

BINDING SAMEDI CLAN & VODOUNIC NECROMANCY
PACKET FOR ONE WORLD BY NIGHT 2010



HOW TO PLAY A SAMEDI

*"If I don't meet you no more in this world then uh
I'll meet ya on the next one
And don't be late
Don't be late
'cause I'm a voodoo child voodoo child
Lord knows I'm a voodoo child"*

-Jimi Hendrix, Voodoo Child

GETTING THROUGH COUNCIL

So, you want to play a Samedi? Well, you should know first that the Clan is Rare by One World by Night's bylaws, requiring a majority vote by Council. So, you've got this great idea - how do you pass Council? Here is the best tip I can give you:

-Have an amazing background. The first step in getting through Council is having Coordinator Approval. It will go very, very far. So, make sure you can prove that the character is firm and fresh in your mind - and write it down. