

G U R P S

# BLOOD & TYPES

DARK PREDATORS AND DEADLY PREY: VAMPIRES AND VAMPIRE HUNTERS



BY LANE GRATE

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

GURPS

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DARK PREDATORS AND DEADLY PREY: VAMPIRES AND VAMPIRE HUNTERS

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# INTRODUCTION

## NO OTHER MONSTER

in fiction and myth is more enduring than the vampire. The vampire legend stretches from the earliest roots of civilization to the pop-culture of the space age. It has a unique hold upon our collective imagination, with the power to both horrify and fascinate. Perhaps this is because the vampire is based upon the primal fears at the core of human experience: the fear of death, of the predator, of the power of sex, of the night.



Before exploring the variations of the vampire legend, it is first necessary to ask, "What is a vampire?"

The vampire has many guises. It is a type of ghost. It is a demon. It is at once a human and a wild beast. It is the fear of death and the dead; the pale, hairless spectre that looms from the shadows driven by a jealous hunger for the living, or the hooded figure standing silent in the graveyard. Yet the vampire is also the fear of evil in human form. It may be the cold and ruthless killer or the blood-crazed madman, the black magician made monstrous in the image of the forces he serves, the assassin in the night, the seductive sexual predator . . .

At the same time, the vampire can be a romantic figure or an object of sympathy. He may be the anti-hero or the tragic villain, struggling nobly against his fate or using his powers to battle greater evils. A vampire may have had centuries to acquire wisdom. Yet he is an outsider, cursed never to look upon the sunlit world of mortal man, feared and hated because of his very existence.

Yet with the many faces of the vampire, there are certain essential characteristics. The vampire is nocturnal; a creature of the night. It is a predator and a cannibal. It is dead and yet alive, belonging fully to neither realm. Its curse is a disease that may be spread to its victims. It wears a human form, and yet is both more and less than human.

Regardless of the reasons, the vampire seems to be a permanent part of our imaginations. It is our dark side, our fears and fantasies brought to . . . well, something like life.

## ♣ GOOD EVENING

*"Throughout the whole vast shadowy world of ghosts and demons there is no figure so terrible, no figure so dreaded and abhorred, yet dight with such fearful fascination, as the vampire, who is himself neither ghost nor demon, but yet who partakes the dark natures and possesses the mysterious qualities of both."*

— Montague Summers; *The Vampire: his Kith and Kin*, 1928

**VAMPIRE. FOR MOST PEOPLE**, the word conjures an image of a sinister but distinguished looking gentleman with a black cape and oversized canine teeth. The image has been reinforced countless times, by gothic novels, late-night movies and children's Halloween costumes. But the vampire is more than that. There is a shadowy history as old as mankind itself of bloodthirsty revenants, fiends and ghouls lurking in the darkness waiting to pounce upon the unwary with razor fangs, bringing death . . . and worse.

The sinister aristocrat of the gothic genre is only one chapter in the long history of the vampire. The undead have lurked in the shadows of man's subconscious in many different lands and times, in many different forms. The archetype of the vampire pervades the folklore and legends of people all over the world; it is a personification of the most basic fears inherent to the human condition. Vampires have endured through the centuries, because they are *us*. They are our dark side, the receptacle of our fears and desires that are not allowed the light of day, monstrous yet still wearing human faces. This is the secret of the vampire's immortality.

## ♣ THE LEGEND OF THE VAMPIRE

**THE LEGEND OF THE VAMPIRE** is unusual in that it is nearly universal throughout human culture. Nearly every mythology has a creature that corresponds to the essential characteristics of the Undead. Despite boundaries of long centuries and thousands of miles, the vampire looms over widely disparate peoples around the globe.

## About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of the **GURPS** system. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources now available include:

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### Page References

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the **GURPS Basic Set**, Third Edition. Any page reference that begins with a B refers to the **GURPS Basic Set** — e.g., p. B102 means p. 102 of the **GURPS Basic Set**, Third Edition.



## What is a Vampire?

The problem in tracing the vampire through history is partly linguistic and partly conceptual. Many cultures failed to distinguish the vampire as a unique monster. In the legends of many different cultures, the archetype of the vampire is present, but inextricably linked to other supernatural phenomena, so that it becomes impossible to say what differences exist between vampires and other malevolent entities, particularly ghosts, demons and witches. Yet in most cultures, there is a spectre at the crossroads, a creature caught between life and death who hungers for mortal lives.

By the strictest interpretation, vampires may be defined as beings who were once living mortals who have died and returned from the grave as nocturnal predators of human beings. However, there are always exceptions. There is an entire bestiary of monsters from around the world who fit the archetype of the vampire. Many early vampires were demonic beings who were never human. There is an entire category of astral vampires who were not necessarily dead. Many Gothic tales include vampires who may walk abroad in daylight. Yet there are common themes that connect all of the creatures from different times and different lands.

There are three main varieties of creature that will be considered in this work:

*Mortal vampires:* These are living humans, who, through some personal inclination (and usually the help of some supernatural agency) have become cannibalistic predators upon their own species. Such a being may or may not possess supernatural powers. Often this condition comes about through consortship and bargaining with forces of darkness.

### About the Author

Lane Grate is a freelance writer and game designer with 16 years of experience in roleplaying. He has been previously published in *Rogue Mistress*, a supplement for Chaosium Games' *Stormbringer*. His greatest educational achievement is attending nine years of college without graduating from anything (including high school). He was once described by a teacher as "the perfect example of a bad example" and he has always tried to live up to this.

His main areas of interest are horror and dark fantasy, existentialist philosophy, herpetology, cyberspace exploration, the occult sciences and all things Gothic. Contrary to popular superstition, he could go out in the daylight if he really wanted to and he is quite capable of eating garlic.

He is currently maintaining a nocturnal existence in Missoula, Montana, where he has more good friends than he deserves.



*The Undead:* These are former mortals who have died and come back from the grave. They are usually required to prey upon others simply to maintain their existences. They may be bloodthirsty monsters who have lost all traces of their human natures during their transformations, or unwilling victims who have been cursed with existences they do not want (but perhaps can't bear to end). These are the vampires most commonly associated with the word; the animated corpses that suck the blood of the living to continue their own morbid half-life.

Being dead already, this variety of vampire can be extremely difficult to dispose of, possessing an unnatural relationship to the conditions of life and death.

*Spirits and nonhuman entities:* These are parasitic beings of nonhuman origin that may masquerade as mortals in order to be closer to their prey. They are often of a less corporeal nature, with the ability to exist as non-physical spirits or materialize as solid and tangible presences. Such creatures can be very difficult to exterminate, as they may not be dependent upon the existence of their physical forms. Many of these entities have demonic or infernal origins.

Of these general categories of vampiric creatures, the primary focus here will be the true undead. Mortals and spirits, while included for the GM's use, are exceptions to many of the traditional rules of vampirism (see below). The terms vampire and the damned are employed as generic terms for any vampiric being, while the terms revenant and undead are applied specifically to "true" vampires.



## Symbolism of the Vampire Legend

The vampire can be seen to represent more than just pre-scientific superstition or an interesting literary bogey man. The vampire has been used both deliberately and subconsciously to symbolize many different religious, social and political situations. The archetype has also been a receptacle for many subconscious fears and desires about both sex and violence.

To some early Church fathers, the vampire represented the restless dissatisfaction felt by a soul who had turned away from the salvation of the Church. This manifested in the belief that one who was lost to the Church, for example by excommunication or suicide, was predisposed to become a vampire.

The vampire has been used as a political statement by some writers as a metaphor for the parasitic relationships of different social classes, and indeed, possibly the first use of the word "vampire" in the English language may have been in the article "Political Vampyres," published in *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1732. This article spoke of a type of financial vampirism practiced by greedy officials and tax-happy bureaucrats: "These Vampyres are said to torment and kill the Living by sucking out all their Blood; and a ravenous Minister, in this part of the World, is compared to a Leech or Bloodsucker, and carries his Oppression from beyond the Grave, by anticipating the publick Revenues, and entailing a Perpetuity of Taxes, which must gradually drain the Body Politick of its Blood and Spirits."

The vampire is also the Jungian Shadow, the dark side of human nature made flesh. The reversal of human values (day to night, good to evil, alive to dead, etc.) is one of the best-defined characteristics of the undead. The vampire is the reflection of mankind, "through a mirror, darkly," and as such inspires both the fear and desire that accompanies the forbidden elements of human nature.

## ✠ ELEMENTS OF THE VAMPIRE LEGEND

VAMPIRES PERSONIFY SOME VERY FUNDAMENTAL FEARS. These basic fears, inherent to the human condition, are the themes around which every vampire tale, fictional or folkloric, is woven. These themes also serve to define the true vampiric archetype.

The five primary themes at the heart of the vampire legend are death, disease, the night, predators and sex. It is these topics and their attendant anxieties which give the vampire its identity.

### Death

One of the fundamental themes of the vampire legend is the creature's relationship to death. The horror at the heart of the vampire tale is, first and foremost, the fear of mortality. For mortals, death is frightening. This vast unknown, looming inescapably for all, produces a whole litany of attendant fears: fear of dying, of others dying, of what happens after death, and of the dead themselves. Thus the vampire tale, with its cemeteries and tombs, its living corpses and their prey and its tantalizing promised glimpses into the mysteries beyond life has been an ideal vehicle for confronting the spectre of the reaper.

Generally speaking, all vampires are willing or unwilling bringers of death. An intimate relationship with mortality is thus required for both vampires and those who hunt them. The vampire is death given human form, regardless of its method of killing. Whether a slow wasting or a savage attack, the end result to the mortal victim is the same.





## Funeral Customs

A great many of the rites and taboos associated with laying the dead to rest also imply a fear of what will happen if the dead become restless. Funeral customs from all over the world hint at this morbid possibility, and many of these customs have survived until the present. Even the modern tradition of placing a head stone has a more sinister undertone than merely erecting a monument to the deceased; the heavy stone was once intended to keep the corpse in its place.

In countries where belief in the undead is strongest, all sorts of elaborate practices keep the dead in their graves. Corpses are bound with cords, nailed or spiked down, pierced with needles and spikes, and dismembered or maimed (usually the legs) to prevent any nocturnal wandering. In fact, the now-famous wooden stake originated as just another tool to pin a suspect corpse to the earth.

Similar methods were used to hinder the vampire's efforts if it should rise again, such as sewing shut the eyes or mouth of the potential undead. Another widespread practice was the burial of suspect persons at a crossroads, in the supposition that when the monster rose it would be unable to decide which direction to go. In some lands, corpses were buried face down in the hope that, should the dead awake, it would be confused and dig deeper into the earth rather than rising from the grave.

Some cultures routinely dispose of bodies by cremation, the only certain way to prevent the dead from rising, by denying them a body altogether.

"True" vampires are neither dead nor alive, but exist in an intermediary state known as undeath. These vampires are privileged with some insight into one of the fundamental questions of human existence, namely, "What lies beyond death?" The vampire has passed beyond this great veil, and returned. In this state between life and death, the creature is outside the normal cycle of human existence. Because of this, it does not need to fear death as a mortal must, yet to maintain this unnatural unlife a vampire must take the lives of others. We find the vampire once again at the crossroads, caught between the extremes of human experience, for he is both the dead and death itself.

## Disease

In many of its manifestations, the vampire is intrinsically linked to fears of pestilence and disease. In fact, this seems to be the very source of some vampire tales. In plague-stricken societies with little medical knowledge, the undead can be seen as a pre-scientific metaphor for contagion; specifically, that the dead were still a menace that could bring death to the living. Most reported epidemics of vampirism coincided with outbreaks of plague.

Indeed, the reported symptoms of vampiric predation were most often a type of wasting sickness, as the victim's life was drained by the jealous dead. Weakness, paleness, shortness of breath, and other infirmities were thought to be caused by the creature's attack. Disease carrying vermin, such as rats and fleas, also became associated with the vampire, either as his minions or as a disguise.

Finally, the condition of vampirism itself has many qualities of a disease, particularly in the European folklore that became the basis for the modern conception of the vampire. It is a condition that brings death, and is transmitted from one victim to another. In fact, some early reports maintained that a person could be infected with vampirism by merely eating the flesh of an animal that had been preyed upon by a vampire. Left unchecked, vampirism, like the plague, could soon assume epidemic proportions.

Not surprisingly, the vampire has seen a great deal of attention once again, right when the metaphor of death and disease brought by the sharing of blood is once again a topical comment on the frightening realities of life.

## The Night

The fear of the night stretches back to the earliest roots of prehistory, when mankind huddled in caves with only the light and warmth of the fire to hold the darkness and the predators that lurked there at bay. While the night has become less dangerous over time, even the most modern "civilized" cities become more perilous in the hours between dusk and dawn. Understandably, then, darkness still triggers some of mankind's primal fears.

The night represents the unknown, with its impenetrable shadows that can conceal menaces as well as blind man and make him more vulnerable to the threats they conceal.

The night is the vampire's realm. In many ways, the vampire is the night on a symbolic level, and like his cave-dwelling ancestors, man knows instinctively that the only safety is the light of the sun, or its earth-bound surrogate, fire. This is the reason for the universal use of fire as a weapon against vampiric monsters; it is a source of warmth and light and thus an ally of the living.

## Predators

The fear that is inspired by the vampire is also the primal fear of the predator. As members of the animal kingdom, mankind has always had to face the realities of the food chain. The vampire is a complex symbol for these realities. First, he represents man's fear of becoming the prey of something more dangerous than himself. No one likes the idea of being stalked, caught, and most horrifying of all, consumed. Perhaps because it is another fear that dates back to man's earliest experiences, there is a special terror that comes with the thought of falling victim to the fangs of the beast.

## ... For the Blood is the Life

"But you must strictly refrain from partaking of the blood, for the blood is the life; you must not eat the life with the flesh." *Deuteronomy 12:23*

Since the earliest times, man has understood this simple axiom. To primitive man, this was an easy relationship to observe; the blood is the life. As blood drained away from a man or beast, so did the life. Thus, blood became identified as the physical medium for the more etheric energy of the soul or spirit. Blood sacrifices proliferated in many cultures, with the blood once again symbolic of the life-force it carried. It only followed, then, that if the loss of blood caused weakness and death, that the ingestion of blood might provide strength and vitality. Some primitive peoples took this form of sympathetic logic to the extreme of performing ritual cannibalism, drinking the blood and eating the flesh of respected enemies in the hopes of acquiring their strength.

With the advent of Christianity, blood acquired a new host of mystical and miraculous characteristics, once again symbolic of a supernatural immortality.

With all of this potent mystery and symbology attributed to the blood, it is little wonder that it was assumed that if the dead hunger for life, they might take it in the form of blood.



## Metaphysics and the Undead

To be undead means to exist in a physically and metaphysically “unnatural” state. The vampire’s existence is inherently opposed to the sources of life, whether natural, like the sun, or supernatural, like forces of spiritual “goodness” (however that is defined in the campaign world). The vampire’s very existence is an affront to nature. Many vampires are directly in league with whatever “demons” or forces of darkness are native to their culture.

In most cultures, there is some belief in the continued existence of mortal souls after death. Whatever these beliefs are, the vampire stands in opposition to them. The vampire cannot follow the natural course of the spirit after death, but remains tied to the physical world for all eternity. Even if destroyed by appropriate means and granted the peace of permanent death, the vampire is generally barred from whatever spiritual rewards await mortals, and possibly damned to some form of punishment.

Because of their spiritual exile, however, vampires may have access to the secrets of the Other Side. They may see the metaphysical action behind the scenes. One familiar method of demonstrating this is the countless tales in which a vampire lives long enough to perceive the reality of some form of reincarnation, invariably in the form of a previous lover thought lost to the ravages of time.

Secondly, the vampire represents our own savage side as hunters and carnivores, illustrating the condition of a biological organism; to survive, man must kill and consume other life.

Finally, as a predator with human form, the vampire illustrates our own dark side, and the reality that the most dangerous predator that man can face is another human.

The predatory nature of the vampire shows through in his very appearance. The most easily recognizable feature of the undead are the sharp fangs of the beast. Many independently formed legends all attribute the vampire with the ability to assume the form of one or more animals, usually nocturnal predators such as cats, wolves, etc. Countless varieties of vampire around the world possess vicious talons, glowing red eyes and animal forms – all outward manifestations of the beast within.

## Sex

The legend of the vampire has had distinctly sexual elements from its very beginning. The earliest known depiction of a vampire is a Babylonian bowl engraved with the image of a beheaded female vampire crouching above a male victim in an unquestionably sexual pose. This tradition saw its way through a variety of early versions of the predatory but seductive female vampire, through the suave and compelling aristocrats of Gothic fiction, and into the popular image presented by contemporary cinematic presentations.

As an archetypal receptacle for the dark side of human nature, the vampire has had attributed to it the sexual taboos of various cultures. In many early tales, this was as simple as a depiction of a sexually aggressive female. This intimidating image fueled the vampire legend through much of the ancient world, as well as during the Middle Ages when succubi and witches served the same purpose. It was believed commonly across the Slavic and Baltic countries that spawned the European vampire that lecherous or unusually sensual people

were predisposed to rise again as the undead, and many tales from the same areas relate the predisposition of the vampire to return to his widow with carnal intentions.

By the time the vampire entered the popular imagination by way of literature, he was no longer a bloated corpse of a peasant, but rather a smooth, Byronic aristocrat with a strange power of fascination over all mortals who crossed his path. Even Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* is primarily the tale of the Count’s frustrated romantic overtures toward Mina Harker. By the early days of cinema, the predatory seductress had returned with a vengeance, and the term “vamp” became popularized.

In the most modern interpretations, the erotic elements of the legend have become even more strongly emphasized. The vampire has become less a serious object of superstition and fear and more romanticized; the perfect inhuman lover.



# I HISTORY

THERE IS NO SINGLE creature that we can call "the real vampire." The vampire as it is imagined now is the amalgamation of centuries of myth and legend wedded to the embellishments of Hollywood and popular fiction. The term "vampire" embraces an entire company of the damned, including demonic spirits, mortals who have sold themselves to the darkness, and the innocent and guilty alike who are punished by some dark curse.



## Lilith

The Hebrew legend of Lilith has come to be closely associated with the legend of the vampire, and in many works of folklore and literature she has come to be thought of as a sort of "queen of the vampires."

The myth of Lilith is a morality tale about the "right" and "wrong" behavior for women. Lilith represents the "evils" of rejecting a subordinate role as mother and wife, the rebellious outcast who dares to engage in forbidden behavior, the same role that has been emphasized in contemporary portrayals of the modern vampire.

According to Hebrew legend, Lilith was the first wife of Adam. Adam and Lilith were formed by the creator equally and simultaneously. Adam and Lilith had a stormy relationship from the beginning because Lilith refused to be in any way subordinate to her husband. Adam did not appreciate his wife's liberated ways and so Lilith disappeared into the night.

Having rejected the plan of the creator and asserted her independence, Lilith was placed under a curse. She went alone into the desert where she began to consort with demons and spirits, and soon became queen of the night. She who was to be mother of all living became the mother of demons. Her progeny were the *Lilim* or *Lilitu* (in reference to the more ancient Babylonian myth), and they were thought to be vampiric demons themselves.

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In presenting the history and evolution of the vampire, every effort has been made to be as inclusive as possible. Despite this effort, the focus of this history largely follows the development of Western civilization, and then narrows to European cultures. This occurs for a variety of reasons. First, many cultures, particularly India and the Orient, have a rich tradition of legend that dates to ancient times, but it is still unavailable to the English-speaking reader. Many tribal and nomadic cultures had little in the way of written records. And in some cases, the legends were lost in a systematic attempt by Europeans to eradicate all traces of a particular culture – many of the beliefs and traditions of tribal Africans, as well as South and Meso-Americans, suffered this fate. Finally, as the vampire is a composite creature which is still inspiring new material, the modern conception of the vampire is firmly based upon the image of the European vampire.

## ✠ TYPES OF VAMPIRES

WHILE THE FAMILIAR IMAGE of the European vampire still has plenty of power to horrify and fascinate, when one leaves the rather sheltered haunts of horror movies and Gothic literature and begins to explore the shadows of more exotic locations around the world, it becomes apparent that the ranks of the damned are numerous and varied. Almost every culture has known the vampire in some guise, and each had its own individual characteristics. However, despite the variety of nations, time periods and beliefs, the bloodthirsty fiends that have menaced humankind have more similarities than differences.

One of the chief divisions among the ranks of the damned is between physical beings and non-physical spirits, with a host of creatures haunting the territory in between.

Mortal vampires and true undead possess physical, tangible bodies. Demonic spirits, psychic entities and the displaced dead are examples of beings whose natural state is non-physical. With these distinctions made, it can be observed that it is in the nature of the vampire to cross between the physical world and the Other Side with an impunity that is not permitted to mortals or spirits. Living or dead vampires who possess bodies may have the power to escape the flesh in astral form, and exist as immaterial spirits. Vampires with a non-corporeal nature, either due to their extra-planar origins or the death of their bodies, can assume a physical form; either temporarily by Materialization, or on a long-term basis through Possession.



# Glossary of Foreign Vampires

While many different types of vampire are described in detail in Chapter 5, the following table is intended to provide the GM with an extensive glossary of different cultures' vampires. Where possible, foreign terms have been given a literal translation. Creatures marked with an asterisk have been described in detail in Chapter 5.

Type	Origin	Notes
<b>Adze*</b>	(Africa; Ghana and Togo)	
<b>Algul, Aluga</b>	(Arabia)	"Horse leech"
Alp	(Germany, Slavonia)	
Aswang*	(Philippines)	
<b>Baital, Baitala*</b>	(India)	
<b>Bebarlang*</b>	(Philippines)	
Boabhan-Sith	(Scottish)	
Bhuta	(India)	Generic vampire term
<b>Blutsauger</b>	(Germany)	"Blood sucker"
<b>Bruksa*</b>	(Portugal)	
Callicantzaro*	(Greece)	
Chi'ang Shich*	(China)	
<b>Chordewa*</b>	(Bengal)	
<b>Churel</b>	(India)	
Civateteo*	(Pre-Columbian Mexico)	
Danag	(Philippines)	
<b>Dearg-dul</b>	(Celtic Ireland)	"Blood sucker"
<b>Dubbelsuger, Dopplesauger</b>	(Germany, Slavic states)	"Double sucker"
Empusa	(Ancient Greece)	
Erestun, Eretica, Eretik	(Russia)	
<b>Gaki*</b>	(Japan)	
<b>Ghul*</b>	(Arabic)	
Givach	(Prussia)	
Hannya*	(Japan)	
<b>Hsi-hsue-kuei</b>	(China)	"Blood sucking demon"
Jaracacas*	(Brazil)	
Kasha	(Japan)	
<b>Katakahana</b>	(Crete)	
<b>Kephn*</b>	(Burma)	
Kosac	(Croatia)	
Kozlak	(Dalmatia)	
<b>Krvoijac</b>	(Bulgaria)	
<b>Kukuthi</b>	(Albania)	
Lamia*	(Ancient Greece)	
Lampir	(Bosnia)	
<b>Langsuir*</b>	(Malaysia)	
<b>Larvac</b>	(Roman)	
Leanhaum-sidhe	(Ireland)	
Liderc nadaly	(Hungary)	
<b>Lilitu*</b>	(Babylonia)	
<b>Lobishomen</b>	(Brazil)	
Loogaroo*	(West Indies)	
Lugat	(Albania)	
<b>Lupi Manari</b>	(Croatia)	
<b>Mormo*</b>	(Ancient Greece)	

## Lilith (Continued)

After the creator had replaced her with the more submissive Eve, and the children of Adam and Eve multiplied, Lilith became the child-killer, strangling or draining the blood of the children of Eve while they slept in their cribs at night. She was also said to visit men by night, seducing them and then draining their lives.

By the Middle Ages, Lilith had been cast as an arch-demon and a Princess of Hell, the mistress of the succubi. Many Jewish authorities designated her as the bride of Sammael, one of the fallen angels who later became identified as the devil.

Whether her legend is translated literally or metaphorically by the GM, Lilith is certainly an incredibly ancient and powerful being. The curse of her rebellion and her involvement with the powers of darkness have transformed her into a member of the infernal elite. She is a very suitable figure upon which to base the origins of vampirism— as many writers have already done. Her role as the mother of demons, spawning children of the night who prey on their human counterparts, and her presence at the very beginning of human history are ideally suited for adaptation into a story explaining the origin of the children of the night.

Lilith also has the power to command her children, and can summon a veritable demonic army. These *Lilim* will most likely be Lilitu and Succubi, but depending upon the GM's conception of Lilith's rank amongst the damned, she may command any type of vampiric entity (and any other demonic beings the GM wishes).

Lilith could easily be the focus of an entire campaign. Vampire hunters could spend decades trying to stop the spawn of Lilith, possibly even confronting the demon herself some day. Alternately, a group of vampires who sought the secrets of their origins and true natures might spend much, much longer seeking to find the mother of the damned.





## Vlad Tepes

The historical Dracula was Voivode Vlad IV of Wallachia. He was adopted by Bram Stoker as his arch-villain, and modern films and novels have strengthened the connection with elaborate scenarios detailing the transformation from brutal warlord to undead monster.

Vlad Tepes, also known as Vlad the Impaler and Dracula, has become inextricably linked to the idea of vampirism in the popular imagination. While the historical Vlad was wholly mortal, his deeds earned him the status of full-fledged monster. Historically there is little to link Vlad with vampirism, but he was decidedly a monstrously cruel individual, and he ruled Wallachia, a small country in the Carpathian mountains where the legend has some of its deepest roots.

Dracula was actually Vlad IV, and his legend has become confused with some of the previous Vlads, particularly his father. Vlad III was a member of the Order of the Dragon, a Christian order of knights charged with defeating the "infidels" during the crusades. Because of this, Vlad III was called Dracul, which means "the Dragon" in Latin (and was a common expression meaning "devil" in his native tongue). Vlad IV came to be called Draculea (in the Romanian tongue, this spelling is a more appropriate masculine form of the name) or "Son of the Dragon." It was also Vlad III who may have been the inspiration for the vampire connection, as it was rumored that he arose from his grave each evening at sunset, not to prey upon his subjects but to watch over their homeland, maintaining his vigil against the infidels (i.e., the Turks) even from beyond the grave.

<b>Moroi*</b> , <b>Muroni</b>	<b>(Romania)</b>	
<b>Motetz Dam</b>	<b>(Hebrew)</b>	"Blood sucker"
Mullo	(Gypsy)	
Nachzehrer	(German)	
<b>Nelapsi</b>	<b>(Slovakia)</b>	
<b>Neuntoter</b>	<b>(Germany)</b>	"Nine Killer"
Nosferatu*	(Romania)	
Obayifo*	(West Africa; Ashanti)	
<b>Pennagalen*</b>	<b>(Malay)</b>	
<b>Pijavica</b>	<b>(Slovenia, N.W. Yugoslavia)</b>	
Pontianak*	(Malaysia)	
Priculics	(Romania)	
<b>Sampiro</b>	<b>(Albania)</b>	
<b>Sanguisuga</b>	<b>(Roman Empire)</b>	"Blood sucking"
Strigoii	(Romania)	
Strix*	(Roman Empire)	
<b>Succubus*</b>	<b>(Europe)</b>	
<b>Talamaur</b>	<b>(Australian isles)</b>	
Tlaciques*	(Mexico; Nahuatl)	
Tenatz	(Montenegro)	
<b>Tenjac</b>	<b>(Croatia)</b>	
<b>Tympanios*</b>	<b>(Greece)</b>	
Ubour, Upior, Upyr, Upi	(Russia, Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia)	
Ustrel*	(Bulgaria)	
<b>Vampir, Vampiir, Vampyras*</b> , <b>(Slavic states)</b>		
<b>Wampir, Wamphyr</b>		
Varcolaci	(Romania)	
Vere-Imaja	(Latvia)	
<b>Veripard</b>	<b>(Latvia, Estonia, Russia)</b>	
<b>Vetal, Vetala</b>	<b>(India)</b>	
Viesczy, Vjiesce,	(Slavic; Russia, Poland)	
Volkodlak, Vukodlak	(Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia)	Originally meant "werewolf"
<b>Vyrolakos*</b>	<b>(Balkan; Albania, Greece)</b>	

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## ✠ PRIMITIVE BELIEFS

**THE VAMPIRE'S ROOTS** go back to the earliest fears of primitive man. Some of these primal fears still empower the vampire's mystique. Fear of the night and the predators that lurk in the dark, fear of death and what lies beyond, fear of the dark side of our selves, all have undoubtedly plagued mankind from the very beginning, and these are the very fears that the vampire represents.

Before there were vampires, there were ghosts. Whether from superstitious refusal to accept death, or from an intuitive sense that nothing is ever destroyed but rather transformed to another state, the earliest humans believed in the continued existence of the dead and their power to affect the living. The ancestors who had passed to the other side could bless their descendants, or, if not properly placated, could harm them from beyond the grave. These fears gave rise to early funerary customs designed to insure the dead a peaceful journey to the next life, thus avoiding their wrath. The physical counterpart to such metaphysical speculation was the disposal of the body in some way (burying, burning, etc.) that prevented the dead from disturbing the living.

## ✠ ANCIENT BELIEFS

### Assyria

**FROM THIS FOUNDATION OF BELIEF** and fear sprang the early vampires. At some point, funeral customs began to incorporate offerings of food for the dead, to make sure they were not somehow dissatisfied with their living relatives. The restless dead became the *hungry* dead. The earliest recorded accounts of the evolution of the vampire legend come, as much of Western civilization, from the fertile realms of Mesopotamia. Here are found tales of the Ekimmu, spirits who could be created by violating the basic funeral taboos. A corpse that remained unburied, or a spirit who received no offerings became restless and prowled the world of the living. An Assyrian proverb said, "A hungry man is an angry man," and apparently the same could be said of spirits, for the Ekimmu's goal was to find a victim (either one of the offending relatives or an innocent passer-by) and cause him to feel the torment that the disgruntled spirit felt. Here are some of the early elements of the vampire, yet the Ekimmu does not meet the criteria as a vampire. The Ekimmu was a disembodied spirit, a ghost rather than a walking corpse, and it did not feed upon its victims but merely tormented them with traditional haunting techniques (wailing, throwing small objects, etc.) instead. A less malicious spirit of the same nature was the Utukku, which was nearly identical but less feared.

Assyrian incantations intended to ward off evil also included mention of seven vampiric demons who had to be banished lest "They rage against mankind: they spill their blood like rain / Devouring their flesh, sucking the veins."



## Vlad Tepes (Continued)

Dracula was born in 1431, in the Transylvanian village of Sighisoara. He was raised as the son of a prince and was schooled in the arts of court and war. In 1444, Dracula's father entered into an agreement with his Turkish enemies. As part of the bargain, Vlad, then 13 years old, and his young brother Radu were turned over as hostages to the Turkish sultan for several years. Undoubtedly, these years of imprisonment taught the young Dracula some hard lessons and exposed him to many atrocities, probably including the art of impalement. During Vlad's imprisonment, his father broke his treaty with the Turks and went to war, condemning both of his sons to death. The sultan, however, believed the young nobles to be more valuable as living political pawns, and allowed them to live. Vlad III was killed shortly thereafter, in 1447.

In 1448, Dracula, now grown to manhood, forcibly took the throne of Wallachia with Turkish support. This rule was to be short-lived however, and Vlad was soon forced to flee. Since he was not eager to remain a thrall of the Turks, Vlad fled to Moldavia in Hungary.

In 1456, Vlad again rose to the throne of Wallachia, this time with Hungarian support. He established his rule from Tirgoviste. His rise to power was heralded by a comet, which was generally considered to be an ill omen signifying death and disaster. Vlad interpreted it as a sign of his destiny and had a comet impressed upon his coinage.

It was during this six-year reign that Vlad established his reputation as one of the most bloodthirsty rulers in history. Vlad was a strict leader, to say the very least. He obtained his nickname, "the Impaler," from his habit of skewering people upon long poles, raising them up into the air, and allowing gravity to work a long and painful demise. This torture, possibly learned during his stay with the Turks, was his preferred method of execution. Some tales describe a "forest of the impaled" where the skewered bodies were as thick as trees. Dracula was reported to have taken meals in such a setting, amidst the cries of the dying. Estimates of the Impaler's victims range from 40,000 to 100,000. If the latter estimate is the case, Vlad was responsible for executing a full 20% of his population.

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## Native Soil

As the corpses of people whose mortal lives have ended, vampires can be said to *belong* in their graves. As such, they often still have some connection to the dark earth to which they have already been consigned once, while at the same time being rejected by the earth as something unnatural. Thus the concept of "native soil."

There are several possible ways of defining native soil. First, it may be the grave-site itself, a particular plot of earth in a particular geographic location. Vampires bound by this condition are extremely limited in range, and generally haunt the environs known to them in life. The second option, as described by Stoker, requires the undead to rest upon their native soil, but allows this to be transported under certain conditions, as long as its "purity" is not compromised. Such native soil may be the earth from the former mortal's grave, from the grave site in general, or merely from the vampire's original homeland. Such definitions are left to the individual Game Master.



## Gypsies

The Gypsies are a nomadic ethnic group who have long been associated with mysterious and supernatural events. The word "Gypsy" comes from an early belief that their origins were in Egypt. It is most likely that the Gypsies (or the Rom, as they call themselves) were originally indigenous to India, as their language, called Romany, has many similarities to Sanskrit. This being the case, it is quite possible that the Gypsies were responsible for transmitting the vampire legend from the East.

It is believed that the Gypsies began their westward migration and nomadic lifestyle somewhere around 1000 A.D. They are recorded as being in Crete as early as 1322, and in Germany by 1417. By the 14th century they formed a distinct ethnic population across eastern Europe, and had spread across the rest of Europe by the 16th century.

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In Philostratus' "Life of Apollonius of Tyana," written in the 3rd century, there is related a tale of a lamia (or empusa) who had set her appetite upon Menippus, a student of Apollonius. The young man is saved in the nick of time by his learned mentor, and the creature's nature is revealed. Philostratus observes of the lamiae "They are wont to lust not for love but for flesh . . ."

The lamia demonstrated a greater longevity than many ancient types, and the legend developed over time. Eventually, the lamia had acquired a reptilian form and had become truly undead, in the classic mold of the vengeful seductress. The undead nature of the later lamia can be seen in its etymological connection to the terms *lemure* and *larvae* (see *The Roman Empire*, below).

Greek writers also chronicled a number of tales about vengeful revenants with more clearly mortal origins, but these were more akin to ghosts or zombies than true vampires.

## The Roman Empire

The folklore of the Romans possessed an admirable number of gods, demons and monsters, but seem to have been relatively free of the plague of the undead. The most vampiric figures of Roman tales were the *strix*, who were clearly mortal witches with vampiric powers and appetites. The *strix* conformed to a very common archetype of the shape-shifting, blood-drinking witches that are found throughout the world, and survived into the Middle Ages in Mediterranean and Slavic countries as *striges*, *shtriga*, *strigoi* and *strigon*, among other names.

Perhaps the Roman dead were more peaceful due to the feast of Lemuria, a four-day festival in May which was intended to placate the spirits of deceased ancestors who were thought to walk abroad at this time. Malicious spirits who received no offerings might torment their relatives or others, and these supernatural malcontents were known as *larvae* or *lemures*.

## ✠ VAMPIRES OF OTHER CULTURES

THE IDEA OF THE VAMPIRE does not occur solely in Western civilization. Many disparate cultures independently developed very similar legends. While most of the modern conception of vampires comes from the development of the European legends, many of the other stories have some eerie familiarity.

The Chinese vampire, in particular, is almost identical to its European counterpart. Indeed, nearly all of the allegedly true reports of Chinese vampires come from the same period which spawned the "vampire epidemics" of Eastern Europe. There is a rich tradition of vampiric entities throughout the Orient. Indeed, it is possible that the origins of the European vampire may have come from the East, by way of the gypsies from India or the Mongols from China.

Likewise, when European explorers reached Central America, they found well-defined vampiric entities that shared many characteristics with European vampires and witches (and similar methods for combating them).

While the true undead are not well represented in the beliefs of tribal cultures, there is an almost universal belief in mortal witches and sorcerers who take the forms of animals (either physically or astrally) and steal the blood of their neighbors. This belief is widespread throughout Africa, Southeast Asia and the surrounding islands, the Americas and many ancient cultures. It was generally accepted that such "living vampires" should be disposed of very carefully, preferably with fire, to prevent their return after death.

From isolated and complex cultures such as Japan to more "primitive" tribal societies, the theme of the bloodthirsty dead appears again and again.

## ✠ THE VAMPIRE IN EUROPE

MUCH OF THE HISTORY of the European vampire is focused upon the eastern portion of Europe. This region is roughly divided into the Slavic states to the north and the Balkan states to the south. However, today and at many previous periods in history, defining firm geographical boundaries in this part of the world proves problematic. The consistent political instability of Eastern Europe has resulted in frequent changes of the names, boundaries and national allegiances of many of these states. Many of the smaller provinces between these two regions have been long disputed, and at various times have been part of both Balkan and Slavic nations. Some of the best examples of this are the various states recently known as Yugoslavia.

### The Middle Ages

During the Middle Ages, Christianity became the driving belief behind society across Europe and much of the Mediterranean, and the vampire was not immune to its effects.

The widespread Christian metaphysics added new layers to the vampire mystique, however. For the dead to be denied their eternal reward and be forced to stalk the earth clearly implied the work of Satan, as well as some wrongdoing perpetrated by the mortal who became the revenant. Suicide and black magic were already universal explanations for the vampiric state, in the ancient world and other cultures as well as European Christendom. Added to these were more uniquely Christian ideas, such as the belief that excommunication could be the cause of vampirism. During this period, the vampire was recast from its role in

### Gypsies (Continued)

The Gypsies generally assimilated the religious customs and beliefs of their current home, adopting Moslem or Christian concepts depending upon their neighbors, yet still maintained their own folklore and metaphysics. The Gypsies had some very specific traditions regarding the dead, and lived in fear of the consequences of violating these traditions. They believed very strongly in the continuing power of the dead to work good or ill upon the living. A form of ancestor worship was practiced by most, involving offerings of food and drink to the deceased, and prayers and incantations beseeching the dead for assistance. It was thought to be disrespectful to the spirits of the dead to retain any of their possessions; all material possessions had to be destroyed to prevent offending the spirit.

If these funeral taboos were not satisfied, the dead could become angry and return as a *mullo*, a Gypsy vampire. A *mullo* might rise for a number of reasons; because of sudden death or suicide, failure to receive offerings, or to take vengeance on those who kept their property. Some of the methods for preventing this were to pierce the corpse with iron needles or thorns, particularly hawthorn, but once it arose the *mullo* had to be destroyed by the traditional staking, decapitation and burning. The *mullo* were not as much of a threat as many types of vampires, however, as they were not immortal but rather had a finite span of days or years in which to work their evil before returning to the grave.

A *mullo* might appear as a normal human, a corpse, or a monstrous creature with animal features. At any rate, their forms were not fixed as they had the power to assume the shapes of cats, dogs or wolves, and in some regions, birds and horses. They could also become invisible, and might appear at any time of the day or night. They were thought to strangle and drink the blood of animals and persons, but were also known for their carnal appetites. A *mullo* would often return to a spouse or lover for amorous attention. These visits, nearly identical to the European accounts of incubi and succubi, often took place while the vampire was invisible and were invariably damaging to the health and stamina of the mortal lover.

The Gypsies believed that such unions could produce children, and the child of a *mullo* was known as a *dhampir*. Dhampirs were thought to have great inherent power against the undead, with knives and even firearms becoming deadly to the creatures in the hand of a *dhampir*.

Because of their exotic origins and mysterious ways, Gypsies became a familiar element in Gothic literature and films, acting as Count Dracula's servants in Stoker's novel, and supernatural oracles and advisors in countless other books and films since then.



## 19th-Century Transylvania

Transylvania is a mountain-girt high-land plateau of some 22,000 square miles. It forms a rough circle a bit over 250 miles across. Transylvania is isolated in the midst of central Europe, more than 300 miles from the sea, 300 miles east of Budapest and more than 400 miles northwest of Istanbul. It is bounded on the south by the Transylvanian Alps and on the east and west by the Carpathian mountains.

The mountains in this region are marked by tall, jagged spires and treacherous cliffs. The land is dotted with remote villages connected by poor roads through dangerous passes.

Transylvania has a long history of war and disturbance. It was part of the old Roman province of Dacia, and was overrun by Hun and German invaders. In the 12th century it was incorporated into the Kingdom of Hungary, which was again its status by Victorian times. In the Middle Ages it was frontier ground between the Byzantine Empire and the Slavic states. It was overrun by Mongols in 1242, and for centuries it was part of the frontier between Islam and Christianity. During the Reformation it was split among several mutually-intolerant forms of Christianity.

In the Victorian times the great conflict is national. The population is divided among four main groups (and a substantial fifth group of gypsies).

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pagan societies into a Christian demon. The vampire became a minion of Satan, a human corpse possessed by the spirit of a demon, eager to do its dark master's bidding. We also see the continuation of the ancient female vampire in writings of the Middle Ages as the succubus, a female demon that seduced mortal men and drained their strength by more subtle methods than blood-drinking.

This period also laid the foundations for later explanations of vampire reports in the form of an elaborate demonology expounded by the Church fathers. For example, it was decided that non-corporeal demons could assume physical form (largely based upon the obviously physical exploits of incubi and succubi). This was later used to explain some of the vague representations of the vampire's degree of solidity.

Toward the late Middle Ages the true vampire, as perceived by Western culture, began to appear. This is the monster that captured the imaginations of the later Romantic poets, the Gothic authors and their readership, and finally modern-day film audiences. Largely originating in Eastern Europe, tales of restless corpses with malevolent intent began to spread throughout Europe. These early vampires bore little resemblance to the suave aristocrats that prowled through later tales. The vampire of the Middle Ages was Death, and it was neither handsome nor seductive. The "real" reports of vampires were generally peasants, or more precisely, their filthy bloated corpses inhabited by some malevolent force. They were fat and ruddy from their unholy feeding, and just as likely to strangle or suffocate their victims as bite them. They often returned to prey upon their own families, continuing the earlier traditions of the dissatisfied ancestor's vengeance from beyond the grave, but were also said to prey upon sheep and cattle. The artistic or literary portrayal of the undead was more like the Grim Reaper, a skeletal figure that took the lives of the young and healthy, a concrete symbol of the ever-present spectre of death and disease, and specifically, the Black Plague.



## Slavic States

The Slavic states of eastern and northeastern Europe produced a respectable variety of undead, and it is likely that the Slavic tales greatly influenced the Balkan states. Russia, Poland, Hungary, Serbia and the surrounding states and the eastern provinces of Germany . . . all contributed their own interpretations of the undead. This is the origin of many of the most familiar elements of the Western vampire legend. In the Slavic states, the vampire was linked to the legend of the werewolf, much like the relationship with witches, ghosts and demons in other lands.

In the Slavic lands, it was commonly accepted that the dead rose as vampires, could assume the forms of animals and could only be destroyed for certain by consigning the corpse to flames. In many ways, the Slavic vampire can be seen as a personification of the hostile Slavic winters with their long nights, lurking wolves and life-draining chill.

While Hungary, Austria and Croatia were the sources of the most typical type of vampire reports, the northern countries had some unusual varieties of undead. Polish and Russian vampires such as the *upir* and its variants were believed to possess barbed tongues rather than fangs for feeding, and were often entirely diurnal. As in other lands, the Eastern Orthodox Church in Russia encouraged the belief that those outside the grace of the Church were at special risk of becoming undead. The *eretica* were dead heretics who were refused the final rest for their sins. They had attributed to them the usual characteristics of the undead, but also were thought to possess the power of the evil eye, allowing them to steal life and work their evil at a distance.

This was also the region that was later responsible for the vampire epidemics that captured the attention of officials and scholars and launched the vampire legend across Europe.

## The Balkan States

There was a certain uniformity of belief in the region of the Balkan states which was distinct from the Slavic beliefs. The Balkans include those nations of southeastern Europe upon the Balkan Peninsula – namely Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Yugoslavia (or its often-divided component states which have, at various times, consisted of Albania, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia) – and, depending upon the politics of the time, occasionally parts of Turkey. These regions, influenced by Slavic tales of the restless dead, produced a rich and varied tradition of their own which contributed to the spread of the vampire legend.

Greece presented some of the most fertile ground from which the restless dead arose. Greek folklore typified the beliefs of the Balkan region and strongly influenced the rest of Europe as well. If the advent of the Greek Orthodox Church drove the pagan lamia into the wilderness, it also created a new and more grisly monster in the process. Greece is a nation with a rich tradition of tales of the undead, with enough reports, rumors and very real outbreaks of panic to rival the epidemics of the Slavic states. Indeed, the combination of tall tales and somber reports that originated in Greece did much to spread the legend of the vampire, or *vyrolakos*, throughout the Balkan region and then to the rest of the world.

A number of factors contributed to the Greek vampire hysteria. First and foremost, the Greek Orthodox Church had proclaimed that anyone who had been excommunicated or otherwise excluded from the grace of the Church would not decay naturally after death, but rather remain in a perpetual state of preservation, eternally imprisoned within his own corpse. Thus, it was something of a sticky situation for the church when reports began to filter in that

## 19th-Century Transylvania (Continued)

The Rumanian-speaking Vlachs are a narrow majority; they were mostly serfs until the 1850s and consider themselves an oppressed race within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. They agitate for a reunion with the Kingdom of Rumania (created in 1878 from former Turkish provinces).

The nobility, gentry, and most of the professionals are Magyar-speaking Hungarians; they favor the rule of the Hungarian kingdom and a hard line with any “inferior” nationalities.

Two nationalities resent the loss of a privileged status that looked back to the Middle Ages.

The Szeklers are Magyar-speaking. Most historians think they were settled as border troops by the Hungarian kings of the 12th century; Szeckler tradition says they are descended from Attila’s Huns.

The German-speaking Saxons are mostly townspeople; their ancestors were brought in by the Hungarian kings to develop and defend the land in the 12th and 13th centuries.

In 1848 there was severe fighting between the nationalities (as part of the Hungarian revolt against Austrian rule) and there is still intrigue, espionage and assassination.

Dracula’s castle can be found near the Hungarian village of Bistritz. Reaching the castle from Bistritz is best done by taking the 3 p.m. coach northeast through Borgo Pass. Here, a carriage from the Count himself will meet invited guests and will bring them to the castle by around midnight.

## Arnold Paole

The case of Arnold Paole is perhaps the most frequently cited report of “real” vampirism, partially due to the comparatively detailed investigation and documentation of the reported events. It was this case, more than any other, that brought the legend of the vampire into the popular imagination of Europe and inspired the scholarly investigation of the condition of vampirism.

Arnold Paole was a *heyduk*, a type of mercenary foot soldier, in Austrian Serbia during the early 1700s. According to most accounts, Paole claimed to have been attacked by a vampire while serving on the Turkish front. He believed this so thoroughly that to counteract the curse of contagion, Paole was said to have followed one of the prevalent superstitions; eating the dirt from the grave of a vampire. When Paole died from a broken neck after a fall from a hay wagon, he was apparently given a typical burial without special precaution, despite the very real belief in the undead that was prevalent in his homeland.

*Continued on next page . . .*

## Arnold Paole (Continued)

However, by 1731, his living neighbors in the village of Medvegia were quite concerned about Arnold. So concerned, in fact, that in December of 1731 the Austrian government felt compelled to begin an inquiry into the recent events in Medvegia. After their investigation, under the direction of Regimental Field Surgeon Johannes Fluckinger, the Austrian officials issued a report that concluded that Arnold Paole had indeed been a vampire.

The report described Paole's belief that he had been the victim of such a creature and the precautions he took to avoid his fate, as well as the tale his neighbors told. Allegedly, some 20 to 30 days after Paole's death, he was seen by a number of villagers and had four deaths attributed to him in his undead state. By the 40th day after his burial, the villagers took things into their own hands and disinterred his corpse, at which time he was "found to be perfectly preserved. His flesh had not decomposed, his eyes were filled with fresh blood, which also flowed from his ears and nose, soiling his shirt and funeral shroud."

The villagers knew what to do. They drove a stake through the body. According to the report, at this time, "he gave a great shriek, and an enormous quantity of blood spurted from his body." After burning the corpse, the villagers then repeated the process for Paole's four alleged victims.

This was not the end of the epidemic of vampirism, however. As long as five years later, the spectre of Arnold Paole loomed over the village of Medvegia. By the time of the investigation, the count of Paole's victims had risen. The belief was that Paole, in his undead state, had preyed upon animals as well, and that all who had eaten of these animals fell victim to the curse of the undead. In turn, these unfortunates returned to prey upon their own families and neighbors. The official report stated that the death toll had risen by an additional 17 victims within a period of three months. A number of these corpses were exhumed (under supervision of the government officials) and eight more were found in a state of preservation adequate to pronounce them vampires as well.

The report ends: "After having taken the appropriate action, we ordered the heads of all these vampires cut off by some wandering gypsies, their bodies to be burned, and their ashes scattered in the river Moravia, while the corpses found to be in a state of decomposition were returned to their coffins. I affirm – together with the assistant medical officers dispatched to me – that all of these things took place as we have reported them in Medvegia, in Serbia, on 7 January 1732. Signed: Johannes Fluckinger, Regimental Field Surgeon."



some of these preserved sinners were not content to remain quietly in their graves. The *tympanios* was one of these unhappy revenants who became dissatisfied with his funereal accommodations and wandered about among the living, for the most part harmlessly. Some tales even describe these walking dead returning to their widows and their former lives, or even taking new wives and fathering children. Upon the introduction of some of the Slavic tales, the *tympanios* became the *vyrolakos* (from the Slavic word for werewolf), a much more malevolent form of the undead. Besides the traditional crimes of returning to prey upon family and neighbors, the *vyrolakos* had a petty malicious streak that manifested in vandalism, bizarre pranks and general mayhem.

