjoyed it. It diminished his self-hatred. He took it again the week after. It didn't take long for the drug to cloud his judgement and for Logan to quietly secrete Neally in an institution.

KINDRED NIGHTS: SECOND CHANCES

Lodin had long followed Neally's career and decided he was well-equipped to serve as Seneschal. Neally didn't fully understand the offer. He accompanied the Prince on a tour of Chicago and its underbelly, meeting vampires and finding out about Camarilla politics. Lodin Embraced him before he could say "yes."

Neally disappeared from Senator Logan's life, but continued to send the elderly mortal regular packets of money. When Logan died, Neally lost an anchor, and the tear in his soul was intense. Neally Embraced Jefferson to fill the hole, but in so doing made a long-term enemy

as the two dueled over influence and the love of a ghoul named Emily.

It was in the early 1990s when Neally's spirit took its biggest hit. Under the influence of a manipulative Jefferson, Neally frenzied, murdering a swathe of kine, including his treasured ghoul Emily. Lodin was furious that his Seneschal had caused several blatant Masquerade breaches and would have destroyed Neally himself had the Sabbat not ferried him away.

The Sabbat poured words into his head about ancient elders controlling him and wanting to devour him. They told him Lodin was just using him. They assured him he was worthless and sin in human form. Such rites were similar for many Sabbat inductees, but usually came accompanied with the reassurance that despite all that, the vampire had a home and love from the Sabbat. Jefferson, who led the Sabbat pack, forbade such love-bombing. Instead, he turned Neally and his pack loose on Chicago as saboteurs, using Neally's knowledge of the city to destabilize it, assassinating prominent Kindred such as the Caitiff hero Dickie Fulcher at the Sabbat's behest.

When many members of the Sabbat migrated on their Gehenna Crusade, the bond with Jefferson's pack snapped. He was free. He was in Chicago, a known Sabbat agent provocateur, but now he wanted in with the Camarilla. The first thing he did was tell the Primogen Council about all the Sabbat nests in their domains in exchange for sanctuary.

Once again, Neally has to start from the bottom.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Power Once More:** The disgraced Ventrue has aspirations of rising to high status once again. It was he who encouraged Joseph Peterson to make the step up to praxis, only to see his unpopular brother in vitae crash and burn. He courts his clanmates Naomi Stewart and Bobby Weatherbottom to gain their backing for Ventrue Primogeniture, but he knows these Kindred carry little weight.

- **Property Deeds:** Until the werewolves attacked in the mid-1990s, the Succubus Club was under the stewardship of a Ventrue named Brennon Thornhill. He died in the assault, but Neally — as former Seneschal — had custody of Thornhill's property deeds. To Edward's surprise, the deeds were in Thornhill's name and on his death, spread between his mortal descendants. Neally has already made a ghoul of Thornhill's oldest nephew, considering now how best to act.

- **Rising Tide:** Neally believes the Sabbat will return to North America sooner than anyone anticipates, and when they do, it will be in the form of bloated blood gods, fat on the vitae of methuselahs. He sees the Sabbat holdout cities such as Miami, Montreal, and Kansas City as futile breakwaters containing Cainites too philosophically up their own asses to stop a returning crusade of blood-drunk knights. He leaks information wherever he can about the coming tide so the Camarilla might erect a suitable defense, even making information up to galvanize the Kindred.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Garfield Park Flat (Haven 1, Influence 2)** Neally shares a second-floor flat in Garfield Park with his ghoul, Oscar Thornhill, whom he removed from the more opulent suburbs to be closer to the city's heart. Neally feeds from the many addicts in the building, making the population of Anderson Halls high rise his personal herd. Garfield Park is known for its danger, and Neally has plans to expand his territory from one building to the entire block.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Oscar Thornhill (Resources 2, Retainers 2)** Neally's personal thrall is Oscar, a man of 26 who doesn't understand the sudden interest his uncle's old friend Edward is showing him. Neally has fed Thornhill several doses of vitae and regularly gets inside his head with the use of his Dominate Discipline. Neally is confident he can wrangle the entirety of the Succubus Club's ownership into Thornhill's name legally.

- **St Patrick's School (Influence 2)** Neally's mortal traumas compel him to exert control over the still-running St. Patrick's on West Belmont Avenue, where he tentatively pulls the school system's strings with blackmail and threats to the staff. He is undecided on whether to groom a herd, make a haven there, or just take revenge on the school he loathes so much.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Naomi Stewart (A Leg Up) Bobby Weatherbottom (Kinship)** Neally claims allegiance with Stewart and Weatherbottom as outsider Ventrue, though his crimes are a little too extreme for their tastes. They mostly keep him around as a source of old city information rather than through affection and he knows it.

- **Sir Olaf, the One-Eyed King (Fear)** Edward doesn't believe Lodin died during the werewolf attack and is deeply fearful of what his sire will do when he finds him, given the way they parted all those years ago. His wishes to enlist other Kindred to find the truth behind Lodin's fate, and if the former Prince is still around, extinguish him.

WHISPERS:

- **See Me:** Neally staked Capone and stashed him away as a sign he's taking the Masquerade seriously. He was always jealous of Al's favor with the boss.
- **Mortal Obsession:** Neally obsesses over a mortal family that's not his own. He's taken them as his herd and retainers. He seems to be forcing himself back toward humanity in a crude way.
- **Get a Fix:** Neally was an opiate junkie in life and is no different now. He regularly uses the Circulatory System's services to find kine deep in the melancholic humours.
- **Distant Domitor:** Jefferson is still pulling Neally's strings and is waiting to set this double agent off like a bomb.

MASK AND MIEN:

- Edward Neally reverses his name to Neally Edwards to avoid casual scrutiny, but his strongest mask comes in the form of Theodore Logan, a low-level city functionary registered as an office worker on long-term sick leave. The role provides a meager income and little intrusion into his life, while providing him a pass to enter civic buildings when needed **(Mask 2)**.
- Tall and slender, with a narrow face and feline-like eyes, Neally's a moderately attractive male who appears to be in his mid-30s. He allows the thinness of his hair to show or shaves the top of his head each night, just leaving a sandy-colored horseshoe around the sides.
- Neally wears off-the-rack suits, his fortunes low since the '80s and '90s, but he keeps his shoes at a high shine, abiding by the maxim that "a man cannot be trusted if he doesn't shine his own shoes." After years of living among the Sabbat, he has forgotten many basic human traits, such as pretending to breathe, blinking, or even stimulating the vitae to work around his system.

Sire: Lodin

Embraced: 1896 (Born 1863)

Ambition: Rise to the position of Seneschal or Primogen

Convictions: Never betray my city again

Touchstones: Oscar Thornhill — nephew to deceased clanmate, Brennon Thornhill

Humanity: 3

Generation: 8th

Blood Potency: 3

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4; Charisma 2, Manipulation 4, Composure 2; Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 5

Skills: Athletics 3, Drive 2, Firearms 1; Etiquette (Seneschal) 4, Insight 2, Intimidation 3, Leadership 4, Performance (Dancing) 1, Persuasion 2, Streetwise 1, Subterfuge 3; Awareness 2, Finance (Fundraisers) 4, Investigation 2, Occult 2, Politics (Brinkmanship) 3

Disciplines: Dominate 4, Fortitude 3, Presence 2

BOBBY "THE HURRICANE" WEATHERBOTTOM

Epitaph: Anarch Spy

Quote: *"'Cutting edge security?' Don't worry; I broke into this weeks ago!"*

Clan: Ventrue

MORTAL DAYS: BETWEEN LOVE AND LARCENY

Bobby Weatherbottom kindled a love for computers at an early age, when his father bought him one of the first personal computers ever made. His passion for code and hardware meant that he had no time to make steady friends and couldn't keep up with his schoolwork. By the time he dropped out of high school, he flunked 10th grade twice.

He managed to get by. College had nothing to teach him and running a savings-account manipulation scheme against Illinois' largest bank gave him the all the money he needed. He moved into a small, dirty apartment, where he was free to do whatever he wanted. It wasn't long before "The Hurricane" was a name other hackers recognized as the best in the business. No security or copy protection could withstand his techniques.

Amanda Cersey, an officer at Bobby's bank, discovered his scam and approached him with a request to clear her father of embezzling from the bank. He quickly learned Amanda was the one embezzling the money, and wanted to take the fall. Still, he obliged. He liked having her attention, and more importantly, she promised to keep his own bank fraud secret.

She came back to him for more corporate espionage jobs. The Hurricane enjoyed the work. Amanda put him up against the best defenses of the era, and tearing them apart brought a sense of glee that tackling underfunded government systems or yet another computer game couldn't match. Hanging out with Amanda was just an added bonus. The two grew close, working together to scope out targets and work out strategies. With their combined forces, Amanda was able to rise to one of the top positions at her bank.

Bobby fell in love with Amanda, but there was a problem. Bobby knew a lot about computers, but very little about boundaries. Encyclopedic recitations of someone's personal life and hacking ATM machines to write mash notes on their receipts were a poor means to woo anyone, especially the heir to one of the city's most powerful families. By the time he realized the full, harmful extent of his obsession, Amanda reached out to a "distant cousin" for help. This "cousin" was Annabelle Triabell of the Toreador. Annabelle assured her she would do something, and studied Bobby in her spare time.

While considering her options, she brought him up in a conversation with then-Prince Lodin. As they waited for *Eugine Onegin* to begin, she talked about the hacker's technical prowess. For once, Lodin paid attention. The Prince just so happened to need someone young and capable of keeping up with changing technology. The Hurricane was a perfect choice, and Lodin resolved to Embrace him.

As Lodin stalked his childe-to-be, Bobby repaired his friendship with Amanda. He talked about the loneliness he felt, and apologized for his actions. Amanda accepted his apology. She felt lonely too; her rocky relationship with a local socialite recently imploded. They both felt isolated, one by technology and the other by wealth. As they reconnected, Amanda realized she loved Bobby. She asked him out, hoping to make a fresh start.

Lodin ensured that fresh start never came.

KINDRED NIGHTS: ON BORROWED TIME

Without permission from the Primogen, the Prince forcibly Embraced Bobby Weatherbottom. He commanded his newly born childe to work in his haven. When Amanda found him missing, she feared she put a hit on his life and ran back to her "cousin." Annabelle realized what happened, and was so furious with Lodin that she supported Maldavis, setting off the Council Wars. At the end of the war, one of the terms of her renewed loyalty was to reunite Bobby and Amanda. They've been together ever since.

When Lodin died in the War of Chicago, the Hurricane let loose. As the years went on, he became dissatisfied with the Camarilla. He became fast friends with the Nosferatu Khalid and Cedrick Calhoun after breaking into SchreckNET. There, his eyes were opened to the possibility of the Anarch Movement. The Second Inquisition's raid of the network convinced him the Camarilla could not face this new threat, and he formally threw in with the Anarchs, as an anomaly to the Ventrue mold.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Technical Mastermind:** As the de facto technical support lead for Chicago's Kindred, most of the domain's cellphones and computers go through his inspection. He's taken advantage of this, and backdoors his way into the city's secrets. If something seems like it'd be embarrassing to the Camarilla or a threat to the Anarchs, he passes it to the Movement right away.

- **Blind the Mortals:** Bobby despises the Second Inquisition and will put aside ideological differences to give them a black eye. Fighting them is tough work, even for him. They have electronic warfare

tools that he's never seen before, and they're not afraid to unleash them. He's convinced he can safely reverse engineer them, but that might be the Ventrue arrogance talking.

- **The Truth of Golconda:** The Hurricane researches Golconda. He's trying to gather every Golconda text and digitize it into a wiki for the Kindred to consult. He knows that if the Second Inquisition discovers this wiki, he and all Golconda-seekers are in grave danger, but it's worth the risk. He's doing it for Amanda's sake. If he doesn't stop his hunger, it's not a question of if he'll kill her, it's a question of when.

DOMAIN AND HAVEN:

- **Norwood Park House (Haven 3, Influence 2)** Bobby lives with Amanda in a house on the Northwest side of the city. When Bobby isn't on Camarilla business or attending an Anarch meeting, he's doing chores in the house or working in his immense computer room in the basement. Like all Ventrue, he has a feeding preference, but his might be the most focused of all: Amanda is the *only* human who constitutes his preference, and she's getting older. He feeds from others to sate his Hunger, but all other blood tastes rancid to his palate and conveys little benefit.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Hacking Community (Allies 3, Contacts 4, Influence 5) "Slip Up" (Allies 2, Retainers 2)** Bobby is still part of the mortal hacking community and he maintains a chatroom where he organizes the best and brightest into a force to be reckoned with. While they're not aware he's a vampire, he uses them to keep the Second Inquisition out of Chicago's servers. One of the hackers, "Slip Up," is his protégé. He's teaching her how to better exploit code, and she teaches him everything about social engineering.

- **Jillian Cersey (Allies 3)** The younger sister of his lover, Amanda, Jillian is the president and CEO of one of the largest banks in the state, with direct access to the movers and shakers of mortal government. Bobby uses this connection to examine the financial workings of the Camarilla. The advantage Jillian conveys may not last for long, however. She is in her 50s now and facing serious health issues.

- **Amanda Cersey (Retainers 1)** Once upon a time, Amanda was a financial powerhouse just like her sister. More importantly, she was Bobby's lover and soulmate. With his incredibly restrictive feeding restriction — Bobby's Hunger is only truly sated when the blood he drinks is from Amanda's veins — he's recently found himself taking awful, destructive actions to keep that blood supply flowing. Amanda spends most of her time unconscious in a bed at Bobby's haven. She receives a blood transfusion every other day, the blood bags supplied through Newberry's hospital contacts, and receives a drop of vitae every day to keep her body strong. Bobby drains off a little blood each time he needs to feed, but keeps Amanda sedated. He doesn't want her to know she's become a blood mill and is terribly afraid of what might happen if she ever realizes the monster he's become.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS:

- **Sergeant Duncan MacTavish (Hero Worship)** MacTavish is the kind of Anarch the Hurricane wishes he could be. He doesn't hesitate to take action, and he always gets results. Bobby feeds him information from the inside, and he's pretty sure the two are friends. Yes, Duncan does threaten to kill him, but those are (hopefully) just jokes.

- **Annabelle (Admiration) Jason Newberry (Disgusting)** Sometimes, Bobby feels bad that he's abandoning the Camarilla. After all, it was Annabelle who saved him. Then he remembers Son is the Malkavian Primogen and that no one bats an eye about it. Whenever Newberry commits another act of cruelty on the innocent, the Hurricane knows he made the right choice.

WHISPERS:

- **A Real Slip-Up:** Everyone knows the Hurricane's an Anarch. Prince Jackson's got a bunch of his own hackers watching his every move, and even he's not good enough to take them all out if they dogpile him.

- **Directionless:** The Hurricane talks a big game about how he's dedicated to the cause, but no one can pin him down on what he wants. Maybe he just needs a little push.

- **A Real Library:** Bobby's been gathering some real old books, and he's not telling anyone what they are or what he does with them. Someone better do something about it, because that's how you get infernalists.

- **Desperate Demands:** Amanda's trying to convince Bobby to finally Embrace her. If he won't, she'll go find someone who will.

MASK AND MIEN:

- The Hurricane is a tall, skinny man who appears to be in his early 20s. His skin is as white as marble. He's worn the same pair of eyeglasses since he dropped out of high school, and the lenses have become so scratched that it's difficult to see his green eyes through them. He prefers wearing old t-shirts and jeans.
- As a part of Annabelle's deal with Lodin, Bobby keeps a mortal identity as "Michael Cersey." Michael is legally married to Amanda, and presents himself as a shy, reclusive man who took his wife's last name. Online, he operates under the alias "Galeforce."
- The Blush of Life gives his skin pockets of bright red, mostly around his forearms and his nose. The Beast rarely overtakes him, but when it does, his eyes become a solid blood red, and all of his teeth become sharp and elongated, like shark's teeth.

Sire: Lodin

Embraced: 1984 (Born 1963)

Ambition: Disable all Second Inquisition actions in the city

Convictions: I can solve any problem; Love is the truest virtue

Touchstones: Sang-min "Slip Up" Seop — Hacking Protégé; Amanda Cersey — Blood Mill

Humanity: 7

Generation: 8th

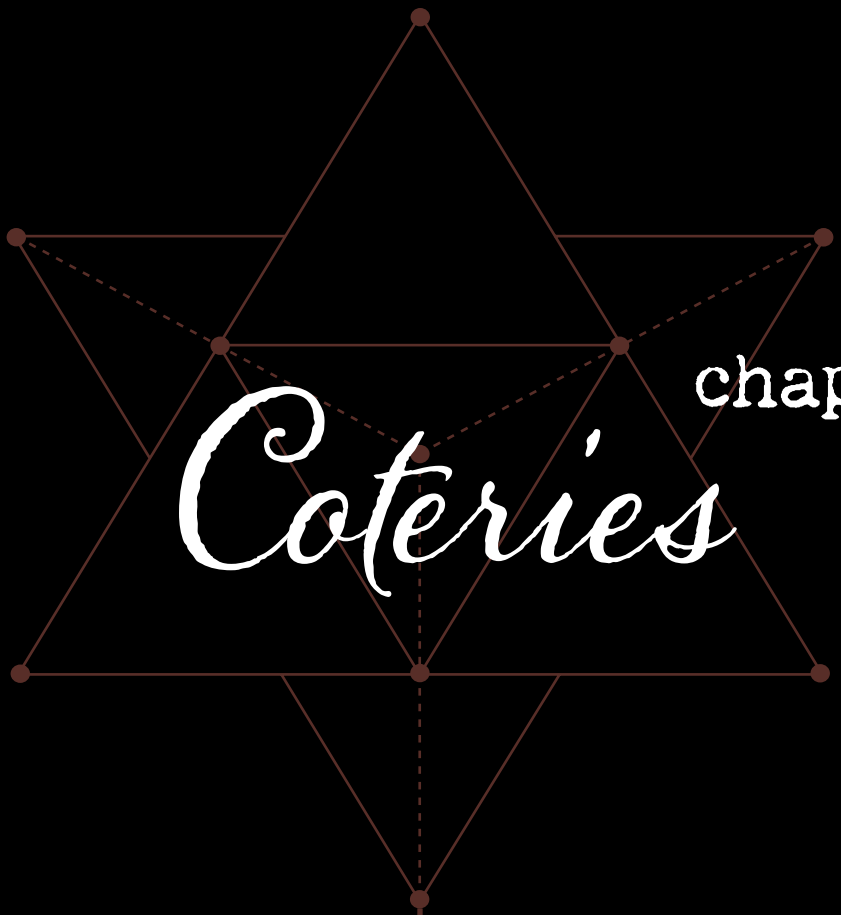
Blood Potency: 2

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2; Charisma 1, Manipulation 1, Composure 2; Intelligence 5, Wits 3, Resolve 2

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 4

Skills: Craft (Computer) 5, Drive 1, Larceny (Hacking) 5; Etiquette 2, Insight 2, Persuasion 2, Subterfuge 3; Academics (Coding) 2, Awareness 3, Finance 2, Investigation (Surveillance) 5, Occult 2, Technology (Online Security) 5

Disciplines: Dominate 1, Fortitude 2, Obfuscate 1, Presence 1



chapter five

Coteries

In the old Chicago, most coteries were either tightly bound to clan traditions, or represented loose affiliations that rarely earned formal recognition. Sometimes there was simply no need, but there were also cases where Lodin's regime felt defining a faction gave it power. While coterie traditions were steeped in ceremony in parts of the Old World, and these ideas were exported to the Americas with recent Camarilla reforms, the whole thing was never really Chicago's style. Now that the Camarilla asserts itself as an elite organization instead of an ecumenical one, Kindred struggle to adopt new, more structured forms. This comes at a time when the few coteries that were tightly organized in the first place have sometimes lost their old formalities. For instance, the broken Tremere Pyramid, and their sparse numbers in Chicago, have deprived them of an official voice in the local Camarilla. They join rough circles of mystics, politicians, monsters, and survivors. For all the renewed formality of the Camarilla, a new Prince and more elitist regime has promoted fluidity instead of tamping it down. Outside the political nucleus, alliances are ad-hoc things, perhaps too easily betrayed.

This chapter doesn't provide an encyclopedic breakdown of the Chicago's coteries. Instead, it covers those that are either major players, or that have distinctive responsibilities or places in the city's history. Where vampires in this book aren't given a coterie, you may either devise one using the social connections they possess or decide these connections don't need the kind of detail used for players' coteries. In any event, these coteries matter in relation to your protagonists, and their coteries should have the central story role. Story importance isn't the same as political power, of course. The most intense **Vampire: The Masquerade** stories

MULTIPLE COTERIES

Can you join more than one coterie? Absolutely. Gengis is an example of a character with multiple affiliations. Besides, this wouldn't be a game of personal and political horror if you couldn't set your character up in multiple conflicting alliances. Each additional coterie affiliation costs separate Advantage dots, and dots from multiple coteries may not be combined. Multiple coterie Backgrounds may not be used together, though the Storyteller may allow it if the player comes up with a clever explanation. Even so, their dots may not be stacked.

Popular Kindred may be asked to join multiple coteries. This is time and resource consuming, but essentially a compliment, and permitted if each coterie is aware of the others. Joining more than one coterie in secret is loathed, however, and marks a vampire as untrustworthy.

tend to feature downtrodden vampires attacking established power structures. This chapter also includes new rules for players' coteries, so that, at the top or bottom of the pyramid, players have better tools with which to detail their positions.

Coterie Format

The coteries in this chapter conform to the rules in **Vampire: The Masquerade 5th Edition** except where noted, laid out in the following fashion.

Coterie Name

This is where you'll find the coterie's name, history, and basic description. Some coteries have an "official" name, recognized in Camarilla ceremonies, and used by members themselves, but in Chicago, many are looser associations known by nicknames, of which the listed name is the most common. Secondary nicknames are noted immediately below the common name. Following those (if any), a logline provides a pithy summary of the coterie's nature.

This section also describes the coterie's sect affiliation. Certain Chicago coteries neither belong to the Camarilla, nor truly stand apart from it, with the Anarchs or another faction. These are often referred to as "subjects" when the speaker is feeling especially traditional, or as a veiled insult. "Associates" is a modern term, preferred among junior ancillae and the odd politically inclined neonate. These social niceties, or lack thereof, are lost on Anarchs.

Members and Agendas

This section discusses the coterie's common goals, and how each member contributes to them — or how members oppose each other despite having other common causes. Much of this topic is taken up by the coterie's relationship map, which uses the same style found in **V5**.

Customs

Each coterie's description concludes with any traditions or other habits it might possess.

Type

The coterie may be one of the types described in **V5**, or it may have a purpose that isn't covered in that book. In any case, the coterie's mission and habits are explored here.

Backgrounds

A coterie's Backgrounds depend on its type and the Kindred who support it, though not always in ways one might expect. For example, powerful vampires may have relatively weak coterie Backgrounds due to a lack of shared trust, or if their alliance is a new one.

The Backgrounds listed here are starting points, for use if players' Kindred join the coterie or otherwise connect to it in circumstances where this information would be useful to the Storyteller. The Storyteller can always adjust these traits or go by the narrative description of each coterie to determine what it provides for its Kindred. Therefore, this section describes Backgrounds in story terms as well as game traits.

Domain

In addition to Backgrounds common to both coteries and characters, many possess a Domain. In Chicago this represents part of the city or outlying area claimed by Prince Jackson's regime. Domain is further divided into Chasse, Lien, and Portillon aspects, representing the Domain's size, the ease with which Kindred draw upon its benefits, and its security, respectively.

As well as game-trait listings, Domain aspects come with a description of what they represent in the city and to the coterie's Kindred.

One vital distinction is the degree to which a territory is recognized. In Chicago, the tightening of Camarilla membership has left coteries which are no longer fully integrated with the sect with virtually official holdings, nonetheless. Depriving trusted citizens left on the wrong side of politics, through no fault of their own, of their long-held territory would have been too bitter a pill for certain powerful Kindred and their "outsider" coteries. Beyond Domains with unofficial Camarilla recognition, Anarchs respect competently managed turf — and so does everyone else, really. Elders may claim renegade territory is theirs for the taking, but if unrecognized claimants are powerful enough, wise Kindred leave their turf alone.

The Anarch Center

The Baronate, The Official Opposition, Hypocrite Central

The Leading Coterie of Chicago's Anarch Movement

Failure makes them stronger. It's not that Chicago's Anarchs celebrate their past failures, but they've put them in perspective. The last century held out the city as a tempting fruit, seemingly ripe for the taking in the face of embattled, disorganized governments. Schemes from Gary, war with the Lupines, and even coming within a night or two of apparent Gehenna all produced openings for the Anarchs, but none of them led to a revolutionary government.

On the other hand, overthrowing the Camarilla, with its genteel salons and sneering elders, never had much appeal for a significant part of the Anarch Movement, which wanted autonomy more than revolution. The nights of the Anarch Revolt don't inflame the hearts of New World Kindred. A restructured Camarilla made the prospect of revolution even less tenable, as that body became a thing to which Kindred bootlickers aspired, instead of a pretend government for all. Like roses from shit, every failure to incite revolution fertilized a core movement toward autonomy. Maldavis failed to seize the throne, but the elders didn't burn the rest of the local Movement. Juggler gathered a crew for his own coup attempt nearly 30 years ago, and his failure produced minimal casualties, though it conveniently encouraged Juggler to stick to Gary, where he proclaimed himself Baron, threw his weight around for a few years, and more recently, disappeared. He was the last serious firebrand. In the shadow of these failures, other Anarchs managed to produce something enduring: The Center. It's got hardscrabble territory in East Chicago (not even in Illinois!), but it belongs to the Anarchs — indisputably. The Anarch Center's built something that might endure, and even thrive as wayward Kindred discover the Camarilla isn't handing out turf after a bow and recitation of the Traditions. They don't know if they care about taking Chicago so much anymore, but they sure don't want *you* to fuck up their growing stability.

The "Anarch Center" isn't an official name — not yet, anyway — but it's the preferred polite term. The coterie spent a few years trying the "Baronate" out, but this turned out to resemble an Italian word for a collection of crooked schemes. Therefore, Jackson's people use it constantly.

Members and Agendas

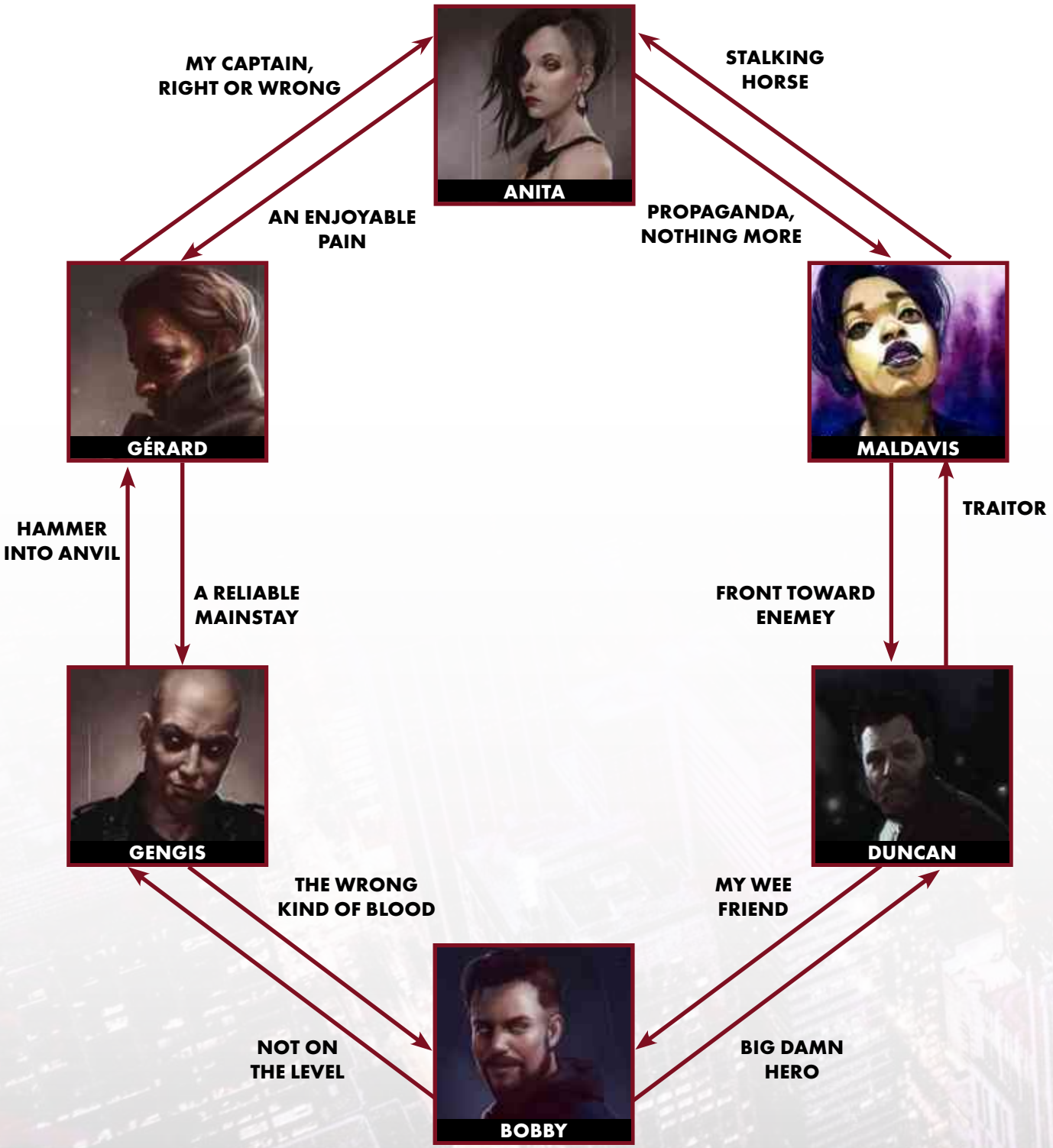
The Anarch Center's goal is to provide a stable alternative to Camarilla governance. Coterie rhetoric calls it a "Consultative Vanguard" — that is, anyone can ask for something, but the coterie's suggestions may attain the weight of law, depending on the context. In return, the Center keeps Jackson's regime in interesting times often enough to prevent it from bothering Anarchs too much, but not enough to prompt serious conflicts. The Center wants Anarchs to be patient, build an autonomous power base, and win Chicago only when a revolution seems like a foregone conclusion, when they can invite former Camarilla subjects to join the better government.

This is a hard sell to the most radical Anarchs, who think this talk of base building is just an excuse to abandon the cause, but to this, Anita Wainwright has a persuasive answer: "How'd the last revolution turn out?" After that, it's only necessary to trot out Maldavis to mingle with the crowd, and it mollifies all but the most zealous — for now.

Anita Wainwright: The center of the Center, Wainwright is the one a newcomer might call the Anarchs' "Baron," though she never uses that term herself. Emissaries treat her as the Anarchs' leader, but she only accepts that role after consulting with the rest of the coterie. Over time, however, everyone has come to assume that her words represent the voice of the whole. One source of frustration for her is that despite becoming a prominent voice for Anarchs across America, she has a diminished reputation in Chicago itself. She can identify one reason: Maldavis. Why are people addicted to backing the woman who would be (and repeatedly, fails to be) Prince? Wainwright has her aboard as a propaganda tool and political lubricant, and even thinks she has potential, but so far, she doesn't think it's been unleashed to the point where she deserves the attention she's been getting.

Gengis: Gengis is the one who makes trouble for Chicago in carefully measured doses, using contacts in a smattering of anti-authoritarian subcultures and activist groups. Gengis also moderates mayhem committed by other Anarchs. In a Camarilla government he'd be something like the Sheriff, but saying that to his face is a *terrible* idea. It doesn't help that Gengis' calculated chaos is a compromise. If he could, he'd happily fuck shit up and damn the consequences. Unfortunately, he's stuck

The Anarch Center



in the Nihilists (p. XX) too, and is beginning to see the worst aspects of extremism on display.

Gérard: Where Gengis is the one who threatens to unleash Anarch rage at anyone who opposes the Center's plans, Gérard *is* that rage, concentrated in a single fanatical individual. Unfortunately, his zeal isn't especially political anymore, but based on his loyalty to Wainwright.

The Hurricane: Bobby "The Hurricane" Weatherbottom is supposedly a secret member of the Center, but it's not an especially well-kept secret. This suits the coterie's interests perfectly. Through whisper campaigns they talk about how Lodin's own protégé couldn't stand to be part of the establishment anymore, making him an example of an Anarch with mainstream, conservative interests. This isn't the real Hurricane, who made his definitive break with the one-two punch of Lodin's fall and the Camarilla clampdown on Internet use.

Duncan MacTavish: As a skilled soldier, MacTavish should be the coterie's military advisor, trainer, and strategist, valued for his knowledge over his capacity for violence. But he's an indifferent mentor who prefers the front lines. Honestly, he'd join a more radical coterie if he could, but the regional options are, in his words, "all wankers."

Maldavis: This woman has been the hope for change so often, and to so many people, that her simple appearance at an event is enough to convince younger Kindred that anything they're doing — even working with Jackson's people — is part of some bigger liberation scheme. Maldavis wants to make her own moves, free from coercion, but she's got to get out of the multiple commitments to which many, many Kindred would subject her. For now, the Anarch Center is the least onerous of these. They just want her to show up at meetings. That doesn't get in the way of her other business, but sometimes she feels a touch insulted by the how little the Center expects of her — especially Wainwright — though it's a refreshing contrast to those who want the legendary Maldavis to burn down Elysium and kick the Camarilla's ass, either by herself or at the head of someone else's dream army.

JUGGLER'S ENVY

The existence of the Anarch Center is a source of embarrassment for Juggler, a former contender for Anarch leadership who's retreated to claim Baronial rule over Gary. Officially, Juggler's crew and the Center are part of a common movement. Unofficially, the Center uses him as an example of the egotism, ambition, and impulsivity that's kept Chicago's Anarchs from making real progress.

For his part, Juggler spreads rumors that the Center is nothing more than a pack of opportunists working with Jackson's regime to prevent real change. When those rumors grow too insistent, Juggler's friends run into trouble on the way to Chicago — lethal trouble, if the Center believes Juggler sent anyone to directly attack them.

Customs

"Nothing about us, without us," is an ethos the Center follows, inviting Anarchs to meet at the Inland Steel Building — not the famous one in Chicago proper, but the other one in East Chicago, sitting at the head of vast, semi-derelict steelworks. Ordinary sessions happen on the first Friday of each month. Anyone who calls themselves an Anarch can meet with Center members. Extraordinary sessions happen whenever a crisis calls for it. Speakers are put on a list. As the Consultative Vanguard, attending Center members can limit speaking time and offer side commentary at will. Any Anarch in attendance may make a proposal, too, but it must be seconded by a Center member. After that, majority rules, except that two-thirds of any attendees who come from a territory that is the subject of the proposal must consent. The Center is the ultimate arbiter of these rules.

Type

The Center is a Vanguard Coterie. Vanguard Coteries are most common among Anarchs, though Camarilla coteries surrounded by the most hostile political rivals may also belong to this type. "Mastery in one domain, revolution in many," is the Vanguard way. These coteries establish a strong Domain among their enemies, but after securing its borders, check further ambitions in favor of making their own position as strong as possible. This allows them to be "first among equals" in any embattled alliance and prevents enemies from crushing them. After that, a Vanguard engages in a campaign of destabilization against established powers. The point isn't conquest, but to make the Vanguard a better alternative to the enemy. The Center's name is deliberately ideologically neutral, for broad appeal, but other Vanguards may call themselves Soviets, Syndicates, Councils and the like. Once entrenched, the Vanguard assumes decision-making powers over other Kindred, with their ostensible consent, though naturally, this springs from *realpolitik* more often that a shared ideology.

VANGUARD COTERIES FOR PLAYERS

The Anarch Center is a well-developed Vanguard Coterie. Starting coteries of this type have the following distribution of dots:

Domain: Chasse (• •), Portillon (• • •)

Status: (•) (Anarch, usually)

Enemies: (•) (reactionaries and bootlickers!)

Possible Extras: Adversary, Mawla

Domain

The Anarch Center claims East Chicago. Despite the name, East Chicago is small Indiana city sandwiched between Chicago and Gary. The coterie portrays it as the "Anarch Capital" of Chicago proper. This makes East Chicago well-protected, but it ultimately suffers for being a symbolic territory. Managing the Domain is considered a chore, and the coterie's members often behave more like as absentee landlords than rulers of a Kindred manor. Center members all have personal holdings in Chicago proper, but always ensure at least one of them, along with Anarch allies, is watching over the Domain. East Chicago's decrepit steel industry provides little wealth for the Center and its guests but puts the Center in a position to deal with traffic from Gary. The Center treats Gary troublemakers as a natural resource it can turn on and off at will, based on whether it chooses to provide safe passage to travelers bent on causing problems in Chicago.

CHASSE • • •

A city of nearly 30,000 would seem to be quite a prize for a lone coterie. In truth, American Domains this vast, with their own municipal governments, usually aren't so poor. Plenty of derelict buildings shield Kindred on the hunt, but nightlife is practically nonexistent.

LIEN • •

Coterie members regard East Chicago as a symbol of legitimacy but think of Chicago proper as their true home, and where the real prize lies. The Center hasn't made much of an effort to bend inhabitants to their interests, except to maintain the Masquerade and a network of monitors.

PORTILLON • • •

Even though the Center neglects East Chicago in some ways, it fiercely protects it. Gengis manages an "alternative neighborhood watch" aimed at people who don't trust the cops. They call, text, or email with anything unusual they see. This tells the Center what's going on, and thanks to software coded by the Hurricane, often tell them who the witness is, so they can be persuaded to keep their mouth shut. Visiting Anarchs are asked to patrol the city, and resident Center members utilize an array of webcams and weapon caches to keep the peace. This is, after all, where Anarchs might come if shit really goes down.

Backgrounds

Members of the Anarch Center enjoy access to the following shared Backgrounds:

HAVEN • • •

Beneath the foundations of a demolished building surrounded by fencing and warnings of toxic chemicals, a clean, if sparse, lightproof room awaits each member of the Center.

MAWLA • •

The Center is one of the most respected Anarch coteries in North America, and members can expect guidance from well-known Anarchs elsewhere.

STATUS • • • •

Membership in the Center marks a vampire as one of the leading American Anarchs, though this is less respected by the most radical members of the Movement, who see it as soft on actual revolt. This doesn't replace individual Status but represents the prestige that might be claimed in the context of Center membership.

Baby Chorus

The Band, The Chorus

The Best Damn Band in Damned Chicago

In Chicago, it's more acceptable to drive a log through the Prince's heart or pop claws at a Cubs game than mess with Baby Chorus. The band is a fearsome political powerhouse and, simply, extremely good at playing. Baby Chorus is something special because regardless of its members' other interests, they're committed to the music above all. That sincerity appeals to all but the most coldhearted Kindred, and even true monsters often understand that without a redeeming feature like the band, Chicago's vampire subculture wouldn't be worth preserving in any form. Indeed, when Prince Jackson selected Damien to act as Sheriff, the main obstacle wasn't the vampire's former Anarch affiliations, but the possibility it would take him away from the band, which, after a lengthy hiatus, was coming back. The Prince had to publicly assure the court he would remain a member of Baby Chorus for as long as he liked.

Baby Chorus' best music is almost unclassifiable, with countless genres orbiting a bright star of guitar-driven blues-punk fusion. The Chorus incorporates new musical forms as they arise, as if they belong to an eternal present, in a way that might only be possible for Kindred. Under Kathy Glens' leadership, the band pursues an artistic direction never before seen by Kindred or kine. Some of their songs require supernatural speed and precision to play, or have subtle elements that can only be appreciated by those who possess superhuman hearing.

However, Baby Chorus is a working band, too. Experimental art satisfies what passes for a soul among certain, more refined, undead, but most of the people the band plays for want heavy blues rock with a gothic tinge. The Chorus has refused offers of full patronage by wealthy Kindred. They say music as labor is an essential part of their artistic process. Yes, the Chorus recently agreed to play the Succubus Club for the Prince, but that was part of the deal keeping Damien in and, after its dormant period, the band needed a pile of cash to reestablish itself. As a working band, Baby Chorus has always been highly successful, and as it returns to the local scene, promoters have discovered legends of the band's excellence are real. If most members weren't undead, they'd have a record deal, an international tour, merchandise, and music: the entire panoply of fame. That's not allowed.

Famous performers cite Baby Chorus as an influence, and a few have even played with the band, though they don't discuss it in interviews. Everyone in the know understands the band plays the Chicago club circuit and a few private shows, and should be appreciated live, or through audio bootlegs the band secretly distributes itself. Recording the Chorus on a camera is a great way to get your ass kicked, though shows sometimes hit video-streaming sites anyway — and are taken down as soon as the band's very skilled agent notices. These recordings have never betrayed the nature of members, however, because another great way to get your ass kicked is to feed in and around a Chorus show, or get in a fight with another vampire.

Nowadays, the band endangers the Masquerade the most through its longevity. The newly revived band's members look exceptionally well-preserved, even for musicians with the benefit of stage charisma and excellent lighting. Fans believe Kathy Glens is in her mid-50s now, but had work done. Damien runs with the band part time now. As a precaution, he wears sunglasses and a hoodie when he performs, changes up his stage patter, and goes by the stage name Cosmas. When they can get him, Evan Klein plays as...Evan K, successor to Ray Falcon. It works, for now.

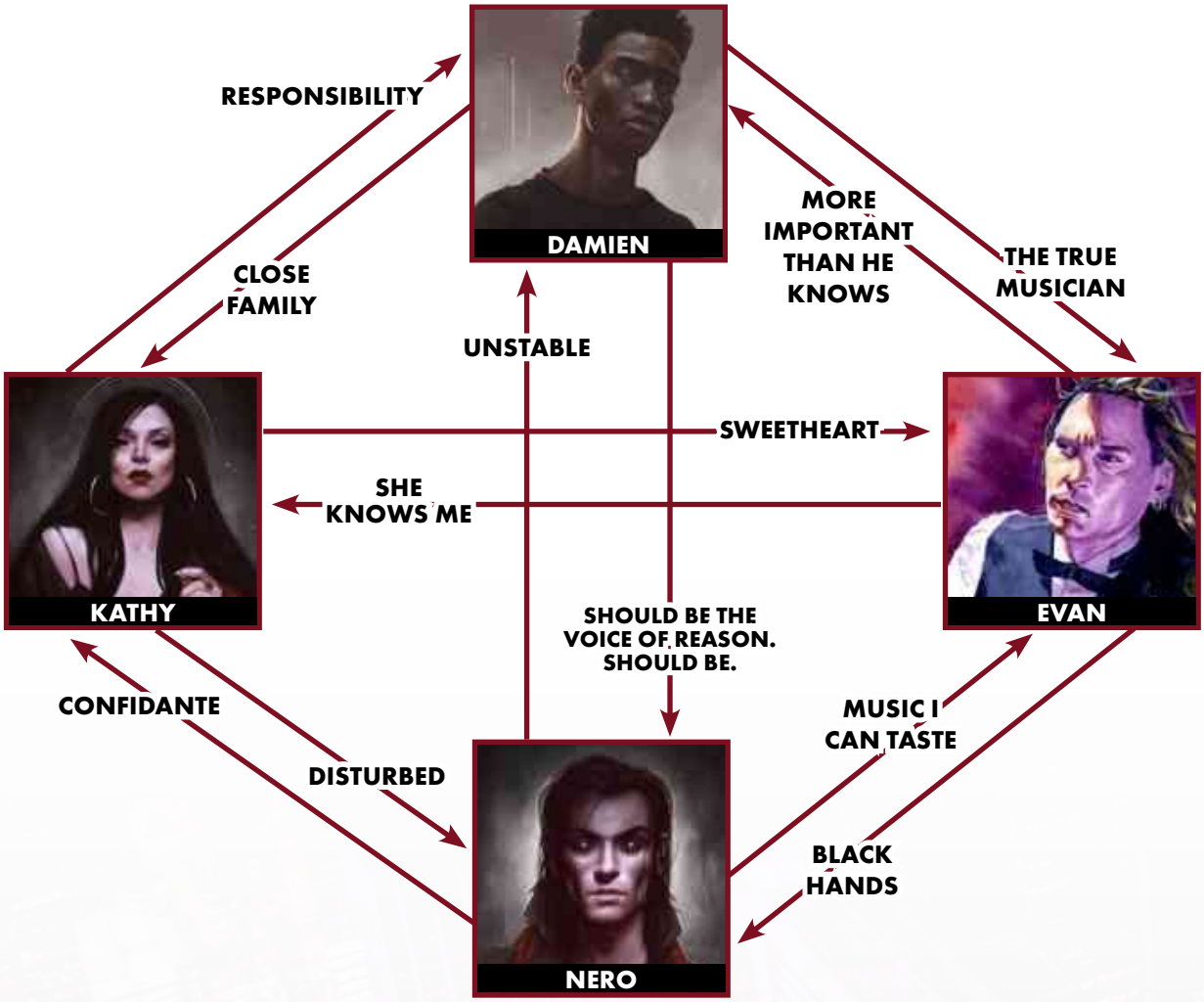
Members and Agendas

Baby Chorus is a working band devoted to playing the best music in the world, and in being musicians before anything else. "Guitarist first, vampire a distant second," says Kathy Glens. You may take heads for the Prince, see Gehenna in terrifying visions, or be part of some obscure plot to seize power, but if you can't bring it to your performance, it comes second after the band. The sole exception to this is given to Damien, in his business as Sheriff, and the Prince takes care to avoid such conflicts.

While the revived band includes the Ventrue vocalist Scarlet Thompson, the Gangrel drummer and saxophonist Gareth Ray, and the Caitiff Riley on violin, these vampires aren't members of the coterie, per se, but "on contract," as Glens puts it. Nero rarely performs, and Evan Klein's a spotty addition, but they're members, nonetheless. This generates a certain amount of resentment, but the opportunity to play with the Chorus is too good to pass up.

Damien, or "Cosmo": In the revived Baby Chorus, Damien goes by the name Cosmas (the name of Saint Damien's twin brother). The rest of the band teases him by calling him the "part timer" now that he's Sheriff.

Baby Chorus



Damien is the only member of the band who can get away with putting the art second — sometimes. Damien is the band's lead vocalist and second guitar, and while his ability is world class, it hasn't improved since he started working for Prince Jackson. Kathy Glens tolerates this for now, but has occasionally damned his work with faint praise ("merely good, as usual") when the band has its post-show meetings.

Kathy Glens: Well, what would *you* do if you were quite possibly the world's greatest guitarist, but couldn't tell anyone why? You might do as Kathy Glens does, performing art for art's sake. She runs Baby Chorus as a machine that generates beauty and is fueled by excellence, within certain tolerances. Those limits include live (or at least lifelike) audiences, an intimate atmosphere, and the constraints imposed by working in Chicago's music scene. Glens understands that creativity flows from these restrictions, and not just in some ill-defined sentimental sense. By keeping a low profile, the band avoids accusations of endangering the Masquerade. By refusing to accept full Kindred patronage, the band stays away from political entanglements. Once it finish the Succubus Club run, the Chorus will be free to do what it wants. Glens sets the rules for Baby Chorus, and is both an excellent creative collaborator and unquestioned leader.

Nero: Nero doesn't play with Baby Chorus as often as he used to but remains essential to the band's creative direction. Kathy runs the band, but Nero is its night-to-night

taskmaster, directing the roadies, providing technical feedback, and managing the band's merchandise. These shirts, CDs, and other items always appear to be bootlegs, paid for on a strictly cash basis. This work doesn't especially suit Nero, but it only takes up a fraction of his concentration, and builds social connections he uses to release his own music. Nero has taken contract player Riley under his wing, and as the Caitiff's playing style begins to emulate Nero's, rumor has it the Malkavian is retiring, and Riley may even be Nero's wayward progeny.

Evan Klein: As "Evan K," Klein's experience playing for the band is almost psychic torture. Klein's musicianship for Baby Chorus is bound up in the Ray Falcon personality, but if Ray Falcon was mortal, he'd look too old, and Kathy Glens doesn't want band members using Disciplines that directly affect the audience (a little Celerity-enhanced shredding is fine; using Presence to win the audience is cheating), so misdirecting people's minds is out. So now, as Evan K, Klein is Ray Falcon *pretending* to be Evan Klein. He originally thought this would be therapeutic, in the "fake it 'til you make it" sense, but instead, it's produced a bizarre mental feedback loop that increasingly convinces him his default personality is no more real than any of the others. Nevertheless, Evan as Ray as Evan is an excellent bassist.

Customs

Band practice is at 10 P.M. every Thursday at the Succubus Club. Members *will* attend unless faced with Final Death or similar extreme circumstances, or they're out of the band. Damien is grudgingly excepted from this requirement, and the contract players are given a bit more leeway, though Kathy Glens has made it known that anyone who wants to graduate to full membership in the band should never miss a session. As noted elsewhere, members are forbidden from affecting the audience's minds with Disciplines. Beyond certain exceptions like the recent Succubus Club residence, the band accepts cash only, and bookers should be aware of an extensive contract rider that provides absolute privacy from their arrival to their exit. Members may not do anything to promote the band beyond. Pursuing a contract based on one's reputation as a member of the Chorus is also forbidden, and the band may only make money from shows and the "bootleg" merchandize Nero distributes. Finally, political activities by band members while practicing or at gigs is forbidden, and politics should never affect the gigs they accept (though again, the Succubus Club run stretches this rule). Kathy Glens is reported to have said, "If the Sabbat were still around, had a pile of cash, and followed our rules, we sure as hell *would* play for them."

GARWOOD'S GHOST

Former member Garwood Marshall fell to Lupines in the 1990s. The Tremere was an excellent musician with a lie-studded background (see "The Mysterious Garwood Marshall," p. XX) who was well-loved by other band members. Thus, it's rattled them to hear that on three occasions, audience members have seen Marshall on stage — and on one of them, band members heard Marshall on saxophone.

Kathy Glens initially believed Evan Klein had duplicated Marshall's form, but after interrogating him, is convinced something else was the cause. Theories include some sort of trick from the now-creepy Abraham DuSable, that Marshall's ghost has appeared, or that he never really died, and is using some form of magical remote viewing to spy on the band.

Type

Baby Chorus is a Plumaire coterie with substance, to the point where Kindred concerned with coterie taxonomies might consider it a Questari group now. Baby Chorus didn't just adopt a subculture, but remixed and built upon the local music scene to create its own style and following. Kine fans know the Chorus isn't quite like any other band, though few of them suspect the supernatural is involved. Due to the band's period of inactivity, there's an age split between the two sets of fans: the 40 and 50-ish "old babies," whose blues-goth style has muted with time, and "new babies," drawn from the ranks of 20-something music snobs, who have an eclectic, self-consciously retro style. The band is famously indifferent to fashion trends, following their own sense of style, and the fans they like the most belong to neither group of followers, but to dive-bar crowds who stomp the floor when the band plays blues standards.

Domain

Baby Chorus' Domain is bordered on the south by the Chicago River, on the north by East Chicago Drive, in the west by North LaSalle Avenue, and on the East by North Michigan Avenue. This area contains some of the city's most prestigious clubs, and a number of back-alley dive bars. Backed by local Camarilla decree, the band's policy is that this area remains the Rack, but the

band can curtail feeding by Kindred whenever it likes, and feeding within a three-block radius of a Baby Chorus show is forbidden, except by prior arrangement with the band. Baby Chorus also has free access to backstage and storage areas at the Succubus Club.

CHASSE • • • •

The band's Domain is a nexus of culture, wealth, and intoxicated vessels for the taking, restricted only by the fact that it shares the area with Kindred looking to feed off the Rack. A Baby Chorus performance can make a new club an essential part of Chicago's nightlife, but when the band lets it be known they won't play a place, or (as a weapon of last resort) deliberately plays badly, they can crush an established venue's fortunes.

LIEN • • • • •

Baby Chorus is a Chicago institution. The band's long history means people are used to everything that makes it weird, such as its lack of official releases and insistence on privacy. Now that the Chorus is back, music aficionados will bend over backwards to help members with just about any problem.

PORTILLON •

While few Chicagoans ascribe the band's eccentricities to anything but artistic temperaments, it isn't hard to track Baby Chorus down. Posters, handbills, and word of mouth tell people about their shows. The band takes sensible precautions against Masquerade breaches, but can't do much about enemies mingling with their audience or browsing the Rack.

Backgrounds

Under Kathy Glens' leadership, the revived Baby Chorus has reclaimed its unique place in Chicago's culture, affording the following Backgrounds:

FAME • •

If you're deep in Chicago's music scene, you know Baby Chorus. If you're into obscure bands other acts cite as inspirations, you also know the Chorus. While fame is often convenient for the band, Kathy Glens and Nero work to keep the group from getting any more notice. On several occasions, they've convinced international music publications to pull reviews of their shows, and even drop mentions of the band in general descriptions of the music scene.

INFLUENCE • • •

Baby Chorus has a strong influence over the local music scene, though their sway can be overridden by business-focused power brokers, due to the band's rules about avoiding excessive fame or contractual obligations.

RETAINERS • • •

Gord, Priya, and The Guff (he doesn't remember his real name) are the band's ghoul roadies, recruited by Kathy Glens and maintained by various band members since the 80s. They set up and break down Baby Chorus' gear with military precision, keep out groupies (yes, *all* groupies) and knock the teeth out of anyone who gets on stage without permission — and that's pretty much it. The roadies barely function in mortal society, and only have an apartment because Nero rented it for them, as they were stinking up the band's van.

The Blood Disco

Bahari, Category Is, The City Balls, The Drag Houses, The Houses of Lilith

Give the City to the Dark Mother

Erzulie does not take kindly to the mistreatment of the lowest Kindred castes. They are not soldiers, and none of them asked to be drafted into a sectarian war. Erzulie would not allow these Caitiff to be exploited. She created the House of Lilith, the first of the Kindred Drag Houses, in 1972. Erzulie claimed the goddess as her personal deity using the coded language and performance of ball culture to recruit and educate wayward Caitiff. She provided a lair when there was none. She began to minister to as many Caitiff as she could using the ball as a haven for wayward souls. She taught them how to feed, move among the humans, assimilate, blend in, and pass. Erzulie, in essence, became sire to these lost childer of the Kindred.

With ball culture becoming the basis for the Blood Disco, Erzulie's events grew larger. It became difficult for her to operate without the Camarilla becoming aware of her actions. Rather than cease her activities, Erzulie decided to hide in plain sight, becoming a fixture of the new scene. The balls became not just about acceptance and freedom, but indulgence and fertility. Vitae and flesh were shared, the name of Lilith celebrated as the Mother who brought together all lost children.

The first Blood Disco was held at Studio 54 on its opening night April 26, 1977. As Studio 54 grew in popularity, so did the Blood Disco. If there's one thing Toreador know how to do, it's throw a party. The bacchanal was a perfect cover for Erzulie's needs. It allowed for the continued organization of the Caitiff while the club's popularity kept her business safe from reprisals, as causing trouble at the iconic nightspot would threaten the entire Masquerade.

The House of Lilith disbanded in 1980 with Erzulie telling her adopted childer to create houses of their own. They were to continue the mission of finding the abandoned and creating clans from the clanless. Erzulie's charge was to find a place where they could all gather once a year. She would contact them when she found such a place.

Erzulie's search brought her to Chicago in 1982. It was at the Warehouse where she met Adze, the Nosferatu club owner, crime lord...

And soul mate.

The Blood Disco continued to grow as the phoenix of house music rose from the ashes of disco. Working with artists like Jamie Principle, Erzulie would use the 12" singles to send messages to her childer, now mothers of their own houses. She used the music as communication developing a secret language only her mother generals could decipher. The mothers would use the tools Erzulie gave them to organize and inform. The network spread with the music with Detroit, New York, and Los Angeles becoming hubs for this new information stream. Still, every year, the mothers would return to Chicago for the gathering of the tribe. It became a pilgrimage for many of the childer to catch a glimpse of the one who brought them together and gave them a sense of community, protection, and freedom.

Erzulie, whom some now called the Mother-Above-All, has created an army threatening the Tradition of the Masquerade. Adze controls the flow of information between clanless and other outcasts — Ravnos, Camarilla Gangrel, and Anarch Ventrue among them — through his new venture, Red No⁹ 5. Together, they may well be the biggest threat the Camarilla face in Chicago.

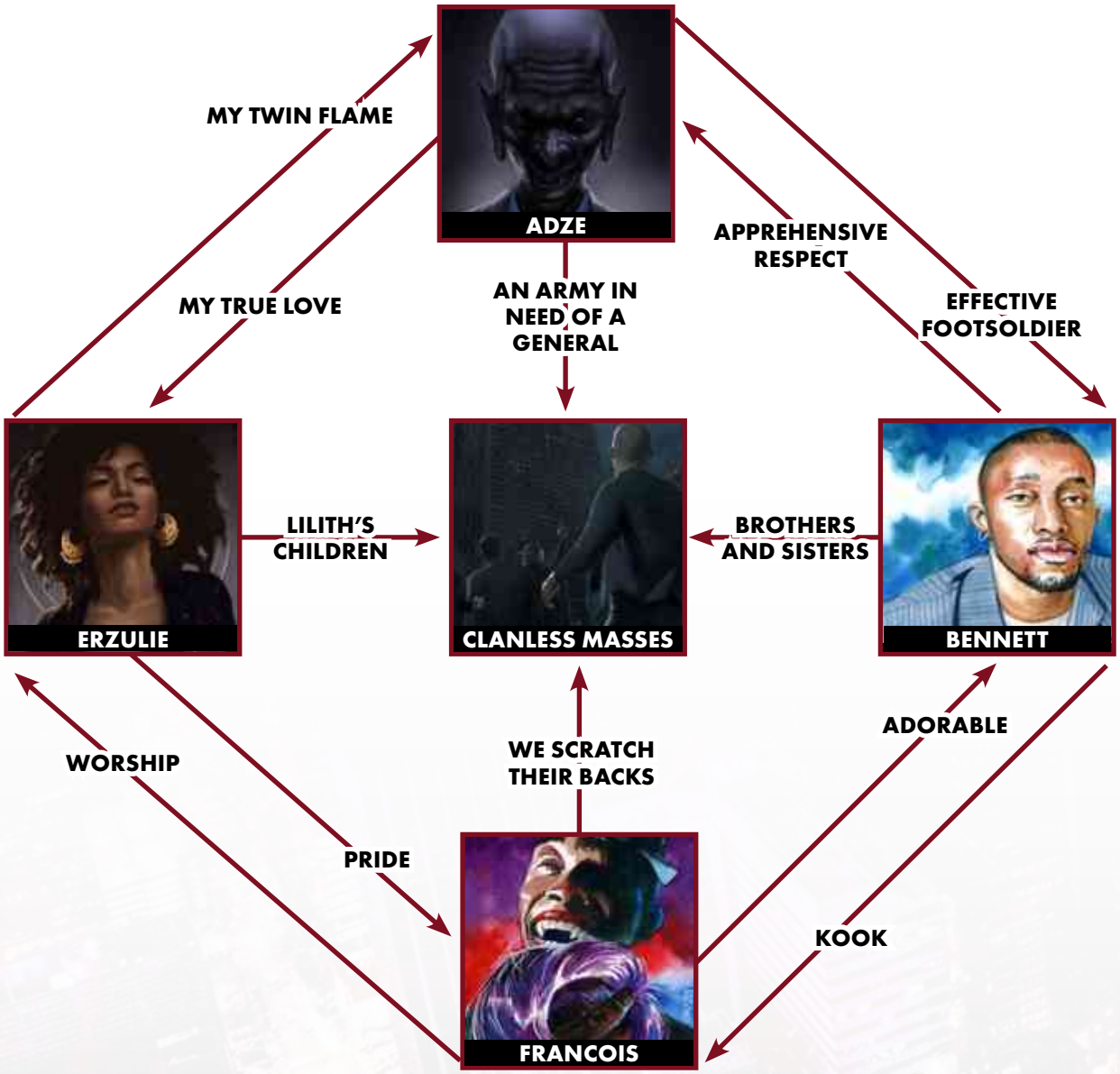
There may be some hope for the Camarilla assuming control of this operation. Some say Adze's heir apparent, Bennett Steadman, grows impatient with the chain of command and has designs to take the throne. Some say Erzulie and Adze are coming to a crossroads in their relationship, at odds with the direction of the Blood Disco. Others claim Francois Mamuwalde, Erzulie's favored Caitiff, might wish the Mother-Above-All title for herself.

Then again, it is hard to say what is true and what is fiction. When it comes to the Blood Disco, all information is tainted.

The Blood Disco was a three-night festival in Grant Park last year. Beginning at sundown, Kindred and humans mingled freely as five stages provided a canvas for the top DJs of house, techno, lo-fi and other music genres to paint sonic landscapes for which the audience can create their own stories. The high visibility of the event is a natural deterrent for violating the Masquerade. At the Grant Park event, blood flowed via seduction, bodies were shared to facilitate feeding, and celebration of the Dark Mother reached giddy heights. The only question tonight is where this year's venue might be.

The Blood Disco is the city of Oz for the lost and the voiceless. Human or Kindred, gay or straight, Thin-Blood or Ventrue, everyone is the same at the Blood Disco. As Erzulie would say: "Gender, like blood, is fluid. We are all the children of Lilith."

The Blood Disco



Members and Agendas

The Blood Disco comprises many facets. On a micro level, it is a moving den of hedonism held in a variety of venues, from open parks to exclusive clubs. It has its compartments, known as the Houses of Lilith, which run Blood Discos in cities across the North and South American continents, Europe, and Asia. It emphasizes the art of the Masquerade in the form of drag, burlesque, and occasionally the classical ball. The Blood Disco is a ticket to debauched enjoyment with the fun of never having to know from whom you're truly drinking or feeding.

At a larger scale, the Blood Disco is an organization with only one real show per year. This great event is consecrated in Lilith's name with a thick flow of blood and bodies. It is also a recruiting ground for outcast vampires, with the Caitiff and Thin-Bloods chief among them. At the Blood Disco they find excitement

and acceptance. Just like any successful cult, the Blood Disco's operators tell such Kindred how much they're loved and wanted. And just like many such cults, there may come a time when they have to pay back the blood and love they've been given.

Erzulie: For Erzulie, the Blood Disco is philosophy, politics, and religion all rolled into one. She believes earnestly in the striving for a new way for Kindred, and states openly that such a way is only possible through the elevation and acceptance of Caitiff. She is also a high priestess of the Bahari, using the Blood Disco as her temple to the Dark Mother. Her ability to draw Caitiff to her as mother and warden came inadvertently, but she optimistically uses her charisma to form an army of devotees across 11 cities (so far), each with their own house dedicated to Lilith. Erzulie depends on the other members of the coterie for love, companionship, and the tedious task of admin. She's no CEO or even a DJ. She acts as the Blood Disco's heart. Adze is Erzulie's rock and she loves the Nosferatu dearly. Mamuwalde is like the daughter she never had. Steadman...Well, she'll break him down with precision if he won't join the Disco passively. In fact, Bennett's reluctance to invest himself fully has left Erzulie surprised, as most Caitiff rush to join such a giving subsect of the Camarilla.

Adze: If Erzulie is the heart, Adze is the mind. He possesses the pragmatism to utilize a Caitiff army, the business and criminal sense to rinse money through the Disco's patrons and his many businesses that host the Disco's activities (the Red No⁹ 5 chief among them), and the self-control required to know when to step back from the spotlight and allow the Inquisition to turn its eyes elsewhere. Adze cares little for the Camarilla's scrutiny — he always seems to abide by the Traditions and makes token offerings to the Prince — but mortal eyes worry him more. He loves Erzulie deeply and is one of her disciples in ways that go deeper than any other member of the Disco, but cringes at her ofttimes blatant displays of power and love of bloodshed. To protect himself and Erzulie, he places Bennett Steadman at the front of the Red No⁹ 5, while planning how to best utilize the Blood Disco's resources.

Bennett Steadman: Steadman is a fledgling, fresh from the Embrace, and already he can tell where the dangers are within the Blood Disco. He just wants to run his business and keep his head down or leave this coterie and form a new one, but he finds himself locked in to loyalty to Adze and charmed by Erzulie, despite himself. Bennett is not a Bahari, but recognizes the strength of his allies and how they might assist him in leaving a decent mark on Chicago. The trick is to be the one using them, and not have it the other way around. For the time being, he's Red No⁹ 5's front man, and therefore the host for a whole batch of House of Lilith activities he finds uncomfortable.

Francois Mamuwalde: The supreme queen of House Mamuwalde, Francois organizes the Blood Disco's most ostentatious displays in Chicago. House Mamuwalde runs out of a three-story bar on North Clark Street, en route to Evanston. This is the rallying point for Erzulie's Caitiff disciples, with Francois as her lieutenant. If Steadman and Adze are the legitimate business side of the Blood Disco, Francois is the compere of the revels and libertine indulgences for which the coterie is most infamous. She loves every experience and cannot understand why any Kindred might be turned off by nights of extreme pleasure accompanied by the best music. House Mamuwalde wears its purpose openly and proudly, like so many of its patrons do when they're rubbing bodies on the dance floor. To the kine it's a club where drugs and sex come easy. To the Kindred, it's a place where they can be themselves.

Chi Chi Villalobos: The mother of House Villalobos with its core of Latinix Caitiff, Chi Chi runs her club out of L.A. Though the house mothers are spread far and wide, Chi Chi's role is an important one as the Blood Disco spokesperson in the Anarch Free States. Caitiff flock to her to a degree that Francois finds disconcerting and even Erzulie has been forced to consider as a potential threat. Francois and Chi Chi were the first of Erzulie's children and always vie to be her favorite. Chi Chi thinks herself the prettier of the two "sisters" and feels she has more in common with Mama Erzulie being trans and Latinx as well. As a result, when their houses battle during the balls, it is epic. There is no competition or rivalry fiercer. You can be sure both houses will lay it all on the line to snag bragging rights and dominance over the other. Still, it's all pretty ridiculous as their "mothers" are two sides of the same coin. In reality, when the chips are down, these houses have each other's back.

Numerous Caitiff: The core of the Blood Disco is its leading coterie in Chicago, but behind them they have scores of clanless, among other outsider Kindred. They may not be within the coterie's inner circle, but Erzulie values them all, while Adze plans how best to utilize this dedicated army.

Customs

Whenever the Blood Disco performs, no matter the venue, the hours leading up until midnight are fairly typical of the house music scene. Kine drink, may take some drugs, and the dancing speeds up

as the night goes on, bodies growing hot and emotions coming to a boil. Past midnight, the coterie's rites progress. After the bell tolls, vampires are permitted to feed on their prey during the acts of dancing and sex. Drink- and drug-induced ritual scarification and tattooing is also common, leaving mentally addled mortals to walk away from a venue like House Mamuwalde with a Bahari sigil to mark their time there and denote them to other members of the Blood Disco as fair game. Crucially, the Blood Disco coterie exists to take every pleasure and profit, as its members feel their clans, wealth, or status should not affect their ability to take the most from unlife.

There is to be no violence at the Blood Disco, at least not between its coterie members. "The Walk" is the form arbitration takes. The battles of dance, fashion, and serving realness are held during the Disco with the response of the Houses' audience determining victory or defeat. The loser must drink the vitae of the victor and make their House a cadet to the winner's for a full year. These epic competitions are steadily becoming the stuff of legend and the highlight of the Blood Disco.

Type

The Blood Disco appears to be a Plumaires coterie to the uninitiated, but is more of a Blood Cult, united in disrespect for High Clan overlords and a love of the vampiric condition. They see the acquisition of mortal and clanless disciples as their objective, whether for religious reasons (for Erzulie, Chi Chi, and Mamuwalde) or pure profitability (Adze and Steadman). The coterie acts as a chain, where Steadman might lure kine to a club; Chi Chi, Mamuwalde, and the other house mothers entertain and bewitch the patrons; Erzulie brings them to points of enlightenment through musical sermon and pleasures of the body; and Adze — to put it bluntly — empties their wallets as they lay passed out on the floor. The coterie's shared resources are substantial, as each member must play their part to achieve their respective goals.

Domain

The Blood Disco is spread throughout venues, though in Chicago it has its party center at House Mamuwalde on the corner of W Devon Ave and N Clark St, and its respectable front at Red No⁹ 5 near the Grand & Halsted Bus Station. The latter seems unorthodox for a club location, but Red No⁹ 5 has successfully made the area a nightspot, even if its initial surroundings did not.

The coterie's decision on where to host this year's House of Lilith Blood Disco will be important, with some of the coterie advocating for the great space one of the parks provides, like last year, while Erzulie favors Red No⁹ 5. Adze is divided — it'll undoubtedly draw a great profit, but does he want FIRSTLIGHT raiding his own club? Probably not.

Though the clubs act as focal points for the coterie, their Domains extend to surrounding areas, including the bus station, taxi ranks, and small businesses nearby. Most of this is due to Erzulie and Adze's careful planning. The former knows the kind of kine she wants in local occupancy — those she can trust to be smitten, loyal, and ultimately devoted to the cult — while the latter has an eye for detail that leaves him in control of local security at both sites. Adze hires a private firm named Deference Security to monitor both buildings and the areas surrounding them on their busiest nights, to ensure no flagrant breaches occur.

CHASSE • •

The buildings in the blocks surrounding both House Mamuwalde and Red No⁹ 5 fall within Erzulie and Adze's territories, as agreed by the Primogen Council. The Prince has yet to revoke or reaffirm this privilege. As the Blood Disco coterie has inhabited this area for some time, it's made the investment in properties and the community to see both clubs as local centerpieces worth protecting.

LIEN • • • •

At least some of the inhabitants of the Blood Disco's Domain are employees of House Mamuwalde or Red No⁹ 5. Individuals like Bennett, Erzulie, and Francois are well-known faces in these parts of the city, not as vampires but as entertainers and successful business operators. Adze is less inclined to feed in his own backyard, but appreciates the cult surrounding the Blood Disco's operations. The benefits go further, due to House Mamuwalde's strong reputation on the gay scene and Red No⁹ 5's fame as a venue for black patrons and performers.

PORTILLON • • •

Guards from Deference Security are in attendance in the coterie's properties and on the streets surrounding, every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday night. The locals forming the Blood Disco's cult — especially those of the black or LGBTQ+ variety — are also incredibly defensive over the Domain, as these venues represent places of peace and fun, distinct from the rougher parts of the city. Any gangs or individuals outwardly looking to cause harm quickly have their names funneled back to Adze.

Backgrounds

The Blood Disco's reputation increases week by week, winning

popularity from those on the Camarilla's fringe — vampires like Sylvia Roanhorse, Dawson, and Rowan see the appeal of bars outside the Succubus Club's high-society feel — and earning ire from the establishment. Jackson and Damien are convinced the Blood Disco is going to be responsible for a Masquerade breach of epic proportions when some fool with a camera records the blood drinking and sex taking place in House Mamuwalde, only to stick it on some RED Network shock show, and none of the Blood Disco's members have loudly declared fealty to any sect.

ALLIES • • •

The Blood Disco engenders a great deal of loyalty from its patrons-cum-cultists, to the point where frequent customers leap to the coterie's defense if needed. They also act as informal security for the Domain (as noted above), though not in a permanently attached fashion like retainers might.

CONTACTS • • • •

The Blood Disco's reach within the LGBTQ+ and black communities of Chicago is impressive, especially among those who enjoy the nightlife and music scene. House Mamuwalde offers thrills and pleasures; Red No⁹ 5 offers class and exclusivity. Anyone who wants a Red No⁹ 5 invite is a potential contact, as Adze and Steadman don't mind trading favors for entry on a hot night. Anyone hooked on the Blood Disco's post-midnight rituals is also inclined to pass on gossip concerning the coterie.

ENEMIES • •

The city's elite aren't the coterie's enemies yet, but the bigoted mortal contingent of the city certainly is. Whether on racist, homophobic, or pick-your-poison bigoted grounds, House Mamuwalde occasionally draws preachers and their congregations to the road outside with placards decrying the sin within, while Red No⁹ 5 has fallen afoul of a couple of fire bombs over the last decade, when white supremacist assholes decide a successful black establishment was a step too far.

HAVEN • • • •

The two pillars of this Domain are divided by a 30-minute drive, but both act as secure castles for the coterie. Neither lacks a ready supply of blood, both come with bodyguards, and each has comfortable and secure hidden rooms within walls, basements, and ceilings. The coterie doesn't reside in the venues as a group, but they make for fine resting spots in a pinch.

RESOURCES • • • •

Theoretically, Red No⁹ 5 and House Mamuwalde could be liquidated within a matter of nights. Both are cash businesses and there's no shortage of clubs and bars in Chicago to buy up furniture, alcohol, or indeed the buildings that are owned outright. Adze ensures a stash of a rumored $500,000 remains in Red No⁹ 5's large safe, as in his age he refuses to trust banks with his money. Unless pushed by Erzulie, he'd probably only share his small fortune with her.

The Chantry

The Tremere, The Old House

The Fractured Heart of the Tremere in Chicago

Chicago's Tremere have never been especially well-liked, but in the old order of things they were considered essential. The clan was the Camarilla's authority on blood magic and the occult. The Tremere Pyramid ensured that every chantry was part of a coordinated effort to support the global Camarilla and . . . what else? There's the rub; half the Tremere's business was a secret, compartmentalized within its initiatory society. At the dawn of the 21st century, the Tremere's hidden schemes exploded into multiple conflicts. The sparsely populated Chicago Chantry was ill-equipped to deal with it. When the clan found itself in a conflict with Order of Hermes magi, the child vampire Nicolai sent Abraham DuSable to assist in the war effort. It was a way to dispose of a rival for power and increase his prestige in a court that treated him with contempt.

Nicolai may have thought the clan would provide neonate underlings to replace DuSable and werewolf-victim Garwood Marshall. Instead, after years where Chicago's Chantry hosted only Nicolai and a gargoyle (Erichtho despised Nicolai and avoided him), the elders called him to Vienna — just before the Prime Chantry burned. Nicolai was presumed dead, and Abraham DuSable returned, much changed from his travels.

With the clan divided, the Chantry remains nominally loyal to House Tremere and the remnants of the Pyramid, but members disagree on where the Chantry's ultimate loyalty should lie. DuSable and Erichtho form the nucleus of the current Tremere chantry, but barely tolerate one another because their philosophies and characters radically differ. DuSable is a traditionalist and amoral pragmatist; Erichtho sympathizes with Carna rebels and seeks enlightenment in Humanity. These differences aren't enough to separate them, however, as their mutual respect and shared knowledge makes them a powerful team. Recent arrival Sun Che stands between them. Each member has divergent interests, but a common devotion to the occult, and a deep appreciation of the powers and dangers it offers to initiates. Now Portia has returned to the Chantry after years of absence, and the others have yet to decide whether she's that threat personified or has come to aid them against other hidden enemies.

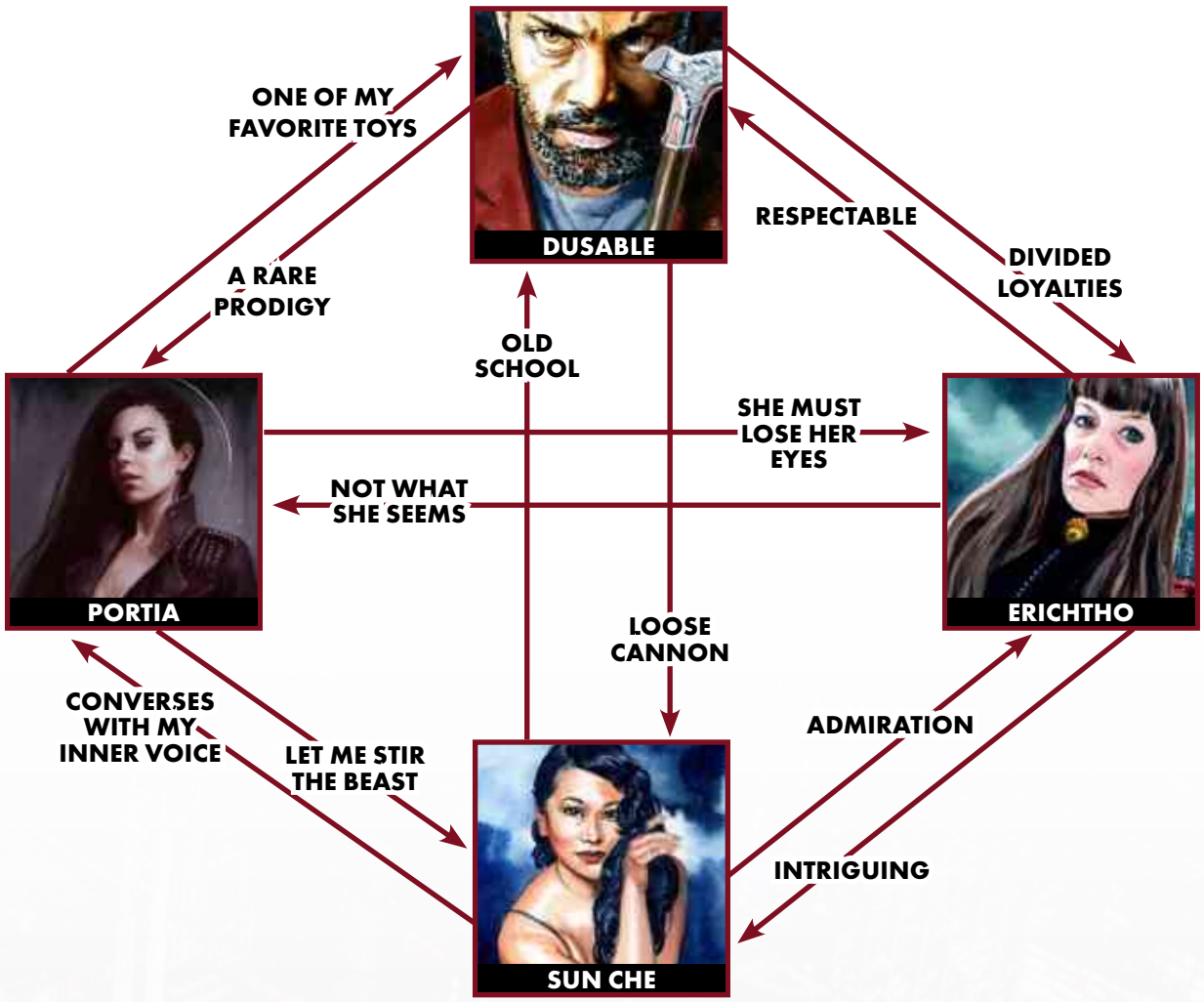
Members and Agendas

The Tremere pursue the traditional interests of their clan: the art of blood magic, occult matters, and the well-being of the clan. That last element is a sticking point dividing the Chantry's members. DuSable wishes to build a stronger House Tremere, whose disciplined soldier-sorcerers can face the kinds of horrors he witnessed battling Awakened magi, demons, and other beings he refuses to describe in any great detail. Erichtho believes the fall of the Prime Chantry was a blessing, leaving the Tremere to seek enlightenment in their own terms. Sun Che's interests are personal. Returned as Portia, Helena's interests remain a mystery, though she seems extremely insistent to maintain a connection with the blood magicians.

Abraham DuSable, Regent: DuSable is the Regent, or head of the Chantry, and in matters to do with maintaining the building or dealing with occult matters, the others defer to him — mostly. DuSable isn't arrogant enough to believe he knows everything, so he freely consults with the others, especially Erichtho and "Portia," who he knows is Helena. DuSable wishes to attract Tremere with offers of tutelage and access to the Chantry's considerable resources, believing that one day the Carna rebels will either meet a threat they're too ignorant to handle, or will try to seize House Tremere's assets by force. Either way, he wants the clan to be ready. He also doesn't believe the Seven have all been destroyed. He's seen enough evidence of their power to assume the destruction of the Prime Chantry has simply caused them to change their strategy. DuSable is also concerned with the arrival of the Lasombra, whose occult interests he distrusts. He believes the clan raises power from the Abyss that it isn't fully equipped to control. Like Erichtho, DuSable is interested in Awakened magi, but considers them enemies, one and all.

Erichtho: Erichtho agrees with DuSable that would-be blood sorcerers need disciplined training but has long thought the Tremere Pyramid stifled the real search for enlightenment. Erichtho almost never teaches blood magic to someone who doesn't know it but will provide guidance to those already initiated in the Art, so they can avoid the potential dangers. She hopes to guide these neophytes to a more humane mystical path so that like her, they can seek Golconda. She doesn't ask for any deep loyalty, because it recalls the bondage her sire Nicolai kept her in. She refuses to inflict that on anyone else. Erichtho may know more about mortal magi than any other American vampire. Her discoveries only reinforced her belief that the Pyramid is a false path to enlightenment, but also made her aware of dangers she can barely describe to anyone else. How could Kindred

The Chantry



ever believe this world is a dream — and that some would make it a nightmare?

Helena, or "Portia:" What does she want? She keeps that to herself, though helping the Tremere appears to be part of the plan. Helena possesses a haven occupying a wing and sub-basement of the chantry house. She joined the Chantry through an arrangement with Nicolai after the Lupine attacks of the 90s. She renewed the connection two years ago, revealing her identity to DuSable. She told him other things which he has never revealed to anyone else, but evidently prompted a month-long journey — the only lengthy trip out of town he's taken since his return. They often speak until the threshold of dawn. After these conversations, DuSable has been known to act strangely, or lead Chantry members on bizarre missions. Once, he returned with a burned skull in a lead box. Another time, he bade Sun Che to bury 10 pounds of salt, which he supplied, in the middle of a country crossroads. DuSable never does anything of which Helena wouldn't approve. Erichtho distrusts "Portia" immensely and half suspects her true identity.

Sun Che: The youngest of the Chantry's Kindred, Sun Che's interests have produced divided loyalties. She's attracted to Erichtho, and believes in her philosophy of self-directed enlightenment, but respects DuSable's discipline and commitment to the clan. She's utterly loyal to the Tremere, and so far, that means serving the orthodox House he represents. DuSable tolerates Sun Che's coven but she manages it well enough.

She believes she's possessed by a demon, too, and getting it out of her consumes no small part of her occult studies. She hasn't told anyone else about her demonic dreams, so her interest in the infernal has been cause for concern for both mentors, but Helena knows about them, and has offered to rid her of the demon in exchange for certain tasks she's yet to perform, but about which she is forbidden to tell the other Tremere.

Customs

The Chantry has numerous protocols and rituals, set according to Tremere custom. Some of these no longer apply, in part or in full. DuSable prepares reports for the Council of Seven but immediately archives them instead of fruitlessly looking for someone to whom to deliver them. He shares information with regional Lords and Pontifexes when the opportunity presents itself, though the upper echelons are somewhat disorganized now — for all he knows, *he* might be the closest thing to a Lord in the Midwest. The Chantry doesn't skimp on security protocols, however. The chantry house possesses formidable defenses, and specific rules about to whom they apply. In the Tremere hierarchy, DuSable, Erichtho, and Sun are Regent, Magister, and Apprentice, respectively. DuSable has the greatest access to the Chantry's resources, followed by Erichtho. Sun Che's access is the most strictly controlled. "Portia's" place is less well defined, though certain rooms in the chantry house are hers alone.

Type

The Chantry is a Rectorate: a coterie dedicated to the acquisition and management of esoteric knowledge. The title comes from the term for an ecclesiastical or academic administrator's Domain. Like a Questari coterie, a Rectorate is devoted to a specific purpose, but seeking out the subject of its concern is secondary to organizing and managing it. A Rectorate usually operates from a secure location where it can safely store items (or people) or interest, perform rituals, and organize operations over their chosen protectorate. Many traditional Tremere chantries are coteries of this type, though in modern nights, these are much less common than they used to be. The Chicago Chantry benefits from over a century of management and a methuselah's support, to boot, so it has impressive collective resources.

RECTORATE COTERIES FOR PLAYERS

The Chantry is an exceptionally powerful Rectorate. Starting coteries of this type have the following distribution of dots:

Domain: Chasse (• •), Portillon (• •)

Resources: (• •)

Retainers: (•) (daylight guardian of their secrets)

Possible Extras: Contacts, Enemies

Domain

The Tremere's Domain is dominated by the Hyde Park chantry house, which has been extensively renovated into a defensible complex that's much larger than it appears from the outside. The Chantry provides little in the way of common feeding grounds for its members. Its business is the occult, and if blood magic requires vitae, there are specific procedures a Tremere follows to get it from the required source. Otherwise, the Chantry lays claim to places associated with the occult, or unusual supernatural phenomena. This includes the quasi-Masonic Orthodox Temple of Akhenaton, but not the Fanum, which Prince Jackson has declared off-limits to Kindred (a fact that irritates DuSable).

The Chantry's Domain technically includes two other locations, and these claims are recognized by the city, though in both cases the Tremere do not exploit these locations but monitor them. Chinatown is expressly forbidden to Kindred for reasons the Chantry refuses to explain, and Prince Jackson calls "state secrets." Leaked communiques use code words based on an 80s cult film about a Chinatown-dwelling demon. The second territory is a one-block radius around a single, abandoned-looking (yet strangely, never condemned) house in Irving Park. Known as the Sepulcher, the house is infamous as the site of a multiple murder in 1905, and is said to be haunted, owned by Satanists, or both. At one point, it housed a small community of mortal magi. Erichtho has visited the house on many occasions but doesn't talk about her experiences.

CHASSE • • • •

Chantry territory exists to further its occult interests. The Orthodox Temple of Akhenaton and the surrounding area near North Halsted and Wrightwood cover the largest area members use for feeding purposes.

LIEN • • • • •

Tremere retain ties to their Domain through secret societies. Chantry members are ritual figures in the Orthodox Temple's ceremonies; initiates take solemn vows to render aid whenever the "secret masters" use a specific code phrase or handshake. The pattern repeats itself in various Masonic groups and covens.

PORTILLON • • • • •

Mortal occultists protect the Chantry's secrets as well. Furthermore, strict security rules and the supremely well-protected chantry house stymie hunters and other interlopers.

Backgrounds

The Chantry's extensive Backgrounds come from the same origins as its Domain: over a century of management, focused on esoteric matters.

HAVEN — SPECIAL

The chantry house in Hyde Park is an enormous mansion with multiple sub-basements. Its flaw is that its location is well-known to Kindred. The Chantry even entertain guests from time to time. Attacking it is popularly thought to be suicide, however. Mundane and magical security features protect it from sunlight, fire, and tornado-force winds. The mansion can be emptied of breathable air in seconds. Magical wards bar intruders based on multiple criteria, and sometimes trigger further magical defenses. Helena's personal quarters may possess features bound to the methuselah's potent blood, while DuSable and Erichtho both possess relics from their interactions with the Awakened.

MAWLA — SPECIAL

Helena is a member of the Chantry, but really stands outside it as an almost peerless Mawla. She has her own agenda and aids the Tremere when it best suits her plans.

RESOURCES • • • •

Collective investment provides the Chantry with enough money to maintain the mansion and take care of all routine expenses.

The Government

The Court of Chicago, The Jackson Regime, The New Machine

The Governing Kindred of Chicago's Camarilla

It's over. That's what Kevin Jackson, Prince of Chicago, wants you to believe. The power struggles. The Lupine invasions. Dreams of Gehenna. Weird and shadowy elders pulling the strings. Saber-rattling in Gary Fucking Indiana. Over. Done. Jackson is determined to make Chicago more than a stable Camarilla city. He wants it to be the standard-bearer for the New World Camarilla. This isn't because he has some idealistic commitment to the sect, but because one must deal with its European arrogance and oh-so-precious formalities from a position of strength. God didn't make the rules. Men and woman didn't even make them. Monsters did, for their own purposes. Among monsters, respect is the coin of the realm, more precious than blood.

Yes, some of the things that are officially over, aren't — yet. But these are problems to be managed by a strong, steady hand, not left to fester according to the notion that Kindred left to each other's throats won't be able to challenge the leadership. Prince Jackson proved that was wrong. In the turmoil accompanying his rise, ambitious, destructive Kindred showed their true colors, but the Camarilla provided tools to deal with them. The new regime banished some of them, and in the case of a few others, declared that they'd never truly been initiated into the sect. Bending knee and reciting the Traditions just wouldn't cut it anymore.

Jackson and his allies used the rise of the Second Inquisition, and dictates handed down from on high, to do a certain amount of housecleaning. The fact that no Ventrue holds a Primogen's seat is regrettable, but it demonstrates that Jackson is even-handed, unwilling to place his own clan before the cause of good government. Some of the regime's other actions have brought the Prince a degree of relief. He never had much use for occultists, especially after so many of them bought into the Gehenna craze, so keeping the Tremere at arm's length suits him fine. Yet many Kindred with mystical inclinations are old and strong, and much as Jackson hates to admit it, blood magic is real, so the Bahari, Tremere, and other eccentrics haven't been cast out so much as disinvited from the political nucleus. The "New Machine" is focused on political excellence over superstitions and old grudges — even the traditional rivalries between clans. Critias is essential, for example, regardless of stereotypical Brujah-Ventrue frictions. Ideally, the Government judges Kindred by their deeds — nothing more, or less.

Speaking of deeds, Jackson has made it clear that in his view, negotiations with the Lasombra will make or break the city's reputation. Pulling this off is the Government's top priority, but there won't be time to rest afterward. There will always be the next project, designed to vault Chicago to the first position among American, then Western Camarilla, holdings. If a member of this coterie isn't willing to do the work, they're expected to get out if the way.

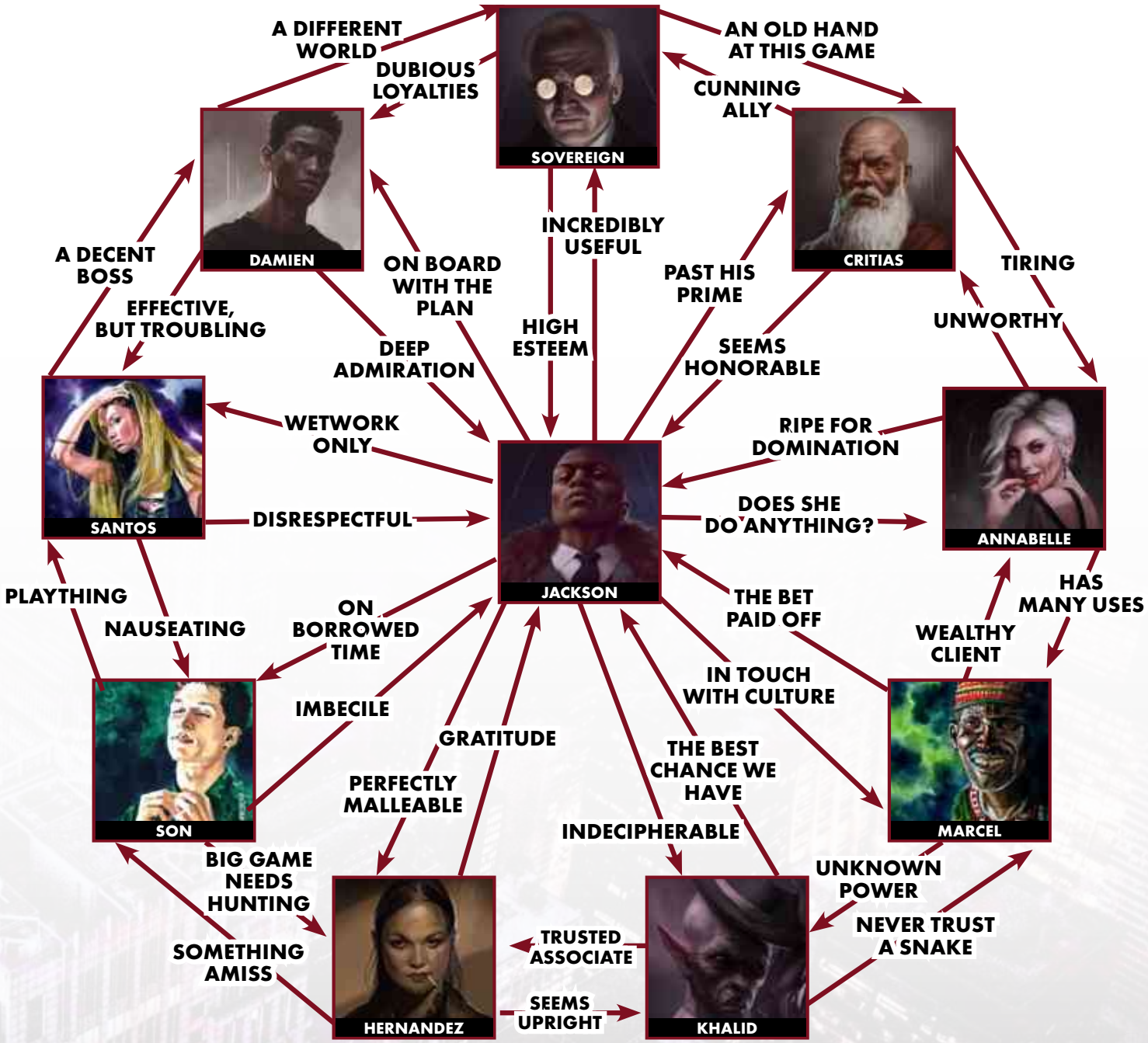
Members and Agendas

The Government consists of Jackson, the Primogen, other title-holders in Chicago's Camarilla, and a select group of advisors. Titled members of the Camarilla are formally recognized as "Honorable Members of the Court of Chicago" on occasions where Prince Jackson feels the need for ceremony. Pompous customs aren't his style, however, so this is restricted to times when Old-World Kindred or important traditionalists visit, so these people know they're dealing with a regime every bit as organized as what they're used to. Members without formal titles are styled "Friends of the Court" if necessary.

Kevin Jackson, Prince of Chicago: Collaboration and brutal decisiveness are Prince Jackson's weapons. He knows other members of the Government have ambitions incompatible with his own, but they never know whether he'll offer them a deal that somehow helps them both, or if he's made an alliance with someone capable of crushing an errant courtier. Jackson's weakness is his crushing workload. For him, ruling Chicago isn't an aristocratic entitlement, but a job — one with specific benchmarks for success. That means specific projects can occupy his attention to the point where less-defined elements of governance escape his notice.

Alan Sovereign, Seneschal: Neither Sovereign nor Jackson are under any illusions about their relationship. Sovereign supported Prince Jackson out of pure pragmatism, and the Seneschal position is payback. If Jackson falters, Sovereign will back a stronger successor. If Sovereign betrays Jackson, the Prince will kill him. This framework supports a surprisingly productive relationship. Neither man is liable to impulsively act against the other, and both want to build something lasting — Jackson's Government and Sovereign's financial empire. Currently, Sovereign acts as the Prince's advisor, and is given responsibilities on a case-by-case basis. He is

The Government



forbidden from working with other Ventrue, so he doesn't get it in his head he can recruit a new Prince from their ranks. That's why he isn't Primogen.

Damien, Sheriff: Newcomers often assume Damien became Sheriff out of some lapse in the Prince's judgment, and are puzzled at the respect given the thin, teenage-bodied Brujah. Damien intervenes with a word and a hand on the shoulder first. The Prince has made it clear he wants Damien to keep the peace and let fools underestimate him. But anyone who survived the Lupine raids knows exactly how dangerous he is.

Alexa Santos, *Magnus Canis*: Alexa is *not quite* Chicago's Scourge. Appointing one would be politically explosive, but in Santos Prince Jackson recognized a wayward, dangerous personality in need of direction. Thus, he appointed them *magnus canis*: "big dog," chief among the hounds. Santos is technically Damien's subordinate, but occasionally receives direct instructions from the Prince to dispose of troublesome people without making a fuss in court. These are mostly kine who've caused problems but have Kindred protectors, though Alexa has also been sent against Thin-Blooded progeny of vampires who the Prince doesn't want to publicly sanction for unauthorized siring. As a young, unfriendly vampire who has the ear of the Prince, Alexa is consequently very unpopular.

Critias, Brujah Primogen: That Critias bends the knee to a young Ventrue Prince (even if "bending the knee" consists of permitting oneself to be made Primogen, and to occasionally attend meetings) is a source of amazement for certain Kindred. The Brujah's presence on the Primogen Council solidified the Government's claim to be the successor of Lodin's regime. Critias may also be the greatest political philosopher who has ever existed, so his choice to participate in Jackson's regime at all lends it credence. Yet Critias' support has increasingly been limited to simply filling his post, as he appears to be distracted by other issues — though given his age and mental sophistication, what those are may be unfathomable to other Kindred.

Rosa Hernandez, Gangrel Primogen: Hernandez is a single-issue politician. If it's not about eradicating the Lupines, she couldn't care less, and she hates that Prince Jackson and Inyanga made a deal with them, but as far as the Prince is concerned she's in the perfect role. Her presence makes it clear the Government takes the Lupine threat seriously, but as Primogen, she can't make it her sole focus. Rosa is at risk of losing this position as the Camarilla landscape shifts and the Gangrel presence in Chicago diminishes. At some point, a newcomer such as Khadija of the Banu Haqim or a prominent Caitiff like Mamuwalde may opine for their own inclusion on the council, and highlight how few Gangrel Rosa Hernandez represents.

Jason "Son" Newberry, Malkavian Primogen: The Prince treats Son with a formality Chicago Kindred know is insulting, though puzzling, as Son is a popular member of the Government. He readily lends a hand to Kindred in need, especially if they're neonates or newcomers. Some of these youngsters are never seen again, but the Camarilla doesn't concern itself with every vampire anymore and the first years are always the most dangerous. Son is very good at making excuses for absent friends and proteges, and only *imagines* licking his lips at the thought of meeting new Kindred.

"Khalid," Nosferatu Primogen: "Khalid" (that is, Cedric Calhoun disguised as Khalid) is the quietest member at court, preferring to speak to other Government members individually, in brief conversations supported by detailed notes. "It's all in the file," he says, before departing. He never talks to Critias. This is because the old Brujah might expose him by asking about some bit of medieval trivia the original Khalid would understand in an instant. "Khalid" supports increased restrictions on feeding and violence against mortals as a way of strengthening the Masquerade, though he truly wishes to minimize the suffering Kindred visit upon mortals. In this, at least, he follows in the footsteps of the original Khalid.