In particular, the Aegean island of Santorini was seen as a hotbed of vampiric activity, and the mortal inhabitants of the island much respected for their skill at combating the undead.

One explanation for some of the reported events of the Greek isles lies within the earth itself. The volcanic soil of the region, being largely sterile because of its fiery origins, has a tendency to slow the process of decomposition significantly.

### Romania

*"Transylvania might well be termed the land of superstition, for nowhere else does that curiously crooked plant of delusion flourish as persistently and in such bewildering variety. It would almost seem as though the whole species of demons, pixies, witches, and hobgoblins, driven from the rest of Europe by the wand of science, had taken refuge within this mountain rampart, well aware that here they would find secure lurking-places, whence they might defy their persecutors yet awhile . . ."*

– M<sup>me</sup>. Emily de Laszowska Gerard, "Transylvanian Superstitions," July 1885

Between the Balkan and Slavic lands lies the small country, cradled in the Carpathian mountains, that has made the greatest contribution to the modern vampire myth. The area that is now Romania has historically consisted of three provinces – Wallachia, Transylvania, and Moldavia (usually; this qualifier being necessary in a portion of the world that has always known frequent con-

quests, upheaval and border disputes). Romania has the distinction of having the most diverse population of the damned concentrated in one area. Balkan, Slavic and Gypsy vampires all co-existed within the shadow of the Carpathians. Bounded by the Slavic states on the north and the Balkans to the south, and by European Christendom to the west and Islamic Turkey to the east, Romania was the meeting place for a vast variety of myths and legends. This four-way intersection of cultures and beliefs demonstrates once again that the vampire is inextricably linked to the crossroads.

Apart from a wide variety of vampiric fiends, Romania has also provided many other developments in the history of the vampire. Vlad Tepes (see sidebar, p. 14), the historical Dracula and model for Bram Stoker's immortal literary fiend, ruled the provinces of Romania. Elizabeth Bathory (see sidebar, p. 17), the so-called "Bloody Countess," was of Transylvanian nobility. The term *nosferatu*, which was popularized in Stoker's work and is still frequently used in vampire fiction, is of Romanian origin. While officially a part of Hungary at the time, the village that was the birthplace of Bela Lugosi was once within Romanian borders.

The one-time province of Transylvania has become nearly synonymous with the archetypal Gothic setting, conjuring visions of decaying castles, mist-shrouded passes and deep forests prowled by wolves and worse. "Transylvania" comes from Latin, meaning "the land beyond the forest." When the Roman Empire arrived in this land, they called the native Dacians "wolf-men" after their wearing of wolf pelts in a ritual context (strangely enough, the etymology of the vampire terms *vyroloakos*, *vudolak*, and similar derivatives can be traced to an older Serbian term, "vilki dlaka," meaning "one who wears a wolf pelt").

The traditional vampires of this region are many and varied. First, there was a distinction drawn between *moroi*, or living vampires, and *strigoi*, the true undead.

The *moroi* were those mortals who, through accidents of birth or consort with the powers of darkness, were predisposed to become true vampires after their deaths. They exhibited vampiric tendencies in life and interacted with the undead. *Moroi* had identifiable characteristics; the males were bald or balding (reminiscent of the film portrayals of another Romanian type, the *Nosferatu*) and the females were said to have very red faces.

*Strigoi* were the undead, and *moroi* were destined to develop this condition after death. The *strigoi* were said to have red hair, blue eyes, and two hearts (possibly necessitating a second stake?). A *strigoi* can be recognized even at rest by those who know that it will always keep its left eye open. A Wallachian sub-type is the *muroni*, which had a wide variety of shape-shifted forms to choose from as well, including non-traditional forms such as spiders and fleas.

Another type of Romanian vampire was the *varcolaci* or *priculics*. These vampires appeared as pale but attractive humans during the daylight hours, and as vampiric black dogs at night. The *varcolaci* is attributed with the awesome power to cause eclipses, not only a feat of astronomical power, but a very handy ability for a nocturnal monster to possess.

The *nosferatu*, unlike his cinematic descendants, was a seductive predator. In life the illegitimate offspring of illegitimate parents, the *nosferatu* was clearly a symbol for sexual "misconduct." Aside from a lust for blood, the *nosferatu* had other lusts as well, and was infamous for indulging them. This superhuman degree of lecherousness seems to be the fundamental trait that distinguished the *nosferatu* from other undead. The *nosferatu* was believed to be capable of siring children, who would be born as *moroi* and claim their undead heritage upon their deaths. It is interesting to note that given a variety of Romanian undead to

## Peter Plogojowitz

The case of Peter Plogojowitz did a great deal to encourage the spread of the vampire legend across Europe, as this marked the first official government sponsored investigations of the phenomenon.

Peter Plogojowitz was a peasant farmer in the village of Kisilova, in Serbia. If Plogojowitz possessed any unusual qualities in life, they were apparently not extreme enough to be memorable. After his death in September of 1725, however, he became one of the most famous vampires of his day. Plogojowitz allegedly returned from the grave three days after being committed to the earth, appearing to his son asking for food. This ominous declaration of hunger was a foreshadowing of what was to come. Within 24 hours of this visitation, the son had wasted and died. Within ten weeks, Plogojowitz had claimed as many victims, all of whom reported before dying that they had been visited in their sleep by the vampire, and that he had "laid himself on them, and throttled them, so that they would have to give up the ghost." Plogojowitz's widow also had experienced a less murderous visit from the revenant of her husband, wherein he had come home to get his shoes.

At this point, conventional wisdom demanded that the corpse of the accused be exhumed and examined to determine if the folk of Kisilova indeed had one of the undead within their midst. The government officials who were in attendance to these events, three German officers, were informed of this intention. When the officers were unable to convince the populace to wait for official action, they gathered up a local clergyman and accompanied the mob to the grave sight of the accused. The narrator of the report describes the events that occurred next:

*Continued on next page . . .*



## Peter Plogojowitz (Continued)

“Since I could not hold these people from the resolution they had made, either with good words or threats, I went to the village of Kisilova, taking along the Gradisk pope, and viewed the body of Peter Plogojowitz, just exhumed, finding, in accordance with thorough truthfulness, that first of all I did not detect the slightest odor that is otherwise characteristic of the dead, and the body, except for the nose, which was somewhat fallen away, was completely fresh. The hair and beard – even the nails, of which the old ones had fallen away – had grown on him; the old skin, which was somewhat whitish, had peeled away, and a new one had emerged from it. The face, hands, and feet and the whole body were so constituted, that they could not have been more complete in his lifetime. Not without astonishment, I saw some fresh blood in his mouth, which, according to the common observation, he had sucked from the people killed by him . . . After both the pope and I had seen this spectacle, while people grew more outraged than distressed, all the subjects, with great speed, sharpened a stake – in order to pierce the corpse of the deceased with it – and put this at his heart, whereupon, as he was pierced, not only did much blood, completely fresh, flow also through his ears and mouth, but still other wild signs (which I pass by out of high respect) took place. Finally, according to their usual practice, they burned the often-mentioned body . . . to ashes.”

As for Plogojowitz’s victims, the vampire hunters were content to stake them with whitethorn and fill their mouths with garlic.



choose from, Bram Stoker chose to use the term *nosferatu* when applying a traditional name to his arch-vampire.

Another interesting note; the last serious report from Romania of vampirism and the traditional staking of the alleged undead came to light in 1974, having taken place only a few decades before.

## Western Europe

Strangely enough, while the general trend of the spread of vampirism was east to west across the European continent, some of the earliest documented accounts of the undead in Europe come from Britain. William of Newbury chronicled several such cases late in the 12th century in his *Historia Rerum Anglicarum*.

These historically isolated tales of undead resurrection have all of the traditional elements of the Balkan and Slavic tales that became popular several centuries later. This work included the accounts of several revenants (including an impious priest) who engaged in all of the traditional vampiric pursuits, including preying upon their families and spreading disease. Some British revenants were reported to be susceptible to the continuing process of decomposition, becoming increasingly distressing to encounter over time. Strangely, these reports arose rather mysteriously among the writings of several 12th-13th century scholars, and then the vampire disappeared from the folkloric record in most of Britain until reintroduced from Eastern European tales in the 18th century. (This minor mystery could be an adventure seed. What drove the vampires out of Britain for six centuries?)

## The Epidemics

By the end of the 17th century, rumors of vampirism had become epidemic. The phenomena was centered in Eastern Europe – Poland, Hungary, Serbia, Silesia, Romania. These traditional homelands of the vampire are still a part of the legend today, with the automatic association of the monster with Transylvania and the Carpathian mountains. Entire villages were caught up in morbid dramas that could last years, as the villagers systematically emptied cemeteries until they were convinced they had rid themselves of the taint of the undead. Still in the realm of peasant superstition, the vampire nonetheless spread rapidly.

In 1679, the vampire was adopted into the world of scholarly inquiry with the publication of *De Masticatione Mortuorum*, or *On the Chewing Dead*, by Philip Rohr. This work marked the beginning of the major German contribution to the development of the legend as a series of pseudo-scientific tracts on vampirism were released by scholars in Leipzig. By 1732 rumors of the case of Arnold Paole (see sidebar, p. 21) had spread, inspiring even more literature, including *De Masticatione Mortuorum in Tumulis*, or *That Dead Men Chew in their Graves*, by Michael Ranft. Understandably, these two authors and their works are often confused.

The work from this period considered to be *the* authority, however, was the French monk and scholar Don Augustine Calmet’s *Treatise on the Vampires of Hungary and Surrounding Regions* published in 1746. It seems that Calmet’s work was also primarily inspired by the thoroughly documented Paole case (see sidebar, p. 21). While generally condemned by other scholars for lending the weight of serious inquiry to peasant superstitions, Calmet’s work was for the most part objective. He concluded, “This is a mysterious and difficult matter, and I leave bolder and more proficient minds to solve it.”

## ✠ THE GOTHIC PERIOD

THIS PERIOD MARKS THE BEGINNING of the vampire's evolution in the 19th century as a literary creation rather than a literal phenomenon. The literary vampire was first popularized by the poets of the Romantic movement.

The first indisputably vampiric poem of this period was Goethe's "The Bride of Corinth" in 1797. This was the retelling of the ancient Greek tale of Philinon (first related by Phlegon of Tralles), about a young bride who, after experiencing an untimely demise, returns to her husband to satisfy her hungers until her undead nature is revealed.

The vampire made its debut in English with Robert Southey's 1801 poem, "Thalaba the Destroyer." The epic tale was an Arabian Nights-style quest which followed the exploits of the title character as he struggled against a school of evil magicians to retrieve his father's sword and bring about the sorcerers' destruction. In the course of his adventures, Thalaba encounters the vampiric revenant of his bride Oneiza, who had inopportunately perished upon their wedding day. As Oneiza's corpse had become possessed by a demon, Thalaba was obliged to lay her to rest by a variant of the prescribed method:

... Through the vampire corpse  
He thrust his lance; it fell,  
And howling with the wound,  
Its fiendish tenant fled.

In 1813, Lord Byron (see sidebar, p. 29) published "The Giaour," which featured a curse laid upon the hero with explicit references to vampirism;

But first, on earth as Vampire sent,  
Thy corpse shall from its tomb be rent:  
The ghastly haunt thy native place,  
And suck the blood of all thy race;  
There from thy daughter, sister, wife,  
At midnight drain the stream of life;  
Yet loathe the banquet which perforce  
Must feed thy living livid corpse.  
Thy victims as they yet expire  
Shall know the demon for their sire,  
As cursing thee, thou cursing them,  
Thy flowers are withered on the stem.

John Keats' "The Lamia" followed in 1819 with another re-telling of an ancient Greek tale, this one from Philostratus' "Life of Apollonius of Tyana." In Keats' version, the victim is saved from his supernatural seductress, but still dies of a broken heart without her.

It is generally accepted that the initial tale that brought the vampire to the literary forefront was Dr. John Polidori's "The Vampyre." Published in 1819, this short story detailed the exploits of Lord Ruthven (see sidebar, p. 31), who was certainly the literary predecessor of Count Dracula. Polidori was the personal physician of Lord Byron (see sidebar, p. 29), and initially the tale was attributed to Byron, who had used the vampire as a theme for poetry and written a fragment of a story that probably inspired Polidori. In fact, Lord Ruthven seems to have been modeled on Lord Byron himself, beginning the tradition of the vampire as sinister aristocrat instead of peasant.

By as early as 1820, other authors were using Lord Ruthven as a character for their own vampire epics. From here, the vampire took to the stage. In



### *Tournefort in Mykonos*

Another eyewitness account of the destruction of a vampire, in "A Voyage to the Levant" (dated 1702), was recounted Joseph Pitton de Tournefort, royal botanist to King Louis XIV of France. The tone of this account was somewhat different, however, in that Tournefort clearly held the peasant superstitions in disdain, and his telling of the events in Mykonos is colored with dry irony, sarcasm and outright bigotry. This account saw wide circulation and was included in the anonymous introduction to the first edition of Polidori's "The Vampyre."

Tournefort found himself in the Greek isles on an expedition to collect plants for the royal gardens when he witnessed the familiar pattern of the outbreak of vampire hysteria. It seems a local peasant, specifically remembered as a disagreeable character, "naturally ill-natured and quarrelsome" in life, was murdered in the fields. It does not appear that much effort was expended in bringing his killer to justice, possibly due to the victim's winning personality. Two days after his burial, he was an even greater annoyance to his neighbors as he embarked upon a spree of violence against persons and property. By the tenth day of this behavior, it was decided that it was necessary to follow the prescribed course of action, in this case the removal of the monster's heart. To this end, the people disinterred the corpse and summoned the local butcher. At this point, Tournefort relates a grisly account, not without its own black humor, of an incompetent and aging butcher with no knowledge of human anatomy clumsily searching the corpse's torso for its heart. Meanwhile, incense had been lit to cover the stench of the corpse, and the increasingly hysterical mob began to see all manner of apparitions in the densely smoky chamber.

"Their imagination, struck with the spectacle before them, grew full of visions. It came into their noddles that a thick smoke arose from the body; we durst not say that it was the smoke of the incense."

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France, dozens of vampire plays were produced in the mid-1800s. In a large number of these productions, Lord Ruthven returned in many guises, becoming something of a fictional celebrity. Ruthven was the very image of the vampire for the time, much as Dracula is today. The vampire theme became something of a fad in Parisian theater at this time, attracting the efforts of Alexander Dumas and Charles Nodier as well as many lesser-known playwrights.

Next in the vampire's literary family tree is Varney. *Varney the Vampire; or The Feast of Blood* by James Malcolm Rymer was a serialized "penny-dreadful," an inexpensive and sensational gazette that was produced at regular intervals. Published throughout 1846 and 1847, this immense work chronicled the un-life of Sir

Francis Varney (see sidebar, p. 33) over the course of 868 double-column pages. *Varney* introduced a number of elements into the vampire genre that were seen later in Stoker's *Dracula*, and which have endured to the present. Varney was a Hungarian count who specialized in seductive predations upon innocent young women. Rather than meeting his doom on the point of a stake, a disillusioned Varney takes his own "life" by leaping into a volcano.

The next seminal tale in the evolution of the undead was the Irish writer Sheridan Le Fanu's "Carmilla," published in 1872. Le Fanu's story was something of a return to the vampire's roots, as the title character is a seductive female predator. Le Fanu's exploration of the sexual elements of the legend were quite frank for his time. Carmilla's attention towards the young, female narrator of the story is as much romantic as it is predatory. Le Fanu's description of vampirism contains some familiar elements, and some surprises. Most importantly, he gives the most succinct account of the modus operandi of the Gothic vampire. The ambiguous nature of the vampire's relationship to the victim influenced the plot of *Dracula*, and thus most every vampire tale since then. Le Fanu described "... a system of principles that appear to govern – some always, and others occasionally only – the condition of the vampire. I may mention, in passing, that the deadly pallor attributed to that sort of revenant, is a mere melodramatic fiction. They present, in the grave, and when they show themselves in human society, the appearance of healthy life . . .

"How they escape from their graves and return to them for certain hours every day, without displacing the clay or leaving any trace of disturbance in the state of the coffin or cerements, has always been admitted to be utterly inexplicable. The amphibious existence of the vampire is sustained by daily renewed slumber in the grave. Its horrible lust for living blood supplies the vigour of its waking existence. The vampire is prone to be fascinated with an engrossing vehemence, resembling the passion of love, by particular persons. In pursuit of these it will exercise inexhaustible patience and strategem, for access to a par-

## Tournefort in Mykonos (Continued)

Tournefort was unconvinced that he had seen anything supernatural in all of this, and comments on the supposed incorruptibility of the undead that is so prominently mentioned in other accounts. "I don't doubt they would have sworn it did not stink, had we not been there; so amazed were the poor people at this disaster, and so infatuated with their notion of the dead's being re-animated. As for us who were got as close to the corpse as we could, that we might be more exact in our observations, we were almost poisoned by the intolerable stink that issued from it. When they asked us what we thought of this body, we told them we believed it to be very thoroughly dead . . ."

Nonetheless, the heart of the supposed vampire was burned, but to no effect. His nocturnal mischief became worse if anything. Tournefort describes a community in the grip of panic, with entire families leaving their homes and sleeping in tents in the town square. After much debate and several other failed remedies, the people knew there was nothing else to do but burn the offending corpse entirely. Tournefort ends his tale on a scornful note about the ignorance and superstition of the Greeks, but does observe that upon the immolation of the corpse, the village became quiet once more.

ticular object may be obstructed in a hundred ways. It will never desist until it has satiated its passion, and drained the very life of its coveted victim. But it will, in these cases, husband and protract its murderous enjoyment with the refinement of an epicure, and heighten it by the gradual approaches of an artful courtship. In these cases it seems to yearn for something like sympathy and consent. In ordinary ones it goes directly to the object, overpowers with violence, and strangles and exhausts often in a single feast."

Le Fanu's tale is not only one of the most memorable in the history of the undead, it also laid the foundation for another Irish writer's Gothic masterpiece.

Of course, the ultimate work in the evolution of the vampire tale is Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. This novel, more than any other source, contributed to the immense popularity of the vampire and its survival to this day. The character created by Stoker has indeed demonstrated an almost supernatural longevity, as the book has been in continuous publication since its introduction in 1897. This story, more than any other, crystallized the folkloric and literary traditions of the vampire into a single image that has colored every representation of the legend, in literature and film, ever since.

Stoker's now-familiar story relates the events that arise from the decision of the ancient Count to leave his familiar territory for the greener pastures of then-modern London. Much of the tension of the novel arises from this conflict between the dark and ancient superstitions of the Old World and the relatively recent advent of Victorian scientific rationalism. The plot revolves around the efforts of a motley band of reluctant vampire hunters to protect the heroine and her friend from *Dracula*'s unwholesome predations.

*Dracula* introduced a number of elements to the vampire legend for the first time that have persevered into the modern image, but also contains some surprising contradictions to the "rules" of the undead that are now traditional.

Stoker was even more exhaustive than Le Fanu with his categorical definitions of vampirism, presenting a comprehensive list of strengths and weaknesses instead of leaving the nature of the undead in the shadowy realm of folklore. Stoker's compilation of vampiric abilities is presented by Dr. Van Helsing (with his sometimes comically broken English) as he tries to warn his mismatched band of vampire hunters about the dangers they will face in their battle with the undead Count: "The nosferatu do not die like the bee when he sting once. He is only stronger; and being stronger, have yet more power to work evil. This vampire which is amongst us is of himself so strong in person as twenty men; he is of cunning more than mortal, for his cunning be the growth of ages; he have still the aids of necromancy, which is, as his etymology imply, the divination by the dead, and all the dead that he can come nigh to are for him at command; he is brute and more than brute; he is devil in callous, and the heart of him is not; he can, within limitations, appear at will when, and where, and in any of the forms that are to him; he can, within his range, control the elements; the storm, the fog, the thunder; he can command all of the meaner things: the rat, and the owl, and the bat - the moth, and the fox, and the wolf; he can grow and become small; and he can at times vanish and come unknown. How then are we to begin our strike to destroy him?"

"The vampire live on, and cannot die by mere passing of the time; he can flourish when that he can fatten on the blood of the living. Even more, we have seen amongst us that he can even grow younger; that his vital faculties grow strenuous, and seem as though they refresh themselves when his special pabulum is plenty. But he cannot flourish without this diet; he eat not as others. Even friend Jonathan, who live with him for weeks, did never see him to eat, never! He throws no shadow; he make in the mirror no reflect . . . He has the strength of many of his hand . . . He can transform himself to wolf . . . he can

## The Vampire of Croglin Grange

The story of Croglin Grange is another of the most often repeated vampire stories that purports to be true. The events allegedly took place in Cumberland, England sometime in the early 19th century, making it one of the most contemporary accounts.

An unnamed trio of siblings, two brothers and a sister, had taken up residence in the manor at Croglin Grange. One evening the sister observed two glowing lights moving across the lawn toward her bedroom window. Upon closer examination, she realized that these lights were the balefully glowing eyes of some human-like creature. As it approached, she could see its skeletal form more clearly, observing its brown, mummified appearance and its prodigious fangs and talons. Presumably experiencing an episode of the Victorian paralysis that was popular with feminine protagonists of the novels of the time, she was unable to flee as the monster clawed its way into the room and bit her in the traditional fashion. Her brothers were summoned by her screams, but were too late to observe the attacker.

The family retreated from Croglin Grange while the young lady convalesced, but returned soon after. They experienced no difficulties for several months, but inevitably, the creature appeared again. The young lady seemed to have found her voice this time, however, summoning her brothers—who had slept with pistols at hand since the first incident. Arriving in the proverbial nick of time, the brothers routed the monster and gave chase, shooting it in the leg during the pursuit. The trailed it to the ancestral crypt on the manor grounds, and followed. Inside the crypt they found the coffins and their contents in disarray, with one exception. Opening this coffin revealed the vampire, damaged leg and all. The brothers promptly consigned the monster to flames.

While an interesting anecdote, the events at Croglin Grange have proved exceedingly difficult to verify. There is not even a record of a place called Croglin Grange, although the Croglin Low House lies near where it was said to be.





## The Gothic Tale

The Gothic tale was the direct ancestor of everything that is now considered part of the genres of horror, mystery and romance. It arose from some of the darker musings of the Romantic Poetry movement, and the vampire was one of the most prominent figures common to both styles. The Gothic tale began certain conventions that still exist today.

The Gothic genre is generally defined as having begun with *The Castle of Otranto* by Horace Walpole in 1763. The term "Gothic" referred to the frequent use of medieval settings. The Gothic novel reached its pinnacle in the publication of *Dracula*, although an equally valid argument can be made for the Reverend Charles Maturin's exquisitely diabolic *Melmouth the Wanderer*.

This literary tradition was marked by a number of distinct characteristics. First and foremost, Gothic literature consistently deals with the dark side of life, with sinister characters, evil plots, and impending doom constantly lurking in the shadows nearby. At the same time, there is always an atmosphere of sensuality, a fascination with beauty and passion, that manifests in everything from exotic setting to character relationships. This tension between fear and desire is bound together with a style which (when it works) is moody and evocative, with a heavy reliance upon atmosphere that reflects the central themes.

Relying as it does upon contrast, the genre tends toward melodrama, with the purest heroines, the most diabolic villains, and everything from setting to plot depicted as larger than life. This also affects the often moralistic theme of the stories as well, with good and evil manifesting in extremes, and the consequences of such actions following suit. However, while wrongdoers are generally punished in accordance with the magnitude of their evil, the Gothic villain was often a romantic figure. He might be monstrously cruel and diabolically cunning, but he was often noble, strong and sometimes even tragic. Many Gothic writers demonstrated this kind of Miltonic ambivalence which half admires the power of evil.

be as bat . . . He can come in mist which he create – that noble ship's captain proved him of this; but, from what we know, the distance he can make this mist is limited, and it can only be round himself. He can come on moonlight rays as elemental dust . . . He become so small – we ourselves saw Miss Lucy, ere she was at peace, slip through a hair breadth space at the tomb door. He can, when once he find his way, come out from anything or into anything, no matter how close it be bound or even fused with fire . . . He can see in the dark – no small power this, in a world which is one half shut from the light."

Obviously, Stoker's arch-vampire was possessed of some fairly amazing powers, beyond those that have become traditionally associated with the Count. This passage seems to credit Dracula with not only the common powers associated with vampires, but also other abilities such as invisibility and teleportation as well as the more bizarre power to "travel on moonlight as elemental dust." Dracula was also the first vampire to crawl vertically along walls like a lizard and turn into a bat.

Yet there is still hope. Van Helsing continues with a list of the creature's weaknesses: "Ah, but hear me through. He can do all these things, yet he is not free. Nay; he is even more a prisoner than the slave of the galley, than the madman in his cell. He cannot go where he lists; he who is not of nature has yet to obey some of nature's laws – why we know not. He may not enter anywhere at the first, unless there be someone of the household who bid him to come; though afterward he can come as he please. His power ceases, as does that of all evil things, at the coming of the day. Only at certain times can he have limited freedom. If he be not at the place whither he is bound, he can only change himself at noon or at exact sunrise or sunset . . . Thus whereas he can do his will within his limit, when he have his earth-home, his coffin-home, his hell-home, the place unhallowed, as we saw when he went to the grave of the suicide in Whitby; still at other time he can only change when the time come. It is said, too, that he can only pass running water at the slack or the flood of the tide. Then there are things that so afflict him that he has no power, as the garlic that we know of; and as for things sacred, as this symbol, my crucifix, that was amongst us even now as we resolve, to them he is nothing, but in their presence he takes his place far off and silent with respect. There are others, too, which I shall tell you of, lest in our seeking we may need them. The branch of wild rose on his coffin keep him that he move not from it; a sacred bullet fired into the



coffin kill him so that he be true dead; and as for the stake through him, we know already of its peace; or the cut off head that giveth rest.”

While interpreted an astounding number of times on stage and screen, the novel is in some ways quite different from the tale that film-goers know. Dracula rarely even appears in this story, issues no climactic final speech or struggle and is dispatched not by a stake or the light of day but rather by simultaneous knife wounds to the throat and heart (*almost* fulfilling the requirements of staking and beheading; perhaps it was this failure that allowed the Count to return for innumerable sequels).

Dracula defined the vampire in literature and marked the pinnacle of the Gothic movement. It is almost impossible to imagine any vampire tale in any medium that was not influenced by Stoker.

Dracula was soon brought to the stage by Hamilton Deane, a long-time friend of the Stoker family. Deane's interpretation of the Count established the image that was portrayed by Bela Lugosi and still remains in the popular imagination, introducing the now-familiar formal evening attire and black opera cape. Deane's play did quite well for a number of years before closing, and was the basis for several film interpretations of the story.

## ✦ THE MODERN VAMPIRE

### Film

IN THE 20TH CENTURY, the vampire's popularity remained undiminished. The vampire of today has been shaped by films as much as by its literary roots.

Perhaps the earliest film treatments of the legend was with *Nosferatu*, a fairly blatant retelling of Stoker's *Dracula*. So blatant, in fact, that Bram Stoker's widow successfully sued to have all copies of the film destroyed; fortunately for horror fans today, this was not effectively enforced. While based on the plot of *Dracula*, the vampire in this silent film bore more resemblance to his medieval forerunners. Count Orlock is a monstrosity with the hairless skull of the dead, pointed ears and protruding teeth. This was a return to the image of the vampire as death and disease, to be more associated with vermin such as rats than with the predatory wolf or mysterious bat. Orlock has the distinction of being the vampire to begin the tradition of complete destruction by sunlight.

Of course, as in literature, the most influential portrayal of the genre in film was *Dracula*. Bela Lugosi, himself a Hungarian who was born very near the region previously known as Transylvania, brought a sinister dignity to the role and forever cemented the image of Count Dracula and the vampire into the minds of horror fans. Lugosi's delivery of certain lines was so effective as to give them nearly catch-phrase status in the genre; "Good evening," "I bid you . . . welcome," "I never drink . . . wine." Lugosi's portrayal of the Count was so effective, in fact, that he could never escape the role and remained permanently type-cast as the Count, rarely straying farther from the role than an occasional evil European mad scientist instead of an evil European vampire.

After several less successful *Dracula* films, the genre sunk into camp and self-parody with "monster mash" type groupings of popular movie monsters and deliberate comedy by the likes of Abbott and Costello.

In the Sixties and Seventies, the film revival of *Dracula* and vampires in general was almost single-handedly brought about by the British company, Hammer Films. With Christopher Lee entrenched almost as firmly in the role as Lugosi before him, Hammer added to the *Dracula* myth with numerous films, as well as adaptations of Le Fanu's "Carmilla." Hammer produced six *Dracula* films (see Appendix 2) and numerous miscellaneous vampire movies.

## Lord Byron

George Gordon, Lord Byron, was an intriguing historical figure who has become inextricably linked to the development of the vampire as a literary phenomenon. Apart from his poetry – which certainly contributed to the Gothic image of the undead – Byron's sense of personal style lent him a sinister reputation that merged his life and art. It is said that Byron drank vinegar daily in the belief that it would help him to maintain a pale and corpse-like complexion, and one of the more sensational rumors that circulated in his time was that he had murdered one of his mistresses and drank her blood from a cup made of her skull. Even ignoring unlikely accusations such as that, Byron certainly cultivated the image of the type of saturnine, decadent aristocrat that has come to be associated with the vampire.

Byron was the host of the much-described weekend outing which inspired John Polidori to write "The Vampyre" and Mary Shelley to create *Frankenstein*. Byron was almost certainly the model for Polidori's Lord Ruthven, marking the beginning of the Gothic tradition of presenting vampires as sinister but suave aristocrats instead of filthy peasant monsters. Considering Byron's relationship as employer with the young Polidori, it is hardly surprising that Polidori chose to cast him in the role of the predatory dead.



## Bram Stoker

Abraham "Bram" Stoker was born in Dublin in 1847. A sickly and often bed-ridden child, he frequently passed the time reading and listening to his mother tell traditional stories. As a young man, he attended Trinity College, and upon graduation, entered civil service like his father. One of his first publications was "The Duties of Clerks of Petty Sessions in Ireland," hardly an auspicious beginning for the author of the most popular horror novel of all time.

While in college, Stoker attended a performance by the theater company of one Henry Irving, a man who was to become extremely influential in the young writer's life. Stoker was so impressed with this performance that he accepted a job as a drama critic for a small newspaper without pay. He also continued to pursue his other writing endeavors, publishing his first horror story, "The Chain of Destiny," and his first novel, a serialized adventure entitled "Snake's Pass."

In 1878, Henry Irving took charge of the Lyceum Theater and asked Stoker to come to London to be the theater manager. Stoker accepted and worked in the theater for many years. He continued to write and produced a collection of children's stories entitled "Under the Sunset," as well as a number of other short stories and novels.

In 1890, Stoker began work on the novel that would assure his own immortality. Stoker claimed the idea for *Dracula* was inspired by a nightmare. He did extensive research on Eastern Europe and its folklore at the British Museum, including "Account of the Principalities of Wallachia, Moldavia, etc." by William Wilkinson, a former consul to Bucharest, and "Transylvanian Superstitions" by Emily Gerard. Having unearthed these references to Transylvania and Vlad the Impaler, Stoker had the historical foundation on which to build his dark vision. *Dracula* was published in 1897 and received immediate attention (although not all of it good). Stoker staged a dramatic reading of the initial chapters, ostensibly for copyright protection, although it seems likely that Stoker had visions of bringing *Dracula* to the stage from the beginning.

While *Dracula* brought him a fair amount of fame, Stoker was perpetually plagued by money problems. He never recaptured the success he achieved with *Dracula* despite his continued literary efforts.

In 1898, the Lyceum was damaged by a fire, and the theater was closed in 1902. Henry Irving died in 1905, and Stoker wrote his biography in 1906, "The Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving." Stoker also suffered health problems during this year, including a mild stroke and the onset of kidney disease.

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Recently, the vampire has undergone a new transformation. A number of films, novels and games have introduced updated vampires for the late 20th century. These modern vampires are leather-clad rebels who stalk the night in search of wild fun as well as prey. The fear represented by this incarnation of the undead seems to be social fear. These creatures exist in a twilight world outside of the prescribed social order.

### Literature

In the 20th century, the vampire has become a full-fledged pop icon, with interpretations and elaborations in every possible medium from novels to comic books to roleplaying games. A complete listing of suggested reading may be found in Appendix 1, including many excellent modern tales.

The modern writer with the most influence upon the development of the vampire archetype (and the evolution of the Gothic genre in general) is undoubtedly Anne Rice. Rice's "Vampire Chronicles" have influenced most modern trends and interpretations of the vampire tale. Her central vampiric protagonist, Lestat de Lioncourt, is an androgynous anti-hero who has redefined vampirism for the latter half of the 20th century.

## ✠ LIFE AFTER DEATH

DESPITE THE BEWILDERING ARRAY of mythological, historical and artistic sources that have contributed to the archetype of the vampire, it is possible to distill some general tendencies and rules which govern the condition of undeath.

### Life, Death and Beyond

The vampire stands in a unique relationship to the greatest mystery of the human condition: the barrier between life and death. The vampire has crossed this barrier, and his existence continues in a condition that is neither life nor death. Even those vampires who are not specifically defined as truly undead either have their origins in some realm beyond mortal life, or have been brushed by such otherworldly forces.

This section deals specifically with the condition of undeath, the twilight realm between the daylight world of living mortals and the cold, dark embrace of the grave. What follows is a general overview of the conditions of undead existence. Specific rules regarding vampiric powers and limitations are found in later chapters.

## Becoming a Vampire

How does one become a vampire? The first and most obvious answer is of course the attack of a vampire. Within the European tradition at least, contagion is the most direct cause of vampirism. Death by vampiric attack was the most direct and common vector of the infection, but its virulence was such that even eating the flesh of an animal that suffered such an attack could cause the condition. Film and literature defined more specific rules for becoming one of the damned.

There are a number of lesser known ways of falling under the curse of the undead. Black magic and consorting with the powers of darkness were universally agreed upon as one method of becoming a vampire, whether deliberately or otherwise. And throughout myth and literature, victims of various curses have been driven to return from the grave. It was also generally accepted that werewolves consistently returned as vampires after death.

Suicide was generally seen as increasing the chances of vampiric return, presumably based on the supposition that the decisions of life and death were made by higher powers, not by mortals. Hence, those who tried to end their lives before the appointed time might be condemned to a restless existence that was worse than life. Likewise any sudden or violent death was seen as having the potential of producing a body that was not ready to rest, and women who died in childbirth were consistently identified as some of the more vengeful fiends. In some Mediterranean countries, the legend of the vampire was tied to the tradition of the *vendetta*, where any man who was murdered might return unless he was avenged. Additionally, those who were generally wicked, overly sexual, violent or just disliked by their neighbors were all candidates for vampiric resurrection. Strangers were always under suspicion as well, and anyone possessing an uncommon color of eyes or hair might be one of the undead; one particularly widespread belief incriminated anyone with red hair.

In many cultures, the moon was seen as possessing supernatural powers which might animate a corpse that was carelessly left exposed to its cold rays. In China it was believed that the rays of the moon falling upon a corpse might energize the *p'ao*, or inferior soul, and effect re-animation. This belief in the reanimatory powers of lunar rays is seen in Western lands as well.

In Christian lands, excommunication by the Church and generally wicked behavior brought a risk of becoming one of the restless dead. Anyone outside the grace of the Church, denied the rites and rituals of a Christian funeral, might well lose his way to the hereafter and find himself bound to his corpse as a revenant.

Some even believed that the curse could be brought about by more trivial phenomena, such as allowing a corpse to be scratched by a black cat or allowing any animal (but particularly a cat) to jump over the corpse (it was supposed that the corpse might steal some of the animal's life and thus re-animate).

Some children were thought to be born with a predisposition towards vampirism. The signs of this ranged from being born with teeth or a caul to being born on Christmas.

What occurred after death is a matter for speculation; the most common conflict being in regard to whether the undead were animated by their own spirit or some malignant nonhuman entity. If the GM decides that all vampirism is the result of demonic possession, this would probably rule out vampire PCs entirely, and make the curse of the undead truly a fate worse than death (with vampires immediately becoming NPCs).

## Bram Stoker (Continued)

Stoker continued to write and be published, producing at least a few other stories that are still remembered today. "Jewel of the Seven Stars," published in 1903, was the inspiration for two films, *Blood of the Mummy's Tomb* in 1971 and *The Awakening* in 1980. His 1911 story, *Lair of the White Worm*, was also adapted to the screen in 1992 by director Ken Russell.

Bram Stoker died April 12, 1912, from complications of kidney failure. His widow, Florence, lived on his royalties, shrewdly defending the rights to his work. In 1914, she published "Dracula's Guest," a chapter that had been edited out of the final draft of the novel.

Bram Stoker's creation went on to have a long career in countless plays, films and literary interpretations, becoming one of the most well-known characters in English literature.

## Lord Ruthven

Lord Ruthven first appeared in Dr. Polidori's "The Vampyre," and in many subsequent plays. He was almost certainly based upon the character of George Gordon, Lord Byron (see sidebar, p. 29).

Ruthven is the predecessor of the Gothic vampires. He was British instead of European, and the very model of the English aristocracy. Instead of stalking the night, Ruthven pursued his prey through the parlors and drawing rooms of upper-class society. Ruthven displayed a preference for innocent, fair young ladies. He delighted in the corruption of the innocent and the encouragement of the wicked.

"... a nobleman, more remarkable for his singularities, than his rank. He gazed upon the mirth around him, as if he could not participate therein. Apparently, the light laughter of the fair only attracted his attention, that he might by a look quell it, and throw fear into those breasts where thoughtlessness reigned. Those who felt this sensation of awe, could not explain whence it arose: some attributed it to the dead grey eye..."

Ruthven demonstrated no difficulty in walking abroad by daylight, though his pursuit of vice and its adherents led him towards a nocturnal lifestyle. He gave no indication of particularly great age, showing comfortable proficiency in the most exacting social circles of his time, and demonstrating all the qualities of a well-heeled British aristocrat (and eschewing any hint of ancient, old-country superstition and mystery that cloaked so many of his predecessors). Little is revealed about the past of Lord Ruthven.

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## Lord Ruthven (Continued)

An unusual detail is Ruthven's individual form of immortality. In the course of the tale, Ruthven is killed (by a mere bullet wound to the shoulder, no less). His final request is to be placed upon a hilltop where the moon's rays may fall upon his body. He then elicits a solemn oath from his companion: "Swear by all your soul reveres, by all your nature fears, swear that for a year and a day you will not impart your knowledge of my crimes and death to any living being in any way, whatever may happen, or whatever you may see!" This was complied with, and upon the light of the next day, the body had vanished. Ruthven subsequently appears again, presumably resurrected and rejuvenated by the moonlight. Ruthven's return creates a dilemma for his former companion, who is torn by having realized Ruthven's monstrous nature while having sworn not to reveal it, even to save his own sister from the undead Lord's unwholesome intentions.

Interestingly, Ruthven wins in the end, with the narrator upon his deathbed and his sister slain by the vampire's predations.



## Undeath

What does it mean to be undead? It is sometimes difficult to separate the inherent conditions of undeath (which would apply to most or all vampires in a campaign world) from the many and varied abilities attributed to individual treatments of vampires in literature and legend.

To be undead means to be a walking corpse, a flesh and blood entity that is animated not by natural life but by some supernatural or paranormal force. The vampire may possess the same consciousness and personality that inhabited the body in life, or the animating force may be another entity entirely. Another possibility is the union of the original occupant's "spirit" or "soul" with another non-physical being in one synthetic consciousness.

Regardless of the vampire's metaphysical make-up, the physical body is, for most intents and purposes, dead. The vampire's body is no longer a functioning biological organism. The condition of vampirism has two major effects upon the infected corpse; first, it animates the body, and second, it preserves it. To do this requires the vital essence of creatures which are alive.

Biologically, then, the condition of an undead body may be described as static. None of the biological processes of life are functioning in the undead, including heartbeat and breathing, aging, and healing. For the same reason, the vampire is immune to the effects of biological hazards such as disease, poison, and drugs. However, there are certain contradictions, since the vampire obviously has some means for both digestion and circulation, and a number of tales describe vampires whose hair and nails continued to grow within the grave.

The vampire, for all its superhuman vigor, is still a corpse and as such appears different than a living mortal. As a corpse, the vampire will display the pallor of death. Pale skin, cold and dead eyes, and a lack of body temperature are among the superficially obvious manifestations of death.

The vampire must take life from others because it has no life of its own. The undead do not, under normal circumstances, heal or recover from injury in any way. To accomplish this, the undead must steal additional life force from a mortal victim to restore its own depleted health. This is generally, but not always, accomplished through the medium of blood. Alternative vehicles for stolen life and health are emotional energy, will power, and youth. Some varieties of vampire experience dramatic physiological flux in proportion to their reserves of stolen life. Such vampires may be very hideous and corpse-like when hungry, and bloated and ruddy when full.

Because the undead are neither alive nor dead, their bodies neither decay nor age. Thus, barring violent death, a vampire is effectively immortal. A vampire will always appear to be the age at which it died originally. Alternately, some vampires begin to undergo the process of aging (at varying rates) when deprived of sustenance, as in the novel *Dracula*. Vampires which age in this way will rejuvenate to the age of their first death when provided with sustenance. It is also a time-honored tradition for ancient vampires to pass through all of the stages of aging and decomposition upon their demise.

## Temporary and Permanent Death

The undead are intimately familiar with death and the intermediary stages between life and its final end. Death generally occurs when a mortal's life force is separated from its physical body. However, if the deceased becomes one of the undead, this end of mortal life becomes merely a transformation.

A number of methods can render the undead unable to function without actually destroying them. This includes extremes of physical damage that do not fulfill the specific conditions for destroying that vampire type. This is known as temporary death (the vampire is effectively dead, but it might get better).



Lastly, for all beings, comes permanent death. This can usually only be brought about in vampires through a very specific set of conditions which varies widely by “racial” type. Generally, however, the complete destruction of an undead body by fire will be sufficient to bring about permanent death.

### ***Immortality and Age***

As an immortal, that is to say, a being who is unaging and tremendously hard to kill, the undead enjoy certain unique opportunities. Having the potential to exist for centuries if not longer, the vampire may acquire truly vast amounts of personal power, knowledge and experience. This may manifest on a more mundane level as well; an individual who has spent a few centuries in the “school of hard knocks” is likely to demonstrate nearly superhuman levels of shrewdness and caution.

It is also generally supposed that vampires gain greater powers as they mature and learn to fully exploit their supernatural abilities. This may or may not involve delving into whatever mysteries of magic and supernatural are appropriate to their respective cosmology.

### ***Day and Night***

Almost without exception, vampires are nocturnal creatures. Some varieties of vampire are destroyed by sunlight, and almost all lose their formidable powers while the sun is above the horizon.

Depending upon the setting, a nocturnal existence can be anything from a minor hindrance (in the 24-hour world of modern convenience) to complete social isolation (in more primitive and superstitious times and places, where daylight determines activity and strangers met after dark are automatically distrusted).

### ***Daylight***

It is now a well-accepted convention that vampires take spectacular physical damage when exposed to the light of the sun. However, this is actually a very modern addition to the legend. Both in traditional folklore and the Gothic literature that defined the vampire, the undead are often seen walking abroad in the day without ill effect. While most vampires *were* nocturnal predators, and many lost their powers when the sun was in the sky, the idea that sunlight was as lethal as flame to the damned was largely generated by films in this century.

## ***Varney the Vampire***

Sir Francis Varney was the next fiend after Ruthven to capture the popular imagination. Varney was a Hungarian count, maintaining the tradition of the aristocratic Byronic vampire, but that is where the similarity ends. Varney was altogether less refined than Ruthven; more the wild beast. With his ragged fangs, skeletal talons for rattling window panes, and dead metallic eyes, Varney was anything but seductive. Add to this his tendency to make ghastly sucking noises while feeding and the blood-curdling howls that issued from his throat when hunting, and you have an altogether less socially acceptable creature than most of his Gothic brethren.

“The figure turns half around, and the light falls upon the face. It is perfectly white – perfectly bloodless. The eyes look like polished tin; the lips are drawn back, and the principal feature next to those dreadful eyes is the teeth – the fearful looking teeth – projecting like those of some wild animal, hideously, glaringly white, and fang-like. It approaches the bed with a strange gliding movement. It clashes together the long nails that literally appear to hang from the finger ends.”

Like Dracula after him, Varney had a particular taste for innocent specimens of Victorian womanhood, and his attention seemed even less wholesome.

Varney’s particular form of immortality followed the pattern set by Ruthven before him. While he could be killed, the mystic rays of moonlight that fell upon his corpse would cause him to rise again. His final demise came by his own hand, and he ended his existence in a spectacular manner that left little chance of failure, leaping into the flames of Vesuvius.





## Carmilla

Carmilla is perhaps the most haunting vampire in Gothic literature, with her languid nature and youthful appearance belying her predatory nature. She appeared as a beautiful young girl, about 19 years old. "She was slender and wonderfully graceful . . . Her complexion was rich and brilliant; her features were small and beautifully formed; her eyes large dark and lustrous . . ." Carmilla was in fact Mircalla Karnstein, a Syrian countess who had died some 150 years before the story begins.

Her preferred prey was young girls. Insinuating herself into their homes under the pretense of distress, she befriended the young ladies before gradually draining them of life. Her attacks were enacted while the victim slept. Generally, she performed these feedings while shape-shifted into the form of a very large cat, lessening the risk of her being identified by her friend/prey. While required to rest in her grave for a time each day, it was her shroud, rather than her coffin or grave earth, that she required for this rest.

Carmilla maintained more of the semblance of life than most of the undead. She had no difficulty going about in daylight, although she was a late riser, and when examined after a carriage wreck, she was pronounced to have a pulse.

Carmilla is eventually found out when the narrator and her father encounter the uncle of one of the vampiress's other victims, now a staunch foe of the undead. He immediately recognizes Carmilla, whom he knew as Millarca. She flees, but to no avail. Tracked to her ancestral grave the next day, she is found in the traditional manner: undecayed and lifelike, her limbs flexible, and the coffin awash with blood. Taking no chances, the impromptu band of vampire hunters subject her to the full traditional treatment as she is staked (accompanied by the well-known death scream), beheaded, burned, and the ashes scattered upon the river. Even with all of this, the narrator confesses that sometimes she expects to see Carmilla again.

## Count Dracula

Count Dracula, the literary creation of Bram Stoker, stands apart from both the historical Voivode Vlad IV of Wallachia, called Draculea, and the modern image of the Count that was shaped by the Hamilton Deane play and the film interpretations since. Count Dracula, the literary character, is perhaps not so familiar as modern vampire enthusiasts might think.

Stoker did describe his Count as the historical Vlad, when Van Helsing confirmed his identity to his adversaries:

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This vulnerability to sunlight has become a very familiar part of the myth by now, and many GMs will wish to include this limitation upon the undead. How this damage manifests is largely a matter of the GM's personal taste. However, usually the undead will react to sunlight as to a flame, beginning with smoking and withering and culminating with complete immolation, leaving nothing but a pile of corpse-dust.

In addition to taking damage from the sun, these nocturnal creatures may suffer other handicaps as well. Penalties may be applied to all rolls when the vampire is required to act during the day (if this is possible at all), particularly those applying to senses and alertness. When the sun is at its apex in the sky, most of the undead automatically lose 1 HT each day.

Finally, some varieties of vampire are absolutely nocturnal, unable to act at all during the day. Such creatures will begin to become lethargic as the dawn lightens the horizon, and will fall into a catatonic trance as long as the sun is in the sky.

## The Sleep of the Dead

Besides avoiding the light of day, some vampires are also bound by elaborate conditions necessary for their daytime retirement. The most familiar requirement for the sleep of the dead is a connection to the grave where they are supposed to lie. Originally, the vampire was seen as bound to his actual grave during the day, and only able to venture a short distance from it at night. Bram Stoker added a variation to this tradition by providing the Count with the foresight to acquire and transport enough of this "native soil" to allow him to go abroad. This has become the popular conception of this limitation, that a vampire must lie each night within reproduced funereal conditions, complete with a coffin and the earth of the grave. While this is the modern conception, a wide variety of similar conditions have been attributed to vampires around the globe.

When creating new vampires, the GM will have to consider why a vampire behaves as he does. Does he sleep in a coffin because he must, or merely as a convenient enclosure against the sun? Does the vampire slip into the catatonic sleep of the dead upon the breaking of the day, or does he merely wait in safety until he can once again prowl the night?

## Feeding

Perhaps the single most defining characteristic of a vampire is its nature as a parasitic predator. Vampires, of all varieties, drain the life from living creatures to maintain their own existence.

In its most familiar form, this is accomplished by biting or otherwise piercing the mortal prey and drinking the blood; for the blood is the life. Thus the vampire is able to supplement its own dwindling reserves and continue its unnatural existence at the expense of others.

While the bite is perhaps the most primally frightening kind of attack that one creature can inflict upon another, the bite of the vampire has often had another element to contrast with its savagery. Since ancient times, the kiss of the undead was also perceived as a sexual assault. From Victorian to modern times, victims of the undead have been portrayed as having a conflicting reaction to their attacker's predatory embrace; it is both savage and sensual, symbolic perhaps of the ambivalent nature of life-in-death. Victims of vampires often seem almost willing participants in their own destruction, and rarely resist once the bite has begun, if at all.

This is more pronounced in creatures like the succubus, whose life-draining habits required no blood loss, but rather were purely sexual. Other mediums of

the life force that have been consumed by the undead include youth, psychic energy, strong emotion and magical power. Perhaps most insidious are those creatures, mortal and otherwise, who can drain others of their vital energies at a distance and leave no physical signs to reveal their attacks.

## The Curse of the Vampire

In traditional European folklore, as well as in modern imagination and some other cultures, vampirism was conceived of as a disease that could be spread like any epidemic. The victims of a vampire might be infected with the same curse. Such victims are often under the control of the vampire that created them.

This curse of vampirism has been depicted in a number of ways in fiction and folklore. Below are some of the most typical patterns of contagion. Any of these requisites may be combined with the Infectious Attack disadvantage in Chapter 3, at the GM's discretion.

### No Contagion

Many types of vampire did not spread their curse to others. They were created only by special supernatural or theological conditions. Unique curses, special circumstances of death and violation of funeral taboos are all examples of non-contagious origins of vampirism.

### Death

One method of contagion is simply to be killed by a vampire. This makes the condition of vampirism very dangerous and a little difficult to explain. In this case, a single vampire might decimate an entire area, as the number of vampires and victims multiplies with each attack. This was how the folkloric vampire was imagined, with the ability to consume an entire village in weeks. With this condition, vampirism becomes a potential threat for the entire human race, as a plague-like epidemic could break out at any time, so long as one undead is left intact.

This method of contagion works best in a game where vampires (or at least the varieties with this type of transmission) are exceedingly rare. Otherwise, the ecology of the situation begins to fall apart, with too many predators and not enough prey in a very short time indeed.



## Count Dracula (Continued)

"He must, indeed, be that Voivode Dracula, who won his name against the Turk . . . If it be so, he is no common man; for in that time, and centuries after, he was spoken of as the cleverest and most cunning, as well as the bravest of the sons of the 'land beyond the forest.' That mighty brain and that iron resolution went with him to his grave, and are even now arrayed against us."

Indeed, the physical appearance of Dracula was not at all like the seductive and suave bloodsucker as portrayed by the likes of Bela Lugosi and Frank Langella, but instead more like an aged version of the Impaler imbued with traditional vampiric qualities. Dracula is described in detail in the first chapters of the novel, through the perceptions of Jonathan Harker:

"Within stood a tall old man, clean-shaven except for a long white mustache, and clad in black from head to foot, without a single speck of color about him anywhere.

"His face was a strong – a very strong – aquiline, with high bridge of the thin nose and peculiarly arched nostrils; with lofty domed forehead, and scant hair about the temples but profusely elsewhere. His eyebrows were very massive, almost meeting over the nose . . . The mouth, so far as I could see it under the heavy mustache, was fixed and rather cruel-looking, with peculiarly sharp white teeth; these protruded over the lips, whose remarkable ruddiness showed astonishing vitality in a man of his years. For the rest, his ears were pale, and at the tops extremely pointed; the chin was broad and strong, and the cheeks firm though thin. The general effect was one of extraordinary pallor.

"Hitherto I had noticed the backs of his hands as they lay on his knees in the fire-light, and they had seemed rather white and fine; but seeing them now close to me, I could not but notice that they were rather coarse – broad, with squat fingers. Strange to say, there were hairs in the centre of the palm. The nails were long and fine, and cut to a sharp point. As the Count leaned over me and his hands touched me, I could not repress a shudder."

Harker also notes the corpse-like chill of the Count's grip when they shake hands, and comments on the traditional bad breath associated with the dead. Over the course of the novel, the Count begins to grow younger and more vital as his prey becomes more plentiful. Still, the literary Count Dracula remains an embodiment of supernatural power and savagery, quite in contrast to the sophisticated and subtle fiend of modern fiction.



## Modern Vampires

While the true undead have become less commonly reported as scientific explanations have displaced supernatural beliefs, the modern age certainly has had no shortage of human monsters. Mortal "murderers," like Elizabeth Bathory, have proven immune to the decline of superstition.

These are people, who for one reason or another, have had a compulsion to drink human blood, and some have been willing to kill to obtain it. Obviously, the twisted sexuality that is expressed by violent sadism is an element in this behavior, like that of many other serial killers and mass murderers. Some persons who exhibit this behavior seem to be possessed by haemosexuality . . . sexual arousal from the sight (and possibly taste) of blood.

Following are the three most notorious examples of this kind of individual from this century, all of whom earned the name "vampire" in the popular consciousness.

### Fritz Haarman, "The Hanover Vampire"

Fritz Haarman was born in 1879 into, by all accounts, a thoroughly unpleasant family. He escaped by joining the army for a time, but upon his release was arrested for child molestation soon after returning home to Hanover. He survived for a time by dividing his efforts between petty theft and acting as a police informant.

*Continued on next page . . .*

## Survival

Another method is to *survive* the bite of a vampire. This allows the vampire to choose not to propagate others by slaying his victims. Dead victims stay dead; living victims gradually become vampires. This serves as a good model for the assumption that vampirism behaves like a natural disease, and could be used for pseudo-scientific forms of the curse.

Sometimes this type of contagion requires three or more feedings from a single victim.

## Infection

Perhaps vampirism does function like a disease, and the contagion of the condition depends on a number of factors. In this case, the GM decides whether the "vampire virus" affects living or dead victims, and makes a HT roll. In such a case, the attacking vampire is not likely to have any control over the creation of new vampires, giving it the potential dangerous situation of having unhappy victims rise with vampiric powers, possibly in search of revenge. See the Infectious Attack disadvantage, p. 66.

## Will

Sometimes, all that is required to transmit the curse is the deliberate intention of the vampire. This may quite easily be combined with any of the other methods, or may represent simply a conscious effort.

## The Unholy Communion

The unholy communion is a concept that first gained popularity with Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, and has been adopted into the legend to be used again and again since that time. With this method, the vampire must not only drain the blood of the victim, but must share the vampiric taint by inducing the victim to drink his own blood. This implies a certain willingness (natural or otherwise) on the part of the victim, making him a collaborator in his own dark fate, and making the transmission of vampirism more palatable to people with certain religious convictions by making the victim share in the guilt.



## The Transformation

The metamorphosis from living to undead is the end of the mortal life. This can be considered the "initiation" into the hosts of the damned. The actual death can occur in a variety of ways. It was traditionally thought of as a kind of wasting sickness. This could be caused by a single assault, after which the victim sickened and died, or could be the result of repeated visitations which resulted in the same steady draining of the victim's life.

After death, the experiences of the vampire-to-be depend upon the metaphysics of the setting. While in this state, the new undead is very vulnerable, and may never arise depending upon the prevalent funeral customs and knowledge regarding the threat of the undead. However, if things are allowed to take their unnatural course, the infected victim will soon arise as a new monster. Authorities disagree about the length of time this takes, but three, seven, or nine days seem most frequently proposed. The awakening is undoubtedly a traumatic experience, and the vampire must face the morbid conditions of its new existence immediately.

The first challenge is to maintain some individual human identity amidst the maelstrom of predatory passions and spiritual exile. Many vampires are unable to do this and become insane, ravening monsters. Those that do retain some human values and sensibilities will find their ethical dilemmas beginning with their first prey.

Often, the fledgling vampire will be under the direct or indirect influence of its "creator," necessitating some struggle for independence.

## TIMELINE

101-105	Roman occupation of Dacia (Transylvania)	1731	Investigation of the case of Arnold Paole
117-138	Phlegon of Tralles	1734	The word "vampire" enters English language
200-245	<i>Life of Apollonius of Tyana</i> , Philostratus		
1136-1198	William of Newburgh chronicles British revenants	1746	<i>Treatise on the Vampire of Hungary and the Surrounding Regions</i> , Don Augustine Calmet
1387	Order of the Dragon founded	1788	Lord Byron born
1431	Vlad Draculea born	1795	John Polidori born
1448	Vlad becomes Voivode of Wallachia	1797	"The Bride of Corinth," Goethe
1456-1462	Vlad ascends to throne for a second time.	1799	"Thalaba the Destroyer," Robert Southey
1475	Vlad's third rule	1800s	"Wake not the Dead," Tieck
1476	Vlad killed		
1560	Elizabeth Bathory is born	1813	"The Giaour" by Lord Byron
1611	Bathory imprisoned		
1614	Bathory dies	1816	Lord Byron, John Polidori, Percy and Mary Shelley stranded by storms at Byron's villa and decide to create ghost stories.
1672-1772	Eastern European epidemics		Origin of <i>Frankenstein</i> and "The Vampyre."
1679	<i>On the Chewing Dead</i> , Rohr		
1728	The case of Peter Plogojowitz		
1728	<i>That Dead Men Chew in their Graves</i> , Ranft		

## Modern Vampires (Continued)

While jailed for another sexual offense in 1919, Haarman met Hans Grans, a 24-year-old male prostitute. Upon their release, they began a spree of murder and rape, mostly performed by Haarman under the direction of Grans.

Their preferred victims were young men and boys, often runaways, whom they picked up at a nearby train station. Haarman testified that he molested and murdered his victims, often dispatching them by biting their throats. The victims' clothes and possessions were taken and sold, and the bodies dumped into the Seine, which proved the predatory pair's downfall, as the police were drawn to Haarman and Grans by the discovery of nearby bodies.

Haarman was charged with 24 counts of murder, but by his own admission believed the actual count to be at least 30-40. He testified that he bit his victims' throats and drank their blood, claiming this behavior took place while he was in some kind of trance. As a final grisly detail, it was revealed that Haarman had dismembered some of his victims and sold them as meat and sausages to the unsuspecting patrons of the butcher shop where he worked. Grans was given life imprisonment, and Haarman was convicted and sentenced to be executed in 1925. He was subsequently executed by decapitation, and his brain was saved and sent to Gottingen University for scientific study.

### John George Haigh, "The Vampire of London"

John George Haigh was born in 1910. His parents were devoted members of the Plymouth Brethren, an extremely strict Protestant sect much like modern Christian Fundamentalism. He was instilled at an early age with a vivid image of the suffering of Christ upon the cross. (An interesting aside; the bosom of the Plymouth Brethren also managed to produce Edward Alexander Crowley, known in adulthood as Aleister Crowley, the most infamous occultist and black magician of this century, who was referred to by himself and others as "The Great Beast 666" and "The Wickedest Man in the World.") Haigh reported vivid dreams and fantasies revolving around the crucifixion images and the association between blood and life.

Haigh was able to control his morbid fascination until 1944, when he suffered a head injury and tasted his own blood running into his mouth. He became obsessed once again with the life-giving power of blood, and this time he acted upon his obsession.

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## Modern Vampires (Continued)

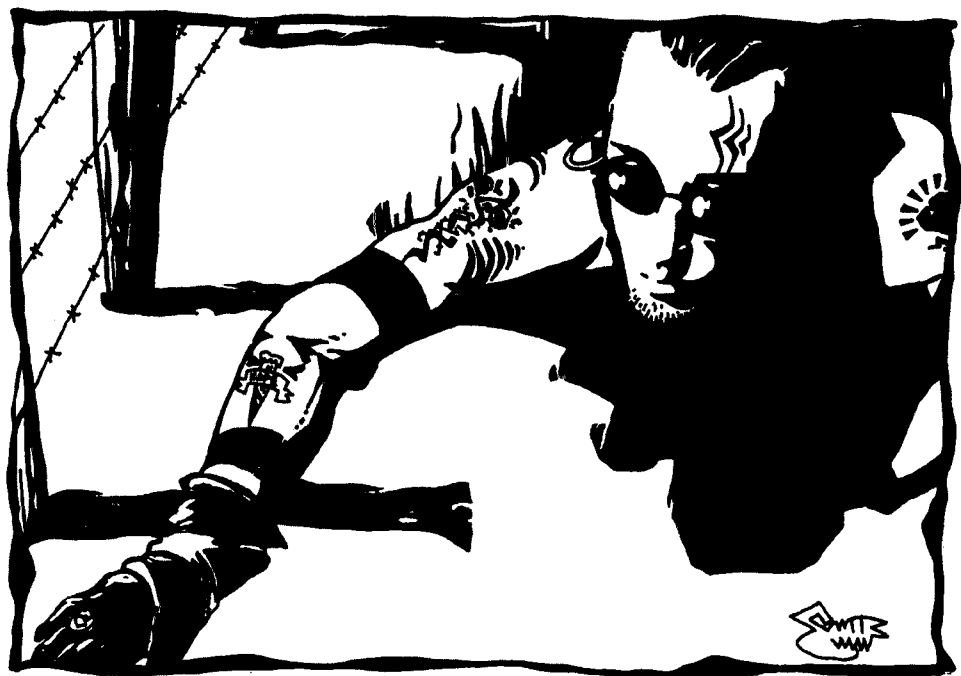
Outfitting a secret laboratory in his home, he began to seek out victims. These unfortunates were lured to Haigh's residence and killed. Haigh then proceeded to drink their blood (usually by first draining it into a glass), believing it would extend his life. He disposed of the bodies in a vat of sulfuric acid, effectively destroying the evidence of his crimes. Haigh claimed nine lives in this manner, before arousing suspicion while trying to pawn a fur coat that he had acquired from one of his victims.

Haigh was confident and unconcerned in the face of the accusations levelled against him, believing that he could not be tried without the bodies for evidence. However, police were able to recover some pieces of undissolved human remains from the acid, including dental work that was identified. Haigh confessed to all nine murders at his trial, and maintained this was a necessary religious ritual for him to attain eternal life. He was sentenced to death and hanged in 1949.

### Peter Kurten, "The Dusseldorf Vampire"

Peter Kurten (1883-1931) was the son of an alcoholic. During his early life, he was in and out of jail for a number of minor offenses, but would later claim that he first committed murder when he was nine years old by drowning two playmates in a lake.

Kurten maintained a relatively respectable existence with a wife and a job as a truck driver, until February of 1929, when his murder spree began. He attacked and killed a large number of women and children during 1929 and 1930, but his attempted murders were often unsuccessful. He eluded police for some time by frequently changing his methods, but preferred to cut the throats of his victims and drink their blood. He was apprehended in May of 1930 and produced a full confession. He is said to have observed a similarity between his need for blood and the addiction of an alcoholic (like his father). Peter Kurten was executed by decapitation on July 2, 1931.



- |      |   |      |  |
|------|---|------|--|
| 1819 | "The Vampyre," by Dr. John Polidori   | 1929 | <i>The Vampire in Europe</i> , Montague Summers            |
| 1820 | "The Lamia," Keats  | 1931 | <i>Dracula</i> (dir. Todd Browning)                        |
| 1824 | Lord Byron dies   |      | Peter Kurten is tried and executed                         |
| 1846 | <i>Varney the Vampire: or the Feast of Blood</i> , James Malcom Rymer         | 1949 | John George Haigh imprisoned, executed                     |
| 1847 | Bram Stoker born  | 1954 | Comics Code Authority forbids vampires in U.S. comic books |
| 1870 | <i>Vikram and the Vampire, or Tales of Hindu Devilry</i> , Sir Richard Burton | 1958 | <i>Horror of Dracula</i> (dir. Terence Fisher)             |
| 1872 | "Carmilla," Sheridan Le Fanu  | 1959 | Romanian stamp honors Vlad Tepes                           |
| 1882 | Bela Lugosi born  | 1970 | Vampire reports in London's Highgate Cemetery              |
| 1887 | <i>Dracula's death in novel</i>   | 1976 | <i>Interview with the Vampire</i> , Anne Rice              |
| 1888 | "Land Beyond the Forest," Emily Gerard  | 1979 | <i>Dracula</i> (dir. John Badham)                          |
| 1897 | <i>Dracula</i> , Bram Stoker  |      | <i>Nosferatu, Phantom der Nacht</i> (dir. Werner Herzog)   |
| 1912 | Stoker dies   | 1985 | <i>The Vampire Lestat</i> , Anne Rice                      |
| 1913 | "Dracula's Guest," Bram Stoker  | 1989 | Nikolai Ceaucescu deposed in Romania                       |
| 1922 | <i>Nosferatu</i> (dir. F.W. Murnau)   | 1992 | <i>Bram Stoker's Dracula</i> (dir. Francis Coppola)        |
|      | Christopher Lee born, May 22  | 1994 | <i>Interview with the Vampire</i> (dir. Neil Jordan)       |
| 1924 | Hamilton Deane's "Dracula" opens  |      |  |
|      | Fritz Haarman captured  |      |  |
| 1925 | Fritz Haarman executed by decapitation  |      |  |
| 1928 | <i>The Vampire: His Kith and Kin</i> , Montague Summers                       |      |  |



# 2 CHARACTERS

## HEROES, VILLAINS AND VICTIMS

This chapter discusses character types that are likely to wander into the shadowy realm of vampires — their opponents, their victims, or the undead themselves.



## Vampire Quirks

Having potential centuries to develop preferences and habits, vampires may have a wider variety of quirks than mortals. Any defining characteristic that the GM does not believe consequential enough to rate as a disadvantage should be noted as a quirk. At the GM's discretion, vampires (particularly those who have lived well beyond a single lifetime) may possess more than 5 points' worth of quirks. The GM may be liberal here, as long as the quirks serve to define and enrich the character and are not used for abusive point acquisition.

At the same time, the GM should not hesitate to relegate any trivial limitation possessed by a vampire as a mere quirk. For example, "Feeds only on virgin blood" might be considered a Vow or a special condition of Dependency for multiple points, or it may be only a quirk if the GM believes that the character will be willing and able to prey upon an abundant population of children.

People with nocturnal habits, people with an interest in the supernatural, and people whose occupation or nature inclines them to investigate mysteries all run the risk of meeting the children of the night.

Then there are the vampires themselves. Vampires are solitary monsters, but many of them play a role in society so they can live amongst mortals where prey is plentiful. And many vampires are still shaped by who they were in life.

## Men and Monsters

Two types of campaign are considered here. The first is the traditional horror campaign, where the players take the roles (willingly or unwillingly) of mortal supernatural investigators who have to confront the reality of the undead. The most common form of this campaign will feature vampire hunters, with the PCs battling against a predatory evil they have discovered lurking in the night.

The second type of campaign considered is just the reverse, where some or all of the player characters are the monsters. This requires more subtlety on the part of the Game Master if it is not to degenerate into a mindless splatterfest. Playing the monsters can provide unique roleplaying challenges, but character development and good roleplaying are even more necessary than usual to ensure the PCs are interesting protagonists of a memorable adventure. The exploits of thoughtless killers and invulnerable super-monsters will be far less interesting than those of complex anti-heroes, noble villains and flawed heroes. In general, the more human-seeming types of vampires will be the most appropriate for use as player characters.

Of course, any combination of these campaigns can be used, if the GM wishes, with mortals and monsters alike in the party, cooperating or competing.





## Reputation, Status and Wealth

There are certain inherent Reputation problems that go with the territory as a bloodthirsty monster. However, sufficiently human-looking vampires may very well have an elaborate facade of normalcy and propriety, and be well-respected by mortals who never suspect their secret. Thus, individual vampires may buy Reputation and Status as normal, providing that it is consistent with the character's concept and background.

Vampires often possess greater than average Wealth. This is for two reasons. First, vampires possess certain inherent advantages in the competition for resources, and second, a vampire may have had a very long time to amass wealth. The GM and player should determine together what forms of property and currency is represented by a vampire's Wealth level, based upon the historical periods in which the vampire has lived.

### Money and Equipment

One problem with retaining resources through multiple lifetimes lies in the shifting value of currency and property. A vampire can always will the estate of one identity to his next identity, but choosing and maintaining the form of the wealth might prove challenging. Currency may either increase or decrease in value over time, but it is equally inconvenient to attempt spending a Spanish dubloon or a Confederate dollar in the modern world. Land, art and jewelry are examples of investments that are likely to remain valuable for centuries.

When considering a vampire character's possessions, the GM may choose to allow a certain amount of leeway in the area of rare and antique items, depending upon the age and experience of the vampire.

## Character Point Values

For a standard horror adventure, with PCs who are competent, yet intentionally over their head, the default of 100 points is appropriate for starting characters.

Vampire hunters, being required to regularly confront superhuman opponents, must be made of sterner stuff. 150 points, and perhaps some access to supernatural abilities like magic or psionics (entirely depending on the GM's whim and the tone of the campaign) will make a competent foe of evil. It will probably require at least 200 points to create a genuinely cinematic vampire hunter; a true nightstalker.

Vampire characters will require even more points. With the cost of the basic package for various vampire types ranging from 50 to 300 points, 100 points are suitable only for the newest fledglings.

Most PC undead will probably be between 200 and 300 points, formidable beings whose only natural enemies are their own kind.

For the true immortals, those ageless beings who have had centuries to increase their knowledge and power, 500 points and up will be necessary to represent their awesome abilities.

### Age and Point Values

Skill points for newly-created characters are limited by the character's age (see p. B43). Thus, some vampire characters have the potential for some truly vast varieties and levels of skills. The GM should pay careful attention to this factor to avoid abuse.





## Academic

This is a teacher, professor or researcher at a university or other center of higher learning. He is easy to work into adventures, as people often bring mysteries to a professor, hoping for expert help (a good portion of the plot of *Dracula* arising from this very situation) – and the professor may be able to pass an adventure off as research, thus staying employed.

A professor is likely to know or have access to a great deal of old lore from other cultures, indispensable weapons when attempting to determine the particular variety of vampire and the appropriate way to fight it.

**Advantages:** None are necessary, although Eidetic Memory and Language Talent might be useful. Reputation (as an expert in the chosen field) is common, but rarely above the +1 level.

**Disadvantages:** Reputation cuts both ways, especially for researchers active in the occult. A negative reaction for odd beliefs is possible. Age and physical infirmities are logical choices.

**Skills:** A very high skill level in the chosen field is a must, and so is a specialization. Just about any skill on the list can be easily explained, as academicians have a fair amount of free time and a tendency toward eccentric hobbies. Academicians usually know more than one language, and are one of the few character types likely to be familiar with “dead” languages such as Greek, Latin and Sanskrit.

## Aristocrat

This character has earned his money and status the old fashioned way – by inheriting it. Large amounts of disposable income and other resources, as well as a lack of responsibilities, make this sort of character easy and fun to play.

Vampires often move in this level of society, presumably because they can. The aristocrat is suitable as a model for a vampire character or a mortal who might encounter the undead. Aristocratic families are generally quite old, allowing the potential for all sorts of opportunities for vampiric entanglement.

**Advantages:** He must have Wealth (at least Very Wealthy) and Status (at least +4). If the money is the family's, rather than his own, substitute a Patron for part or all of the points put in Wealth.

**Disadvantages:** None are necessary, although Gluttony, Greed, Intolerance, Bad Temper and an Addiction of some sort are all typical by-products of having too much money. Many aristocrats also have interesting family Enemies.

**Skills:** Savoir-faire is almost unavoidable for an aristocrat, although he doesn't have to use it. A character interested in maintaining the family empire should take Administration, Economics, and similar skills. But that's not necessary; the whole idea behind being an aristocrat is that he can study anything he wants, and do anything he wants – and no one will mind.

## Clergyman

This is a priest, minister, rabbi, witch doctor, etc. If a clergyman is attached to a particular congregation, he will often get involved with the problems of its members – and some of those problems may be supernatural. Also, clergymen with special training often act as supernatural “trouble shooters” and can be involved in adventures all over the world.

Clergymen of all varieties, from the Catholic priest to the Malay witch-doctor, have long been the arch-enemies of the

undead. A priest of any religion might have special abilities for combating vampires that his faith is familiar with (depending on the campaign. See *Clerical Investment*, p. 48).

**Advantages:** Clerical Investment is a must. Also, the church the clergyman serves will sometimes act as a Patron, providing living expenses, as well as limited research facilities and the resources to combat supernatural horror. Most clergy enjoy a reputation bonus of +1 or +2 (which must be bought separately).



**Disadvantages:** A Sense of Duty (to the church, to its members) is common. Some churches require an actual Duty or Vow (poverty, celibacy, etc.) on top of that. Truthfulness, Honesty and Pacifism are also common.

A cynical GM might suggest certain disadvantages such as Compulsive Behavior, Compulsive Lying, Delusion, Fanaticism, Greed, Intolerance, Lecherousness, and Secret to portray a certain kind of modern clergyman.

**Skills:** Common skills are Theology (level 15 or higher), Bard, Diplomacy, Leadership and Psychology. Occultism (see p. 51) and Exorcism (see sidebar, p. 72) are also natural for the "trouble shooter" type.

## Doctor

This is the medical professional, whether a general practitioner, a surgeon, a nurse, or a healer. While their healing skills make them a very useful addition to any group involved in dangerous activities, medical professionals also have an opportunity to encounter vampires, as vampires have a tendency to make work for doctors. Once a doctor suspects the existence of the undead, either from encountering the monster's victims or from other evidence, he has plenty of motivation to investigate further; first, in almost any setting the condition of vampirism is a dramatic medical mystery, and second, most doctors and healers are somehow pledged to defend and uphold life, while the vampire is the very personification of death.

**Advantages:** None necessary, but high IQ, Acute Senses and Eidetic Memory will all help with important medical skills. Most doctors have a Comfortable or higher Wealth level.

**Disadvantages:** Pacifism, Sense of Duty and some sort of Vow (to protect life) are common. Less admirable hazards of the medical profession could include Addiction, Overconfidence and Greed.

**Skills:** Of course, a wide variety of medical skills are necessary. Diagnosis and First Aid are required for nearly any healer, and medical doctors from higher TL worlds will find it essential to possess Physician and Surgery. Hypnotism can be especially useful when dealing with vampires and their victims, as demonstrated by the many incarnations of Professor Van Helsing.

## Entertainer

Performers, particularly poor or struggling ones, often frequent the same run-down, after-hours world as the undead. Many vampires have had centuries to develop a refined sense of taste, and particularly gifted entertainers might find themselves the object of a cultured vampire's interest. Alternately, a vampire with artistic talents (or the ability to simulate them with paranormal abilities) might choose this profession as a way to interact with mortals on a flexible schedule. Beware of too much success, however. The scrutiny of fame makes secrets hard to keep.

**Advantages:** Entertainers will be best served by advantages that may be used in their occupation, such as Appearance, Voice, Fashion Sense or Musical Ability. Charisma is especially useful for stage presence, regardless of the character's specific talents.

**Disadvantages:** Any. A wide variety of disadvantages are commonly associated with the artistic temperament. Addiction and Alcoholism, Compulsive Behaviors and Lecherousness, and more common flaws like Laziness and Overconfidence all fit the stereotype.

**Skills:** Appropriate to the entertainer's talents and occupation.

## Henchman

This includes an entire spectrum of possible characters, from efficient modern bodyguards to subservient hunchbacks. The main characteristic of the henchman is that his relationship to the adventure is secondary, his primary interest being some other factor (money, loyalty to another individual, etc.). The henchman takes orders. He may or may not be able to take any kind of action on his own initiative, depending on his personal abilities.

Vampires often need mortal henchmen to manage their daily affairs and maintain a semblance of normalcy, to guard them and perform tasks during daylight hours, and to otherwise make up for the disadvantages of being undead.

**Advantages:** Most henchmen will be strong on physical and combat advantages, as people rarely hire servants to think for them. High Pain Threshold, Combat Reflexes, Toughness and the like will be most common.

**Disadvantages:** Any.

**Skills:** As with advantages, henchman will generally be designed for physical and menial labor. Some henchmen might be more trusted liaisons or spies, and will possess the appropriate social skills.



SWIF

## Lowlife

This character type represents the more violent and predatory mortal element that inhabits the city after dark. Petty thugs, street gang members and criminals in general make up the Lowlife character type. Because of their nocturnal existence, these characters may become vampires or their victims quite easily. Some vampires who retain a sense of morality may feel more justified when preying upon this type of mortal.

**Advantages:** Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Danger Sense and similar advantages make it easier to survive on the streets. Members of organized crime groups or street gangs may have Patrons.

**Disadvantages:** Enemy; Law Enforcement will probably be the single most common disadvantage for this type of character. Other likely possibilities include Addiction, Alcoholism, Berserk, Bloodlust, Bully, Greed, Kleptomania, Sadism and any other problems that might lead one into a life of crime.

**Skills:** Streetwise is essential. Combat skills, such as Brawling, Guns (Pistol) and Knife, will likewise be very common. Area Knowledge and a few thief skills like Stealth, Lockpicking and Pickpocket can be used to round out such a character.



## Mage

Unlike the Occultist (see below), the Mage character depends upon the reality of magic and the supernatural. These are the true sorcerers, shamans and witch-doctors. They perceive the occult influences around them and have learned how to manipulate these forces. This generally implies some training or apprenticeship in an established occult tradition (Voodoo, witchcraft, shamanism, etc.).

This type of character makes a potent foe of the undead, possessing their own supernatural talents to counter the vampire's powers. Alternately, many vampires (particularly mortal types) are formidable black magicians themselves, with a repertoire of magic spells and infernal allies in addition to their vampiric advantages.

**Advantages:** Magery is a prerequisite. Eidetic Memory, Language Talent and Strong Will are also extremely useful. These characters will have high IQ and emphasize mental advantages over the physical.

**Disadvantages:** In many worlds, occult talents will be socially unacceptable, leading to a poor Reputation or a Secret. Many mages develop mental disadvantages from tampering with forces from beyond, and Megalomania is a common result of the *hubris* that comes from having powers beyond those of most mortals. Black magicians often have a Vow or Duty to some infernal master.

**Skills:** Apart from the obvious magical skills, mages will find use for all manner of scientific skills and ancient languages. Craft skills may be useful for creating objects of enchantment.

## Nightlife

Nightlife are those mortals who supply the pulse of the city after dark. They are the clubbies, partiers and trendoids, the prostitutes and their clients, the ones who dare to search for the pleasures that are only found after dark. Small-time entertainers, such as musicians and dancers, might also be included here, as well as a significant overlap with the criminal element. This character type represents the mortals who are most likely to casually encounter the undead, as well as a convenient cover image for the more hip and modern of the damned.

**Advantages:** Any.

**Disadvantages:** Almost by definition, the life-style of this type of character may lean toward the excesses of Addiction, Alcoholism, Lecherousness and other indulgences. Some social and mental disadvantages may tempt or condemn a character to this kind of life as well.

**Skills:** Carousing is a must. A certain amount of Streetwise is probably necessary to survive for long. Otherwise any.

## Occultist

This person investigates the occult and paranormal as a career. The character can be a true believer in the authenticity of his field, or a researcher dedicated to disproving the supernatural.

**Advantages:** Charisma, Intuition and Voice are all useful, as are Empathy and Danger Sense. Magical Aptitude can come in handy, even if it is only used to detect the supernatural.

**Disadvantages:** None are specifically required, although Greed or a Delusion might fit in well. Some of the more successful occultists probably have Weirdness Magnet.

**Skills:** Occultism is a must; Astrology, Acting, Bard and Fast-Talk could all be useful.

## Policeman

Whether London bobby, Roaring 20s flatfoot or modern detective, a policeman has the force of law behind him. Unfortunately, he loses this when he leaves his jurisdiction, and he cannot become *professionally* involved in an investigation unless he suspects a crime.

**Advantages:** Legal Enforcement powers are a prerequisite for a cop within his jurisdiction. Danger Sense, Alertness and Intuition are common, as is a Reputation: +2 from law abiding citizens on his beat. Some police departments are Patrons; others are just employers.

**Disadvantages:** Duty to the department: -15 points. Also Enemy: All Criminals in Area (fairly powerful, appearing fairly often): -20 points.

**Skills:** Criminology, Law, Area Knowledge, Driving (Auto), Forensics, Professional Skill: Law Enforcement and various combat skills, including Guns (Rifle), Guns (Pistol), Guns (Shotgun) and Shortsword (Baton).

## Private Investigator

The P.I. is a natural for horror role-playing in any background. Private eyes take on the cases too unbelievable for legal authorities to waste their time on, and stick their noses into places they shouldn't.

**Advantages:** A P.I.'s advantages are similar to a policeman's, but with different Reputation (usually lower) and no Legal Enforcement Powers.

**Disadvantages:** Most private eyes have Enemies – a criminal gang, the police or sometimes both. Poverty is also common, especially among the hard-boiled dicks of the Roaring 20s. Many fictional private eyes also have traits like Bad Temper, Bully or even Sadism.

**Skills:** Streetwise is the archetypal P.I. skill. Other useful skills include Area Knowledge, Brawling, Criminology, Detect Lies and Lockpicking. Common combat skills include Guns (Pistol) and Fast Draw (Pistol).

## Scientist

The man of science who seriously pursues occult phenomena will often be scorned by his colleagues, so it is often a lonely job. Still, some institutes have been established to study things like magic and psionic powers. An alternative to the occult scientist is the skeptic who will seek out natural explanations for everything he encounters, no matter how unusual.

**Advantages:** Mathematical Ability, Alertness, Intuition, Lightning Calculator and Eidetic Memory are all suited to scientific thinkers.

**Disadvantages:** A poor Reputation among scientists is good for the occult researcher. The die-hard skeptic will probably suffer from Stubbornness and Intolerance of those who believe in the occult.

**Skills:** Each scientist has his own area of specialty: occult scientists will be interested in Anthropology, Theology and even Physics. All scientists should have Research and (at applicable Tech Levels) Computer Operation skills.



## Student

This character usually studies under an academic, so they often enter an adventure together.

Students are one of the preferred dietary choices for all manner of monsters in modern horror films, making them an ideal choice for any vampire adventure requiring victims.

**Advantages:** None are necessary, but any are possible. A non-player professor could act as a Patron for this type of character.

**Disadvantages:** Poverty is common, as are Laziness and Impulsiveness.

**Skills:** Any number of academic pursuits; one of these should be a major at a higher skill level than the others. (Graduate students should also have a speciality within that major.) The rest can be either minors or simply other fields of interest. Carousing is a skill well-known to most college students.

## Vampire Hunter

This character may have begun life with some other occupation, but he has abandoned everything to become a full-time foe of the damned. The most likely motive for this is revenge; often the vampire hunter has lost a loved one to the foul ravages of the undead.

There are many possible variations for this type of character. Trouble-shooting priests, crossbow-toting commandos, professors of arcane lore and victims driven by desperation may all fulfill this role for a time, but those who go on to make a career of it are the true vampire hunters.

**Advantages:** A special kind of strength is required to routinely face super-human opponents. Perhaps the most useful advantage for the vampire hunter is Strong Will, which allows the character to resist mind control, withstand Fright Checks and persevere against the horrors he must face. High Pain Threshold,

Magical Resistance and Night Vision are also useful. Because of the power of their foes, the GM may wish to allow vampire hunters to have access to magic or psionics (depending upon the tone of the campaign).

**Disadvantages:** There are several social disadvantages that go with the territory of full-time foe of evil. It is difficult to maintain Wealth or Reputation when involved in such pursuits, and the society is likely to treat the vampire hunter's beliefs as a Delusion. More extreme mental disadvantages may also result from regular confrontations with supernatural evil. Of course, the most obvious disadvantages for this type of character are Enemies, as it is easy for someone in this line of work to acquire very tenacious ones.

**Skills:** The first weapon of the vampire hunter is knowledge. High levels in Occultism, Demonology and Theology are desirable. Combat skills are also useful, though perhaps only with some unusual weapons.

## Victim

Victims are characters of any type or occupation who are intentionally designed to be out of their depth, and who stand a greater than average chance of being terrorized and destroyed. This character type best represents the main characters of most modern horror films.

Victims may be designed for a single-session adventure, or they may be continued in play, perhaps acquiring enough experience to be true heroes.

**Advantages:** None necessary, but any advantages are possible (at the GM's discretion).

**Disadvantages:** Victims, being non-combatants, are likely to suffer from disadvantages like Combat Paralysis, Cowardice and Weak Will when faced with truly dangerous and shocking situations.

**Skills:** As appropriate to the victim's mundane occupation.

## Vampire Character Types

Many vampires at least pretend to function as one of the mortal character types. Aristocrat, Henchman and Mage work for any time period. Films like *The Lost Boys* and games like White Wolf's *Vampire: The Masquerade* demonstrate an interesting type of modern vampire as Lowlife and Nightlife characters. While some vampires may identify themselves by such mortal roles, others (particularly older vampires) will define themselves by their vampiric condition.

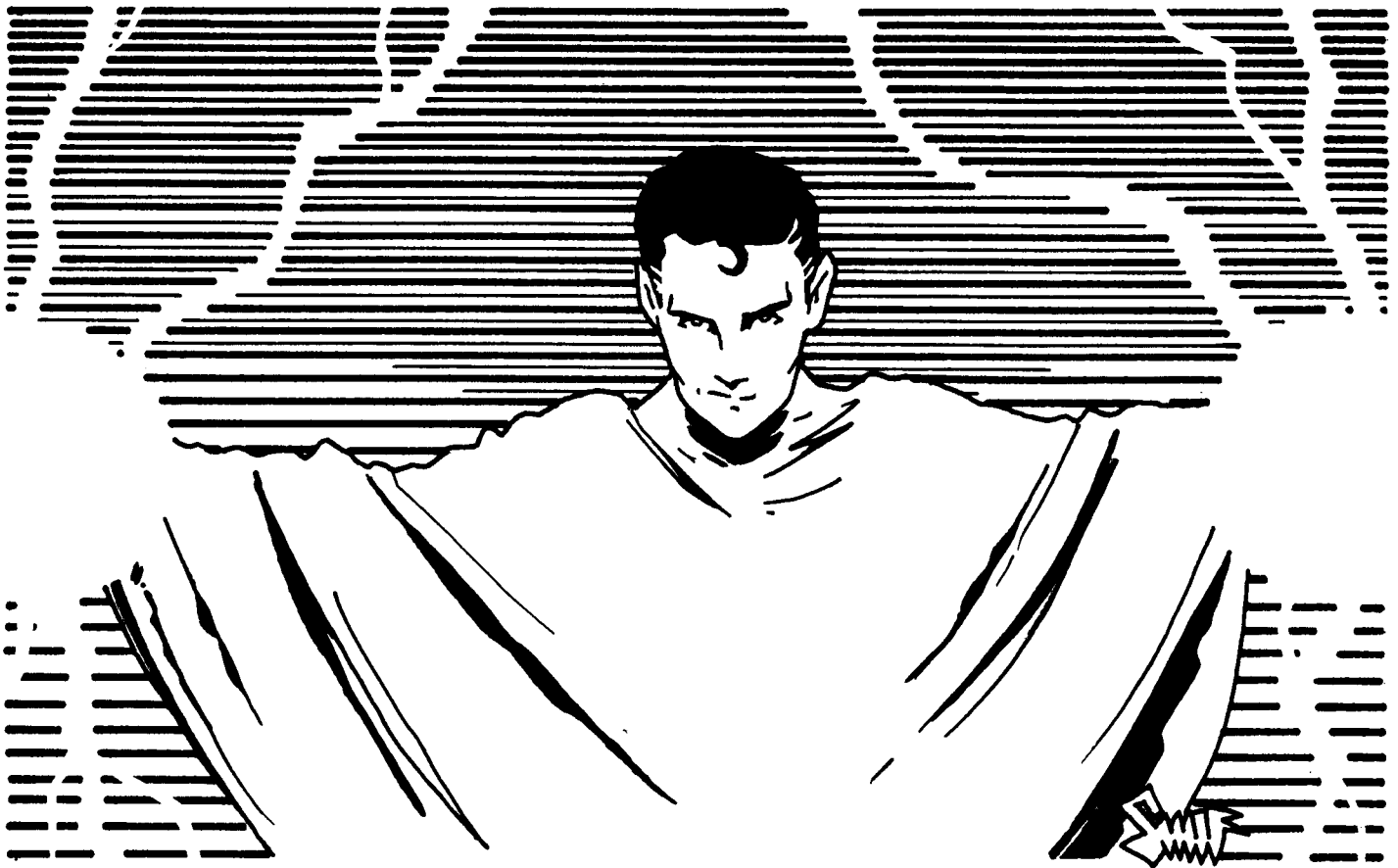
## Anti-Hero

This character type covers all of those vampires who struggle to maintain some human values despite the nature of their curse. The anti-hero is unlikely to be a saint, but he is at least attempting to be the lesser of evils. While his actions may not always be "virtuous," the anti-hero is still concerned about the morality of his actions (he may kill, but he will not kill thoughtlessly). Such characters are often tragic and passionate beings, tortured by the division between their human values and vampiric requirements. Regardless of whatever other beliefs or principles these types of vampires may follow, they will generally have some self-imposed rules about their prey, refusing to feed from some categories of victims or in certain situations. Ultimately, the anti-hero is defined by his struggle against evil more than the success of that struggle.

Note that vampire hunters may also find themselves in such morally ambiguous territory if their methods begin to rival the ruthlessness of their undead opponents.

**Advantages:** Strong Will is useful for all manner of self-control.

**Disadvantages:** The anti-hero possesses some personal ethics or principles which restrict his behavior. This will most



likely manifest as a Code of Honor, some form of Pacifism, a Vow or a Sense of Duty. Otherwise, any disadvantage is possible, as this character type should be flawed.

## **Black Magician**

Many vampires obtain or increase their powers through dark sorceries and consort with forces of supernatural evil. Such characters have rejected their humanity in the quest for personal power. Literally or figuratively, these beings have sold their souls for supernatural abilities, the power to get revenge, or a way to cheat death. They are usually quite ruthless and single-minded in pursuit of their goals. While they may have extensive knowledge about magical and supernatural topics, they are seldom scholars of the occult in the true sense. They are witches and sorcerers who have concentrated on the quickest and easiest ways to become more powerful, regardless of the consequences.

Often, this type of character has some bond to some supernatural (and probably demonic) master. The character may be allied with such a being, actively cooperating with it to achieve its goals and qualifying it as a Patron, or may simply be serving to repay a debt, making the relationship a one-sided Duty.

*Advantages:* Obviously, Magery is a must.

*Disadvantages:* Bad Temper, Greed, Paranoia and Sadism are all likely personality traits. Fanaticism and Megalomania are almost compulsory.

## **Fledgling**

It takes time to come to terms with a condition as dramatic as vampirism, and newly-created vampires may react unpredictably. This is the time when the fledgling undead must choose between the dualistic extremes of his new existence; good and evil, humanity and monstrosity, life and death.

Many young vampires are left to their own devices when making these decisions. In this situation, the fledgling may retain their human values while sorting out the confusion of undead existence, or he may become drunk with the new powers he has acquired, becoming more fiendish than wiser and more experienced vampiric villains. Some individuals are totally unhinged by the transition to undead existence.

Fledglings may not have the independence to make their own decisions, however; many newly-created vampires are under the domination of their creator. An older vampire with the Vampiric Dominance advantage (see p. 63) may have many such minions.

*Advantages:* Possibly Patron.

*Disadvantages:* Slave Mentality and Weak Will for dominated fledglings.

## **Immortal**

After a sufficient number of mortal lifetimes, a vampire will unavoidably lose touch with his mortal roots. Such ancient beings may develop immense wisdom. While this broader perspective may temper the vampire's behavior, some become so removed from mortal concerns that human life means nothing to them.

This type of character is probably most appropriate in the employ of the GM, to be used as a Patron or master villain. Immortals may also be used to provide information about campaign backgrounds and goals, as they tend to be highly knowledgeable, particularly in reference to history and the occult.

*Advantages:* Any.

*Disadvantages:* Megalomania is the most likely occupational hazard for these characters.



## **Monster**

This is the creature that has lost all semblance of humanity and civilization, becoming wholly the predator. The monster may be subtle or savage, cunning or brutal, but he has totally surrendered to the killer instinct. This character type is defined by its appetite, malevolence and complete indifference to human values.

*Advantages:* Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Danger Sense or any other ability that represents an edge to a hunter.

*Disadvantages:* Berserk, Bloodlust and Sadism are almost given. Odious Personal Habits are also common.

## **Seducer**

Many vampires pursue a more subtle form of predatory behavior. These are the graceful monsters who bring pleasure as well as pain. In most cases, this feeding style serves to camouflage the hunter, luring the prey into a vulnerable position. Often, however, the seductive predator has little choice, being a creature ruled by its appetites. These vampires do not make a distinction between lover and victim; they merely know they *hunger*.

The seductive predator becomes entranced with its potential victim. It will then use all of its amorous wiles and supernatural resources to possess him or her.

If the seduction is successful, the outcome will depend upon the individual vampire and its type. Some vampires will kill their lovers. Some take only what is necessary and refuse to kill. Some consume the "beloved" slowly, causing a gradual wasting away through repeated visits. Occasionally, the vampire becomes so enamored of a mortal that it will offer the gift of eternal life (possibly whether the mortal is willing or not).

*Advantages:* Appearance, Charisma and Voice.

*Disadvantages:* Lecherousness is appropriate for those vampires who use this form of feeding because they are compelled by their appetites.

**Acute Senses****See p. B19**

Many vampires possess enhanced senses, particularly senses associated with animals, such as hearing and smell. Vampires under the effect of Shapeshift spells may also gain enhanced senses bonuses for their animal forms.

**Alertness****See p. B19**

As predators, vampires are more aware of their surroundings. Increased Alertness may be part of the vampire "basic package."

**Alternate Identity****15 points**

Vampires may be required to contrive elaborate schemes to protect their identities. In particular, it is necessary to establish a new mortal "cover" every few decades to avoid arousing suspicion by remaining untouched by age. It may be convenient for the vampire to stage his own death and return in the guise of an inheriting younger relative to simplify the process of retaining his belongings and resources.

**Animal Empathy****See p. B19**

While some vampires will unnerve natural animals, many have a special rapport with them; particularly nocturnal predators. More dramatic advantages for the supernatural control of beasts are found in Chapter 3.

**Clerical Investment****See p. B19**

Clergy of all types have long been primary foes of the undead. Clerical Investment is a must for characters who desire some sort of special "divine" assistance in combating the damned.

Campaigns where religious powers are especially effective may require point value adjustments for this advantage (see Chapter 4; *Clerical Magic*, p. 78; or *GURPS Religion*). It is recommended that Clerical Investment be treated like Magery for point value if it confers inherent supernatural advantages.

**Magery****See p. B21**

Vampires must possess at least one level of Magery in order to perform Racially Innate magic abilities (see p. 72) appropriate to their Type.

Magic is also more effective against vampires than more conventional forms of attack.

**Night Vision****See p. B22**

Night Vision is absolutely necessary to nocturnal hunters, and this Advantage should be included as part of whatever "basic package" the GM assigns to the undead.

**Unusual Background****See p. B23**

This advantage can be the GM's "catch-all" Advantage in a vampire campaign. Very old or exotic creatures could require truly vast expenditures in this category. In campaigns where supernatural PCs are not the norm, vampire characters should be required to spend at least some points for this advantage.



## ❖ DISADVANTAGES

### **Age/Youth**

*See p. B27/B29*

Since vampires do not age, extreme Age or Youth at the time of metamorphosis can become a permanent problem.

The youthful vampire will be treated by most people in a manner typical for its age, despite the fact that the vampire may be centuries old.

### **Albinism**

*See p. B27*

Albino vampires are possible, and in fact this can be a quite logical side effect of the Curse, but as vampires are susceptible to sunlight already, the point value should be reduced to reflect a mere Appearance deviation.

### **Amnesia**

*-10/25 points*

You have lost your memory – you can't remember any of your past life, including your name. Your amnesia may be Partial or Total.

Amnesia mostly afflicts newly-awakened or -created vampires, and victims of vampires.

### **Appearance**

*Variable; see p. B15*

A vampire with Unattractive appearance is not necessarily ugly. For example, a six-year-old with eyes that speak of long gone centuries will deserve a reaction penalty even if physically perfect.

Vampires also may be supernaturally repulsive. There are two lower degrees of appearance for vampires to represent Hideous and Monstrous appearances (see Chapter 3).

However, more often than not, a vampire will possess or assume a form of exceptional beauty.

### **Berserk**

*See p. B31*

Vampires are, at their very essence, predators. Savage and bestial behavior is required for them to maintain their existence, and endless lifetimes are available to develop bad habits.

### **Bloodlust**

*See p. B31*

Even more than other combatants, a vampire may have immense difficulty leaving living enemies, either because of hunger or long years of experience with violence and revenge.

### **Enemies**

*See p. B39*

Vampires make enemies very quickly and easily. Vampire hunters, other vampires, priests of a particular faith, law enforcement officials, bereaved and vengeful relatives of victims and other supernatural creatures only begin the list. When this is compounded by an unlimited lifespan in which to accumulate foes (though granted, foes of lesser longevity tend to go away if avoided for a few decades) vampires have the potential for extensive use of this disadvantage.

Vampires may also have more impersonal hereditary enemies. For example,

there is the extensive belief amongst Gypsies and Slavic peoples that wolves are natural enemies of the undead, and will destroy them on sight.

### **Gluttony**

*See p. B33*

For obvious reasons, this disadvantage becomes more serious when applied to vampires. Most vampires have some degree of difficulty with controlling their appetites, and this is reflected by the Bloodthirst disadvantage (see Chapter 3). However, vampires who routinely over-indulge in feeding, taking blood for pleasure rather than for survival, may qualify for the Gluttony disadvantage at an increased point value. This disadvantage is worth -15 points for vampires, and makes secrecy and any semblance of morality very unlikely. Vampires who indulge in such behavior may be required to take the Sadism disadvantage as well, and are likely to have a Poor Reputation amongst other vampires who are trying to keep their existence a secret.