Annabelle, Toreador Primogen, "Keeper of Elysium": Annabelle often serves as the Government's representative when Prince Jackson is occupied with a project and the issue at hand doesn't precisely fit anyone else's purview. This is because the Toreador is simply more charming than anyone else at court. She resents being the one forced to take up this task, and recently discovered a marvelous concept called "emotional labor" that defines why she's irritated. This is the furthest thing from the work she does to encourage culture and a beauty for Kindred, which she generally enjoys. Keeper of Elysium isn't a formal title in Chicago, but she's begun using it anyway and nobody's objected — though if called on to perform the position's security duties, she'll hide behind Damien. (If he falls, she may well tear apart the threat, but Damien goes first!) All these aesthetic considerations evidently conceal ripening political ambitions, as Prince Jackson often secures her assent before making major pronouncements.

Marcel, *Amicus Curiae*: Marcel got into the Government through a novel strategy, at least for a Ministry vampire: honesty. "If I tell the truth about the matter at hand, my personal interests are immaterial, even if they would disturb you — and believe me, they most certainly would." He was up front about his clan and his purpose: to benefit by

representing Kindred who lacked easy access to the court. He would serve as an advocate, ambassador, or mediator, as needed. In these roles he's proven essential in keeping the peace among vampires left outside of the Camarilla after its reorganization, including the Tremere and certain nominal Anarchs. He was also involved in initial communications with the Lasombra delegation, though this is known only to the Prince. Some night or other, Marcel will want a significant favor.

Customs

The Government is responsible for the whole gamut of customs required for government in the Camarilla, including designating Elysia, receiving dignitaries, recognizing Kindred and their affiliations — the lot.

One of Prince Jackson's innovations is to make Elysium a place to formally discuss certain matters of state in front of the wider body of Kindred. This doesn't apply to every issue that comes up, and the Prince's word remains final, but he's selected this relatively public venue to make Chicago appear more accountable, and to showcase a distinctly American form of government. However, the Prince isn't stupid enough to believe in completely undirected debate. Before every such session in Elysium, the Prince or Sovereign holds a private meeting of Government members, "as a committee of the whole." In this session, relevant officials get most of the debating done and decide on a few narrow questions for public consumption. This strategy is deceptive, but effective; subsequent debates in Elysium appear focused and highly productive, unlike the chaotic rants indulged by Anarch meetings.

Type

The Government is an unusual form of Maréchal coterie, as it has grown large enough to encompass and define the recognized Camarilla authorities of the city, along with Marcel, the "Friend of the Court." Prince Jackson has opted to embed himself in the coterie instead of staying aloof. This is consistent with his collaborative leadership style. Despite the coterie's power, it's more a construct of convenience than a sincere alliance. These Kindred are stuck together by their positions, not their objectives. Jackson wishes to turn Chicago into the most respected and stable Camarilla city in the world — a goal to which the rest of the coterie isn't necessarily opposed, but certainly approaches with less enthusiasm. For example, Critias considers this one of several intellectual challenges (and not necessarily the most pressing one), while Son only cares about what could help or hinder his cannibalistic pursuits. This is one reason why the coterie's collective resources are not as potent as one might expect. The other reason? Vampires operating at the apex of city life are expected to be largely self-sufficient, anyway. They've got their own suspicious briefcases full of guns or money, carried by people they each trust individually. Prince Jackson imagines a night when Chicago has a significant pool of collective resources to deal with various issues, but he's not going to be the first one to donate to it, either.

Domain

The coterie maintains Chicago's longstanding Elysium sites at Chicago City Ballet, the Linda Enfield Art Gallery, the Chicago Central Library, the Art Museum of Chicago, the Smart Gallery, the Chicago Opera Theater, Orchestra Hall, the Arie Crown Theater, and the Civic Theater. Elysium has been declared elsewhere, but these are longstanding sites which have, over the years, been modified for Kindred use, with secret entrances and lightproof rooms. These are part of the Government's Domain, but all Kindred, including coterie members, are forbidden from feeding in and around these places without making prior arrangements with the Sheriff or Seneschal. Lately, it has been considered rude not to request permission from Annabelle Triabell, as well. Permission is only granted as part of an event in conjunction with an Elysium, or if a Government member wishes to discreetly slake their thirst while conducting business in one of these buildings.

In addition to these areas, Prince Jackson donated a portion of his former territory in Little Sicily, which once contained the Cabrini-Green housing project. Jackson maintains more diverse interests now but has not divested himself of the entire area. Nevertheless, a portion of this territory, with its new, upscale low-rise units, can act as a refuge or hunting grounds for Government members and visitors on official business.

CHASSE • •

Most of the Government's territory isn't for feeding, but for Elysium and discreet meetings. Members are expected to hunt within their personal holdings.

LIEN • • • • •

Elysium territories have been developed over decades, and as Cabrini-Green was torn down, Prince Jackson and other Government members influenced everything from architecture to staffing.

PORTILLON • • • • •

The Government's Domain is extremely well-protected, with security cameras that only show their real feeds to coterie retainers, secret means of access and egress, and armored, lightproof safe rooms.

Backgrounds

Again, the Government expects its members to possess formidable personal resources, so the shared Backgrounds available are only what is required to help Chicago's Camarilla function.

HAVEN • •

Spartan accommodations are available to Government members and their guests. These are lightproof rooms with reinforced doors and padded steamer trunks — better digs await those willing to pay for them. These havens are generally one-dot sized and Creepy, but have additional features such as Postern, Fashionable, and Security System, depending on location.

INFLUENCE • •

Coterie membership provides some basic conveniences within Chicago. Members' cars don't get tickets, and applications for permits to, say, deepen a basement level, get approved in record time.

MAWLA: SPECIAL

Members gain a Mawali of elders interested in helping Chicago develop into a stable, strong Camarilla city, but they also attract the attention of rivals hoping to reshape or overthrow the government. It's difficult to tell which is which. One reason Jackson is interesting in leading the Lasombra's move to the Camarilla is that they'll be free of all the old internal rivalries, and will come in owing him a favor, bypassing the European elite.

RETAINERS • • • •

Two ghouls from the coterie's collective retinue are available to aid members at need, though one must secure permission from their masters before committing violent acts to do anything but defend themselves or coterie members.

STATUS • • •

This Background is three dots because it doesn't replace or supersede individual Status but represents what a member can claim solely as a member of Chicago's ruling coterie.

The Nihilists

Wreckers, The Distinguished Opposition, the Wrath

Destroyers of the Status Quo

Fuck it all up.

Fuck it all up before *they* fuck it up.

If *they've* already fucked it up, fuck it up again into something better.

That's the Nihilist agenda. For a long time, this wasn't a conscious political position. It disguised itself as "propaganda of the deed" committed for a worthy cause, or was submerged by a general rebellious anger, until the 21st century. That's when the world almost ended, but it didn't, and nobody got their comeuppance. To get something done right, sometimes you've got to do it yourself, even if that means killing Kindred, setting their stuff on fire, and maybe trying to ruin the world.

Back in the 90s, the Nihilists were fringe Anarchs, setting fires and punching stuffed-shirt licks for liberty's sake. There was no plan, just action. That's the way Gengis, Dickie, and Damien liked it. Times change. Damien became *Sheriff*, for Christ's sakes! Gengis stuck around, but only to cultivate radical ties as part of his personal balancing act between true radicalism and the Anarch Center, which part of him still calls "social fascist" even though he's a member. He and Dickie still made the rounds with graffiti and pranks, but two people aren't a party.

"Then," Gengis might say, "some *really* fucked up shit happened."

First: Everybody thought the world was ending. That was a trip. Too bad it wasn't true. Second, Nathaniel Fucking Bordruff, former holy terror Anarch hunter, shows up, looking bloody under the weird red moon of those days, and tells Gengis and Dickie they were right, he was wrong, and it's time to "punish all the sinners." Third, Dickie left town, and came back with Sweetie Pepper, a Caitiff with some intriguing new fuck-shit-up concepts. That was the most normal part of it all.

Then, *fucking Balthazar, man*. The Man, in fact. The old Sheriff, who they all used to fantasize about giving the ol' stake and bake. Jackson was in, Prince of Chicago, so Balthazar was way out. He joined up because of Bordruff, who he called a "fitting weapon." (Because even after they leave, Camarilla fucks just talk like that.) Yeah, the moment that happened, Gengis was kicked to the sidelines but he stuck around to keep an eye on it — and they wanted him to be their man in the Anarch Center. Dickie ran away or sunk into torpor. He was the smart one.

Now shit has turned Old Testament. Bordruff's talking about a "new flood." Balthazar's still calling himself Sheriff, but of the "Kingdom to Come," though he says it with a twinkle in his eye. Sweetie Pepper's got lots of friends to bring the riot, and Gengis has to find some way to either get out, or turn this merry crew of psychopaths into something he can use.

Members and Agendas

The Nihilists are a group of vampires determined to destroy Chicago's Camarilla first, then reshape its Anarchs. It wants to destabilize the Jackson regime, scare the shit out of Kindred, and maybe do worse, depending on the member. The desire to destroy attracts a wide range of personalities. The Nihilists are less a political group than a set of damaged personalities, intensifying each other's worst aspects. Nevertheless, the coterie has managed to carve out a niche in the Anarch scene as an uncompromising, action-driven crew: an alternative to the moderate Anarch Center, which observers believe may be working with them. After all, Gengis is part of both groups, so there must be *some* connection.

Balthazar: "I'm the real Sheriff, and I'm bringing the real goddamn law." Balthazar figures anybody ruling Chicago without his support needs to be taken down. When the coterie gets together he can talk about justice with all the fancy words he learned listening to Critias and all the other Brujah who turned their backs on him, but it's absolutely about revenge. Once he gets it, and becomes the strong right hand of whatever order rises out of the ashes, he'll decide which of the Nihilists become his enforcers, and which will be disposed of. Gengis is definitely on the chopping block. Besides the fact that he's an Anarch true believer, he's never forgotten how much Gengis whipped up hatred of him back when they were on opposing sides. Maybe Bordruff can act as Scourge or something. Sweetie Pepper? He's got the makings of one hell of an attack dog.

Nathaniel Bordruff: For Nathaniel, it's about the pleasure of the hunt. Calling himself "part of the Wrath of Chicago" is an amusing affectation that provides cover for his actions. His rhetoric may be more Biblical than Anarchs are used to, but that's turned out to be a benefit. He speaks a language Rust Belt Kindred learned while they breathed, in church, and they respond to it well. None of them realize he has no intention of sparing them the Wrath of God, but they'll come last.

For now, Anarchs provide a cover for schemes to expose Chicago's Kindred to FIRSTLIGHT and other hunters. He incites Sweetie Pepper's associates to breach the Masquerade to supposedly show the strength of their convictions. He doesn't make speeches, but in quiet conversations he uses religious rhetoric to convince vulnerable Kindred to work for him.

Gengis: Well shit. This used to be Gengis' crew. Now he's the only one left, used as a prop by Balthazar and Nathaniel to ingratiate themselves with Anarchs and other malcontents. Now he's stuck. The new Nihilists have horned in on his mortal activist and independent Anarch connections to such an extent that he's afraid of what will happen if he leaves. He's also dissatisfied with the slow, safe path espoused by the Anarch Center, and while the Nihilists represent a tool for radical action, it's not one he can trust. Gengis was never the planning type and hates being some bullshit two-faced schemer, but what else can he do? He thinks if he can get the Nihilists to make a little trouble, but encourage the Center to keep it from getting out of hand, that might actually accomplish something worthwhile. Plus, he needs the massed Anarchs of the Center to dispose of the Nihilists when Balthazar and Bordruff finally lose their minds.

Sweetie Pepper: This young Caitiff's the one who could really make something of the Nihilists, but he sees the coterie as a way to make connections and gather intelligence until he either assumes control or abandons them for the gang of Midwest vampires he's cultivating to make his own move. Sweetie Pepper doesn't trust Balthazar but knows the Brujah has a host of useful connections from his time as Sheriff and, best of all, is more interested in some sort of majordomo position than ruling the city. Nathaniel Bordruff is getting to close to Sweetie Pepper's allies, and will have to go down eventually. Gengis is useful as a connection to the Anarch Center. When Sweetie Pepper makes his move, he hopes to convince Gengis to break the Center and draw Anarchs over to his alternative power base.

Customs

The Nihilists aren't the most organized people. The old version of the coterie used to complain about the Camarilla at a booth in the Succubus Club, get drunk and high off partying kine, and pull some pranks to annoy the high and mighty. The new members prefer to keep a low profile, to remain the subject of rumors. In this, its unlikely membership has proven useful. Who'd believe Gengis and Balthazar are working together? Now, the Nihilists schedule irregular meetings using burner phones, and get together in dive bars and derelict buildings. When dealing with outsiders, one or two members of the coterie typically stay away, so nobody gets the idea the coterie is a stable group with a set membership.

Type

The Nihilists are a loose Questari coterie, united by a common desire to overthrow the Camarilla elite and shake up even the Anarch status quo. Their differences don't present much of a problem as long as their goals remain unfulfilled, acting as a license for members to combine them with their own agendas. If Prince Jackson ever stumbled, however, or the Anarch Center suffered a serious setback, there would be a hell of a reckoning. Nathaniel wants to kill everybody, so failing hierarchies would prompt him turning everyone over to mortal hunters. If Balthazar gets to be Sheriff again, he'll divide everyone into soldiers, subjects, and rebels ready for a sun-and-stake vacation, and act accordingly. Gengis wants to radicalize the Anarch Center. Sweetie Pie wants to lead his own army. Each member of the coterie knows at least intuitively that their interests will eventually catastrophically diverge. Consequently, the coterie's shared resources are minimal, as each member saves the best of what they can get for themselves.

Domain

The coterie quietly holds turf in and around Fuller Park. After the stockyards closed in the 60s, Chicago's Kindred left this area to fester, save for the odd criminal enterprise or bolt hole. Balthazar knew this and advised the Nihilists to take it. This was successful enough that the coterie followed a suggestion last year to establish a similar presence in Riverdale — a mistake. Balthazar was unaware that Marcel keeps a haven there. The Ministry vampire, a "Friend of the Court" in the Government coterie, watches Nihilist movements with interest but has yet to act on that information. They don't have Riverdale yet, and whether they get it is probably up to Marcel.

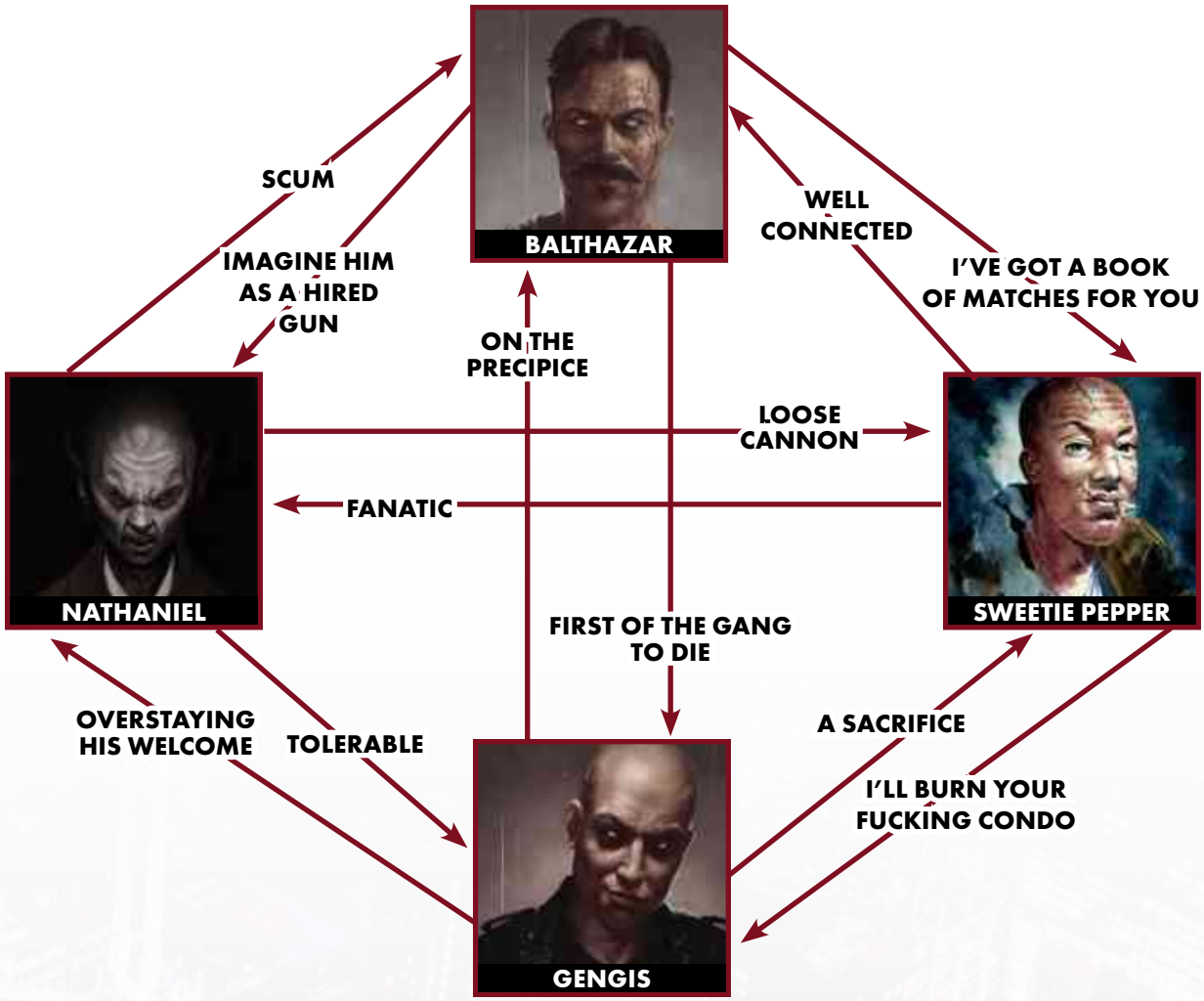
CHASSE •

Fuller Park is impoverished and underpopulated. This makes it attractive for the hunt only as much as rampant crime conceals Kindred violence, and widespread distrust keeps local kine from going to the authorities.

LIEN • • •

The Domain's strong Lien rests almost entirely on Gengis and Sweetie Pepper's efforts. Gengis backs local anti-poverty activists and police-accountability groups. Sweet-

The Nihilists



ie Pepper provides advice and keeps the peace between local gangs in exchange for their discretion when the coterie does anything that might otherwise disturb the peace.

PORTILLON • • • •

Gengis and Sweetie Pepper's connections give them advanced notice when intruders come snooping around. Balthazar has also used his knowledge of the area to deal with several possible angles of intrusion based on what he would do if he were digging into the area as Sheriff, using blackmail and mind-twisting Disciplines to secure community leaders. Even Bordruff has taken part by blocking sewer entrances other Nosferatu might use to enter the neighborhood.

Backgrounds

Few Kindred know the Nihilists exist, and many that do just remember the old group of Succubus Club rowdies who talked big but never did much. Now that the coterie operates in a semi-clandestine fashion, this limits the assets they can collect.

CONTACTS • • •

Together, Balthazar, Gengis, and Sweetie Pepper know Fuller Park's police, the community activists with whom they liaise , and the criminals with whom they deal. They've used this to accelerate the career of one Detective Rob Krakowski — and supply him with the meth he developed a taste for while he worked undercover. Krakowski has a reputation as an old-school ass-kicking gangbuster, thanks in part to the easy arrests his friends helped him get.

ENEMIES • • •

The "Uptown Brunch Club" is the informal name of a handful of Anarch and Camarilla ghouls who, having suffered through recent political upheavals serving various masters, have decided to do their part to stabilize the city, even if their efforts aren't exactly loyal to the various Kindred for whom they work. After one of them spotted Gengis and Balthazar together, the ghouls have taken an interest in their actions. They don't know Bordruff is a member but have a basic understanding that the coterie threatens Chicago's fragile peace.

Expanded Rules for Coteries

The coteries in this chapter introduce two new coterie types and clarify or slightly expand the rules. This section builds upon that work with new coterie types and other game systems.

Miscellaneous Systems

Use the systems in this section to further detail and adjust the rules found in the **Vampire: The Masquerade** core rulebook.

Coterie Versus Personal Backgrounds

As noted on p. 196 of **V5**, coterie Backgrounds are possessed by the coterie as a whole, not the individual vampires in it. This may raise questions on what happens when one of the Kindred uses personal and coterie Backgrounds together. As **V5** says, personal and coterie Backgrounds don't stack. However, when a character possesses both, they'll normally get an additional attempt at a task related to the Background, or access to another passive opportunity. For example, if a vampire has both coterie and personal Fame, they have two chances to lean on it to get preferential treatment at a nightclub — but other clubgoers have twice as many opportunities to recognize them. These extra chances don't happen when both Backgrounds cover different Domains. A vampire in Baby Chorus who's also a well-known physicist will only stand an enhanced chance of recognition if the band plays at the University of Chicago.

Coterie Backgrounds can be used by individual vampires without the permission of the rest of the coterie, though these Backgrounds are generally less effective. Reduce the Background's effective rating by one dot. In the case of SPCs who are given dot ratings, the reduction doesn't make them less personally effective, but limits how effectively they'll work for the vampire. In most cases, coterie Backgrounds are assumed to be used with the implied assent of the coterie, so this penalty isn't necessary, but using Backgrounds normally also means that by default, any other member of the coterie can find out about the action. Using Backgrounds with the penalty allows the Kindred to keep their actions a secret from the rest of the coterie.

Coterie Boons and Debts

In most cases Status, Influence, and other Backgrounds are sufficient to represent a coterie's social resources, but there may be time when you'd prefer to track debts and boons owed to specific individuals and coteries. In this case, an adaptation of the guidelines for prestation on pp. 314-315 of **V5** is called for.

In these cases, you may allow well-connected coteries (or individuals) to purchase Boons as a Background, or take them as a Flaw, with the following costs.

Boon or Debt	Type
•	Minor
• •	Major
• • • •	Life

Each boon or debt is tracked separately. Minor, major, and life boons function according to the descriptions in **V5**. When a coterie possesses a boon or debt, any member of the coterie may call upon the boon, or discharge the debt. Individual boons and debts are, by default, acquired in play. Optionally, you may allow the acquisition of boons and debts as individual Backgrounds, but in each case the costs increase by one dot, since boons are more onerous for individuals to hold, and more valuable when one vampire reaps their benefits. Note that trivial boons, as simple, easily discharged promises, are not tracked using this system.

If you give boons dot ratings, this opens the door to negotiating the types of boons owed based on the total dot ratings. For example, it may be possible to discharge a life boon through two major boons instead, since both are worth four dots. Generally speaking, consolidating lesser boons into a smaller number of greater boons requires no conflict — who wouldn't want to get a life boon instead of four minor boons? — but breaking a boon down into multiple lesser boons requires the debt holder to convince the boon holder this would be worthwhile. This is generally handled through a simple social conflict using the rules in **V5**. In both cases, a third party, such as a duly empowered Harpy or Anarch rumormonger, should be informed of the change.

New Coterie Types

This chapter has already presented two new coterie types: The Vanguard and Rectorate. This section provides additional options for your coteries, using the rules in **V5**.

CARNIVAL

Carnival coteries move from place to place, bringing the party with them. Where Nomads celebrate rootlessness, Carnivals strive to make an impression on mortals, Kindred, or both, depending on the coterie's style. Some Carnivals appeal to elders by providing deliberately anachronistic entertainments, recalling Dust Bowl circuses or further back, medieval troubadours. Others organize raves with cutting-edge music spun by six-figure-a-night DJs. Not all Carnivals are devoted purely to entertainment and the chance to feed, however. Their spectacles might include politics and theater or Cainite rites, hidden in plain sight.

Domain: None

Contacts: (• • •) (fans in every town)

Fame: (• • •) (a wandering spectacle)

Retainers: (•) (daylight help)

Possible Extras: Allies, Herd (fans who follow), Resources

CORPORATE

Corporate coteries exist to further the economic and territorial goals of their members. They use modern business methods, supplemented by the strongarm tactics and psychic manipulation members can bring to bear as Kindred. Corporate groups are either wracked with infighting or tightly organized in pursuit of their goals, with little room in between, as their selfish goals make or break members' social bonds. In modern nights, Camarilla traditionalists consider Corporate coteries gauche but useful, since they have the collective skills and resources to harness contemporary capitalism. Stereotype holds that Ventrue lead many of these coteries, but while it is true the clan has long functioned inside bourgeois institutions, the edifice of global capital is too large for any one clan to dominate.

Domain: Chasse (•) and Lien (• •)

Influence: (• •) (business community)

Resources: (• • •) (the portfolio)

Possible Extras: Contacts, Herd (interns)

FLAGELLANT

Flagellant coteries have a mocking name, given to them by Kindred who may or may not care about the plight of the kine, but don't go around being so publicly remorseful, or so desperate to make amends. Flagellant coteries try to redeem their members for the harm they visit upon mortals. The coterie sponsors charitable works, and individuals behave as good Samaritans and occasionally, as vigilantes, hunting down mortals who prey on their own. Most vampires have few objections to this sort of thing, but that changes when Flagellants go after other Kindred. The most extreme of these coteries may act as judge, jury, and executioner over vampires they believe mistreat the kine. Some coteries even abuse the Blood itself, treating the sick by feeding them vitae. Thus, the Camarilla keeps a close watch on these "kindly coteries."

Domain: Chasse (•) and Lien (• •)

Allies: (• • •) (mortals they've helped)

Influence: (•) (local charity)

Adversary: (• •) (Flagellants almost always annoy a local Cainite)

Possible Extras: Contacts, Loresheet (Golconda or some other reputed path to salvation), Retainer (nursed back to health with vitae)

FUGITIVE

These vampires are on the run. The Second Inquisition is after them. The Camarilla proclaimed a Blood Hunt upon them. Anarchs want to treat them to a stake-and-boot party. The pursuer may even be a single, potent vampire. Fugitive coteries keep low profiles, cultivate resources they can take with them or liquidate, and develop contingency plans for when their pursuers catch up with them. It's rare for every member of the coterie to be hunted. Instead, one or two Kindred on the run convince others to go with them due to bonds of love or camaraderie. In any case, Fugitive coteries survive or perish based on the bonds of loyalty members hold for one another.

Domain: None

Contacts: (• • •) (help on the run)

Mask: (• •) (Cobbler; fake IDs available for members)

Resources (• •) (cash and a lightproof vehicle)

Retainer (•) (daylight driver)

Special: Fugitive coteries always have one or more Flaws related to whoever or whatever is pursuing them, such as Adversary, Enemy, or a Flaw such as Known Blankbody

Possible Extras: Allies, Despised, Shunned, Loresheet (when being hunted because they know too much)

SOMNOPHILE

Many coteries are rumored to be Somnophiles, but the term is primarily used as a slur — as slang, it actually comes from the old days of the Sabbat, where loyalty to old, torpid elders was likened to a sexual fetish. True Somnophile coteries represent the oldest vampires, who may well sleep, but are just as likely to dwell in ancient labyrinths (as was the fad shortly after the fall of Rome), masquerade as younger vampires, or otherwise place multiple degrees of secrecy between themselves and modern Kindred. A Somnophile coterie's patron is often powerful enough to send messages through Disciplines, as omens or dreams, or have penetrated mortal institutions so completely they can relay messages through proxies that can never be traced back to their point of origin. Each coterie has its own reasons for obeying these hidden masters, from Bahari religious convictions to ambitious Kindred convinced their association will bring them power, as major players in the Jyhad.

Domain: Chasse (•), Portillon (• •)

Loresheet: (• •) (their master teaches them secrets)

Mawla: (• • •) (the somnolent or distant elder)

Possible Extras: Allies, Retainers, Status (guardians of an esteemed vampire)

LORESHEET VERSATILITY

Loresheets exist to add depth and richness to both characters and chronicles, and a method of more closely integrating them together through a source of shared mythology. This mythology can cover an enormous amount of conceptual territory, ranging from membership in an alternative Kindred subculture such as the Bahari or Inconnu; to descent from a famous (or infamous) figure in Kindred society such as Lodin, Marcus Vitel, or Helena; to possession of specialist knowledge of Kindred history or religion that lies out of reach of the average Kindred on the street. The same is true when it comes to the Lore of specific locations and their residents.

Most of the loresheets presented in this supplement are Chicago-specific in their orientation, but this doesn't mean that they can't be portable to other locations. A childe sired by Lodin or a friend of Kevin Jackson remains linked to an eminent Ventrue lineage, even if they're spending their nights in Tokyo or Paris, and the status that clings to it will continue to apply no matter where they travel. Contacts may become more difficult to get ahold of and it will take longer for their efforts and advice on behalf of a character to come to fruition, but those relationships still hold value. Some forms of Lore, such as detailed knowledge of threats to specific domains and individuals, might also compel a character in possession of them to flee to safer climes, knowing the hammer of ecclesiastical or governmental authority is about to drop and wanting to get as far from ground zero as possible. The only real limit on how to apply the Lore of Chicago lies in the hands of the Storyteller.

ANNABELLE

Toreador Primogen Annabelle has been involved in Kindred politics for nearly two centuries. She's served on the council throughout the reigns of four Princes and survived fires, purges, and Lupine attacks. So far, she seems unaffected by the Beckoning. Some of her enemies (and a non-zero number of her allies) whisper about what it is that lets her come through so many calamities unscathed. Is she that politically savvy, and has simply made smart bargains and surrounded herself with strong protectors? Or does some mysterious benefactor watch her from the shadows, stepping in to keep her out of harm's way?

Annabelle throws frequent parties — one or more a week — where invitees can rub elbows with the powerful, admire art both new and old, and set any number of political plates spinning. Though other Cainites find it amusing to scoff at her taste in art, only a rare few do so to her face. While she might not have an eye for masterpieces, it's foolish to assume she therefore has no head for politics.

Annabelle's connections span not only Kindred society but run deep into mortal affairs as well. Her money and influence are extremely welcome in the art world. She still maintains contacts within the media under her human guise, Elaine Stanley-Greer. Although her husband's newspaper empire shut down 20 years ago, she knows who to call to get a story pulled or a headline bumped to the front page.

LORE

• **Intern:** Fledgling vampires who want to learn the ins and outs of Kindred politics often spend time working for Annabelle. Once per story, you may ask for Annabelle's guidance on a particular matter. She may even decide to help you, though whether that's to your benefit or detriment is questionable.

•• **Glitterati:** Whether you're this week's one-hit wonder or are famous by virtue of your last name, your presence makes Annabelle's parties more interesting. Once per story, you can get on the guest list for an event to which you weren't previously invited by simply asking *"Do you know who I am?"*

••• **With Thanks to Our Donors:** Annabelle knows someone at every museum and recording studio in town. Once per story, she will pull strings to get you a meeting with someone in charge, but the rest is up to you.

•••• **Patronage:** Your exceptional talents have drawn Annabelle's eye. She invites you to sing at an exclusive gathering, or finds a buyer for your latest painting. When you perform for her associates or when Annabelle brokers a deal for your artwork, your Resources increase by one dot until the end of the story. This may be used once per story.

••••• **Inner Circle:** You've proven indispensable to Annabelle. She heeds your judgment and entrusts you with sensitive information. Once per story, she will present an issue of your choice (at the Storyteller's discretion) before the Primogen council.

BALLARD INDUSTRIES

With a healthy mix of administrative businesses, trust funds, financial firms, and industrial companies, Ballard Industries is one of the pillars of Chicago's economy. It is also one of the largest conglomerates in the country, with significant holdings in companies in other fields.

Horatio Ballard still runs his corporate empire in secret, either through his direct descendants or employees that only exist on paper. The company provides the Camarilla of Chicago with a significant amount of its funding, ensuring that Elysium is lavish and secure. In addition, it provides the Kindred with legal services.

As a member of Ballard Industries, you have access to a share of Horatio's wealth and power. Whether you're just a trusted employee or his childe, you rarely find yourself in a state of need. As long as you maintain your loyalty to Ballard, the world is yours.

LORE

• **Deep Pockets:** Ballard knows better than to screw you out of your hard-earned pay. You've saved enough of it to weather the very rainy days to come. Once per story, after any event that causes a reduction in your Resources, you may choose to immediately restore your Resources to their original value.

•• **Where the In-Crowd Goes:** As an agent of Horatio Ballard, you carry a surprising amount of authority in the business world. If you let them know who you are and who you work for, they'll let you do just about anything. Once per story, you may invoke one of Ballard's false identities to receive three extra dice on a Social test in a corporate environment. If you choose to invoke Ballard's real name instead, you will automatically succeed the test, but it may be declared a Masquerade breach at the Storyteller's discretion.

••• **I Fought the Law, and I Won:** Ballard Industries owns some of the best law firms in the country, and where legitimate legislation doesn't work, bribery certainly will. A number of law-enforcement officers dance to Ballard's tune, and they might not even know it. You can be their conductor. No matter what crimes you commit, you will always have access to Influence: Police (•••) in your home state or district.

•••• **Favors for Favors:** Ballard taught you that no one gets ahead in business without a little *quid pro quo*. If you can make sure you come out with the better end of the bargain, even better. You know how to wield this on the desperate, and make them bend to your will. If you spend your resources for an SPC's benefit, you may declare they owe you a debt and have two additional dice to add to an Intimidation or Persuasion roll if this proves a hard pill for the SPC to swallow. If they agree to repay the debt, from the next scene onward, you may call in that character's debt at any time. The debt can be anything within the character's natural ability and morality. They are not obliged to repay, of course, but will suffer social backlash among the Ventrue if they do not. You can hold as many debts as your total Status at any one time. Note that this Lore is not equivalent to Kindred boons, as these debts are only considered sacrosanct in Ventrue and financial circles.

••••• **The View from the Top:** You have earned Horatio Ballard's respect — or his fear. Whichever the case, he has chosen to place you in charge of a piece of his empire. Name your company and state what it does, then choose one of the following Backgrounds at (••••) and the other at (•••): Haven, Herd, Influences, Resources, or Retainers. This is what your company provides you. You will earn an Enemy (••) who represents a major business rival and another Enemy (•) who is an employee you leapfrogged to seize your piece of Ballard Industries.

BLACKSITE 24

The former Chanute Air Force Base lies 130 miles south of Chicago and was first established in 1917 as an Air Service training camp following the United States' entry into World War I, being used primarily to train pilot cadets to fly over the battlefields of Europe. Following the declaration of World War II, Chanute's importance as a technical training center and enlistee entry point increased. The first all-black fighter squadron was activated there in March 1941, the 99th Pursuit Squadron, who trained first in ground-support roles and would later go on to form the core of the other black squadrons. The Women's Army Corps Training School was established there in early 1944 and produced class after class of WACs until the end of the war.

In 1988, as part of a general reduction of forces consideration, the Base Realignment and Closure Commission recommended that Chanute be closed and redeveloped for civilian use. Certain portions of the former base have, however, not been turned over to the public. Careful inspection of the site turned up the extensive use of asbestos in many of the oldest buildings on site, as well as toxic levels of volatile organic compounds in soil and groundwater requiring extensive environmental remediation. Those areas of the former base were declared an EPA Superfund clean-up site closed to the public, cordoned off, and assiduously patrolled to keep the curious and the foolish away.

Two months later, FIRSTLIGHT took possession of their new blacksite and began shipping captive Kindred into the facility via the conveniently located civilian airfield for long-term detention and processing. It's not like blankbodies need to eat or drink or worry about mesothelioma, after all, and the isolation protocols followed by the interrogation crews generally also act to ameliorate exposure to environmental toxins. In 2015, the operation expanded from mere warehousing and interrogation when FIRSTLIGHT obtained possession

of the former Octave Chanute Aerospace Museum, also on the site of the former base, and converted it to use as a medical research facility. An international team of specialists now makes its home there studying blankbody physiology to their hearts' content once intelligence is done with them.

As a Kindred resident of Chicago, you have acquired knowledge of Blacksite 24's existence and what you do with that knowledge could have a serious impact on your own, for good or for ill.

LORE

• **Rumors:** You know a lick who knows a lick who knows somebody that got scooped up by creepy, suspiciously well-informed and well-armed MIB-looking dudes in unmarked black vehicles on the way into the city. Once per story, you may ask the Storyteller to feed you one rumor — which may or may not be based in anything resembling reality.

•• **No, Really!:** You *are* the lick the other lick knows. Whether you're a recent arrival in Chicago who witnessed something in your travels or part of a Kindred underground railroad who helps ferry the desperate fleeing from their situations, you know what you've seen. Once per story,

BLACKSITE 24

LORE

you may ask the Storyteller for a solid piece of information about the weirdness you've witnessed.

••• **Paranoia Strikes Deep:** Maybe you were a SchreckNET administrator once. Maybe you're a paranoid conspiracy theorist now. Maybe you're a top-flight investigator with a million burnable alternate identities and sources all over the globe. Whatever the explanation, you know about the existence of FIRSTLIGHT and you know they're active somewhere near, and possibly inside, Chicago. You possess Contacts (••••) whose particular expertise relates to FIRSTLIGHT or related government-sponsored vampire hunting operations and may utilize them once per story before they disappear out of reach.

•••• **It's My Job To Know This Stuff:** You are part of the security apparatus of the Chicago Domain — a specialist advisor to the Prince, an agent of the Sheriff, a protector employed by one of the Primogen or another high-ranking member of a powerful clan — whose task encompasses ferreting out and neutralizing possible threats to the Kindred as a whole. Subsequently, you've had greater cause than most to discover the truth of certain disturbing rumors, including employing investigators of your own to sort fact from rumor. Consequently, you have managed to uncover considerable amounts of information about the government's own vampire hunters, including the fact that they have some sort of permanent installation near Chicago. This specialist knowledge grants you Status (••) among the Kindred, who frequently come to you to benefit from it, and Influence (••) among the kine, which you use to manipulate the mortal world for the benefit of your clients.

••••• **The One That Got Away:** You escaped from containment at Blacksite 24. You are very likely being hunted by your former captors, who have every reason to want to retrieve you before you can go to ground or, even worse, reach others of your own kind and warn them of the horrors you've endured or witnessed. Fortunately for them, those horrors are not clear in your own mind, even though you have reached safety: The after-effects of Rötschreck and protracted near-torpid starvation have clouded your memories of your experiences — you can only clearly recall what you saw, or heard, with the greatest effort. Once per story, you may ask the Storyteller for one clear snippet of memory from your incarceration. You have gained immunity from FIRSTLIGHT-induced Rötschreck.

THE BLUE VELVET

The Blue Velvet opened its doors in 1972, and has been a hotspot for Kindred nightlife and politicking ever since. Located in the heart of the Rack, the club had several incarnations before its current one. An anonymous entrepreneur bought out Fantastica and immediately closed the bar's doors for three months of extensive renovations. When it reopened, the Blue Velvet boasted four separate bars, a VIP lounge, and a dance floor big enough to handle fans of the hottest bands. It was an ambitious endeavor, and one that's worked for nearly 50 years.

The bar draws Kindred and kine alike. While mortals dance their cares away below, Cainites high above engage in a different kind of dance, moving carefully through the rhythms that control the city and its future.

For decades, no one knew who owned the Blue Velvet. Rumors and speculation swirled. Most attempts to dig into the club's financials to unearth its owner led nowhere. Only one investigator got close, in early 1987, but she disappeared right after confiding to a friend that she'd made a stunning breakthrough. Her notes and research never surfaced. In the mid-1990s, the mystery ended with the Malkavian Bronwyn's emergence into Kindred society. Her revelation that she'd been the force behind The Blue Velvet all these years gave her an immediate in with Kindred all across Chicago, and a storefront from which to illicitly traffic blood on behalf of the Circulatory System.

LORE

• **Est. 1972:** You've been there since the start, and may have been familiar with some of the bars that preceded The Blue Velvet. In many ways, the club's history is *your* history, and others consider you an authority on it: bands whose rise started here, Kindred rivalries that played out in the VIP lounge, if it happened at The Blue Velvet, you've got the skinny. Add two dice to any roll related to recalling and using the club's history.

•• **Who's Who:** Everyone who's anyone stops in at the Blue Velvet. You know them all by name, but they don't know you're keeping tabs on who comes and goes, who they talk to, and when they leave. Once per story, ask your Storyteller for information on a fellow club-goer's movements. The Storyteller will tell you when the named patron was last at the Blue Velvet, how they acted, and who they were with.

••• **Standing Gig:** Only the hottest bands play at the Blue Velvet, and its dance nights have lines stretching around the block. You've played or DJed at the club and appear on its calendar regularly. Once per story, when you perform at the club, choose between gaining a three-dot Resource Background (lasting until the end of the story) or a three-dot Herd from fans who attend your every performance.

•••• **VIP Club:** Your status is well-respected at The Blue Velvet. Your fame or influence draws others to the club, and Bronwyn appreciates your patronage, acting as a four-dot Ally or Mawla. A table's always ready for you, and you have access to a private room in the VIP lounge for meetings and feedings.

••••• **Backstage Pass:** You are a trusted, high-level employee at The Blue Velvet. Ian Gibson relies on you for night-to-night operations, and you're a member of Bronwyn's inner circle. One per story, you may request and receive her aid, whether that's via influence, financial backing, or use of the club for a private endeavor.

THE BOOK OF NOD

The *Book of Nod* collects oral histories, text fragments, and other media detailing the history of Caine and his childer, with additional poems and prophecies regarding Gehenna and the Final Nights. Its author — or authors — are unknown, though many Kindred believe Caine, Malkav, and Saulot contributed significant portions of the text. The stories and fragments have been carefully passed down through the generations; those who own physical pieces of the book take great pains to ensure they don't end up in non-Cainite hands. The *Book of Nod* also provides the theological basis for the Sabbat's worship of Caine.

The first and largest section of the book, The Chronicle of Caine, recounts the tale of the first vampire, his childer, and the rise and rebellion of the Antediluvians. The Chronicle of Shadows lays out a series of laws attributed to Caine, though some Kindred doubt its veracity and view it as the work of Carthaginian scholars. The Chronicle of Secrets is the shortest and most enigmatic section. Its highly symbolic passages describe the author's visions of Gehenna. Some Noddists have dedicated their entire unlives to attempting to interpret the predictions and apply them to their modern nights. Additionally, some scholars view the Erciyes Fragments as another version of Caine's story, while others dismiss the Fragments as apocryphal and relegate mention of them to a footnote in their dissertations, if they're acknowledged at all.

The *Book of Nod*'s collectors, translators, and editors have introduced myriad inconsistencies and contradictions over the millennia, and no two scholarly analyses ever completely agree on its true content. Many among the Camarilla denounce the book and ban, confiscate, or destroy any related texts they discover their fledglings passing around.

LORE

• **Precis:** You are familiar with the broader concepts of the *Book of Nod* and some of the more commonly known prophecies. Once per story, add two dice to an Academics or Occult roll related to ancient Cainite history.

•• **Well-versed:** Your sire or Mawla taught you certain passages from the book, and may even have physical fragments in their possession. Once per story, you may seek their input on a matter regarding Noddist lore, gaining a two-dice bonus to any Occult test related to the book.

••• **Scholar:** You've dedicated significant time and study to the *Book of Nod,* and are familiar with at least one complete version of the text. You can support your theories with quotes from that version and are aware of counterarguments or alternative interpretations. Once per session, add three dice to a Persuasion roll when debating the *Book of Nod*'s finer points.

•••• **Collector:** You own several fragments from the book or have memorized sections of Caine's history. Noddists seek you out hoping to examine your copies or hear you recite the tales, and they're willing to pay for it. This isn't always a monetary trade; some offer favors, an exchange of information, or access to other resources your character finds valuable. Once per story, when you grant someone access to your collection, gain three temporary dots in Resources (or other appropriate Background as approved by your Storyteller) for the remainder of the story, or the ability to call in a future favor from the Noddist.

••••• **Noddist Master:** Other Noddists look to you for insight and interpretation on the texts, and your theses on the subject are regarded as must-reads. You have exchanged correspondence with Noddist experts on finer points of lore. Once per story, you may derive a fact or prophecy from the *Book of Nod* that your character can apply to sway a decision, automatically succeeding at a Persuasion test at the Storyteller's discretion.

CAPONE GANG

After Capone's disappearance from Chicago, some of his lieutenants wanted to continue the great prosperity their gang saw in his mortal heyday. One lieutenant in particular, the Ventrue Eddie Wu, became a vampire not long after Capone and ran one of the only vampiric arms of the gangs in Chicago. Although during Lodin's reign this was all very hush-hush, he feels he has no reason to hide and in fact is growing in power. The new gang he leads is called "The Capone Gang" and, while small, is influential amidst the criminal underground.

The Capone Gang's main imports are drugs from Thailand, Laos, and Myanmar, but they still employ cooks for Chicago-made meth. The gang operates out of the Green Mill, a jazz club that's been around for over 100 years and was a famous Capone hangout. Since Capone has long since become a relic of Chicago's past, it's a surprisingly good cover, and too old-fashioned to be a gang hangout in modern times. There are two cemeteries nearby that act as exchange points among the undead gang and any human gangs or other vampires.

Eddie Wu is well known for his ruthless "shoot first, ask questions later" attitude. His second in command and ghoul, Lily DeAngelis, is more balanced, looking to the long-term future of the gang instead of making violent snap judgments. She balances out Eddie's temper, and is the real brains behind the operation. Eddie stays outside Chicago's limits to avoid Prince Jackson's notice, while Lily handles the night-to-night business.

LORE

• **A Favor for a Favor:** The Capone Gang will do something for you if you do something for them. You know a gal that can get what you need done. Favors are in the realm of procuring drugs, weapons, information, or some other illegal thing. Gain Contacts: Capone Gang (•) and Allies: Capone Gang (•) for one use each per story.

•• **In Debt:** You've got a big ask of the Capone Gang. Maybe you need someone gone, or you have to launder some cash, or you've got a clean-up job they can handle. No problem. Now you're in Eddie's debt. Once per story you can utilize this to fix some sort of problem but in exchange, at some point in the story, Eddie's going to call on you for a favor.

••• **Just One Job:** When you help the Capone Gang out with a heist, you get a cut of the profits. They often use another Kindred on these jobs, either as an enforcer, or just to utilize their supernatural abilities in tandem with the ghouls. They plan out the job, mapping the location for the robbery, taking into account security and surveillance, just leaving you to walk in, grab what's good, and walk out again. Gain Resources (•••) from a successful completion of the job. Other characters could join in, but how much you decide to cut them in is entirely up to you.

•••• **One of Us:** It's official, you've spent enough time with the gang to become a member. You can join in a "making" ceremony, where you swear an oath of loyalty to the other vampires in the Capone Gang and gain access to their stash. This gets you Resources (••) and Allies: Capone Gang (••), allowing you to hire some of the members to do work for you as well as some extra cash if needed — with Eddie Wu's permission, of course. You get one additional die o Streetwise rolls concerning organized crime.

LORE

••••• **Prodigal Child:** Eddie Wu has put an incredible amount of faith in you, and sees you as a trusted lieutenant. You're in on the organizational meetings, and can help influence big decisions on what the gang does next. Gain Contacts: Capone Gang (••••), Mawla: Eddie Wu (••), and Haven: Capone Gang Safehouse (••). Now you have to help build a lasting empire in Capone's name. You gain access to all resources, people, and power this position can grant you within a gang, providing Prince Jackson doesn't clamp down your operation. Should you ever put your own interests before that of the gang, you lose the above benefits, potentially gaining Eddie as an Enemy.

EDDIE WU

Sire: Alphonse Gabriel Capone

Embraced: 1998 (born 1946)

Ambition: Dominate the Chicago drug trade

Convictions: Never brook disrespect

Touchstones: Lily DeAngelis — ghoul and front for the mortal side of the Capone Gang

Humanity: 4

Generation: 9th

Blood Potency: 2

Attributes: Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2; Charisma 2, Manipulation 3, Composure 1; Intelligence 4, Wits 3, Resolve 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 4

Skills: Brawl 2, Drive 3, Firearms (Handgun, Shotgun) 3, Larceny 3, Stealth 1, Survival 1; Insight 2, Intimidation 3, Persuasion 1, Streetwise (Organized Crime) 5, Subterfuge 3; Academics 1, Awareness 3, Finance (Laundering) 4, Investigation 3, Technology (Security Devices) 2

Disciplines: Dominate 1, Fortitude 2, Presence 1

THE COBWEB

(MALKAVIAN CHARACTERS ONLY)

You're never truly alone. Not anymore. Not even if you want to be. Not even if you *try* to be. The Cobweb catches so many thoughts in its sticky strands, sends them skittering further inside, or reverberating out to the far edges. You're not always sure the thoughts you're hearing are from *now*. Some feel like they've been stuck for years and have just shaken loose. Others taste like tomorrow.

The Cobweb, also known as the Madness Network, is a psychic network to which all Malkavians are linked. No two clan members describe it exactly the same way. For some, it's a constant low murmuring in their Blood. Others describe it as a kind of hivemind operating alongside their own cognition. Many — even most — Malkavians are only reminded of its presence a few times a year, like a sudden burst of static on a forgotten radio.

No one knows the Cobweb's ultimate purpose, though it's been used to summon a gathering of Oracles together with a subconscious imperative dubbed The Call. Some suspect Malkav himself uses the Network to view the world through his descendants' eyes and ears, or that he simply *is* the Network.

LORE

• **A Break in the Static:** The Cobweb is just barely perceptible to you. You catch sporadic snatches of conversation, often just a few distinct words or images. It's enough to piece together an order or a call for aid, though you're unable to respond.

•• **Step into My Parlor:** You can communicate over the Network with other Malkavians nearby. These discussions are heavily abstract, limited to short phrases, simple images, and strong emotions.