## **Megalomania**

Many vampires develop this disadvantage to some degree. However, it will be necessary for individual Game Masters to determine at what point an immortal, super-human being develops an inflated self-image.

## **Odious Personal Habits**

This disadvantage is another with almost limitless potential for vampire characters. "Drinks Human Blood" is a good, solid -15 point disadvantage in nearly any setting. "Sleeps in a Coffin" is good for -10 points, even if the character has hidden his supernatural nature.

It is conceivable that vampires may exhibit behavior so extreme as to merit -20 or even -25 point OPHs, but this is left to the individual GM's discretion and stomach strength.

Behavior only qualifies as an OPH if it is performed obviously and frequently. Concealed OPHs become Secrets.

## **On the Edge**

Many people who deal with the undead, or who have to be undead, don't care whether they live or die. While not actively suicidal, they will take unreasonable risks in the face of mortal danger (see p. B241). The sort of motivations that drive vampire hunters in particular can cause this.

## **Pacifism**

This is the defining virtue of the vampire hero. A vampire who will not kill has a more complicated time simply trying to preserve his own existence, but will also be a paragon of virtue amongst the undead.

"Cannot Kill" is worth -20 points to the undead. "Total Non-violence," requiring exclusively willing or charmed victims, is worth -35 points to vampires. One more unusual form of pacifism that may arise is "Cannot Kill Mortals" (-15 points), for those vampire hunters who believe in the sanctity of *human* life, but have no compunctions about laying the undead to rest.

## **See p. B34**

## **See p. B26**

## **-15 points**

## **See p. B35**

## **Paranoia**

Just because a vampire is paranoid doesn't mean everyone is *not* out to get him. The Paranoia disadvantage is very common for vampires; the only difference is that vampires are generally right about their persecution.

## **See p. B35**

## **Primitive**

Because of an existence that potentially spans centuries, this disadvantage may have a special relevance for some vampire characters. The most typical way this manifests is when a vampire is resurrected in a later century than his own. Other situations may call for this as well, as any time an immortal becomes inactive or isolated for an extended period of time, the march of social and technological development will continue without him.

Some nonhuman entities and spirits tied to a particular time period might also have this disadvantage.

## **See p. B26**

## **Reputation**

As supernatural monsters, vampires generally have very poor Reputations amongst the living. Note that this only applies to those vampires who are unable or unwilling to pass themselves off as mortal; otherwise it's a Secret.

## **Variable; see p. B17**

## **Sadism**

Because of the requirements of their existence, vampires are more likely to develop an enjoyment of pain and cruelty. Mortal vampires in particular are prone to this, as they have chosen their vampiric habits.

Some vampiric entities actually feed upon the emotions of fear, suffering and despair.

## **See p. B36**

## **Secret**

A Secret is some aspect of the character's life (or past) that must be kept hidden. The point value of a Secret depends on the consequences of its revelation. The worse the results, the higher the value. A revealed Secret also earns a character new disadvantages – see p. B238. Vampirism is usually

## **Variable; see p. B238**

odious enough to humans to be a -20 or -30 point Secret. Lesser values are appropriate to individual vampires or other characters ("believes in vampires" for -5 or -10 points is an obvious Secret for the modern vampire hunter who would be ridiculed if his belief were known).

By far the most common Secret among vampires is their vampirism itself. This Secret is so terrible that the character may be executed by the authorities, lynched by a mob or assassinated by the government if it were revealed – the character would be hunted. This is the typical reaction from human communities that believe there is a vampire in their midst. -30 points.

Secret vampirism, of course, will always be threatened to some degree whenever the vampire meets mortals.

In the specific case of vampires, the GM may rule that all vampires in the campaign take a Secret, and that the Secret can never be bought off with earned character points, as long as the character remains a vampire.



## ✠ NEW DISADVANTAGES

### *Secret Identity*

### *Variable*

A Secret Identity is a special kind of Secret. It is another persona you use for deeds you wouldn't want connected to your "real" self. Many vampires use a Secret identity to interact with mortal society. Such an identity may be "weak," supported by no official paperwork, or it may be a true Alternate Identity (see p. B233).

When a PC has a Secret Identity, the GM should occasionally provide a serious challenge to it, in the form of someone who threatens to expose it. This may be determined randomly by rolling 3d before each game session; on a 6 or less, there is the threat of exposure.

Anyone with a Status of 3 or more gets an extra -10 points for a Secret Identity, because of the attention the media and public pay to his every move. The GM should introduce a challenge to such an ID on a 7 or less, instead of 6.

If a Secret Identity is revealed, trade it in for twice its value in new disadvantages or lost advantages, as for a regular Secret.

The value of this disadvantage is figured as per the Secret disadvantage; it is worth more to a vampire (who will be destroyed if found out) than to a vampire hunter (who will just be inconvenienced).



## ✠ NEW SKILLS

### *History: Esoteric (Mental/Hard)*      *No Default*

In a world with supernatural immortals, it is likely that the commonly-accepted version of history is wrong. Esoteric History covers the important developments of the past that are unknown to the world at large, knowledge of influential organizations and people, intricate conspiracies and other secrets of the past.

### *Exorcism (Mental/Hard)*      *Defaults to IQ-6 or Theology -3*

See sidebar, p. 72.

### *Flight (Physical/Average)*      *Defaults to DX-4 or DX*

This is the ability to use the Winged Flight or Gliding advantages (see p. 60) well, to allow difficult maneuvers, tight turns, etc. For a naturally winged creature (or shapeshifted vampire), the skill defaults to DX, but the skill can still be improved normally as a Physical/Average skill.

### *Intimidation (Mental/Average)*      *Defaults to ST-5 or Acting-3*

This is a social skill, used for persuasion. The essence of Intimidation is to convince the subject that you are able and willing, and perhaps eager, to do something awful to him.

A human-looking vampire should receive +3 to all Intimidation rolls if the subject knows he's a vampire. Undead are rarely intimidated by each other; a -2 penalty would be appropriate.

### *Occultism: Demonology (Mental/Average)* *Defaults to IQ-6*

Demonology is a required specialization of Occultism, and is in many ways the counterpart to Theology. It is the study of evil spirits: demons, devils and the like. This skill covers the

knowledge of the infernal forces recognized by different cultures and the respective netherworlds they inhabit. This may be used to determine the relative power of demons by their place in the infernal hierarchy, their habits and natures, and methods of dealing with them. It may be used to recognize demonic possession and may (at the GM's discretion) be used in conjunction with Magery to perform an Exorcism (see p. 72) as effectively as with Clerical Investment.

### *Occultism: Vampire (Mental/Average)* *Defaults to IQ-6*

This specialization covers knowledge of vampires: their habits, strengths and weaknesses. Often, those who possess this skill will focus primarily upon means of detection and destruction of the undead. The skill can be as broad or narrow as the variety of vampires within the campaign. It is not recommended that PCs begin play with high levels of this skill, as it could be used to instantly destroy the mystery of even very exotic vampire types if not carefully monitored.

### *Survival: Urban (Mental/Average)*      *Defaults to IQ-5, Naturalist-3, or Survival: other area type-3*

This talent covers the physical part of staying alive in a city environment, whether it's overpopulated or empty. The social problems of city survival are covered by the Streetwise skill. A specialist in Urban Survival could (for instance) find clean rain water; locate manholes from above or below; quickly locate building entrances, exits, stairwells and so on; recognize and avoid physically dangerous areas like crumbling buildings; make and read city maps and find his way out of strange city areas; find a warm (or dark) place to sleep; and locate common types of buildings and businesses without asking anyone, just by his "feel" for how cities are laid out.

# 3 CREATING VAMPIRES

## WHEN BUILDING A VAMPIRE

you need to consider background, ability and supernatural magical powers. This chapter provides a basic template as a starting point for “generic” vampires. It also includes an extensive list of advantages, disadvantages and innate magical abilities, to allow GMs and players to customize their undead creations.



A collection of advantages and disadvantages that define a particular race of vampire is handled as a package; the point cost for advantages and disadvantages are figured against each other and then applied as one cost to the character, and disadvantages are not counted against the individual's 40-point limit. A vampire "race" of more than one individual that is defined by such a package will be referred to as a "type." In the case of vampiric infection, the entire package is usually transmitted.

## ✠ VAMPIRE CHARACTERS

THESE RULES ARE INTENDED for the creations of two varieties of vampire character; player characters and non-player characters. Player-character vampires will probably only be suitable for very dark horror campaigns and extremely cinematic campaigns where all of the PCs are super-human.

Player-character vampires will probably be more human-like in both abilities and behavior. They will also probably be those types with mortal origins, as opposed to those varieties that are otherworldly spirits and monsters.

NPCs, on the other hand, can be anything from subtle and complex immortal antagonists to ravenous inhuman monstrosities with incomprehensible motives.

## Other Sourcebooks

A basic version of the Gothic vampire has already been established in several *GURPS* sourcebooks that are likely to be used in conjunction with this book; namely *GURPS Horror*, *GURPS Fantasy*, *GURPS Fantasy Folk* and, of course, *GURPS Vampire: The Masquerade*.

The basic vampire type can be used as a default version, or as a basic package for further customization.

**Advantages:** Enhanced ST 20 (110), HT +5 (60), Night Vision (10), Immunity to Disease (10), Immunity to Poison (15), Magery (15), Unaging (15), Invulnerability to Non-Wooden Weapons (150).

**Disadvantages:** Paranoia (-10), Dependency: Mana (-25 points), Compulsive Behavior: Cannot Cross Running Water (-10 points), Dependency: Native Soil (-60 points), Weakness: Sunlight (-60 points), Dependency: Blood (-30 points), Reputation -6 (-30 points), Vulnerability: Holy Water (-30 points), Unliving: Crumbles to dust at -1 HT (-50 points).

## Vampire Occupations

If a vampire is to blend into the world of mortal society (where prey is the most plentiful), it may become necessary to establish some sort of social role or occupation to maintain the appearance of normalcy and the material trappings of human life. This may run the gamut from a casual cover story to a full-blown Secret Identity (see p. 51).

The first factor that most vampires must consider when choosing an occupation is their schedule. The nocturnal existence of the undead can be an inconvenience when interacting with the diurnal world of mortals.

The least subtle option for employment as a vampire is to assume, like some mortals, that a nocturnal existence, a ruthless nature and the strength to take what one wants is enough to get by on. So many vampires may make the natural choice (in light of their predatory nature) and fulfill a criminal role in society. This still provides some degree of camouflage as well; while thieves and murderers and not highly regarded by society, they *are* perceived as slightly more desirable than cannibalistic corpses.

At the other end of the spectrum are those vampires who play the role of the idle rich, using their influence and resources to place themselves high enough in mortal society to be able to avoid casual scrutiny. This can be achieved by taking the route of the wealthy recluse, or by maintaining a high-profile, above suspicion, hide-in-plain-sight strategy.

In between the extremes is a plethora of varied night jobs. A clever occupation can serve to define a vampire character and provide him with an identity. A few possibilities include night school student or teacher, history professor, taxi driver, night watchman, assassin or hit man, detective, mortician, entertainer, convenience store clerk and occultist.



*Innate Magic:* Shapeshift-15, Steal Health-15, Mammal Control-15, Body of Air-15, Charm-15 (72 points).

*Quirks:* Dislikes Garlic, Dislikes Holy Objects.

Total Points: 150.

## New Rules

A number of changes have been made to existing interpretations of vampires in the *GURPS* system. For example, a more elaborate system for determining damage, injury and death has replaced the 0 HT system found in *GURPS Fantasy*, *GURPS Horror*, and *GURPS Fantasy Folk* (see p. 68).

Vampiric shapeshifting has been treated as the Multiple Forms advantage based upon the animal template rules found in *GURPS Bestiary*.

These new rules should be considered as optional depending upon the level of detail and "realism" desired by the players and GM.

## Called Shots

Both vampires and their opponents will often find it advantageous to aim for specific locations, particularly the throat (for biting or decapitation attempts) or the heart (for staking and general nastiness).

The neck is -5 to be hit; missing by 1 hits the body. The neck has no DR of its own, but most armor includes neck protection, either as an extension of the torso armor or of the helmet. Use torso PD and DR, unless an appropriate helmet is worn. After subtracting for DR, crushing attacks do 1½ times normal damage; cutting and impaling attacks both do double damage.

If the victim takes over ½ of his hit points in a *single crushing blow*, the throat may be crushed. Roll vs. HT; if the victim fails the HT roll, his throat has been crushed. he must make an additional HT roll each turn, losing 1 hit if he fails, until he dies or receives the appropriate first aid. If the neck takes over 1/3 HT in a *single cutting blow*, a successful HT roll is necessary to avoid decapitation. And in any case, the victim is stunned if he takes total hits over ½ his hit points to the neck.

The heart is -4 to be hit, as it is well-protected and not visible. Missing by 1 hits the body. Shots to the vital organs have a 1 in 6 chance of piercing the heart by accident. Impaling weapons that penetrate armor do triple damage instead of double. It is recommended that the GM apply the Bleeding rules (p. B130) to all heart wounds. If impaling damage equal to or greater than 3 times the victim's HT is taken from a single blow, the victim's heart (and torso) has been pierced through. This will cause instant death to vampires with Vulnerable hearts (presuming the proper type of weapon was used) and requires living beings to roll HT or die. Once again, it is recommended that Bleeding penalties be assigned to all such wounds.



## ✠ THE VAMPIRE PLAYER CHARACTER

IF THE GM ALLOWS VAMPIRES as player characters, he will have to make a number of decisions. Which types are to be allowed? How many points are available to the PCs? What special abilities are to be allowed or disallowed? Which advantages and disadvantages, if any, are universal to the condition of vampirism? At any rate, vampire PCs will undoubtedly have a much greater range of abilities than humans, and the GM must prepare accordingly.

The most likely PC vampire types are mortal vampires and the true undead. Mortal vampires are those living humans who have acquired supernatural powers through some psionic, pseudo-scientific, magical or infernal agency. Examples of types in this category are Astral Vampires, Ghuls, Half-Vampires, High-Tech Vampires, Loogaroo and Strix.

The true undead are those beings who were formerly mortal but have since died and become reanimated. Types in this category include the Baital, Ch'iang Shich, Civateteo, Gaki, some Ghuls, Gothic, Modern, Nosferatu, Vampirs and Vyrolakos.

### Beginning as a Vampire

A great deal more thought may be required to flesh out the background of a vampire and make it "live" as an individual and dynamic character. An experienced vampire might have centuries of background and history, and the GM (or player, as the case may be) should have some idea how the creature has become what it is.

First, who was the vampire in life (assuming the vampire was formerly mortal)? The character's original identity will have a strong influence on its nature as one of the undead. After all, a former 14th-century Eastern European warlord will probably behave differently under the curse of the undead than a former Victorian maiden.

How and when did the character become a vampire? At what point in history and the individual's life did he become a vampire? How did it occur (infection, sorcery, a curse, etc.)? This information will go a long way to flesh out the character's attitudes about his undead condition, most importantly by determining whether he is willingly or unwillingly damned.

As characters with the potential for super-human longevity, vampires may require a great deal more background material than other characters. If a vampire has been around since ancient Rome, what has it been up to in the meantime? Some sort of chronological timeline, with major historical periods covered, will be useful here, especially in the case of very ancient vampires.

### Becoming a Vampire

If, in the course of a campaign, a mortal character becomes infected with the curse of the undead, the GM will be required to make some decisions. There are several ways of handling this, based on the type of campaign the GM wants.

If the GM does not wish to introduce vampire PCs into the campaign, he may simply rule that infection is a fate equivalent to (or worse than) death itself. In this case, PCs who are transformed into the undead immediately become NPCs, and property of the Game Master to do with as he sees fit (preferably to return and antagonize his former companions). This is most appropriate for horror and vampire-hunter campaigns where the undead are a major antagonist who are consistently villainous.

If the GM is interested in allowing vampire PCs, he must decide how to handle the additional point cost incurred by assuming the package of a particu-



### Liquid Weapons

Combatting the undead often requires some unusual weapons; holy water is one example. A holy water "bomb" may be fashioned by merely placing it in a breakable container, which is then used as a missile weapon. These devices function according to the rules for "Molotov Cocktails and Oil Flasks" on p. B121. Damage is determined according to the target vampire's level of Vulnerability, but the water will not inflict continuing damage on subsequent rounds.

Additionally, molotov cocktails and oil flasks are quite effective against vampires in their own right, making them a likely weapon of choice for PCs with an adequate Tech Level. However, the GM should remember the destructive side effects of such imprecise weapons if they are relied upon too heavily.

An open container of liquid may be splashed at a range of 2 hexes (but flammables will still need to be ignited). Alternately, splashing liquid may be used as an area attack, spreading damage over up to 3 adjacent hexes at no farther than 1 hex range.



## Vampire "Races"

Vampire racial types may be created using the following rules. Examples of mythological and fictional vampire types created utilizing this process may be found in Chapter 5.

### *The Generation Process*

The race creation process consists of selecting an assortment of characteristic modifiers, advantages, disadvantages, and skills which will, under normal circumstances, apply to every member of the "racial type." Just as in character creation, each of these advantages and disadvantages has a positive or negative point value. All of these are totaled together to find a final point value, positive or negative, which each member of the type pays or takes as a bonus.

Buy racial attribute bonuses or penalties according to the table on p. B13. When raising or lowering characteristics, the character pays based on his attribute score before the racial bonus is applied.

Most, but not all, of the character advantages, disadvantages, and skills can be taken racially. The point values generally remain the same, though there are several exceptions. Racial disadvantages and quirks are never applied against a character's normal limit of -40 points of disadvantages and -5 points of quirks.

lar vampire type. If the GM does not need a lot of detail or record keeping, the character can rise as a vampire and the cost of the type is noted. All future experience points will then be applied against this balance until the cost of the vampiric abilities is paid off. This is effective but does not lend much to character development or roleplaying. Here are two suggested methods for handling a character's transformation into the undead with greater detail:

### *The Fledgling Method*

This is the more gentle method of introducing mortal characters into a vampiric existence. It is useful for campaigns that were designed for vampire characters, and it allows both point balance and character development. Upon infection, the GM immediately applies all of the points of disadvantages for the type immediately. He then can allow the player some of the new advantages equal to the point value of the disadvantages. If the GM wants to grant more points to represent some advantage inherent to the vampiric condition (such as Invulnerability or Resurrection), the excess points may be charged against future experience as above. The remaining advantages and abilities of the type are only manifested as the character gains enough experience to buy them *and* after the character and GM have roleplayed some situation that might lead to the discovery of these abilities (the presence of an experienced vampire can hasten this process a bit). This also allows the player the choice between using experience points to enhance mortal or vampiric abilities.

### *The Metamorphosis Method*

This method is a little more traumatic, but it is useful if the GM wants to emphasize the darker side of vampirism or discourage mortal characters from voluntary infection. In this case, the GM applies all point costs for a particular type to the character, and then requires the character to acquire an equal point value of disadvantages, effective immediately. This reflects the traumatic and soul-damaging nature of the transformation, and explains why many vampires are insane monsters with little trace of their human identity. The GM may choose the disadvantages, allow the player to choose, or compromise somewhere in between. Racial or ordinary disadvantages may be used for this pur-

pose, but supernatural and mental disadvantages should be the most common. Some social disadvantages may also be appropriate, particularly Odious Personal Habits. Mental disadvantages should be chosen to fit the situation, and some of the most common will be Berserk, Bloodlust, Compulsive Behavior, Sadism, etc. The process is so personality-shattering as to drive some vampires into the realm of true insanity with extreme Delusions, Split Personalities, etc.

## Playing a Vampire

A campaign featuring prominent vampire characters will present some special challenges for the players as well as the GM.

To begin with, vampires are monsters. They are essentially predators, and their prey are other sentient beings. This presents some problems. It is a tradition of fantasy roleplaying, and literature and folklore as well, that the protagonists are somehow – if not virtuous – then at least sympathetic. Undead monsters who drink the blood of others *can* be sympathetic, it just takes a little more work. This can be addressed by creating complex characters who are not portrayed in simple black and white. Vampire characters have a long tradition of twisting the traditional stereotypes of heroes and villains. It can be argued that the entire genre of vampire fiction has been defined by guilty attraction to noble villains and reluctant sympathy for anti-heroes. Even the most virtuous and civilized vampire is going to be a flawed hero at best, with the occasional evil performed out of necessity, and probably a number of guilty secrets in proportion to the vampire's age. Likewise, the most diabolical villains should have some reasons for their actions, and this is likely to go back to some fatal flaw or personal tragedy that make the characters more understandable. For example, one could even take a villain who has inspired fear in millions, give him a lost love that is once again found, and end up redeeming the most prominent monster of the last century (just ask Francis Ford Coppola . . .).

Another problem with vampire characters is in their interactions with mortals. Due to the predator/prey relationship, the undead will often experience difficulties fitting in to mortal society and adventurer parties. As a general rule, vampires can be considered to have an automatic -30 points of social disadvantage, either in the form of a potentially fatal Secret or as -6 on reaction rolls from mortals due to the Reputation of the bloodthirsty dead. This can also provide good roleplaying material, as it encourages the player to explore the role of the vampire not only as a superhuman immortal, but as a haunted outsider.

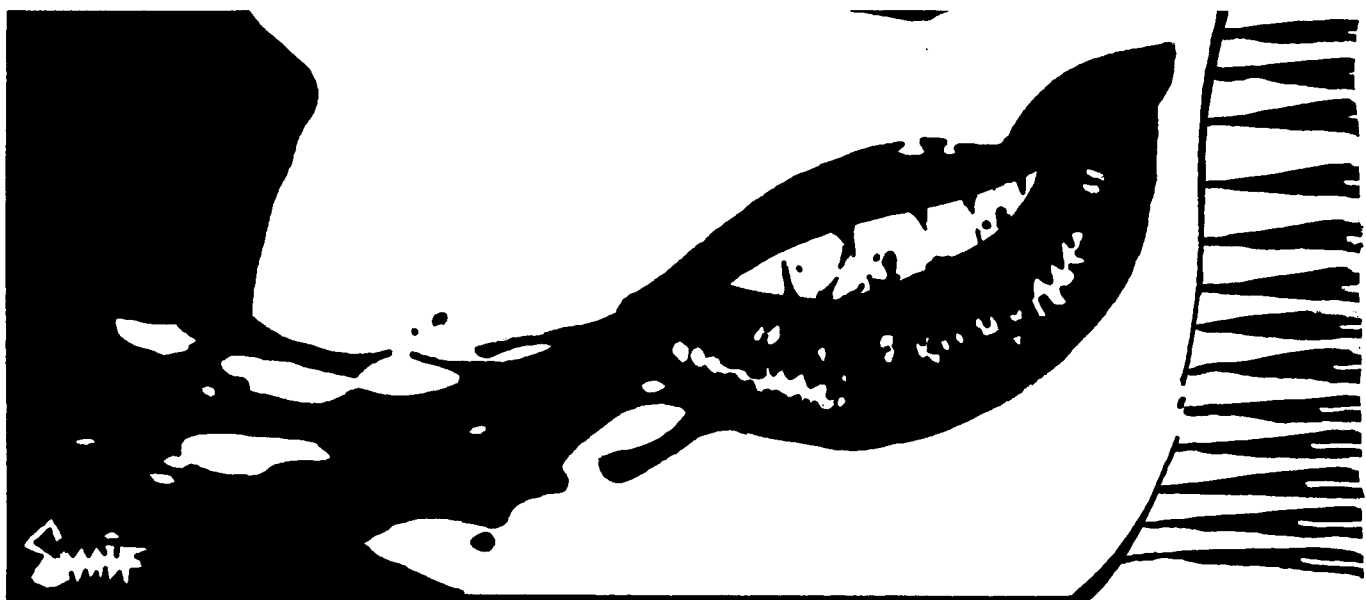
## Special Effects

Specific advantages and spells cannot easily represent all of the vast array of mysterious and arcane abilities that have been attributed to vampires. This is no reason for the GM to limit his creativity, however.

The GM should allow his vampire NPCs a certain amount of latitude in the interests of creating mystery and atmosphere. Powerful vampires may be allowed supernatural special effects. As long as the situation is not crucial and the effect is not used for an attack, the GM should feel free to allow NPC vampires to perform minor magical operations without possessing a specific ability to reflect this. Causing a door to slam with the wave of a hand might technically be telekinesis, but if it is never used to injure characters or interfere with the aiming of guns, the GM need not spend points merely to allow for a good, creepy effect. Causing candles to light, conjuring up bloody writing on walls, projecting harmless bad dreams and similar minor violations of natural laws might be represented with an appropriate spell, but if the power serves only to enhance the story and has no real practical application, the GM may feel free to treat it as a special effect.

Another example of this is the default form manifested by astral projection. The shape may be human, animal, or monstrous, but unless it confers some inherent advantage (such as causing Fright Checks) the actual appearance of the character's astral body is considered a special effect.

At the GM's option, PCs can be allowed to buy minor, beneficial Special Effects such as these for 1 point each, or take minor, inconveniencing ones as quirks.





# RACIAL ADVANTAGES

## **Bite** 30 points + 5 points/ +1 damage

The vampire's bite is a special attack that allows the creature to drain the blood (and HT) of its victims.

To make a Bite attack, the victim must be helpless – sleeping, stunned, surprised, or successfully grappled. Note that the vampire may still bite in combat for normal damage; the restriction is only upon feeding. The only exception is with a more savage attack; the bite may be attempted as part of a Slam. The bite usually does cutting damage based on ST as described on p. B140. Most victims of a vampire's bite will be required to make a Fright check each round they are bitten.

Each round, the vampire may steal 1 point of HT from the victim. For every 3 points of HT the vampire steals, it regains 1 to its own HT. This cannot be used to raise maximum HT.

## **Claws** 15/40 points

For 15 points, the vampire has claws that do an extra +2 damage on any hand-to-hand attack (including Karate).

For 40 points, the claws are six to 12 inches long and do both thrust/impaling and swing/cutting damage.

*Special Limitation:* Claws are assumed to be retractable; if they are not, the cost is reduced by 10%, to 14 and 36 points, respectively

## **Clinging** 25 points

The vampire can walk or crawl on walls or ceilings. Move is halved when using this advantage. An individual may stop at any point and stick to the surface without fear of falling.

If an individual is falling and tries to grab a wall before hitting the ground, the GM first decides whether the wall is within reach. If it is, a successful DX roll is needed to touch the wall. Once the wall has been grabbed, a successful ST roll must be made, modified at -1 for each 5 yards fallen. If the ST roll is failed, 5 yards are subtracted from the distance because of the slowing effect the failed clinging attempt had on the fall.

## **Dark Vision** 25 points

The vampire can see in absolute darkness, using some means other than light, radar, or sonar. It cannot detect colors in the darkness.

*Special Enhancement:* The race can see colors in the dark. This is worth +20%.

## **Discriminatory Smell** 15 points

The creature can differentiate between (and recognize) people, places, and things by their odors. Odors may be memorized by sensing them for at least one minute and making a successful IQ roll. This advantage allows +4 to all rolls involving the sense of smell, and +4 to any roll against Tracking skill.

*Special Enhancement:* The vampire can detect a person or animal's emotional state by odor. This effectively provides the Empathy advantage while within 2 hexes of a subject. +50%.

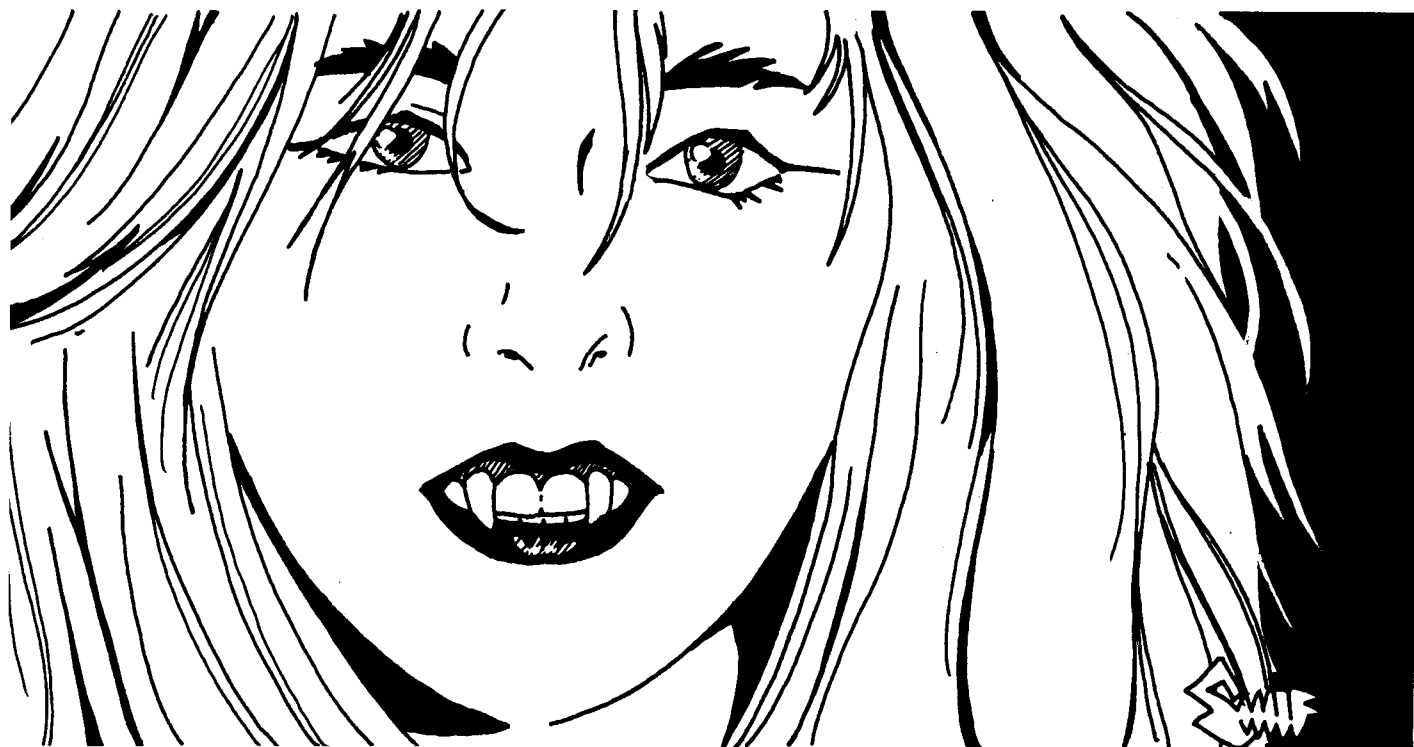
*Special Limitation:* One particular substance has a particularly offensive odor. If encountered, the player must make a HT roll or become temporarily ill, losing 1d from each stat while in the presence of the odor and for 30 minutes thereafter. This is a -50% limitation for common substances, -20% for things found occasionally (garlic, impure blood) and -10% for rare items (wolfsbane, a specific type of vampire). It is a 1 point quirk for something very rare.

## **Doesn't Breathe** 20 points

The creature has no need for oxygen or breath. Individuals cannot be strangled, drowned, suffocated or affected by gases. A vampire may theoretically survive in a vacuum.

## **Enhanced DX** Normal cost

All attributes other than ST are bought at normal cost. Any time an attribute is raised above 20, all default skills are figured as if that attribute were 20. This prevents defaults from becoming unbalancing.



**Enhanced HT** See *Enhanced DX*, p. 58 and  
*Extra Hit Points*, below

**Enhanced IQ** See *Enhanced DX*, p. 58

**Enhanced Move** **10 points/level**

Each level of Enhanced Move increases the race's maximum speed by the original Move score in one mode of locomotion (running, swimming, flying, etc.). Move is only increased if the individual is moving along a relatively straight, smooth course. Combat Move and Dodge are unaffected, but anyone targeting the individual with missile or thrown weapons must subtract a speed modifier appropriate to the individual's current speed.

**Enhanced ST** **Variable**

Enhanced ST is used to determine the base ST of a race. The cost for a base ST of 11-15 is the same as for a standard ST increase; for higher bases STs, use the table below. Individual ST variations can still be purchased at the normal cost, but the changes are based on the race's Enhanced ST.

Most vampires possess super-human Strength. The following chart provides damage and maximum lift for these characters.

ST	Cost	Thrust	Swing
16	70	1d+1	2d+2
17	80	1d+2	3d-1
18	90	1d+2	3d
19	100	2d-1	3d+1
20	110	2d-1	3d+2
21	120	2d	4d-1
22	130	2d	4d
23	140	2d+1	4d+1
24	145	2d+1	4d+2
25	150	2d+2	5d-1
26	155	2d+2	5d
27	160	3d-1	5d+1
28	165	3d-1	5d+1
29	170	3d	5d+2
30	175	3d	5d+2
31	175 ½	3d+1	6d-1
32	176	3d+1	6d-1
33	176 ½	3d+2	6d
34	177	3d+2	6d
35	177 ½	4d-1	6d+1
36	178	4d-1	6d+1
37	178 ½	4d	6d+2
38	179	4d	6d+2
39	179 ½	4d+1	7d-1
40	180	4d+1	7d-1

**Extra Encumbrance** **5 points**

The vampire can carry more than a human with the same ST could. Light encumbrance is defined as 5 × ST, Medium as 10 × ST, Heavy as 20 × ST and Extra-heavy as 30 × ST.

**Extra Fatigue** **3/point**

Your fatigue is higher than normal for your ST. You can run farther and fight longer than others, and you have more power available for powering magical spells. Extra fatigue goes into a separate pool that can be used to power super-powers, psionics, extra effort or magical spells. This pool recharges at the same rate as normal fatigue, but will only begin to regain points if normal fatigue (based on ST) has been completely regained first.



**Extra Hit Points** **5/point**

You can take more damage than a normal human of your HT. Hit points are initially equal to HT, so a character with HT 14 could buy his hit point total up to 20 for 30 points. This would be written as HT 14/20. Any roll vs. HT, Contests of HT, resistances, calculation of survival and unconsciousness rolls and anything else involving HT would be made against the HT of 14. Only damage is subtracted from 20.

Example: If a vampire has HT 14/20, he would experience -HT penalties at -14, not -20.

**Flight** **40 points**

You can fly through the air without wings or gliding surfaces. Flight speed is equal to twice normal Move plus any levels of Enhanced Move (flight) advantage possessed. This advantage does not confer the ability to do complex acrobatics and tight turns; buy Flight skill (physical average, default to DX-4) for use in such tough spots.

**Special Limitation:** With Winged Flight (-25%), the race has functional wings which allow individuals to fly at a base speed of twice normal Move. The Enhanced Move advantage may be taken to increase flight speed.

Wing span is typically at least twice height, more if the race is especially large or heavy (GM's decision). In order to take off, land, or maneuver, the individual must have an open area with a radius equal to its wingspan in all directions. Thus, an individual with a 12-foot wingspan could not take off if there were any obstructions within 12 feet, on the ground or above. Needless to say, if a winged flier loses a wing, it cannot fly.

**Special Limitation:** The wings are very small, with a wingspan as small as 1/2 height. The race uses its wings only to help steer, not to lift. If the wings are seriously damaged in flight, the individual can land safely on a successful Flight roll. -10%.

**Special Limitation:** Gliding is a limited form of Winged Flight; it costs -50%. Gliders cannot gain altitude while flying. Individuals descend at 1 hex per turn. Enhanced Move does not affect speed, but each time it is bought, it halves the descent rate.

**Special Limitation:** With Controlled Gliding, gliders can gain altitude by riding warm air currents, or "thermals" (assuming such currents are present) for -45%. A normal thermal will raise a glider 1 hex per turn. If thermals are present, a member of a race with this advantage can locate them with a successful IQ roll (one attempt per minute).

### **Hard to Kill**

**5 points/level**

You are incredibly difficult to kill. Each level of this advantage confers a +1 on all HT rolls made for survival. If you miss your normal HT roll, but make it with your Hard to Kill bonus added in, you appear dead (a successful Diagnosis will reveal signs of life), but will come to in the normal 1 hour per point of negative HT.

This comes in especially handy for cinematic vampire-hunters and psychopathic human vampires.

### **Immunity to Poison**

**15 points**

The race is immune to the effect of any toxins. This doesn't confer immunity to a corrosive substance such as acid – just to bona fide biological or chemical poisons. If there is a question, the GM's decision, as always, is final.

### **Infravision**

**15 points**

The creature's vision extends into the infrared portions of the spectrum, allowing the individual to see varying degrees of heat. Individuals can even see in absolute darkness if the temperature is above 70 degrees. No matter what the temperature, the individual suffers only a -1 when fighting at night due to the heat emissions of its opponent (assuming the opponent is of a race that emits heat!). Individuals are +2 to see any *living beings* if scanning an area visually.

This advantage also allows the race to follow a heat trail when tracking. Add +3 to any tracking rolls if the trail is no more than an hour old. A sudden flash of heat, such as an explosion, acts as a Flash to anyone with Infravision.

Note: Infravision can be taken in conjunction with the Blindness disadvantage. Blind creatures with Infravision always operate as though at night. They can only track if the trail is less than 1 hour old.

### **Insubstantiality**

**80 points**

The race can become insubstantial. Perhaps it phases into a different dimension or another vibratory plane. Individuals move at a normal rate, but pass through solid objects as though

they weren't there. They cannot pick up normal objects or affect them in any way. The GM may rule that certain types of energy barriers impede the insubstantial individual's progress, however. Physical and energy attacks can't harm the race, but they're still vulnerable to psionic and non-material magical attacks.

Physical and energy attacks from an insubstantial individual will only affect insubstantial members of the same race, or creatures under a similar sort of insubstantiality (GM's determination). An insubstantial individual is at -3 on all spell casting while in this form.

Although it can pass through solids, the individual must still breathe (*if this is normally necessary!*). When moving through a solid object, treat it as if the character were swimming underwater for purposes of suffocation. Insubstantial races must take the Invisible advantage (see below) to be unseen when insubstantial.

Insubstantial creatures cannot become substantial inside solid objects. They are unaffected by gravity, and can move up or down at their normal movement rates.

Note that determining the "natural" form of the being is considered a special effect; this advantage covers those beings which may exist in either physical or insubstantial form.

**Special Limitation:** The race is always insubstantial and cannot become substantial. -50%. There is no penalty for spell casting if the race is always insubstantial.



## Invisibility

40 points

The creature is invisible to normal sight. Anything an invisible individual carries remains visible. Invisible creatures still make noise, leave footprints and can be smelled. If carrying nothing, the invisible individual gets a +9 to Stealth in any situation where being seen would matter. The individual cannot be visually scryed, but can be detected by magical devices. The individual doesn't show up in mirrors.

*Special Enhancement:* The race is normally visible, but may become invisible at will. +10%.

## Multiple Forms (Shapeshifting) 10 points/form

This advantage allows the character to shapeshift into another form, usually animal but possibly monstrous. The base cost is 10 points per form. This cost is paid by the form with the highest point total. Additional points may be required to represent the advantages and disadvantages of the alternate form(s). Each form may have separate advantages, disadvantages, quirks and special powers. Each form is allowed the standard 40 points in disadvantages.

Point values and abilities for specific animal forms are included in Chapter 5. Additional monstrous or transitional forms may be created using these rules and those included in *GURPS Bestiary*.

## Morph

40 points

The race is able to assume the form of any creature. The creature being duplicated must be physically present or memorized, although magical scrying or an illusion may suffice at the GM's discretion. A morph can memorize IQ number of forms. A memorized form may be "overwritten" with a new one.

Mass does not change, although the morph may still take the appearance of a much larger or smaller creature by increasing or decreasing its body density.

The morph gains the physical appearance of the target (including its voice), but not its knowledge, skills or memories. The morph retains all its own abilities, and its attributes remain unchanged. It takes one full turn for morphing to finish, and the same amount of time to change back to original form. Normal clothing can be mimicked (GM's discretion as to when clothing is "abnormal"), but cannot be removed because it's part of the morph's body.

When impersonating someone, there is a chance the morph will be discovered by associates, friends or family. Every time the morph encounters someone who is familiar with the person being imitated, that person gets an IQ roll to spot the difference, modified as follows.

Casual acquaintance: -4

Daily acquaintance: -2

Friend: +2

Close friend: +4

Close family: +6

Empathy advantage: +3

If the morph has Acting skill at 12+, viewers roll at IQ -2. If it has Fast Talk at 12+, viewers roll at -1.

## Radar Sense

50 points plus 1 point/hex radius

The individual perceives a complete radar "picture" of everything going on around it. It can sense shapes and objects, but not colors. The denser an object is, the easier it is to see. The individual must make a Vision roll to make out details about less dense objects. On the other hand, radar can look right through water, clouds, leaves, and so on.



## Recovery

10 points

You recover from unconsciousness very quickly. Instead of staying unconscious for hours, your recovery time is measured in minutes (see p. B129). In any situation where unconsciousness was measured in minutes, you reduce it to seconds.

## Regeneration

10/25/50/100 points

The race recovers from damage much faster than normal. The individual automatically has the Rapid Healing advantage (p. B22) at no extra cost. Cost of this advantage depends on the speed of regeneration.

*Slow Regeneration:* recover 1 HT (or Hit Point) per 12 hours. 10 points.

*Regular Regeneration:* recover 1 HT per hour. 25 points.

*Fast Regeneration:* recover 1 HT per minute. 50 points.

*Instant Regeneration:* recover 1 HT per turn. 100 points.

Note: A character may not take Unhealing and Regeneration. Vampires who experience the Draining disadvantage will not recover daily HT loss, only hit points lost to injury.

## Regrowth

40 points

You can regrow lost limbs and organs. A lost ear, finger or toe will regrow in 1d weeks, a lost hand or foot in 1d+1 months, and a lost eye, arm or leg in 2d+2 months.

## Sensitive Touch

10 points

The vampire's tactile senses are extremely sensitive. For instance, it can, by touch, notice residual heat in a chair, faint vibrations in the floor as someone approaches, similarities and differences between two pieces of fabric, etc. The vampire must roll his IQ to use this advantage successfully (note: low IQs do not default to 12 when using this advantage).

## Silence

5 points/level

You can move and breathe (if needed) noiselessly, giving you an additional +2 per level to your Stealth skill if you are perfectly motionless, or a +1 if you are moving (even in armor, etc). These bonuses help you only in the dark, or against somebody who is listening rather than depending on sight!

## Sonar Vision

0/25 points

The creature can "see" by emitting sound waves that bounce off the surroundings. No light is required. Sonar can be "jammed" or fooled by very loud noises, but not otherwise. It is color blind, but can "see" the interiors of living things and other objects of equal density. Effective range is typically a few hundred yards.

As a creature's sole form of vision, this is worth no points. As an adjunct to another form of vision, it is worth 25 points.

## Speak with Animals

15 points

This allows you to carry on a conversation with any land animals (including birds, reptiles and insects). How much information you can get from the animal depends on its IQ and reaction roll, and the GM. Add +2 to the reaction roll if you are offering food while you are talking. In general, insects and other small animals won't be able to convey anything but simple emotion such as hunger and fear, while animals like chimpanzees or cats could have a reasonably intelligent discussion. It takes one minute to ask one question and get the answer – assuming the animal decides to speak to you. The GM may require a reaction roll.

*Special Limitation:* Only one kind of animal. -20% for one type (for example, only mammals, or only birds), -30% for one family (the canine family), -50% for one species (wolves only).

## Super Jump

10 points/level

Each level of Super Jump doubles the distance you can leap. Additionally, if you fall a distance less than or equal to your maximum high jump (p. B88), you take no damage. This can be increased by 5 yards with a successful Acrobatics roll (p. B131).

Your Move during a super jump is 20% of your maximum normal long jump, with a minimum of 10 yards. Thus, your maximum normal jump never takes over 5 turns. If your maximum jump is 100 yards, your Move is 20 in any jump.

You can jump at a foe in order to slam him; figure the slam at your maximum jump speed! You don't need to make a separate roll to jump accurately.



## **Tunneling**

**40 points + 10 points per  
hex/turn of Tunneling speed**

The race can dig through the ground like a worm, spewing dirt and sand behind. This advantage lets the individual dig a passage, sized for its race, through dirt or stone. Movement through rock or stone is half Tunneling speed.

The GM may wish to assess a chance that the tunnel collapses behind the tunneler. The individual must roll each minute against IQ to build a stable tunnel. This can be modified upward for hard rock and downward for soft dirt. Each halving of Tunneling speed gives the individual +1 on this roll.

## **Ultrahearing**

**5 points**

You can hear sounds in the frequencies above the range of normal human hearing (20,000 cycles). Dog whistles, motion detectors and even many household appliances may emit sounds audible to you.

## **Unaging**

**15 points**

Individuals of this race never grow old. Age is fixed at a certain point and will never change. Individuals never have to make aging rolls. Members of this race may not take the Age disadvantage.

## **Vampiric Dominance**      **5 points + 15/100 pts. Controlled**

This is an advantageous form of the Infectious Attack disadvantage (see p. 66) The vampire spreads his curse as per the Infectious Attack rules, but keeps absolute command over all the vampires he creates, and all the vampires they create. Subordinate vampires take the Slave Mentality disadvantage (see p. 67). The advantage costs 5 points, plus 15 points for every 100 points' worth of vampires dominated. As the vampire acquires new slaves, the cost must be paid with new disadvantages or, at the GM's discretion, with earned character points. This dominance persists as long as the dominant vampire lives. If the dominant vampire dies, the vampires he created directly become dominant, with control over any vampires they have created, or will create in the future.

When a PC vampire changes from subordinate to dominate, he must use earned character points to "buy off" Slave Mentality and purchase this advantage. The change takes place immediately upon the death of the dominant vampire, but all subsequent earned experience points must go to pay off the character point "debt" thereby created, until it is paid in full.

## **Vampiric Immortality**      **60 points**

Members of this race will never die of natural causes and are tough to kill unnaturally! This is the form of immortality typical of undead and non-human spirits. This advantage includes Doesn't Breathe, Immunity to Disease (p. B20), Immunity to Poison, and Unaging.

## **Vampiric Invulnerability**      **150 points**

Most vampires can only be killed by some specific types of damage. Vampires can be hurt by other types of damage, they just can't be killed by them. Knockback is still caused by physical attacks. Invulnerability does not protect against any Vulnerability or Weakness a vampire has. Vampires with this advantage can only be truly "killed" by damage from their Vulnerabilities. They take damage from weapons, and may be incapacitated by their wounds, but they will not die unless they



receive the actual deathblow from one of their Vulnerabilities that negates this advantage.

Characters with Vampiric Invulnerability suffer none of the debilitating effects of injury (negative modifiers, reduced Move, etc.); they can simply "shake off" most wounds until they reach zero HT. Below zero HT, they are at half Move and suffer from crippling injuries.

Fire is the one universal method of disposing of the undead. All beings with Vampiric Invulnerability are assumed to be vulnerable to flame.

Base cost: 150 points. This protects the vampire from all physical attacks except fire and extreme heat. Magic, psionics (except those that cause physical attacks) and most energy attacks still cause full damage.

This cost may be reduced by taking Vulnerabilities (see p. 67). One level of Vulnerability is assumed to negate this advantage for that particular form of attack; additional levels may be purchased for extra damage.

## **Vampiric Resurrection**      **150 points**

Vampires can die, but some of them get better. If a vampire dies from any means other than one prescribed by a Vulnerability or a limitation of this advantage, it will come back to life. Starting 1 hour after death, the vampire will begin regaining HT at the normal rate (note that traditionally undead vampires must have a HT source or purchase Regeneration as well). This power will restore the vampire, even if hacked to pieces (unless beheading or the destruction of its heart is prescribed as a limitation). If any parts are destroyed, they will regrow spontaneously. The vampire remains unconscious until it has regained full HT.

If parts are kept separate, they do not grow multiple copies. Instead, the largest existing pieces reassemble, and the rest will melt into goo.

If the entire body is destroyed (burned entirely, disintegrated, etc.), the vampire is permanently dead (unless capable of existing as a non-corporeal being).

Each time a vampire dies, it loses 25 points. These may be taken off anything. If a vampire's point total is brought down to 0, it dies permanently.



### **Slave Mentality** -40 points

The vampire has no initiative of its own. It becomes confused and ineffectual without a "master" to give it orders. This does not necessarily imply a low IQ.

This disadvantage is appropriate for vampires created by a "master" with Vampiric Dominance, or who serve a powerful mage or spirit.

A vampire with Slave Mentality must make a roll vs. IQ-8 before taking any action that is not obeying a direct order, or part of an established daily routine.

As a rule, such a character will always fail Will rolls. In a case where the GM thinks success might be possible, the roll should be made at -6.

### **Unhealing** -20 points

As an unliving being, vampires have certain restrictions on the basic functions of life – HT, hit points, and healing.

An Undead creature possesses HT, but no hit points of its own. This has several effects. The creature is not normally able to heal with the passing of time. Rather, the injured Undead must supplement its own HT from some outside source. Without life, the HT attribute cannot remain constant. Each day at noon, an Undead being loses 1 HT (or more if certain conditions of the vampire's resting period are not met).

If a character has this disadvantage and the Regeneration advantage, the character may heal injuries, but not daily HT loss.

### **Unliving** -50 points

The race is not truly alive. When a member of such a race is wounded to exactly 0 HT and then fails a consciousness roll, its body collapses in a semblance of death. The GM should determine the conditions under which the race can be revived from this state. However, at -1 HT the ties that link the individual's spirit with its body are actually severed and the individual dies.

### **Unnatural Feature** 5 points per feature

This is for vampires who are essentially human-looking but possess one or more features that might give away their condition or cause fear or hostility in mortals. Fangs that cannot be retracted are the most common, but other examples include pointed ears and red eyes. This does not have to be a physical feature; the sound of the voice or the intensity of the gaze could qualify if intense enough to require concealment.

### **Vulnerability** Variable

Vampires often take extra damage from certain forms of attack, or are weakened and hurt every time they come within a certain proximity to some substance. For each level of Vulnerability purchased, the character takes an extra 1d of damage (or 1d damage for substance that are not used for attack).

The value per level depends on how common the substance or form of attack is.

Rare: (Jeruja thorns, whitethorn stake, holy water) -3 points per level.

Infrequent: (Heart shot, wood, silver) -5 points per level.

Occasional: (Any organic weapon, Fire) -10 points per level.

Common: (Sunlight) -15 points per level.

the sun is below the horizon. As soon as dawn starts to break, the Nocturnal creature begins to become lethargic. When the sun actually clears the horizon, the creature falls paralyzed and comatose until the sun goes down again.

### **Pallor** -10/-5 points

This is the visage of death shown by many undead. Pale and bloodless flesh, lifeless eyes and a generally gaunt appearance are manifestations of this condition. The character simply looks like a corpse. While this is not overtly unnatural, mortals will assume that the character is very ill, strung out on drugs, or something similar and react with -3 on all reaction rolls.

The disadvantage is worth half as much if the vampire takes on the semblance of life after feeding.

If a vampire is affected by merely being near the substance, add 10% per hex of range to the cost per level. If damage comes off of fatigue rather than hit points, the value per level is halved. If a vampire is struck by an object he is Vulnerable to, the Vulnerability damage is added to the regular damage.

For characters with Vampiric Invulnerability (see p. 63), one level of Vulnerability to something cancels the Invulnerability's effects for that item or substance. Additional levels of Vulnerability will do damage as above.

## ☠ COMBAT, INJURY AND DEATH

Being supernatural creatures caught somewhere between the threshold of life and death, vampires are more difficult to injure and kill than mortal creatures. Generally speaking, most (although not all) vampires may only be laid to rest by one or more specific methods that varies by type, although there are certain universal patterns in their methods of destruction. Fire, sunlight and wooden weapons are very widespread methods for



### Weakness

### variable

This is like a Vulnerability, but less severe. A Weakness is a sensitivity, not to any kind of attack as such, but to the presence of a common substance or condition. It cannot be a food item or something equally easy to avoid. The more quickly the individual takes damage, the more the Weakness is worth. 1d per minute: -2 points; 1d per 5 minutes: -10 points; 1d per 30 minutes: -5 points. Halve the value if the damage done is only Fatigue. The rarity of the weakening condition also affects the value of the Weakness: Rare is half value, Infrequent is full value, Occasional is double value and Common is triple value.

dealing with the undead, although the exact particulars vary widely. This unnatural vitality is represented by two advantages; Vampiric Invulnerability and Vampiric Resurrection.

The following rules on damage, injury and recovery are specific to the true undead, those beings who possess a formerly living body. Of course, there is no reason why vampires of other origins should not function the same way, and this is the case with several types in the Bestiary (see Chapter 5). However, nonhuman or extra-planar creatures with physical bodies might possess the Invulnerability advantage and have it manifest in an entirely different manner.

### Invulnerability

Creatures possessing Vampiric Invulnerability may only be *killed* by a specific condition or set of conditions defined by their Vulnerabilities. As possessors of flesh and blood bodies, however, they are still susceptible to tissue damage like any other biological organism. Thus, while vampires with this advantage may only meet their final demise from one of their vulnerabilities, they may be damaged, injured and even incapacitated by the destruction of their bodies.

Non-human entities with physical forms are not necessarily bound by the same rules, and may have Invulnerability that manifests entirely differently – attacks passing harmlessly through them, for example.

### Resurrection

Characters with Vampiric Resurrection are not necessarily any more hardy than mortals (although they may be, or they may possess other supernatural recuperative powers). They take damage and injury as a living being would, but upon their destruction, they will completely recover unless killed by a source of damage to which they have a Vulnerability.

### Vulnerabilities

Vulnerabilities limit both Invulnerability and Resurrection. These are the special sources of damage that can cause one of the undead to suffer permanent death.

To kill a vampire totally, one of the monster's Vulnerabilities must strike the death blow. This can be accomplished in a number of ways.

If the vampire has been reduced to  $-5 \times HT$ , even one point of damage from a Vulnerability will cause death.

Additionally, if an undead character is bound, incapacitated or unconscious, the death blow may be struck using the Instant death rules (p. B126).

Vulnerabilities are also capable of stunning the undead, unlike other forms of damage.



# Injury and Damage

## General Damage

Even if the damage is not potentially fatal, sufficient damage to a vampire's physical form will eventually hinder and even incapacitate him.

Vampires are usually immune to crippling or stunning, unless badly injured or the damage is from a source that the vampire is Vulnerable to. Knockdown and Knockback still apply normally.

0 or less hit points left: The undead has been damaged enough to affect the performance of the body. Move is divided in half.

-HT: The vampire becomes susceptible to crippling injuries.

-5 × HT: This is the point of certain death for mortals, and even immortal flesh cannot function beyond this point. The vampire is incapacitated, although not necessarily unconscious. If conscious, the character may still use any powers or abilities that do not require physical action, but is unable to move his broken body. If a vampire receives even a single hit from an attack to which he is Vulnerable while in this condition, he will be destroyed.

-10 × HT: Complete destruction of the physical form. However, unless the vampire has been killed by a vulnerability, it could still arise again under the right circumstances.

## Types of Damage

Crushing and cutting damage both have the potential to cause dramatic structural damage, even to dead bodies, and are treated normally.

Impaling damage, however, while more effective against living creatures, cause comparatively little tissue damage. Undead with Vampiric Invulnerability only take 1 point of damage from impaling attacks and most bullets *unless* the attack is one of the vampire's Vulnerabilities, in which case damage is applied and doubled normally.

## Burning

Most vampires take full damage from fire, and sunlight has come to be assumed to have the same power. This is the single most universally recognized weapon against the undead, and the GM may well wish to apply these Vulnerabilities to all vampires in his campaign.

Vampires take damage from fire as per the rules on p. B129, plus any extra damage from multiple levels of Vulnerability. In addition, the GM may call for a HT roll (-1 for each level of Vulnerability) to determine if the character has burst into flame for an additional die of damage (no DR) per round.

Even in a case where a vampire is not Vulnerable to fire (which should be highly unlikely), burning damage is extremely destructive to the physical form, and may be especially difficult to recover from.

## Starvation/Dehydration

Most vampires lose HT daily, and must replace this by feeding upon mortals. A vampire who has reached 0 HT from



the Unhealing or Dependency disadvantages will become comatose, and without some assistance can be considered "dead." However, as long as the character is not exposed to one of his Vulnerabilities, administration of blood (or the appropriate medium of HT) will usually resurrect the creature.

## Illness

Most vampires are immune to disease. However, they may act as carriers of a disease and infect their victims during feeding. This may be determined using the contagion rules on p. B133. These rules may also be applied in the case of undead who have a specific power to spread disease.

Mortal vampires who do not have the advantage Immune to Disease may need to exercise more caution, whether in a plague-infested medieval setting or the equally dangerous modern world.

## Bleeding

If the Game Master wishes to make injury and combat more challenging (read lethal) for undead characters, he may institute the optional Bleeding rules found on p. B130. This will make combat more difficult for the undead, as blood loss will affect nearly all vampires, regardless of other defenses. This not only makes combat more deadly, but may necessitate additional inconveniences in the form of hunting and feeding to restore the lost blood reserves.

If these rules are applied to vampire characters, the First Aid skill may be applied to them, but only to stop bleeding (hit points still may not be restored).

## HT and Recovery

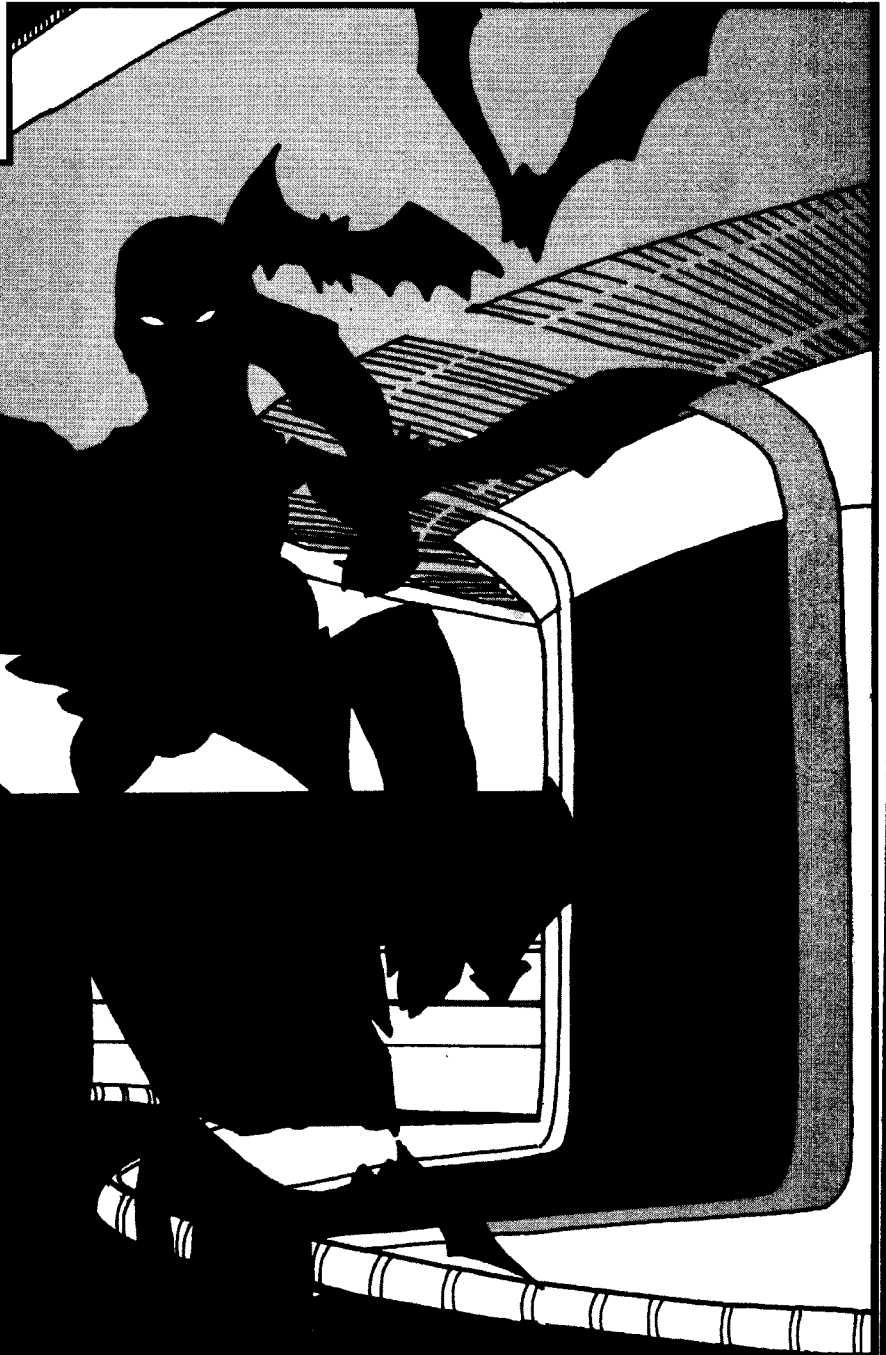
Undead creatures with the Unhealing disadvantage do not recover from injuries like the living. They will not benefit from rest or medical care, but must replenish their Health by taking it from another.

Magical or psionic healing *may* remove the effects of wounds from the undead. Some medical techniques may be useful as well, but will not restore Health. For example, a vampire with a crippled leg may be splinted to allow movement, internal organs may be held in with bandages and bleeding may be stopped by proper treatment if the Bleeding rules are in effect.

No treatment will restore the daily HT loss without feeding.

**VAMPIRES ARE,**  
with a very few exceptions, inherently  
supernatural creatures and a great  
many of their powers may only be  
described as magic. In addition to  
those inherent powers, many vampires  
are powerful mages in their own right,  
and fearsome foes for any would-be  
vampire hunter.

# 4 MAGIC



Of course, the GM is free to assign any of the innate spells as vampiric powers with more scientific explanations, treating the origin of the power as a special effect (see sidebar, p. 57). But remember that magical powers have magical counters, and if these powers become scientifically or psionically based, the GM will have to find other ways to limit them or be faced with a dangerously unbalanced campaign.

## ✠ MANA LEVEL

AS SUPERNATURAL CREATURES, most vampires are to some degree dependent upon the mana level of their environment. True vampires cannot exist in a no-mana area or world.

## ✠ TYPES OF VAMPIRE MAGIC

VAMPIRES POSSESS A GREAT MANY POWERS that are not accessible to mere mortals. First, many of the "racial" advantages available to vampires are obviously supernatural. Every effort has been made to treat most vampiric powers as advantages. Those inherent magical powers possessed by the undead which are of a very specific or distinctly magical nature are recorded as innate magic (see below).

Additionally, vampires may be mighty sorcerers and mages in their own right, often having had centuries to perfect their craft, and many have access to some secrets unknown to mortal wizards. Quite a number of mortal and undead vampire Types have the origins of their conditions in the shadowy realm of black magic.

## Aspected Magery

Aspected magery places limitations on use of the character's magical ability. Note that aspected magery will affect both innate and learned spells.

### *Moon-Aspected Magery*

*8 points for first level*

*5 points/level for 2nd and 3rd levels*

A moon-mage has power only when the moon is in the sky; this changes every day, but averages to half the time. A simple solution: assume the moon

## Vampires and Demonology

Most cultures presuppose some sort of connection between vampires and whatever infernal or demonic forces their mythology has, often assuming that vampirism cannot be a product of the natural or benevolent forces of the universe, and hence must be the work of the powers of darkness. It is almost universally considered one of the chief causes of vampirism.

The practice of necromancy and black magic, and the infamous pact with a demon, are globally recognized as putting the practitioner at risk of becoming a vampire. Some mortal sorcerers were known to do this deliberately, selling themselves to the forces of evil in exchange for supernatural powers and longevity. Other black magicians were cursed to rise as vampires after their death, either as part of some deliberate bargain or as a punishment for their atrocities against the natural order.

In those regions that thought of the vampire as a corpse that was actually possessed by a demon, a more direct relationship between demons and the undead could be found. Such notions were common in Christian lands and many parts of the Orient. Some traditions maintained that their vampires were not mortal at all, but in fact were a variety of demon, and some of these vampires can be summoned as demons.

At any rate, most vampires with supernatural or undead origins will probably have had a brush with whatever dark forces exist on the other side of death, and it is unlikely they will be unaffected by this. Whether they are in league with these powers or struggling against this evil that has touched them, the vampire remains at the crossroads, with one foot on Earth and one in Hell.



## Exorcism

To drive a spirit from its possessed victim or its haunt requires an exorcism. Treat Exorcism as a professional skill (Mental/Hard), defaulting to IQ-6 or Theology-3. A character without the Clerical Investment advantage takes a -4 to his Exorcism skill or default when performing the ritual - he may understand the ritual, but he lacks a priest's holy support. A NPC clergyman will usually perform this ritual for free, if the players can convince him that the person or location is actually possessed.

An exorcism is not a magical skill; it is a religious skill involving a complex ritual (although, depending upon the originating culture of the vampire, it might be performed with equal efficiency by a Malay witch-doctor or a Catholic priest). The length of the ritual depends on the HT of the spirit (generally 15 minutes for every 1 HT possessed by the spirit). Upon completion of the ritual, the exorcist rolls against his Exorcism skill or default value. Some spirits will wait patiently through the ritual, anticipating the combat to come; others will try to distract or disable the exorcist before the ritual can be completed. If the Exorcism roll fails, the spirit remains, and the exorcist must wait at least a week before repeating the ritual. On a critical failure, the exorcist rolls on the Fright Check table (see p. B94), adding 10 to his die roll. Furthermore, even if he keeps his sanity, he may never again attempt to exorcise this particular spirit again.

A critical success automatically banishes the demon or ghost. If a regular success is rolled, the exorcist and his opponent meet in a Quick Contest, pitting the exorcist's IQ + Exorcism skill, modified by Strong or Weak Will, against the total of the monster's ST + IQ. When combating a spirit in a living host, the exorcist adds to his total the ST, IQ and Will of the possessed subject, as the victim tries to "push" the spirit out (obviously, this is not applicable to corpses and locations). If the spirit wins, it remains and the exorcist may not repeat the ritual for a week.

However, a successful IQ roll after a failed exorcism may reveal something about the spirit that will help the exorcist in his next attempt to banish that foe, giving him a +2 on later skill rolls. Only one such +2 bonus is allowed.

Should the exorcist win the contest of wills, the spirit of a deceased mortal will be laid to rest. A successfully exorcised demon or non-human spirit loses his hold of the possessed person or body, and will usually flee in humiliation. Make a reaction roll for the spirit. On any Poor or better reaction, it will flee, but on a Bad or Very Bad reaction, the spirit will immediately use whatever resources it has to take vengeance on the exorcist and those nearby.

rises and sets one hour earlier each day. During solar eclipses, moon-mages have +5 power! Since many vampire Types gain strength in moonlight, this is a natural choice.

For more realism, the GM can keep track of the *phase* of the moon. Moon-mages' powers then wax and wane with the moon. All Magery and spell rolls are at +3 at full moon; +2 for two days before and after; +1 for two days before and after *that*. They have no power at all the night of the new moon, or for five days before and after. Their powers are normal at all other times (although they still get the +5 during solar eclipses).



### Star-Aspected Magery

8 points for first level  
5 points/level for 2nd and 3rd levels

A star-aspected mage can only use his powers when the sun is not in the sky - on average from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. When the sun is up, the star-mage will have none of his magical abilities, though a look at his aura will reveal he is a mage.

This type of mage is not affected by being in a building, underground, etc. He will know automatically (if he is awake) when it is one minute to sunup and one minute to sundown.

### Dark-Aspected Magery

8 points for first level  
5 points/level for 2nd and 3rd levels

A dark aspected mage can only use his powers in darkness. Regardless of the time of day or night, any light greater than candlelight or starlight will deprive the mage of his abilities, though his aura will still reveal magic.

## ✠ RACIAL OR INNATE MAGIC

A RACIALLY INNATE SPELL is almost identical to a normally-learned spell, except that the caster knows it intuitively; it isn't taught to him. Races that live in low- or normal-mana areas must have racial magical aptitude before they can have racially innate spells. Any spell may be innate, but the GM is cautioned against granting the more powerful spells to PC races through this method.

The minimum cost for a racially innate spell is the number of points necessary to bring that race's skill to 12 (based on racial Magical Aptitude and the race's default IQ), or one point, whichever is greater. Races whose skill with an innate spell is 15 or higher get the normal reductions in casting time, energy cost, etc. Most vampires will possess their powers at a skill of at least 21, allowing them to cast without ritual, at ½ casting time, -2 to energy cost.

Most of the abilities here are taken from *GURPS Magic*. Where differences occur, the rules here supersede those in the other source book, but only as applied to vampires.

# INNATE MAGIC FOR VAMPIRES

THE FOLLOWING SPELL LIST represents the magical abilities most commonly possessed by vampiric creatures. Casting time and energy cost are listed as standard; remember to adjust the values according to the vampire's skill level with the spell (usually 21+).

## Innate Spells

### **Beast Control** *Regular; Resisted by IQ*

Allows the vampire to control the actions of one large animal (of a specific type) or a group of small animals of an aggregate weight of 100 lbs. Each type of animal must be learned as a separate spell. Concentration is required. This spell will not work on an intelligent being (IQ 8 or more). This may be cast upon multiple subjects simultaneously if the appropriate energy cost is expended.

*Duration:* 1 minute.

*Cost:* 5 to cast, 3 to maintain.

### **Beast Summoning** *Regular*

Lets caster call one creature of a named type (IQ 8 or less). Range does not matter for this spell. If the spell is successfully cast, the caster will know the location of the nearest creature of the type, and how long it will take that creature to come to him. It will move toward the caster as fast as it can, until the spell ends or the animal can see the caster. It will stay nearby, without attacking, until the spell ends. The summoned animal will then have a +1 on its reaction to the caster (only). Note that if the creature is attacked by the caster or someone near the caster, the spell will be broken.

*Duration:* 1 minute.

*Cost:* 3 to cast, 2 to maintain. To call many animals, double the cost of the spell. All creature within a certain area (usually about a 10-mile radius; more for a very successful casting) will be drawn. Of course, the time they take to arrive depends on the speed at which they can travel, and if the spell ends before they arrive, they will go about their business.

### **Body of Air** *Regular*

The vampire's body becomes vaporous; it can change shape, seep through cracks, float in the air, etc. Clothes (up to 6 lbs.) also become vaporous, but lose any magic they might have while in vaporous form. The subject remains visible and able to speak. He may carry nothing while in this form.

A person in vaporous form has all his normal senses. He is at -3 when using spells, and may not make physical attacks. He is immune to normal physical harm, but can be affected by mental attacks (spells or psionics).

A wind will move the vapor without harming it. A *violent* wind will do harm (GM's discretion, depending on type and source of wind). An explosion will affect vaporous bodies as though they were solid, but with concussion damage only.

*Duration:* 1 minute.

*Cost:* 4 to cast, 1 per minute to maintain.

*Time to cast:* 5 seconds.

### **Charm** *Regular; Resisted by IQ*

To use Charm a vampire must make eye contact. A subject who fails to resist this spell (roll vs. IQ) becomes the vampire's faithful slave and obeys any orders, no matter how dangerous. The vampire must command the subject verbally or in writing,

although the subject will automatically protect the vampire even without orders. In all other respects the subject will be mentally normal and alert. He will be unable to explain (and unwilling to discuss or even think about) his loyalty to the vampire.

If the victim fails to resist the charm, he will be at a -2 to resist the next time that vampire attempts to Charm him. This penalty is cumulative. But once a subject successfully resists a vampire's Charm, he is *immune* to that particular vampire's spell *forever!*

*Duration:* 1 minute.

*Cost:* 6 to cast, 3 to maintain.

*Time to cast:* 3 seconds.

### **Clouds** *Area*

Creates or dispels outdoor cloud cover, as the caster chooses. Weather control is a traditional vampiric power, and this may be used to briefly lessen the damage from sunlight.

*Duration:* 10 minutes, after which normal clouds leave/return unless the spell is maintained.

*Base Cost:* 1/20. Same cost to maintain.

*Time to Cast:* 10 seconds.

### **Darkness** *Area*

Covers one or more hexes in pitch darkness. A person in a dark hex can see out of the hex normally, but can see nothing else in his own hex or other darkened ones. Those outside a hex can see nothing inside it but darkness. Thus, attacks out of darkness suffer no penalty, but attacks into darkness are at a penalty. The Night Vision advantage allows one to see through dark hexes; Infravision does not.



This spell can be put to frightening and efficient use to confuse prey while hunting. As the darkness allows no light in, this is an ideal way to avoid sunlight in an emergency (so ideal as to require careful moderation by the GM to avoid abuse).

*Duration:* 1 minute.

*Base Cost:* 2 to cast; 1 to maintain.

### **Enslave (VH) *Regular; Resisted by IQ***

Like the Charm spell, but permanent. Subject will follow the caster's orders until the spell ends or is removed. At any time the caster concentrates, he can form a link with the subject to see through the subject's eyes, hear through his ears and give orders.

*Duration:* Permanent.

*Cost:* 30.

### **Fog *Area***

Creates an area of dense fog. Even one hex of fog will block vision. Flaming weapons and missile lose their extra power in fog. However, no amount of fog will extinguish a fire.

*Duration:* 1 minute.

*Base Cost:* 2; half this to maintain.

### **Nightmare *Regular; Resisted by IQ***

When cast on a sleeping subject, this spell causes a nightmare of the caster's choice. Knowledge of the subject's fears and phobias gives a +2 to effective skill. The subject gets an IQ-

4 roll to realize the nightmare was caused by hostile magic. If the spell succeeds, the subject gets no rest from that night's sleep, and instead suffers 2 fatigue. Dispel Magic will stop the nightmare while it is occurring, preventing ST loss.

If the spell is cast the next night, the effects are cumulative. If the subject's ST falls to 0 from this spell, he enters a coma, and will lose 1d HT each day until dead, unless treated (Dispel Magic, etc.).

*Duration:* 1 hour.

*Cost:* 6.

*Time to cast:* 1 minute.

### **Pestilence *Regular***

Infects the subject with a loathsome plague (caster's choice, although the GM can veto an inappropriate selection). No immediate effects, until the disease takes its normal course.

*Duration:* permanent, until cured.

*Cost:* 6.

*Time to cast:* 30 seconds.

### **Rain *Area***

Creates or prevents 1 inch of rain, in a normal outdoor setting.

*Duration:* 1 hour.

*Base Cost:* 1/10. Cost to maintain is the same per hour. Cost to make rain doubles in the desert or other area (GM's determination) where rain is unnatural. Cost to prevent rain doubles in a naturally rainy or swampy area.

*Time to cast:* 1 minute.

### **Sense Life *Information; Area***

Tells the caster if there is any life in the subject area, and gives a general impression (on a good roll) of what kind. Caster can also specify he is looking for a specific sort of life – humans, children, redheaded girls, or a named person whom the caster knows.

This can be used when other senses are not available; for example, when beneath the earth.

*Base Cost:* 1/2 (minimum 1).

### **Sense Spirit *Information; Area***

Tells the caster if there are any ghosts, spirits, undead, or other supernatural creatures within the area of effect, and – on a good roll – gives a general impression of what kind. Caster may, at the time of casting limit the spell to a specific type of spirit or exclude a given type.

*Base Cost:* 1/2.

### **Sleep *Regular; Resisted by HT***

Subject falls asleep. If standing, he falls to the ground; the fall does not wake him up. He can be awakened by a blow, loud noises, etc., but will be mentally stunned and must make an IQ roll to become fully awake. If not awakened, he will sleep for around 8 hours and awaken normally.

*Cost:* 4.

*Time to cast:* 3 seconds.

### **Soul Jar (VH) *Regular***

This spell allows the caster to trap the subject's soul in some object (which must be present during the casting). If the subject is not the caster, then he must be present, and either willing or unconscious.

If a character's soul is in a "jar," he is unaffected until either the body dies, or the jar is destroyed. The death of the

body does not kill the character; instead his consciousness shifts to the "jar," where he can see, hear, and even cast any spell known at level 21 or above (i.e., usable without speech or gesturing). The character may communicate at a distance via telepathy-type spells, if known – or by direct mental contact without a spell, with anyone who handles the jar. ST, for Fatigue purposes, remains the same. HT may not be spent, but any powerstone in contact with the jar may be used.

If a new body comes within range of the jar, the subject may try to take it by use of the Permanent Possession or Exchange Bodies spells (if known). In the latter case, the soul of that body goes into the jar. If the jar is destroyed, the character is killed *permanently* – beyond hope of resurrection – even if the body is unharmed.

The spell may be cast again to move the soul to a different jar.

*Duration:* Permanent.

*Cost:* 8.

*Time to cast:* 1 minute.

### **Steal Health**

#### **Regular**

Lets the vampire take HT from the subject to heal his own injuries (does not actually increase the HT attribute) and counteract the daily HT loss of the undead. The subject must either be willing or totally helpless. The caster must touch the subject. This works on *living*, intelligent subjects only! The spell stops when the caster's HT is completely restored, when the caster decides to stop or when the subject's HT reaches -1 (which automatically kills the subject).

This is already covered in the Bite advantage for creatures that draw blood. This method allows for the theft of life by more subtle and less identifiable means. This will *not* work upon unliving subjects.

*Duration:* Permanent.

*Cost:* None to the caster! For every 3 points of HT taken from the subject, the caster regains 1 point of HT.

*Time to cast:* 1 minute for each 3 HT taken from the subject.

### **Steal Strength**

#### **Regular**

Lets the vampire take ST from the subject to heal his own lost fatigue (does not actually increase the caster's ST attribute). The subject must either be willing or totally helpless (bound or unconscious). The caster must touch the subject. This works on *living*, intelligent subjects only! The spell stops when the caster's ST is completely restored, when the caster decides to stop, or when the subject's ST reaches 0 and the subject falls unconscious.

*Duration:* Permanent.

*Cost:* None to the caster! For every 3 points of ST taken from the subject, the caster regains 1 point of ST.

*Time to cast:* 1 minute for each 3 ST taken from the subject.

### **Steal Youth (VH)**

#### **Regular; Resisted by HT**

Lets the caster take another's youth. For every 10 points of energy put into this spell, the caster grows one year younger and the subject grows 2 years older. The subject must either be willing or totally helpless; the caster must touch the subject. This works on *living*, intelligent subjects only!

A critical failure on the spell will cost the caster 1 point of IQ and cause him to age 20 years instantly.

*Duration:* Permanent.

*Cost:* 10 to 30.

*Time to cast:* 1 hour.



### **Suspended Animation**

#### **Regular; Resisted by HT**

Holds the subject in apparent sleep, either indefinitely or for a pre-programmed length of time. The effects of severe bleeding, disease, age, etc. are all halted while this spell is in effect. The subject requires neither food (nor blood) nor air, but can still be harmed by fire, weapons, and other natural hazards.

Generally, a vampire will secure itself within its funereal resting place or beneath the earth before entering this type of prolonged hibernation.

*Duration:* Until broken.

*Cost:* 6.

*Time to cast:* 30 seconds.

### **Windstorm**

#### **Area**

Lets the caster create a circular windstorm with an "eye" of calm inside (a good place for the caster to stand). The radius of the eye can be up to half that of the storm – or smaller if the caster wishes. By concentrating, the caster can move the storm any distance up to its own diameter each turn; the eye moves with it. The caster may move up to 3 hexes per turn inside the eye while concentrating on this spell.

Anyone within a full strength Windstorm must roll vs. ST each turn to avoid being knocked over by the wind. All DX-based rolls are at -5, and ranged attacks will succeed only on a critical hit.

*Duration:* 1 minute after reaching full strength.

*Base Cost:* 2; half to maintain.

*Time to cast:* The storm starts immediately, but the caster must concentrate for a number of seconds equal to the storm's radius in hexes to bring the storm to full strength.

### **Zombie**

#### **Regular**

The subject of this spell must be a relatively complete dead body. The type of body determines the result: a fresh body produces a Zombie, a skeleton produces a Skeleton, a very old, dry body produces a Mummy. The animated corpse becomes an undead servant of the caster.

Its attributes are based on those of the original body, as are its physical skill. It does not have a "soul," mental skills, or memories of the living person.

*Duration:* The Zombie remains animated until destroyed.

*Cost:* 8 for human size or smaller corpse, more in proportion for creatures of larger size.

*Time to cast:* 1 minute.

IN ADDITION TO THEIR INHERENT superhuman advantages and their innate magical abilities, many vampires have a familiarity with magic and sorcery, particularly the College of Necromancy.

Some vampires have been brought into existence by magical forces. Others, having been transformed into one of the undead (and possibly gaining a level of Magery) find motivation and ability to practice magic in their new condition.

While most vampires are, by nature, supernatural creatures with a wide variety of magical abilities available to them, it is recommended that the GM carefully moderate the additional spells that vampires are allowed to learn. A vampire with an amulet of Darkness and a Resist Fire spell would quickly unbalance almost any game and defeat the spirit of the vampire legend.

## New Spells

### *Astral Projection*

*Regular*

The caster can control his "astral body," sending it out to act while the physical body remains in place. The astral body is insubstantial and can fly at the character's normal Move. While astral, the caster's dodge is equal to his normal Dodge, modified by Combat Reflexes but not by Running skill, Lameness or other physical considerations.

A glowing silvery thread links the astral form of living beings to the physical body. This will be conspicuously absent in undead or "native" spirit entities. The astral body is normally invisible, except to others in astral form. However, the astral body can be detected by psionics and magic. Magical Aptitude allows an IQ roll to sense (but not see) an astral presence. In the case of vampiric entities, they are made visible to their victims by the special connection necessary for the draining of vital energies.

Astral bodies can interact physically while on the astral plane - they are fully solid to each other.

An astral body cannot be physically harmed by anything in the physical world. Magic and psionics that do not depend on physical effects can reach into or out of the astral plane at -5 to skill, allowing an astral entity to affect a physical being or be

affected by one. Any magical spell or superpower that acts on the mind or soul rather than the body (in general, anything resisted by IQ rather than ST or HT) may work, at the GM's discretion.

The astral body is not affected by damage to one's physical body, and HT is recorded separately for astral and physical forms.

If the astral body is destroyed, the physical body becomes a mindless husk. If the physical body is destroyed while the astral form is active, the caster becomes a creature of the astral plane.

Note: Masters of this spell (21+ skill) may freely change the physical appearance of the astral body, assuming the appearance of various animals or monstrous creatures.

*Duration:* 5 minutes.

*Cost:* 5 to cast, 1 to maintain.

### *Grave Mist*

*Regular*

Allows the vampire to assume a Body of Air that is capable of penetrating their original grave site. A vampire may enter and exit its coffin this way, or simply seep beneath the surface of any earth that qualifies as "native soil." This spell *only* works upon native soil and may only be used to travel directly into the earth.

*Duration:* Instantaneous.

*Cost:* 5.

*Time to cast:* 2 seconds.

### *Materialization*

*Regular*

In order for a spirit to make itself visible to the world of the living, it must *Materialize*. Spirits can communicate verbally and visually with the living, but cannot smell, taste, or feel. A materialized spirit is insubstantial and cannot be affected by physical weapons. It cannot affect the physical world unless it possesses the magical or psionic abilities to do so.

Exceptionally powerful spirits can actually *solidify*. This allows them to interact physically with their environment. This draining process takes 50 points of fatigue for one minute, and an additional 10 points for each further minute.

*Cost:* 5 fatigue for the first five minutes, and an additional 5 for every minute thereafter.





## Possession (VH)

Spiritual entities may inhabit the bodies of living or dead mortal by means of Possession. Possession allows the caster to inhabit a body, gaining access to all of its physical attributes but none of its mental abilities, e.g., skills, spells or memory. The entity retains its own powers and mental abilities and may use them through the host body, as well as its disadvantages.

In the case of a living target, the possessing entity must roll a Contest of combined IQ and HT against the victim, with the victim getting a +5 on the roll. Objects and corpses do not resist, but the roll still may be critically failed.

Dead bodies may be animated in this way, but will retain only the physical characteristics the mortals had in life. Living persons who become possessed are trapped in their own minds, and the possessing entity has complete control over their perceptions. The GM may rule that in extreme circumstances, exceptionally strong-willed characters may make a Contest of Wills roll to temporarily wrest back control. Exorcism (see p. 72) may be effective in dispelling a possessing spirit, as well as some necromantic spells.

If the body is killed, the entity just leaves it, and may search for a new host.

*Duration:* Permanent, or until the caster leaves or is expelled.

*Cost:* Cost is equal to the victim's HT.

## Spirit Fire

This spell is similar to Astral Projection, but Spirit Fire is more material. This allows the caster to assume the form of an unearthly, spectral fireball, often with hideously distorted facial features.

This form allows flight at twice the caster's normal Move. The Spirit Fire form may not manipulate physical objects normally, but may use natural forms of attack (such as Bite) as well as any magic which may be cast without physical gestures. Spirit Fire is vulnerable to normal weapons, but injuries received in this form will be transferred to the caster's physical body when the spell ends.

Inevitably, some part of the caster must be left behind as a link to the physical body, although this may be only the skin. If the link is destroyed, the caster is trapped in Spirit Fire form. Those with a skill level of 21 or higher may attempt to escape in Spirit Fire form upon the demise of their current body.

Those trapped in Spirit Fire form must roll vs. Will every day to maintain cohesion as an entity. Those with appropriate powers of Possession may be able to find a new host body.

*Duration:* 10 minutes.

*Cost:* 5 to cast, 2 to maintain.

*Time to cast:* 3 seconds.

## Magic Items

There are a wide variety of objects and substances that are believed to magically affect vampires. Many of these items are universally effective in that they function naturally without the need for enchantment or magical proficiency on the part of the wielder.

These items may also be required as the object of enchantments for sorcerers who are preparing to combat the undead.

## Blessed or Holy Items

Vampires are often portrayed as being vulnerable to blessed items, religious icons and holy symbols.

Whatever the religion or item, it acts as the focus for a

## Special



power, generated by some divine presence or the wielder's own faith, which may repel or damage the vampiric creature whose very existence is opposed to such forces of light and life.

In most religions, the requirements for a "blessed" object will be one which has been ritually consecrated by a priest (or equivalent) who has Clerical Investment, good standing in his church and genuine faith.

## Special Plants

There are many plants that have the power to harm or repel the undead attributed to them. The GM may decide that some particular substance or condition has a universal effect upon vampiric entities and assign an automatic disadvantage to the vampiric basic package.

Wooden weapons have been used quite widely to send vampires to their final rest. Besides the traditional stake through the heart, thorns of all types have been used to guard against the nocturnal monsters. It is as if the vampire, an "unnatural" creature, is inherently opposed by nature itself, making natural weapons more effective. Thus, even in regions where the stake was used, the preferred woods for the weapon were thorn woods; blackthorn, buckthorn, whitethorn and hawthorn. Ash, rowan and juniper are also suggested in some regions. In northern regions, oak was preferred.

In Malaysia, *jeruja* thorns were placed around windows to snag the entrails of any marauding Pennanggalen that might desire entrance. Another use for thorns was to bind a corpse as a preventative measure, and it is well-known in Transylvania that a branch of wild rose upon a coffin prevented the creature from rising.



Strangely, the use of garlic as a ward against vampiric monsters seems to be an almost global phenomenon. From the East to the West, it was believed that the odiferous bulb of garlic was repellent to the undead. This legend is a likely candidate for being accepted as fact and applied universally as described above.

Alternately, some plants were considered to be beneficial to the undead. For example, in Haiti the silk-cotton, or devil, tree was believed to serve like the crossroads as a meeting place for Loogaroo and other forces of evil.

## Magic vs. Vampires

### *Clerical Magic*

A number of religions have prescribed methods for combating the menace of the undead. The vampire's aversion to holy symbols is well known, but perhaps it requires a Will roll and Clerical Investment in some worlds. Exorcism (see p. 72) is the most elaborate example of a religious ritual that may have supernatural effects. The GM may allow certain religions to have other skills for dealing with supernatural adversaries, or even allow those with Clerical Investment to learn a limited number of spells (see *GURPS Magic* for more detail).

Alternately the GM may charge for Clerical Investment as though it were Magery, if the advantage confers a number of automatic supernatural abilities. For example, if the mere blessing of a priest effectively creates enchanted weapons for combating the undead, the GM will probably wish to assign a higher point value to Clerical Investment.

### *Combat Magic*

In many fantasy worlds and horror campaigns with full magic, it is quite possible that would-be vampire slayers will have access to offensive magic. This can go a long way towards leveling the playing field between mortal and undead.

In particular, fire spells, light spells and plant spells can be very effective against many varieties of vampire. Many other elemental spells will prove useful and healing spells may be used as a treatment to deprive the creature of victims. Finally, meta-spells and necromantic spells may be able to defeat vampires by affecting their own supernatural natures.

### *Necromancy*

Powerful necromancers may know the secrets of summoning, binding and banishing some vampiric entities. Most nonhuman vampiric entities may be summoned as per Summon Demon (*GURPS Magic*, p. 65) if the proper variant of the spell is known.

## Vampires and Psionics

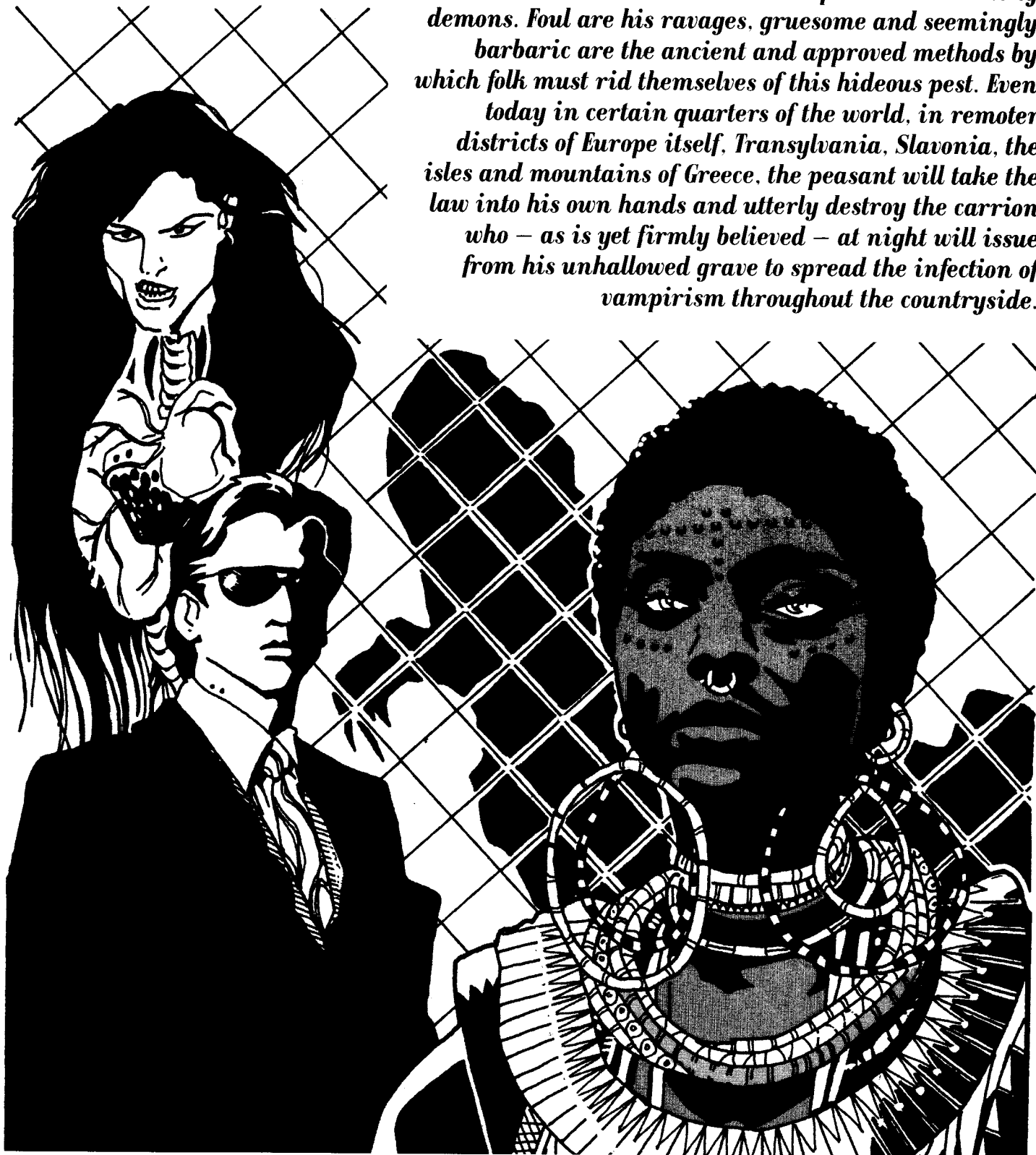
Many representations of vampires include powers that are more in the realm of psionics than magic. Mind control abilities in particular have become commonly associated with the undead, and the very popular treatment of vampires by Anne Rice depicts their powers as psionic, including telepathy, levitation and pyrokinesis.

Hi-tech, alien and psychic vampires are all more likely to possess psionics than magic. The GM may choose to "mix and match" psionic and magic powers depending upon the campaign world and the characters.

# 5 BESTIARY

**"IN ALL THE DARKEST PAGES of the malign supernatural there is no more terrible tradition than that of the Vampire, a pariah even among**

**demons. Foul are his ravages, gruesome and seemingly barbaric are the ancient and approved methods by which folk must rid themselves of this hideous pest. Even today in certain quarters of the world, in remoter districts of Europe itself, Transylvania, Slavonia, the isles and mountains of Greece, the peasant will take the law into his own hands and utterly destroy the carrion who – as is yet firmly believed – at night will issue from his unhallowed grave to spread the infection of vampirism throughout the countryside.**



# Scientific Explanations for Vampirism

As early as the 1st century A.D., Pliny the Elder proposed that all reports of the reanimation of corpses could be explained by premature burial. This theory has found favor with a number of authorities since, and this phenomena has undoubtedly contributed to the body of legend.

It is easy to imagine how this might occur. A person in a coma or cataleptic state is mistakenly pronounced dead and interred in a tomb or grave. If the grave-site is re-examined, due to grave robbers, a wave of vampire hysteria or even mysterious noises caused by the victim's struggle, the would-be night stalkers would discover a body that is much fresher than they expected. It is likely that the corpse would show signs of having moved and changed position. There might be fresh blood upon the fingers and damage to the inside of the coffin or tomb. If the unfortunate victim of such a scenario were still not dead, but merely comatose from lack of oxygen, the vampire hunters would be satisfied – when they applied the stake and observed the gush of fresh blood and final death gasp – that they had sent the unhappy creature to its final rest.

*Continued on next page . . .*

*“Assyria knew the Vampire long ago, and he lurked amid the primeval forests of Mexico before Cortes came. He is feared by the Chinese, by the Indian, and the Malay alike; whilst Arabian stories tells us again and again of the ghouls who haunt the ill-omened sepulchers and lonely cross-ways to attack and devour the unhappy traveler.”*

*– Montague Summers, The Vampire: His Kith and Kin, 1928*

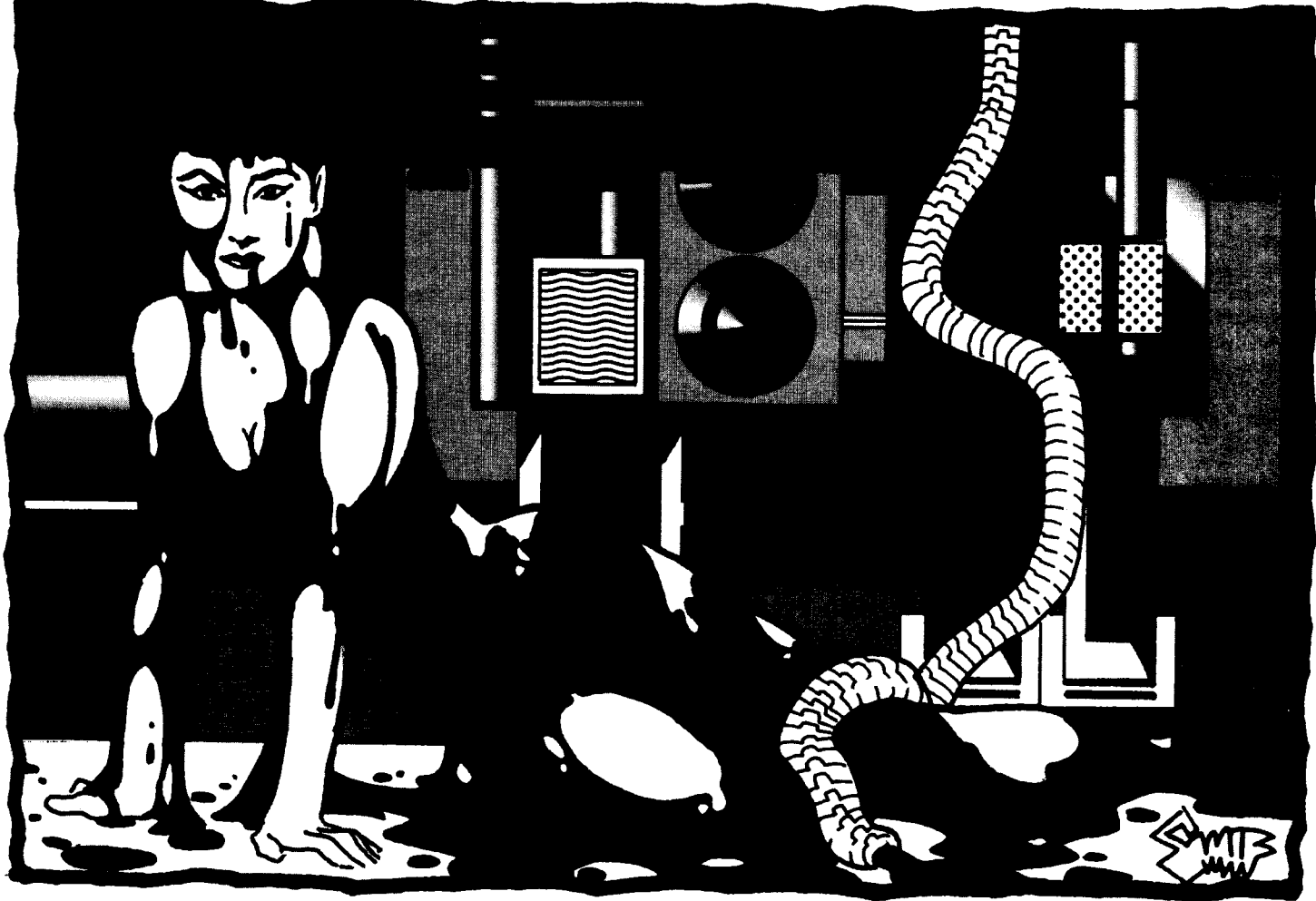
## ✠ VAMPIRE TYPES

THE SPECTRE OF THE VAMPIRE has risen from the shadows to loom over many different cultures. While certain themes remain consistent, each culture has had its own distinct ideas about the precise nature of the undead. Presented here are some of the most interesting vampires from around the world. Some will be immediately recognizable, while others are more exotic. The different varieties of vampires are treated as different races (as in *GURPS Aliens* and *GURPS Fantasy Folk*). This list may easily be expanded by utilizing the vampire creation rules in Chapter 3 to develop custom vampire types, either from other mythological or literary sources or from the GM's twisted imagination.