••• **Across the Web:** Your voice is one of the strongest on the Cobweb. You can hold more involved conversations with Malkavians in your city. Once per story you may initiate the Call, sending impressions of the time and gathering place to all who can hear. This does not guarantee obedience —herding cats is child's play compared to organizing the children of Malkav.

•••• **Pluck the Strands:** The tensile strength of spider silk rivals steel's, and your connection to your Cainite ancestors and descendants is equally powerful. Once per story, you may use the cobweb to piggyback on your sire's or one of your childer's senses. You are only an observer, and cannot control their responses or their movements.

••••• **Malkav's Will:** The entity in the Cobweb is awake and aware. They know your name and tell you their secrets. They have a plan and want you to help carry it out. Malkav — or a consciousness pretending to be him — speaks to you directly via the Network. Once per story, you may ask the Storyteller to divulge a secret about another Malkavian or reveal what orders the mind in the Cobweb wants you to follow.

CULTIVAR

Horticultural science defines a cultivar as a plant selected intentionally and carefully shaped and maintained through cultivation. Such are those called who are singled out and shaped by Nerissa Blackwater to be agents of the Ancestor, working to uproot the Cannibals — descendants of Caine — and establish a New Garden upon the broken shells of the first. Some vampires and some mortals dangle the tantalizing prospect of stability, of an ancient power, a pathway to enlightenment for Kindred who have lost faith in *all factions.*

LORE

• **Dark Seedling:** The legends of the Dark Mother always appealed to you, but perhaps you were too intimidated to openly approach one of the Bahari. Now, though, your new associates have put you onto something that makes sense, feels real. They are tapped into something powerful and that's worth getting to know. Once per story you may use two dots in Allies: Cultivars representing mortal cultists who come to your aid.

•• **Fresh Cutting:** Under the sponsorship of a current Cultivar, you are tested, pushed to your limits, and forced beyond them. At this stage, it is expected that you regularly engage in some sort of mortification of the flesh — scarification, scourging, even passing a candle flame over your skin. You gain a free Skill Specialty in Occult, with that Specialty being Bahari, Lilith, or the Ancestor, and a ritual scar to mark your membership in the cult, conveying one dot in Status: Cultivar.

••• **Suppressing the Beast:** Hunting mortals brings you near-constant misery, but you are forbidden from feeding upon animals. Thankfully, your sponsor gives you access to feeding grounds where mortals in pursuit of the Mother's wisdom spill their blood in service to her and, as a kindness, allow you, a curse-carrier, to consume it. This grants you a three-dot Herd. You also gain a one-dot Haven you can access once per story, in the form of a cultist's home. You may never again feed from animals, however.

•••• **Newly Made Initiate:** One month spent on a private yacht, 150 miles out into the waters of Lake Michigan, enduring night after night of searing torment and delirium-induced visions earns you the title of Initiate. You enjoy elevated status and are now a guide for others on the path. As an Initiate, you enjoy Status: Cultivar (•••). Once per story, you may use an additional two dice on a Willpower roll when calling to mind the harsh fasting endured during your month on water.

••••• **Jewel in the Garden:** Three drops of a methuselah's blood now sing fiercely within your veins, granting you visions, leaving you in no doubt: The Mother will return. Whether this vitae came from the Ancestor, Nerissa, or some other source is a matter to interpret from your vision-addled daydreams. You are expected to maintain your own Garden — be that a physical space with growing things or a more figurative interpretation — and come when summoned by the Ancestor or the Blackwaters. As a Jewel, you receive an additional four dice on rolls to resist frenzy due to the harmony of your inner Eden..

CULT OF SHALIM

Shalim is the name of the Canaanite god of dusk and night. This name was passed down to the city of Jerusalem and possibly to King Solomon.

To the Lasombra in the modern nights it has a different meaning altogether. Shalim is a name spoken of in hushed tones by those who have returned from the Gehenna Crusade unharmed. Some celebrate it quietly, others speak it with fear. It is a name that has driven the awakened members of the clan to seek sanctuary in the arms of their once enemy, the Camarilla. It is their beginning and, some fear, their end.

In truth, adherents to this mad religion seek nothing less than total annihilation, not of a clan or a sect, not of a nation, but of the entirety of reality itself. The twisted philosophy of the group comes from the simple fact that all pain, all suffering, all hate and injustice exists only in what we call "reality." Heaven, Nirvana, Jannah, Shamayim, all afterlives promise a place where there are no more tears, no more pain, no more sadness. Only in the absence of existence can this be achieved. In the absence of self, all are one, all are equal. In the absence of reality, we become part of the infinite nothingness, we return to Shalim.

For this reason, the cult's members often speak the phrase "Shalim is" to the initiated, since they believe

that nothingness is the ultimate reality and the end of all things, embodied in their dark master. In their minds, nothingness is indestructible, has always existed, and will always exist. Thus, Shalim is the only true infinite, the only true immortal. Shalim is beyond existence. Shalim, simply, is.

LORE

• **Dark Whispers:** You have heard rumors of the cult from those returning from the Gehenna Crusade. Once per story, you gain an additional two dice to either Insight or Investigation to look into the myths of the cult or to identify if someone is a member.

•• **Cult Initiate:** As an initiate into the cult's mysteries, you are aware of the significance of the Semitic phrase "Shin-Lamedh-Mem" as the identifier of other members. You can speak this phrase to an initiated member to immediately gain two dice on any Persuasion roll to gain their assistance. Speaking it to the uninitiated may not only result in their confusion but may expose you to a savvy Lasombra as a member of the doomsday cult.

••• **Power of Faith:** The cult's reach extends deepest into the religious community. When they speak of heaven, a place where suffering, sadness, and misery do not exist, you know this can only be found in the bliss of nothingness. In the peace of any church or temple, your zeal allows you to ignore the negative effects of Impairment.

•••• **Crush the Dreams of Life:** Shalim's teachings say the dreams and ambitions of the flesh must be cast off to achieve perfection. All are equal under its gaze and so all must witness the path to the glorious dark of emptiness through the felling of their conceited ambition. When you succeed on an Insight roll against any character, the Storyteller reveals to you their foremost ambition in addition to the information sought by the roll. Armed with this knowledge, you may now reroll any dice in a failed Persuasion roll per scene against them as you turn their desires to your advantage. Furthermore, you may choose to roll Manipulation + Persuasion against the difficulty of the target's Composure + Insight. If you succeed, you crush their hopes and dreams, plunging them into despair and inaction for the remainder of the story in the form of one Aggravated Willpower damage. A total failure exposes your ruse and turns them against you.

••••• **Shalim Is:** You are a true servant of Shalim. Your zeal and faith in the coming end know no bounds and you are certain that the Abyss has chosen you to enact its purpose. Your position in the cult gives you access to the Herd background (••) for your followers as well as Influence (•••) in the religious community of your choice from the cult's many contacts in those circles. You gain the Dark Secret Flaw (•) when taking this loresheet. You also automatically pass any Composure-based roll to hide your position as a member of the cult.

DESCENDANT OF LODIN

(VENTRUE CHARACTERS ONLY)

Before Lodin came to power, one thing was true: He was not the only Ventrue in the city, only the most ruthlessly ambitious, the one who seized opportunity when it presented itself and claimed a throne for himself. After Lodin came to power, this was also true: He systematically eliminated any who might grow into a significant challenge to his claims of praxis, particularly the members of his own clan whom, rightly or wrongly, he considered primary threats instead of potential allies. He ruled for decades, siring a series of lieutenants to enact his will and solidify his control over the domain he had claimed, permitting those lieutenants to sire broods of their own as they, and he, deemed necessary.

Lodin is gone now, pulled down by treachery and inhuman savagery, but his legacy lives on in those that carry his bloodline — both of the childer he sired once he came to his throne and those he sired *before* the tides of conflict washed him up in Chicago.

LORE

• **Baby of the Family:** You are the (current) youngest member of the lineage, Embraced within the last decade and still young enough to be treated with some degree of indulgence while you learn the ropes — and pretty much every Ventrue you encounter thinks they have something useful to teach you. With other members of your clan in Chicago, you always have a Mawla rating of one dot.

•• **Responsible Middle Childe:** You are a steadfast and proud member of Lodin's wide bloodline, just coming into your own power and responsibilities. Due to your lineage and position, other Kindred of similar age and Generation to you look to you for leadership. With them you always carry a minimum of Status (••).

••• **Black Sheep of the Family:** You are a descendant of Lodin...and you don't like it one little bit. You have split with the rest of the late Prince's consanguinity in some dramatic way: running off to join the Anarchs, publicly siding with the (dis)loyal opposition in political matters affecting the stability of your bloodline's rule, turning into the world's worst and least appeasable Herald. You have a little bit of dirt on every one of Lodin's childer. The Storyteller will reveal a secret about any one of them you encounter, once per story.

•••• **Like Sire, Like Childe:** Like your ancestor, you are a virtually unkillable cockroach of a vampire, capable of taking anything that unlife throws at you and turning it, if not into gold, then at least a solid shot at survival. Add two dice to your dice pools when making tests to avoid physical or supernatural injury outside of direct physical conflict.

••••• **Long-Lost Relative:** Lodin had an unlife before he came to Chicago and your existence is proof of that fact: You are the descendant of one of the childer he sired in the years between his departure from Veracruz and his arrival in Chicago, when he was a rootless and pragmatically unsupervised wanderer. Your arrival has sent a shockwave through the city and now you are among the most sought-after of its residents, enjoying Status (••••) among Ventrue and court officials, the attention of every social gadfly in Chicago, and a definite seat at the Prince's table.

DESCENDANT OF MONTANO

(LASOMBRA CHARACTERS ONLY)

Montano has achieved much for Clan Lasombra, but it is only now that the clan feels comfortable singing his praises. As one of the few who walked with the clan's founder, his conversance in the Abyss is parallel to none. It is said it was by his will that Christianity rose to prominence and that his legions of armies shaped the history of Europe itself.

Yet, Montano was always a man of honor. When vampire society split into sects, he refused to abandon the newly born Camarilla. For centuries, he was branded a traitor.

As his progeny, you have felt the sting of his decision and stand to reap its fruits. Whether you served the Camarilla openly or in secret, the clan now looks to you and your ancestor for guidance. You will show them what loyalty truly means.

LORE

• **The Shadow of Yesterday:** Montano remembers nothing about his early days, but remembers plenty about his sect and clan. Once per story, you may write a letter to Montano asking for a single piece of information about either the Camarilla or Clan Lasombra. From his distant haven, he will respond either with truth or clues leading to it, with the implication that the journey is its own reward.

•• **Siblings in Darkness:** Montano's deeds brought the clan to its lofty position. The line he has cultivated is one based in the same honor that kept him in the Camarilla. You are afforded a respect even your clanmates in the Sabbat and elsewhere cannot help but acknowledge. Your Status: Lasombra (••) applies to Lasombra across all sects.

••• **Abyssal Apprentice:** Montano cannot teach you everything about the secrets of Oblivion, due to the comparative weakness of your blood, but you've picked up a few tricks. Once per story, you may use an Oblivion power you do not already know that is at your current level or lower.

•••• **Word of Mouth:** Inspired by Montano's patience, you held fast to your place in the Camarilla even when the rest of your clan served as leaders in the Sabbat-held domains. As your siblings join the fold, your allies in the Camarilla have not forgotten where you truly stand. Your status among non-Lasombra in the Camarilla is at the same level no matter where you travel in your home country, even if you do not hold any position in the city you currently reside in.

••••• **Purity of Remorse:** Once, Montano murdered his beloved friends and family to save the rest of his village from his sire. Though he cannot remember this, he weeps over it just the same. You hope to mourn for your sins as deeply as he does. Whenever you roll for Remorse, you never roll with fewer than two dice.

FIRES AND FLOODS AND DEVIL'S NIGHT

Chicago has suffered and survived several disasters since its founding in 1833. Often, the chaos and confusion generated by a catastrophe presents the perfect smokescreen for vampires to rid themselves of enemies or sabotage a rival's holdings in the city. The most famous of these was the Great Fire of 1871, started by the Malkavian O'Leary. More recently, the 1992 Chicago Flood has been blamed on a weakened utility tunnel wall giving way, though rumors among the clans suggest it was a Tremere attack on the Nosferatu living belowground. Of course, disasters also create chances for the city's Kindred to wield influence over rebuilding and reconstruction efforts. Over the last two centuries, enterprising vampires have hidden havens beneath new skyscrapers, or influenced city planners into adding extra branches off of sewer tunnels.

This knowledge can apply to other cities' disasters as well, such as the Great Fire of London or the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake

LORE

• **Trivia Buff:** Your knowledge of Chicago disasters is rock solid. You know dates and details, and have written listicles on the strange-but-true facts about the tragedies. Add two dice to Academics or Investigation rolls pertaining to the topic.

•• **Old Bones:** New parts of the city were rebuilt on top of the old. Perhaps you've studied architectural records, or maybe your old haunts were in the path of destruction. Parts of them still stand, and you know how to get into them. Once per story, you may hide in one of these places to throw off a pursuer.

••• **Devil's Night Survivor:** You lived through the Great Fire and Devil's Night, and may have participated in Lodin's purges. Once per story, add three dice to a Social roll involving another person who survived the fire or their childer.

•••• **Local Hero:** You helped rebuild after disaster struck, or were one of the rescuers at the scene, and people remember you fondly for it. Once per story, you may leverage this goodwill to sway mortal opinion to your side of an issue, granting you Influence: Goodwill (•••••) for a single session, once per chronicle.

••••• **Puppetmaster:** You were one of the primary orchestrators of a disaster. Work with the Storyteller to determine how you were involved and what the results were. What were your goals? Who died as a result? Who knows you were behind the tragedy? What are some of the rumors surrounding it? What did you gain from it?

FIRSTLIGHT

FIRSTLIGHT is a joint operation among the world's intelligence agencies, tasked with learning about — and hunting — tonight's vampires. Camarilla, Sabbat, or Inconnu, a Cainite's sect doesn't matter to the people whose directives involve killing them and dismantling their power over mortal affairs. FIRSTLIGHT's operatives often aren't aware the people they're tracking down are no longer mortal, and possibly haven't been for centuries. Most receive information portraying their targets as human terrorist cells; reports after the fact uphold that narrative.

FIRSTLIGHT relies on both ultra-modern technology and old-fashioned investigation, making their nets tough to dodge. FBI agents and their expert systems monitor internet chatter for certain keywords; some calls coming in to their tip line get rerouted to FIRSTLIGHT when they might involve the so-called "Blankbodies." Months' worth of footage is surveilled, searching for the blurred images and shadowy shapes indicating a Lasombra's presence. TSA agents working for FIRSTLIGHT have the authority to search cargo at O'Hare and Midway, which has made already-difficult air travel even harder for Kindred who don't have access to private planes.

LORE

• **Evasion Tactics:** You're familiar with some basic surveillance tactics, and know simple ways to avoid being followed or spied upon. You keep your online footprint minimal or locked down, and own a white-noise generator, a cell-phone jammer, or a burner phone to keep from being recorded. Add one die on rolls to avoid being tailed or listened in on (Potential Skills: Drive, Stealth, Streetwise, Technology.)

•• **Branch Office:** Maybe someone slipped up and you've got their scent. Maybe the military-looking types at the bar thought they were talking too low for others to hear, but your keen ears picked up their conversation just fine. Maybe you clicked their thinly disguised trap of a URL and hacked them right back. However you did it, you know where their closest base of operations is located.

••• **What Do They Know:** You've intercepted some communications between agencies, whether you learned the location of a dead drop or decrypted their signal. Once per story, you may ask the Storyteller for a piece of information FIRSTLIGHT has on you or a coterie-mate that you've managed to seize.

•••• **No Records Found:** Through bribes, break-ins, and a heaping dose of paranoia, you've managed to erase yourself from FIRSTLIGHT's records. Your slate is clean... for now. It's up to you to remain off of them going forward, but should you find yourself in their targets again, you know where to start to rectify the situation. Add three dice to Larceny, Stealth, or Survival rolls when handling FIRSTLIGHT operations.

••••• **Friend on the Inside:** You've got someone on FIRSTLIGHT's payroll who reports back to you. Discuss with your Storyteller whether your control over them takes the form of supernatural coercion, threats, or a hefty periodic bribe. The mole alerts you if their organization is coming after you, and once per story will commit an act of minor sabotage (destroying evidence, screwing up an operation, etc.) on your orders.

KEVIN JACKSON

Kevin Jackson is one of Lodin's younger childer, a lieutenant Embraced to reorient the then-Prince's influence over Chicago's criminal underground, expected to succeed where Capone's grip was beginning to fail, to bring those operations into the future where they belonged. Recognizing opportunity when he saw it, Jackson played the long game: acting the deferential head-thug-in-charge to his frequently paranoid sire's face while building a massive personal power base behind his back. Lodin's fall and presumed destruction presented Jackson with an unprecedented opportunity to seize power for himself — one he took his time to capitalize on, securing for himself the throne, vast influence among the Kindred, and access to his unlamented sire's financial resources.

These nights, Jackson is principally focused on solidifying his own powerbase, building alliances, and establishing his personal diplomatic cred. He has forged and maintained a peace with the local Lupines and may be about to cut a deal with the Lasombra that, if it goes off, will establish him as a force to be reckoned with among the Camarilla as a whole. Getting in on the ground level with him could be just the sort of leg up an ambitious young lick needs to get ahead in the Second City.

LORE

• **New Blood:** A newcomer to the Prince's service, possibly a recent arrival from another domain, you have access to a specially constructed Mask worth two dots for use once per story, created using Jackson's Influence. If you cause a breach of the Masquerade using that Mask, you suffer no adverse consequences beyond a stern talking-to by the Sheriff or the vocal disdain of Harpies in Elysium.

•• **Recent Graduate:** You have emerged from one of the Prince's new "finishing schools," devoted to his cause and ready to help him achieve his goals of unity and justice. You have been granted the assistance of one of his ghouls equivalent to Retainers (••) who schools you in Chicago and its workings and is tasked with assisting you in whatever duties the Prince assigns you.

••• **Up and Comer:** The Prince has granted you provisional access to one of his non-criminal areas of interest, equivalent to Influence (•••). Once per story, you may invoke Jackson's name to automatically succeed in a Social test with a Kindred SPC whose interests overlap with those of the Prince.

•••• **Adjutant:** The Prince knows your capabilities and values them. He has granted you access to the core of his personal power, the gangs he spent years developing into his personal army. Once per story, you may call upon the Bloods to assist in an upcoming scene, where they count as an effective Allies (Bloods) ••• and Contacts (Bloods) •• Background.

••••• **The Prince's Lieutenant:** You are the Prince's strong right hand, the vampire he turns to for decisive action and wise counsel alike. You possess Mawla •••• (Kevin Jackson). Once per story, you may request the opportunity to gift the mortal of your choosing the Embrace and the Prince will approve that request.

KINDRED ICONOGRAPHY

Attend any Kindred gathering and you'll see signs and sigils of clan affiliation everywhere: the Toreador with roses twining around her sleeves, the Ventrue with scepters embroidered on his lapels. Over the millennia, Cainites have raised their symbols not only to an art form, but to an entire language of its own.

Out on the cities' streets, Neonates and Anarchs have taken those icons and others and created images that offer information at a glance. They warn those savvy enough to interpret them that a particular rack has been claimed by a coterie, or that there's a safe place to rest for the day just ahead. What looks like a wall covered in plain old graffiti to human eyes speaks volumes to vampires.

LORE

• **Iconographer**: You're versed in Kindred symbols, able to identify someone's clan by the motifs in their clothing and could lecture neonates on how and why the imagery has changed over the centuries. Add two dice to relevant Academics rolls.

•• **The Writing on the Wall:** You've learned to look for marks other Kindred have left behind. Gain three dice on relevant Streetwise rolls when looking for information on local domains and vampires available in graffiti, posted flyers, or other artwork in the area.

••• **Trendsetter:** You make this look *good*. Your style catches eyes in Elysium, and other Kindred look to see what you're wearing this week. Add two dice to Social rolls when you're decked out in the imagery of your clan or chosen affiliation.

•••• **Graffiti Artist:** Those warnings on the wall? That's your design. Your murals are works of art, and have drawn the eye not only of coteries heeding your warnings, but of Toreador who come to admire it. You may even have attracted the attention of Annabelle herself. Craft rolls regarding your art receive three extra dice when involving Kindred iconography.

••••• **Giorgio Who?** You've dressed Princes and Primogen, subtly weaving clan iconography into the lines of a suit or the cut of a dress. You don't make statements with your work, you make *dissertations*. Once per story, an outfit of your design grants two dots of Status to a character of your choosing for the session. Alternately, your scathing critique of another Kindred's poor sartorial choices removes one dot of Status for the same period of time.

THE LABYRINTH

In downtown Chicago there's an abandoned "superstation" for the L that was built but never used, under Block 37. This leads to a series of tunnels that are in various stages of disrepair, since construction on them was halted. The series of connected stations and places they lead to is known colloquially among Kindred as "The Labyrinth."

There are various lairs and hideouts within the Labyrinth, but it's a chaotic place that's difficult for the Camarilla to police. It's said there's all manner of Kindred and other things down there, and sometimes when Kindred head down into the Labyrinth they never return. Others however, have come back with everything from useful knowledge to new allies

LORE

• **Tunnel Access:** There are several tunnels one can travel through in the Labyrinth that exit to different levels of the city. A Kindred from the Labyrinth who knows the way has shown you which turns to take and markers to follow. If you follow that path, none in the Labyrinth will harm you, but if you stray from it you risk death or worse. This knowledge is useful when trying to escape a pursuing enemy or you need to hide for a night by taking your time in the tunnels.

•• **Boxcar Blues:** The stories told in the Labyrinth are strange and unusual tales of what its inhabitants have seen in their years of Chicago. For one reason or another the Kindred inhabitants of this place have decided to go underground, and because of that they have a unique form of spreading news through word of mouth. Well, through song. There are various folk songs they sing that have double meanings, or characters in them who represent certain political figures currently in power. You've been taught how to decipher these lyrics and discern important information from them. Gain free Skill Specialties in Performance (Folk Song) and Streetwise (Labyrinth Rumors).

••• **Church:** Once a month there's a small club night hosted in one of the larger empty concrete rooms. The subterranean Kindred have kitted it out with lights, speakers, and bars. It's called Church, ironically of course, and it pumps dungeon synth and witch house music until sunrise for its dancing night worshippers. There's darker vampiric activity in some rooms adjacent to this open space, designed to confuse humans with altered states of consciousness who wander in and become meals. Nobody's shut it down yet because the Kindred who run it are careful to cover their tracks. You know its location and are welcome to bring a plus one anytime.

•••• **Lydia's Lair:** There's an oracle named Lydia who lives amidst these abandoned train ruins. Her lair is decorated with beautiful silks and a collection of the bones of dead things she's cultivated over the years. She's a young-looking white woman with long black hair who wears simple jeans and a t-shirt. Lydia's a Tremere, and blind, a condition that becoming Kindred didn't solve for her. It's possible she's very old but she won't reveal her exact age, and nobody understands how she utilizes Blood Sorcery to see such specific futures. If you bring her something to eat, she'll read your palm, telling you one specific thing about the future. You've got access to her, since she won't see just anyone, only those who are trusted by the subterranean vampire community. Lydia counts as a Mawla (••••).

••••• **Hideout:** The Kindred living here trust you enough to hold you over for a time if you're looking to hide out from anyone. It's a safe haven for outsider vampires, and no judgment is made. If crimes are committed against the community, however, you're quick to be ousted. Gain Allies: Labyrinth Kindred Community (••••).

LUPINE EXPERT

Outside of the safe haven of cities, the Lupines roam. These shapeshifting beasts lie in wait to catch Kindred and tear them limb from limb. Every vampire these nights seems to have a story of a nightmarish Lupine encounter. They are a terrifying and infuriating threat. No one is ever sure where they come from, when they will strike, or why they even want to kill vampires in the first place.

No one except you, that is. Unlike other Kindred, you have encountered the Lupines and lived to tell the tale. You know their secrets, and most importantly, how to use those secrets to keep your fellow vampires safe. You may have learned them by spying on a pack, from a rogue Lupine, or just surviving a traumatic event like the War of Chicago. Whatever the reason, when the wolves start howling, the Kindred turn to you first.

LORE

• **Huntsman:** You've developed a keen eye for tracking Lupines, even when they're pretending to be human. Once per session, you may receive three extra dice to any Mental test to pursue Lupines.

•• **Tactician**: A Lupine attack is one of the most terrifying experiences in a vampire's unlife. You've lived through enough of them to keep a cool head and help your coterie fight back. When you and your allies use Teamwork (**Vampire: The Masquerade** p. 122) against Lupines, the group can always assist each other. Every character can contribute one die to the Teamwork roll, no matter what Skill the test requires.

••• **Soldier:** A werewolf's ability for combat should never be underestimated. You know that more than anyone, but it won't stop you from getting into the thick of it. When engaging you in Physical combat, a shifted Lupine only has a −2 damage modifier when using its claws and teeth.

•••• **Trophy:** You have slain a Lupine, and you have the evidence to prove it. This memento may be something like a fragment of the Lupine's human skull, a scrap of their clothing with an insignia representing a Lupine faction, or the shattered remains of one of their prized weapons. Once per story, when you reveal this trophy to a werewolf, you may choose its initial reaction: Either it flees from you, or only targets you for Physical conflict. Revealing this trophy to Lupines for more than once per story initiates the same choice, but the Storyteller chooses the reaction instead.

••••• **Ambassador:** Your knowledge of werewolves is so great that you can parley with them. You've earned mutual respect from both the Kindred and the Lupines, and you can use that respect to establish alliances between the two. The alliances you form are tense and fleeting, but compared to the status quo of "kill on sight," they're a dramatic improvement. Whenever you try to heal the rift between individual vampires and werewolves, or stir the two to unite, you receive two extra dice to Social tests in pursuit of your goal. With sufficient effort and sacrifice, you may convince the Kindred and Lupines of a city to act as one to accomplish a task once per chronicle, with no roll necessary.

NATHANIEL BORDRUFF

Nathaniel Bordruff is an elder of the Chicago Nosferatu warren, one of the late Prince Lodin's personal minions. Lodin's fall opened a vista of opportunity before Nathaniel to seize the rulership of the city, a goal he pursued with a will for reasons that most other Kindred failed to fully appreciate but which he ultimately failed to achieve thanks, in part, to the refusal of his own clan's elder to support his bid for greater power. Furious and embittered, Nathaniel broods upon this injustice, among many others, and has gone increasingly further and further off the Kindred reservation in his ultimate goals in the years since.

Nathaniel Bordruff is a vampire who loathes all other vampires and most other humans with his entire heart and soul. He would like nothing more, now that a Second Inquisition rages, to expose the entire corrupt Kindred edifice to the cleansing light of day like the crusading monster hunter he once was. His all-devouring egotism allows him to believe he will be celebrated for this act and not another pile of ash with a rather greater constituent element of treachery to it once all is said and done. He has begun seeking allies to assist him in his mad endeavors and this may yet be the key to his undoing.

LORE

• **Recruit:** Something about you — maybe it's your jaundiced attitude, maybe it's your angry heart, maybe it's the way you complained bitterly once not about vampire society but about the vampiric condition itself — has attracted Bordruff's attention. Whether or not you're Nosferatu, he has extended his hand in friendship to you, in the form of Mawla (••) but requires you accept a one-step Blood Bond with him.

•• **Collaborator:** For whatever reasons, you have chosen to accept Bordruff's friendship or patronage. At first, this seems like a perfectly reasonable quid pro quo arrangement in which you do one another small but meaningful favors, but gradually the relationship grows deeper than that and you begin to suspect he wants more out of you than the occasional bag carrying or act of minor social sabotage. As a result, you have developed Resources (•) and Status (•) and a reputation as ambitious and hardworking, but with a certain stench clinging to you from your associations.

••• **Accomplice:** Bordruff has begun offering you greater favors in return for greater risks or actions taken upon his behalf. You have begun to realize, either because he has begun sharing more insight into his greater goals or through investigation or intuition of your own that there is some cause here whose dimensions you are only now beginning to comprehend. Your patron's largesse has granted you access to Haven: Secured Room (•) in a parishioner's basement, Contacts: CoC Consistory (••), and a growing knowledge of the inequities of Kindred society.

•••• **Conspirator:** You know it all know — Bordruff, satisfied of your loyalty, has brought you fully into his confidence, exposed to you the full scope of his vision, and asked you to join in his conspiracy to bring down Kindred society from within as a partner and fellow visionary who will cleanse the world of the stain of vampirism. He has granted you access to his principal human minions, the pastor of the Church of Christ and the consistory, all of whom are his ghouls and in whom he has instilled a virulent hatred of the undead. This constitutes Allies (••••) who regard you as a potential savior of humanity.

••••• **Betrayer:** What course will you choose: to betray the Kindred as a whole and seek some means of bringing the world where you now exist wholly to destruction? Or will you betray the one who chose to trust you to the Prince and the justice of the damned? Choose wisely. Either way you stand to gain (Status and potentially Mawla with the Prince) and lose.

THE PAINTED LADY

Any number of upscale tattoo parlors, piercing studios, and BDSM dungeons exist in Chicago, but only one can claim to be completely exclusive. Edith Beaubien's by-invitation-only salon is something of a legend among ink collectors, body modification enthusiasts, and those seeking an edge to their sexual kinks. Invitations to events hosted at The Painted Lady are coveted by certain elements among the city's Kindred, but the truest indication that one has "arrived" upon the Chicago scene is the receipt of a slim, metal membership card and a tattoo or piercing bearing the distinctive Painted Lady style. While many strive to collect ink from Beaubien herself, only longstanding VIPs may boast of that honor. It is even rumored some of the most prominent Kindred in the world have been passed over for membership in favor of random Thin-Bloods, Caitiff, and Anarchs with seemingly nothing at all to recommend them.

LORE

• **Plus One:** By a stroke of luck, your companion (or snack) of an evening secured an invitation and asked you to be their "plus one." You could only observe, not participate, but being there alone automatically raised your social capital amongst the city's Kindred. You gain two dice to Persuasion and Status (••) in any encounter with a fan or regular of the Painted Lady who sees you during the week following their visit.

•• **Engraved Invitation:** In your hand rests a glossy, ruby-red business card. On one side is engraved, in white, scrolling letters, "The Painted Lady, Chicago, est. 1907." The reverse is stamped with a date and a time in silver ink. Below, someone has hand-printed, "You are invited to come and play." At this level, you receive Influence: Painted Lady Enthusiasts (••), and you may participate in BDSM scenes, feeding upon any mortal willing to engage in blood play.

••• **Schedule an Appointment:** The slim, matte metal card looks nearly identical to the black business cards you received when you first came to The Painted Lady, only the name of the establishment is etched in silver on the front, and on the reverse is engraved, "Member" along with a day of the week. This card entitles you to attend one party per week as well as to schedule an appointment to receive a standard tattoo or piercing. Due to your elevated status, you attract the particular notice and regard of one regular patron, playmate, tattoo artist, or piercing technician equal to Retainers (••) and if you receive a piercing or tattoo, your Status among domain counter-culturalists improves by one dot.

•••• **VIP:** Your card is now the color of silver mist and the back is simply stamped "VIP." You may attend the salon on whatever night or nights you prefer, and you may access more…enticing scenes. A considerable amount of pain and blood is involved, but the mortal and Kindred celebrants engage in these semi-tortures enthusiastically. Accept the invitation to join the action or coolly observe; the choice is yours. At this level, your character has access to a Herd: Painted Lady Enthusiasts (•••) and gains Contacts: BDSM Community (••).

••••• **A Beaubien Original:** Tattoos, piercings, and body modifications from The Painted Lady's staff are remarkable, but to receive a commissioned piece executed by Edith Beaubien herself is a rare and unforgettable experience. The Nosferatu works in the Japanese *tebori* style, and something in her hand-crafted pigments makes it feel as if drops of the sun itself are being slowly deposited into your skin. The pain is worth it for a tattoo that never disappears upon waking and the satisfaction of telling other Kindred precisely who inked you. A Beaubien original allows you to add two dice to all Streetwise rolls, grants a permanent Status (•••) among Painted Lady enthusiasts and art lovers, and a permanent Status (••) among other Chicago Kindred.

REVENANT FAMILY: DUCHESKI

(TREMERE CHARACTERS ONLY)

The Ducheski were once the *Krevcheski*, a family of scholars in Eastern Europe patronized by its nobles. The Tzimisce subjected them to years of experimentation, transforming the family into *revenants*, a hereditary line of ghouls born with a semblance of vampiric vitae in their veins but afflicted with a craving for the real thing. For a time, they served the clan faithfully, developing a knack for creating advanced clockwork devices for siege warfare and torture.

When war broke out between the Tremere and the Tzimisce, the Krevcheski betrayed their masters, pledged fealty to the Tremere, and took their new name. They have served the clan in secret ever since, maintaining the Warlock's libraries, sanctums, and laboratories. The family is in decline; few are permitted to continue their line and even fewer are allowed to join the clan as Kindred. At least one member of this illustrious family is at your service.

Unless stated otherwise, purchasing any level of this loresheet for the first time provides the player with Retainer (•), representing the revenant. A Ducheski revenant is a ghoul built as a Weak Mortal that always has access to Auspex 1 and Blood Sorcery 1.

LORE

• **Nourishing Blood:** While a revenant's vitae is nowhere near as potent as the Kindred, drinking it can be just as sustaining. When you feed from your Ducheski revenant, they are not subject to the Human slake penalty of your Blood Potency. Feeding from them never risks a Blood Bond. The revenant is still harmed by your feeding like a human would be.

•• **Personal Library:** The Ducheskis hold a wealth of knowledge within their dilapidated ancestral strongholds. Your revenant has added their personal library of ancient texts to yours, increasing your understanding of the world's mysteries. Choose two of these three Skills: Academics, Investigation, or Occult. Whenever you make a test with any Specialty in your chosen Skills, you receive one extra die, in addition to any applicable bonuses.

••• **Research Team:** You have a tight-knit family unit of three to five Ducheski revenants in your care. You receive Retainer (••) to represent them. Once per story, when you task your research time with studying a new Ritual, their dedication and teamwork allow you to learn the Ritual in half of the usual learning time.

•••• **Ritual Assistant:** Your Ducheski revenant has a special aptitude for the story of Blood Sorcery, and can help enhance your magical techniques. When your revenant is present and helps you prepare a known Ritual, the Difficulty of the roll to activate it is reduced by 1. If more than one Ritual Assistant is present, the Ritual pool increases by one die for every two Ritual Assistants present after the first.

••••• **Ducheski Invention:** You own a one-of-a-kind Ducheski creation. This could be one of their infamous clockwork devices, or even a modern technological marvel designed by a revenant in your service. Give the invention a name and function, and choose a Skill. Your Storyteller will name up to three components that make its function possible. The invention is a Specialty of that Skill that provides three extra dice when the invention is used in tasks involving that Skill. If it is damaged or destroyed, any Ducheski in your service knows how to fix it, if they have all the components available.

THE SOCIETY OF ST. LEOPOLD

Chicago is a city of faith as much as high finance and *haute couture*; the Roman Catholic Archdiocese centered on the Holy Name Cathedral serves a flock of more than two million — most of whom are alive, some of whom are not. Scattered among the ecclesiastical ranks, hidden among the priests and nuns, the vicars and deacons, the missionaries in training and the lay brethren, is one of the oldest threats known to the Kindred: the righteous and implacable vampire hunters of the Society of St. Leopold.

Named for their spiritual founder and inspiration, the Dominican friar Leopold von Murnau, the Society has existed in one form or another since the formation of the Holy Inquisition *Contra Diabolus enim et alii Daemones* in the 13th century CE, the very earliest of the mortal forces to turn their hands to the pursuit and destruction of the Kindred and all their works. The organization has changed shape considerably over the centuries as its fortunes have risen and fallen in the regard of cardinals and pontiffs, at some points regarded as an invaluable tool in the battle for men's souls, in others as an embarrassing relic of the past, best left to molder forgotten in the darkest corner of the Vatican archives available. Never, however, has their mission changed nor has it entirely ceased attracting the service of those in the Church who have looked more deeply into the darkness than most and found horrors gazing back at them, even if their numbers slowly dwindled nearly to extinction over the years.

The Society of St. Leopold is no longer fading away. Since 2008, and the development of the joint program to ferret out and destroy the undead — referred to as "blankbodies" by the sort of individuals who can accept the existence of paranormal entities abroad in the world but can't bring themselves to speak the word "vampire" aloud — the Society's membership has swelled from a few dozen to several thousand members worldwide. Their extant mass of accumulated knowledge of the undead, collected and guarded and disseminated down the centuries, has formed the basis of much of the modern research into Kindred physiology and capabilities currently underway in blacksites the world over, now aided by science as well as faith. The organization's members now primarily function as specialist knowledge resource officers and field investigation agents for joint SOCOM/ESOG task force operations, the "first boots on the ground" when FIRSTLIGHT's Analysis Division indicates the need for more information from a suspected nest of "anomalies."

As a Kindred resident of Chicago, you possess some knowledge of the Society of St. Leopold, how it is organized, and how it functions — or, at the very least, how it did prior to the last decade — and may have some idea how or capacity to ferret out more current information.

LORE

• **Postulant:** Your relationship with your former (or current?) Church is that you once seriously considered taking Holy Orders. During the process of consideration, you dove deep into the history of the archdiocese and its constituent organizations, which may or may not have already included an office associated with the Society of St. Leopold. Once per story, you may ask the Storyteller for a piece of known information about the Society.

•• **Novice:** Your interest in entering into a profession of faith went deeper than most: you were on the verge of entering into your novitiate when that life was permanently torn away from you. Whether you resent this or have accepted it, you retain a considerable amount of interest in and potential contact with members of the local church. These Contacts (equivalent of ••) would naturally include your confessor, the members of the order you were seeking to enter who oversaw your training, fellow novices, or members of the local congregational volunteer groups.

••• **Brother or Sister:** Before your Embrace you *were* a member of the Church, sworn and consecrated to a religious community of contemplative, monastic, or apostolic character. Your current state of existence no longer allows you to pursue your vocation but you nonetheless retain the knowledge you acquired during the period of your existence when you actively served the Church. You possess detailed knowledge of the local diocese, including its members and properties, when groups meet and where, and which are affiliates of the Society, allowing you two extra dice on all Academics and Occult rolls relating to the religious district of your expertise. You may use this knowledge once per story to find a safe place to hide among the various properties belonging to the Church (equivalent of Haven •).

•••• **Father or Mother:** You were a fully professed and ordained priest or the senior canoness overseeing a community of nuns prior to your Embrace. While you are separated now from your former profession of faith, you nonetheless still possess many of the advantages you gained while in service. You know exactly who the members of the Society of St. Leopold are in the city and where they meet, generally how often, have some idea which secular forces they are affiliated with, and have developed some strategies on how to avoid or misdirect them, amounting to Influence (•••) with the diocese when it comes to dealing with the Society. Additionally, you still possess access to church properties that can act as a permanent Haven (••) where no vampire hunter will generally think to look for you. This loresheet comes with the Infamy Flaw (•), as while the local diocese might trust you, the grander Society does not. They know what you were and know you stepped back from that life. They just don't yet know why.

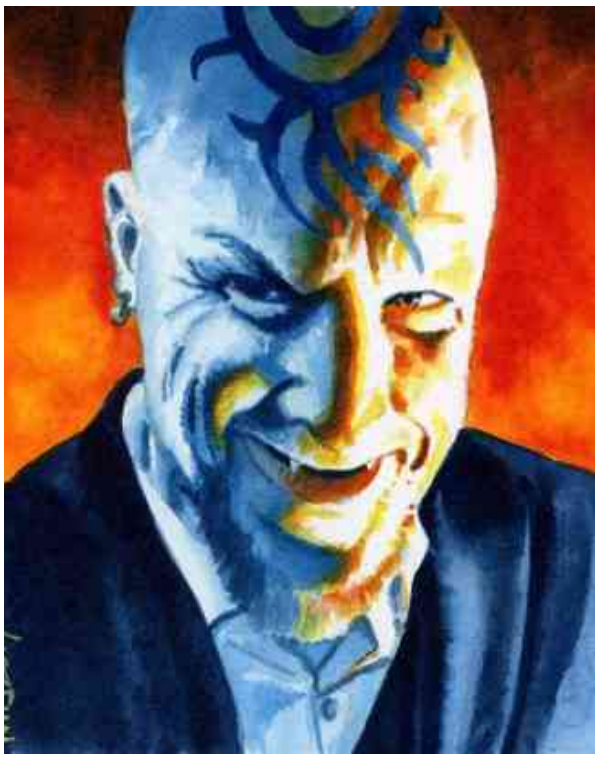
••••• **Inquisitor:** You are a former, fallen member of the Society of St. Leopold or one of its constituent organizations (the Condotierri, the Gladius Dei, the Office of the Censor, or the Order of St. Joan). You may have chosen to accept the Embrace for treacherous reasons of your own or you may have been Embraced and bound for some purpose of your sire's, but in any case, you possess deep personal knowledge of the Society and its inner workings, how it functioned historically and how it may be functioning in concert with the Entity Special Operations Group. Once per story, you may ask the Storyteller for one piece of true and accurate information about the Society and its current activities. If you are a traitor, congratulations! Your treachery may yet bear fruit. If you are in bondage against your will, congratulations! Your vengeance may well be nigh.

TALLEY

Cold, professional, and possessing a rare specialty in both bodyguarding and murdering, the Lasombra idolize Talley, while most vampires outside the Night Clan despise him. To hear him tell it, Talley was among the first Lasombra to join the Sabbat as a way of breaking the elders' chains. Now that he's an elder, his view hasn't changed much. He feels a vampire can never stop punching up at unworthy masters, and these nights, it just so happens the Camarilla are better placed to do so than the degenerated Sabbat and the chaotic Anarch Movement.

Never a rebel in his own right, Talley works for the highest bidder and never reneges on a contract. This code of honor, combined with a truly dry sense of humor, is all he possesses to mark him as anything other than a bloodthirsty predator. Few Kindred cross Talley and survive, and the vampire who does feels inclined to constantly look over their shoulder.

Representing an assortment of powerful Lasombra, Talley participates in talks tonight permitting Keepers into the Camarilla's ranks. Word is, he put the flame to Lucita at the Camarilla's command, and did so without hesitation. Unfortunately for Talley, it seems he's soon to be hung out to dry by the very masters he's served so diligently for centuries.



LORE

• **Recognize the Signs:** Like Talley, you have a sense of when danger approaches, and it's time to change allegiance or flee a domain. Once per story, if an action is likely to cause a severe social backlash, the Storyteller will tell you at your request.

•• **Secret Communications:** Talley's mastery over the sub-channels of Kindred communication allows him to operate as a highly successful assassin, existing outside the Camarilla hierarchical chain. You know of these channels, and can claim a prominent member of the Camarilla (such as a Prince) as a three-dot Mawla for use in a single session per chronicle. How you treat this contact is up to you, but blackmail or warm relations will produce different results.

••• **Tangled Strings:** You do not fight the elders like the Sabbat or the Anarchs. Instead, you seek to manipulate the masters from beneath. You gain two bonus dice to Intelligence and Wits dice pools when seeking to determine whether you're being manipulated. You gain an additional two bonus dice to your Social dice pool if you ever attempt to directly manipulate the person attempting to control you.

•••• **Trained Killer:** Talley acts as your mentor in the art of killing, either because his current master requested it, or because you paid his high price yourself. Once per chronicle, Talley counts as a Mawla (••••) and can supply you with access to his transportable armory on the same night, allowing you to purchase automatic weapons, explosives, blades, and even flamethrowers if you have the cash.

••••• **Personal Defender:** Talley is your bodyguard. You have already arranged payment, whether in cash, favors, or blood, and for the time being Talley is your loyal defender. He will accompany you anywhere you wish him to be at your side, casting no judgment and offering no counsel unless you request it. Once the contract ends at the end of the session, Talley will speak of no sins he witnessed you perpetrate.

WAUNEKA

The Nosferatu Wauneka is one of the most well-connected Kindred in the city due to his vast whisper network on the streets. As a Nosferatu, many Kindred tend to stay away from him, fearing his monstrous physical form. He's not the easiest to talk to, but he'll go places most others won't and that makes his information incredibly valuable.

His network of teen runaways, young victims of sex trafficking, abused sex workers, and homeless veterans contains vast knowledge of the city's underground. They see things most of human society doesn't, both human and Kindred crimes that occur in the darkness of the Chicago streets. Wauneka even schooled some of them how to watch out for the things that go bump in the night. He feels connected to them, like they're his family, and they accept him when most of "proper" society won't.

This vast network of secrets secures Wauneka's continued survival in Chicago, and even nets him some wins politically now and then if he can give the right info to the right person.

LORE

• **Secluded Meetup:** Wauneka has decided you're an okay enough Kindred to meet up with and have the occasional chat about what's going down. Once per story, meet in a secluded place with Wauneka that he chooses, and he'll dish on one secret you're after as related through his underground whisper networks.

•• **Spy Paths:** You've proven you don't mind hanging out with the outcasts of society, and while you may switch between respect and pity for them, they make you feel welcome. Wauneka has noticed this, and so has his outsider family. Once per story they'll allow you access to their secret pathways in order to spy on someone from a hard-to-detect vantage point. If you make a loud noise or a lot of motion, your perfect camouflage — perhaps a false wall, a shadowed ledge, or one-way mirror — loses its use.

••• **Insider Connections:** Wauneka knows someone inside of almost every industry and business inside of Chicago. Usually they're the people that go unnoticed, like the janitors, sanitation workers, or food workers connected to these places. Need someone on the inside? Once per story, Wauneka can hook you up with someone who can get you inside, or get you the info you need from the inside for a price. This individual counts as Retainers (••) for one session per chronicle, but will remain Contacts (•) for you from this point on if you spend the required Experience.

•••• **Spy Skills:** You've spent enough time with the underground people in Chicago that you've begun to pick up on their subtle skills of going unnoticed. You're friends with them, and even help care for them the way that Wauneka does. You can gain three pieces of secret information once per story, either through use of your learned spy skills or your close bonds with the underground people. You also gain free Skill Specialties in Investigation (Espionage) and Insight (Secrets).

••••• **Darkest Whispers:** Wauneka has come to trust you like one of his family, a thing he does rarely and not without great caution. He welcomes you into his most secret places (at least as far as he lets you know), and confides in you the darkest things he learns about the Kindred in the city. You are his confidant, his friend, and trusted ally. Wauneka counts as Allies: Wauneka (•••) and his underground associates. Additionally, once per story he'll ask your advice on what move to make to influence Chicago's politics, and take it to make permanent change in the city.

Lasombra

THE NIGHT CLAN, MAGISTERS, KEEPERS, SHADOWS, ABYSS MYSTICS, TURNCOATS, TRAITORS

When you enter the dark, and can see nothing but blackness, you are truly alone. Voices become distant. Even the dim light of the stars feels like a fading hope, devoured by the black. There is nothing.

Nothing but you.

Now that you're one of us, you realize you are the center of it all. Nothing matters except you. Everything will die except you. Does this make us nihilists? Perhaps so, but better to be pragmatic than to cling to the hope of redemption or the light.

Our elders believe we can only grow in strength through enlightened self-interest and preying on the weak. The weak will always be prey, so it is far better that their predators are competent enough to handle them with grace.

You will find yourself clad in the trappings of religion. You will find Kindred and kine falling to their knees and begging you for guidance. Fight the urge to send them to some Ministry preacher, and take them to your bosom. Hold them. Nurture them. Enslave them. Destroy them.

We promise those who serve us a place in heaven, a bounty when they slay our enemies: a glorious cocktail of dogmatic faith and absolute nihilism.

Does this make us evil? No. Don't be silly. The concept of evil is something on which elders sell their ignorant childer. We Lasombra are the only ones awake. We are awake because we stepped into the darkness, opened our eyes, and saw what was staring back at us.

There is nothing out there, and there is everything.

You are one of the flock, and I'm overjoyed to have you among us.

Who are the Lasombra?

Lasombra sires favor mortals who fit the mold of the clan. The Lasombra have been of a Darwinian philosophy since before the term existed. They have no time for weakness, feel the only way to survive is to excel, and cut away the trappings of sympathy and petty morality wherever it might slow down their ascent to power.

The Lasombra Embrace those who fight against the odds, survive dangerous situations, and exist at the pinnacle of excellence. The Magisters describe their Embrace tradition as "targeting those fit for more than a simple human life." Sociopaths, counter-culturalists, deviants, and scarred survivors all hold appeal for the Lasombra. Anyone who can say they have seen the dark on the other side, and subsequently came back stronger, is a potential candidate for the Embrace. Many become vampires obsessed with the accumulation of social power, prepared to mislead and use mortals to elevate themselves. Others were like that before the Embrace, with such pragmatic traits leading to their ascent in Lasombra eyes.

The Lasombra lean heavily into the institutions of organized religion to find their prospective childer. They do not look for the truly faithful, or the truly

Childe, I write to you now under my warden's gaze. He wishes for me to pen my truth, and I can only hope this last testament reaches you before Talley puts me to the flame.

We Keepers claim to court your souls, but all we want are your lives. We masquerade as your priests and counselors but in reality, we are nothing more than destructive accountants and crime bosses. We demand your service for a higher power, but all we want is for you to fall into lockstep and do what we command. We are a clan of power, and though we wield it with raw might when pushed, we skillfully deceive, break down, and puppeteer our victims through brainwashing and fanatical devotion.