The following races of vampire are drawn from a variety of sources, from legend and folklore to literature and popular entertainment, in an effort to represent the broadest view of the vampire legend. While all of the races have historical or artistic roots, in some cases legends have been altered or embellished upon. For example, the Gaki is a composite of several Japanese tales of vampiric beings.

In some cases, various traditional types from other lands have already been covered in geographically specific worldbooks such as *GURPS China*, *GURPS Japan*, *GURPS Arabian Nights*, etc. The expanded character creation rules for vampires have made it necessary to present these types in accordance





with the new format. However, in campaigns where this amount of detail is not required, particularly those where vampiric monsters are not allowed as PCs, the GM is free to use either interpretation of the creatures. In the cases where not only the rules but the entire folkloric interpretation differs, the GM must decide what is rumor and what is fact, possibly assuming that one version is the popular conception and one version is the secret reality at the heart of the legend.

## The Basic Vampire

Each type is described in a standard format, which the GM may also wish to use as a template for his own custom-created vampires. Some optional abilities are suggested to aid this process.

## Advantages and Disadvantages

These are the “racial” advantages and disadvantages that are specific to each individual vampire type. These come as a package in the point cost of the particular type and are separate from individual disadvantage point limits. These can be modified, allowing disadvantages to be bought off or new advantages added to an individual vampire character (at the GM’s discretion, of course). This package of abilities may be considered the “default” version of the type, while the optional abilities and descriptions of minor sub-types will present alternate possibilities from other cultures and different folkloric interpretations. This is intended to give the GM the greatest freedom to customize each creature to his purposes, and to represent vampires from the widest variety of cultures possible.

## Scientific Explanations (Continued)

A number of the details in reports of alleged vampires can be explained simply by the natural process of decomposition. To begin with, corpses decay at varying rates depending upon such factors as soil conditions, cause of death, and presence of other organisms. Often, in the historical records describing the reports of vampirism, it is clearly stated that the body was undecayed, and then the author proceeds to describe the signs of natural decomposition.

For example, it is often mentioned that the “vampire” appeared to be in the process of sloughing its old skin, while a rejuvenated, pink skin can be seen beneath. This is simply the natural process of decay in the epidermis, revealing the raw, subcutaneous layers of tissue. Likewise, the reported growth of fingernails by the dead can be explained by the shrinking of the tissues surrounding the nails. Decaying corpses generally bloat with gases, causing superstitious persons to suspect they were distended with blood. If pierced, such a corpse might very well issue forth bodily fluids and a groaning noise without any supernatural agency whatsoever.

*Continued on next page . . .*

## Scientific Explanations (Continued)

Additionally, there are number of medical conditions that might have spawned some of the reports of vampirism. Porphyria is a rare disease that mimics many of the traditional symptoms attributed to the undead. This disease, caused by an imbalance in certain enzymes necessary in the synthesis of blood proteins, can manifest in paleness, extreme sensitivity to bright light, and malformed teeth that might be mistaken for fangs. The enzyme deficiency sometimes affects the digestive system, necessitating a liquid diet. It has also been theorized that sufferers of this affliction may have even attempted drinking blood in a desperate attempt to supplement their own deficient fluids, but this is highly controversial.

Congenital syphilis also produces a number of "vampiric" symptoms, and some experts believe that Bram Stoker might have had an intimate familiarity with this condition. Children born with congenital syphilis will also exhibit pallor and photosensitivity, and are sometimes born with fang-like incisors already in place.

While these phenomena have undoubtedly contributed to the belief in the undead, there is no comprehensive theory that satisfactorily accounts for the near-universal distribution of the vampire legend.

## Racially Innate Magic

These are the magical abilities available to each particular type. At least one level of Magery is necessary to possess innate magic (see p. 72).

Innate magic can always be considered optional. Unless a point total is specified, the ability is not included as part of the package. Magical abilities must be purchased separately from the package or developed over time.

## Optional Abilities and Limitations

The optional advantages and disadvantages presented with each type are meant to include differing treatments in legend, variations of sub-groups within a type, and individual diversity possible for vampire characters. These have not been figured into the point cost of each type, so the Game Master should make the appropriate adjustments when adding these abilities and limitations.

## Habits

These are the details of the vampire's behavior from folkloric and fictional sources, specifically regarding hunting and feeding, and the necessary resting conditions for each type.



# Adze

## Origin

The Adze is a vampiric being known to people in central Africa. The Adze originates in Ghana and Togo, particularly among the Ewe tribe.

## Description

The Adze is a non-human supernatural entity, but it does possess a physical form. Its preferred shape is that of an insect, a disturbingly large firefly. If necessary, it can assume an attractive human form, but its "natural" form is that of a small, hunch-backed and generally misshapen humanoid with ill-fitting jet-black skin, a large head and a sharp-fanged grin. The Adze may have additional insectoid features: large multi-faceted eyes, diaphanous wings, extra legs, antennae, etc.

## Habits

The Adze's primary defining characteristic is its hunger. Like the insects it commands, the Adze is a force that emerges from the darkness of the jungle to consume crops and the blood of livestock and humans. The Adze feeds upon the life-force of living things by draining essential fluids; however, it is unusual in that it may obtain sustenance from the fluids and life-force of plants as well as animals, allowing it to benefit from substances such as palm oil and coconut milk. Living plants drained in this manner will also sicken and die. This is a variant of the Steal HT spell, allowing the Adze to gain 1 HT per acre drained (or up to 3/acre if the foliage is particularly lush or plentiful). Its preferred diet, however, is blood, particularly that of children. The Adze will generally approach its prey, whether crops or children, in insect form. Sometimes it will conceal itself within a summoned swarm of insects, generally locusts or biting flies, depending upon whether its prey is vegetable or animal.

The Adze has no special resting conditions, and may go about in the daylight without harm, but only in insect form. An Adze may only assume its "natural" or human forms after sunset.

The Adze is a physical creature with no specific description of vulnerabilities or means of destruction. The GM may either assume the Adze may be damaged normally (perhaps mediated by levels of DR, Hard to Kill, Regeneration, etc.) or he may assign standard Vampiric Invulnerability with a Vulnerability to fire (and possibly other sources of damage, at the GM's discretion).

## Advantages

Acute Vision +3 (6 points), Bite (30 points), Clinging (25 points), Magery 1 (15 points), Multiple Forms: Insect (10 points), Multiple Forms: Human (10 points), Vampiric Immortality (60 points).

*Optional:* Infravision, Enhanced ST 20, Vampiric Invulnerability, Super Leap, Regeneration, Winged Flight,

## Disadvantages

Appearance: Monstrous (-25 points), Bloodthirst (-15 points), Dependency: Vital Fluids (Daily, common; -15 points), Lifebane (-10 points).

*Optional:* Dread, Vulnerabilities, Frightens Animals.

## Racially Innate Magic

Steal HT 21 (24 points), Beast Control (Insects), Beast Summoning (Insects), Sleep.

**Base Cost: 115 points.**

## Adze in the Campaign

Adze will generally be found in locales that have a connection to their home climate and environment in Africa. However, they are easily adaptable to any fantastic or historical tropical region where insects are feared for their attacks on persons and crops.

Adze are non-human beings, possibly native to some other dimension. As such, they might also be encountered in whatever infernal or netherworld realms are appropriate to the campaign. In this context, they might fill a niche as scavengers and minor parasites. Here they might be encountered in much greater numbers. If Adze can also be summoned and controlled by magic, they might be encountered in the service of a magician (probably one with experience in Obeah or another tradition of African tribal shamanism, including particularly knowledgeable Voodoo practitioners). While the distribution of the legend is quite geographically specific, some of the insect gods of northern Africa and the Middle East could probably be connected to the Adze without too much trouble.

Due to its non-human origins and monstrous nature, the Adze will probably not work as a player character. As a non-player character, the Adze could be used as anything from a rapacious monster with all the subtlety of a horde of locusts to ancient beings who hold primeval secrets from the dawn of the first civilizations.



# Alien

## Origin

The Alien Vampire has its roots in modern literature and film. Its history ranges from C.L. Moore's "Shambleau," from 1933, to the modern trilogy of *Alien* films. Perhaps the best example is Colin Wilson's *The Space Vampire*, and its film adaptation *Lifeforce*.

## Description

Alien Vampires have appeared in a vast variety of shapes and sizes, usually hideous. They may have some of the traditional features, such as fangs, bat-wings, or other animal-like features, or they may be utterly . . . alien.

The Alien Vampire will usually be a physical creature with exotic origins. If its origins are so alien as to be extra-dimensional, anything is possible.

## Advantages

Any. The range of possibilities for the Alien Vampire is so vast as to require individual customizing. Like other vampires, they will probably be extremely durable and possess advantages that assist them in hunting and feeding. Natural weapons and enhanced senses are almost a must.

## Disadvantages

Any. Again, the GM can customize the Alien Vampire any way he wants. However, the Alien Vampire will quite likely be strange enough to receive points for Appearance: Hideous or Monstrous. To be truly vampiric the creature should possess some variety of Dependency upon the energy/essence/fluids of other living beings. Finally, vampiric creatures generally have some manner of Vulnerability that may be exploited by opponents who are clever enough to discover it.

## Racially Innate Magic

The GM may wish to use the Innate Magic rules to simulate exotic alien powers, but it will probably be most effective to rely upon the more "scientific" explanation of psionics. The GM may use any of the powers in the *GURPS Basic Set*, or utilize *GURPS Psionics* for greater detail.

## Optional Abilities and Limitations

The Alien Vampire is built upon optional abilities. The GM should customize each racial type or individual using the vampire creation rules in Chapter 3.

## Habits

To qualify as a vampire, obviously, the Alien must possess vampiric qualities and habits. First and foremost is the role of parasitic predator, which can be even more frightening when approached from a scientific/medical angle than from a supernatural angle. Whatever form this vampire takes, it will drain the life of living creatures in some ghastly way. Perhaps it takes blood, or perhaps it needs something more obscure such as psychic energy, cerebrospinal fluid, or a warm host body to propagate its species. It may possess potent psionic and parapsychical powers, besides the possibility of access to a different technology base.

One way of approaching the Alien Vampire is to assume, as

many writers have, that humans have encountered such a creature before, resulting in the legend of the vampire. The GM may then decide which stories have a seed of truth in them, and build the alien upon that premise. Scientific explanations for traditional vampiric qualities are one of the things that distinguishes this type. For example, a creature from a system with a cooler star would experience discomfort and possibly damage from the rays of the sun.

There is a broad range of possibilities for the Alien Vampire's tactics. It might be a straight-forward killing machine, designed solely as a dreadfully efficient predator, or it might have complex psychic powers developed to lure its prey more subtly. Such creatures will often possess some particularly ghastly digestive process, with an equally nasty method of extracting its nourishment from its prey. It will probably be a nocturnal hunter out of necessity, requiring the cover of darkness for its hunting activities whether it has an aversion to daylight or not.

Destroying the Alien Vampire might prove more difficult, as it is unlikely to be as well known as its supernatural counterparts. However, there may be some obscure hint within the myths and legends that reveals the creature's weaknesses.

## Alien Vampires in the Campaign

The Alien Vampire will generally appear in the role of unrelenting menace, with its motivations so incomprehensible that it is defined solely by its predatory nature. Its form will generally be somehow monstrous, but it may have powers of charm or illusion that are capable of projecting a pleasing form. Another possibility is the parasitic metamorph, which incorporates the traditional vampiric power of shapeshifting. Creatures that reproduce through some parasitic infection of a host body could present the epidemic contagion fears that are traditionally associated with vampires.

More human-like vampires with a scientific or technological rationale will probably be better modeled on the High-Tech Vampire type.

The Alien Vampire might be encountered as an isolated phenomenon, perhaps a wayward specimen that has entered the PCs' environment by accident. In such a situation, the creature's appetite will soon draw attention to it. Alternately, these creatures might be encountered in greater numbers, either in their own environment or as some sort of invasion. If encountered on its home territory it will probably have a marked advantage, as an environment that evolves such a rapacious parasite/predator is likely to be hostile or harsh enough to present its own perils.

## GURPS Aliens

Another method for creating Alien Vampires is to develop a basic vampirism package, with appropriate powers and weaknesses, and then to apply it to any of the races from *GURPS Aliens*. There is no reason why vampirism should necessarily be a uniquely human condition, especially if it is a disease with a scientific or pseudo-scientific explanation.





# Astral



## **Origin**

Astral Vampires are found on nearly every continent, particularly within tribal communities.

## **Description**

The Astral Vampire is an evil sorcerer who has the power to leave his body in astral or spirit form while still alive. In this form, the sorcerer may fly about the physical world and prey upon mortal victims by draining their astral life force.

An Astral Vampire in mortal form will appear as a normal human, though possibly a very ancient and wizened one. He is not immortal, but can extend his existence indefinitely by preying upon others. The astral form is invisible most of the time, although it may be perceived by those with appropriate magic or psionic abilities. When the astral form is visible, it may appear as a humanoid, animal or monstrous image. When it attacks, it is always perceived by the victim.

## **Habits**

The Astral Vampire, as a mortal made vampiric through the use of black magic, does not need to drain his victims to sur-

vive. Rather, he chooses to do this to increase his personal power. He must have a safe place to store his physical body while hunting. He will then leave the body a lifeless husk and travel abroad in search of prey. It is likely the Astral Vampire will take precautions, such as human minions or magical defenses, to protect his body while in this vulnerable state.

The Astral Vampire drains youth, HT, or ST without drawing blood, but rather through the medium of the victim's astral essence. He is likely to have an arsenal of other spells and magical abilities at his disposal.

The Astral Vampire's spirit form may only be affected by magic, psionics, or other astral entities. The physical body is entirely mortal and may be killed normally.

## **Advantages**

Magery 1 (15 points).

## **Disadvantages**

Optional.

## **Racially Innate Magic**

Astral Projection 21 (24 points), \* Steal HT 21 (24 points), Fear, Sleep, Nightmare, Sense Life.

\* Optionally Steal ST or Steal Youth (if latter option is taken, add Extra Fatigue).

## **Base Cost: 63 points.**

## **Astral Vampires in the Campaign**

While relatively exotic, the template of the Astral Vampire can be used quite broadly for all manner of still-living magical or psychic vampires. Other monstrous or bestial astral forms are entirely possible (see examples, below).

As astral predators, such beings might be encountered anywhere, including other planes of existence. They could provide a very interesting challenge to astral travelers as indigenous predators of that realm.

This template is conceivable for use as a player character, however, the fact that they choose their predatory existence makes it more difficult to accept them as sympathetic protagonists. In a campaign with many astral entities, such powers could make a formidable vampire hunter of any character daring or foolish enough to acquire them. As NPCs, they are likely to have other powers and knowledge as formidable mages or psis.

## **Bebarlang**

The Bebarlang are known to the island communities of Southeast Asia and the Philippines. The Bebarlang are a typical type of Astral Vampire. They possess a monstrous, bat-winged astral form with glowing eyes.

There is some disagreement as to whether Bebarlangs are individual aberrations caused by black magic, or whether there is an entire tribe of Bebarlangs.

## **Chordewa**

The Chordewa is another type of mortal vampire, known to the hill tribes of Bengal. Like the Bebarlang, the Chordewa is a mortal human with sorcerous powers of astral projection. The Chordewa assumes the astral form of a large black cat. Like the Bebarlang, the Chordewa must leave its body behind, presenting a very vulnerable target unless properly guarded or hidden.

# Baital

## Origin

The Indian sub-continent spawned a rich variety of vampiric ghouls and demons, but the Baital is by far the "purest" vampire of Indian myth (also transliterated as Baitala, Vetala, and Vetala). Legends of the Baital were first introduced to the Western world with the publication of Sir Richard Burton's translation of *Vikram and the Vampire, or, Tales of Hindu Deviltry* in 1870.

## Description

This creature is a human corpse animated by a non-human, incorporeal entity. The presence of this entity causes a more dramatic change of appearance in the host body than in its European counterpart, with a distinctly monstrous appearance that has no resemblance to the body's previous owner. This non-European vampire is associated with the bat, much as the European variety came to be following the Gothic period.

The Baital is described as appearing mummified, with its skeletal form visible through its tightly shrunken skin. It is brown in color, both flesh and hair. It has large green eyes with a hypnotic stare. Additionally, the Baital possesses prodigious talons upon its feet, and a thumb-like toe, by which it hangs upside down when resting. Its skin is cold like a reptile, and as a final peculiar detail, the creature has a short, goat-like tail. The overall impression suggests a humanoid version of the fruit-bats that are common to its native lands.

## Habits

The Baital, in its natural form, is an invisible and incorporeal spirit. Such spirits haunt the places of the dead: cemeteries, charnel houses and the traditional burning *ghats* of its homeland. They also have certain shrines dedicated to appease them, monolithic standing-stones smeared with red paint where offerings may be left to avoid their wrath.

When it finds a corpse it deems suitable, the Baital takes possession of it, transforming it in the process. Thus clothed in a physical body, it begins to feed. Generally, feeding occurs while the Baital is shapeshifted into human form, and its preferred victims are women, particularly those who are insane, intoxicated, or otherwise mentally impaired. The Baital seems to be a less ravenous predator than some varieties of vampire, and there is no reason to assume that its condition is contagious.

The Baital, rather than having a dependence upon a funeral resting place, is as likely to be found hanging upside-down in a cave or hollow tree. They are nocturnal creatures by nature but suffer no actual damage from daylight. The creature has a fondness for riddles and mental challenges, and if beaten in such a contest may come to respect the victor and give assistance.

## Advantages

Acute Hearing +4 (8 points), Bite (30 points), Claws (15 points), Clinging (25 points), Gliding (20 points), Magery 1 (15 points), Sonar Vision (25 points), Vampiric Immortality (60 points), Vampiric Resurrection (150 points).

## Disadvantages

Astral Entity (no points, as it may freely Possess a body), Dependency: Human Blood (monthly, uncommon -20 points), Monstrous Appearance (-25 points), Compulsive Behavior:



Riddles and Puzzles (-10 points), Frightens Animals (-10 points), No Body Heat (-5 points), Nocturnal (-10 points), Unhealing (-20 points).

## Racially Innate Magic

Beast Summoning (bats), Beast Control (bats), Charm, Possession 21 (48 points), Suspended Animation.

**Base Cost: 296 points.**

## Baital in the Campaign

The Baital is an excellent example of a non-European vampire that still very closely fits the traditional mold. As such, it would be easy to include the Baital as one of the most prominent types. While indigenous to the Indian sub-continent, they could easily be found anywhere in the region. The Baital would probably be fully at home anywhere in Southeast Asia. It is also possible that Gypsies (having similar geographic origins) might recall legends of this type, and have spread these into the more traditional Gothic settings of Europe. India has often been proposed as one of the possible origin points in the history of the vampire, both in fiction and folklore, so it is not inconceivable that the Baital may hold some of the oldest mysteries of vampiric history.

The Baital, being a non-human and non-physical entity, is probably not suitable as a player character except in the most cinematic campaigns where all of the PCs are members of the undead. As an NPC, the Baital can be used as a new and exotic vampire to antagonize the players, or as a mysterious entity that guards the mystical secrets of vampiric history. Since they are very difficult to destroy entirely (given their ability to possess a new corpse upon the destruction of the old), a Baital could prove a very long-standing adversary in a campaign, returning again and again in new forms. Alternately, the GM could use the Baital to contradict the characters' suppositions about the nature of the undead by stressing the creature's less ravenous appetite and its penchant for wisdom and riddles.



# Ch'iang Shich

## Origin

The Ch'iang Shich is found all over China, and is spread as far as Mongolia. It is an excellent generic template for any Oriental vampire.

## Description

Ch'iang Shich have two forms. The first is the traditional form of the vampire, the uncorrupted corpse of a mortal being, often of great physical beauty. This form is suitable for Mandarin lords and vengeful seductresses. The other form relates to Chinese burial customs. Soil conditions and burial shrouds conspire to produce a fine white or pale green mold upon the corpses, hence the more monstrous Ch'iang Shich are described as being covered with white or greenish hair. Regardless of form, the Ch'iang Shich is often given away by its prodigious talons and red, glowing eyes.

## Habits

The similarities between Chinese and European vampires are so numerous as to almost be frightening. Like the European variety, the Ch'iang Shich is either a restless peasant corpse or a diabolical feudal lord. In agreement with Western Church Fathers, the Chinese believed that their vampires were mortal corpses possessed by demons. The more elaborate Chinese metaphysics detailed this process, however. Each person possesses two souls: the *Hun*, or superior soul – a person's spiritual essence – and the *Po*', or inferior soul, the individual personality and baser instincts. In the creation of the vampire, the *Hun* passes out of the corpse to the afterworld, but the *Po*' is inhabited by an evil spirit. The result is a demonic monster which retains some qualities of the living individual. This aberrant condition could be brought about in a number of ways, once again very similar to the European vampire. The Ch'iang Shich could be caused by the moon shining upon an unburied corpse, or two favorites from all over the world, suicide or black magic. In another parallel to European belief, the Ch'iang Shich could also be created by an animal passing over an unburied corpse. The belief behind the effect of the moon and the proximity of an animal was that the *Po*' could absorb *yang*, or life force from these sources and affect a resurrection.

The Ch'iang Shich preys on mortals and requires blood, but does not transform its victims into more undead. Many times, the Ch'iang Shich is a territorial monster, and some are even bound to the immediate area of their crypt or grave. Thus, the greatest danger of encountering such a fiend will be within the resting places of the dead. Ch'iang Shich may have the ability to assume normal human form, even to the extent of impersonating a particular mortal. They were also known to take the form of various night birds (treat as owl or raven).



The Ch'iang Shich may be repelled by certain strongly odiferous substances, most notably incense and garlic. To destroy the Ch'iang Shich it must be burned completely; even a tiny piece of flesh will allow the monster to resurrect. Some have magically bound their hearts or life essences into objects or containers (see the Soul Jar spell, p. 74), which must be destroyed to end the vampires' existences.

## Advantages

Bite (30 points), Claws (15 points), HT +5 (60 points), Enhanced ST 20 (110 points), Magery 1 (15 points), Multiple Forms: Bird (10 points), Vampiric Immortality (60 points), Vampiric Resurrection (150 points).

*Optional:* Flight, Enhanced Move, Morph, Insubstantiality, Regeneration

## Disadvantages

Bad Smell (-10 points), Bloodthirst (-15 points), Dependency: Human Blood (daily, -30 points), Dependency: Tomb, Shroud or Coffin (-30 points), Dread: Consecrated Incense (-10 points), Dread: Garlic (-10 points), No Body Heat (-5 points), Pallor (-10 points), Unhealing (-20 points), Vulnerability: Fire (-10 points).

*Optional:* Hideous Appearance, Frightens Animals, Lifebane, No Shadow.

## Innate Magic

Sleep, Pestilence, Body of Air, Charm, Fog, Sense Life, Soul Jar.

**Base Cost: 300 points.**

## Ch'iang Shich in the Campaign

The Ch'iang Shich is the perfect example of the non-European vampire. The habits and characteristics all fit the traditional Western conception of the undead.

This type is suitable for use as a player character or non-player character, with enough flexibility to provide a monstrous powerful adversary or a newly-created and thoroughly confused fledgling protagonist. NPC Ch'iang Shich will usually fit the sinister but aristocratic feudal lord or vengeful seductress character types, precisely like their Gothic counterparts.

Of course, the Ch'iang Shich is most likely to be encountered in the Orient, or in adventures with an Oriental influence, particularly in any campaign utilizing *GURPS China*. Other settings that the Ch'iang Shich would fit into smoothly include any *GURPS Horror* adventure with connections to the East and *GURPS Fantasy's* mysterious lands of Sahud, where this type would be right at home. It would take relatively little effort to place Chinese vampires in *GURPS Cliffhangers*, *GURPS Old West* (in a horror crossover campaign) or a very cinematic *GURPS Martial Arts* campaign.

As the Ch'iang Shich can be created by black magic as well as accidentally, they can be powerful sorcerers or necromancers, enhancing their vampiric abilities. Alternately, like the European variety, it was sometimes assumed that the mortal corpse was only a shell that was actually possessed by a demon, in which case the Ch'iang Shich could be the possessor of even more esoteric abilities and knowledge.

The more monstrous form of the Ch'iang Shich is suitable as a ghoulish grave skulker, and may be a bestial predator or a cunning supernatural stalker.

# Civateteo

## Origin

Pre-European Mesoamerican, Civateteo means "Honorable Mother," a euphemism that recalls the Greek's reference to the Furies as "the Kindly Ones." These vampires, like many other predominantly female races, are the restless spirits of women who died in childbirth.

## Description

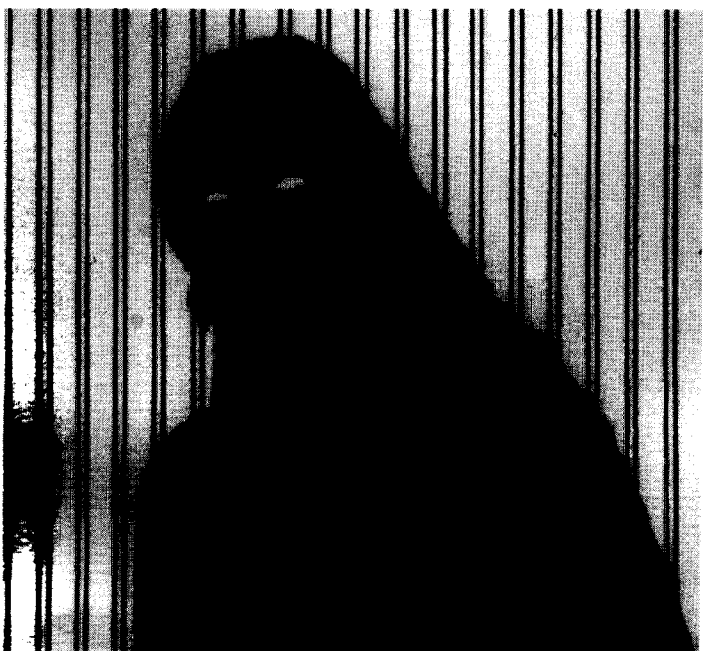
In appearance, the Civateteo are ghostly figures of women, some very beautiful and some hideously hag-like. The young ones are known as *Civapipiltin* ("Honorable Princess"). They are an eerie spectacle at any rate, with flowing shroud-like garments and the chalk-white skin that is associated with funeral rites of the Mesoamerican cultures. They are able to fly freely, and may be seen in groups, riding upon the winds of the storm above the crossroads or one of their shrines.

They may also take the form of animals, particularly coyotes, screech owls and poisonous serpents.

## Habits

Like many other vampire types, the Civateteo are associated with the crossroads, where they hold meetings very similar to the European witches' Sabbats, and where shrines are sometimes built to placate them. The Civateteo are driven spirits who seem to crave vengeance as much as blood. Because they died while giving life (in childbirth), they are driven to steal the life back, preferring to prey upon pregnant women and infants. They descend upon huts using their power of flight, sometimes under the cover of a storm. Civateteo may hunt in packs or alone.

There is no record of their daytime activities or resting place, although it may easily be supposed that they take refuge in funeral caves – associated both with the ritual chalk white-face that the Civateteo wears and with sorcerers, were-coyotes, and other maleficent entities of the area.



As genuine undead, the Civateteo possess Vampiric Invulnerability. Aside from the standard Vulnerability to fire, the Civateteo may also be killed by destroying or removing their hearts, in accordance with the Mesoamerican peoples' strong association of the heart and blood as the source of life.

## Advantages

Bite (30 points), HT +5 (60 points), Flight (40 points), Magery 1 (15 points), Multiple Forms: Snake (10 points), Multiple Forms: Coyote (10 points), Multiple Forms: Screech Owl (10 points), Enhanced ST 20 (110 points), Vampiric Immortality (60 points), Vampiric Invulnerability (150 points).

*Optional:* Appearance: Beautiful.

## Disadvantages

Bloodthirst (-15 points), Dependency: Human Blood (daily, -30 points), Frightens Animals (-10 points), No Body Heat (-5 points), Nocturnal (-10 points), Pallor (-10 points), Unhealing (-20 points), Vulnerability: Heart (-10 points).

*Optional:* Appearance: Hideous, Infectious Attack.

## Racially Innate Magic

Pestilence, Charm, Rain, Sleep, Windstorm

**Base Cost: 385 points.**

## Civateteo in the Campaign

The Civateteo are most likely to be encountered as NPC antagonists, as their insane thirst for vengeance upon women and children make them difficult to portray as sympathetic. However, exceptions are always possible, and one of the *Civapipiltin* who had retained some of her humanity could be an evocatively tragic figure.

One particularly interesting use for the Civateteo is within a crossover *Horror/Old West* campaign, as an authentic and uniquely American vampire type. Of course, the most natural home for these vampires would be within the realm of a *GURPS Aztecs* campaign. In such a setting, the Civateteo may well be in league with other evil beings of the region, specifically witches, sorcerers and were-coyotes.

## Langsoir

The Malayan Peninsula is rich in a variety of blood-sucking fiends. The two most strictly "vampiric" are included here (see also Penanggalen, p. 101).

The Langsoir is another strictly female type of vampire, with statistics similar to the Civateteo. They are typically portrayed as wearing long, flowing green robes and having floor-length hair. They always have very long, sharp nails that are effectively talons. Like the Civateteo, they have the power of flight and may take the form of screech owls. According to the familiar pattern for female types, the Langsoir are said to be the revenants of women who died in childbirth, and thus, prefer to prey upon infants and children. A unique detail about the Langsoir is their method of feeding. Rather than drinking the blood in the expected manner, the Langsoir has a hole in the back of her neck which she uses to ingest blood. This is an inconvenient method of attack and may only be used on absolutely helpless opponents.

To destroy a Langsoir requires special treatment: her nails and hair must be cut off and stuffed into the second mouth in the back of her neck. According to some sources, this not only ends her vampiric predations, but returns her to mortal existence.

# Gaki

**Origin**  
Japan.

## **Description**

The vampires of Japan are difficult to pin down from the legends. Certainly, the Gaki fit the criteria for the undead: they are walking corpses who thirst for blood. However, some Japanese vampires seem to be more like demonic spirits than former mortals.

For the most part, the Gaki conform to the general characteristics of the undead. They might be recognized by their pale skin, hollow features, and lack of body temperature. They are masters of shapeshifting, however, and have at their disposal not only the animal form of monstrous, tiger-sized cats, but the ability to take other human forms, even to the extent of impersonating a living person.

## **Habits**

The Gaki often uses guile and deceit to stalk its prey, rather than making a direct attack. A typical tactic is to gain the confidence of their intended victim in another form. This can be accomplished either by dispatching and replacing someone who is already close to the victim, or by merely taking a very pleasing form (generally of the opposite sex from the prey) and relying upon its charms.

The creature will then assume its feline form and drain the victim gradually to mask the attack as a normal illness. A Sleep spell is used upon the victim and any other members of the household to ensure the creature's feeding is undisturbed.

The Gaki is affected by religious paraphernalia, but only of the Shinto (and possibly Buddhist) faith. Shinto holy items and rites may or may not have the power to repel the creature, but it is unable to attack anyone on the grounds of a shrine or temple.

The Gaki seems to be able to avoid the daylight by shapeshifting to human form, but suffers no damaging effects from daylight. Gaki can be destroyed by normal weapons (although they will probably still be very difficult to kill), but may have an extra vulnerability to swords and other weapons consecrated by Shinto priests.

## **Advantages**

Bite (30 points), HT +5 (60 points), Enhanced ST 20 (110 points), Magery 1 (15 points), Multiple Form: Monstrous Cat (10 points), Morph (40 points), Vampiric Immortality (60 points).

*Optional:* Claws, Clinging.

## **Disadvantages**

Bloodthirst (-15 points), Dependency: Human Blood (daily, -30 points), Dread: Shinto Holy Site (-10 points), No Shadow (-10 points), Unhealing (-20 points).

## **Racially Innate Magic**

Charm, Enslave, Nightmare, Sleep.

**Base Cost: 240 points.**



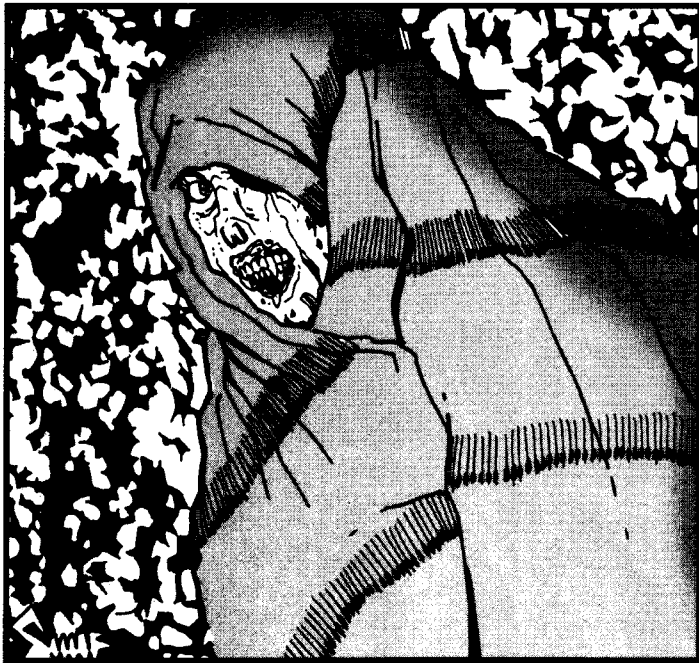
## **Gaki in the Campaign**

The Gaki is another good standard template for Oriental vampires in general. Their undead existence, hunting tactics and animal form all correspond with other legends well enough to allow the inclusion of the Gaki in virtually any vampire or horror campaign.

Gaki may be unrelenting predators who rarely leave their monstrous feline form, but they could also fulfill the role of any character type, like the modern Western variant. They can either be the victims of the curse of the undead, or the servants of the dark demons of Shinto and Buddhist legend. It is likely that some Gaki are non-human entities whose "natural" form is the feline.

The Gaki could be used as a PC or NPC, particularly in any fantasy or horror variant of a *GURPS Japan* campaign, as well as any adventure for *GURPS Horror* involving the mysteries of the East. A cinematic *GURPS Martial Arts* campaign could include Gaki as enemies for any characters from noble samurai to modern students who encounter the darker secrets of the Orient.

# Ghul



## Origin

The Ghul comes from Arabian folktales of the type popularized by "The Arabian Nights."

## Description

Ghuls are mortals of either gender who have obtained vampiric powers, generally through the use of dark sorceries and the assistance of demons. They may remain, to all appearances, normal mortals for many years. They were often portrayed as quite beautiful young women. Eventually their grisly habits take their toll, and ghuls become more monstrous looking until they are forced to retreat with their fellows to the shadows of the sepulchers. This is a process which takes years of cannibalistic, degraded behavior. It starts gradually, as ghuls develop minor inhuman features such as claws and fangs, and culminates in skeletal, corpse-like visages that can no longer be concealed. They may be attired in anything from rich finery to the decaying rags of the grave.

## Habits

Ghuls are capable of maintaining a mortal existence during the daylight hours, being unaffected by sunlight. Their only daytime behavior that may arouse suspicion is their inability to consume normal food. But come nightfall, the creature's predatory nature surfaces and it must skulk away from its home and family to prowl about graveyards and sepulchers in search of its sustenance: human flesh and blood. Ghuls are capable of feeding upon the dead, but probably prefer fresher fare, as they are described as decidedly predatory when given the opportunity. If its nocturnal activities and true nature are discovered, the Ghul will usually not hesitate to slay the overly inquisitive mortal to protect its secret, even a close friend or family member.

The Ghul is not Invulnerable, and holds the distinction of being the only type of vampire in the folkloric tradition to be

recorded as being dispatched by a kick to the groin. However, as with any of the damned, it is best to burn them to be sure, as Ghuls who are improperly disposed of were known to resurrect as true undead.

## Advantages

Bite (30 points), Claws (15 points), Dark Vision (25 points), Discriminatory Smell (15 points), HT +5 (60 points), Immune to Disease (10 points), Enhanced ST 20 (110 points), Magery 1 (15 points), Tunneling: 2 Hex/Turn (60 points), Silence +3 (15 points), Unaging (15 points).

*Optional:* Appearance, Regeneration, Vampiric Immortality, Vampiric Resurrection.

## Disadvantages

Dependency: Human Flesh or Blood (-30 points), Bloodthirst (-15 points), Frightens Animals (-10 points).

*Optional:* Appearance, Bad Smell.

## Racially Innate Magic

Charm, Pestilence.

## Base Cost: 315 points.

## Ghuls in the Campaign

Ghuls are one of the most human types amongst the ranks of the damned. Consequently, they have greater flexibility within the campaign. The native lands of the Ghul are covered in *GURPS Arabian Nights*. The Ghul would make an excellent primary adversary race in any campaign that had the requisite fantasy or horror elements and mana level.

Capable of posing as normal mortals, Ghuls may be encountered anywhere there is civilization of some kind, and hence prey. They are often city dwellers, as this allows access to the large funeral grounds necessary to their existence.

Ghul PCs are possible, but this would require a certain amount of work on the part of the player and GM, as some of the Ghul's habits are extraordinarily distasteful, even by the standards of vampiric conduct. However, a Ghul might prove an interesting addition to a party of sufficiently unorthodox adventurers in a *GURPS Arabian Nights* campaign, and in a *GURPS Horror* campaign with the potential for monstrous PCs, a Ghul might be one of the more human-like possibilities (apart from their feeding habits, that is).

Ghuls may present themselves in any human role they wish, so NPC Ghuls might be encountered in almost any context. The GM may use this to his advantage, as the Ghul's human appearance and daytime activity can be used to thoroughly confuse characters who have come to expect nocturnal monstrosities only. Almost all Ghuls are the result of some infernal magic, and some of them are powerful mages.

## Hannya

The Hannya is a variety of Japanese monster that is nearly identical to the Arabian Ghul. Like the Ghul, the Hannya was thought of as primarily female, although male specimens were not unheard of. The Hannya's vampiric condition was thought to be the result of demonic possession, and if this is the case they are likely to be utterly irredeemable monsters. The Hannya also ate flesh as well as drinking blood, and their preferred prey (at least for the female variety) were children and young men.

The Hannya lacks the Ghul's abilities at social camouflage, however, possessing an appearance that is Hideous at best.

# Gothic

## Origin

This is perhaps the most familiar guise of the vampire. This is the portrayal of the legend that was popularized by Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, although the literary roots of this type of vampire can be traced back as far as the writings of Lord Byron. Since then, the popular conception has been dramatically shaped by films. The Gothic Vampire is the vampire of the late show and the "penny dreadful." It is the image that is most easily recognized by modern observers, with all of the familiar associations. The Gothic Vampire was at least partially generated by the tension between Old-World superstition and Victorian rationalism, and this conflict still works quite well in a modern setting.

## Description

The Gothic Vampire represented a dramatic change in the nature of the undead (see *Vampir* and *Vyrolakos*, below). The Gothic vampire is almost always attractive (though perhaps with a more monstrous visage lurking below the surface), suave and cultured, with an aloof and aristocratic appearance and nature.

Of course, the most familiar representative of this type is Count Dracula, although he had his predecessors (such as Varney and Lord Ruthven) who fit the same mold. He is often the evil nobleman, probably from some exotic foreign land, who can exert a seductive charm to mask his true nature. His nature is likely to be violently divided, as he swings between arrogance and politeness, savagery and civility, horror and tragedy, without warning. While he is likely to possess mental disadvantages such as Sadism, Bloodlust and Megalomania, he is just as likely to have a Code of Honor or Sense of Duty. He might be something of an anachronism, if he recalls the days when his noble blood meant absolute power in a feudal society.

When the Gothic Vampire is female, she is another incarnation of the lethal seductress. She also is likely to possess a divided nature, a haunting and ethereal beauty that masks the savage beast. She is probably the victim and thrall of a more powerful male vampire, in accordance with the attitudes of the time. However, there are always exceptions, as in Sheridan Le Fanu's classic, "Carmilla," which features an independent female villainess in pure Gothic style who menaced Victorian virgins as well as any male fiend.

## Habits

The Gothic Vampire's feeding habits are inextricably tangled with its love life. While this type of vampire may prey on the average mortal like cattle, with no compassion or subtlety, its habits change dramatically when it encounters a mortal it is attracted to. The Gothic Vampire's appetites are all one, and when it finds someone it *hungers* for, it will attempt to possess him utterly, perhaps even granting the kiss of immortality.

The Gothic Vampire invariably has some link to its final resting place, and requires a grave, coffin, or shroud to sleep in. While this type is generally assumed to be extremely vulnerable to sunlight (with Count Dracula dying quickly and horribly at the climax of countless films), in its literary roots most vampires (including the Count) suffered no such effects.

The Gothic Vampire may be destroyed by the most familiar methods – a wooden stake driven through the heart, preferably followed by burning of the body. As mentioned, more recent

interpretations of the Gothic Vampire have firmly established a dramatic vulnerability to sunlight, but this is not necessarily the case. Beheading is used less often but is also effective. Christian holy items are often effective in repelling them, and blessed items may actually be damaging enough to destroy weaker vampires.

## Advantages

Bite (30 points), Dark Vision (25 points), Enhanced ST 20 (110 points), HT +5 (60 points), Magery 1 (15 points), Vampiric Dominance (35 points), Vampiric Immortality (60 points), Vampiric Invulnerability (150 points).

*Optional:* Multiple Forms (usually bat, cat, dog or wolf).

## Disadvantages

Compulsive Behavior: Cannot Enter Without Invitation (-10 points), Dread: Garlic (-10 points), Dread: Holy Symbols (-10 points), Dread: Running Water (-10 points), Dependency: Human Blood (daily, -30 points), Dependency: Native Soil (daily, -60 points), Infectious Attack (-5 points), No Body Heat (-5 points), Nocturnal (-10 points), No Reflection (-10 points), No Shadow (-10 points), Unhealing (-20 points), Vulnerability: Wooden Stake, Heart Shot (-5 points), Vulnerability: Beheading (-10 points).

*Optional:* Bloodthirst, Frightens Animals, Vulnerability: Holy Items, Vulnerability: Sunlight.

## Racially Innate Magic

Beast Control (Mammals), Beast Summoning (Mammals), Body of Air, Charm, Pestilence, Steal Youth, Zombie, any weather spells.

## Base Cost: 280 points.

## Gothic Vampires in the Campaign

The Gothic Vampire is so familiar as to almost have become a cliché. This is the undisputed default version of the vampire in the Western hemisphere, with a distinct image built upon by a long succession of writers, artists, and film-makers. Even the Modern Vampire (see p. 99) is merely an updated variety of its Gothic ancestors.

Gothic Vampires may fulfill any role that has come to be associated with the undead. However, Gothic Vampires of any advanced age will probably assume an identity that permits their aristocratic, anachronistic and passionate personalities.

They are quite often encountered in situations with some connection to their Old World European origins, but may have adapted to the modern world with superhuman efficiency. Having essentially defined the nature of vampiric contagion, Gothic Vampires are easily created and justified at any age.

Most GMs who allow vampire PCs will want to begin with the Gothic Vampire. As a native to the genre from the beginning, this type will fit seamlessly into nearly any traditional horror campaign. The GM may wish to use the familiar roles of the Gothic Vampire (the evil aristocrat, the seductress, etc.) to build a familiar setting and atmosphere within a vampire adventure, or he may wish to develop other vampiric roles to contradict the player's expectations.



# Half-Vampire

## Origin

Fictional; films and literature.

## Description

Many depictions of vampirism have included an intermediary state between life and undeath. This may happen when a victim has been preyed upon but not slain by the walking dead. In the genre of the vampire tale, this is most often imposed upon depraved henchmen and victims of vampiric seduction. This type will often be found as a subordinate to the Gothic Vampire (see p. 91).

The Half-Vampire will appear as a normal mortal, although perhaps somewhat pale and sickly. They may display any of the symptoms of vampirism, perhaps to a lesser degree. Most commonly, the victim of this state will demonstrate an increased sensitivity to sunlight and a thirst for blood. Also, this intermediary state often implies some measure of control by the vampire that caused the infection (see *Vampiric Dominance* and *Slave Mentality*, pp. 63 and 67).

## Habits

Half-Vampires are not likely to be full-blown murderous predators . . . yet. They might content themselves with raw meat or the blood of animals.

While they might be sensitive to sunlight, or merely inclined to be nocturnal, they do not specifically have vampiric resting conditions, so they are still able to do the bidding of their masters during the day.

There may be a progressive development of vampiric symptoms as the Half-Vampire falls more totally under the power of its undead master. For example, one might begin with

a 1-point quirk "Always wears sunglasses" to a 10-point Delusion "Sunlight is harmful," to a 30-point Dread before actually becoming Vulnerable. The GM may balance the point cost with a similar development of advantages.

The Half-Vampire is still mostly mortal, and as such, subject to normal damage and injury. However, if the infection has progressed sufficiently, the Half-Vampire may rise again as true undead unless disposed of by one of the prescribed methods.

## Advantages

Night Vision (10 points), HT +5 (60 points).

*Optional:* Extra Hit Points, Hard to Kill, Increased ST.

## Disadvantages

Bloodthirst (-15 points), Odious Personal Habit: Craves Blood (-10 points), Slave Mentality (-40 points), Pallor (-10 points).

*Optional:* Dread: According to type.

## Base Cost: -5 points

## Half-Vampires in the Campaign

The Half-Vampire, or minion, requires some sort of relationship to a more powerful vampire type in most situations. The most traditional role for this type will be as the victims and servants of Gothic Vampires. However, it is entirely reasonable to assume that this type of vampirism is the intermediate state between the living and any variety of undead (perhaps requiring some customizing of abilities depending upon the type of the infecting vampire).

As NPCs, Half-Vampires are most likely to be encountered as subservient minions of established vampires. These near-human servants allow more options for a party's undead antagonists, as they can operate during daylight hours and are not restrained by many of the typical vampire repellents. Alternately, this state may be used as a poignant fate for vampiric victims, and it may or may not be possible to reverse the transformation at this point.

This type can be quite useful for PC vampires as well, providing a gradual transition for player characters who either begin the game as newly infected vampires or who become infected in the course of play. In this case, the first disadvantage that the players and GM will want to address is the Slave Mentality and ensuing relationship with the Half-Vampire's creator.

## Dhampir

A variety of Half-Vampire known to Gypsy legend, the Dhampir is the offspring of a vampire and a mortal. The traditional Gypsy vampire, the *mullo*, is possessed of an insatiable sexual appetite and is capable of producing offspring. They have a number of supernatural abilities which give them a natural advantage as foes of the undead. Dhampirs may have the power to Shapeshift, generally into wolf form like the *mullo*. They have supernatural powers of perception when detecting the undead, even if the creatures are invisible (see *Sense Spirit*, p. 74). Some sources indicate that a gunshot or any attack on a vampire by a Dhampir is potentially lethal.

The Dhampir could provide an interesting racial option for PC or NPC vampire hunters who require a little magical assistance.





# High-Tech

## Origin

Fictional; Modern film and literature. The attempt to represent the disease of vampirism with a pseudo-scientific rationale has appeared in enough modern depictions of the myth to warrant the High-Tech Vampire as a unique type. This covers all of the victims of strange plagues, bizarre pseudo-scientific mishaps, and genetic tampering who end up in a vampiric state (this is not to be confused with the Alien Vampire, as the High-Tech Vampire was once human). Some good examples of this type can be found in Richard Matheson's novel *I Am Legend*, the film version of the same story (*The Omega Man*) and Marvel Comics' title "Morbius, the Living Vampire."

The High-Tech Vampire is quite capable of existing in a world with no mana. Superhuman strength, bloodthirst, and the animation of the dead may all be the result of some obscure medical condition. However, the introduction of psionics may be necessary for some of the more sensational abilities of the undead.

## Description

The changes in the High-Tech Vampire's appearance are likely to be more subtle than those of his supernatural counterparts. While probably extremely human-like, the High-Tech Vampire may have physical manifestations of its symptoms. A more extreme Albinism disadvantage could account for corpse-like paleness, red eyes and sensitivity to sunlight. This type may also develop vestigial fangs and claws.

Of course, in a more cinematic setting (such as *GURPS Supers*) or Tech Levels above TL9, virtually anything is possible. Like the Alien Vampire, this type needs customizing.

## Habits

The feeding requirements of the High-Tech Vampire are likely to be presented in a scientific or medical context. This type might be fully alive and thoroughly mortal, but still require the blood of other humans to supplement their own. The reasons for this might call for the definition of this type of vampirism as a degenerative (rather than preservative) condition. The disease of vampirism might even qualify as the Terminally Ill disadvantage.

Almost any vampiric powers or limitations might be explained within a scientific world-view, so the GM has almost absolute latitude in interpreting how close this type is to its folkloric ancestors.