We are a clan of darkness. We wield the night as a weapon and prefer the security of shadows. We are creatures of the night, and take comfort in that fact. Take comfort that no matter what, the night is always your friend.

Though I am to burn by Camarilla decree, I know it is so my clan can receive sanctuary within the Camarilla's arms. I wish my life was not forfeit, but accept the cost. The night is still our friend. From now onward, the Camarilla is the night.

I die so the Lasombra may live.

This statement was not extracted under torture.

Carolina Valez

depraved, but the priests who gained their role through a desire to have complete control over the spiritual destination of their congregations. Those nuns, monks, vicars, and rabbis who use their institutions as a tool to increase their power, often shaking hands with gangsters behind closed doors, are the kind of cold-hearted bastards Magisters adore.

The mortals Embraced into this clan surprise those who underestimate their ability, rising to positions of power in Camarilla cities more swiftly than anyone can predict.

Lasombra Archetypes

Activist

The Lasombra have claimed to exult the virtue of rebellion and opposition to tyranny for the last half-millennium. Though the clan now attempts to hold membership in the Camarilla, many younger Lasombra still refuse to kneel before unknowable ancients. In life, this character was likely a political or religious activist, recognized for the Embrace by a Lasombra who shared, or at least appreciated, their vision. Such a character could be a libertarian, anarcho-capitalist, or even a member of a terrorist cell.

Legate

Clan Lasombra values the art of the deal and those who make it. Whether in attempts to court power and influence, broker peace or instigate a war, a Lasombra found this character capable of the required task and Embraced them. In life, they were likely a diplomat or successful trader, or perhaps a marriage counselor or Mafia consigliere. They are well-equipped to handle negotiations on behalf of the clan, likely using the title "Legate."

Masquerade Templar

The Lasombra target fighters for the Embrace. Any mortal who has overcome extreme adversity draws the eyes of Clan Lasombra, often because the Lasombra place that adversity in the way of prospective childer. This mortal survived and triumphed over great and punishing odds. As a vampire, they fought on and proved worthy of their sire's respect, going on to fight against greater oppressors in the form of the Second Inquisition and the Sabbat.

Religion's Parasite

This Lasombra hid among the religious in life, continuing to do so in death. Whether a leader or simple congregant, this character holds allies within the faithful and at least some sway over like-minded individuals. Not a true believer, this Lasombra coldly manipulates others who hold faith, using the religious institution to serve their own elevation.

Winner at Life

The beaming athlete holding their medal aloft, the mother proud of her rosette-winning daughter, the investment banker tossing cash at strippers, the actor with cocaine lining his lungs — all exemplify the winner. Clan Lasombra loves winning more than they love the battle, and they will do anything to win. Weak humans who succumb to stressful failure hold no allure to the Keepers. This character is possibly braggadocious, and almost definitely envy-inducing, but few can deny their perpetual success.

Disciplines

Dominate: The power to mentally compel others into action, and remove and alter memories. The Lasombra speak lovingly of their ability to crush wills and command obedience without the unnecessary pretense of the Ventrue and Toreador. The callous way in which they exert this Discipline on victims earns antipathy from the other clans, yet few deny the Magisters' ability in brainwashing and subjugating prey. Without hesitation, a Lasombra uses Dominate to tell a victim to bare their neck and ready for feeding.

Oblivion: The ability to manipulate darkness as a weapon or tool. This power, envied by some Kindred, loathed by most, is the Lasombra's greatest strength and deepest weakness. Lasombra may use shadows to attack a foe, intimidate a victim with a cloak of darkness, or pass into one shadow and exit another to evade observation. Many claim there's a cost to one's soul for using Oblivion, or that it draws the eyes of the clan founder.

Potence: This power enables a vampire to hit unnaturally hard, lift with an inhuman strength, and bound across impressive distances. Few

Lasombra use Potence for the purpose of assisting their feeding, considering it a vulgar exercise to manually grab and hold a vessel. The clan's members favor popping an enemy's skull with their hands, driving a boot through a punk's stomach, or ripping a door off a hinge to command respect and fear in other circumstances, however.

Compulsion

Lasombra: Ruthlessness

To the Lasombra, failure is not an option. Their Blood will urge them to any act conceivable to reach their goals, whether in the moment or in Byzantine plots lasting centuries. Any setback is felt profoundly and they quickly escalate to the most ruthless of methods until they achieve their aims.

The next time the vampire fails any action they receive a two-dice penalty to any and all rolls until a future attempt at the same action succeeds. Note that the above penalty applies to future attempts at the triggering action as well.

Bane

Anyone seeing the reflection or recording (live and otherwise) of a Lasombra vampire can instantly recognize them for what they are, provided they know what they're looking for. People with no prior knowledge will know something is wrong, but likely attribute the distortion to irregularities in the reflecting surface or recording errors. Note that this will not hide the identity of the vampire with any certainty, and the Lasombra are no less likely to be caught on surveillance than any other vampire. In addition, use of modern communication technology, including making a simple phone call, requires a Technology test at Difficulty 2 + Bane Severity as microphones have similar problems with the voice of a Lasombra as cameras with their image. Avoiding electronic vampire detection systems is also done at a penalty equal to Bane Severity

Lasombra and Technology

While all vampires lose something profound at their Embrace, the Lasombra exhibit the most telling signs of this spiritual deficiency. When viewed in a reflective surface or a recording medium, their image appears distorted, sometimes almost invisible. Whether flickering, twisted, or transparent, their reflection betrays their undead state and lineage. Similarly, modern technology relying on touch or other forms of direct interaction — such as voice activation or use of a stylus — tends to glitch or simply act unresponsive to Magisters, and electronic detection systems easily pick up the tell-tale signs of their passing. It's as if they exist on a slightly different frequency to other beings, flickering in and out of light.

While Lasombra fledglings despair at technology's refusal to work to their wills, most swiftly recruit mortals or create ghouls to handle such "busy work" as taking calls and driving them around a city. This clan trend is so noticed among the Magisters, that a Lasombra who conducts their business without a personal attendant is held as a curious kind of beast..

Oblivion

The sudden blast of heat from the gasoline-steeped Cardinal Renate made Talley step back, shielding his eyes. A very mortal gesture. Talley corrected himself to watch the body burn. Tracking Renate, seizing her, and staking her ultimately came down to which of them was better skilled in the Lasombra arts. It had been a grueling task, but not an unpleasant one.

As his ghoul started typing "It is done" into Talley's phone, the few lights in the alley blinked off one by one. The shadows drew in, plunging the entire area into blackness. Talley cast about, looking for the source of this sorcery. His eyes pierced the unnatural gloom, but found nothing. A sound made him turn toward the fire. The Cardinal's body was gone, nothing left but the flames dying down. A stump of the stake was resting in the ash. "Maybe we'll meet again sooner than planned, my dear."

Talley dusted ash from his jacket as his accomplice at the other end of the alley spoke up. "By order of the Friends of the Night, you're next to go, Sir Talley." Shadows throughout the alley rapidly converged on the Templar, snaking along the walls and across the ground while his assailant maintained their distance. Talley watched as the tendrils approached, and considered for a second before nodding respectfully at his murderous childe, and vaulted into the dark.

Nicknames: Obtenebration, Necromancy, Shadowboxing, Abyssal Mastery, Tenebrae Imperium, Mortis, the Dark Arts, Black Magic, Entropy

Few Kindred outside Clan Lasombra and the Hecata know the Discipline of Oblivion, and as far as the Camarilla is concerned, this is a good thing. While the Lasombra favor the Discipline's raw power, the more necromantically-inclined Hecata explore its ritual uses. With this power, vampires wield the very stuff of shadows and unlife as weapons. Some call the power's source

the Abyss, while other practitioners refer to it as the Labyrinth. The one certainty is Oblivion channels the darkest arts, from where the dead go to die.

The masters of Oblivion call upon the it to wreathe themselves in night, enslave spectres, or throttle victims with their own shadow. Each time they use it, wielders run the risk of losing their soul and Humanity to the something darker than death and twice as hungry.

Characteristics

The powers of Oblivion allow for the control of forces or spirits of an extradimensional element, originating from a plane of death and nothingness. When manifest, this element projects into our reality as two-dimensional shadows on the surface of three-dimensional objects, either by themselves or as extensions of the wielder's own shadow, snaking along the ground, walls, objects, or people. This makes them impossible to attack with most physical means as any blow will only hit the surface on which they're projected, rather than the entities themselves.

Oblivion projections and spirits sustain damage from fire and sunlight, counting as vampires with Blood Potency 1 in this regard. They also take one level of Aggravated damage per round from bright, direct lights, and may also be damaged (Superficially or Aggravated) from blessed weapons and artifacts, depending on the strength of the blessing and any True Faith of the wielder.

Oblivion's powers are ineffective in brightly lit areas. Daylight and rooms without shadows are particularly prohibitive, preventing the Discipline's successful function, though ultraviolet light and infrared light places no restriction on the Discipline's use. Moderately lit rooms add one to the Difficulty of the Discipline roll involved.

The use of these powers takes a heavy toll on the psyche of the user, and many powers cause Stains as the numbing emptiness of Oblivion seeps into the spirit of the wielder.

Type: Mental

Masquerade threat: Medium-High. The abyssal shadows rarely show up well on cameras but are obviously unnatural if witnessed in person.

Blood Resonance: Psychopaths and the emotionally detached. Blood empty of Resonance.

Note: When making a Rouse check for an Oblivion power, a result of "1" or "10" results in a Stain, in addition to any Hunger gained. If the user's Blood Potency allows for a re-roll on the Rouse check,they can pick either of the two results.

Level 1

SHADOW CLOAK

Subtly applying the influence of Oblivion on ambient shadows, the user masks their appearance or seems more sinister and threatening.

Cost: Free

System: The vampire gains a two-dice bonus to Stealth rolls, as well as on Intimidation versus mortals.

Duration: Passive

OBLIVION'S SIGHT

The vampire closes their eyes. Upon opening them, the irises of their eyes are black against the white of their sclera, and they can now see clearly within pitch blackness, and can perceive ghosts who are not actively hiding their presence.

Cost: Free

System: On activation, the user's eyes become supernaturally attuned to darkness, allowing them to ignore all low-light penalties, including those of supernatural origin. They still need their eyes to see and are affected by blindfolds and the like as usual.

If a ghost is present and not attempting stealth or using a power to conceal its presence, the spirit becomes visible to the vampire using Oblivion's Sight. In such cases, ghosts appear as they wish to appear, whether as humans bearing the wounds that caused their death, as spectral monstrosities, or as perfectly immaculate corpses. Ghosts do not automatically realize when a vampire spots them, but if they do, many react with fear or anger rather than passivity.

This power does not grant the ability to make physical contact with ghosts.

Duration: One scene

Level 2

SHADOW CAST

Oblivion is powerful but can often be foiled by the simple lack of appropriate shadows from which to summon it. This power draws upon the darkness within the user to project a supernatural shadow from which to manifest other powers, no matter the ambient lightning. This shadow usually mimics the movement and shape of the user but can sometimes grow distorted and even

monstrous, resonating with the current temperament of its owner.

Cost: One Rouse Check

System: Activating the power conjures a supernatural shadow from the vampire's body. As long as the power is active, the user casts this shadow, which cannot be removed except by direct sunlight.

Anyone witnessing the practitioner notices the shadow cast from no visible light source on a Wits + Awareness roll (Difficulty 3). The vampire can direct their shadow, elongating or distorting (but not detaching) it at will, though it can sometimes act on its own accord, at the Storyteller's discretion. For the purposes of other powers such as Shadow Perspective, the shadow can be lengthened to up to twice the practitioner's Oblivion rating in yards/meters.

For anyone stood within the shadow's reach, the Willpower damage from social conflictincreases by 1. Standing in a Oblivion's shadow is a terrifying prospect.

Duration: One scene

ARMS OF AHRIMAN

Amalgam: Potence 2

The vampire summons abyssal appendages from unlit spots in the area, within line of sight. Local shadows distort as murky tentacles snake out from them and converge on one or more hapless victims. Whether by gliding up the body of the victim or engaging in a mystic grapple with the victim's own shadow, the arms are able to hold them in place or smother them.

Cost: One Rouse Check

Dice Pools: Wits + Oblivion

System: The user takes one turn and pays the cost, summoning the shadow appendages. Using these, the vampire can perform bludgeoning and grappling attacks against distant targets every subsequent turn. Additional arms can be created by splitting the dice pool, enabling the user to engage multiple opponents. (see **Vampire: The Masquerade** p. 125). The arms use the vampire's Wits + Oblivion to attack and deal Superficial damage or grapple, adding half the user's Potence rating (round up) as a damage bonus. The vampire can do nothing else except control the arms while this power is active. They can also be used to perform simple actions (such as opening doors and pulling levers) but nothing as advanced as typing or controlling vehicles. The arms have a length (in yards/meters) equal to twice the Oblivion dots of the user. (Note that the arms, being shadows, move across surfaces, not air, and any distances must take this into account.)

The arms have three health levels and use their owner's Wits + Oblivion to avoid and endure attacks. As two-dimensional shadows, they can only be harmed by bright light, such as from a powerful torch or daylight. The Wits + Oblivion roll allows the tendrils to attempt to snake into the dark corners of a room or overpower the light for a turn, taking a health level of damage but continuing the assault.

As the shadow tendrils constrict and assault victims via magical means, it takes an act of will to escape them. A constricted victim must roll Resolve + Composure and achieve more successes than the attacker to simply pass through the tendrils incurring no harm. This action does not dissipate the Arms of Ahriman, which can attack again on a subsequent turn if the wielder wishes it and the target is still within reach.

Duration: One scene or until ended or destroyed

Level 3

SHADOW PERSPECTIVE

The vampire can project their senses into any shadow within line of sight, seeing and hearing as if they were hiding within any part of it. This includes their own shadow, as manipulated by Shadow Cast (see p. XX).

Cost: One Rouse Check

System: Following a Rouse Check, the presence of the vampire in the shadow is undetectable by anything but supernatural means. (Sense the Unseen, for example). While this power is active the vampire perceives both their surroundings as well as what can be gleaned from the Shadow Perspective, as if looking through a screen or hole.

Duration: Up to one scene

TOUCH OF OBLIVION

The vampire using Touch of Oblivion channels the power through their vitae. When they make physical contact with a victim, the annihilating element runs through the vampire and into their prey like an electric current, except the effect is to physically wither the target area.

Effective on any part of the body, the touch shrinks and shortens muscles, snaps tendons, and makes bones brittle, effectively aging the affected part catastrophically. Its main use is in withering a limb, choking a throat, or blinding a pair of eyes.

Cost: One Rouse Check

System: Following a Rouse Check, the vampire grips their victim (requiring a Strength + Brawl roll if the victim is trying to avoid the vampire), with the victim suffering two levels of Aggravated damage as well as a crippling injury.

If this injury is inflicted to an arm or leg, the targeted limb is rendered crippled and will in the case of mortals require lengthy rehabilitation, while vampires can mend the damage as regular Aggravated damage. Likewise, Touch of Oblivion may render a target mute, deaf, or blind. See crippling injuries in **Vampire: The Masquerade** (p. XX) for details on the mechanical effects of crippled limbs.

Duration: One turn

Level 4

STYGIAN SHROUD

Darkness spews out of a nearby shadow as the vampire blankets the area around them in gloom equivalent to a moonless night, while sounds are muffled and indistinct. Anyone viewing the effect from without see it as a shadow expanding over every surface, including the bodies of any victims, in the area. Those apart from the invoker caught in the effects find themselves struggling to see and hear their surroundings, and mortals are drained of their very life by the suffocating power.

Cost: One Rouse Check.

System: The user makes a Rouse Check and spends a turn concentrating, spreading the shadow over the desired surfaces. The effect covers a circular area with a radius equal to twice the user's Oblivion rating in yards/meters. The area is centered on the user or a spot in their line of sight.

Anyone caught in the Stygian Shroud receives a three-dice penalty to all rolls, unless they possess the ability to see through supernatural darkness. Any mortals caught in the Stygian Shroud suffer one level of Superficial damage for every turn they remain within it, due to the power's suffocating effects.

Duration: One scene

Level 5

SHADOW STEP

Stepping into a nearby shadow, the user disappears only to reappear from the same or another shadow further away. Whether they enter the Labyrinth or merely pass along its surface is a source of conjecture among many Lasombra and Hecata, but the spiritual damage with which they can emerge implies they are touching something foul as they use this power.

Cost: One Rouse Check

System: The vampire must enter a shadow large enough to cover them, and emerge from another one turn later. The target shadow must be within sight, though it can be perceived by mystical means, such as Shadow Perspective, if desired.

It is possible to bring another through the passage, but unless that person is willing, they must be held by a successful grapple. If a Stain is incurred as a result of using this power, the passenger also receives one.

Duration: One turn

TENEBROUS AVATAR

The vampire gains the ability to change their very substance into that of a shadow, becoming a two-dimensional patch of darkness able to slither over any surface and through miniscule gaps and cracks. While in this form the vampire is only harmed by fire and sunlight.

Cost: Two Rouse Checks.

System: The transformation takes one turn, during which the vampire is unable to do anything else. Once the transformation is complete the vampire can move at walking pace across the ground or along walls, hampered only by hermetically sealed barriers.

Vampires using Tenebrous Avatar can envelop victims, causing the victim to reduce all their dice pools by three and suffocating mortals as with Stygian Shroud, above. If surrounding a mortal, the vampire can feed from them without penetrating the skin with fangs.

Practitioners of this power take no damage from physical sources but can be harmed by fire and sunlight as normal. Mental Disciplines can still be used at the Storyteller's discretion.

Duration: One scene or until ended

chapter seven

Chicago Chronicles

Many tales can be told about the city of Chicago and its many mortal and Kindred residents. The following example chronicle hooks act as seeds for your own stories. Should the players require a quick story with minimal preparation, or the Storyteller need inspiration for a longer chronicle, these hooks serve to illustrate the main beats in the domain of Chicago.

The Beast

It is known by many names, the other, the creature within, the inner darkness, the dark urge, but most Kindred refer to it as "the Beast." It is the feeling that feels sentient, residing at the core of a vampire's being. It gnaws at them from the inside, demanding human life in exchange for the gifts of power it brings.

Some succumb to its call, others forestall it with gifts of blood, and a few try to appease it in stranger ways, but all Kindred know it is real. It is tangible and not one of them is immune to its deathly demands.

Caged Animal

Cast: Alvin Carrasco — MMA coach, Terry Umas — Alvin's Gym janitor

What Happened: Some Kindred take solace from their Beast in controlled aggression. The thrill of the chase and the kill condensed into a moderated environment and released in a limited way. Some nights, it is enough to stay the hand of the Beast, other nights it is simply a blood-red rag to a Kindred's inner bull.

Training at Alvin's Gym late one night with the head coach, the session is becoming more and more intense as Alvin ups his game to match the protagonist's intensity. One well-placed strike follows another, and the Kindred comes close to losing it.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- Fists fly with increased speed and power. The PC ceases to hear Alvin's protests to calm it down a bit as the red mist fully clouds their vision. They regain control to find him quivering on the canvas beneath them with the gym's elderly janitor trying desperately to pry them off.
- Each blow that lands on the protagonist feels like a shell landing in the dirt of their mind, but with discipline, she can keep them from exploding.
- Alvin is picked up and slammed down to the canvas. As the two figures begin to grapple, the PC takes the opportunity to feed from him to slake the Beast.

Attribute Focus: Physical

The Sanctity of Elysium

Cast: Several Kindred of Chicago

What Happened: The rules of Elysium are simple and yet they form the basis of what separates civil Kindred society from the worst excesses of the Cainites. The most important rule is you shall do no harm to others within those confines. The allowance of this safe place for Kindred to mingle and socialize provides the pretext to mend old wounds and sort out grievances amicably. However, there are always those who like to weaponize those customs for their own gain.

Part of the reason for the sharp-tongued nature of Camarilla courts is the drive to embarrass your foes, and what better way to do so than to have them lose their composure in the one place where it is not permitted under any circumstances, even at the most heinous provocation.

One of the Kindred in Elysium is currently the subject of vicious rumors regarding a recent breach of etiquette and seems to be losing their composure. The PCs are in place to bear the brunt of the backlash or calm the feelings of the seething party, potentially winning a grateful ally.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- With a guttural snarl, the Kindred rushes past her compatriots and falls upon the bastard who slighted them with fangs extended and fists balled in rage. Her eyes bulge in their head as she rains blows down upon her quarry, who offers no resistance of any kind. A booming command from the Prince quells the Beast and brings the vulgar display to an end. The active participants in this event are banished from Elysium until a fitting punishment for their behavior is devised. The PCs may be the target of this rage, observers, or get blamed alongside the combative vampire.
- The Kindred rages at the offender as the coterie strains to hold her back. She spits and hurls all manner of invective toward the subject of her ire. Out of the corners of their eyes, the coterie sees other Kindred whisper and mutter behind their backs. In the distance, the Prince looks on and shakes his head in abject disapproval. The active participants in this event lose one dot of Status unless it's bought back with Experience or earned back through diligent service.
- Perhaps aided by the protagonist coterie, the Kindred spits back with a well-aimed barb causing their erstwhile opponents to scoff and storm from the room in a fit of pique. Other Kindred mock the childish display. The Prince notes the coterie's assistance in defusing the situation and they receive a note as they leave thanking them for preserving the sanctity of Elysium. The active participants in this event gain one dot of Status until the end of the story.

Attribute Focus: Social/Mental

Staying in Touch?

Cast: Any Touchstone

What Happened: It is only a matter of time before a vampire's new life collides with their old one. An old friend reaches out to the PC, seeking a meeting to talk about how much their lives have changed. Over the course of the discussion, they are asked why they no longer attend daytime activities, why they don't eat or drink with them anymore. The questions continue even after the protagonist asks them to stop.

The fire in their friend's eyes just worries the mortal even more. The closeness of their relationship allows them to be completely honest with each other, but there is a third party at play of which they are unaware. The Beast roars in the mind of the PC to silence this gnat buzzing in their ear.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- With a frenzied roar, the protagonist strikes out at their acquaintance, bellowing for them to stay away from them. They lose any benefits associated with being friends with the Touchstone though they may still follow their movements in secret.
- The PC breaks down in tears of blood at the pressure from the Beast to attack their friend. A heartfelt moment between the two is shared as the PC must choose whether to reveal the true nature of their pain.
- Composing themselves, the protagonist attempts to find convenient explanations for their absences and placate their friend on these matters.

Attribute Focus: Social

Whispers in the Dark

Cast: Michalis Basaras (p. XX)

What Happened: Fleeing from the deep darkness gnawing at them, a PC seeks solace in faith. They hear of a gathering of faith communities taking place at a nearby community center and there see a face they recognize from Elysium.

Rabbi Michalis Basaras recognizes them also and the two strike up a conversation. Reading his companion's intent, Rabbi Basaras asks them probing questions about their inner demon and the terrible acts it commands them to do. His questions become more and more leading as the conversation proceeds.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- The PC is spooked by the rabbi's personal line of questioning. Their reaction causes him to merely smile and wish them a pleasant evening before

moving on.

- The rabbi's words resonate with them in a deep way and he becomes an Ally (••) of the protagonist. He contemplates initiating them into the Cult of Shalim. By aligning with Basaras, they earn an Adversary (••) in another Lasombra, Talley, who thinks Michalis is a pest.
- Over the course of the conversation, the Rabbi gleans insight into the PC's deepest dreams and desires. This allows him to wield great influence over them (See Cult of Shalim loresheet, p. XX).

Attribute Focus: Social

Frenzy

For all their pretensions of power and control, the Kindred live on a knife's edge. One slight mistake can be the difference between a respected predator of the night, and a ravenous monster wearing a human's skin. Vampires live from night to night, never sure which they'll become.

Frenzy isn't just a moment of panic, anger, or starvation. It's an event with far-reaching consequences: the loss of status, the end of an alliance, the death of a friend. These are the stories of what happens when a vampire loses themselves, when they tumble onto the blade.

An Animal Out of Context

Cast: Zachary Forge — Reclusive Golconda researcher; Emma Smith — Loyal ghoul; at least three Chicago Kindred

What Happened: Zachary Forge was a quiet hermit who studied Golconda in a large, private estate on the outskirts of Chicago. He never reached out to the other Domain's vampires other than to announce his presence to the Prince. That changed when Emma Smith, his assistant, invited the city's Kindred to attend his haven for a presentation on a guaranteed means of achieving enlightenment. Whether they were seeking it or were just curious, the coterie attends.

Within his home, Forge reluctantly explains that to achieve Golconda one must accept the role of the ideal hunter, and only feed from the ideal prey. His clan's Bane causes him to favor feeding from sleeping men, which is not ideal for any hunter. Fighting against his nature, he has conditioned a new vessel — one of his assistants — to possess rarefied, tempered blood, as a result of months of pain and torment. He lets the maddened assistant loose in his estate and commences the hunt, declaring that the experience will bring the hunter to heights of enlightenment.

The guests are expected to join the hunt, some doing so, others sitting it out. The PCs can act as they choose. What becomes clear is Zachary completely lacks humanity or regard for the Camarilla's tight codes of conduct.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- Forge pounces on his fleeing assistant and drains him dry before the audience. Years of hideous experimentation eroded his will, and this was the last straw. Now, he has entered the final frenzy, the *wassail*, and everyone is trapped on the estate with him.
- If someone else drains the prey, Forge still breaks into *wassail* but escapes his home, fleeing into the night. The coterie must track down the wight in Chicago, and figure out a means to combat a being with seemingly limitless strength and power.
- Emma activates the manor's security system. This seals the wight in, but also everyone else. As she holds Forge in a weakening panic room, the coterie must disable the security without unleashing the wight.
- One of the Chicago Kindred in the audience takes advantage of the chaos to destroy a hated rival.
- Through some miracle, one of the protagonists calms Forge's Beast for a time. The matter of what to do with the unrepentant Golconda seeker then becomes their issue.

Attribute Focus: Physical

ZACHARY FORGE

Sire: Jefferson

Embraced: 1932 (born 1877)

Ambition: Achieve Golconda by becoming one with the Beast

Convictions: None

Touchstones: None

Humanity: 1

Generation: 10th

Blood Potency: 2

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3; Charisma 2, Manipulation 1, Composure 1; Intelligence 5, Wits 4, Resolve 2

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 3

Skills: Athletics (Chasing) 3, Brawl 2, Drive 1, Stealth (Stalking) 4, Survival (Ambushes) 4; Insight 1, Intimidation 4; Academics 1, Awareness 2, Finance 1, Investigation 2, Occult (Golconda) 2, Technology 3

Disciplines: Dominate 1, Fortitude 3, Potence 3

A Simple Favor

Cast: Billy Russell — Remorseful upper-crust fledgling; Naomi Stewart (p. XX); Kaiv Faustin — Unfortunate frenzy victim; Officer Kate Rogers — Beat cop on duty; Balthazar (p. XX)

What Happened: The coterie was supposed to take Naomi's new childe, Billy Russell, around town for a little while. Things were going so well, too. The fledgling's a nice enough guy, if a little twitchy, and the Rack was packed with all kinds of tasty, emotional people.

Turns out, he was a lot hungrier than he let on. As soon as the hunting began, he flipped out and killed someone in full view of the street. Now he's sobbing, there are witnesses, and the coterie has to figure out some way to clean this up.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- Balthazar shakes down a crooked cop to clue him in on the incident, and he sees an opportunity to knock some up-and-comers down a peg. He's influenced a few investigators to throw Billy and the coterie into jail by the end of the night.
- As Billy and the coterie deal with the initial fallout, Officer Rogers tails them. She's sure she's witnessed some gang violence and plans to apprehend them alone.
- Billy has a bright idea on how to fix everything: He'll Embrace Kaiv, his victim. Can he be talked out of it? If not, is the coterie prepared to deal with two fledgling frenzies in one night?

Attribute Focus: Mental

Inferno

Cast: Keegan Lyons — Desperate arsonist slumlord; Any player Touchstone

What Happened: After one bill too many, Keegan Lyons torched his own housing complex in hopes of collecting the insurance money. The fire caught on too quickly, and a number of tenants found themselves trapped inside the burning building.

The coterie is trapped, too. What began as an awkward social call with one of the coterie's Touchstones has become a nightmare. Will the coterie escape? What will they need to sacrifice to do it?

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- The Touchstone won't leave, either because they figure it's better to wait for rescue, or because they want to make sure their neighbors are safe. The coterie must find a way to make that happen.
- Another tenant in the building catches sight of the coterie using inhuman powers. In the moment, they won't do anything, but they're sure to bring it up once they're out of danger.
- As the coterie escapes, they find evidence that Keegan is behind the fire. Once they've escaped the building, they spot him trying to flee the scene. If they catch him, he'll explain everything, and promises absolutely anything to keep them quiet.

Attribute Focus: Physical

Rage Unending

Cast: Sun Che (p. XX); Any number of Chicago Kindred

What Happened: It was supposed to be a simple test, the latest in a number of Blood Sorcery experiments to determine whether or not Sun Che is truly possessed by a demon. The Tremere set up a basic ward against spirits, and had Sun walk into it.

The good news is that the ward reacted to her presence. The bad news is that a flaw in the ward caused an explosion of magical energy, unleashing a wave of intense, communicable frenzy upon the Chicago Kindred. It's only infected a few vampires at the moment, but if nothing is done, it will consume the entire city within a week.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- One of the protagonists is infected. They can choose to resist their frenzy, which will come as soon as they catch sight or odor of blood, with –2 dice rolled to do so. A critical success purges the infection from their system, with success or failure leading to resistance

or frenzy, but still maintaining the infection. On a total failure, the infection passes to the next nearest Kindred and remains in the carrier.

- The infectious frenzy strikes in Elysium. With social norms falling apart, the coterie must keep the peace and come up with a method to neutralize the infection.
- Sun believes that if the infected Kindred are placed in a new ward against spirits, the frenzy will end. If the protagonists can gather the vampires, she can set up the ward. There's just one problem: the "demon" inside Che is pleased by the contagious frenzy, and will try to sabotage the ritual.

Attribute Focus: Mental

With My Jealousy

Cast: Sierra Van Burrace (p. XX); Mr. Warde — Long-suffering ghoul; Annabelle (p. XX)

What Happened: There's a history of embarrassing incidents at Chicago's parties, and Mr. Warde might have set off a new chapter. After he saw his beloved master flirting with another Kindred, he dropped a cutting remark, implying that Sierra used unsavory methods to control her hospitality empire.

Sierra is on the verge of fury frenzy, and everyone knows it. However, she's hosting the party, and leaving just might be the humiliation to set her off. The coterie must set the party back on course, either by mending the rift or just getting one of them out of the room for a while.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- Mr. Warde has been in love with Sierra since before the Lasombra was Embraced. Warde just wants to be able to express that in public. Maybe the coterie can help with that.
- Annabelle's lived through many bad parties. She's sure she can get the two to reconcile, but first needs some help to lighten up the party's mood.
- Mr. Warde tells the PCs that Sierra spies on all her enemies, including Kindred rumored to be disloyal. Another partygoer eavesdrops on the conversation and decides to reveal it to the party.

Attribute Focus: Social

Hierarchy

Those Kindred who cling to the bosom of the Camarilla must respect the Traditions first and foremost, one of which refers to Domain. From this Tradition flows the power of Princes and the established hierarchies of the Camarilla itself.

If a Kindred ever wishes to scale those lofty peaks she must find a way to impress those above on the ladder, or face their boots upon her head for years to come.

Carving a Place

Cast: Valerie DuChamp — Art Historian; Ingrid Fallon — Personal Assistant to Mr Sovereign; Burt Robertson — Night Security at DuChamp Antiquities; Alan Sovereign (p. XX); Horatio Ballard (p. XX)

What Happened: Introductions went well and the coterie has been accepted into the city, but their Toreador companion caught the eye of one of the city's Ventrue. Alan Sovereign approaches them with an offer to, as he puts it, "Get off on the right foot on your first night."

A sculpture by Rodin was delivered to a warehouse belonging to DuChamp Antiquities. Sovereign has it in mind to seal a deal for this priceless object, but he is not willing to pay more than $10,000. Unfortunately, word on the grapevine is Ms. DuChamp wants at least $30,000 for it. Perhaps the coterie could persuade her otherwise, or even liberate it from her grasp before the negotiations drag out.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- The coterie manages to use its prowess and powers to negotiate a cheap deal for the artifact. Sovereign congratulates them but also chides them as their lazy approach to the problem has damaged his contact Valerie's business by making her sell cheaply. He tells them to think more carefully about their approach in future before storming off.
- After a carefully planned heist, the coterie succeeds in disabling or distracting the night guard, as well as removing the security disc from the office. They deliver the artifact only to find Valerie alongside their benefactor. Thanks to their actions, she can reclaim the $30,000 on insurance for the theft while Sovereign fences the artifact to his out-of-town contacts. He rewards them with a minor boon for a job well done.
- Deciding to keep the antique, the coterie makes discreet enquiries around the court for others who might wish to pay them the full value. Horatio Ballard comes forward, laughing, now he can extort his childe with the sculpture and says it's worth every cent just to see his face. He also praises their acumen in seeking a better deal for themselves rather than blindly following Sovereign.

Attribute Focus: Mental/Social

The Death of Kings

Cast: Olaf (p. XX); Eleanor Freeman — Black law student; Cedric "El Fuego" Marquez — Infamous arsonist

What Happened: The talk at Elysium turns to the past and mention is made of the former Prince and the various opinions at court of his achievements or lack thereof are interesting to the coterie. The information about him begins to chime with one of the members as a reminder of a local legend about a low-level crime boss who goes by the name of Olaf.

Investigating him leads them to the home of Eleanor Freeman, a young law student who seems to be at the center of some plan of Olaf's. Upon resolving to talk to the woman, they find her home ablaze at the hands of a notorious arsonist.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- Failing to rescue the screaming student from her home, the coterie is confronted with the sight of a shadowy figure crashing through the window and dragging her clear. Upon attempting to talk to or apprehend the girl's savior, they are easily beaten by what appears to be a mad, snarling homeless man and he rushes off into the night.
- Steeling their resolve, the coterie manage to save Ms. Freeman's life. They receive a note at their haven the following night, a simple piece of paper with scribbled words informing them the streets of Chicago are their friends now. The coterie is considered to have one dot of Influence when dealing with the Riverdale gangs following this point.
- Not only does the coterie save Ms. Freeman, they capture the man who set her house ablaze as he attempted to flee the scene. Olaf agrees to meet them in person in trade for handing Marquez to them. He does not reveal if he is truly the former Prince but becomes an Ally (•••) of the coterie.

Attribute Focus: Social/Physical

Lower than Dirt

Cast: Yvonne Grange — Toreador ghoul; Howard Dens — City graveyards and memorials worker

What Happened: Yvonne is a young ghoul formerly in service to Eletria of Clan Toreador, but now receives vitae from multiple Degenerates. It's her job to organize and publicize events for her domitors. She has received instructions to organize a Halloween-themed party in a local graveyard but has no idea of how to gain permission for such a thing.

Yvonne approaches the protagonists' coterie and asks for their help. In return for securing a suitable site, she says she can get them into the Succubus Club for an evening and even introduce them to some of her "bosses."

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- Dens rejects the coterie's application and forces it to return to the Toreador empty handed. The following night, their haven is disturbed by a knock at the door and a series of parcels containing Yvonne's severed body parts.
- The coterie persuades Dens to award it the permit by use of its Kindred disciplines. He is fired from his job but the party goes ahead and they claim their reward.
- Mr. Dens agrees to allow the coterie access to his family's extensive crypts in exchange for a reasonable financial consideration. This allows the party to go ahead without the need for the usual permits and records in place. Not only are the Toreador impressed, but Dens becomes a contact of the coterie.

Attribute Focus: Social

New Sheriff in Town

Cast: Balthazar (p. XX); Damien (p. XX)

What Happened: Reluctantly, Clan Brujah's Damien has agreed to become the new Sheriff of Chicago. He receives the honor at a public Elysium for his authority to be recognized officially. The Prince calls upon all present to congratulate the new appointment but the coterie notices one man stands aside from the crowds applauding the appointment before storming out.

Further investigation reveals this man to be Balthazar, who used to proclaim himself the city Sheriff. He says he was unfairly stripped by the new Prince of the position he claims to have upheld diligently. "Wait a second, I reckon you boys can help me get just about even," he says, even to a mixed group of Kindred. He indicates if they do not help him, they'll have hell to pay and attempts to intimidate them with his age and experience.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- The coterie acquiesces to Balthazar's demands and helps him carry out a simple vandalism job on what he says is Damien's car. It turns out to be one of the Prince's vehicles and Balthazar gleefully turns the coterie in midway through the romp.
- A member of the coterie recognizes the vehicle and expresses doubts, causing Balthazar to leave in a foul mood, saying they're no fun. They gain his ire.
- The party purports to go along with Balthazar but turns his own plan against him and captures images of him smashing the window of the Prince's car. They beat him down and hand him over to the new Sheriff, leading to his display at the next Elysium in stocks.

Attribute Focus: Mental/Physical

Taming the Wolf of the Woods

Cast: Prince Kevin Jackson (p. XX); Detective Walter Ambrose — Anarch police informer; Detective Hilary Renton — Undercover unit; Duncan MacTavish (p. XX)

What Happened: The Prince calls upon the coterie to perform a task in service to the highest echelons of the Camarilla. A meeting of great import is taking place in the city and the Anarchs of Gary are attempting to uncover the nature of it, or at least the date on which it is taking place. Someone in the 23rd Precinct Undercover Unit is informing on visitors to the Prince's havens to the Anarchs' enforcer, MacTavish.

The Prince's instructions are simple: Silence this police mole in whatever way is most expedient. The future of the Camarilla depends on the success of this investigation.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- After identifying and killing Walter, the coterie is attacked outside of the precinct by Duncan MacTavish, firing a high-powered rifle from a nearby building. They must preserve the Masquerade while sustaining the assault of the deadly Gangrel who rains fire on them in full view of the public.
- The coterie mistakenly identifies Detective Hilary Renton as the mole. After killing her, they return to Elysium to face the Prince's ire.

- The coterie gains a contact in the precinct by turning Walter to the cause of the Camarilla without killing him. Through him, information about Duncan's movements can be gleaned. The Prince informs the coterie their mission was simply supposed to distract Duncan, but they have gone above and beyond their instructions. They are rewarded with the title of "Hounds" and instructed to report directly to the Sheriff on their findings from their new lackey.

  Attribute Focus: Physical

Humanity

Vampires are unique, in that they are predators that live in fear of their prey. It is an undisputed fact that when the kine realize the existence of the Kindred, they retaliate with a force backed by numbers that no mastery of the blood can defend against. In order to survive, they must pretend to be that which they hunt.

It is not an easy task. The nature of the vampire threatens to reveal itself at all times. The humans they hide are drawn to them like moth to flame. These are the stories about what it means to be a wolf among sheep.

One More Kiss, Dear

Cast: Jason Sanders — Nostalgic real estate tycoon; Maya Reid — Vengeful ex-blood doll; Helena (p. XX)

What Happened: Before "blood doll" became Kindred slang, it was originally a unique aspect of early '90s goth subculture. "The Original Mid-West Blood Dolls" is a popular social media page, with several hundred people reminiscing about being young and living dangerously. Jason Sanders, the page's creator, has a surprise for the community: He's bought the deed to the land that the ruins of the original Succubus Club stand on, he's hosting a party there, and everyone is invited. Unbeknownst to him, not all the guests are still alive.

The PCs are crashing the party. Whether they're looking for a bite to eat or under orders to make sure the shindig doesn't breach the Masquerade, it'll be an event they'll never forget.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- Jason Sanders has an ulterior motive. He wants to reconnect with his old friend Sofia. What he doesn't know is that she was a vampire killed in the War of Chicago. Can he be let down gently without spilling the beans?
- Maya Reid was a blood doll until vampires killed her friend. She's hunted them ever since. She knows the gathering will attract Kindred, and she's ready to make them pay.
- The party is a trap. Helena used her powers to influence Jason to purchase the plot. She's planning to sacrifice everyone to an infernal power.

  Attribute Focus: Social

Questions of Mercy

Cast: Angela Batsakis — Childe-to-be; Olaf (p. XX)

What Happened: In late 1992, Angela Batsakis was diagnosed with cancer. She wasn't worried. She knew Sharon Payne, a woman she partied with at the Succubus Club who once confided in her that she was a vampire. The two kept in touch, and the plan was set. Sharon asked Lodin to sire Angela, he agreed, and that should have been the end of it.

The War of Chicago ruined that plan. Both Sharon and Lodin were lost to the carnage. Angela managed to pull through and went into remission for over two decades. She quietly returned to daily life.

Unfortunately, she's had a recurrence. It doesn't look like she'll make it, and she wants nothing more than to become Kindred.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- Angela attempts to blackmail the PCs into helping her, threatening to reveal their true nature to their loved ones. She keeps the evidence on a hard drive with a dead man's switch.
- The domain becomes aware of Angela and she is declared a Masquerade threat. She's not going down without a fight, and prepares to reveal the domain's existence.
- The PCs request permission to Embrace Angela to ensure her silence. Bringing her into the conspiracy may be the safest option.
- The coterie discovers Lodin survived the War of Chicago and lives under the alias "Olaf." Perhaps they could persuade him to keep his old promise, even at risk of angering the current Prince.

  Attribute Focus: Social

Scotty Cartwright's Last Scoop

Cast: Scotty Cartwright — Veteran hack journalist; Crespin Perez

— Novice hack journalist; Araceli Rivera (p. XX)

What Happened: Scotty Cartwright, Senior Editor of "Chicago's Favorite News Source" *Tell It All*, is no stranger to the supernatural underbelly of the city. He even helped a coterie save Prince Lodin many years ago. He's stuck to the usual half-true celebrity gossip the tabloid's known for since then, but a wave of disappearances and murders has him looking toward the occult once more.

This time, he might have dug too deep. One of the reporters he put on the story, Crespin Perez, went missing a week ago. Fearing the worst, he's taken the story into his own hands, and has enlisted the PCs for help.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- Perez' trail leads back to Araceli Rivera. She's held him captive in her basement to learn how to feed off of one person slowly, instead of many people at once. Scotty wants an interview with her, even if it kills him.
- By reaching out to the coterie, Scotty's breaking a code of silence he made with the city's Kindred years ago. The few vampires who remember the pact are furious and impede the protagonists' investigation.
- Perez was Embraced, and now works for the vampire behind the killings unwillingly.

Attribute Focus: Mental

Should Old Acquaintance Be Forgot?

Cast: Paul Haddock — Wistful child; Elena Mathers — Unwilling Embrace; Tom Haddock — Terrified father

What Happened: New Year's Eve is an exciting time for the Kindred. It brings the kine out in droves, drunk and horny enough to let a Kiss slide. For Elena Mathers, it's a painful reminder of what she lost. She was Embraced after a messy divorce at a New Year's party, just like the one the coterie attends. She'd rather sleep the night away.

Fate has other plans. Paul, Elena's son, lost sight of his father during the festivities and ended up in the arms of the coterie. No matter what they decide to do with the five-year-old, it'll be a wild night.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- Tom lost his son while being shaken down by a loan shark who was trying to collect a longstanding debt. Now the loan shark is looking for Paul as well, as potential leverage over his debt-owing daddy.
- Elena discovers the coterie with her child. After a joyous reunion, she becomes tempted to Embrace Paul and be with him forever.
- If the coterie returns Paul to Tom, they inadvertently set up a reunion between Tom and Elena. It quickly goes sour, and will lead to a messy Masquerade breach if no one intervenes.

Attribute Focus: Mental/Social

ELENA MATHERS

Sire: Margarite

Embraced: 2015 (born 1991)

Ambition: Remain away from other Kindred

Convictions: Never form an emotional attachment to prey

Touchstones: Paul Haddock — Long-lost son

Humanity: 6

Generation: 14th

Blood Potency: 1

Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 3, Stamina 3; Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Composure 3; Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 8

Skills: Athletics 1, Drive 2, Survival (Underground) 2; Animal Ken (Rats) 3, Insight (Emotions) 4, Persuasion 3, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 1; Awareness (Loners) 3, Finance 1, Medicine 2, Politics 1

Disciplines: Animalism 2, Potence 2

The Wrath of Sullivan Dane

Cast: Sullivan Dane — Famous vampire hunter; Manue Santoro — Diplomatic Vatican agent; Any Chicago Kindred

What Happened: Sullivan Dane knows evil. He's fought against it his whole life, and he has the burn scars to prove it. Armed with True Faith, he is one of the few mortal men the Camarilla considers a threat. However, Dane's getting on in years. As he refuses to use vitae to stay alive like some of his contemporaries, he knows he's bound for a slow decline and a violent death.

He's going out with a bang. Someone told Dane where the Kindred hold Elysium. As they gather, he lurks in the shadows, preparing his last hurrah.

What Could Happen:

- Dane is picking off the Kindred one by one. He'll try to separate the coterie, preferring to stake and immolate his victims in an open area.
- Sullivan knows he won't survive. He's going to lay incendiary charges in plain sight, hoping to take out the domain in one fell swoop.
- The hunter isn't alone. Manue Santoro, an Entity member, is tracking him. He finds the protagonists and promises protection for the entire domain under one condition: Help him convince Dane to help train the next generation of vampire hunters.

Attribute Focus: Physical

SULLIVAN DANE

Born: 1957

Ambition: Put an end to this blight on Chicago once and for all

Humanity: 9

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 3, Mental 5

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 9

Exceptional Dice Pools: Athletics 5, Brawl 6, Firearms 5, Melee 7; Awareness 6, Occult 7, Science 6

Special: True Faith 4 (**Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. 222)

Hunger

The thirst for blood is the defining horror in any vampire's new life. Driven on by this endless lust for human life, the Kindred find they cannot participate at all in human society without running the risk of quenching their unnatural thirst.

Such unexpected feasts have a habit of triggering clean-up operations as well as placing fledglings who lack subtlety in debt to those with the power to make problems disappear.

Blood from a Stone

Cast: Any Touchstone

What Happened: A long and drawn-out battle with militant Anarchs leaves a PC low on blood and needing somewhere to lie down for the day. They escape to the nearby home of one of their Touchstones, bursting in covered in blood and trying in vain to explain.

As they attempt to persuade their Touchstone of their innocence, the protagonist notices the vein bulge on their Touchstone's neck.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- The PC falls upon their most precious lifeline to Humanity, for a moment seeing them only as a blood bag. If they survive, the Kindred's nature is revealed and a tough choice must be made.
- The Kindred convinces their Touchstone they were simply an onlooker to a gruesome gangland shootout. They silence the Hunger but resolve to keep their distance from their closest confidants when hunger strikes.
- After a brief spell of controlled feeding from their Touchstone, the nature of their relationship changes as they become addicted to the Kindred's Kiss.

Attribute Focus: Social

Distracted Pursuit

Cast: Patrick Sullivan — Photography student

What Happened: Patrick captures a PC on film performing one of their Disciplines and a chase ensues. As Patrick flees the scene with the vampire in hot pursuit, they rush across a busy road and Patrick is wiped out by one of the passing vehicles.

Problem solved? Maybe for the moment, but the protagonist vampire catches sight of the blood flowing across the asphalt...

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- The PC throws themselves upon Patrick in the middle of the road and drains his bleeding body dry as several onlookers scream in horror.
- Summoning their Willpower, the PC holds back on feeding and flees the scene before the police arrive, checking later to see if Patrick survived the collision.
- "Stand back! I'm a doctor!" yells the protagonist as they bend down and feed under the guise of CPR, finishing the job the car started. "It's no good, he's dead..."

Attribute Focus: Physical/Social

One for the Road

Cast: Penelope Valbuena — Virtuoso violinist; Nero (p. XX)

What Happened: After accepting Nero's invitation to a performance of Puerto Rican violin prodigy Penelope Valbuena, one member of the coterie becomes enraptured by her performance, which reminds them of their musical instruction in life.

While enjoying an after-show refreshment, Penelope makes a pass at them and in their passion the temptation to feed rises.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- Succumbing to Hunger, the PC feasts sloppily upon the violinist, leaving Nero with a lot of explaining to do. They are indebted to him by a major boon.
- The PC subtly and easily feeds from Penelope, and depending on how they handle her, she could become a Contact (••) or a member of their herd (potentially increasing the number of dots). They gain the Adversary Flaw (•) with Nero, as he doesn't want the mortal corrupted by Kindred.
- Falling into a furious frenzy of feeding, the protagonist drains Penelope dry; her lifeless body is all that remains. They gain the Enemy Flaw (••) with Nero.

Attribute Focus: Social

Pick your Poison

Cast: Evan Klein (p. XX); Peter Witchcombe — Booze hound; Frank Veratti — LSD savant; Veronica Kroger — Cocaine queen

What Happened: On a night out with the gregarious Raymond Falcon, things take a sour twist when the affable musician takes one of the PCs to a "private party." He locks them in a basement room with no way out and three mortals taped to chairs.

He tells them in a deep and dark-sounding voice, unlike Raymond's, they must feed from one of them so he can know what they truly are.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- Refusing to feed from any will lead to Evan leaving them locked in the basement until Hunger forces them to kill all three.

- The door is thrown open by Officer Dirk MacGriff just as they are about to feed on Peter or Veronica, he charges them with attempted murder, leads them outside in handcuffs, then suddenly runs away, leaving them handcuffed in the street.
- The PC chooses to feed from Frank and the LSD hits their system. They are joined in the room by Evan Klein who tells them about his visions of Moonchild and wake the following night wondering if it was all an acid trip.

Attribute Focus: Mental

The Siege

Cast: Any Ventrue player character; Wauneka (p. XX)

What Happened: A spying mission goes hideously wrong and a Ventrue member of the coterie is trapped in a sewer tunnel with Wauneka while a pack of Gangrel tries to stake them out on the opposite side of a sealed hatch.

After days of not feeding, the young Nosferatu suggests they feed on the rats and other vermin that inhabit the sewer until their pursuers starve themselves out.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- The Ventrue PC is unable to lower themselves to feeding from the animals. The pair eventually surrenders to their captors due to fear of feeding on each other.
- Succeeding in overcoming her feeding restrictions, the Ventrue goes along with Wauneka's plan. They hear ravenous sounds from the other side of the hatch the following night and exit to find their pursuers have killed each other in frenzy.
- The Hunger drives the Ventrue to diablerie and they must now cover up their heinous sin or be considered anathema.

Attribute Focus: Mental

You Are What You Eat

For the Kindred, it's not just a cliché, it's a flat-out fact. Vampires don't only consume blood; they dine on the memories and emotions that lie within it. Without these spices to flavor it, blood becomes a bland stew of proteins, sugars, and ions. In other words, they eat life itself.

But, they cannot feed from life as impartial bystanders. They seek out its pulses and take part. These are the stories of the human condition, and how the Kindred play a role in it.

Goodbye, Mr. Critias

Cast: Alex Robinson — Lovelorn college professor; Critias (p. XX)

What Happened: Twenty years ago, Alex Robinson studied philosophy at the University of Chicago. One of his teachers was Critias, who taught under the assumed name of Professor James Kazan. To his starstruck pupils, however, he was just "The Doctor." Alex became a part of the Brujah's inner circle and one of his favorites. When he left mortal society for an extended period to establish his Entelechy School, he abandoned his philosophy students, leaving no trace of where he went.

Years passed, and Alex became a well-respected teacher in his own right. After years of teaching philosophy around the country, he's returned to his Alma Mater, hoping to discover whatever became of the teacher he loved. His search is about to bear fruit, and Critias enlists the coterie's help in ensuring he isn't found.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- Alex learns there's no official explanation as to what happened to James Kazan. He simply disappeared from the records. If the PCs can forge absolute proof of the identity's death, it just might keep him off the trail.
- Convinced they had something to do with Critias' "disappearance," Alex hunts down a member of the protagonist coterie. He'll take what he can find straight to the police, even if the information he's gleaned isn't correct.
- Alex discovers what happened to his beloved teacher, but won't accept the truth. In addition, Critias changes his mind: If he must be the new Menele, perhaps Alex must become his own new Critias.

Attribute Focus: Mental

Horrors in Blue

Cast: "Scias" — Misled cult leader; "Penitent" — Infernalist puppetmaster

What Happened: The city's always had its alternative religions and niche temples, but the Chapel of All Sense is something new. Members wear signature blue cloaks when preaching their hedonist faith to the public, a sight becoming more common in recent nights.

On the surface, the chapel's nothing too out of the ordinary. It proposes a kind of tantric sensual

stimulation: In order to find enlightenment, people must be brought to the edge of sensory overload and then brought back. However, someone has turned the faith onto Kindred vitae, labeling it "the ultimate rush." Since then, vampires around the city have been vanishing; all of them last seen with blue cloaks.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- They aren't just using the vampires they capture for vitae. Scias believes that if the vampires undergo the same regimen as their underlings, they would achieve their own form of enlightenment and produce more vitae for the cult to use. They've discovered that careful exposure to the sun is a great way to get a vampire to feel something.
- The vampires weren't kidnapped at all. They were actually a secret coterie, and the chapel was the cover for their herd. They're using the chaos of their "disappearance" to prepare for a strike against their enemies.
- Penitent, the secret head of the Chapel, is actually a rogue Sabbat vampire named Bill Butler. The faith's doctrines are preparing its members to become vessels for evil spirits. The kidnapped vampires are offerings to the spirits; getting mortals addicted to their vitae is merely an added bonus. The summoning is almost complete.

Attribute Focus: Mental

"PENITENT" BILL BUTLER

Sire: Demian, the Inverted

Embraced: 1989 (born 1943)

Ambition: Lead the cult into becoming vessels for spirits of murder and violence

Convictions: None

Touchstones: None

Humanity: 2

Generation: 13th

Blood Potency: 2

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4; Charisma 3, Manipulation 5, Composure 2; Intelligence 4, Wits 2, Resolve 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 5

Skills: Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Craft (Torture) 3, Drive 1, Firearms 3, Larceny 2, Melee 2, Stealth 3; Etiquette 2, Intimidation 1, Leadership (Cultists) 3, Performance (Acting) 4, Subterfuge 3; Awareness 1, Finance 1, Investigation 2, Occult (Cainite Heresy) 4, Politics (Camarilla, Sabbat) 3

Disciplines: Celerity 1, Obfuscate 2, Potence 2, Protean 2

Patrol Duty

Cast: Any Chicago Kindred, especially those in coteries (p. XX)

What Happened: A vampire must find ways of enjoying, or at least tolerating, their state. Whether it's the thrills, the kills, or just the rush of a good night out, Kindred strive to find meaning in undeath. Sometimes though, meaning is thrust upon them by a Prince or Sheriff.

"Patrol Duty" is one such responsibility delegated to reliable coteries in Chicago, and is reputedly where Jackson and Damien groom new Hounds. Kindred are selected to go from feeding ground to feeding ground, taking notes on who's who and what's what and then presenting a report back to their master like they're back in third grade. Tonight is the night for the PCs' Patrol Duty, and that means putting plans on hold for a slow, boring census of the city.

Nothing stays boring for long.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- Two coteries have had enough of each other, and they're going to throw down. Someone's bound to be on their way to keep the peace, but maybe it wouldn't hurt to have a little fun before they show up. Then again, that could just start a bloody rivalry that lasts for years.
- Someone's poaching blood in another coterie's feeding grounds. They don't know who it is yet, but they'd be happy if the PCs could assist them in finding the poacher and teaching them a lesson.
- The domain census has an ulterior motive. Rumors of Lupine appearances in the city have been spreading, and the census is to ensure the domain that nothing is wrong. The only problem is that something *is* wrong: The rumors were true, and a pack of Lupines is sneaking around the city. They need to be driven out, ideally without starting a war.

Attribute Focus: Physical

Within the Friendly Confines

Cast: Adze (p. XX); Horatio Ballard (p. XX); Alan Sovereign (p. XX)

What Happened: An old, beloved baseball park has fallen on hard times after years of mismanagement, and two Kindred want to claim it as their own. Horatio Ballard sees the park as the first step in a new strategy to establish a new power base. No one's going to laugh at him if they drive by Ballard Field every night. Adze's more ambitious. The old name would stay, but the Nosferatu wants a total revitalization, complete with an attached shopping center providing guaranteed jobs for the impoverished local community.

The last time the two vied for the same territory in Chicago ended in a turf war so violent it almost tore the Masquerade apart. Fearing the worst, the Prince asks the PCs to bring the two men to a compromise.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN:

- The PCs learn from Sovereign that despite Ballard Industries' net worth of millions, Horatio can't actually afford the baseball field. He's borrowing money from figures outside the city to make it happen, some of them vampires from non-Camarilla clans.
- An anonymous letter arrives at the protagonists' haven, claiming Adze is helping spearhead a Caitiff revolution, and the baseball field would be a rallying point. The letter ends with an invitation to Red No^{9} 5 to learn more.
- A renovation team has made a horrific discovery: a staked vampire buried beneath the stadium. The vampire was buried with thousands of dollars — and a deed naming them the stadium's rightful owner. The protagonists must determine if the deed is genuine, and if the vampire should be unstaked.

  Attribute Focus: Social

chapter eight

The Sacrifice

Whether Chicago is seen as a prime example of a successful Camarilla metropolis or an Anarch-ridden breeding ground, it cannot escape the changing times of the Kindred world. As the Camarilla strengthens its redoubt to hinder the Second Inquisition's intrusion, the Gehenna Crusade rages in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East; clans must reform or face destruction.

Introduction

"The Sacrifice" is a playable version of Clan Lasombra's induction into the Camarilla. This chronicle focuses on other vampire factions' influence over the ongoing event, and the players have the option to play Camarilla or Anarch Kindred.

Throughout the chronicle several characters and locations already mentioned in **Chicago by Night** will appear, giving the Storyteller and players an opportunity for interaction. New characters and locations are also introduced as a part of the chronicle. Although the chronicle follows a set timeline and chapter development, it opens a world of opportunities for exploring Chicago and interacting with interesting characters.

Players required: 3-5

Duration: 10-15 hours

Character Advice

Prince Kevin Jackson will, at the start of this chronicle, decide which group to approach for assistance. The Prince has different reasons behind approaching Camarilla- or Anarch-leaning coteries:

- **The Camarilla:** Prince Jackson chose vampires from his own flock because they can be trusted. He knows who they are, and if not, he knows their sires or grandsires and therefore is aware of their capabilities. Via his agents — the Sheriff and the Hounds — he may be aware of their mortal connections and responsibilities, so he can exert some pressure should they refuse or fail the mission.
- **The Anarchs:** The Anarchs, being detached from both the Sabbat and Camarilla, are a neutral choice. The Anarchs aren't known for their enmity toward the Sabbat or Lasombra, potentially making them more sympathetic and reliable as bodyguards and shepherds, with no old grudges to complicate matters. Also, Anarchs are expendable assets to a Camarilla Prince such as Jackson.
- **The Others:** The Bahari have a strong Lasombra membership, as does the Church of Caine, should

Jackson choose to get either faction involved. Any given methuselah cult may be the kind of distinct mercenary outfit Jackson hires for this task. Vampires of independent clans and bloodlines likewise carry little political baggage but have everything to gain from winning the Prince's favor. Of course, any character who owes the Prince or the Sheriff a boon is eligible for enlistment on this mission.

No matter which sect the characters belong to, it is assumed the PCs have at least a slight knowledge of one another before they embark upon their mission. This is necessary for the sake of the length of the chronicle and will also assist the players in creating deeper relationships within the timeframe. Use the relationship map in **Vampire: The Masquerade** (p. XX) when creating your coterie.

Prologue

The PCs have been called together by Damien, the Sheriff of Chicago, at a local O'Tolley's fast food restaurant. They are told nothing but that this is business ordered by the Prince and the need for a meeting is urgent. Damien has already arrived, sitting in a booth with an uneaten burger and fries in front of him. His normal laid-back demeanor is instead one of barely concealed nerves that can be picked up with an easy Wits + Insight roll. A bulky, brown-paper envelope lies neatly in front of him on the red plastic table and his right leg restlessly taps against the floor.

As soon as they walk through the door and place themselves in front of him, he slides the envelope across the table and gets up to leave, saying "the Prince only requested I ensure the envelope reached you. The four phones inside are burners and connect to one of my people. You'll get one use out of each of them and then they'll go dead. Clear? Enjoy the rest of your evening." He then departs the restaurant.

Certain acronyms and nicknames are used in the prologue handouts that the PCs can try to decipher using Intelligence + Politics or Intelligence + Investigation rolls. For the Storyteller, the coded language in the handouts means the following:

SC = Succubus Club
Our social club = Kindred Society
PKJ = Prince Kevin Jackson
The elite club = The Camarilla
My family = Clan Ventrue

HANDOUT #1: THE PRINCE'S LETTER

My trusted kin,

I write to you in complete confidence. Confidence you will remain silent about the information in this letter and confidence you will perform this task competently and swiftly.

Tomorrow night, a delegation will arrive at O'Hare. You are to safely guard and transport them from the airport to the third floor of the SC the night after at 21:00 – no later. The night of their arrival, it is your task to keep them somewhere safe, bringing them to the SC on the night following. I should not have to mention I expect the delegation to arrive at the SC intact and well-rested.

Our visitors consist of two individuals of our kind, a small-framed younger East Asian woman with long, dark hair and a bald, bearded older white gentleman who I choose to describe as "unkempt." Meet the delegation at 22:00 outside the Terminal Five Herrick's Grocers, in the arrivals area. A car will be ready for you at the Terminal Five parking lot, in zone #22, the registration and keys for which are also in this envelope, though you may wish to arrange an additional car of your own.

Do ensure certain troublemakers from within our social club do not disrupt your task. I am confident you are aware of whom I speak, but for clarity's sake I have enclosed files Damien compiled. Use the night you receive my message to subtly kill the fire before it begins. Do not cause unnecessary trouble by leaving stains on the ground. Merely subdue potential issues, temporarily, for your own and the city's sake. I don't want anyone feeling like they need to cause a rebellion due to your actions.

Payment for the successful completion of this task is guaranteed and in keeping with my family's generosity.

Sincerely,
PKJ

HANDOUT #2: NOAH GREWAL

NAME: Noah Grewal

ALIAS: "Flyboy"

BACKGROUND: This member of our club followed in Tyler's footsteps with his interest in the city's air-travel system. He believes O'Hare is his territory and claims to control everything entering and leaving Chicago via flight. He will undoubtedly raise questions about our guests and their business and perhaps prevent them from passing security, though we suspect they have methods of bypassing mundane checks. He has influence over the Department of Aviation's executive team, specifically one Felicity Miller.

HANDOUT #3: CHARLES DAWSON

NAME: Charles Dawson

ALIAS: "Crook"

BACKGROUND: When Charles becomes bored, unnecessary drama occurs, and we believe he heard of this coming delegation. Therefore, he will undoubtedly do whatever he can to draw unwanted attention and disrupt proceedings. He will most likely send out thugs to spy on you and sabotage your mission just to prove his relevance in the city. He will be around Crooks' Lounge near Rogers Park, as they are currently renovating.

HANDOUT #4: GENGIS

Name: Gengis

Alias: -

Background: If you haven't lived under a rock for the past few years you would know about Gengis and his alternative methods of dealing with his hatred for the elite club. He would happily go out of his way to release PKJ's hold on power. When he hears about a foreign delegation arriving, and I suspect he will due to his high status among the local rebels, rest assured Gengis will have eyes on the airports. I cannot say where he is at the moment, as his movements are completely unreliable. An informant tells me he has a haven on the Gold Coast at 126 E. Cedar Street, but security will be tight.

Part One: Pave the Way

Give the coterie legroom to discuss what its approach to the Prince's letter should be and what to do next. Damien is not of much help if they turn to him and will brush them off with him only being the messenger in this case. Prince Jackson will not be available for a meeting regarding the case, and if the group chooses to call him (in the rare event they have his number), they will be met by a voicemail.

The coterie can choose to approach the troublemakers mentioned in the files. They might also choose to only approach one or two. If they instead want to use their last night before the arrival on something else, skip the following three sections.

Approaching "Flyboy" Noah Grewal

O'Hare Airport is the only place to find Noah. If characters approach the front desk or the security guards in the airport, no one responds to the name Noah, but most are familiar with his mortal contact Felicity Miller, as the head of a long chain of authorities at the airport. They point the coterie in the direction of the head offices with a successful Manipulation + Persuasion roll (Difficulty 4) or Manipulation + Subterfuge roll (Difficulty 3) if they make up some reason to be visiting the Aviation Department commissioner, as she keeps late hours. The coterie might also choose to search for the Aviation Department without assistance and can find it behind a locked door meant for employees only, with a successful Resolve + Awareness roll (Difficulty 3) to find the offices and an Intelligence + Larceny roll (Difficulty 3) to bypass the electronic security measures. Walking to their destination, the coterie will see unusually heavily armed guards patrolling the airport with weapons in hand.

If surprised, Felicity's first response is to summon security using the phone on her desk. She isn't under thrall to Noah however, and can be simply intimidated into revealing the location of his secluded office in the winding corridors looping behind the forecourt of Terminal 2.

Noah's office, and those of many in the Aviation Department, is behind three security checkpoints and four locked doors, with codes required for entry, requiring Felicity to guide them through or use of a successful Resolve + Awareness roll (Difficulty 4) to

find Noah's specific office and three successive Intelligence + Larceny rolls (Difficulty 4) to get through the security doors. Manipulating other security staff, using ventilation shafts, or PCs disguising themselves as workers reduces the difficulty of any tests to reach Noah.

All the offices on Noah's floor are made of transparent glass and, though with the coterie visiting in the evening at the earliest, few workers beyond security are present. Noah's office door stands out as the only frosted one, and is at the very end of the corridor behind a bright overhead light. It is locked (one of the Intelligence + Larceny rolls above) but a square of light glows from inside the office.

Inside, Noah taps away on a laptop with his back to the door, the screen bright enough to illuminate the room. When the door opens, he slams the laptop shut and turns on a desk lamp. The entire back wall of his office is one big window, facing the runway. He watches the planes take off and land throughout the PCs' conversation with him, barely glancing at them. His intent is to appear cool, but his subterfuge disguises his concern. The most important thing to Noah is his laptop stays shut during the confrontation and it never leaves his left hand. He was reporting to one of his mortal masters when the coterie arrived.

Grewal is keen to get rid of the PCs as quickly as possible, and doesn't hesitate to tell them he's aware a group of "alternative" Kindred coming through his domain tomorrow night, via a couple of heavy-duty speaker cases due to be unloaded and delivered directly to arrivals without scanning. *Someone* paid for this service up front and he's already arranged it, but he absolutely intends to find out exactly who he's receiving into Chicago. He fully intends on preventing them entrance if they have "doubtful motives" or if news arises, compelling him to lock the cases and put them on the next flight back to their origin point of JFK in New York.

Coterie Options

Bribing: Noah is cash-happy and will gladly receive money in exchange for him letting the visitors through without trouble. The amount will have to exceed one dot of Resources (with a character losing that dot for the remainder of the story) via direct transfer or cash for him to make a deal with the coterie.

Manipulation: If the group takes the social route, trying to either charm or threaten their way around Noah, they either make a successful Charisma + Persuasion roll (Difficulty 5) or Manipulation + Intimidation roll (Difficulty 3) to convince him. It's easier to intimidate the thin-blood, as his grip on the airport is pretty weak.

Combat: Noah has an alarm button in his office. Should any of the PCs jump him or use a physical approach he will have up to a dozen heavily armed guards (use the Gangster statistics on p. 371 of **Vampire: The Masquerade**) at his side 20 seconds after pressing his buzzer. They will not attack the coterie unless the coterie proceeds to fight Noah or them, ordering the PCs to stand down and back away from Noah's office, through the gauntlet of guards and down the corridor. The PCs can attempt to fight and subdue the guards and Noah in the cramped corridor and glass offices, leading a to a lot of potential destruction and bloodshed.

Approaching Charles "Crook" Dawson

As mentioned in his files, Crook will be available in Crooks' Lounge on the North Side of Chicago. The bar is visibly closed and barred off with a large warning sign on the front door reading "Please wear safety equipment when entering." All doors will be closed off and there is no sign of life if PCs look through the windows. Crook will be sitting in the basement of the bar with his fangs plunged into the limp body of a young blond man. A small window at street level allows the PCs to witness this, should they get on hands and knees to peer through. The PCs can knock on the window to catch Crook's attention, though he'll quickly throw the body across the floor and disappear into the dark. The coterie might also look for the back entrance on their own and can find it using Investigation + Awareness (Difficulty 3).

If the PCs linger around outside the building, one of Crook's mortal retainers, Ina Miller of the Steel Horse Lounge, is also looking for Dawson and will approach them to ask if they've seen him. She's unaware he's a vampire, just thinking the Nosferatu is a horribly deformed, but kind (to her) man. The PCs may be able to use her presence to get Dawson's attention, as Ina is dear to him despite his monstrosity.

If they knock at the bar's back door, an eye-height slot will slide open to reveal Crook's eyes staring. His immediate response is to say "we're closed, go to the Steel Horse Lounge." The PCs will have to convince Dawson to admit them with a successful Charisma + Persuasion (Difficulty 4) or Manipulation + Intimidation roll (Difficulty 4). They might also want to use force on the door with a Strength + Brawl roll (Difficulty 5) but this will result in a furious Crook.

The basement of Crook's bar is a damp and moldy mess, with raw brick walls dripping with water from the heating pipes, the foul, sweet smell of rotten flesh, and the occasional yellow eyes of rats observing the PCs from the dark. The slight smell of blood forces those at

Hunger 4 or higher to resist a Hunger frenzy (Difficulty 4). By the time the coterie heads down there, the man from whom Dawson was feeding has disappeared, hiding in a wardrobe while business takes place.

"Please, make yourself at home. Yes, excuse the mess, we are...renovating. I'm sure you understand."

Coterie Options

Bribery: Crook's interest in material goods has slowly dwindled over the years. He can get by without chasing cash and knows the only thing he truly has to hunt is blood. If the players offer him money, he huffs with disdain and tell them money has no interest to him — no matter the amount they present.

Manipulation: Although Crook lacks both appearance and money, his years of street life and rough environments, on top of his clan abilities, have granted him with an initially stubborn mentality. He does not bow down quickly, and especially not to a group of new faces. Promise of chaos and city sabotage to come is a good way to win him over.

Combat: If the coterie uses violence or physical threats to get their way, they will have to fight Crook, who is fully fed and quite the striker, and his prey, the blond man he's brainwashed into service who is currently hiding in a closet. Refer to Crook's statistics on p. XX and Crook's Meal on p. XX.

Approaching Gengis

There are two locations at which Gengis might be found, though Jackson's information only leads to the Brujah's penthouse. The Mohawk, where Gengis actually is, requires a little investigation to locate or for the PCs to be Anarchs with connection to the Brujah rebel.

The Penthouse

As the coterie nears the high-end Gold Coast of Chicago and makes its way to Gengis' penthouse, they can clearly hear the raw sound of the Sex Pistols cutting through the otherwise quiet night. Following the sound will lead them to a gorgeous villa three floors high, with a gravel driveway and a couple of cars parked inside the gate. As they approach the fence, they hear aggressive barking and with a Resolve + Larceny roll (Difficulty 4) spot the security cameras monitoring the grounds. The coterie can ring the gate bell and the night security will answer via intercom. Any requests for Gengis result in a minute's pause before the security guard responds to say, "the resident is not answering his intercom. Maybe try during the day."

If they try to climb the fence, they can do so successfully with Strength + Athletics (Difficulty 3). The gate can also be lockpicked with Dexterity + Larceny (Difficulty 4) or the security lock destroyed with a Strength + Melee roll (Difficulty 4). Four Doberman guard dogs sniff around without chains to keep them at bay (see p. 373 of **Vampire: The Masquerade** for their statistics). Charisma + Animal Ken (Difficulty 4) or Dexterity + Stealth (Difficulty 5) are required to subdue or bypass them without conflict.

Unfortunately, even if the PCs do reach the villa and Gengis' locked penthouse, they do not find the Brujah within. He left the music on loud to annoy his downstairs neighbors, but is in fact elsewhere during this scene. If anyone breaks in to his penthouse with an Intelligence + Larceny (Difficulty 4, Difficulty 5 to do so without setting off alarms that summon security) they find a plush, well-appointed, and beautifully furnished apartment not befitting the Anarch stereotype, but no sign of Gengis. On a Resolve + Investigation (Difficulty 4) however, they do find a matchbox from the Mohawk, an old punk joint on Clark Street. Anarch PCs know this if they have at least one dot in Status as an Anarch or a personal relationship with Gengis.

The Mohawk

Gengis is at the Mohawk, a grimy club still adorned with the peeling posters of bands long gone and marred with graffiti inside and out. It's no tourist joint, with all its inhabitants regulars or friends of friends. These nights, few live bands play the Mohawk, it being more a place renowned for its jukebox, impressive record collection, and nostalgic atmosphere.

The door to the Mohawk is closed but anyone may enter. Outsiders are given a frosty reception from the regular patrons, with regular hazing taking place for the business-dressed and obvious middle and upper classes.

Gengis sits on the top steps of the stairway leading up to the second floor of the club, smoking a cigarette while talking to a young woman standing on the landing next to him. When he sees the PCs, he flicks the cigarette toward them to try and make them jump, before laughing.

"This is my night off, doggies. I'm guessing you're not all here for a social call, so," he cracks his knuckles, "Give me one good reason not to wreck a few of the Prince's drones right now. After all, word on Anarch street is you're inviting some nasty elements into town."

Coterie Options

Bribing: Gengis has all the money he could ask for and will simply laugh at the coterie if they try. If the coterie bribes him with boons or perhaps insider information about other Kindred, they gain his interest. The group has to offer him a small boon in order for him to leave them be and not cause trouble around the delegation.

Manipulation: Although it might prove difficult for the PCs, they can convince Gengis to focus Anarch disruptions elsewhere in the city (against a fundraiser Ballard's hosting, or an Annabelle-backed gallery, for instance) with a successful Manipulation + Persuasion roll (Difficulty 5).

Combat: If the players engage Gengis in combat, they will also have to deal with the old punks in the club, who love a knock-down, drag-out fight. See Gengis' character write up on p. XX for his stats, and p. XX for the Mohawk punks. Gengis isn't interested in fighting to the death, but will attempt to humiliate the PCs and have them thrown off the premises.

Exploring the City

The PCs might choose to not follow the Prince's orders. Following are short scenarios the Storyteller might decide to use depending on where the protagonists go.

The Nightlife

Exploring the city nightlife provides the PCs a chance to know the different feeding grounds, territories, and where other Kindred use their nights.

THE SUCCUBUS CLUB

As one of the most popular spots for Kindred in the know, the Succubus Club welcomes vampires provided they maintain the Masquerade and respect the establishment. The PCs can feed from kine here, and gather information from Kindred.

If the PCs ask about the visiting delegation, the only Kindred who knows details is the Minister, Thea Noel-MacCrain (see p. XX). She has a stalkerish lust for Prince Jackson and overheard him speaking to Damien about the visitors while eavesdropping the night before. The PCs can find her hanging around the bar, speaking loudly to the bartenders about how much time she spends in Jackson's company and how marvelous he is. If they make a successful Charisma + Persuasion roll (Difficulty 4) or a Manipulation + Intimidation roll (Difficulty 3), Thea will inform them the delegation involves some vampires called "Lasombra" but knows little more than that.

BLUE VELVET

Tucked away on Rush Street and attracting Kindred with particular and exclusive taste in blood — and a full wallet — is the Blue Velvet club. Although the club is smaller than the Succubus and Red No⁹ 5, it serves some of the most exquisite and rare blood in Chicago.

To have heard of the Blue Velvet, one of the PCs must have a Status of three dots or more or possess an influential Mawla or Kindred ally in the city. The ghouls on the door are under orders to allow mortals in, but restrict obvious Kindred unless they possess a VIP invitation. There is no queue at the door, meaning the ghouls are accessible and can be persuaded to let them in with a successful Manipulation + Intimidation roll (Difficulty 5), though they will call ahead to the owner, Bronwyn, to confirm the coterie is making its way in.

The Blue Velvet is a dimly lit and petite lounge with no access to natural light. It is elegantly decorated with deep-blue silk drapes hanging neatly from the ceiling. The tables, chairs, and bar are mahogany and every glass is crystal. Inside, the coterie meets the owner of Blue Velvet, Bronwyn. She will let the coterie taste some of her finer bloods as a friendly gesture, if they're polite, and can provide them with information if they make a successful Charisma + Etiquette roll (Difficulty 5). She will tell them she was asked to increase her stock, not because a vampire with peculiar tastes is coming, but because Damien told her imminent bloodshed is possible, and her reserves may be in high demand

RED NO⁹ 5

As ever with Red No⁹ 5, the line is long and cutting is not permitted. Groups of expensively dressed mortals smoke, vape, and chatter away as they wait, actually enjoying the atmosphere outside the club. It doesn't take long, however, for a couple of young men to start pushing each other when one accuses the other of hopping ahead in the line. The doormen shout at the crowd to push the young men out into the road so they can take their fight away from the line, but the fighting spills further into the line unless the PCs interfere with a Strength + Brawl (Difficulty 3) or Charisma + Intimidation (Difficulty 4) roll.

At this point, the players are introduced to Bennett Steadman (see p. XX), who controls the guest list at the bar. He steps out and briefly adjusts his suit before he goes up to the loudest and rowdiest of the group. He whispers something and the man turns around and walks away without question. Shortly thereafter Bennett looks over at the PCs, scanning them from top to bottom. If they assisted in defusing the situation, he waves them over. Otherwise, he gives them the finger before disappearing back inside.

Bennett cannot provide them with any information about Prince Jackson's actions and advises the coterie to talk quietly if they're going behind the Prince's back. He does know Jason Newberry was in his bar recently and appeared extremely agitated about newcomers heading to Chicago. Bennett offers the PCs a round on the house (which they can't drink, of course) and leaves them to enjoy the live blues band playing on stage.

Prince Jackson

It's not possible to arrange a meeting with the Prince, even if the PCs somehow have a secure line to him. If a PC already knows where Jackson makes his haven, or one of his business fronts, it's possible to look for him, but they will only find his assistants. They do not keep Jackson's schedule (it's known only to the Prince and the Sheriff), but the Prince will respond with severe punishment if he finds out his employees were harmed or coerced.

Clan Advice

PCs might want to seek out their Mawla or other elders after receiving the letter. Most of the Primogen and clan representatives respond to enquiries with curiosity, as many are unaware of the full nature of this visit. Typical responses are as follows:

Khadija and Marcel: *"I can tell you these newcomers are not of our clan. I am fully aware of our clan's intentions toward this city."*

Critias, "Khalid", DuSable, Ballard, and Rosa: *"I am sure if this was something that concerned the whole city, the Prince would have consulted the Primogen and city elders."*

Maldavis: *"Jackson and I had a rare meeting about this, but I need to keep you in the dark. I don't know who you'd tell and secrecy is important. For once, do as the Prince says."*

Michalis: *"I believe shadows encroach on our city, but nobody sought to provide me with detail."*

Alexa: *"None of our concern. And Primogen Newberry has gone to Gary on business, so you'll not find any answers from him."*

Galura: *"I see shapes moving toward Chicago. Dangerous. Dark. One wears manacles while the others pull chains leading into a cloud of smog."*

Annabelle: *"Oh yes, the Prince asked me to prepare a party at the Succubus for the arrival of some diplomats, but I assumed they were Archons, Prince Decker of Milwaukee, or the like."*

Part Two: New Blood

The second chapter begins just after sundown the next day. It is up to the PCs to have found a place to rest during the day. Immediately after they wake up they receive a call from Damien on one of the burner phones (if there are any remaining), reminding them they have to be at the airport in two hours to pick up the visitors and telling them he hopes they have taken care of Jackson's little problems, so everything will run smoothly. If there are no burners left, the call doesn't come through and a Resolve + Streetwise roll (Difficulty 3) reminds the players how far they have to travel to pick up their guests. Give the players a little time to talk things through before warning them about their strict time limit.

O'Hare Airport is full of travelers at arrival. A sea of people with suitcases and trollies shuffle and sprint past them, glancing into their cellphones or looking at their watches. With a successful Wits + Awareness roll (Difficulty 4) the PCs see the airport guards are heavily armed and there seems to be a surplus just standing around, occasionally speaking into their earpieces.

If the PCs make their way to Herrick's at Terminal Five, as instructed, the delegates arrive soon after. They walk silently toward the store and the long walk from arrivals to the grocer's gives the PCs plenty of time to study the two vampires. The young woman is short but has broad shoulders and a muscular frame. Her hair is long and chestnut brown, her face indicating East Asian ancestry. She ties a colorful belt firmly around the waist of her long coat as she approaches. A successful Wits + Investigation roll (Difficulty 5) reveals a black heart tattooed on her left wrist. She looks polished and confident, much in contrast to her traveling companion. Where people might turn their heads to admire the girl's confident beauty, they quickly withdraw their looks because of her male companion's stench. His anemic skin stretches across sharp cheekbones and his hollow eyes do not help his emaciated look. His bald head is wrinkled and flaky, his beard wild and untamed around a pair of chapped lips. He holds his arms in front of him with joined hands, so his many rings on one hand scrape against the surface of those on the other as his large eyes shift nervously, almost manically, from side to side.

The two vampires reach the store and do not speak with each other. A pair of mortals catches up to the two of them, if given time, both of whom have a military air. These ghouls are Arkady and Dmitri (see p. XX), Malenkov's servants. They will wait to be approached rather than go to the PCs.

If the coterie's vampires introduce themselves, Sierra holds out a hand to shake, before pulling in the first vampire to clasp it. She whispers "Clan Lasombra appreciates the welcoming committee" before letting go.

Flyboy's Ambush

If the coterie has successfully bribed, fought, or socialized its way out of trouble with Flyboy, skip this section.

Give the PCs a few minutes to greet the two Lasombra and talk together as a group. However, as soon as the initial greeting is over, a successful Wits + Awareness roll (Difficulty 3) reveals more and more security guards converging on the group, speaking aggressively, with some even going for their guns. Shortly after, they see a group of four to 10 guards approaching them. The concourse undergoes a security lockdown, alarms blasting through the area as a speaker tells everyone "Stay calm, this is just security test." As the concourse empties of civilians, the security remains in place, ordering the PCs and their guests to "stand still, do not move." All doors to the concourse are locked. Eventually, Felicity Miller (see p. XX) appears flanked by three additional guards. While Noah Grewal himself does not make an appearance, he's watching via security cameras.

"You two" she points at the new arrivals "breached security regulations on entry and will be detained. You did not clear this entry with Mr. Grewal or sign the relevant documents. The rest of you may leave, unless you have the green form required for entry."

The "green form" is code for the bribe Grewal requires to allow the two visitors to pass. A Wits + Finance (Difficulty 4) roll allows you to reveal this to the players. When Grewal met the Lasombra upon arrival, they did not have the required cash for bribes. He therefore waited for them to meet the coterie, whom he now intends to extort. He expects the PCs to sacrifice at least two dots of Resources, split among them however players decide; one dot is lost until the end of the story, and one permanently.

Coterie Options

Escape: Escape is a hard option and should be described as such. The PCs will need to act before security locks down the concourse to escape without incident, but their faces will still be on airport security footage,

and future chronicles should see Grewal blackmailing them. It's possible for the coterie to distract the guards through use of Disciplines such as Presence (to manipulate the crowd), Dominate (to make an individual do something dangerous), or even Oblivion (to darken the area and provide convenient hiding spots).

If the concourse is already locked down, the coterie's best route to escape is through Herrick's Grocer's, as the service entrance doubles as a fire escape without electrical locks and takes them into one of the chained-off parking decks outside the terminal.

If the coterie successfully evades security, Damien will call them later to say the Prince is furious there's been so much media activity at the airport. He holds Grewal responsible, but the thin-blood in turn blames the coterie for not clearing this use of his territory with him. Jackson expects the PCs to pull strings, make peace with Grewal, and make the media look the other way for the cause of the disturbance.

Manipulation: Felicity Miller doesn't know who Prince Jackson is, so any attempts to use Camarilla status or titles to manipulate or intimidate her won't do much other than cause a Masquerade breach. The coterie can ask to speak with Flyboy and try to convince him this visit is by the order of the Prince. Providing the letter to Felicity for passing on to Grewal (she will hold it up to a camera for him to read) will, after a few minutes, persuade him to let them go. Otherwise, they will have to make a successful Manipulation + Intimidation roll (Difficulty 4) or a successful Charisma + Persuasion roll (Difficulty 5) to convince Miller to let them go. No matter what, they will receive a letter later in the week with a fine for loss of income and setting off the security alarm, which equals three Resources dots. How or if the PCs pay is up to them.

Combat: Either Flyboy's patience has run out or the PCs decide to attack the guards (see p. XX) and Felicity Miller (see p. XX). Malenkov (see p. XX) engages in combat with abandon, but Sierra (see p. XX) will hold back. The guards will attempt to neutralize the group with lethal force, if necessary. If the group successfully subdues the guards, Flyboy admits defeat and allows them to escape. He won't pursue costs in this case, as knocking out or killing his security is a problem enough, and will likely lead to his quick death at the hands of the Sheriff or the Hounds. Likewise, a flagrant Masquerade breach in an area like the airport will lead to heavy penalties from Prince Jackson, if not a Blood Hunt. The Storyteller should make the players aware of the cost of murdering mortals in a place like this, to the Camarilla as well as their Humanity.

Leaving O'Hare Airport

Outside, the rain is slowly falling on the parking-lot pavement. A black van with tinted windows and its lights on is parked in the space noted in the letter. If the PCs didn't subdue Crook the night before, there's already a driver inside: a young woman wearing spectacles and overalls. If asked who she is, she says "compliments of the Prince." Otherwise, if Crook was handled, the driver is absent. That they've been given keys should tip them to the fact that a driver shouldn't be provided.

When the players enter the van, they have a chance to engage in conversation with the two Lasombra. The young woman speaks briefly, and constantly has her sight on the road and the people the van passes, but the older male Lasombra begins talking as soon as everyone enters the van.

"What a shithole this is. I've been on the frontline and fought wars with the worst this planet has to offer and Chicago is still worse."

He spits on the van floor and proceeds to stare at the PCs one at a time, before continuing his rant, his ire different depending on the clans represented in the vehicle. The Storyteller can decide how vicious the Lasombra is, but it is important the PCs dislike him early in the story.

The coterie can ask questions to both the Lasombra delegates during the ride. Following are examples of possible questions and suggestions for the delegates' answers. The Storyteller has the final say in the communication between the two parties, but let the following act as a guideline for gameplay:

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

Sierra: *"We are here on matters that, as for now, only concern Prince Jackson and ourselves."*

Malenkov: *"The little Prince wants to speak to us. Or we want to speak to him. I don't fucking know, it's my sister who is on this mission. I'm just here to get fucked up in this Camarilla shithole."*

WHO ARE YOU?

Sierra: *"My name is Sierra Van Burrace and this is my blood brother Malenkov. As mentioned, we are both of Clan Lasombra and we thank you for acting as guides for us."*

Malenkov: *"I'm Malenkov. I'm the first and the last of his fucking name. I fought in wars with a longer duration than your time as a bloodsucker. The frontlines were mine and I destroyed everyone in my path, Cainite or kine. Don't bother telling me who you are, because I don't give a fuck."*

MALENKOV'S CRITIQUE

Following are examples of criticism Malenkov can use. The Storyteller can use these as inspiration to truly make the coterie dislike him:

Banu Haqim: *"I was murdering a bunch of you bastards back in Afghanistan. I might have killed your sire. Your clan turns to begging so easily. Too easily. I guess fleeing from your problems like a bunch of cowards is better than standing up for what you believe in."*

Brujah: *"Oh! One of those self-entitled extended pricks. How goes the brainwashing of fledglings and neonates? I'm sure you punish those who dare think outside the box of the Camarilla with a firm hand. Good for you! Individuality is toxic, as we all know."*

Caitiff: *"And here we have it. The "Oh Caine didn't have a clan, that makes it okay for me to walk around clanless" type. Only fools seek away from the flock in nights like these, and I suppose you just don't have the mental capacity to comprehend that."*

Gangrel: *"It must be interesting to suck up to a sect and kiss their feet just to be the absolutely cast out of it. You must really think the top view of the Ivory Tower is amazing since you so desperately claw your way towards it, despite all claims to the contrary. Nothing but mutts."*

Malkavians: *"So...what exactly do you do in the Camarilla? I mean, aside from acting as comic relief. Watching your clan interact with normal and well-balanced beings is like watching a shitty movie with a hero and his useless sidekick. You just feel pity."*

Ministry: *"What's the matter, did you finally work out that your god is dead and now you've become an all-faith church? Christ, the fact you're even allowed in a domain makes me sick. My kind have spent centuries stamping on your kind."*

Nosferatu: *"How the Prince of this domain allows walking breakers of the Masquerade to emerge from their rat nests and sewer homes is beyond me. Maybe he just doesn't give a fuck if you're destroyed by a group of hunters."*

Thin-Bloods: *"I won't even waste a second of my time on you. You glorified blood-bag. Disgusting."*

Toreador: *"You are that clan everyone knows exists, but that's really it, isn't it? You are too politically unintelligent to contribute anything of value and you can't use your hands for anything practical. So, you resort to your looks. What a waste of vitae."*

Tremere: *"The clan that murdered its way into the curse and the Camarilla. Although it's something I can stand behind, you can't escape your usurpations. No wonder nobody trusts you and you sit isolated in your libraries. Always treacherous."*

Ventrue: *"Ah... the wonderchildren of the Camarilla! The Clan of Kings! Tell me, does the Prince like his balls played with or is he more of a straight to the point kind of guy?"*

WHY ARE YOU MEETING PRINCE JACKSON?

Sierra: *"To discuss important matters. I'm sure the Prince provided you with whatever knowledge you needed to complete this task."*

Malenkov: *"I'm sorry, I didn't know this was an interrogation! Tell me, who's the good cop and who's the bad cop?"*

HOW LONG ARE YOU STAYING?

Sierra: *"As long as Prince Jackson allows us to. Perhaps longer than any of us expects..."*

Malenkov: *"I come when I please and I go when I please. The same goes for my sister. You think this is your territory? Try again."*

ARE YOU JOINING THE CAMARILLA?

Sierra: *"Who really knows what the future holds? We might meet a pack of Lupines on our way to our destination. I'm sure the Prince will provide you with what you need to know."*

Malenkov: *"Do I look like someone who'd want to be a part of your special little club?"*

Crook's Hijacking

If the coterie successfully subdued Crook, skip this section.

Rather than heading into the city, the van drives west away from it. If nobody sat up front with the driver, she won't respond to knocks on the metal panel separating her from the van's back, having received a hefty payment to deposit the van in Busse Woods. They are now driving along the outskirts of town on a side road surrounded by dense forestation. The driver pulls over at the side of the road.

A successful Wits + Awareness roll (Difficulty 3) reveals the group is not alone and is surrounded by fast-moving shadows in the bushes and trees.

The driver locks the driver-side and passenger-side doors, but remotely unlocks the back doors to the van. A voice from outside calls the PCs:

"Cammy cats! Come out to play!" Anyone familiar with Dawson recognizes his gravelly voice. The Nosferatu is here with a paid band of seven thugs (use the stats for gangsters on p. 371 of Vampire: The Masquerade) with no agenda in mind other than to mess with Jackson's plans.

Coterie Options

Combat: Combat will begin if the coterie attacks the driver or exits the van. The driver (use Joe Q. Average's stats on p. XX) is pretty harmless, while the gangsters outside are paid well by Crook to gun down the van's inhabitants, in old Chicago style. Dawson will attempt to flee into the woods if the odds are against him. If he's captured or otherwise staked and Damien finds out, the Sheriff compliments the coterie's actions. If he's killed, Damien chastises the PCs for their rash actions. "All Kindred have a use and none should be terminated without the Prince's say-so."

Escape: It is possible for the PCs to escape if they bust through to the driver's seat of the van and speed away, though the gangsters will attempt to shoot out the vehicle's tires. If the PCs escape, Crook bans them from his bars. If the coterie tells the Sheriff or Prince about the encounter, the Prince starts taxing Dawson heavily for his actions.

Manipulation: The gangsters are unlikely to turn on their employer, but the driver could be persuaded to drive on with a successful Manipulation + Intimidation roll (Difficulty 5).

Gengis' Deception

If the PCs convinced Gengis to look the other way, ignore this section.

If the PCs decide to head into the city with their guests rather than stashing them in the outskirts, they will find roadworks and diversions pushing them toward a specific road. If a PC succeeds on a Wits + Academics roll (Difficulty 3), they know Chicago well enough to know they're being funneled. This is a coincidence, but one Gengis is utilizing to his benefit. The PCs can choose to take the long route around the city and avoid this, but doing so puts them at risk of being on the road for too long, thereby risking the dawn.

Approaching the city along the intended route, they approach a point where two cars appear to have collided, blocking the road. A queue of six vehicles stretches back to the PCs' van.

Gengis and some of his punk friends set up this incident to slow the coterie on their journey from the airport, having scouted that they were en route. The drivers of the two "collided" cars are pretending to exchange insurance information while the cars blocked from passing beep their horns.

If any of the PCs leave the van, Gengis and another three punks wait for the characters to approach the collision before leaving their car (four cars back from the incident) and coming up behind the coterie. If they remain in the van, Gengis himself will grow impatient, leave his car, and approach the van with his three compatriots trailing behind.

"So, are the new kids in the back of that van of yours? I've been jumping up and down waiting for them to arrive, and I don't see why you gotta keep them hidden away. Although the urge to kidnap your little friends and store them in a basement is pressing, I'm not suicidal. I know you're working for the Prince. But is he gonna forgive you if he finds out I got the drop on you? He probably won't hire you again. So, let's make my silence worthwhile. You're gonna pay me taxes for storing Sabbat in this town. Shall we say...feeding rights in your territory for the next month?"

Gengis reaches out a hand toward the PCs. If they look around, they see the cars are starting to move, but the three mortal punks aren't going anywhere without Gengis.

Coterie Options

Pay up: If the coterie agrees to Gengis' request for territory, they will be let through without any other issues. Obviously, if the coterie lacks territory of its own Gengis has gone way off base with his request, but won't believe the Prince hired licks without a domain to their name. They have to roll Manipulation + Persuasion (Difficulty 4) to convince him they have nothing to give before Gengis calls them "fucking losers" and frustratedly demands their van by way of payment.

Combat: Should the PCs engage in combat, Gengis pulls out a cell phone, telling them he has the cops just one click away. A successful Composure + Insight (Difficulty 3) reveals he is bluffing. Gengis just wants a quick win without bloodshed.

Manipulation: With a successful Manipulation + Subterfuge roll (Difficulty 4) the PCs can convince Gengis they possess no territory, even if they do. On a Charisma + Persuasion roll (Difficulty 6, Difficulty 3 if the PCs are Anarchs) they can charm their way out of

OTHER ENCOUNTERS

Some encounters on the journey from the airport are mundane but suitable for worrying the coterie. These might include:

- **Hitchhiker:** The coterie will see what appears to be the same hitchhiker multiple times. It isn't the same man each time, but they do look eerily similar.
- **Toll Booth:** A new toll booth on the road into the city has been set up during the day and none of the PCs knew about it. The amount of time their vehicle is kept at the barrier should serve to increase their paranoia.
- **Police Tail:** For a 10-minute stretch, a cop on a motorcycle appears to be tailing the van. The cop will only act to stop them if they do something illegal.
- **Recognizable Car:** The car up ahead belongs to another vampire in the city whom one of the PCs knows. Their presence is just coincidence.
- **Gas:** The van is short on gas. There's an Endron gas station en route, but the woman operating the cash register is new and delays the coterie.

If the PCs find the journey too easy, the Storyteller can spice up any of the above encounters.

the situation by promising more chaos than Gengis can dream of in the near future. They will escape unharmed.

If Gengis walks away pleased, lower the difficulty of all interactions with him by one level for the remainder of the chronicle.

Damien's Call

If any burner phones remain in their possession, Damien calls the coterie two hours before dawn to ask them if they made their pickup and if they've found a place to stash the Lasombra during the day. He suggests the PCs guard them while they sleep and utilize any retainers they have to hand. He is noticeably unhappy about the Lasombra presence in his city.

The Sheriff does not assist the players in guarding the Lasombra, as all his Hounds are to be kept in the dark for now. Give the players time to discuss what the next step should be. If dawn fast approaches with nowhere to keep the Lasombra, Sierra and Malenkov reluctantly agree to spend the day in the van, in an underground garage. Sierra has hotel contacts but wasn't expecting to have to use them at such short notice.

Part Three: Be Our Guest

If they've not already done so, the PCs have to make a decision on where to keep the Lasombra delegates during the day. The PCs also have to decide if they will guard the delegates or leave them unattended. This chapter takes place the night before the introductions at the Succubus Club. Let the players choose where to hide the Lasombra and use the scenarios described below to determine the events of the night:

Hotel or Motel: Chicago has hundreds of small motels and hotels. Most hotels are owned by kine, but with a successful Intelligence + Streetwise (Difficulty 4) they players know hotels like the Diamond Yama contain internal rooms famed for their spa-like atmosphere and surprisingly comforting lack of windows. What they won't know is Sierra Van Burrace, one of their Lasombra charges, owns the Diamond Yama. She doesn't intend to announce this any time soon and doesn't really want to run the risk of checking in to her own property her first night in Chicago. The PCs can choose whatever hotel or motel they wish, but if they check the Lasombra into Diamond Yama, the coterie gains a guarded room without having to request it.

Coterie Havens: If any of the PCs are native Chicagoans, own a haven in the city, or have an ally or contact whose haven they can use, the Lasombra can stay there for the day. Most non-Sabbat vampires will resist housing a Lasombra, and especially two they do not know. The PCs have to make a Charisma + Persuasion roll (Difficulty 4) or perhaps owe an ally Kindred a small boon in order to convince them to store the delegates.

Public Space: The PCs might leave the Lasombra delegates to find their own havens for the day, leave them use of the van, drop them off at a homeless shelter, or trust them to a church. The Lasombra delegates will not be pleased and try to convince the coterie that its

decision might result in catastrophe. Such a decision adds a level of difficulty to future interactions with the Lasombra until the end of the chronicle.

Night Becomes Day

Rules for staying awake during the day are on p. 219 of Vampire: The Masquerade.