The High-Tech Vampire may be easier to kill, lacking the supernatural vitality of its magical brethren, or it may possess full Vampiric Invulnerability if the body is actually clinically dead.

## Advantages

Bite (30 points), HT +5 (60 points), Enhanced ST 20 (110 points).

*Optional:* Regeneration, Vampiric Immortality, Vampiric Invulnerability.



## Disadvantages

Bloodthirst (-15 points), Dependency: Human Blood (Daily, -30 points), Nocturnal (-10 points), Pallor (-10 points), Unhealing (-20 points).

*Optional:* Albinism, Appearance, Dread, Infectious Attack, Terminally Ill, Unnatural Feature, Vulnerability: Sunlight.

## Racially Innate Abilities

Possible psionics.

**Base Cost: 115 points.**

## High-Tech Vampires in the Campaign

There are two likely scenarios in which the High-Tech Vampire is likely to appear.

The first situation is when a single individual, due to a freak accident or deliberate experimentation, is infected with the vampiric condition. Such an individual will then be required to deal with the unique conditions of his new existence, and the resulting stigma of so closely resembling a supernatural monstrosity. This type of character may be used in a wide variety of ways – an evil murderer who revels in his new predatory nature, a distraught victim attempting to find a cure, or a super-human anti-hero who uses his new-found powers for good while struggling with a curse that requires morally repugnant acts.

The other most likely scenario is when a new form of vampiric plague has arisen, transforming a portion of the population into cannibalistic monsters. In this situation, the characters will need to decide, based upon their own nature and temperament, how to cope with the disease, their fellow monsters and their human prey.

Either one of these situations may be applied with equal ease to both player and non-player characters, depending upon the tone and goals of the campaign.

# Human

## Origin

This is not truly a vampire at all. However, there is enough material on this type of case, both fictional and true, to warrant mention.

The history of this type of behavior is long and varied, ranging from such notable cases as Elizabeth Bathory (see p. 17) in the Middle Ages to modern "vampire killers" like John George Haigh (see p. 37).

## Description

The Human Vampire could be anyone.

## Habits

This is the mortal human being who, for one reason or another, feels compelled to drink the blood of others. The Human Vampire can be anyone from a civilized eccentric who

cultivates willing victims to a psychopathic serial murderer who stalks his prey. One explanation for this type of behavior is a condition referred to as haemosexuality: sexual arousal at the sight of blood. Regardless of the Human Vampire's methods, his compulsion for blood is probably obsessive, and his entire existence is likely to be dominated by his thirst.

This type of vampire has the advantage of being able to appear in any setting and not being dependent upon a supernatural explanation. Such a character could be used as a particularly repulsive villain in any story. While not necessarily supernatural, the Human Vampire might possess any number of extraordinary abilities as the setting allows, such as great strength or superior senses. If he actually believes himself to be a "real" vampire, he may very well possess lesser versions of vampiric disadvantages, like phobias over daylight, holy symbols, etc.

As a "normal" mortal, the Human Vampire is susceptible to regular damage and injury rules, although some particularly vicious individuals might possess almost super-human durability in the tradition of unstoppable psycho-killers. This may be represented with Extra Hit Points or Hard to Kill.

## Advantages

*Optional:* Alertness or Acute Senses, Extra Hit Points, Hard to Kill, Enhanced ST, Recovery.

## Disadvantages

Bloodthirst (-15 points), Odious Personal Habit: drinks blood (-15 points), Secret (-20 points)

*Optional:* Berserk, Bloodlust, Compulsive Behavior, Delusions, Nocturnal, Paranoia, Sadism, Phobia: As per Dread.

**Base Cost: -50 points.**

## Human Vampires in the Campaign

The Human Vampire can be encountered in any setting, from high fantasy to realistic horror. While the more subtle, non-violent character types can be used to create a very unusual roleplaying experience, the most likely appearance of the type will be as a predatory murderer. Such characters are likely to be repulsive in the extreme, despite whatever facade they present to the world.

It is *exceedingly* unlikely that such a character can be successfully molded into a workable protagonist, but anything is possible.

## Moroi

The Moroi is a variety of Human Vampire from Romania that *does* have supernatural origins. These are mortals who, through accident of birth or improper conduct, are destined to rise as the undead. They are also possessed of certain supernatural powers in life, most notably the power to project forth their spirit, or astral form, to work mischief (see Bebarlang, p. 85). Some Moroi also have the ability to take on animal forms like a lycanthrope.

While appearing as normal (if somewhat depraved) human beings, the Moroi have their own distinguishing features. The males are usually without hair, and the females may be recognized by their red complexion.

Upon its death, a Moroi will soon resurrect as a full-fledged undead vampire, becoming known as a Strigoi at this time (see p. 23).





# Incubus/Succubus

## Origin

The Incubus and Succubus are non-human, demonic spirits from the Christian demonology of Medieval Europe.

## Description

The Incubus and Succubus are actually the same type of creature. The Incubus appears male, and preys exclusively on women; the Succubus appears female, and preys on men. Any one creature of this type is capable of manifesting as either gender.

In their "natural" form, these creatures are spiritual, non-corporeal entities, but they are capable of assuming physical form. They were categorized as a form of lesser demon by Medieval demonologists. It was also believed that they were the subjects, or even the children, of the arch-demon Lilith, and thus may be related to the Lilitu; see p. 97).

While able to appear as exceptionally beautiful humans, the Incubus/Succubus was portrayed in its natural form as being as monstrous as any other medieval demon, with bestial or reptilian features. A more modern conception of the Succubi are as fallen angels: alluring women with large, bat-like wings.

## Habits

Incubi and Succubi are nocturnal predators who steal the vitality of mortals, hence their inclusion as a vampire type. However, their methods were somewhat different from the traditional blood sucker. The Incubus/Succubus drains its victim of life essence though sexual contact instead of blood. They traditionally prefer sleeping victims, as the entire incident might be dismissed as an erotic dream, leaving the creature free to repeatedly feed on the same person without arousing suspicion. One of the warning signs associated with the predations of the Incubus/Succubus was the nearly universal account of the deathly coldness of their flesh.

It was also believed that children might result from liaisons between these demons and human kind; such offspring were always considered to be tainted by their infernal ancestry, and thus predisposed to evil, madness, and crime. There are always exceptions, however, as some legends describe the arch-wizard Merlin of Arthurian fame as the result of such a union.

While limited by no special resting conditions, these demons can only assume physical form between sunset and sunrise. Upon the first light of day, they fade into incorporeal form.

As non-physical spirits, Incubi and Succubi are extremely difficult to permanently destroy. Their physical bodies may take damage normally, but upon "death" they merely dissipate into spirit form, only to return again. They might be driven off or banished by appropriate religious or magical rites such as Exorcism, but it will require magic to destroy one of these demons completely.

## Advantages

HT +5 (60 points), Insubstantiality (80 points), Vampiric Resurrection (150 points), Invisibility (40 points), Magery (15 points), Morph (40 points). Vampiric Immortality (60 points).

*Options:* Regeneration, Winged Flight.



## Disadvantages

Dependency: Life-Force (daily, -30 points), Nocturnal (-15 points), No Body Heat (-5 points), No Reflection (-10 points).

*Optional:* Dread: Religious Symbols, Unnatural features.

## Racially Innate Magic

Steal HT 21 (24 points), Charm 21 (24 points), Enslave, Nightmare, Sense Life, Sleep.

**Base Cost: 433 points.**

## Incubi/Succubi in the Campaign

As the Incubus/Succubus is one of the types with the most purely demonic origin, its role in the campaign will probably be shaped by these infernal influences in some manner. Medieval demonologists classified the Succubi as subjects of the demon queen Lilith; if this is the case, these demons may be in league with all manner of vampires and demons.

The only characters likely to encounter an Incubus/Succubus are their victims, or those daring or foolish enough to deliberately call upon them with sorcery. They may appear as ghostly nocturnal tormentors, bringing torrid nightmares and physical weakness to unsuspecting sleepers, or they may disguise themselves as normal humans and seduce their victims under a pretense of normalcy. Either way, a relationship with one of these demons will lead to the rapid decline and inevitable death of their mortal lover if events are allowed to run their course.

# Lamia

## Origin

The Lamia are another traditionally female type from the ancient world. Found primarily in the legends of Greece, the Lamia were said to be the servants of the witch-goddess Hecate. If this explanation is used, the Lamia may be non-human entities, but they can just as easily be former mortals who have fallen under the curse of the undead.

According to legend, the first Lamia had an affair with Zeus, the king of the gods. When Zeus's wife Hera discovered the liaison, she cursed the Lamia with her inhuman predatory form, pronouncing her fate: as an inhuman monster with a taste for infants, she would never again bring live children into the world, but rather only be responsible for dead ones.

## Description

The Lamia are female fiends in the model of the "vengeful seductress." They can appear as enchantingly beautiful women, and this is their preferred form for hunting. In their "natural" form, the Lamia will always have some reptilian features, such as scales, fangs or a serpent tail in place of legs.

## Habits

Like so many female vampires, the Lamia prefer the blood of infants. Thus, her hunting grounds are more likely to be family homes rather than lonely wilderness or city streets. However, there was also a seductive side to the Lamia's hunger, and sometimes she will cultivate a lover to prey upon. The Lamia was generally considered to be uninhibited in her choice of this type of victim, seducing and feeding upon men and women alike.

Lamia are incapable of manifesting during the daylight hours.

## Advantages

Bite (30 points), +5 (60 points), Enhanced ST 20 (110 points), Insubstantiality (80 points), Magery 1 (15 points), Multiple Forms: Human (10 points), Multiple Forms: Serpent (10 points), Vampiric Immortality (60 points), Vampiric Resurrection (150 points).

*Options:* Claws, Clinging, Infravision, Invisibility, Regrowth, Vampiric Dominance.

## Disadvantages

Bloodthirst (-15 points), Dependency: Blood (daily, -30 points), Lecherousness (-15 points), No Body Heat (-5 points), Nocturnal (-10 points), Unhealing (-20 points).

*Options:* Dread, Frightens Animals, Infectious Attack, No Reflection, Unnatural Features, Vulnerability.

## Racially Innate Magic

Beast Control (Reptiles), Beast Summoning (Reptiles), Charm, Enslave, Sleep.



**Base Cost: 430 points.**

## Lamia in the Campaign

The Lamia is another variant upon the "true" vampire, with enough traditional qualities of the undead to allow their appearance as an exotic variety in any vampire-oriented campaign.

Because of their ancient origins, Lamia are likely to be extremely experienced and powerful beings. Some accounts describe them as supernatural entities and some give them mortal origins; this will be for the GM to determine on a case-by-case basis. Non-human Lamia will be extremely ancient beings from the Greek underworld, and possibly minions of some more powerful evil. Once-mortal Lamia will be the victims of some curse, or possibly infected by the predations of another Lamia.

A Lamia is suitable as a major villain for any fantasy or horror adventure with influences from Greek mythology.

## Mormo

While the Empusa and Lamia seemed to share qualities, it was generally agreed that the third variety of this type were uniformly hideous. Remove the Multiple Form: Human advantage and reduce appearance to Hideous, Monstrous or Horrifying. Mormo will possess a number of obvious reptilian features, and may be related to the legends of the gorgons.

## Jaracacas

Another vampire with a reptilian form, the Brazilian Jaracacas may be treated as a male variant upon the Lamia. The Jaracacas generally feeds upon the breasts of nursing mothers in the form of a serpent, while keeping the displaced infant silent by placing its tail in the child's mouth.

# Lilitu

## Origins

Ancient Mesopotamia; especially Babylon. The Lilitu was perhaps the first true vampire, and many of the details of this monster from legend are shrouded by the passage of time.

The Lilitu are the ancestors of all of the incarnations of the vampire as vengeful seductress that proliferated in the Middle East and Mediterranean during ancient times, and they become personified in the identity of the demon queen Lilith.

## Description

The Lilitu was a spirit, possibly demonic or previously mortal, yet she could become corporeal enough to attack her victims and engage in sex. Traditionally, the Lilitu was always portrayed as female.

Lilitu appear as stunningly beautiful women. In their true form, they possess great bird-like talons for feet and large wings. They were depicted in art as having wings either in place of, or in addition to, their arms. If the GM decides this is the case the cost of the wings is reduced.

Lilitu may also assume the form of a screech owl.

## Habits

The Lilitu prefer some rather specific victims. Children, particularly infants, are their favorite meals. However, healthy young men are also at risk, as the Lilitu lust for more than blood.

The Lilitu is a non-corporeal spirit that manifests only at night.

## Advantages

Appearance: Very Beautiful (25 points), Bite (30 points), Claws (15 points), HT +5 (60 points), Enhanced ST 20 (110 points), Invisibility (40 points), Insubstantiality (80 points), Magery (15 points), Multiple Forms: Owl (10 points), Speak with Animals (15 points), Vampiric Immortality (60 points), Vampiric Resurrection (150 points), Winged Flight (30 points).

*Optional:* Vampiric Dominance.

## Disadvantages

Bloodthirst (-15 points), Dependency: Human Blood (daily, -30 points), Lecherousness (-15 points), Nocturnal (-10 points).

*Optional:* Infectious Attack, Unhealing.

## Racially Innate Magic

Beast Control, Beast Summoning, Charm, Enslave, Nightmare, Sleep.

## Base Cost: 570 points.

## Lilitu in the Campaign

Due to their incredibly ancient origins, Lilitu are likely to be even more removed from humanity than the rest of the damned. An "original" Lilitu will be millennia-old, immensely powerful and probably possessed of motives which seem incomprehensible to modern thinking. The GM will have to decide whether the Lilitu are immortals with the wisdom of the ages, or pre-human monsters that are driven by their hunger for humans.



Since they are creatures of ancient times, a GM who intends to use the Lilitu extensively in a campaign will probably wish to devise an explanation for their long absence and subsequent reappearance in the world, unless he wishes to assume that the many vampires of the evil seductress model are different manifestations of the same entities, manifesting as Lilitu, Lamia, Strix, Succubi (etc., etc.), depending upon the situation. Such a campaign might feature all of these types under the direction of Lilith.

Lilitu should probably be a relatively infrequently encountered type, as such a venerable and exotic variety of vampire should be reserved for dramatic revelations about the secrets of vampirism.

# Loogaroo

## Origin

The Loogaroo is found in the folklore of Haiti and other Caribbean islands. The word is a Creole variation on the French term *loup-garou*, which originally indicated a werewolf, just like the Slavic *vyrdolak*.

The *Asema* of Surinam and the *Sukuyan* of Trinidad are identical to the Loogaroo.

## Description

The Loogaroo is a mortal, often an old woman who is also a witch, who has sold herself to the powers of darkness for vampiric powers. Such persons are generally so corrupt and degenerate that it gives them an Unattractive Appearance. Traditionally, they fit the stereotype of the hag.

They are also capable of becoming great, grey swine (as per the wild boar, p. B144), or balls of Spirit Fire (see p. 77) with a sinister, leering, jack-o-lantern face.

## Habits

During the day the Loogaroo maintain a normal (if probably squalid and degraded) mortal existence. At night, they go to their meeting place and assume their nocturnal identities.

The Loogaroo are associated with the silk-cotton tree. Also known as the jumbie or devil tree, it is a focal point for the Loogaroo. Here they hold their meetings and shed their skins. Leaving their skins hanging on the devil tree, they emerge in Spirit Fire form and blaze into the night to do their evil. They usually hunt by using their power of flight to approach from the roof. They are not invulnerable, and injuries sustained even in Spirit Fire form will be readily apparent upon their mortal flesh.

Animals immediately sense Loogaroo in mortal or supernatural form, and dogs particularly hate them. While in Spirit Fire form, the Loogaroo's skin is extremely vulnerable (although there may be magical protection). If a Loogaroo's skin can be obtained and salted, she will instantly die upon reassuming her physical form with a layer of salt burning her internally. As mortal beings, the Loogaroo may be injured and killed normally, even in Spirit Fire form.

## Advantages

Magery 1 (15 points), Multiple Forms: Swine (10 points).

## Disadvantages

Dependency: Human Blood (-30 points), Dread: Garlic (-10 points), Frightens Animals (-10 points), Vulnerability: Salt (1 level, -10 points).

*Optional:* Appearance: Unattractive.

## Racially Innate Magic

Nightmare, Spirit Fire 21 (24 points), Sleep, Steal HT 21 (24 points).

**Base cost: 13 points.**

## Loogaroo in the Campaign

The most common setting in which to encounter the Loogaroo is any adventure with a Voodoo theme, most obviously a *GURPS Voodoo* campaign. Loogaroo are first and foremost black magicians, and will probably possess elaborate Voodoo spells and rituals appropriate to the magic level of the campaign.

As almost invariably malignant sorcerers and witches, the Loogaroo are most suitable as NPC antagonists. Because they have attained their evil powers through deliberate interaction with the forces of evil, Loogaroo are always at least moderately powerful mages, usually in the traditions of Voodoo and its African origin, Obeah. Because of her repertoire of spells (quite often focused upon necromancy and enchantment), the Loogaroo can be equally dangerous day or night. With common origins in the beliefs of Voodoo, Loogaroo and Zombies may often be encountered together. Powerful Loogaroo mages will undoubtedly have the knowledge and foresight to create a number of unliving bodyguards and servants.

## Obayifo

The Obayifo is an African variety of this type known to the Ashanti people, and is quite possibly the precursor of the later Loogaroo. Like the Loogaroo, the Obayifo hunts in Spirit-Fire form. The Obayifo prefers the blood of children, but may also prey upon plants like the Adze (see p. 83). They are particularly known for their raids upon cocoa crops.

They may be recognized in their mortal guises by their perpetual hunger and interest in food (treat as Gluttony disadvantage).

## Tlalicque

Another female type from pre-Columbian Mexico, the Tlalicques, are nearly identical to the Loogaroo. The swine form should be exchanged for the incongruous shape of a wild turkey, in which form the Ylalicques disguise themselves for the hunt when not in Spirit Fire form.



# Modern

## Origin

Modern literature and film.

## Description

The "Modern" Vampire is the Gothic European vampire updated to survive in the latter half of the 20th century. These are usually youthful, streetwise fiends more at home in a dark alley or smoky nightclub than a crypt or Carpathian castle.

Just as the Gothic Vampire had a traditional social status (the aristocracy), the Modern Vampire also has a recurring role: that of the outsider. They are often rebels, outcasts and hoodlums, associated with a wild, untamed nocturnal existence. Whether older and elegant, such as Anne Rice's "brat prince"-turned-rock-star, or the rough, leather-clad outlaws of such films as *Near Dark* and *The Lost Boys*, the Modern Vampire represents the dark side that can never be accepted by polite society.

## Habits

These are vampires who have adapted to life in the latter half of the 20th century. These vampires live in the densely-populated world of the present, where prey is plentiful and subtlety is more important than savagery.

It is necessary for Modern Vampires to maintain some degree of secrecy to avoid undue attention from modern authorities (science, law enforcement, the government, etc.). This often makes a nomadic existence desirable, to stay one step ahead of the evidence.

Modern Vampires may take on almost any normal social role, but often tend to fit the mold of some kind of outsider.

## Advantages

Bite (30 points), HT +5 (60 points), Enhanced ST 20 (110 points), Vampiric Immortality (60 points), Vampiric Invulnerability (150 points).

*Optional:* Regeneration, Magery, Vampiric Dominance.

## Disadvantages

Bloodthirst (-15 points), Dependency: Human Blood (daily, -30 points), Infectious Attack (-5 points), No Body Heat (-5 points), Nocturnal (-10 points), Pallor (-10 points), Unhealing (-20 points), Vulnerability: Sunlight (-60 points).

*Optional:* Dread, Vulnerabilities.

## Racially Innate Magic

Optional.

## Base Cost: 255 points.

## Modern Vampires in the Campaign

There are a number of ways to treat the Modern Vampire.

One common method is to define the condition of vampirism as a singular phenomena, assign all vampires this package, and assume that this basic type of creature was responsible



for all of the legends, and any vampiric traits the GM does not wish to include may be assumed to be incorrect rumors about the "species." This gives the GM the freedom to define vampirism as he sees fit, without trying to incorporate many different historical and cultural perspectives on the undead.

The Modern Vampire may also be defined as a subset of its Gothic predecessors, having changed slightly to adapt to the latter half of the 20th century and beyond. Such a rationale also has the advantage of explaining the Modern Vampire's image as a youth-culture rebel, since this defines the Modern Vampire as more of a social than supernatural phenomena amongst the vampiric population. In this scenario, the primary vampire population would be Gothic and Modern Vampires (with at least a few Half-Vampires) and the GM could choose whether to incorporate more ancient and exotic undead into the campaign.

Finally, it may be assumed that the Modern Vampire is a relatively recent development, triggered by some supernatural or pseudo-scientific event. This could occur with or without a history of other vampires throughout the ages. In this case, the Modern Vampires might well be seen as dangerous upstarts by existing vampires, and as an alarming new development by the foes of the damned.

The Modern Vampire is ideally suited as a PC, both as a topical interpretation of the vampire legend, and as a type that may be easily adapted to the GM's purposes.

# Nosferatu

## Origin

The term Nosferatu was first made popular in *Dracula*, and was used as the title of two movies based upon the tale. It is one of the traditional Romanian expressions for a vampire, but probably comes from the Greek root *nosphoros*, meaning "plague carrier." Here it is used to refer to a combination of modern and traditional vampire concepts. The image was created by films but the concept is one of the basic archetypes of the vampire legend.

The Nosferatu is a synthetic monster. The early Medieval concept of the vampire (before the more definitive consensus of the Vampir/Vyrolakos of the late Renaissance) was a personification of death and disease as a predatory monster.

## Description

The Nosferatu is hairless and skeletal, a symbol of death and the dead. Large and jagged or rat-like fangs, pointed ears, red eyes and prodigious talons are also likely. The Nosferatu takes no pains toward social camouflage; it reeks of an open grave and if it wears clothes at all, they will be the rags or shroud of the crypt. This portrayal includes not only the cadaverous film villains but also the many medieval etchings depicting the vampire as a skeletal symbol of death.

## Habits

The Nosferatu, in its purest form, is Death. A cold, implacable force of evil with no more compassion or humanity than a plague virus, its primary characteristic is hunger; its mortal personality completely submerged. Not likely to be a grand planner, it is concerned with the immediate business of survival by continually slaking its greedy thirst. Still, it will possess a certain animal cunning. Victims of the Nosferatu will probably display wounds from a savage mauling rather than the relatively civilized double puncture wound of film and literature.

The Nosferatu is an opportunistic hunter, taking what it can get. As with most of the damned, it experiences more satisfaction when it devours youth, beauty and innocence. The Nosferatu is tied to a funeral site of some sort, and must return there to take its rest. Thus, it can stray no more than half a night's journey from that location. The Nosferatu is a walking plague, and those who encounter it, or even pass after too closely, take a grave risk of serious infection. General disease rules may be used, or it may be assumed to be the Bubonic Plague.

The Nosferatu is a territorial monster, tied to the earth of its grave. Note that, unlike the Gothic Vampire, the Nosferatu cannot transport this earth; it is bound to the grounds of the cemetery where it is interred, and must sleep *within* the earth each day. A Nosferatu may only be moved if its grave is disinterred and relocated with ceremonies appropriate to its original funeral (variable depending upon religion).

The Nosferatu, as a descendant of the European vampires, may be dispatched by the traditional methods. Count Orlock, of the 1922 film *Nosferatu*, began the tradition of vampires being utterly destroyed by the rising sun.

## Advantages

Bite (30 points), Claws (15 points), Dark Vision (25 points), HT +5 (60 points), Enhanced ST 20 (110 points), Magery 1 (15 points), Multiple Forms: Rat (10 points), Speak

with Animals (15 Points), Vampiric Immortality (60 points), Vampiric Invulnerability (150 points), Tunneling: 2 Hex/Turn (60 points).

*Optional:* Clinging, Silence, Super-Jump, Vampiric Dominance.

## Disadvantages

Appearance: Monstrous (-25 points), Bad Smell (-10 points), Bloodthirst (-15 points), Dependency: Human Blood (-30 points), Dependency: Grave, Soil or Shroud (-60 points), Dread: Garlic (-10 points), Dread: Religious Symbols (-10 points), Frightens Animals (-10 points), Infectious Attack (-5 points), Lifebane (-10), No Body Heat (-5 points), No Reflection (-10 points), Nocturnal (-10 points), Unhealing (-30 points), Vulnerability: Sunlight (5d/round, -60 points), Vulnerability: Stake (-5 points), Vulnerability: Beheading (-10 points).

*Optional:* Vulnerability: Running Water, No Shadow.

## Racially Innate Magic

Beast Summoning (rats, wolves), Beast Control, Body of Air, Darkness, Nightmare, Pestilence, Fog, Sleep.

**Base Cost: 235 points.**

## Nosferatu in the Campaign

The GM may choose to depict the Nosferatu in a number of ways. Nosferatu may be skeletal and cadaverous, as in many medieval woodcuts, emphasizing the creature's identity as one of the dead. They might also be portrayed as more beast-like, displaying the face of the predator that they are. The countenance of Count Orlock, depicted in two films, was a synthesis of these two faces, having the rat-like features of his bestial allies and the form of the corpses the plague-bearing rodents left in their wake.

The Nosferatu's role in the campaign will most often be that of the monstrous antagonist. Nosferatu are the very image of death; the Nosferatu's hunt is the literal manifestation of Death eating Life. Consequently, the Nosferatu tends to be implacable, insatiable and unrelenting as death itself. With this interpretation, the Nosferatu is a bestial predator, maintaining only enough awareness of its natural life to retain the drives for feeding and "survival."

An alternate interpretation allows the unfortunate victim of this type of vampirism to retain their own identity (although perhaps not without a fair amount of psychological toll). This allows for fiendishly clever villains whose very countenance proclaims the twisted nature of their souls, or tragic heroes or victims struggling against a destiny that has conspired to make them a monster in appearance and deed.

This second category of Nosferatu could be an interesting player character in the right horror campaign. The Nosferatu is even more obviously an outsider than most vampires, and would face an additional challenge in interacting with whatever mortal society the setting provides. The "monster with the soul of a man" role gets at the very heart of some of the fundamental themes of the vampire tale.





# Penanggalen

## Origin

The Penanggalen is another denizen of the demon-infested Malay Peninsula (see also Langsoir, p. 88)

## Description

The Penanggalen might well be the most ghastly vampire of legend. During the day, the Penanggalen lives her life as a normal mortal woman, with no ill effects from daylight. At night, however she transforms into a monstrous predator. Her head detaches from her body and flies upward, carrying her digestive system with it. In this form she flies through the night in search of prey; a woman's head with long, dark hair streaming behind and her dripping entrails dangling below.

## Habits

The Penanggalen is created when a mortal makes a pact with demons in exchange for such powers.

The Penanggalen only hunts in her monstrous form, flying through the night dripping acidic bile and searching for blood. She is a domestic hunter, as her preferred prey items are infants, or even better, pregnant women and the unborn.

After the hunt, the Penanggalen must drag her now bloated entrails back to her lair before dawn. While the Penanggalen has no dependency upon funerary items, she does require a large vat of vinegar in her resting place. Upon her return after feeding, she must soak her swollen digestive track in vinegar to shrink it enough to return to her body.

The Penanggalen is vulnerable to the thorns of the jeruja tree (or perhaps to wood or organic weapons in general). If these are fastened around the windows of a dwelling, the Penanggalen may catch her dangling entrails upon the sharp thorns, becoming stuck until dawn brings destruction to her monstrous form.

## Advantages

Bite (30 points), HT +5 (60 points), Flight (40 points), Magery 1 (15 points), Multiple Forms: Monstrous (10 point), Silence +4 (20 points), Vampiric Invulnerability (150 points).

## Disadvantages

Horrifying Appearance (-30 points), Bad Smell (-10 points), Bloodthirst (-15 points), Dependency: Blood (daily, -30 points), Dependency: Vinegar (daily, -15 points), Dread: Garlic (-10 points), Frightens Animals (-10 points), Vulnerability: Wood (-10 points), Vulnerability: Sunlight (3d/round, -60 points).

*Optional:* Infectious Attack, Unhealing.

## Magic

Fog, Pestilence, Sleep.

**Base Cost: 135 Points.**

## Penanggalen in the Campaign

Being both diabolically inspired and unspeakably hideous, the Penanggalen is suitable as a truly ghastly antagonist and lit-

tle else. These creatures are singular aberrations and unlikely to be encountered often or in numbers. The Penanggalen may take any role as a mortal woman during the day, but at night her monstrous curse is hideously apparent. While dangerous and frightening in any setting, the Penanggalen benefits from more primitive settings due to her obviously unnatural nature. A

Penanggalen will need to act with much more subtlety and guile when hunting in the modern world, as flying heads and entrails tend to attract attention.

As the Penanggalen has willingly bargained for such a unpleasant existence, it is hard to imagine one as a sympathetic protagonist. Even an unwillingly cursed Penanggalen (if such a thing exists) is so hideous as to be potentially damaging to mortals' sanity with its mere presence (-6 to Fright Checks).

## Kephn

A variety of the damned native to Burma, the Kephn is physically identical to the Penanggalen. However, the Kephn are traditionally male instead of female, and are capable of drawing out sustenance in the form of the victim's soul as well as through the medium of blood.



# Strix

## **Origin**

The Strix are a type of female vampire/witch that originated in ancient Rome.

## **Description**

The legends of the Strix often portray them as witches as well as vampires. This is another mortal type who have deliberately become cannibalistic predators through their association with black magic.

Strix were primarily associated with their shapeshifted form, a blood-drinking bird of vague description (treat as owl or raven).

## **Habits**

Like so many female vampire-witches, the Strix have marked preference for the blood of infants and children. They almost always hunt in their shape-shifted avian form, drawing blood with their long, sharp beaks.

The Strix are limited to their mortal form during daylight hours, transforming to hunt only after dark.

While mortal and thus susceptible to injury and death by normal means, all Strix are experienced witches with additional magical powers.

## **Advantages**

Bite (only in animal form; 30 points), HT +5 (60 Points), Magery 1 (15 points), Multiple Forms: Bird (10 points).

*Optional:* Hard to Kill, Speak with Animals.

## **Disadvantages**

Bloodthirst (-15 points), Dependency: Human Blood (daily, -30 points).

*Optional:* Dread.

## **Racially Innate Magic**

Any. The Strix are experienced practitioners of the black arts before they achieve their vampiric status. Some likely starting choices include Charm, Darkness, Fog, Nightmare and Sleep.

## **Base Cost: 70 points.**

## **Strix in the Campaign**

Since they have voluntarily chosen their predatory natures through the use of black magic, Strix are inherently villainous beings and will probably be encountered in this context. When they are hunting, Strix will act as relentless predators with blood as their only goal. In human form, however, they may exercise all of the guile and subtlety of any witch or evil sorcerer. Strix were described as hunting in groups, implying some sort of society. This will probably manifest as some manner of coven or cult hierarchy composed exclusively of these blood-thirsty witches. They will undoubtedly be in league with whatever forces of spiritual evil are appropriate to the campaign world.

## **Aswang**

The Aswang is a vampire-witch entity known in the Philippines. They are nearly identical to the Strix – mortal mages who assume the form of birds to hunt.



In addition to the abilities of the Strix, the Aswang may summon and control birds to use as spies to guide her to promising victims. Like the Strix, the Aswang must return to human form at dawn.

The Aswang has one additional disadvantage, the very common Dread of garlic.

## **Bruxsa**

Yet another mortal vampire-witch that assumes avian form, the Bruxsa hails from Portugal. Like the Strix, Bruxsa are heavily associated with witchcraft and congregate in covens. The Bruxsa is distinguished by beginning her vampiric career in a particularly merciless manner: she breaks her ties to her former human life by first consuming her own children.

# ✠ Ustrel

## Origin

Ustrel are vampire children, known to parts of Poland. They were believed to be created when a child died without the benefit of a baptism. After nine days, the child would rise again and begin preying upon livestock and other animals, before eventually graduating to humans.

## Description

Ustrel appear as ghastly, malformed and undernourished children with large talons and visible fangs. They will usually be found wearing the shroud or rags from the grave, if they bother to go clothed at all.

## Habits

Having died before attaining maturity, Ustrel lack the social skills to conceal their nature. They will often haunt the outskirts of civilization, preying on domestic animals and living children.

Traditionally, an Ustrel preferred to attach itself to a herd of cattle, concealing itself by clinging to the body of one of the herd. The Ustrel could then feed freely, switching "rides" as it depletes the cattle. A farmer who was familiar with this menace would protect his stock by means of a "need-fire." The entire herd was run over a small brush-fire, forcing the Ustrel to release its grip to avoid the flames.

It was also believed that the Ustrel's natural enemies were wolves, which would kill the immature bloodsucker on sight. However, unless entirely burned, the Ustrel might return as a full-fledged vampire.

## Advantages

Bite (30 points), Claws (15 points), Vampiric Immortality (60 points), Vampiric Resurrection. (150 points).

*Optional:* Clinging.

## Disadvantages

Appearance: Monstrous (-25 points), Dread: Fire (-20 points), Dependency: Any Blood (daily, -15 points), Enemy: Wolves (-10 points), Unhealing (-20 points).

*Optional:* Infectious Attack.

**Base Point Cost: 165 points.**

## Ustrel in the Campaign

The Ustrel is an irredeemable little monster, without enough of a human personality to temper its behavior. They are cowardly but voracious, and it is likely their handiwork will be noticed before it is ever seen. The biggest challenge in dealing with an Ustrel will probably be in finding it.

This type is suitable for the historical vampire children of various legends. For a vampire child PC or NPC with any depth, another template adjusted to the child's statistics will probably be more appropriate.

## Callicantzaros

The Greek version of the vampire child was also caused by the child dying without baptism, but could also be related to a birth during the holy days. They are identical to the Ustrel

except for a more monstrous appearance, with black skin and red eyes.

## Pontiannak

The Pontiannak is native to Malaysia, and has a special relationship with another vampire type, the Langsoir (see p. 88). A Langsoir is created when a woman dies in childbirth; if the child is also stillborn, the result is a Pontiannak.

These are vampire children, like the Ustrel, but the Pontiannak have the ability to transform into screech owls and begin hunting human prey immediately.



# Vampir

## Origin

The is the traditional European vampire, straight out of the folkloric record and the actual reports. The Vampir is the Slavic variety of revenant, as opposed to the Baltic Vyrolakos from roughly the same time period. There is enough overlap in the historical accounts to justify complete interchangeability between the two types in most campaigns.



## Description

Far from the aristocratic image of the Gothic Vampire that is the Vampir's literary descendant, this type is likely to be the ghastly, bloated corpse of a peasant. The Vampir is neither evilly attractive nor diabolically frightening. This is merely the undecayed dead, an unhappy being trapped between life and death. They appear much as they did in life, with the extenuating factor that death and burial are usually not beneficial to one's beauty. They do not possess any overt signs of their monstrous condition. Alternately, they may possess a more ghostly nature.

When found in the grave, they are even less appealing. The pallor of death has been replaced with the ruddy glow of the blood it is bloated with. The entire corpse may be swollen with the monster's unwholesome repast, and it leaks from the eyes, ears, nose and mouth. Often, there is evidence of some sort of rejuvenation of tissue in the form of new nails and fresh, pink skin visible through cracks in the old.

## Habits

The Vampir typically returns from the grave three days after his death, although this varies. It will most likely return to familiar surroundings, often preying upon its own family first. It generally attacks sleeping victims, biting or strangling them as they lie helpless. The life-sapping powers of the Vampir are very strong, and often the victim will sicken and die after a single visit. Additionally, anyone killed by the Vampir is likely to rise as well, spreading the vampiric condition in an epidemic pattern. So contagious is this strain of vampirism that when such a revenant preys upon livestock (as they often do), those who eat the infected animals run the risk of returning upon their own death.

During the day, the Vampir is essentially a corpse, unable to move or act. It is totally helpless if disinterred and destroyed while resting within its grave.

The only certain method of disposing of this menace is burning. Staking was often used as a preventative or preliminary measure, but it was generally agreed that until the body of the

Vampir was reduced to ashes, the supernatural epidemic might break out again.

## Advantages

Bite \* (30 points), Magery 1 (15 points), Vampiric Immortality (60 points), Vampiric Resurrection (150 points).

\*Only usable during Materialization.

## Disadvantages

Astral Entity (-25 points), Bad Smell (-10 points), Bloodthirst (-15 points), Dependency: Human Blood (daily, -30 points), Dread: Garlic (-10 points), Infectious Attack (-5 points), Nocturnal (-10 points), No Reflection (-10 points), Unhealing (-20 points).

*Optional:* Dread. Vulnerability: Beheading, Vulnerability: Wooden Stake in Heart.

## Racially Innate Magic

Astral Projection-21 (24 points), Materialization-21 (48 points), Pestilence, Sleep.

**Base cost: 192 points.**

## Vampir in the Campaign

There is some uncertainty in the record about the precise nature of the Vampir. They were sometimes reported as ghostly and sometimes as physical entities. This interpretation assumes an astral being that may manifest for short periods of time. If the GM desires a physical revenant, he should use a modified form of the Vyrolakos (see p. 105).

*The Vampir is an astral entity.* Like mortal vampires such as the Bebarlang (see p. 85), the Vampir only hunts in spirit-form. The corpse is immobile but remains the focus and anchor for the astral form. When the body is "killed" for the final time by the prescribed method, the spirit's link to the material world is severed, releasing it to whatever lies beyond.

In either case, there are two options for how the animation of the Vampir is supplied:

*The Vampir is animated by the spirit of the deceased.* For some metaphysical, theological or magical reason, the Vampir is a restless soul who has remained tied to his mortal shell in a hellish, predatory half-life. He may retain some or all of his human personality or he may have succumbed to mindless subservience to his appetites. However, some trace of the mortal "soul" remains.

*The Vampir is animated by a demonic spirit.* In this case, the form of the mortal, whether in spirit or flesh is merely the shell inhabited by some infernal presence. The demon hungers for human lives and blood without compassion and may never be reasoned with, but rather must be destroyed.

## Ka

While not truly a vampiric entity, the Egyptian concept of the Ka is a form of undead that may be represented by the astral type of Vampir. The Ka is stationary, bound to the location of its own tomb. It is not predatory and does not hunt, but if its funereal resting place is disturbed it may retaliate. The Ka, like the Vampir, is a non-physical astral entity that remains tied to its own corpse. Thus it cannot physically attack, but may possess the life-sapping powers of the undead, or even more powerful magics depending upon how versed in the arcane arts the subject was in life.

One possible explanation for the Ka's less ravenous nature may lie in the funeral customs of the Egyptians: once mummified, the spirit has no need to steal the life of others to preserve its earthly focus.

# Vyrolakos

## Origin

This is another view of the traditional European vampire, drawn from the legends of the Balkan nations (primarily Greece and the surrounding environs).

## Description

The Vyrolakos is much like the Vampir – merely an undecayed corpse. While the Vampir's visitations have something of a ghostly nature in them, the Vyrolakos is disturbingly solid. It may appear as hearty and vital as in life, but the eyes will reveal its soulless, insane condition.

## Habits

The Vyrolakos is perhaps not as bloodthirsty as some undead, but it makes up for this in maliciousness. Aside from the expected feeding, the Vyrolakos will indulge in vandalism and property damage, rape and violent assaults, and general malice and mayhem.

Some Vyrolakos, however, seem to have continued relatively normal "lives," even reportedly taking up new residences and wives, and fathering children.

A Vyrolakos might be compelled to rest within its grave or coffin, or it might well return to "live" at home, although generally its behavior will compel it to hide from angry citizens soon after its return.

Like its Slavic counterpart, the Vyrolakos can only be assured destruction by complete cremation. According to some accounts, the heart may be vulnerable too (although it was more often removed entirely than merely staked, and sometimes boiled in vinegar or oil). For some reason, the Vyrolakos is extremely resistant to exorcism and religious rites.

## Advantages

Bite (30 points), Night Vision (10 points), HT +5 (60 points), Enhanced ST 20 (110 points), Vampiric Immortality (60 points), Vampiric Invulnerability (150 points).

## Disadvantages

Bad Smell (-10), Dependency: Human Blood (monthly, -10 points), Frightens Animals (-10 points), Infectious Attack (-5 points), No Body Heat (-5 points), Nocturnal (-10 points), Pallor (-5 points), Unhealing (-20 points).

*Optional:* Any mental disadvantage, Dread.

## Basic Cost: 345 points.

## Vyrolakos in the Campaign

The Vyrolakos provides the GM with a more subtle form of vampirism that is still soundly within the European folkloric tradition. The Vyrolakos is one of the most human-like vampires, and the tales recount some who went on to lead absolutely normal "lives." The most dramatic change caused by this variety of vampirism seems to have been mental, as many Vyrolakos returned with violent, frightening or just bizarre behaviors.

The Vyrolakos may present an ideal solution for GMs who wish to include vampires in less cinematic campaigns. This can be made to serve plot considerations too, if the GM wishes to



assume that the legends of the vampire are exaggerations of an actual but less dramatic condition. This solution will work equally well for player or non-player characters.

## Tympanios

Tympanios are the traditional revenants of the Balkan states before their exposure to the more predatory Slavic variety. They are identical to Vyrolakos, but are not as prone to mental disadvantages and have no dependency upon blood.

Tympanios were usually created by violation of the rules of the Greek Orthodox Church, particularly by excommunication. It is left for the GM to decide what conditions might bring about this "less damned" state of undeath in other settings.



# Vampire Minions

equal to its "Dispersed by" number, it is reduced in size by one hex. The GM decides which hex of the horde is removed. Hits taken by a horde are cumulative.

GMs should feel free to extrapolate from this table. For example, some hordes – such as spiders or scorpions –

might be poisonous, and some – like bats and rats – may carry diseases. Generally, the more intelligent the creatures, the easier they are to disperse, but a horde with a "group mind" or guided by an outside intelligence could be much harder to break up.

A horde does not have to stay in one piece. Parts of the horde may break off from the main group to pursue additional victims. If a horde breaks apart, treat each part of the horde as a separate horde (as long as it is still large enough to qualify) until they rejoin.

## Animals

Many different types of vampire have come to be associated with various beasts. This usually manifests in the ability to transform into one or more types of animal or the power to summon and control types of animals. While the bat and wolf are most closely connected to vampires in popular imagination, vampires of other cultures could become birds, serpents or even insects. As might be expected, most of the animals associated with vampires are largely nocturnal.

## Swarms and Hordes

A group of small creatures is treated as a unit when attacking. Such a group (filling one hex on the combat map) is called a swarm. A swarm will attack any victim(s) in its hex, automatically hitting (though special clothing may protect a victim). Swarms can be dispersed if they take enough hits. Swarms are covered in detail in the *GURPS Basic Set* (p. B143).

A Horde behaves much like a swarm, but it's bigger. In fact, a person cannot count how many creatures are in a horde – they fill each hex so completely that, in the case of crawling hordes, the floor can barely be seen beneath them. Use the swarm rules to determine their behavior unless the following rules specify otherwise.

Type of Horde	Damage/Turn	Base Size	Move	Hits to Disperse
Bats	1d-2	15	6	4 hits/hex
Birds	1d-1	15	8	6 hits/hex
Crawling Insects	1d-1	5	2	5 hits/hex
Flying Insects	1d-3	15	5	3 hits/hex
Large rats	1d+2	5	4	4 hits/hex
Small rats	1d	5	3	3 hits/hex
Snakes	1d-3	5	2	5 hits/hex

*Damage per Turn* indicates the amount of damage taken at the end of every turn by each character overwhelmed by a horde. This is not an "attack" in the sense that there is no roll to hit and no chance to parry; nothing anyone does will prevent at least part of the horde from getting to him. The horde can move and bite in a single turn, even if the victim has dispersed a hex-full in his turn. Characters do, however, get their DR against this damage.

*Base Size* is how many hexes it takes to make a horde. If a horde is reduced below its base size (in hexes), each remaining hex becomes a swarm.

*Move* is the number of hexes a horde can move. All hordes move last in each turn. A larger horde moves even slower; for each 10 hexes of horde (30 hexes for flying or swimming hordes) reduce Move by 1. No horde may have its Move reduced to 0 though – a horde can always move at least 1.

*Hits to Disperse* is the number of hits necessary to disperse a single hex of the horde. Use the rules for attacking a swarm (p. B143) to damage a horde. However, hordes are harder to disperse than swarms. Whenever a horde takes "dispersal damage"

## Bat

ST: 1 -2	Move/Dodge: 12/6	Size: < 1
DX: 13	PD/DR: 0/0	Weight: < 1 lb.
IQ: 4	Damage: 1d-5 cut	Reach: C
HT: 13/2		



Bats are the only true flying mammals and are found the world over, inhabiting caves, structures, and deep woods. They are nocturnal and hunt alone, though they often live in large colonies. The body size is close to a mouse, although some fruit eating varieties are the size of squirrels. The wingspan ranges from 1 to 5 feet.

Most insect-eating bats have poor vision, using echolocation (sonar) for guidance and locating prey. In fruit-eating and vampire bats, the vision is better than the echolocation. The apparently stumbling flight of a bat is actually well-coordinated, and for the most part, bats are no threat to humans – unless carrying rabies or some other disease. Most bats eat insects, some eat fruit, and one family – the vampire bat – drinks blood.

Vampire bats belong to the family Desmontidae, which is made up of the species *Desmodus ecaudata*, *Desmodus rotundus* and *Desmodus rufus*. They are tropical creatures indigenous to Central and South America, and some Caribbean islands. The vampire bat was named after the creature of legend by European explorers when it was discovered in the New World. Bram Stoker cemented the association between the vampire and the bat when he attributed to the Count the power to transform into gigantic version of this creature.

The vampire bat subsists solely upon blood, taking no other nourishment. This bat makes a tiny, painless cut in a sleeping mammal or bird and licks up the blood that flows out – an amount negligible for large animals. They will not attack an active animal or person. Protective netting is favored by those who must sleep in the open air in regions where these creatures are common.

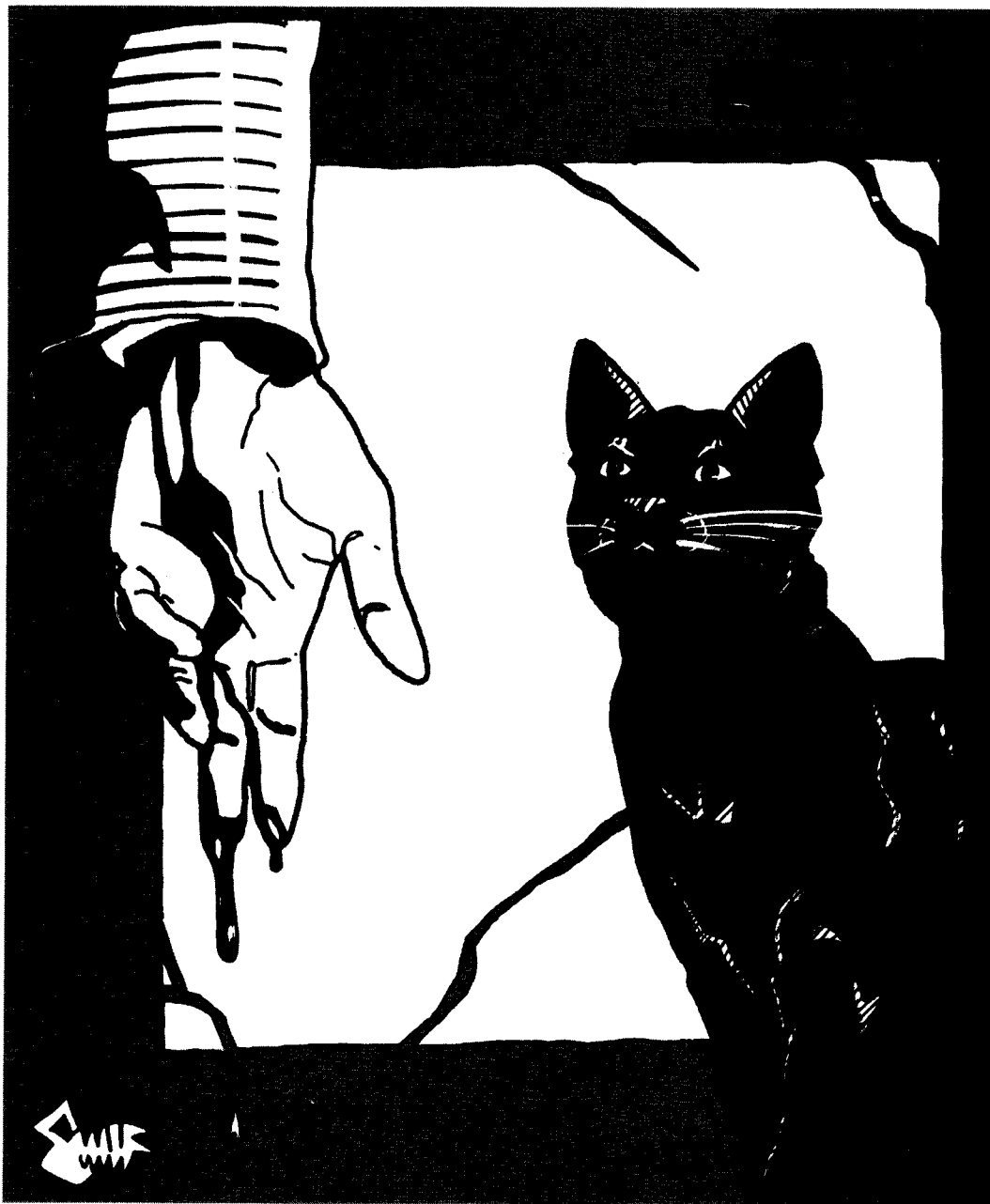
It would take at least three vampire bats to cause even 1 HT of damage in a single night. There is more danger from secondary infection than from blood loss: vampire bats can be carriers of rabies, and they can transmit malaria and other diseases from an infected animal to others. Other bats may also carry rabies. In a vampire scenario, bats might carry even worse diseases.