Jason "Son" Newberry (see p. XX), the Malkavian Primogen of Chicago, has a terrible fear of the Lasombra. It isn't what they can do so much as what he believes they know of him. A Lasombra-led Sabbat pack once witnessed and encouraged his diablerie of another vampire, and since that time his paranoia has led him to believe the clan is holding evidence of his cannibalism over him.

For this reason, when Newberry caught word through his few remaining Sabbat contacts of a Lasombra delegation heading to Chicago, he realized these diplomats needed to be stopped. Not trusting any Kindred in Chicago to handle it quietly, he personally traveled to Gary, Indiana disguised as "Frank Gaughan" to recruit a bunch of no-hope Kindred with promises of fast pay and influence in Chicago in exchange for their service. He fully intends to hang them out to dry or murder them when they outlive their usefulness.

As a result of Son's plot, the Gary coterie (see p. XX for its members' stats) uses its three ghouls (use the ghoul stats from **Vampire: The Masquerade** p. 372) to track down the PCs and their wards during the day.

This part of the chronicle plays out differently depending on where the Lasombra are stashed, if the PCs chose to guard them by sleeping alongside their wards, let their ghouls or other allies perform guard duty, or if the PCs left them abandoned. The following events take place at 8:00 A.M. If the PCs have servants, consider allowing the players to take on those mortals' roles briefly to take in a daytime perspective.

PROTECTION+

If the delegates are in a secure location such as one of the internal rooms at the Diamond Yama or a safe haven, and guards protect the site, the Gary ghouls don't accost the PCs' location. One remains in place to watch the location, however, while two return to their reg-

nants' communal haven in the city outskirts, prepared to inform them that the haven is impregnable and any attack will need to take place on the road.

If the PCs' retainers are being played during this scene, they can make a Wits + Awareness roll (Difficulty 4) to spot the ghoul spying on them. If noticed, the ghoul attempts to flee by leaping into the nearest taxi, bus, or train. It's possible the PCs' retainers can capture the ghoul and bring her to their sluggish masters, though interrogation is tricky during the day due to the vampires' weakness at this time. Following successful Discipline use or a Charisma + Intimidation roll (Difficulty 5), the ghoul reveals she works for a vampire out of Gary named Snowman and was asked to scout the location of the visiting vampires from New York.

PROTECTION

If the Lasombra are in a safe location but lack bodyguards, or vice versa, the three ghouls do not access the haven, but one of them returns to the Gary vampires to inform them of the entry points to the site and that an attack there should be successful.

As with the Protection+ example, the PCs' retainers (if present) might spot the two ghouls watching the location. Unlike their single counterpart in the previous example, these ghouls stand and fight, seeing it as their only opportunity to get to the targets before they're moved.

If the Gary ghouls defeat the PCs' retainers (Arkady and Dmitri are absent), they enter the haven to douse the sleeping vampires with fuel, with the intent of burning them to ash. If the PCs are present, follow the rules for awakening (**Vampire: The Masquerade**, p. XX) when the fuel splashes them.

A fight with the ghouls will be fraught with danger given the flammable liquid and one of the two ghouls holding a lighter. From the moment the coterie wakes, it becomes apparent Malenkov is missing. If the ghouls aren't killed, they name their employers as Snowman and Malort, from Gary, and say they were recruited to follow the new vampires from the airport and burn them during the day.

UNGUARDED

If the PCs leave the Lasombra on their own, the following night they arrive to a trashed haven with broken furniture, holes in walls, dried blood staining the carpet, and three dead kine lying motionless on the floor. Sierra has a stake through her chest and burn scars up one side of her body. It will be up to the coterie to get her ready for Elysium, which may require their vitae to replenish her lost health (she has taken four points of Aggravated damage). As in the previous example, Malenkov is missing along with his two ghouls.

Where is Malenkov?

However the day proceeds, unless the haven was securely guarded and situated, Malenkov is missing. Sierra has no idea where her elder blood sibling has gone, nor where his ghouls are. If the PCs utilized their own mortal associates for guard duty or have access to security footage, they discover Arkady and Dmitri left the haven carrying a body — presumably Malenkov — in a large cement bag. The PCs' mortal retainers didn't stop them, as Malenkov's ghouls persuaded them the coterie instructed that the two delegates should be split up and their locations kept secret.

If Malenkov is still with the group, he resents it. He will take the first opportunity to split off with his ghouls, looking for a moment where the rest of the coterie is distracted.

Remind the players that Jackson's letter said they're to head to the Succubus Club for at 9:00 P.M., which is unlikely to allow them enough time to scour the city for Malenkov. They can dispatch their retainers to do some digging (this will be touched upon in "Retainers Mission" later in the chronicle) or leave Malenkov to his own devices.

Gary Attack

See p. XX for the Gary coterie's respective stat blocks. As a general rule, Snowman and One-Round act as the muscle with Snowman also being an obnoxious bully. Baggie is quiet and hangs back in support, while Malort acts as the coterie's driver.

If any of the Gary coterie's ghouls made it back to their masters, Snowman, Malort and the rest lurk outside the haven in cars or shadows fit to hide their presence. If the Gary ghouls were all eliminated, the Gary coterie does not know where the Lasombra are and does not perform a night attack.

It takes a Wits + Awareness roll (Difficulty 5) to spot Malort, who, with her levels of Obfuscate, is able to hide effectively and act as lead scout for the Gary coterie.

How the Gary coterie attacks the PCs differs depending on the method by which the characters travel to the Succubus Club:

Walking: If the PCs are bold enough to walk to the Succubus Club with their Lasombra charge(s), Snowman's coterie performs a drive-by shooting, with Malort driving and Snowman shooting. During the chaos, Baggie will attempt to snatch Sierra Van Burrace

WHAT IF THE GARY COTERIE SUCCEEDS?

It's possible Snowman's coterie succeeds in snatching Sierra (and possibly Malenkov). Their intent is to get a stake in both vampires, take them somewhere secluded — an alley, abandoned building, an underground car park, woodland, or, at a stretch, the outskirts of the city — and then immolate them. If the kidnapping is successful, the PCs have to engage in a chase. The Storyteller shouldn't ever let the Gary coterie drift out of the PCs' sight for long, rewarding successful Drive rolls to keep up with the antagonists, Awareness rolls to anticipate their actions, and Survival or Streetwise rolls to predict where they're headed.

If the PCs show no interest in recovering their wards, the chronicle takes a turn not accounted for in this story. They will need to explain to Prince Jackson how they lost the two Lasombra and take whatever punishment he decides to visit upon them.

and bundle her into the car or the sewers, while One-Round physically holds off as many of the PCs as she's able before fleeing.

Driving: If the PCs share a vehicle en route to the Succubus Club, the Gary coterie intends to run them off the road. Malort hijacks a bus to plow into the side of their vehicle, requiring the PC driving to make a successful Dexterity + Drive roll (Difficulty 4) to avoid getting hit. Damage from this attack should be four Superficial damage to vampires on the bus side of the vehicle and up to two Superficial damage to PCs on the other side of the vehicle. If they're still driving the van and filled it with gas the night before, consider the threat of a destroyed gas tank and a possible explosion. The rest of the Gary coterie arrives in a car 20 seconds after the collision. Their objective is to snatch and murder the Lasombra, but they'll kill Sierra (and Malenkov, if he's there) at the site if it's too difficult to extract them.

Bus or Train: Should the PCs opt for public transportation the Gary coterie throws the Masquerade to the wind. Baggie, Snowman, and One-Round catch the same bus or train as them and will attack them in plain sight, using mortals as human shields or threatening to murder kine if they don't hand over the Lasombra. If on a bus, Baggie holds the driver at gunpoint and intimidates him into continuing to drive until the Gary coterie gets what it wants. If on a train, the driver is likely oblivious to any fighting in a distant car, and simply stops at the next station, where Malort is waiting with the Gary coterie's car.

If subdued but not killed, the PCs can attempt to get information from the Gary coterie on who hired them and the nature of their objective. This contest should be a social conflict involving the erosion of Willpower or requiring use of Disciplines, as Snowman's group was told explicitly by Son that describing him would lead to their eventual, painful deaths.

If their Willpower is successfully whittled away, one of the Gary vampires states, "Some Camarilla bigwig from this city, calling himself the Ventrue Primogen, asked us to do it. He paid us well for it, too. Damn well. Said there would be territory in it for us as well, if the mission went off as planned. We were to deliver their bodies or ashes to him."

The Gary coterie recalls the vampire called himself "Frank Gaughan." There isn't a Ventrue Primogen in Chicago, but they didn't know that. As far as Snowman's gang was concerned, the money was good and that was enough. On a successful Intelligence + Politics roll (Difficulty 4, Difficulty 3 if there's a Ventrue in the coterie) one of the PCs knows Frank Gaughan as a Blue Blood who was murdered in the 1990s and that this new Frank is likely a pseudonym. The Gary coterie describes the man as nondescript, kind of average looking, and in fact struggle to recall his exact features. This is due to Jason Newberry using his Obfuscate Discipline to disguise his appearance.

The only method by which the PCs might identify the Gary vampires' employer is by asking where they were supposed to bring the bodies or ashes once the mission was done. They say they were asked to head to Lakeshore Hospital's medical-waste-disposal facility at 4:30 A.M. On a successful Intelligence + Streetwise roll (Difficulty 5) or through personal familiarity with Son, the PCs will know this as one of the Malkavian's territories. Otherwise, heading there at that time or after will lead to them getting caught in a Second Inquisition sting, as Newberry placed a called to the Feds to describe "blankbody activity" (a phrase he's heard before and come to love) planned at that site.

Part Four: Elysium

This part of the chronicle follows a strict narrative for the sake of continuity and game direction and will mostly consist of information gathering. Suggested answers to questions are provided, but the Storyteller can put in her own interactions. Remind the players of the strict ban on Disciplines and the

no-weapon policy in the Succubus Club, as violation of any of the aforementioned rules can have serious consequences.

When the PCs arrive at the Succubus, they find the club buzzing with Kindred and kine activity. Anyone who's anyone is here, along with a thick crowd of mortals for ease of feeding. Kindred emulate the behavior of mortals dancing, laughing, and rubbing bodies, all while pretending to drink alcohol. While some Kindred are there to spend a night in the arms of music and company, others clearly have the easily available meals or business upstairs in mind.

If any of the SPCs other than Jackson or Damien have become aware of Sierra's (and Malenkov's) clan before this scene, all the Kindred turn their heads to behold the alleged monster in their midst. They goggle at Sierra like she's some anomaly and whisper as if she's an exotic beast. Scores of predatory glances pierce the crowd and analyze the PCs as they make their way to the third floor, where representatives of all clans in Chicago are already mingling in the soundproofed chambers. The upper lounge's entire back wall overlooks the second and first floor beneath them, bulletproof glass cutting out the noise. Annabelle arranged for a large chandelier to light up the room over a newly built circular bar attended by two bartenders, both silently busying themselves with mixing and pouring crimson drinks into crystal glasses. Any vampires at Hunger 4 or higher must roll to resist a Hunger frenzy (Difficulty 3) or embarrass themselves in their haste to down the blood on offer. Though there's little to sate a vampire in a glass of dead blood (see p. 212 of **Vampire: The Masquerade**), the serving of blood is all a part of the Toreador pantomime, designed to rouse the Hunger.

Baby Chorus, including Sheriff Damien, plays a little experimental jazz on a semi-circular stage, sending relaxing tones into the room. Damien's eyes never leave the PCs and their guest, however.

Between sets, Damien jumps from the stage to greet the group. He is clad in a button-down, blue dress shirt with an untied bowtie dangling around his neck. "Glad you made it here safely. No one knows who is hungry for Magister blood these nights, and who can blame them?" If Malenkov isn't present, he follows up to ask where the other delegate has gone.

The PCs now have to decide what they will tell the Sheriff. They can tell him the truth, and how they or the Keepers were attacked during the day, or they can lie and keep him out of the action. If the PCs know Newberry was behind the attacks and tell Damien he orchestrated the entire ordeal, the Sheriff's expression changes to one of anger, followed swiftly by concern as

A GOOD TIME TO FEED?

Mortals are available for feeding throughout the Succubus Club, but it's poor form to just bite someone on the dance floor. For that, there are private rooms, restrooms, and, if on good terms with Annabelle, Portia, or Aluc, the under-club Labyrinth. The sub-basement maze houses a dozen tourists drugged and strung up for feeding. This thoroughly inhumane method is only available to Kindred high in status or who offer one of the three mentioned Kindred favors. Any attempt to release the tourists receives firm admonishment from Annabelle, increasing the difficulty of social interactions with her and the other city Toreador by one for the remainder of the chronicle.

he suppresses his Beast. He tells the PCs he'll look into it either way, and that it's troubling a member of the Council might be acting against the Prince in this manner.

Making Nice

The PCs now have a chance to engage with other vampires at Elysium. Remind the players of grudges against them if they previously crossed any of the troublemakers. Gengis and Crook are both present at Elysium unless otherwise subdued, Crook finding the entire escapade hilarious. Crook will have told most anyone about the Lasombra if he wasn't made to stay silent. Meanwhile, Gengis keeps slipping the PCs sly winks, nods, and threatening glares. He wants them to know that he knows they've been working with Lasombra, and he's made sure all the Anarchs know. For a change, the Anarchs know more about the Prince's activities than the Camarilla.

If the rest of the city's Kindred know about the Lasombra by this point, they will not be sympathetic about any attacks the PCs endured on their journey, and consider any Lasombra delegation a Sabbat ruse to launch an attack from inside the Camarilla's "Jewel," Chicago. They hope Prince Jackson has brought the Lasombra here just to make a humiliating example of them.

If only the Anarchs know about the delegation, mocking laughter from Kindred such as Anita Wainwright, Maldavis, and Gengis soon angers the Camarilla Kindred in attendance. They all feel the Anarch Movement is in on a joke, and they're the butt of it. The humor's cause is soon revealed when Gengis loudly announces "Prince Jackson has his doggies bringing Sabbat into our Elysium and none of you Ivory twats knew it!"

A fight will start between a riled Alexa Santos and Gengis, with the PCs best placed to step in and separate the two vampires. If they allow the fight to spill onto the floor, Anita joins the fray if Alexa gains advantage, while Rosa Hernandez will hurl Gengis across the room if he pins Alexa down. Damien will break up the fight if the PCs do nothing, though their inaction will be noted. If any of them are the Prince's Hounds, they lose their title that night and are at +1 Difficulty to all social interactions with Alexa, Damien, and Jackson.

Jason Newberry is present at the Elysium, though for obvious reasons the Gary coterie is not. Newberry is restless and prone to angry outbursts, while constantly evading Sierra's eyeline.

As the Night Progresses

Give the coterie time to sniff around Elysium and interact with the Kindred present, but cut in after they have visited the third or fourth vampire. The band stops playing and both bartenders stop taking orders and mixing drinks as they look toward the small stage. The low buzz of laughter and conversation quiets down, and even Gengis' razor-sharp voice falls silent when Jackson steps onto the stage. He briefly corrects his burgundy pocket square and does the button up on his suit jacket before stepping into a beam of light on the stage. The Prince smiles, baring his teeth, and he makes a short and calculated gesture with his arm:

"Welcome to our Elysium. As always, it warms this old body to see so many familiar faces among our number tonight. I want to take this opportunity to thank our escort group, or should we call them bodyguards after last night's activity? It's Kindred like you that make unlife just a tiny bit easier, so props. So, without more ado, I introduce the elephant in the room, as they say." He points to Sierra (and Malenkov, if present). "I'm aware my decision to invite such uncommon guests into Chicago is controversial, to say the least. However, I'm sure there's a good reason why our dear guests have embarked upon such a dangerous journey into Cam land. If it wasn't clear already, our visitor is of Clan Lasombra. Please, approach the stage under our banner of peace. We're all interested in what you have to say."

Sierra steps up, and just as Jackson is about to continue his speech, she grabs the mic out of his hand, steps to the edge of the stage and proclaims:

"I am Sierra Van Burrace. My presence in this town is not a matter

of flight, betrayal, power hunger, or destruction, as mentioned by many in this Elysium tonight. My brother and I have been sent here as representatives of our clan with one purpose in mind: Our clan wishes to join the Camarilla."

Chapter Four ends with the Lasombra announcement, even with Jackson looking shocked at the statement. He was expecting the defection of two vampires, not an entire clan. Let the players discuss briefly before continuing to the next chapter.

Part Five: Bloody Bargain

Nobody present at Elysium was aware of Clan Lasombra's true intentions. Immediately, Gengis shoots up from his chair, throwing a glass of blood against the painting (one of Annabelle's) beside him, yelling to the Prince he cannot allow decades of Sabbat supporters to infiltrate and destroy the Camarilla from within. Aluc retorts, "that's the Anarchs' job," in a mocking tone. Gengis' reaction sends a wave of frustration and anger through the room. The calm atmosphere in Elysium is quickly replaced with one of fear, frustration, and anger. Prince Jackson demands Damien and his Hounds take the Lasombra away, as he tries to calm down a room full of angered predators.

Talk to Jackson

The Prince convinces the assembled Ventrue to exert their powers of crowd influence to calm the Kindred on the third floor; an action that causes Maldavis to bolt from the room and down the stairs (she's not willing to be subject to some Ventrue mind control) and compels Critias to seethe and drag his clanmates from the Succubus Club, leaving Damien the only Brujah present (outside of any in the PC coterie).

The rest of the Kindred hang around to enjoy a somewhat-awkward night, some enjoying Annabelle's grief at the ruin of her painting while others, such as Tamoszius, dryly comment "it's an improvement." Portia ferries an equal number of mortals as there are Kindred to the third floor to dance as Baby Chorus starts up again, sans Damien. The chandelier starts to rotate — Annabelle's favorite attraction — bathing the entire room in twinkling lights of green, red, and violet. Newberry is even more anxious than before, now that the Lasombra delegate(s) are in Jackson's custody. During this scene, encourage the players to mingle with the Kindred in attendance and get their respective opinions on the Lasombra proposal.

Eventually, Jackson steps back into the room. He looks dissatisfied. With a successful Wits + Awareness roll (Difficulty 5) or effective use of Auspex, the coterie hears him whispering to Damien. If Malenkov isn't at the club, he whispers that the second delegate must be found immediately. If Malenkov and Sierra are both at the club, he instructs Damien to find out if similar delegations are visiting other cities.

Jackson will not dedicate much time to answering questions, distracted by conversation with the remaining Primogen: Rosa (stoic and loyal), Newberry (panicking), "Khalid" (quiet and contemplative), and Annabelle (embarrassed she wasn't consulted). The Prince walks past the PCs and to his office on the second floor unless they make a successful Manipulation + Persuasion roll (Difficulty 5) or find some other way to grab his attention.

If the PCs succeed, the Prince responds in a clipped and quiet fashion. "Yeah, you delivered your quarry and performed your task. Tomorrow night we'll talk payment. Go tell Bret Stryker I owe you a boon or something, so it's all on the up and up." He claps his hand on one of the PCs' shoulders. "You did good, but the night's not over yet. If you want to visit our guest, she's down in the basement maze where the hanging meat usually is. Password is 'Lodin.' She's still under Elysium rules though, so no harm comes to her."

Newberry's Gambit

If the PCs make the mistake of confiding in Son, letting him know where the Lasombra are being kept, he will leave Elysium soon after and get on the phone to the Gary coterie (if its still around). If he reaches them, he'll tell them where the Succubus Club is, have them introduce themselves as "guests of Prince Jackson" at the door, and ensure they head straight to the basement to start a fire.

If Newberry can't reach the Gary coterie, or worse, the PCs have the Gary coterie's phones and he reaches the PCs, he'll enter the sub-basement on his own and attack the Lasombra in a frenzy. The maze is soundproofed, but a bleeding mortal stumbling up the stairs in the Succubus Club proper should indicate what's going on down there.

If pushed effectively, Son could meet his end in this chronicle, terrified of finally being outed for his sins. In truth, Sierra knows very little of Newberry's crimes, only having heard rumors.

Hidden in the Basement Maze

If the PCs weren't able to persuade the Prince into giving up the location of the delegate, they can localize her by either making an Intelligence + Streetwise roll (Difficulty 4) or through finding out about the sub-basement maze and how it's been closed off since the delegates arrived. It stores a lot of the wreckage of the precious Succubus Club and acts as an emergency haven for Toreador Helena favors, as well as being a store of doped-up blood dolls for Kindred in need. Sierra is stashed in a storage room in the sub-basement, with the mortal blood bags removed or disposed of.

The sub-basement can be reached via the service corridors or the more direct, visible route of passing behind the central stage in the Succubus Club.

The Service Corridors

The corridors are in dim contrast to the colorful and extravagant façade of the club. Concrete walls and flooring with darkened marks from spilled drinks and years of humid, unchanged air cover the pathway, while uncovered lightbulbs illuminate the darkness with a dim, orange hue.

Half-naked dancers run back and forth in high heels as floor managers issue commands into earpieces. Bartenders rush by, balancing elaborate cocktails on dark-blue trays, barely noticing anything but the task at hand. The service corridors are at a constant buzz to make the Succubus Club the perfect place to spend a night out.

The staircase to the sub-basement is at the end of one of these corridors, but three heavyset bouncers block the door. They're in conversation with each other, and on a successful Wits + Awareness roll (Difficulty 3) their conversation is clearly about the woman that "Jacko" stashed downstairs. One of the bouncers, a well-built woman with a green fishtail braid hanging over her right shoulder, turns to face the PCs as they approach. "Password or fuck off."

The guard will not let the PCs by without the password. The PCs can convince her to get out of the way with a successful

Charisma + Intimidation roll (Difficulty 5) or through use of a Discipline such as Dominate. However, if she behaves strangely the other bouncers will contact Jackson on their earpieces.

If the PCs attack the bouncers, use the Security Guard stats (see p. XX), keeping in mind they're mortal and only armed with stun guns. These bouncers will attempt to restrain or incapacitate the PCs, slamming heads into walls, twisting limbs, and calling for the Prince, Annabelle, or Portia to make their way down.

Walking Through the Club

An alternative, direct route to the storage room is behind the stage in the main area of the club. An elevator fit for two people (three at a push) goes as low as the basement, and from there the PCs can reach the sub-basement via the only stairs heading down from it.

However simple this may seem, it does require the PCs navigating the club and its drunk and hopped-up patrons, as well as drawing the eyes of other Kindred in the room. Doing so requires no rolls, but will be time-consuming and prove difficult for the coterie.

The Succubus Club is pulsating with rapid dark-techno beats. Occasionally a high-pitched laugh pierces through the music, followed by the sound of glass smashing against the ground. The dancers never fall silent as the beat goes on continuously through the night. The club is packed even further to the brim than when the PCs arrived. They will run into several hindrances if they try to make their way through the crowd. Following are examples of who they can stumble into:

THE SOCIALITE

A woman with long, loose dark hair and a bright-yellow skater dress adorned with black symbols and rhinestones approaches the PCs as they pass her by. She sends them a coy smile as her finger glides around the perimeter of her wine glass. Her attractiveness almost seems intoxicating or addictive, and many heads turn her way with even the smallest of her movements. This is Helena, in her guise as Portia. "So, are you the brave vampires that brought Night Clan scum into our city at the request of our dear Prince?"

Portia does not seem to have any regard of the laws of the Masquerade as she flips her hair and givess the PCs a curious look.

THE MUSIC LOVER

Beside the largest bar on the main floor, a small-framed and silver-haired man suddenly grabs one of the members of the coterie. His head turns toward them with determination, and his intense blue-green eyes look almost manic as he puts a finger to his lips and whispers in a way they can somehow hear over the music's volume. "Shh… Listen… The music. It speaks. Can you hear it? It's crying for help, it's in agony, but deep inside it knows it can only help itself."

The PCs have stumbled upon Nero from Clan Toreador. If the coterie allows him, he goes on and on about the music, without letting go of his victim. He is not threatening in his behavior but insistent someone listens to his review. If they hear him out, he can be purchased with Experience as a Mawla.

THE DRUNKEN DISRUPTER

Near the stage, a six-foot-tall red-haired man is thrown, with what seems inhuman strength, to the coterie's feet. He grunts in pains as he hits the floor and grabs the leg of one of the characters as he drunkenly tries to stand. A successful Strength + Athletics roll (Difficulty 3) is needed to not lose balance. "Oy, ye fuckin' Jessie, I'm not too drunk for anythin'! Get me up from 'ere an' I'll smash yer fuckin' head in."

The drunk tourist will try to attack the PC to whom he's clinging, as in his confusion he believes it was this character and not a bouncer who threw him from the stage (where he'd errantly climbed up to join the DJ). Use the Joe Q. Average stat block (see p. XX) but add one dot to his Physical Attributes.

THE DESPERATE STALKER

One of the PCs feels a tug on their sleeve. A young, frail-looking man stands beside them, shifting his eyes nervously from side to side and grabbing both his elbows. If any of the characters are Malkavian they will recognize this person as Alexa Santos' stalker, Anton Carillo. "Hey dude… I know you're like Alexa. I just want a drink. You know, to make me like them. You know? I'll pay you back."

Anton will not do anything to stop the PCs if they do not pursue him, but he uses every card up his sleeve to gain a mouthful of vitae. He wants to be closer to the object of his "affections."

The Succubus Club Maze

The staircase to the sub-basement leads to a large cellar of stored-away art pieces, most of which are water damaged, along with old tables, chairs, and a bar. A small supply of liquor bottles, stacked bar chairs, staff t-shirts, and an odd number of freezers and coolers buzz in the darkness. Light sources are scarce, as most individuals roaming the lower parts of the club have no need for them, and the floor looks like it has not been swept since the opening of club. The PCs' shoes stick to the floor where many unknown substances have been spilled.

Tucked away behind the central storage room are winding and confusing corridors of chicken wire, half-molded wooden planks, debris, and building material. Once through, there is the hidden storage room containing Sierra. Navigating the pitch-black maze requires a Wits + Survival roll (Difficulty 3) to avoid toppling any of the precarious furniture and masonry here.

Sierra is in no distress or surprise that she's been captured. If Malenkov is present, however, he's pacing and close to frenzy. Sierra tells the PCs this was exactly how she expected Jackson would react, and she does not blame him for keeping the city and her safe. Following are examples of answers Sierra will give, if questioned:

(IF MALENKOV IS ABSENT) WHERE IS THE OTHER DELEGATE?

"I know just as much as you do about where he is. Sadly, he decided to bail on our assignment. If I know him, which I do, he is probably at some strip club showing off his fangs. He is not really accustomed to the rules of the Camarilla, you see."

HOW DO YOU WANT TO JOIN THE CAMARILLA?

"Our clan has resolved to take whatever steps the Camarilla deem necessary, or that is what I'm supposed to say when the Prince asks me. You see, I'm sure as soon as he collects himself, he will come to his senses and hear out our proposition."

WHY DO YOU WANT TO JOIN THE CAMARILLA?

"Oh, many reasons. Most are above your pay grade, I suspect. Most are above mine. At its simplest, our current sect has devolved and we have ever been a clan of survivors. We always survive and we always strive to win. The Sabbat offers neither of these things. We have pride and history, but it's not as important surviving. Besides, I truly believe we can acclimate to our new friends if we are given the chance — and perhaps we can actually be of use to the Camarilla and even strengthen it."

WHAT IF YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO JOIN?

"That is not an option. The Lasombra do not lose."

The Meeting Between Sierra and Prince Jackson

When the conversation is over, Sierra reaches into her pocket and pulls out an envelope sealed with the Lasombra crown in purple wax and asks the coterie to hand it to the Prince. If the PCs didn't go to meet her themselves, they'll find the envelope dropped on the floor of the Succubus Club. The name "Jackson" is written in gold ink on the envelope's front.

Prince Jackson is located in his office and, immediately after receiving the letter, dispatches the PCs to

HANDOUT #4: LETTER TO PRINCE JACKSON

Dearest Prince Jackson, of our ancient enemy the Camarilla,

I write with full authority from the inner council of my clan, and hereby extend the offer of peace and friendship between Clan Lasombra and the Camarilla. It is our wish to call an armistice and join your flock, to best survive the nights to come.

I am aware this letter will come as a surprise, and you may ask why we did not approach your Justicars. It is the belief of our clan council that the Camarilla is governed by its respected Princes, such as yourself, and ultimately it is to you and your peers to decide whether you wish for us at your side or as opposition.

This is a sincere offer. My delegates have authority to make deals on behalf of the clan, though please defer to Ms. Van Burrace for matters of politics and Mr. Malenkov for matters of war.

I hope to be a formally admitted guest to your domain in years to come, without fear of reprisals from your mighty Sheriff, and without you having to be concerned that we act against you.

With great respect,
Sir Talley, Legate and Templar for Clan Lasombra
Childe of Lord Leopold Valdemar
Grandchilde of Tercio Bravo
Great-grandchilde of Boukephos

fetch Sierra if they've proven trustworthy, or places a call to one of his ghouls to bring her to the second floor. The PCs are permitted to stay in the office as the conversation between the two takes place. Notably, if Malenkov is in the club, Jackson orders that he remains in the basement. He doesn't trust the Keeper warlord at all.

Though the interaction could just be between Jackson and Sierra, both vampires turn to the PCs periodically to allow interjections and suggestions. For Jackson's part, he believes the PCs should join in as he laughs at the Lasombra's ridiculous proposition. For Sierra's, she looks to the vampires with whom she spent the previous night for reason.

Jackson announces to Sierra that he doesn't take her proposition seriously at all. What could the Magisters possibly offer the Camarilla to make up for five centuries of war? In no way does he place the Camarilla as responsible for waging war against the clans of the Anarchs and Sabbat.

Sierra reminds Jackson of the contents of the letter, and is not intimidated by the Prince. Likewise, she reminds him that he responded favorably to Talley's overtures on their clan's behalf. He wouldn't have done that if he didn't feel there was something worth gaining.

Throughout this discussion, the players should feel as if they're a part of the conversation, whether to highlight the dangers of admitting Lasombra to the city or to speak about the potential benefits of war-hardened allies. If they require encouragement, a clearly amused but slightly troubled Jackson invites them to speak their opinions freely, without judgment. He will then proceed to judge them if they make what he deems a foolish statement.

LETTER OF THE DEAL

If followed to the extreme, Clan Lasombra could find its numbers radically reduced as a result of Prince Jackson's pact, though so far it only extends to Lasombra seeking domain in Chicago. It's an appealing deal to many Camarilla Princes however, so depending on its success, other Princes such as Decker of Milwaukee might soon adopt it.

Of course, the letter of the deal was not to deliver elders of the Lasombra, but elders of the Sabbat. Princes interpret this rule differently, and before the Justicars know it, individual Princes are enforcing their own Lasombra admittance rules. Some are more relaxed than others, some are far stricter.

The Amici Noctis believe the Camarilla will tire of the taste of Lasombra blood when they realize they are purging useful Keepers in the same way Stalin executed almost all his effective military officers. Until then, however, they will state which Lasombra are exempt from the internal hunt. Obviously, the Amici Noctis are on top of the exemption list.

The Crux of the Matter

The back and forth between Jackson and Van Burrace goes nowhere, with the Prince increasingly mocking the Lasombra, and the delegate in turn hissing her retorts through her teeth, trying to refrain from breaking in front of the Ventrue.

Eventually, Sierra asks "What would it take? Just name the price for admitting the Magisters as a recognized Camarilla clan in your city and I'll have it done."

Jackson's reply comes with a laugh. "I don't know, girl. How about you just deliver all your Sabbat elders with stakes through their hearts?"

Van Burrace pauses only briefly before responding. "It will be done. I will arrange for an obligation on all Lasombra who want recognition and peaceful passage through your city. They must each deliver a vampire older than themselves to a place of your choosing, for whatever fate you deem appropriate." She bites into her palm and extends her hand, vitae freshly risen to the surface, in Prince Jackson's direction.

Jackson, stunned, does not take her hand. Sierra continues speaking. "We understand in order to reform to an entire new way of existence we cannot reform some of our more egregious kin. It will jeopardize the security of the Camarilla to try. Younger Lasombra will have a better chance of getting used to the new ways. By your order I will inform our clan of the decision."

Jackson turns around so he faces the Lasombra again. He clasps Van Burrace's hand with a stern expression on his face. "You've got a deal, but it's only good for as long as I remain in power, you understand? And as much as I'd like to think otherwise, my influence only extends to Chicago. Maybe the Midwest. Membership in our club is determined on an individual basis. Every young vampire managing to provably restrain or kill an older one picks up a membership. If you want your whole clan in, you'll need to persuade the whole city. For that I'll arrange something a little uncommon for our kind. Tomorrow night I'll lay out your proposal and let the city decide with a democratic vote. Without it, my word might as well be worth spit. Oh, and you can start

by setting an example for your fellow clan members and bring Malenkov with a stake through him to the vote tomorrow. A Keeper war criminal like him would make a fine first sacrifice. To show you're willing, you know?"

Part Six: Shadow Hunt

Prince Jackson tells the PCs to keep the conversation in confidence, and if Sierra is as good as her word, he'll be able to establish a Lasombra-specific Blood Hunt, where Lasombra are permitted to hunt fellow Lasombra to gain entry to the sect.

After leaving Jackson's office, the thumping sound from the Succubus Club around them acting as a nervous pulse, Sierra turns to the PCs and asks them to help her deliver Malenkov and at least guarantee her safety. In exchange, she offers them temporary havens in any of her family's hotels as a boon. Sierra Van Burrace is no combatant and stands no hope of taking down Malenkov or his ghouls.

The Hunt for Malenkov

If Malenkov arrived at the Succubus Club, he has disappeared from the sub-basement, leaving a short trail of destruction in the Succubus Club service corridors where his ghouls came to fetch him and take him into the city.

Van Burrace cannot provide the group with much information about Malenkov, other than his preferences for hanging around shady establishments and for letting his Beast off the leash in areas where he can gain a little notoriety. He's not stupid enough to frenzy in the Elysium, but won't hesitate to do so in a hospital, mortals-only club, or at a concert in the park.

The PCs can make an Intelligence + Streetwise roll (Difficulty 4) to gain information about the different bars in Chicago and thereby acquire information on where Malenkov might be, with Red No° 5 seeming likely if he's intending on flexing his muscles in front of other vampires. They can pursue the hunt themselves or ask clans present at Elysium for help to find him, though they are sworn to secrecy on the reasons why, and Jackson will punish them for breaching his confidence.

Nosferatu and Malkavian Assistance

Wauneka and Bronwyn saw the PCs enter the Prince's office with Sierra and want answers and future favors if the PCs want to use the city spy network to track Malenkov. The group can tell the two vampires what they spoke to the Prince about, thereby breaking their promise. If they successfully lie with a Composure + Subterfuge roll (Difficulty 5), the two Kindred agree to assist out of plain curiosity.

It takes a couple of hours, but the spies pull their strings in the nightlife environment and inform the coterie Malenkov was spotted at Red No° 5 earlier in the evening, clearly on the edge of frenzy and smashing glasses against the wall in anger when no one believed his war stories. He even manhandled Bennett Steadman and drove a stool through his ribcage. Adze and Erzulie allegedly requested Damien's aid, as none of the personnel could overpower the Lasombra.

The city spies will not aid the group on the hunt, but give them enough leads to get them on the right track. They offer to keep a constant eye out for him and contact the PCs if they spot him other places in the city, provided favors are paid in the future.

Gangrel Assistance

Rosa Hernandez is the only Gangrel left in Elysium. She stands at the glass wall overlooking the club floors beneath her with an annoyed look on her face, occasionally checking her phone before putting it back into the inner pocket of her leather jacket. If the group approaches her for help, she does not know why they want to find the Lasombra, and dislikes that the Prince has left her in the dark.

If given details, Rosa tells the group any hunt for a Sabbat in the city is a good hunt, while looking intensely at Sierra. Hernandez uses her title as Primogen to demand they tell her where Malenkov is, if they find him before she does. She's determined to wet her claws on the vile Keeper.

If the group refuses, she will hunt him herself, potentially becoming a secondary antagonist when the PCs find Malenkov, if necessary. If the group agrees to work with Rosa, Sierra protests and reminds them of the deal they made with the Prince.

Red No° 5

The usual queue outside Red No° 5 is absent when the PCs arrive at the bar. Alexa Santos is outside the bar, scanning the street slowly. When they spy the PCs, they flip them the bird. "This is the Sheriff's business. Keep out of it and go back to your havens."

If the group spoke with the Malkavians and successfully gained their help before arriving at the bar, they can use this to leverage their way inside, though Alexa cautions them to avoid Damien, who is currently spitting bullets at the thought of Lasombra running rampant through the domain.

If they cannot gain access to Red No° 5, Alexa smirks at them and tells them to join the nonexistent queue, if they're determined to wait. If they do wait, make the players aware that the waiting time is two hours before Damien emerges from the club. He eyes the coterie coldly before departing with Alexa.

Adze is present at Red No° 5 but is remaining sequestered upstairs. He has no desire to talk to the Prince's goons. Steadman and Erzulie are more talkative, however.

Bennett Steadman

As the host of Red No° 5, Steadman is leaning against the open back door, staring out into the barren street adjacent to the bar. He has no shirt on and dried blood down his chest. He looks unusually pale, as if in shock. If the PCs approach, he attempts to act cool but is clearly traumatized from having a stake plunged through his chest.

Steadman was present in the club when Malenkov entered. He greeted the Lasombra and showed him to the bar, as Malenkov demanded something to drink as soon as he came inside. He did not want to engage in conversation, but his money was good and Steadman brought him a choice of vessels from which he could subtly drink in a corner booth. Instead, Malenkov decided to tear into his prey with abandon, his ghouls standing in the way to prevent sight of the act, but not preventing the screams. Many in the club reacted and fled, police were called and then called off. When Steadman tried to usher Malenkov and his vessel into a side room, the Lasombra grabbed him and tossed him across the bar. Malenkov then threw his meal, barstools, and glasses, before jamming a stool through Steadman's chest and storming out with Arkady and Dmitri in tow.

CELIA AND MICHALIS

Two Lasombra unaccounted for in this chronicle are the fledgling Celia and the cult leader Michalis Basaras. Celia is unknown to the majority of the city Kindred and Basaras is firmly apolitical, but when the Lasombra Blood Hunt becomes known to them, they're each likely to beseech assistance. Neither is an accomplished hunter, and while Celia unduly fears for her existence (she's unlikely to be an elder by anyone's estimation), Basaras has good reason to be afraid of his clanmates.

Working for these Lasombra is a good way of earning allies within the clan, especially with Celia's media contacts and Basaras' reach through the Jewish community in Chicago. In fact, their enlisting the PCs for this dirty work is exactly how the majority of Lasombra react to the news of the Camarilla defection. Few go out armed and ready to take down their clan or sectmates, preferring to hire coteries to do the staking and delivery for them.

Erzulie

Erzulie leans against a red Chevrolet in the club parking lot. She is dressed in a black, low-cut gown beaded with small crystals from top to bottom. She looks sadly toward the entrance where Steadman is scouting the street.

She expresses her sadness to the PCs, about what an unforgiving introduction Bennett just received to the weaknesses of their kind. She was untouched by Malenkov's frenzy and informs the groups she once owned a disco where types like him — vampires who needed to let loose occasionally — often visited. She watched the entire ordeal with the vessel and then with Steadman from her corner table, and overheard Malenkov demand the location of the nearest brothel from one of the club's dancers.

Erzulie points the coterie in the direction of the Glory Pit a few streets away and tells them her guess is he went that way, but they should be careful: he looked like the kind of Lasombra no respectable domain would want in it, war hero or not.

The Glory Pit

The Glory Pit is notorious for its reportedly celebrity clientele. Supposedly, movie producers visit the ostensible bar for a little of what goes on in the back rooms.

The Pit remains one of Chicago's most popular brothels, rumored to cater to every fantasy imaginable. Situated in the basement of an apartment building on the West Side, it is nearly invisible from the outside. The PCs will have to either ask around the neighborhood to figure out where to find it or use their knowledge of the city's nightlife with a successful Charisma + Streetwise roll (Difficulty 3). Payment to a sex worker on the street will also help them find the small den of iniquity.

A small neon sign in the narrow basement window pulsates with a red message, "Come in and Play," but there are no other indicators a

brothel hides behind the steel door. Entering the building, the PCs find themselves in a small bar fronting a gambling den, which is easily accessed despite its illegality in this state. The host, a large, pale man in his mid-30s, wearing acid-washed jeans and sporting a soul patch asks them their drink and game. From all appearances, Malenkov hasn't been pursuing his path of destruction through the brothel.

Asking after Malenkov returns positive responses. Discretion is a reason for the Glory Pit's success. However, if the players roll a successful Charisma + Intimidation (Difficulty 4) or use a Discipline like Presence or Dominate to make him more agreeable, the host explains three Russians stopped by earlier and currently occupy the VIP room with a group of willing partners. The host's sweet smile and glazed expression implies at least once dose of Lasombra vitae was forced down his gullet.

Beyond the gambling room, where a mixture of civilians sits (one of them recognizable as a local news anchor) playing cards, is the brothel's front room. It contains a small bar with a few customers, one in a bathrobe and two struggling to squeeze out of their BDSM leather clothing. They look panicked and explain "there's some extreme shit going on down there and if they don't stop screaming, someone's going to call the cops."

Malenkov's Hideout

The Glory Pit brothel consists of two adjacent hallways with one large room at each end. The VIP lounge is isolated from the others rooms and a soundproof door keeps out most questionable noise (though clearly not enough tonight). The door is locked with a bar when the PCs arrive, but can be worked open with a successful Dexterity + Larceny (Difficulty 3), Strength + Brawl (Difficulty 4), or by asking the hosts to use the heavy-duty magnet they have for events when the VIP guests lock themselves in for a little too long.

As the door opens into the large room, the intoxicating smell of blood hits the PCs' nostrils and any PCs on Hunger 3 or more have to roll to resist a Hunger frenzy (Difficulty 4). The paper lamp in the ceiling sends a beam of light through its bloodied cover, giving the room a spotted red look, while candles glow on shelves around the chamber. Malenkov sits on a large bed behind a meat pile of what was once five kine, his two

ghouls languorously standing to the side of the room, sharing a joint. His beard sticks to his neck and chest with congealed blood, and his nude upper body is covered from navel to neck in thick red fluid. Bits of bone, skin, and hair cover the entire room. With a satisfied smile, Malenkov rises from his seated position, stretches, and places his hands on his hips.

"You invite Sabbat into your domain," he gestures at the gore, "this is what you get. And this is just the start. Just one room. Imagine this in an entire city. Still, don't be shy. I bet the hunt for me made you peckish."

Malenkov cocks his head at the corpses on the floor. Every member of the coterie must again roll to resist the temptation to indulge in a Hunger frenzy, no matter their Hunger level (Difficulty 3) or feed from the bloodbath in front of them.

The PCs can decide if they want to talk Malenkov into following them back to the Prince, or use physical force. Regardless, he will not go without a fight. He steps up on the bed and yells into the room, pointing toward Sierra if she's present. "No Camarilla cowards are getting the better of me. And you, you little betrayer, I will never give you the satisfaction of killing me to earn your place as a Camarilla underdog!"

Malenkov's first actions are to compel his Discipline of Oblivion into action (see his stats on p. XX), darkening the room and making the shadows come alive. His ghouls drop their joint and go for the knives they were using to cut up bodies, their guns buried somewhere in the mass of offal.

Shortly after, Malenkov leaps into the group fully intent on pummeling his way out of the brothel. The fight in the Glory Pit should be messy, involve the use of furniture such as lamps, bed posts, and even the chains and other BDSM props brought into the room. The horror the Storyteller needs to evoke here is one of extremes: Do not be afraid to have a character using a dismembered limb as a bludgeon or for another character to slip in a puddle of gore. With the candles present in this room, along with the paper partition between changing areas and sheets hanging on the walls, there's a real risk of fire during this conflict. Emphasize the space available, the destructive and combustible nature of the room, and have characters move around — rolling over the bed, ducking behind partitions, and slamming the steel door into anyone who tries to escape.

The coterie will have to subdue Malenkov to transport him to the Prince. They can kill him, but Sierra will remind the PCs that Prince Jackson asked for Malenkov to brought back staked. By the time this event resolves, dawn will be fast approaching and they'll need to secure Malenkov themselves.

MALENKOV'S ESCAPE

If Malenkov overpowers the PCs, he creates a race against time and potential Masquerade breaches. If the mess in the Glory Pit wasn't enough (and is something the coterie should really report to Damien), Malenkov will enter full Wassail and break into the nearest home, killing the family and resting there during the day.

Following this, the Wight formerly known as Malenkov stalks Chicago as a terror. He can still be brought in for punishment, but won't be conscious of the event, while the Prince will be dismayed at the havoc the Lasombra caused. Certainly, his degeneration won't put Sierra's clan in a good light.

Part Seven: The Sacrifice

Damien calls the coterie the following night. He tells them they missed Prince Jackson informing the rest of the city Kindred about the Blood Hunt for Malenkov following the Lasombra's actions at Red No° 5, with Jackson instructing members of all clans (minus the thin-bloods, who the Prince barely considers vampires) to assemble in LaBagh woods at 10:00 P.M., to decide Clan Lasombra's fate.

If the PCs have Malenkov in their custody and inform Damien, he sounds relieved and instructs them to bring him to the woods. He also informs them that the Prince expects Sierra to be present at the meeting. A Wits + Insight roll (Difficulty 4) reveals Damien is hiding some agenda, but it's impossible to tell what it is over the phone.

Before the meeting with the other clans of Chicago, the PCs will face different challenges since not every Kindred in the city agrees with the Prince's decision of providing the Lasombra a hearing. The Storyteller can decide in what order these events happens, as long as they happen before the Sacrifice.

This chapter is open-ended and highly based on character interaction and sectarian alignment. The players will be responsible for deciding the fate of the Lasombra in Chicago.

Malenkov's Offer

The Lasombra ancilla is aware he will not exist much longer. If he's in a position to speak and rational

enough to do so, he bitterly explains his actions as "born in ice, raised in blood, a century of nothing but war. What else did you expect? What else can I do...?"

If the PCs lend a sympathetic ear, he decides his only way of survival is to strike a deal. He offers them the secrets of his entire clan (as much as he knows them) and to teach them how to use the art of shadow-bending to a degree that will greatly benefit the PCs, if he can just be permitted to survive.

If the PCs free Malenkov, they will be crossing Prince Jackson, Damien, the vampires who run Red No° 5, and any other Kindred keen on pursuing the Blood Hunt. His freedom is a guarantee the Camarilla of Chicago will not permit the Lasombra entry to their sect, but might yield an unstable, yet highly effective, Mawla.

Anarch Interaction

The Anarch Movement in Chicago has been following the entire ordeal on the sidelines via Gengis, and they believe Malenkov could be of much better use with them than being destroyed. Maldavis, Anita, Gengis, and the Hurricane approach the coterie on the way to the woodland rendezvous, demanding the PCs hand Malenkov over. Maldavis tells the coterie she has no intention of letting strong blood go to waste at the hands of a Prince who does not know what to do with it. She offers them formal membership in the Anarch Movement (at least as far as Chicago recognizes it) and positions of prominence once the Camarilla regime in the city falls. If all that sounds too hollow, she offers them the Glory Pit as a personal haven and business, it having once been in the possession of fallen Anarch, Dickie Fulcher.

If the coterie agrees, Malenkov never reaches the woods. If Damien or the Prince were aware the PCs had him, they earn the same ire as in the Malenkov's Offer example. Prince Jackson still calls for the vote, but without a sacrifice, it's unlikely to pass and Sierra is denied entry to the sect. She starts eyeing Michalis Basaras and her own sire as potential alternative sacrifices.

Damien's Prerogative

This event takes place right after Prince Jackson's speech at the late-night meeting. The city's Sheriff steps in front of Malenkov and announces to the entire city if the Lasombra is voted into the Camarilla, he and his Hounds will go on a Blood Hunt for every single Lasombra stepping foot into the city. He can no longer stand by and watch his beloved city turned into a haven for senseless beasts who obey their own rules.

Prince Jackson pulls Damien to the side and immediately asks the PCs to take care of him while he tries to hold the outdoor meeting together. The PCs can decide if they want to support the Prince or Damien. If supporting the Prince, they have to convince Damien of the Lasombra's place in the Camarilla. If supporting Damien, they may need to launch a coup this very evening. Where the Hounds sit on this matter, with Prince Jackson or the traitor Sheriff, is down to the Storyteller.

The Meeting

A large lake reflects the light of several battery-driven torches circling Chicago's assembled Kindred. Every clan is represented, although many vampires neglect to show due to the potential for Inquisition scrutiny. If the PCs arrive with Malenkov, Damien offers to take him from them. If they refuse to hand him over, the Sheriff instead barks at them to strap the prisoner to a chair balanced on a central pile of sticks and lumber.

An eerie silence dominates the circle with Jackson silently watching from the perimeter, observing Malenkov's limp frame (if present) lashed to the chair. The circle of vampires creates a wall around the Lasombra, and all eyes glare at him and Prince Jackson with anticipation. Sierra stands beside the Prince, her expression unreadable. Prince Jackson steps forward and places himself in the middle of the circle.

"Brothers and sisters, please accept my sincere apology for taking up another of your nights. I'm aware you're all busy, but I guaran-damn-tee this trip to the woods will be worth it. Yesterday my speech was interrupted by a Lasombra with a very important message from her clan. A message that, potentially, will change our history. The Clan of Night, longtime enemies, wish to join our ranks. Of course, my first response was dismissive. However..."