### Cat

**ST:** 2-4  
**DX:** 14  
**IQ:** 5  
**HT:** 13/2-3

**Move/Dodge:** 15/7  
**PD/DR:** 0/0  
**Damage:** 1d-4 cut

**Size:** < 1  
**Weight:** 5-15 lbs.  
**Reach:** C



Cats, especially black ones, have been viewed with suspicion by many different peoples. It was widely believed that cats might actually be witches, vampires or demons in disguise. In China and Europe it was believed that allowing a cat to scratch or leap over a newly deceased corpse was risking vampiric animation.

Additionally, many cultures believed that cats as a species were prone to the development of vampiric or demonic powers. Japanese vampires manifested as monstrous cats, with statistics more similar to a panther or tiger.

Cats attack by biting and scratching, doing 1d-4 damage (treated as cutting damage because claws are short).

### Dog

A domestic canine, used for hunting or as a pet. Dogs vary so greatly in size that precise stats are useless – see p. B142 for more. Most dogs coats are not thick enough to serve as armor, although a thick-coated dog will have PD 1, DR 1. Some breeds have very keen noses, and a smell roll of 18.



Some dogs are feral – treat them as wolves, coyotes, dholes, dingoes or jackals – whichever seems most appropriate. Dogs bite in close combat, doing cutting damage for their ST. Some breeds will bite repeatedly; others will bite and not let go.

In traditional Eastern European folklore, the vampire more often has the form of the dog attributed to it than the wolf. The people of Romania and the Slavic states believed a black dog was the most common guise of the undead. In Bram Stoker's novel, Count Dracula actually assumes the form of a large dog upon his arrival in England, and at no time assumes the form of a wolf.

However, it may be assumed that any vampiric being that transforms into a dog will do so as a particularly large and dangerous specimen, making statistics interchangeable with wolves.

### *Owl*

<b>ST:</b> 2	<b>Move/Dodge:</b> 17/10	<b>Size:</b> 1
<b>DX:</b> 14	<b>PD/DR:</b> 0/0	<b>Weight:</b> 5-25 lbs.
<b>IQ:</b> 4	<b>Damage:</b> 1d-3 cut	<b>Reach:</b> C
<b>HT:</b> 12/5-7		

Owls are nocturnal birds of prey, feeding mostly on small rodents: rats, mice, moles and shrews (although larger owls will also hunt rabbits, cats and coyotes . . . in fact, there are tales of great horned owls attacking intruding humans). There are many species of owl, varying in length from 5 inches to over 2 feet, and living in a number of different habitats. They possess excellent vision and hearing, and their feathers are very soft, rendering their flight noiseless and making them consummate hunters.

Owls are among the most intelligent birds, and some species make good pets. They can be trained to perform simple tasks – retrieve an object, fetch prey, etc. They attack in close combat with beak and claws, doing 1d-3 cutting damage.

The screech owl has been associated with female vampires since ancient times. In the ancient world, the Babylonian Lilitu, the Hebrew arch-demon Lilith and the Aztec Civateteo were all connected to the form of the screech-owl, and in Malaysia the Langsoir was given the same shape. Their nocturnal habits, predatory nature and eerie cry makes owls a readily understandable choice for shape-shifting vampires.

### *Raven*

<b>ST:</b> 3-4	<b>Move/Dodge:</b> 14/7	<b>Size:</b> < 1
<b>DX:</b> 11	<b>PD/DR:</b> 0/0	<b>Weight:</b> 5-12 lbs.
<b>IQ:</b> 5	<b>Damage:</b> 1d-4 cut	<b>Reach:</b> C
<b>HT:</b> 14/5		

Ravens are smart and mischievous, and can learn to mimic some human speech (although they have very harsh voices). They eat carrion and almost anything else, and prefer to live on cliff faces.

The raven provides a good template for all small- to medium-sized birds that might be used as minions or shapes for vampiric use. Because of their natural ability to mimic speech, a vampire transformed into a raven might be able to communicate verbally. As carrion eaters, ravens may have been associated with vampires by those who observed them feeding upon fallen human corpses at battlefields and similar situations.

### *Rat*

<b>ST:</b> 1	<b>Move/Dodge:</b> 6/6	<b>Size:</b> < 1
<b>DX:</b> 13	<b>PD/DR:</b> 0/0	<b>Weight:</b> 1-2 lbs.
<b>IQ:</b> 4	<b>Damage:</b> 1d-5 crush	<b>Reach:</b> C
<b>HT:</b> 17/2		

Rats are found everywhere there are people, and even in the wild. Roll versus HT-2 to avoid infection from a rat bite – this may be an extra hit of damage or an actual disease.



Rats and vampires have long been associated with each other, at least since both of them came from the East to the West along with the Black Plague. Rats, like vampires, are disease carrying vermin that can continue to bring sickness and death until the last one is exterminated.

While transformation into a rat has the advantages of stealth and mobility for a shapeshifter, the true threat posed by rats comes when they are summoned as a horde. A swarm of rats can overrun almost any opponent in a wave of biting, scabbling bodies; this threat provides not only a very difficult target but is also psychologically distressing enough to most mortals to require a Fright Check.

### **Serpent**

<b>ST:</b> 2-15	<b>Move/Dodge:</b> 2 -4/6	<b>Size:</b> < 1-4
<b>DX:</b> 13	<b>PD/DR:</b> 0/0	<b>Weight:</b> 1-25 lbs.
<b>IQ:</b> 3	<b>Damage:</b> *	<b>Reach:</b> C
<b>HT:</b> 15/2-20		

Snakes come in many varieties and are found in nearly every habitat. The statistics provided are typical for venomous snakes found in temperate regions. Tropical serpents are likely to be larger and more venomous.

Anyone bitten by a venomous snake must make a roll against HT-4 immediately, and then again at the beginning of the day for the next three days. A failed roll means the venom does 2d damage – a critical failure means death. Modifiers to the HT roll: +1 if the venom is sucked out within 5 minutes; +2 if antivenin (TL6+) is used for treatment; and -2 if the victim performs strenuous physical activity. Effects occur within 15 minutes of the injection if the initial HT-4 roll is failed, or upon arising on the day the HT-4 roll is failed if the initial roll was successful. If all rolls are successful, the venom has no effect.

Serpents are generally feared and associated with the powers of evil by many peoples around the world. Snakes were believed to possess the ability to charm their prey with their gaze, like the vampire. Some vampires, like the Lamia and Jaracacas, have the ability to take the forms of serpents.

### **Wolf**

<b>ST:</b> 8-10	<b>Move/Dodge:</b> 9/7	<b>Size:</b> 1
<b>DX:</b> 14	<b>PD/DR:</b> 1/1	<b>Weight:</b> 70-170 lbs.
<b>IQ:</b> 5	<b>Damage:</b> 1d-2 cut	<b>Reach:</b> C
<b>HT:</b> 11-13		

The wolf is a ferocious carnivore, found throughout North America, Europe, and Asia, and in early historical times it was even more widespread. Wolves are courageous and intelligent, with great fighting ability and endurance. They are largely nocturnal, but they do hunt during the day. Packs range from 4-30, though lone wolves may also be encountered. Wolves mate for life and are quite protective of their mates and cubs.

They usually hunt in packs, having a good sense of pack tactics. They attack by biting in close combat for 1d-2 cutting damage. They tend to rush in, bite out a piece of flesh, and then dodge away while other wolves perform the same operation. Eventually the prey weakens from shock and loss of blood and can be dragged down.

Wolf attacks on humans are a subject for heated debate. There are no verified recent attacks, but ancient tales abound with stories of wolves devouring people. The odds are good that wolves will not attack humans unless the climate is so severe that other prey is very scarce.

Many stories in both folklore and literature have supposed a connection between wolves and vampires. Often, as in Gothic literature like *Dracula* and many Slavic folktales, the vampire and wolf were seen as allies, both presenting the same predatory threat. In other regions, it was believed that wolves were natural enemies of the unnatural vampire, and would attack the undead on sight. In Romanian and Gypsy folklore, wolves were trained as guardians against the undead. In a sufficiently cinematic campaign, such animal allies might prove extremely useful to the would-be nightstalker.



## Human Minions

Vampires are often served and attended by mortal minions. These servants guard the vampire during the day and interact with mortal society in the vampire's stead.

There are a number a ways a mortal might become the slave of a vampire.

First, there is the Half-Vampire (see p. 92), a mortal who is partially under the sway of an undead master. These minions are often controlled by Vampiric Dominance and the resulting Slave Mentality.

Loyal human servants may also be guaranteed by the use of Charm and Enslave spells. This type of servant may be very expendable. These enchanted servants might also be used for feeding between hunts as well.

Finally, a vampire may acquire willing mortal minions. Such mortals may be motivated by a desire for personal power, which they hope to be granted in return for services. The most likely scenario in this case is the "apprentice" servant who hopes to be eventually granted the kiss of the undead, and the power and immortality it brings. Another possibility is that a vampire may be attended by sycophantic servants or cultists who simply grovel before any superior power. Because of the vampire's super-human nature, such servants' devotion may actually constitute worship, resulting in fanatic loyalty equal to those Charmed. Finally, a vampire might acquire a mortal assis-

tant and companion through the less sinister avenues of friendship and love. This is perhaps the most powerful hold a vampire can hope to have over a mortal, and certainly the most difficult to achieve.

## Lycanthropes

Vampires and were-creatures share a great deal in common, both in history and nature. The Balkan term Vyrlok and its derivatives, indicating a vampire, comes from the Slavic term for werewolf, even though Balkan vampires were almost never shapeshifters.

It was commonly accepted in Eastern Europe that upon its death, a werewolf would arise as a vampire unless proper precautions were taken.

There has been a tendency in modern interpretations to assign lycanthropic servants to powerful vampires. This was seen most prevalently in the "monster mash" films like *The House of Dracula* and *The House of Frankenstein* where Dracula, Frankenstein's Monster, the Wolfman, and the inevitable mad scientist and his hunchbacked servant were all tossed into the same setting. However, even Bram Stoker had working notes for Dracula that included one version of the death of Quincy Morris, the American character, at the fangs of a werewolf (presumably under the direction of the Count himself).



# 6 CAMPAIGNS

**VAMPIRE CAMPAIGNS** can range from subtle, fringe-culture investigations of unexplained deaths (where the vampires lurk in the background) to full-fledged, vampires-as-PCs, Goth-and-gargoyle cinematic adventures.



## Other Monsters

When designing a campaign with vampires as the central focus, the GM must make some decisions about the supernatural population. A world that permits the existence of vampires might well support other supernatural creatures. However, it is quite possible to develop an entire campaign with vampires as the only supernatural menaces, with different types providing all the variety necessary for monstrous antagonists. With the advantage of immortality, vampires have the potential to fulfill any level of challenge as an opponent. A single vampire or group of vampires could easily have the personal power and resources to support a vast conspiracy and be the primary enemy of an entire campaign.

If other monsters exist, those most likely to be found in the same setting as the vampire are those who also have their origins in the Gothic genre, such as werewolves, witches and other undead beings. The GM will have to give some thought to the relationship of different monsters. Perhaps lycanthropy is merely a lesser form of vampirism, and weres are often servants of vampires. Vampires often have powers over the dead, and may be able to call forth ghosts, spectres and zombies with necromantic rituals. And perhaps vampires are also servants of darker powers, with demonic masters guiding their bloodless hands.

## ✠ THE VAMPIRE CAMPAIGN

THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT WAYS to approach the creation of a campaign with vampires as the primary focus. Vampires may be the chief menace, the PCs could be among the ranks of the damned, or both.

Vampires are most likely to be encountered within horror campaigns, although many types will be equally at home in semi-historic and Gothic fantasy tales. Of course, the use of vampires in the campaign is limited only by the GM's imagination. What follows are some suggestions for the use of vampires in a variety of settings.

At some point it becomes necessary to determine which varieties of vampire are to be included in a campaign world.

Some campaigns might allow only a single type of vampire, a unique template that is the grain of truth to all legends. Historical campaigns may only allow the type of vampire specific to that culture, such as Gaki in a *GURPS Japan* campaign or Ch'iang Shich in *GURPS China*.

Others might include a limited number of types, such as a horror campaign that permitted only Gothic Vampires and their Half-Vampire minions.

Alternately, the GM may allow all types of vampires, giving a wide variety of adversaries and locales for intrepid vampire hunters or complex political and historical material for fledglings who are exploring their shadowy new world.

## Types of Campaign

The GM will have to decide how vampires will be used in the campaign. Are they the protagonists or the adversaries? Are they the elegant, attractive fiends like those described in the novels of Anne Rice, or are they the ragged and brutal hooligans of films like *The Lost Boys* and *Near Dark*? Or are they prevalent enough to allow all manner of undead, competing for prey?



For the GM who is creating a "vampire campaign," the first decision to be considered is whether to allow vampire PCs. If not, he can gather his band of vampire hunters or victims and begin to hurl the hordes of the damned at them, secure that vampiric powers and limitations are safely in the claws of NPCs.

If vampiric player characters are to be allowed, it will require more careful management by the GM.

### ***Realistic vs. Cinematic***

Vampire stories are, almost by definition, cinematic. The excesses of the Gothic genre with its melodrama, shock tactics and sensational descriptions began this tradition, and modern cinema has carried on in the same, er . . . vein. Understandably, it is difficult to create a "realistic" setting that includes supernaturally powerful immortals.

However, a GM can affect the relative level of "realism" by deciding whether to focus upon the benefits or limitations of vampiric existence. Is being a vampire about having the strength of ten men, living forever, and flying upon dark winds above hapless mortal prey? Or is it about hiding from the light of day in a filthy grave, ruthlessly stalking and killing to maintain a cursed half-life and the constant paranoia of concealing the guilty secrets of an unnatural existence?

The style of the individual adventures will ultimately decide the tone of the campaign. High-point-value characters, larger-than-life settings and a reliance on action and adventure will create a cinematic vampire campaign. This can be extremely entertaining for players who are fans of this style of gaming, as Vampiric Invulnerability allows near-indestructible protagonists and antagonists who can routinely perform super-human acts of daring. Conversely, a reliance upon mood, mystery and roleplaying can create a relatively "realistic" vampire campaign where players can confront some of the more subtle existential horrors of vampirism.

### ***Style and Atmosphere***

The vampire tale is particularly sensitive to the subtle nuances of style, tone, theme, etc. depending upon what is emphasized, the same vampire story might be a Gothic melodrama, a sensual romance, an eerie mystery or an action-packed bloodbath.

When the GM decides what type of atmosphere suits a particular campaign or adventure, the style in which the game is actually run can be used to heighten the effect. This can be accomplished in a number of ways – the amount of description, the level of detail, the senses used, symbolism and foreshadowing, and other tricks in the GM's repertoire can be utilized to make the vampire a highly individual fiend with personal depth, rather than a cardboard cut-out pulled from a bestiary.

## **✠ TRADITIONS OF THE VAMPIRE TALE**

WITH SO MUCH HISTORY, it is arguable that the vampire tale has become a genre of its own, standing distinct from its Gothic roots. When considered this way, the vampire tale has its own traditions and conventions, like any other genre. Folklore, literature and films have all presented stories that revolve around common themes when depicting the activities of the undead, and while some measure of originality is necessary for a good story, the GM will find that these elements make the vampire tale familiar.

### **Horror**

The genre now known as horror or dark fantasy is the direct descendant of the Gothic literature and folkloric ghost stories that originally spawned the vampire.



### ***Vampires in Yrth***

As a pseudo-historical fantasy setting, the world of Yrth is fertile territory for the vampires of several cultures and time periods. Of course, with the Banestorms and a little ingenuity on the part of the GM, any vampire type could be introduced to Yrth. However, there are some varieties who will most likely be at home there.

Much of the culture of Yrth is medieval European, the very tradition that the most familiar types of vampires arose from. In a more historical and "realistic" game, the most likely varieties of undead in these lands are the traditional; the Vampir and the Vyrolakos. The medieval Church which still flourishes in Yrth was also quick to warn against consorting with the seductive Incubi and Succubi. A more cinematic campaign might allow the familiar spectre of the Gothic Vampire, as his aristocratic origins were often in feudal society, and the vile Nosferatu fits easily into a world where plague is still a major fear.

In the Moslem lands, Ghuls stalk the deserts and charnel houses, insidiously masquerading as mortals during the day.

The exotic lands of Sahud and its environs might conceal less familiar terrors. Gaki and Ch'iang Shich will probably be most common, while bizarre monstrosities like the Penanggalen may lurk in more remote realms.

Finally, the Human Vampire, the mortal driven by sadism and bloodlust, can provide a particularly loathsome villain in any land.

## Non-Humans and Vampirism

While this work is devoted to vampires and their relations with humans, there is no reason why settings that include multiple races might not include non-human vampires (unless, for some reason, the GM decides that vampirism is an inherently human condition). The introduction of non-human undead could vastly expand the vampiric bestiary, and the GM is encouraged to use the vampire creation rules in Chapter 3 to design such creatures, or to modify existing races in *GURPS Aliens* and *GURPS Fantasy Folk*.

In a particular campaign, the GM will have to decide what races are susceptible to vampirism and how it affects them. This will largely be a matter of taste, but certain combinations will probably work better than others. While a vampiric Dark Elf necromancer might provide a complex villain that will terrorize the players through an entire campaign, a Halfling vampire will probably be greeted with smirks and jokes about protective ankle cuffs.

While the fantasy setting is where this issue is most likely to arise, it is not the only genre that might require rulings on non-human undead. With the right cross-genre influences, GMs running *GURPS Cyberpunk*, *GURPS Supers* or even *GURPS Horror* might find themselves having to make decisions about cyborg, alien or mutant vampires.



These are the stories that express, explain and attempt to come to terms with some essential fear relating to the human condition. As seen above, all of the themes that define the vampiric condition express these basic human fears. Darkness, death and supernatural evil are the fabric of the vampire's world.

The vampire is first and foremost an object of terror. The GM should keep this in mind at all times, and make an attempt to convey this to the players, whether the PCs are intrepid vampire slayers or members of the damned themselves. The horror of supernatural evil and the horror of vampiric existence should never be too long forgotten in a traditional vampire tale. In a campaign which allows vampiric PCs, the Game Master is provided with the additional challenge of making the monsters afraid.

## Tragedy

The vampire has been known to inspire pity as well as fear. Wrapped up as they are with beliefs and fears about death, the undead may be sad as well as horrible, like death itself.

Often it is some tragic event that doomed the vampire to its undead state. Folklore is filled with female vampires who became insane with grief and rage over the loss of their children, eventually taking on the monstrous visage of their interior pain. Another traditional way in which tragedy and catastrophe can result in vampiric existence is when victims of some great bereavement curse the gods or spirits in their pain, and receive the curse of the undead for their impiety. This is a particularly poignant punishment if the original loss was that of a loved one, as the vampire is cursed with the choice between eternal life and damnation, with no hope of reunion with the beloved in this world or the next.

Another melancholy aspect of the vampire's existence is the loneliness and isolation of the outsider. As an unnatural being, the vampire belongs nowhere, rejected by both life and death. The vampire cannot exist in mortal society without elaborate means to conceal its true nature (also increasing the sense of isolation), and even if it is successful in participating with the mortal drama, it is doomed to watch each player make the final curtain call.

## Romance

Apart from the purely sexual metaphors which abound in the vampire legend, there is also a long tradition of (usually tragic) romance that winds through the history of the vampire tale. This is not surprising, considering the emotional power that is inherent in a genre with mysterious and suave strangers, forbidden passion that is more powerful than death itself, and the potential for eternal love. Additionally, many authors have portrayed the undead as inherently more sensual creatures than humans. The vampire's similarity to the predatory beasts has led some to assume that they are more under the sway of primal passions, and that the senses of the beast might enrich the enjoyment of sensual pleasures. It has become a deeply established convention in the literature to refer to the bite of the vampire euphemistically and metaphorically as a kiss, revealing the deep roots of the vampire's romantic association. This kiss is often represented as the deepest intimacy possible, an ultimate act of domination and surrender. To consume another's entire being can be seen as the most sensual and visceral way of experiencing the most sublime and transcendent realities. Ultimately, this tension between the physical and spiritual is the drive for both the vampire legend and the romance.

One example of the recurring romantic theme is "the vampire bride," a story with its roots in ancient Greece (Phlegon of Tralles, 117-138 A.D.) but retold many times. The bride, originally named Philinium, dies young before

her wedding but returns to her lover. When the amorous revenant is found out, she must return to the grave. In some versions, the young man then dies as well, presumably of a broken heart.

The other most familiar romantic theme is that fostered by Count Dracula and his ilk; the tall, dark, and handsome stranger who pursues his virginal quarry with obsessive devotion. This variety of story was one of the favorites of all types of Gothic authors, and it arguably can be said to have reached its pinnacle in the master work of Bram Stoker. While the female seductress of historical archetype generally had motives and methods that were more purely sexual, there were sometimes exceptions. Most notably, in Sheridan Le Fanu's "Carmilla," she doted upon her young, female victims with a "strange ardor" throughout her very slow and subtle predation.



## ✦ THE CAMPAIGN WORLD

ONCE THE GM DETERMINES the variety of vampires to be used and the roles they will play in the campaign, it becomes necessary to decide what kind of world they will inhabit. Several factors which may vary dramatically between campaign worlds and genres will significantly affect the undead.

## Destroying Vampires

While exact details of the methods for ending undead existence vary from one legend to the next, certain patterns turn up again and again throughout history.

Modern tales suggest that sunlight is the surest means of destroying the undead, but this is not necessarily the case. Certainly, the vast majority of vampires are purely nocturnal, indicating some aversion to the day, but many of them suffer only diminished abilities or moderate discomfort, rather than obligingly bursting into flames.

From the annals of vampire hunters from around the globe, it is more than obvious that the most reliable method of undead disposal is to consign the creature to flames until it is completely incinerated. It is necessary to be certain that the cremation is complete. In China it is believed that if a single piece of the vampire escapes the flames, the fiend will rise again. In Russia, the fires must be observed with extra vigilance to make sure that no small, creeping animal (with which Russian vampires are said to be filled) escapes with the vampire's spirit to rise again.

It is also generally agreed that impaling a vampire with a wooden implement is usually effective. While a man-made wooden stake is most common, the undead show an almost universal aversion to thorns of all varieties. Sometimes a specific type of wood (once again, often from some thorn wood) is required, and sometimes it must pierce a particular location, most frequently the heart. According to all reliable sources, it is best to follow up this method with cremation, just to be sure.

The heart might be inherently more vulnerable to all forms of attack, and the removal and destruction of this organ is sometimes prescribed. Likewise, the severing of the head has been used quite widely. It may be supposed that even if decapitation does not send a vampire to its final rest, it will make its existence extremely inconvenient until the situation is remedied.

While not usually a lethal measure, it is also accepted that garlic has the power to ward off the undead. China, Southeast Asia and the Caribbean Islands are just a few non-European cultures to validate this tradition. Sometimes this power is extended to other odiferous plants, such as onions. It is unlikely that garlic will slay an active vampire, but it usually will offer some protection and might be used to prevent a potential vampire from arising in the first place. Sometimes garlic was used to stuff the severed head of a vampire after decapitation as an additional safeguard.

Finally, there are a host of culturally specific magical and religious rituals that may be used with greater or lesser effectiveness (but make sure you know the vampire's religion . . .).



## Crossover Campaigns

**GURPS Cliffhangers:** Vampires may be put to good use in any pulp adventure which incorporates supernatural elements. The wide variety of folkloric types makes it fairly easy to produce an appropriate variety for many of the exotic settings favored by this genre. Any type of vampire could be used as a major antagonist, having the inherent virtue (at least from the GM's perspective) of being able to return from a wide variety of dramatic demises.

**GURPS Cyberpunk:** The gritty, post-modern world of most cyberpunk settings can work well with the twilight world of the undead. The shadowy alleys of the urban sprawl make an ideal home for all manner of nocturnal predators. This may either occur in a world that allows both science and the supernatural, or the High-Tech Vampire template may be used with a purely scientific/medical model for the curse of vampirism.

**GURPS Illuminati:** If superhuman immortals have existed in semi-secrecy throughout history, it is a safe bet that they are involved with any conspiracies and secret societies of real import. Are the undead the pawns of the Illuminati, or their secret masters? What forbidden pacts exist between the most powerful immortals, and what ancient agenda do they follow? Both the Illuminati and the undead represent mysterious and powerful forces behind the facade of mundane life, and the GM must decide how they affect each other and the world at large.

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## Mana Level and Magic

Most vampires are inherently supernatural entities which cannot exist without the presence of magic. Notable exceptions are the Alien, High-Tech and Human Vampires. For most other variety of vampires, the GM must determine the mana level of the setting.

In some previous worldbooks, vampires have been described with the disadvantage Dependency: Mana. This is not necessary for settings with generally uniform mana levels, but in magical worlds with many low or no mana areas, or campaigns that span multiple worlds or dimensions with varying mana levels, this may become a significant factor.

## The Secret Magic Campaign

This is the default condition for most horror adventures. In this case, magic is rare and is unknown to the world at large. Vampires that exist in this sort of world must be constantly vigilant to protect the secret of their unnatural existence.

Player characters will have a difficult time acquiring magical knowledge and items, limiting the range of weapons for would-be vampire hunters. Vampire characters must exercise subtlety when using their powers to avoid revealing themselves.

## The Full Magic Campaign

The full magic campaign is more suitable for fantasy, cinematic horror, and those campaigns that focus upon the struggles of vampires and other supernatural beings amongst themselves. Magic is a powerful and real force in the world, but may or may not be accepted by the majority of people. If the reality of magic is commonly accepted, it still might not be socially acceptable.

In this setting, mortal wizards may wield nearly as much power as the undead, and other supernatural beings such as were-creatures, demons and ghosts probably exist as well.



## Tech Level

Technology is another tool that can dramatically affect the balance of power between vampires and their prey. Stoker's *Dracula* is itself largely a "gadget story," with the protagonists using the newest developments in science and technology to combat the undead, such as using the new and innovative technique of performing blood transfusions to counteract the predations of the Count. Modern technology provides many more options for mortals to fight back against the supernatural powers of the undead.

In campaign worlds with low Tech Levels, vampires must be combated by traditional means, primarily meaning the magical, religious and folkloric methods prescribed for their prevention and destruction. Characters in more modern or futuristic settings may still require this kind of knowledge of a vampire's vulnerabilities, but they will be better able to exploit these weaknesses. From crossbows to flamethrowers, high-pressure holy water sprayers and shotgun shells filled with rosary beads, the vampire-hunter must choose his weapons from the technological resources at hand. In even a near-future setting, laser weapons might be used against the undead with great effectiveness, exploiting their vulnerability to light. Higher Tech Levels may produce weapons that are so destructive to physical matter as to effectively counter Vampiric Invulnerability.

Likewise, more advanced societies may have a better chance of analyzing the condition of vampirism for the purposes of detection, prevention or possibly even the development of a cure. However, the reverse may also be true as well. For example, a scientific, rationalist society will be at a disadvantage when confronted with a purely supernatural condition.

## Background

Regardless of the type of campaign world, the GM will be required to make some decisions about how the presence of the undead has affected this world. The condition of vampirism inherently implies some dramatic assumptions about good and evil, life and death, and the natural and supernatural.

The presence of such immortal, superhuman beings influences many different elements of a campaign world. Should a vampire desire power, it would be easy to meddle in society and its politics if one has centuries to work at it. The history of the campaign world will probably be altered, as well as better preserved, with the existence of unaging characters. In worlds where magic is accepted, vampirism represents an occult "wild card," allowing the potential for vast magical power without the discipline and study of other methods of magical attainment. The GM will also have to determine the relationship between vampires and the religious beliefs and spiritual conditions of the world. Are the undead total spiritual pariahs, forever cast out from natural order of things, or are there gods of darkness that will accept the damned to their bosom? Can a vampire who maintains his human ideals and virtues attain some form of "salvation," or is the curse an absolute condemnation?

The existence of the true undead also requires some manner of life after death. The GM should have some idea what happens to souls of mortals and vampires upon their final demise.

## Origins

One of the most important background details that will be necessary to determine is the origins of the vampires. Where did vampires come from, and when? Many of the types have demonic origins, and the forces of darkness may be directly or indirectly responsible for the existence of the undead (regardless of what individual vampires might believe). However, if vampirism is primarily spread by contagion, there must have been a source of the original infection, possibly in the form of one or more unique vampiric entities.

## Crossover Campaigns (Continued)

**GURPS Martial Arts:** A number of Oriental vampire types are covered in the bestiary, and these are the most likely candidates for inclusion in martial arts campaigns (although other unconventional combinations are possible). The most likely setting for this kind of crossover will be a cinematic foray into Eastern legends (as in the film *Big Trouble in Little China*). Highly skilled martial arts masters could provide stiff opposition to even supernatural beings. *Chi* is defined as the life-force itself, and thus represents abilities that are the province of the living which may serve to equalize the vampires' unnatural powers. However, the undead may possess devastating combat skills, given centuries to perfect any style they choose.

**GURPS Psionics:** Psionic abilities are another potential weapon to level the playing field between vampires and their mortal foes and some or all vampires may derive their abilities from psionics rather than magic. The combination of vampirism and psychic powers may not provide a ready focus for a campaign setting, but may easily be incorporated into any number of worlds with fantasy and horror elements.

**GURPS Space:** Futuristic settings will most likely be home to Alien and High-Tech Vampires. Scientific conditions from genetic aberrations to unearthly viruses may transmit vampiric characteristics to characters of all kinds, and entire races of nocturnal, predatory beings may lurk beneath thick atmospheres and dim stars. As always, the sci-fi/fantasy fusion may be employed as well, making anything possible through either sorcery or super-science.

**GURPS Special Ops/Espionage:** It is quite likely that modern organizations and individuals who battle the undead will make use of some techniques of contemporary warfare. Veteran vampire hunters may well use similar methods to highly-trained commandoes. Stealth, urban combat and guerilla tactics are even more useful to the would-be nightstalker than to other warriors. Alternately, vampiric mercenaries, assassins and spies may operate as protagonists or antagonists in high-powered campaigns.

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## Crossover Campaigns (Continued)

**GURPS Supers:** Vampires have made frequent appearances in comics over the years. Because of their potentially very high point values and superhuman powers, vampires are adequately suited to be player characters or NPC villains. The rationale of most supers campaigns makes magical, psionic or pseudo-scientific origins equally possible. Reluctant vampires may attempt to control their appetites and use their powers to combat evil (as with the superhero Nightflick in *GURPS Supers*).

**GURPS Time Travel:** Because of their universal distribution and extreme longevity, vampires may be encountered in any time, making them an easily-introduced menace for time travelers. Additionally, a single individual vampire might be encountered numerous times over the course of many centuries, providing an enduring antagonist for temporally-mobile characters.



Another possibility is that vampirism is some form of curse, wrought as punishment by some deity or deities upon man (which still leaves the question; are the vampires or their mortal prey the victims of the curse?).

In any setting utilizing some version of Earth history, there are several interesting possibilities. Many creators have tried to link vampires with Ancient Egypt, and this is fertile territory for any explorations of life, death and the territory in between. Another possibility is that the vampire came from India or China, and both of these cultures have more than enough ancient history and supernatural beliefs to justify and elaborate upon the origin of the damned. If one wishes to remain true to the folkloric record, the Lilitu (see p. 97) of the Babylonian culture seem to be the first known vampires, and perhaps they are at the source of the phenomena. Likewise, Lilith (see p. 12), the arch-demon of Hebrew legend and medieval demonology, was believed to be mother to all forms of evil, and she has often been credited with the creation of the undead.

Once the origins of the undead are determined, this can easily provide the focus for an entire campaign, as both vampires and those who wish to destroy them could want or need this information.

## ✠ CAMPAIGN THEMES

### Night Stalkers

PERHAPS THE MOST STRAIGHTFORWARD campaign concept, this can be used as either a single "one-shot" adventure or an entire campaign. In this setting, the characters take the role of intrepid vampire hunters thwarting the machinations of the evil undead. This type of campaign probably works best if vampires are the only, or at least the most common, supernatural threat in the campaign world.

The GM can also vastly vary the tone of this campaign by determining what type of vampire hunters the PCs are. For example, it makes a great deal of difference whether the players are crossbow-wielding, holy-water-toting commandos or a group of college students who have discovered an awful secret in their home town.

Another interesting twist on this approach is to allow the PCs to play vampires who maintain their human values and use their dark powers to hunt their unholy brethren. This campaign may also include any of the other themes for campaigns that allow vampire PCs, with *The Fledglings* or *The Outcasts* being obvious choices.

### The Fledglings

In this campaign, the PCs are newly-arisen vampires trying to make sense of their condition and the dark new world it has thrust them into. At the GM's discretion, the players may either create fledgling vampire characters, or the GM may request that they create ordinary mortals, and then turn them into vampire types of his choosing during the course of the first adventures.

The entertainment in this type of campaign is in the discovery of the campaign world, as the PCs learn the nature of their condition and discover the natives of the twilight world in which they find themselves.

### The Immortals

Vampires being what they are, there is the potential for some very high-powered campaigns to fully explore existence as an immortal. One way of doing this is to allow players to create very powerful and experienced characters who have already lived for centuries.

In such a campaign, the characters would be powerful enough that only other immortals (and whatever other supernatural threats the GM wishes to include) would be challenging opposition to the PCs. The point value of the player characters and their relationship to mortals in this type of campaign will be more comparable to those presented in *GURPS Supers* than a typical horror campaign. However, with the proper atmosphere and antagonists, this may still maintain a dark mood. Emphasis upon roleplaying personal horror and tragedy will assist this effort.

This campaign theme can very easily be combined with any number of historical settings through the use of flashbacks, as the players explore their characters' development through the centuries.

## Vampire Politics

If one supposes a world with a significant population of undead and supernatural beings, it naturally entails some manner of secret society. Powerful and immortal beings who have lived for centuries are likely to have influenced history, particularly when one considers their own power struggles. A single vampire may have dabbled in mortal affairs from the first cities of Mesopotamia to the modern day.

Whether this society takes the form of the Cabal from *GURPS Horror*, a secret society of the type presented in *GURPS Illuminati*, or something entirely different, is up to the GM, but the intrigues and power plays of immortals provide a rich background for adventures that stress mystery and roleplaying. A good example of a setting that relies heavily upon this theme is *GURPS Vampire: The Masquerade*.

## Urban Jungle

Modern cities can provide a setting that is challenging and dangerous even to the undead. Survival on the streets, violence, crime and corruption are all readily available story material. Vampires on the city streets must remain concealed, subtly prowling a vast hunting ground, while competing with other predators, mortal and undead alike. This setting can be used for anything from gritty, *film noir* mysteries to high-action dramas loaded with gunfights and car chases.



## Historical

A number of historical cultures are described by various worldbooks, and most of these had their own varieties of undead that are covered in Chapter 5. Alternate worlds and historical dark fantasies could include these culture's specific types of vampire (as well as their neighbors'). Some example of cultures that have their own worldbook are *GURPS Arabian Nights*, *GURPS Aztecs*, *GURPS China*, *GURPS Japan*, *GURPS Middle Ages 1*, *GURPS Old West*, and *GURPS Imperial Rome*.



## Generic Adventure Seeds

Regardless of genre, setting or period, there are a number of conventional elements of vampire stories that are recurrent because they arise from the fundamental themes of the legend. These story elements may be used as adventure seeds for nearly any campaign which includes the undead. Most of these may be adapted for use in campaigns with human or undead PCs.

**Transformation:** A mortal character (PC or NPC) becomes infected with the curse of vampirism and rises as one of the undead. This may be a member of the players' band, an ally or an enemy.

**Infection:** Like Transformation above, but the situation is slightly less grave. A PC or NPC has become infected with vampirism, but is not yet lost. Usually, the characters must learn how to prevent the metamorphosis from occurring and save their mortal associate from entering the ranks of the damned.

**Immortal Passion:** A vampire character becomes enamored of a mortal, or vice versa. This may involve any combination of player and non-player characters. Such lovers must inevitably address issues of mortality and immortality, as well as the rift between mortal life and undead existence.

**The Hunter:** The characters suddenly find themselves the prey of a deadly assassin, either a powerful vampire or a veteran vampire hunter, depending on the nature of the party. In either case, the PCs must take the defensive against a relentless foe who is bent upon their destruction.

**Ancient Evil:** Some being, force or knowledge from the distant past is unearthed and unleashed upon the world. Very old and powerful vampires are ideally suited to this role, but it may take the form of some supernatural artifact or arcane curse that threatens the present.

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## The Quest

A familiar theme in RPGs, the quest is serviceable for the vampire campaign. The PCs are required to find some object, person or fact. This may be anything from locating and destroying the King of Vampires to extinguish the undead menace from the world, to a group of newly created vampires seeking their origins to understand their new existence. Another good subject for the quest campaign is "The Cure," the method of becoming mortal again. The GM will probably have to heavily emphasize the disadvantages of vampirism to motivate the characters to search for a way to escape supernatural power and eternal life.

## The Outcasts

This is a theme for adventures involving vampire PCs. It can be an extension of The Fledglings theme, or it can accommodate more experienced vampires.

The characters are thrust into a twilight world of the secret, supernatural underground, but due to their own actions or circumstances beyond their control they find themselves at odds with the mysterious Powers That Be.

This can be used with mortal or undead PCs. For mortals, the rationale is easy; they have learned about the existence of the shadow society, and are hunted because of this knowledge. Vampire characters might find themselves morally at odds with such a society, or, through ignorance or circumstances beyond their control may simply end up on the wrong side of some pre-existing conflict.

## Race Wars

In campaigns including more than one type of vampire, the GM must decide how different vampire races get along together. One easy and interesting answer is to say, "They don't." Conflict between competing vampire races provides a backdrop for drama ranging from subtle politics to cinematic combat. There are a number of ways that this theme may be used.

The Modern Vampire and his European ancestors are upstarts when compared to some of the vampires of the East and Middle East. It is easy to imagine a war between the more familiar Western vampires and their ancient predecessors from Babylon, Rome, or China. Another interesting twist is East vs. West, with the PC vampires battling against the ancient and sometimes more monstrous vampires of the Orient. Alternately, for more culturally daring campaigns, the PCs could be on either or both sides of the conflict.

In such a campaign, the GM might assign a relatively "human" vampire type, like the Gaki or Ch'iang Shich, as the default Eastern vampire, while reserving monstrous creatures like the Penanggalen for more infrequent and dramatic appearances.

Other variations of this theme include modern vs. traditional vampires, earthly vs. alien vampires, and scientific vs. supernatural vampires.

## Dark Future

Another interesting setting for vampires or their adversaries is some dark future where disaster has struck and the damned have come to feast in the ruins. The best example of this is Richard Matheson's *I am Legend* and the film adaptation *The Omega Man*.

In this setting, society and/or nature has experienced some catastrophe, and this post-apocalyptic world has spawned, through science or the supernatural, a predator in human form (or perhaps they were always around, and just came

out of hiding after the crash). Generally, such a setting will portray human society at one extreme or the other; formless anarchy or rigid totalitarianism.

This type of campaign could feature the PCs as the survivors amongst the wreckage, trying to cling to life in a mad world while being hunted by the damned. Alternately, the PCs could be victims of the vampiric plague who are battling against other vampires, humans, or both while trying to come to terms with their new existences.

This campaign theme can easily be combined with material from *GURPS Cyberpunk*.

## ✠ SETTING

BECAUSE OF THE NEARLY UNIVERSAL distribution of vampire legends in human cultures, the undead can be used in a much broader range of settings than other monsters. Pop culture, too, has cast the vampire into many different settings and genres in films, novels and comic books. Past, present, or future, the damned can find a niche wherever there is darkness to conceal them.

## Horror

Obviously, the most likely setting for a vampire campaign is *GURPS Horror*.

The variety of vampires in Chapter 5 should be enough to keep any group of fearless vampire hunters furiously globe-hopping in an attempt to extinguish the undead in all their guises. While this allows the GM options for a wide variety of vampiric antagonists, the character creation rules emphasize vampires as characters, rather than generic monsters or cannon fodder. Vampire villains will work best in horror adventures if they are carefully crafted individuals with complex motives and plans worthy of centuries of evil plotting.

## Gothic

The vampire has its roots in the literature of the Gothic movement, and this genre can also provide fertile roleplaying territory. The Gothic tale is the source of everything that is now divided into mystery, romance and horror, allowing

## Generic Adventure Seeds (Continued)

*Reincarnation:* A vampire recognizes a mortal from a previous lifetime. Whether a lost love or an eternal foe, the characters are tied together in some fashion. A twist is possible if the relationship between the characters is a complete reversal of their previous encounter.

*The Mysterious Stranger:* An enigmatic figure enters the PCs' environment. The stranger's intentions should be ambiguous, leaving the players to decide if he poses a threat or offers assistance. This is often how vampires will be encountered by mortals.

*Curse:* Some divine or supernatural punishment is provoked, affecting the player characters. The victims of the curse must learn how to reverse it or live with its conditions.

*Origins:* Information comes to light regarding the history of the undead. This may explain other practical considerations about the existence of vampires, making it a valuable secret to the damned as well as their human adversaries. The PCs are motivated to acquire this information to further their goals or to defend themselves.

*The Cure:* If a cure is possible, it may serve as a goal for mortal and vampiric characters. A vampire PC or NPC may be driven to attempt to regain mortality, and human vampire hunters will naturally covet this knowledge, either to combat the spread of vampiric infection or to save particular people.





## Historical Adventure Seeds

A number of time periods have been especially fertile ground for the vampire legend, and these may be used for inspiration. These historical seeds may be used either as settings, or as background for events in later times.

**Lilith:** One of the most ancient and enduring figures in the history of the damned, Lilith may be used as the focus of an adventure or an entire campaign. She could be the ultimate adversary or patron, a demonic spirit or ancient vampire, the origin of the curse or merely an informed bystander, but such a powerful and immortal being will undoubtedly influence the supernatural politics of the world for good or ill.

**Hellenistic Horrors:** During the first several centuries A.D., the cultures of the Mediterranean began to influence each other heavily, resulting in an unprecedented merging of different beliefs. This time period provides many opportunities for those wishing to explore vampirism in the ancient world, as the fiends and revenants of Greek, Roman, Persian and Egyptian lore may all be encountered in the same regions and time period.

**Gypsy Secrets:** The Gypsies are well-known for their esoteric wisdom and mysterious origins, and the secrets of vampirism may be contained therein. The nomadic wanderings of this people made them an ideal medium for the acquisition and transmission of folklore throughout the West and Middle East, and they may well have been responsible for bringing tales of the undead to Europe originally. Mystic truths, arcane magics and secret histories relating to the plight of the undead might be concealed within the legend and lore of the Gypsy people.

**The Epidemics:** From the 16th to 18th centuries, Europe was plagued by reports of vampiric outbreaks in hundreds of villages. The incidents were primarily centered in the Slavic and Balkan nations of Eastern Europe, but soon spread across the continent. This time period provides some unique adventuring opportunities, as "vampire-hunter" is a viable and legitimate occupation and vampire characters are faced with a hostile populace who are aware of their existence.

the Game Master free rein for the tone of the adventures in such a campaign. For the purposes of campaign setting, there are two approaches the GM may take toward world design.

The first is the traditional approach. The Gothic movement takes its name from a reliance upon medieval locations and settings, and the GM may follow this example. Decaying castles, haunted monasteries and desolate forests are all staples of this kind of story, creating an atmosphere similar to a very dark fantasy campaign.

The second approach is to place the campaign in the late Victorian period that spawned the Gothic movement. The world was still a fairly mysterious place at this time, and the evils of the Middle Ages have had several centuries to fester. The atmosphere will be much the same, but the supernatural mysteries of Medieval times will be contrasted by the scientific rationalism of the "modern" world.

## Historical

The historical vampire game provides a wealth of opportunities for enterprising game masters. This can be handled in a couple of ways. First, the GM might choose a historical time period of particular interest (possibly one already covered by a sourcebook) and structure the vampires to suit that setting. Some choices are already obvious. A campaign set in **GURPS Japan** or **GURPS China** could feature the secret battles between the Japanese Gaki and the Chinese Ch'iang Shich, with other Oriental vampires taking one side or the other. Perhaps the arrival of *gaijin* vampires from Europe has further complicated the situation. **GURPS Imperial Rome** could be the setting of conflict between the vampires of the various Hellenistic cultures.

Alternately, the GM might decide upon a campaign spanning all of history. As immortal beings, vampires have a unique opportunity to experience a wide variety of historical periods. Imagine a campaign that begins in ancient Rome (or even earlier), and follows the course of the development of Western civilization, with the same characters witnessing the fall of the Roman Empire, struggling against the Inquisition during the squalor of the Dark Ages, and fighting in the American and French Revolutions. Such a campaign might not even be a linear affair, with flashbacks being played out as adventures. Of course, the GM would have to make provisions to insure that characters were not killed in an



earlier time than their "present." If the flashback method is used, historical adventures may be interjected into any vampire campaign that includes vampires who have lived more than one lifetime. It may also be used with more short-range history; for example, one could explore just what a group of modern vampires were up to during World War II, or on a lighter note, where they were during the Summer of Love.

### **The Cabal**

The Cabal, that shadowy occult society that was first uncovered in *GURPS Horror*, counts many of the damned among its membership. This is beneficial to both the vampires and the Cabal for a number of reasons.

First, the Cabal offers sanctuary and secrecy for its members, and this is particularly necessary for vampires. Safe houses with light-proof rooms, secure coffins with extra native soil, human assistants to act in the daylight, and nourishment in the form of the Cabal's enemies and willing donors are a few of the services the Cabal may provide for its unliving brethren.

In return, vampires make excellent enforcers, assassins and spies, providing many of the most daring Cabal "field agents." Vampires also contribute to Cabal research, particularly in the areas of necromancy and immortality. Ancient vampire members are responsible for the continuance of much of the arcane lore possessed by the Cabal, as some of them remember the secrets of the ancient world first-hand.

As beings who are already consigned to the twilight world of the supernatural, vampires will find it much easier to join and advance within the Cabal. Membership in the Cabal demands a vow of secrecy regarding the supernatural, and vampires are usually already bound by this as a requirement for their very survival.

Vampires who are also powerful mages make up a significant portion of the Inner Grades of the Cabal. The true relationship between the Cabal and the damned is probably known only to the Inner Circle. It is highly likely that one of the Grand Masters of the Cabal is a powerful and influential vampire; possibly the Son of the Dragon himself, or an even more ancient and powerful undead.

The Cabal may be used in a number of ways in the vampire campaign. First and foremost, the Cabal can provide a structure for vampire society. This vast, supernatural conspiracy can provide an ongoing menace to mortal or undead PCs, or it may be the backdrop for internal power-struggles among the occult elite, with the PCs playing their roles to shape the secret society.

### **Fantasy**

As most fantasy settings draw to some degree upon historical myth and legend, the vampire is just at home within this genre as in horror. Heroic fantasy has much in common with Gothic literature when it comes to villains, with black magicians, depraved aristocrats and diabolical monsters taking center stage.

For historical fantasy campaigns, the bestiary in Chapter 5 should be inclusive enough to provide a variety of undead for nearly any culture, or at least a type or two that may be native to a neighboring culture.

In high-fantasy cinematic campaigns, all types of vampires may be used; as exotic and unusual monsters, as entire races and civilizations or in association with a culture similar to their Earthly origins (as with placing the Gaki and Ch'iang Shich in Sahud on the world of Yrth). A fantasy campaign of this kind may even allow character point totals high enough to allow vampiric PCs. If so, the GM should be prepared for incredibly powerful and immortal warriors and mages with the potential to affect the world for good or ill.

## **Medieval Transylvania Adventure Seeds**

*Dracula's Gold:* Late in the 1450s, Vlad Tepes, called Dracula, was deposed from his throne and imprisoned after some 40,000 gold coins intended to finance his battle against the infidels vanished rather mysteriously. Prevailing wisdom seems to indicate the gold was "appropriated" by King Mathius of Hungary, who subsequently implicated Vlad as an ally of the Turks to cover this misdirection of the Church's funds. Still, no one knows for certain. The mystery of Dracula's gold is suitable for almost any type of adventure, realistic or fantastic, as well as having the potential as the maguffin for all manner of modern adventures.

*The Order of the Dragon:* The Order of the Dragon was a semi-secret society of knights devoted to defending Christendom from the infidels, much like the Knights Templar. With the sinister associations with Dracula and Transylvania, the Order of the Dragon could be a mysterious ally or enemy in historical fantasy or horror adventures. Additionally, the Order of the Dragon could be transplanted to Yrth, like the Templars and other knightly orders, providing the basis for a Gothic fantasy campaign.

*The Scholomanse:* Legend has it that a mystic college is concealed in the Carpathian mountains, where sorcerers and witches learn their craft. Ten students are accepted at a time, and are schooled by Satan himself. When they have finished their studies, nine are released upon the world, and "the devil takes the tenth scholar as his due." If such a school exists, it is undoubtedly associated with the Cabal. Such a repository of arcane wisdom is likely to possess many secrets about the undead.





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