Prince Jackson turns around to face Sierra.

"Sierra came with a proposition I found very interesting and perhaps even plausible. In fact, why don't our firsthand witnesses step forward and tell the city what Clan Lasombra offered."

Jackson turns to the coterie. They are free to speak as they will at this point. The Prince will speak over them if they try to make outlandish claims, but he allows them a little creative freedom if it elevates their positions in minor ways, strengthens his hold on the city, or disparages the Lasombra or Sabbat.

"As the Prince of this blessed city, I'm not gonna make this decision singlehandedly. I'm no tyrant, unlike our brothers and sisters in other cities. Instead, every

individual present tonight, fledgling, elder, neonate, and ancilla has a say. And it's very simple. Do we accept the Lasombra and the potential murder of hundreds of our kind, or do we extend the olive branch and take advantage of new alliances? Whatever we decide will be consecrated with him," Jackson points at Malenkov, "being burned. He's an example of what Clan Lasombra needs to purge from its ranks."

The silence breaks into loud talking and shouting back and forth. Some Kindred are still opposed to the idea of the Lasombra joining, not only because they are Sabbat but because the idea of mass murder of a clan makes younger Kindred balk. Indeed, high-Humanity vampires may also object to the burning of Malenkov and attempt to deliver a quicker final death. Gengis and others speak loudly of the Anarch Revolt anew, and when it will be their own elders' turns. Abraham DuSable and the Tremere speak quietly to the Nosferatu present about how the Lasombra proposition might work, and how the clan could bring several positives, such as influence over the Church, to the table. The Gangrel dispute the costs of letting Sabbat into the domain, but the potential gained from learning about the sect's strategies. Give the players time to explore the different clans' thoughts and get a sense of where their votes will land.

Ultimately, all votes must be submitted to their Primogen to announce before Prince Jackson. Where clans lack Primogen, they must nominate an individual to speak for them. With the thin-bloods not present, they do not get a vote. Likewise, Jackson bypasses the Caitiff even with Maldavis present, and Michalis Basaras and Celia aren't there to speak for the Lasombra. PCs are able to influence their elders' votes through persuasive argument, though it's unlikely intimidation will work on a vampire many centuries their senior.

If the PCs do not influence the voting, clans vote as follows:

CLAN MALKAVIAN

Jason Newberry shouts "No! Never!" His clanmates appear stunned as he shrieks out in this way. It's clear he's not speaking for the clan. This should lead to repercussions in future chronicles.

CLAN VENTRUE

Ballard says "Yes" for his clan, drawing a series of interesting murmurs from the assembled Kindred. A majority of the Chicago Ventrue find the prospect of young Lasombra murdering their elders appealing. Once the Lasombra are in the sect, Ballard and his clanmates reason they can always be thrown out again if they run out of uses.

CLAN BRUJAH

Respecting the spirit of democracy, Critias votes "No" despite his personal wishes to see the Camarilla strengthened. The Anarch members of his clan are fiercely opposed to a stronger Camarilla, so he abides by their decision even as it rankles some of his fellow Hellenes.

CLAN TOREADOR

"Yes. And we also oppose the burning alive of one of our kind, no matter how monstrous he may be. Can't we just cut off his head?" Annabelle laughs and the other Toreador laugh with her. While seeming frivolous, the city Toreador unanimously agree new allies against the Sabbat are welcome. Influenced by Helena, who stands among their ranks as Portia, they each feel the Lasombra deserve the chance to choose their destiny, and many Keepers Embraced into the clan following the Sabbat's establishment never had that choice.

CLAN TREMERE

"We vote no. This will bring nothing but chaos." DuSable sees no good reason for letting the Lasombra join the sect his clan has spent so long securing from Sabbat clans. He cannot see the benefit of opening the doors to Kindred that have been brainwashed for centuries.

CLAN GANGREL

"Yes..." Rosa speaks and then quietens swiftly, her decision made for her by Helena. Few Gangrel are in attendance and none speak up against their nominal Primogen.

CLAN NOSFERATU

Cedrick Calhoun stands for the Nosferatu, as Khalid appears absent. "We say yes, bearing in mind all that could be learned were they at our side." Though they make the decision based on different principles, the various Nosferatu are in favor of the defection. Nathaniel Bordruff was not, and stalks into the night as soon as the vote is cast.

THE BANU HAQIM

"No." Khadija is emphatic in her statement and doesn't provide further detail. In truth, she feels her clan needs to take advantage of being the newest clan in the Ivory Tower, and the Lasombra threaten this role. The Banu Haqim could lose potential territory and positions of influence if Magisters suddenly show up to plant their flag.

THE MINISTRY

"As a traditionally non-Camarilla clan, we do not feel we should be responsible for the deciding vote."

Marcel speaks with a smile, but bows and defers to the other clans in attendance. The Ministers hold precarious positions in the city, and they do not want the blame for this vote going awry.

As the PCs had time to get a general idea of which way the clans are voting, give them time to decide what they want to push for. The result is a deadlock unless the PCs shift it one way or the other. A Lasombra PC could speak up on behalf of their clan, while a Caitiff, thin-blood, Hecata, Old Clan, or Ravnos PC might push for representation and swing the vote.

The PCs do not have to agree on this. Encourage the players to take their characters' views into account and how one way might be advantageous to them. The players should consider how the other clans are voting and realize that by supporting or sabotaging them, they could earn new allies and enemies.

If the vote ends in a tie after the PCs make their decision, Prince Jackson has the final say.

YES

An excited, terrifying rush runs through the veins of the Kindred present as they realize they will now share their city with the Lasombra. Prince Jackson takes a few steps toward Malenkov. Jackson checks his bindings to ensure they're secure and removes the stake, asking him to speak now, for it will be the last time he will does so. Malenkov lifts his head and his gaze wanders over each Kindred in a slow and calculated manner:

"You know what you have done? You have just allowed a mass genocide of your own kind. Do you seriously think you will be safe? Have you learned nothing from previous revolts and wars with us? I don't give a shit if I die. What I care about is the future of the Sabbat and my clan fleeing like from their problems to the enemy line. Fuck you. Fuck Talley. Fuck the Amici Noctis and their ridiculous plans. I hope the shadows of guilt eat you up on the inside for the rest of your miserable, undead existences."

Jackson gives Sierra the choice of how to end her clanmate. He has brought Lodin's broadsword, for which he's famed, and offers it should Sierra wish to take the merciful route. She takes it from him and uncomfortably hefts the blade, placing the tip against Malenkov's collarbone. With a calculated swing, she parts his head from his shoulders, and his body drops, rapidly crumbling to ash in the chair.

The Prince lays a hand on Sierra's shoulder, takes the sword from her, and turns her to face the other Kindred. He lowers his head to her left ear and whispers loud enough for most of the silent vampires to hear:

"Sierra, welcome to the Camarilla."

NO

Prince Jackson smiles confidently and nods at Sierra as he walks up to Malenkov, laughing. "I'm as good as my word, and if you're not killing him, you're not joining our club." He attempts a couple of times to kindle the fire beneath the Lasombra, only to delegate the task to Damien who orders the gathered Kindred to stand back. He starts the fire and the flames slowly lick around the Lasombra's body. Malenkov's screams resound through the woods as the apparently "civilized" Camarilla Kindred watch and the Anarchs do nothing to stop this execution. Many vampires leave as the fire grows, fearful of succumbing to Rötschreck. PCs who watch the burning up close need to roll to resist a terror frenzy (Difficulty 3).

As Malenkov crumbles to ash, Jackson picks up a few choice bones, including his skull, and throws them to Sierra's feet.

"You can take the ashes back to the rest of your kind. Now, get the fuck out of my town before you end up like your brother."

Epilogue

The PCs have now been the decisive factor of Clan Lasombra's fate in Chicago, and Prince Jackson addresses them after the Kindred in the woods go their separate ways. Depending on their behavior he might reward them with feeding grounds in the city, impressive havens, or even a direct line to him. Consider making these rewards a couple of free dots in appropriate Backgrounds. If the PCs crossed Jackson, he threatens to take their territory or just goes ahead and removes it, warning them it'll be their very existences he eliminates next. This shouldn't rob them of rewards, but those rewards might come from Jackson's enemies, such as Maldavis, who appreciate the PCs' efforts to hamper Jackson's agenda.

Give the players time to vent and talk the last events through. Answer raised questions if possible and let them discuss if necessary. When every player is ready, present them with the epilogue, in the form of a letter dropped at the site of the sacrifice.

HANDOUT #5: LETTER TO PRINCE JACKSON

To whomever finds this letter,

I hear rumors my two delegates successfully delivered the message from my clan, and dear Malenkov must lose his life as a result. I was hoping they would both return safely, but I can understand the nature of our proposition did not exactly prevent that. It's a crying shame to lose someone who served his clan for over a century, but we all agree sacrifices must be made.

It seems my efforts might have been in vain, sadly. While others of my clan might join the Camarilla as a part of this offering and future sacrifices, I found out last night the clan I served loyally for half a millennium is prepared to execute me to show their dedication to the Camarilla cause! Cold, don't you think?

I suppose that means I will have to leave your lovely city soon. It's been a delight watching how a Camarilla domain of this strength acts when confronted by unexpected political events such as this, and I might have interfered once or twice, but I am getting carried away and should pack my bags.

Of course, if there's a Blood Hunt for me in Chicago as a result of this letter, I welcome the chase. Send your best. Think of the status they might earn by capturing me.

Allow me to show you why you do not want the Lasombra as adversaries.

Until then,

Talley

Antagonist Stats

These stat blocks are for characters encountered throughout the chronicle who aren't present in the remainder of the book. We also present a condensed character biography for Malenkov, in case the PCs choose to get to know him, spare him, or otherwise research the Lasombra.

MALENKOV

Epitaph: Lasombra War Hero

Quote: *"How about you just sit yourself the fuck down and listen to a real vampire."*

Clan: Lasombra

Mortal Days: Forged from Ice

Born in a raging Siberian snowstorm, Malenkov's childhood and upbringing faced hardship from beginning to end. While the entire world passed him by, he was stuck in a world with no progress and a family constantly fighting for the most basic of human needs.

At 14 years old, Malenkov caught anthrax from the reindeer his family herded. He survived, but his mother did not. His father placed her in a locked shed far from their living quarters, since the frozen earth made interment at that time impossible, and they could not waste tinder on a burial fire. Malenkov snuck off to see his mother's body many times late at night, the sight of her frozen corpse sticking with him, keeping him company every time he sleeps.

Malenkov grew increasingly bitter at the world and his urge to flee was almost unbearable. He knew his father would never survive on his own, but would not agree to leave either. On his 30th birthday, on the warmest day he'd known in some time, he drowned his infirm father in the reindeer trough. Malenkov packed his belongings and rode into the night, placing his father's body in the shed that had once housed his mother's corpse. Although living with the harsh climate for most of his life, he did not predict his reindeer giving out early in his journey. He was exhausted as the cold set in and the snow started to fall.

Days and nights passed without mercy from harsh weather. Malenkov felt death closing in around him and fell unconscious. The next time he opened his eyes, his heart no longer pounded in his chest.

KINDRED NIGHTS: THE BLOODY KHAN

Coincidence brought Malenkov into the night. Talley had been waging a campaign of butchery against several Russian werewolves and, after losing his pack to the ferocious Lupines, discovered the near-frozen Russian lying in the snow. Talley's first instinct was to feed from the well-placed meal, but then he considered: How did this man get here, to the middle of nowhere? How did he survive? Perhaps he would make for a fighting childe.

The Lasombra drained the mortal's life and replaced it with undeath. The two made a journey of many hundreds of miles, burying their bodies beneath great sheets of ice and snow day after day, feeding from vermin and the occasional farmer, until they reached Omsk. From there, the two traveled south and within the year were on a ship destined for North America.

Talley showed Malenkov the western world of the 1870s, while learning all there was to know about the Russian reindeer farmer's simple-but-hard life. Talley was impressed by how quickly the man adapted to his new state of being, the speed with which he picked up languages, and his untapped strategic wit. He was also curious about Malenkov's eroded morality, which, if the Russian was telling the truth, had been melted away like ice under heat. Talley would refer to his childe as "my oil well," as Malenkov proved himself a rich find and clan prodigy. In turn, Malenkov became fascinated with his new parental figure and all the human excesses he'd never had the opportunity to experience while alive. He did everything he could to impress and be useful. Malenkov did not understand Cainite society, but knew he had to fight for survival, which wasn't a new concept.

As Malenkov grew older and the reality of his undead life sank in, his morality dissolving even further, he felt the urge to give in to his Beast time and again. His sire suggested that returning to his home might help, either to come to peace with his inner monster or let it loose on the past that hounded his dreams. In 1941, Malenkov returned to Russia for the first time since his departure a century before. It was during the war that Malenkov's primal urge broke through and took over. He hid within the ranks of Soviet soldiers and compelled them to devastating massacres, often achieving great victories at the expense of thousands of lives. To him, there was no difference between women, children, men, soldiers, or civilians. There was only blood. He lost his few remaining attachments to self-control and morality, and only through his sire rediscovering him close to Wassail was Malenkov able to restrain himself.

Upon returning to the United States, Talley placed Malenkov in charge of Sabbat war packs on the east coast. Malenkov had a great mind and a thirst for war, so the Sabbat used him as their "Khan" during the sectarian wars of the 20th century, styling him after the Mon-

gols of old. The Sabbat considered him a war hero, the Camarilla a bogeyman of legend. Even Talley thought Malenkov was twisted, and became convinced his childe would lose himself to the Beast one night and never be seen again. To Talley's surprise, Malenkov still clings on to self-control through routine outings of his bestial instincts.

When the Gehenna Crusade commenced, Malenkov embarked upon it with gusto. He felt sure this would be his Waterloo, to triumph or perish fantastically. Talley's summoning him back to the States, to sit beside Sierra Van Burrace and make peace with old enemies, leaves nothing but sourness in Malenkov's mouth. He should be fighting, spreading his terrifying reputation throughout the Middle East, but instead here he is: in Chicago as a poster boy for Lasombra penitence.

Now Malenkov is split between serving his sire loyally, as he's always done, or finally letting loose and never looking back.

PLOTS AND SCHEMES:

- **Conflicted:** Though ill-suited to diplomacy, Malenkov is at least determined to not embarrass his sire in negotiations with the Camarilla. If he feels the Beast rise to the fore, he's not going to try and hold it in. He'll find a part of the city where he can be himself instead of endangering the mission. Malenkov wonders who his sire thinks he's kidding, though. He wonders if he's being set up, and if that's the case, he's not prepared to sit like a duck in the crosshairs.

THRALLS AND TOOLS:

- **Arkady Lavrov (Retainers 2) Dmitri Kiriyenko (Retainers 1) Veterans' Descendants (Contacts 2)** Although Malenkov has few friends among Kindred, he still has contact with some of his Soviet soldier comrades and has managed to further that contact to their sons and even the sons of their sons. He keeps Arkady and Dmitri with him as ghouls, still as youthful looking as they were during the Siege of Stalingrad.

- **BDSM Scene (Contacts 3)** Malenkov never got to experience life's many pleasures as a mortal and, despite his age, routinely drinks from vessels high on drugs or indulges in kinky sexual escapades, less due to a fetish and more due to his hardening jadedness. He has made a name for himself in several large clubs and BDSM societies along the east coast, with many having banned him while others appreciate the air of "hardcore" he brings to their establishments. His reputation is such that it might have permeated Chicago.

- **Escort Services (Contacts 1)** Whenever traveling to a new city, Malenkov initiates contact with sex workers. He considers people in that profession his most likely friends, since they are the only ones who listen to him ramble on about his shitty life and long war stories. Most of them believes he's delusional, as he's clearly too young to have served in World War II.

KINDRED RELATIONSHIPS

- **Talley (Mawla 3, Gratitude)** Despite cutting him off to pursue a childe with a little less baggage, Talley could never truly let go of his creation. Knowing Malenkov would never forgive him, he decided to help his childe discreetly. He sends servants to provide Malenkov with places to sleep during the day, act as easy targets for him to feed upon, and to be drinking buddies so he is not alone. Talley believes Malenkov's presence in this deal may convince the Camarilla of Lasombra sincerity. Clearly, Talley has underestimated his childe's monstrosity.

- **Sierra Van Burrace (Resentment)** Sierra never understood her sire's reason for Embracing a person like Malenkov. Likewise, Malenkov sees Sierra as a usurper and weak. She's never fought in a war and, as far as he knows, has never even taken a mortal's life. Still, they'll work together for now.

- **Bret Stryker (Business)** Though Malenkov doesn't know Stryker personally, his contacts reached out to the Toreador's contacts to arrange potential entertainment in the form of sex workers. It's through Stryker Malenkov found out about Red No⁹ 5s existence.
- **Kevin Jackson (Condescension)** Malenkov hasn't met Jackson but despises the thought of him. He's personally murdered Princes with more credibility than this jumped-up punk who hasn't even participated in a vampire war. Malenkov will act formal and with grace if he has to, but he's not going to make nice with this ludicrous excuse for a Prince.

WHISPERS:

- **War Hero:** There are whispers among the Gangrel — Anarch and Camarilla alike — of the Khan coming to ravage Chicago. Despite his fearsome reputation, they want to catch sight of this fabled soldier of the sectarian wars.
- **War Criminal:** The Primogen have heard Malenkov's name mentioned many times, and know the kinds of horrible acts he perpetrated from New York to Miami. They warn anyone against trusting him.
- **On the Verge:** Malenkov is so close to Wassail he can taste it. He almost wants it, but it needs to be on his terms.

MASK AND MIEN:

- This Lasombra goes by Aleksandr Malenkov and has the papers to prove he was only recently honorably discharged from the Russian army **(Mask 2)**.
- Malenkov is a visually striking individual, with a bald head, big round eyes, and a long, tangled black beard. He walks hunched and appears far older than the 30 years of age he'd met at the time of his Embrace.

Sire: Talley

Embraced: 1868 (Born 1838)

Ambition: Find another war to fight

Convictions: Obey authority

Touchstones: Arkady Lavrov — Soviet army veteran and ghoul

Humanity: 2

Generation: 8th

Blood Potency: 3

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 5; Charisma 2, Manipulation 1, Composure 2; Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 8, Willpower 6

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Craft (Leather) 4, Firearms 2, Melee 3, Stealth 3, Survival (Cold Climate) 5; Animal Ken 3, Intimidation (Reputation) 4, Streetwise (Escort Services) 3, Subterfuge 2; Awareness (Ambushes) 4, Medicine 2

Disciplines: Dominate 1, Oblivion 4, Potence 3

SECURITY GUARDS

The guards are all mortal but are armed with specialized weapons. They have roughly the same level of training as a street cop. The Storyteller can choose to give the guards different stats and equip them with different weapons or give every guard the same stats. Here is a sample guard:

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 5, Social 3, Mental 2

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Athletics 6, Brawl 6, Firearms 6, Investigation 4, Larceny 5, Streetwise 4

Weapons: The security guards in this scenario are armed with pistols or shotguns (medium gunshot, +3 damage) or stun guns (light impact, +1 damage)

FELICITY MILLER

Felicity is the Aviation Commissioner at O'Hare Airport, and the personal servant of Noah Grewal.

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 3, Social 5, Mental 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Academics 6, Finance 5, Persuasion 6, Politics 6, Science 5, Technology 5

CROOK'S MEAL

Jake is a young man who hasn't been in Chicago, or indeed the United States, for long and went to Crook's looking for bar work. Instead, he found Dawson, and became the Nosferatu's blood doll.

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 3, Social 3, Mental 2

Secondary Attributes: Health 5, Willpower 5

Exceptional Dice Pools: Athletics 5, Brawl 4, Persuasion 5

Weapons: Jake is naked and bare-handed

MOHAWK PUNKS

There are nine punks in the Mohawk ready to join a fight. They'll pick up whatever's to hand to make the battle violent and nasty.

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 4, Social 3, Mental 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Brawl 6, Intimidation 5, Melee 5, Performance 4

Weapons: The punks pick up chains and chairs (heavy impact, +2 damage), broken bottles and knives (light piercing, +1 damage), pool cues (light impact, +1 damage), and in one case, a shotgun (medium gunshot, +3 damage) from behind the bar with which to fight

MALENKOV'S GHOULS

Arkady and Dmitri are Malenkov's ghouls and fanatically loyal to their domitor, having served with him in the Second World War and not leaving his side since. They will fight to the death to protect him.

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 5, Social 3, Mental 4

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 4

Exceptional Dice Pools: Awareness 6, Brawl 6, Firearms 7, Intimidation 5, Melee 6, Stealth 7

Disciplines: Potence 1

Weapons: The ghouls are not armed when they first arrive in Chicago, but between the first night and the second night acquire handguns (medium gunshot, +3 damage).

JOE Q. AVERAGE

This example of an average mortal can be used to represent SPCs not otherwise mentioned in the book who act as a hindrance for the coterie. They are not trained in combat and can be considered the average Chicagoan. Examples of use: Gengis' goons in Gengis' Deception, the driver and attackers in Crook's Hijacking, the drunken disrupter in Walking Through the Club, or the guards in The Service Corridors. The Storyteller should alter this template to her liking but treat this as the basic mortal in Chicago.

Standard Dice Pools: Physical 3, Social 3, Mental 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 6

Exceptional Dice Pools: Academics (Chicago) 4, Awareness 5, Drive 4, Insight 4, Intimidation 5, Persuasion 4

Son's Coterie

The PCs and Lasombra delegates will face these antagonists the night before Elysium. They are Jason Newberry's fresh fledglings, each promised immortality and power untold in Chicago if they do him the simple task of eliminating the Lasombra. None of them are his childer. He ventured out to Gary, Indiana to recruit some no-hoper unbound Kindred to perform this task and then go to his haven for their reward, where he'll pay them or murder them, depending on his mood.

ZION "SNOWMAN" MIDDLETON

Clan: Gangrel

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3; Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Composure 2; Intelligence 4, Wits 2, Resolve 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 5

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Firearms (Pistol) 3, Larceny 2, Melee 1, Stealth 4, Survival 2; Insight 2, Intimidation (Bully) 4, Leadership 3, Persuasion 1, Streetwise (Drug Deal) 2, Subterfuge (Straight Face) 4; Awareness 2, Medicine 1, Technology 1

Disciplines: Fortitude 2, Protean 2

Humanity: 4

Blood Potency: 1

SYDNEY "ONE-ROUND" MIDDLETON

Clan: Brujah

Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4; Charisma 3, Manipulation 1, Composure 2; Intelligence 3, Wits 3, Resolve 2

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 4

Skills: Athletics (Quick Step) 3, Brawl (Boxing) 4, Larceny 1, Stealth 2, Survival 2; Insight 2, Intimidation (Well Built) 4, Performance 2, Persuasion 1, Streetwise 2; Academics 2, Awareness (Ambushes) 3, Occult 1

Disciplines: Celerity 1, Potence 3

Humanity: 6

Blood Potency: 1

ELIJAH "BAGGIE" FRANKLIN

Clan: Gangrel

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 2, Stamina 3; Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 1; Intelligence 2, Wits 5, Resolve 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 6, Willpower 4

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Firearms 1, Larceny (Drug Theft) 3, Stealth 4, Survival (Urban Ruin) 4; Animal Ken (Rats) 3, Insight 3, Intimidation 1, Persuasion 1, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 1; Awareness 3, Investigation 3, Medicine (Narcotics) 2, Science 2, Technology 1

Disciplines: Animalism 2, Protean 2

Humanity: 5

Blood Potency: 1

MAKAYLA "MALORT" ELLERY

Clan: Nosferatu

Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4; Charisma 1, Manipulation 4, Composure 3; Intelligence 2, Wits 2, Resolve 3

Secondary Attributes: Health 7, Willpower 6

Skills: Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Drive 3, Firearms 3, Larceny (Lockpicking) 3, Melee 2, Stealth (Stalking) 3, Survival 2; Animal Ken 1, Etiquette 2, Insight 1, Intimidation 2, Leadership (Professional) 2, Persuasion 2, Streetwise 4, Subterfuge 3; Academics (Law) 1, Awareness 2, Investigation 3, Technology 2

Disciplines: Obfuscate 3, Potence 1

Humanity: 6

Blood Potency: 1

THE AVENUES OF CHICAGO

	THE CITY	SUCCESS	FAILURE
1	Construction	You see the off ramp right before traffic comes to a complete halt.	All traffic comes to a complete stop.
2	Inebriated Driver	You slow down or speed up before getting side swiped by this jerk.	He thinks he's so important he can take up three lanes. Seemingly every time you try to pass, he swerves toward you.
3	Traffic Jam	The right lane slows down but you swerve over to the left. You've got at least 500 feet before you have to slow down.	The car besides you doesn't let you merge, and you slow down to about 5-10 MPH.
4	Park Camera	You see the telltale "30 MPH SCHOOL" signs before passing the white oval cameras.	You see the distinctive flash as your license plate is captured on film speeding and accrue a $100 fine. Well, you get at least one warning, right?
5.	Police Speed Trap	You slow down to five over and cruise smoothly past.	You see the unmistakable flashing of blue behind you.
6	Pedestrians	You swerve in the nick of time around a pedestrian walking on a crosswalk.	Pedestrians in Illinois have the right of way. You are currently speeding toward one.
7	Gapers Delay	You dodge the significant police and emergency presence covering an accident.	You come to a stop in front of an accident and must wait to merge.
8	Tourists	You swerve around a large group of tourists looking everywhere but in front of them.	Pedestrians in Illinois have the right of way. You are currently speeding towards a group of them.
9	Road Closure	You successfully recognize the detour onto a side street past a main road closure.	There is a very serious reason why this road was closed.
10	One way	You turn correctly down a one-way street.	You turn incorrectly down a one-way street.

THE BLOCK

	THE CITY	SUCCESS	FAILURE
1	Neighborhood Watch	The group of grandmothers waves at you as you walk down the block and invites you over for Sunday dinner.	The group of grandmothers asks when you're going to get a real job and a serious relationship.
2	Snitches	Some guy on the block just got bail and is asking you if you have any intel to give up.	Some guy on the block is on his cell phone and is describing you.
3	Chicago Police Video Camera	That blue box has recently been spray painted over. You got at least a few nights on it.	That blue box has been recording everything for the past hour...
4	Parking Ticket	Your car gets a parking ticket, for the car behind you.	You get a parking ticket. You've got one more before they boot your car.
5	Block Party	There is a massive block party right next to your block, perfect feeding opportunity. Hunting rolls gain a die.	There is a block party on your block and you are expected to be there. It's pot luck.
6	Street Cleaning	You moved your car over to the right side of the street.	Your car has been towed.
7	Blackout	You had a flashlight and some candles next to you.	All your neighborhood's electricity has suddenly gone out. You're left in a dark room.
8	Neighborhood Festival	There is a large festival a block or so away, either a church gathering, ethnic festival, or neighborhood party. All hunting rolls gain two dice.	Traffic is so bad it takes a good half hour to get out of your haven's neighborhood.
9	Dibs	You can get a parking spot perfectly in front of your haven. You know why: You placed a chair out there.	That spot was most definitely your neighbor's and they are now coming out of their house to give you an earful. Also, where is the sun right now? Is it rising soon?
10	The Boot	You catch the police before they boot your car. You still need to pay the tickets, though.	Your tire has a large, yellow, metal boot that will destroy your car if you drive with it on.

THE OCCULT SCENE

	THE CITY	SUCCESS	FAILURE
1	Omen	You see a positive omen on your travels. Gain a die on all Occult rolls for the evening.	You see a bad omen on your travels. Lose a die on all Occult rolls for the evening.
2	Ritual	You have been invited to a ritual taking place in a location of power somewhere in the city.	You have stumbled into a ritual taking place somewhere in the city.
3	New Age	You receive a thread of Golconda, a brief moment of relief from damnation. What made that happen?	You have met someone who "understands your condition" and will "help you along your path" even without your consent.
4	Temple	You have located some place sacred to a group of mortals.	You have located a place sacred to mortals and its true faith has marked you in some way. The PC suffers −1 die from an Attribute roll of the Storyteller's choosing.
5	Grimoire	Chicago holds a trove of ancient tomes filled with powerful magics. You have acquired one.	You have found something that has cursed you with some level of knowledge that is incredibly dangerous to possess.
6	"Magical" Item	You find something incredibly valuable to a group of people. You have no idea how it works but you have it.	You have found a supposed "magical" item that is completely useless yet a group of individuals wants it from you.
7	Dark	The manifestation of magics greater than you has touched you. +1 die to all Stealth rolls for the evening.	You have walked through the wake of something more powerful than you and it has changed your scent. Subtract a die from all Stealth rolls for the evening.
8	Sacrifice	Your blood is highly sought after by a group of mortals and they are willing to help you for it.	You check all the boxes for a sacrifice that was supposedly prophesied.
9	The Spirits	You have been seeing moving things that shouldn't be there all over the city and you don't know why.	Things keep going wrong; take the Haunted flaw for the evening.
10	Will Worker	You meet a real magician who can bend the very fabric of reality around them.	You meet a "magician" who is ready to show you about how powerful they are for the next hour.

THE UNDERWORLD

	THE CITY	SUCCESS	FAILURE
1	Gunshots or Fireworks?	It was fireworks, no big deal.	It was gunshots and there are people running down the block you're on.
2	Brawl	You witness a fight that has broken out in the street.	You get accosted by a random stranger.
3	Petty Theft	Where is your phone? Where is your watch?	Where is your wallet or purse?
4	Panhandled	Hey, can you spare some change? I'm down on my luck.	This person will just not let go of your attention by stepping in front of you or grabbing onto you.
5	Drug Deal	You get offered illegal drugs. You're not a narc, right?	You witness an illegal drug deal and the offenders are walking toward you.
6	Breaking and Entering	Someone has attempted to break into your haven but was clearly disturbed before they succeeded.	Someone successfully broke into your haven.
7	Gang Violence	There has been a drive-by shooting and thankfully no one was hurt.	There has been a drive-by shooting and you or someone near you have been hit.
8	Pressure	One of your Touchstones is being threatened.	One of your Touchstones has been physically assaulted.
9	White-Collar Crime	An area in your character's control has assets or money stolen from it.	An area in your character's control is victim of a hostile takeover.
10	Extortion	You are being extorted by someone and you know exactly who they are and what they want.	You are being extorted by someone. You don't know on what basis or what they want.

DRAGOON

	THE CITY	SUCCESS	FAILURE
1	Bureaucracy	Another vampire in the city offers you a favor: They'll create an entire separate alias for you.	Someone has obliterated your personal records in the county and federal filings.
2	Finance	With the assistance of a knowledgeable ally, you take the proper precautions to create a perfect financial portfolio that should maintain and maybe grow your Resources over the year.	Your accounts, assets, and portfolios have all been frozen by a rival. But which one?
3	Health	Paperwork from the mortal courts has landed in your lap from an anonymous benefactor. You can declare someone deceased.	You have been declared deceased by the county. You first find out about it when you read your own obituary.
4	High Society	A contact provides you with some key information that can help destroy the reputation of a new establishment.	Your or a coterie member's establishment's reputation has been socially tarnished by a rival.
5	Industry	You receive a hot tip regarding which pioneering industry in your city is worth investing in, and the benefits you could receive by doing so.	A massive union strike cripples your resources and associated businesses for a long duration. Is a vampire behind it?
6	Legal	A judge owes you a favor and can summon someone to court during the day time, if you have their name and address.	You have been summoned to court at 9 A.M. It could be a way for the Second Inquisition to flush you out.
7	Police	You can apply pressure to a dirty cop who has agreed to erase your criminal history from city records.	You are tailed for an evening by the police and they watch your every move.
8	Political	You have connections with the local ward and alderman staff. They could grant you construction permission for a new haven or nightspot, or maybe interfere with an enemy's civic activities.	A politician running for office has dropped your name specifically in their smear campaign. You didn't realize you were on their radar.
9	Organized Crime	We got that thing you wanted. It fell off a truck somewhere. No questions asked, you're handed an item you've been looking for.	We got that thing you wanted. By the way, I really love your house. I could see myself living in it...I hope we can keep doing business.
10	University	Not only do you have access to the campus at night due to a fake student or faculty ID, giving you access to student housing rich in blood, you can also coerce the board into awarding you an honorary degree.	Someone has been making their way through members of your friend group from back when you were a mortal student, questioning them about you and in some cases killing them. Word has gotten back to you.

PEOPLE PERSON

	THE CITY	SUCCESS	FAILURE
1	Police	Intentionally or not, you helped the cops tackle a wanted perp. Word has spread about your good deed. You gain a dot in Contacts: CPD for the remainder of the story. You may keep it if you cultivate the relationship and spend experience points on the Background.	The local cops think you're a menace or a nuisance due to rumors they've heard about you, the way you act, or the color of your skin. You lose a die on Social rolls when dealing with all members of the CPD.
2	Fire Department	The CFD believes you're the kind of person who will help out if someone is stuck in a burning building or a cat is up a tree. You gain +1 die on Social rolls when dealing with all members of the CFD for the remainder of the story.	Someone in the fire department hates you and has ensured there's a delay to send a fire truck out to your haven if a call ever comes in.
3	Garbage	A member of the Chicago Sanitary Union found a limb in trash collected near your haven, but instead of calling the police, came to you offering to dispose of the body part in exchange for payment.	Another vampire has put in a word with the Chicago Sanitary Union that you don't need your trash collected anymore, so it just stacks up outside your haven.
4	Chicago Teachers Union	A local teacher has taken an interest in you and would love for you to come to their school and speak to students about your area of expertise. Gain a dot in Influence: Students for the remainder of the story. You may keep it if you cultivate the relationship and spend experience points on the Background.	A student has reported you as disturbing, leading to a closing of ranks among faculty, staff, and the student body. You lose two dice on Social rolls when dealing with all members of the CTU.
5	Service & Hospitality Industry	You've already slipped the concierge a little cash for a room in the center of the hotel, where no light can penetrate and you can take a guest until the next night, no questions asked.	The staff keep asking you about your strangely nocturnal lifestyle, how you never order food, and where that busboy went. Without a sizeable tip, they will try to get you to leave.
6	Bartenders	You helped a bartender out of a sticky spot with a dangerous customer recently, and they haven't forgotten. You can arrange a private party on the premises just once, after closing hours.	The next time you head into your favorite haunt, you find your name behind the bar. You've been banned from the premises for actions that may be false or you just can't remember, and the bouncers are coming for you.
7	Construction Workers	You've got a good line on a building firm making reliable structures on the cheap. You could purchase a dot in the Haven Background for the same experience-point cost as a new level in a Skill.	The next time you head into your favorite haunt, you find your name behind the bar. You've been banned from the premises for actions that may be false or you just can't remember, and the bouncers are coming for you.
8	Security Guards	A mortal for whom you recently did a good turn comes to you with an offer: they'll keep an eye on your property while you're away or busy, at no cost to you. You gain a dot in the Retainer Background for the duration of the story.	The security in the local shopping mall is convinced you are the thief who's been stealing from them. Whenever they spot you they will harass you or try to get you arrested, unless you can convince them of your innocence.
9	Union Card	You recognize the struggle of the working mortal, perhaps having lived that life yourself. You still pay into a union and gain a dot in Contacts: Union and another in Allies: Union for so doing, lasting until the end of the chronicle. Choose the type of union you support.	You betrayed the union when they were striking and they'll never forget your scabbing. You lose two dice on Social rolls when dealing with the union with whom you were affiliated for a duration determined by the Storyteller.
10	Aldermanic Council	The Chicago City Council rewards those who have paid into it for as long as you have. You know which strings to pull for building or demolition permits, and even have access to city archives. You gain two dots in Influence: Aldermanic Council for the remainder of the story.	You've been caught up in one of the many corruption scandals afflicting Chicago's council. You must either send a representative to court on your behalf or lose a dot of Resources in fines for your presumed crime, recovering it at the end of the story.

THE COLLAR COUNTIES

	THE CITY	SUCCESS	FAILURE
1	Community Watch	This is the third time that one old lady has walked by with her dog.	There is a group of neighbors walking toward you and they aren't bringing a pie.
2	Lost	You're pretty sure you are completely lost somewhere in the Collar. Thankfully you know if you head due south, you'll eventually hit I-80, hopefully before sunup?	You just could have sworn that you were supposed to take that last right turn. There is no cell signal out here, either.
3	Gas Station	There is one helpful person behind the counter and his skin just looks a little too tight over his face.	The gas-station bathroom door just got kicked open and *something* is running out of it.
4	Subdivision	Why do the people dress the same out here? Wait, that guy blinked at the same time as that other woman.	Everything looks the same out here. Where the hell are we?
5	Insular Citizens	You know when you aren't welcome, and you are most definitely aren't welcome here.	You may be unwelcome, but these folks want to make sure you never come back here. Ever.
6	Isolation	You need to get out of here, but you don't know where "here" is and how to do that.	Why is the very act of being in this place making your Beast freak out? Take one Superficial Willpower damage every hour you are in the Collar.
7	Secret Society	You have stumbled upon a gathering of kine that seemingly have plans. You don't know exactly what they are yet.	You have walked into a meeting that you had no place being even remotely a part of. But now you're here and they won't let you leave.
8	The Fields	Why do all the bugs out here seem so huge?	What is moving all of the corn and coming toward us? And what is that clicking sound?
9	Bored Cops	You could swear you have been through three towns, but that car is still following you.	What brings you to town? License and registration, please. We don't particularly like your kind around these parts.
10	Tracked	You realize there's a large creature that smells distinctly of an animal of some kind following you and your people.	There's a beast on that rooftop, ready to attack. Allow one surprise attack round for the enemy.

SMOKE AND MIRRORS

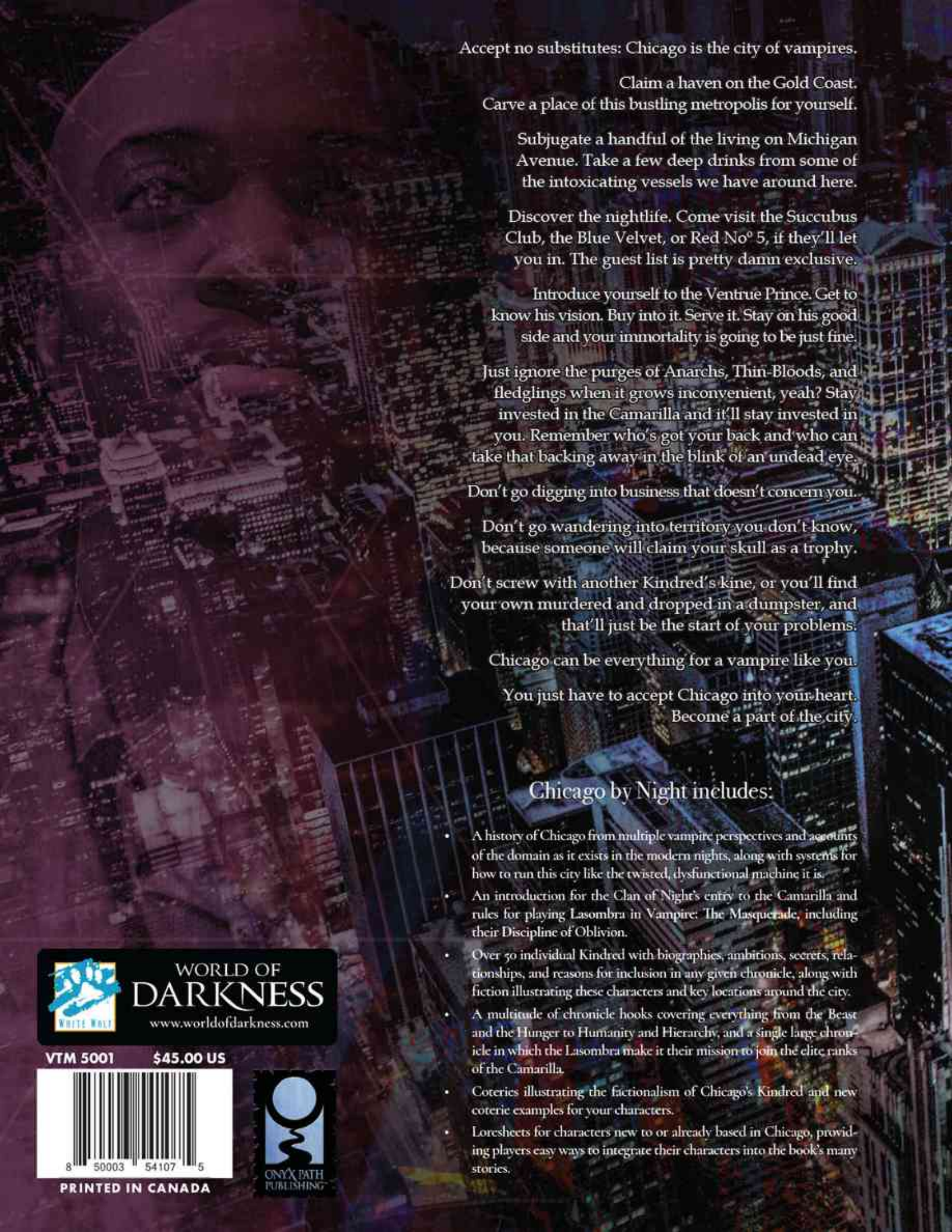
	THE CITY	SUCCESS	FAILURE
1	Rogue Ghoul	A ghoul you know is desperate for vampire blood and is willing to work with you.	A ghoul you know is looking to get your vitae any way they can.
2	Med Card	You come across an abandoned ambulance that was shipping a significant amount of blood. Where did the owners go?	There's a missing shipment of blood and the owner, a powerful elder, is blaming your coterie for its disappearance.
3	Malnutrition	All the kine in this area have experienced a level of economic poverty that has affected their blood. All blood taken from this area deducts one die from all Athletics or Brawl rolls for the evening.	All the blood in this area is just not healthy enough to be used properly. You immediately vomit it up.
4	Damnation	You come across a dying human. They have been mostly exsanguinated and are desperate for help.	You have come across a recently Embraced Kindred in frenzy from their first hunger.
5	Lead Poisoning	All the kine on this street have poisonous blood that will cause you to take two Superficial Health damage whenever you drink.	All the kine have lead poisoning in their blood in this area and will cause four Superficial Health damage whenever you drink from them.
6	Psychopomp	You come across a vampire who murdered a mortal during feeding. They beg you for help.	You come across a Kindred who has killed during feeding. They run off into the night and there are sirens in the distance.
7	Rival Coterie	You have met an openly hostile coterie and they are here to fuck up your night.	There is a coterie out there, somewhere, working against you. You just don't know which.
8	Industrial Blight	This area is so saturated with industrial chemicals the blood is outright dangerous. It causes you to roll –2 dice on all Stamina-based rolls for the evening.	The blood you just devoured is so saturated with chemicals that it's toxic. Take one Aggravated Health damage for every drink. It's a miracle these mortals are still alive.
9	Missing Touchstone	You get a distressing message from one of your Touchstones.	Your Touchstone is missing. You haven't seen them in some time. You're beginning to get scared.
10	Wight	You stumble upon a Wight who has killed and is feeding from a corpse. It has yet to notice you.	You stumble upon a Wight who has just finished off a meal and is looking for something more fortifying.

ELYSIA

	THE CITY	SUCCESS	FAILURE
1	Thin-Bloods	A Duskborn looks up to you as a leader and can give you some tips for roughing it. You gain +1 die to all Streetwise rolls for the rest of the evening.	A pack of thin-bloods are taking quite a "liking" to you. Your vitae could make them more powerful.
2	Caitiff	A local Caitiff believes they may know *something* dubious of your lineage and are willing to trade for it.	A local Caitiff believes they are of your bloodline or may even be your childe, and is threatening to make a scene of it.
3	Brujah	A Brujah finds a moment of camaraderie in their hatred for someone by slipping you some intel.	Wait, what did you just say? You get into a debate with a coterie of Brujah. Good luck with that.
4	Gangrel	A Gangrel catches your scent and finds you novel. They wish to discuss hunting tactics with you and provide you some much-needed pointers. You gain +1 die to all hunting rolls for the rest of the evening.	A Gangrel senses your Beast and just doesn't like it. They are slowly circling you or have their hackles up.
5	Malkavian	A Malkavian provides you a brief flash into your subconscious by indulging in a bit of micro-therapy with you. You gain +1 die to all Insight rolls for the rest of the evening.	You have something of the Malkavian's (no, you don't) and you know where it is (no, you don't) and it simply must come out.
6	Nosferatu	A Nosferatu has a piece of information for you, for a fee. Trust me, it's worth the price.	A Nosferatu knows someone has put a mark on your data. They could feed them bad info for a fee.
7	Toreador	The Toreador just love your ensemble and speak highly of you about the town. Gain +1 die to all Persuasion rolls for the evening.	Your outfit is grinding against the Toreador and they are making it quite a thing. Loudly. Lose −1 die to all Etiquette rolls for the evening.
8	Tremere	A Tremere loved the last book you read and wants to talk about it at length. They drop some knowledge on you, but in plain speak. Gain +1 on all Academics rolls for the rest of the evening.	The Tremere keep looking at you and whispering. One made some gesture with their fingers and the other is furiously writing something down.
9	Ventrue	The Harpy has just made you aware a certain Ventrue is looking to procure a boon from you for a high price.	The Ventrue are looking to procure something of value from you. They'll acquire it or take it, come hell or high water.
10	Lasombra	The Lasombra are looking for allies. They need a person just like you and they are willing to pay handsomely.	The Lasombra think harming you would show the rest of the Camarilla just how serious they are about joining.

DIGNITARIES AND DEBUTANTES

	THE CITY	SUCCESS	FAILURE
1	The Church of Caine	You are being courted by The Cainite Heresy. They keep sending you "gifts."	You are on the local preacher's list of the deserving Damned. He enjoys directing his congregation to mess with your night.
2	The Baron	The local Baron has taken an interest in you and believes you have something that would help improve the Movement.	The local Baron thinks you're a bootlick and commands the other Anarchs to tell you to "get fucked."
3	The Herald	The Herald has an interesting bit of gossip for you if you are willing to trade for some of your own.	The Herald has just sold one of your boons to someone. They will tell you who, for a trade of information.
4.	The Hound	The Hound currently ignores your presence and may even look to you for some intel on a subject.	The Hound has taken an intense interest in one of your Touchstones. They say this mortal knows too much.
5.	The Primogen Council	The Primogen are looking for a certain someone with your exact set of skills and might elevate you to a title if you serve them.	The Primogen are looking for a certain someone with your exact set of skills, except that person is not you and could never be you. You're worthless to them.
6	The Ambassador	A diplomat from one of the sects has an important message for you from a vampire in another domain.	The Ambassador has tarnished your name in another domain due to a perceived offense you made against them.
7	The Keeper of Elysium	The Keeper needs someone to deliver a piece of art to the next Elysium. Are you willing?	The Keeper will be holding the next Elysium in your territory whether you like it or not.
8	The Sheriff	You know the Sheriff has a new case, and you have a significant piece of evidence in it.	The Sheriff would like to interview you about a recent breach of the Traditions.
9	The Seneschal	The Seneschal is willing to offer you a major boon for your assistance in a very private matter. Please, step into this room.	The Seneschal is looking to speak with you privately. Now. Please, step into this room.
10	The Prince	The Prince is offering the Right of Progeny to someone and you are on the shortlist. But, why?	There are rumbles the Prince will soon be splitting up existing territories. You are on the shortlist. But, why?



Accept no substitutes: Chicago is the city of vampires.

Claim a haven on the Gold Coast. Carve a place of this bustling metropolis for yourself.

Subjugate a handful of the living on Michigan Avenue. Take a few deep drinks from some of the intoxicating vessels we have around here.

Discover the nightlife. Come visit the Succubus Club, the Blue Velvet, or Red No° 5, if they'll let you in. The guest list is pretty damn exclusive.

Introduce yourself to the Ventrue Prince. Get to know his vision. Buy into it. Serve it. Stay on his good side and your immortality is going to be just fine.

Just ignore the purges of Anarchs, Thin-Bloods, and fledglings when it grows inconvenient, yeah? Stay invested in the Camarilla and it'll stay invested in you. Remember who's got your back and who can take that backing away in the blink of an undead eye.

Don't go digging into business that doesn't concern you.

Don't go wandering into territory you don't know, because someone will claim your skull as a trophy.

Don't screw with another Kindred's kine, or you'll find your own murdered and dropped in a dumpster, and that'll just be the start of your problems.

Chicago can be everything for a vampire like you.

You just have to accept Chicago into your heart. Become a part of the city.

Chicago by Night includes:

- A history of Chicago from multiple vampire perspectives and accounts of the domain as it exists in the modern nights, along with systems for how to run this city like the twisted, dysfunctional machine it is.
- An introduction for the Clan of Night's entry to the Camarilla and rules for playing Lasombra in Vampire: The Masquerade, including their Discipline of Oblivion.
- Over 30 individual Kindred with biographies, ambitions, secrets, relationships, and reasons for inclusion in any given chronicle, along with fiction illustrating these characters and key locations around the city.
- A multitude of chronicle hooks covering everything from the Beast and the Hunger to Humanity and Hierarchy, and a single large chronicle in which the Lasombra make it their mission to join the elite ranks of the Camarilla.
- Coteries illustrating the factionalism of Chicago's Kindred and new coterie examples for your characters.
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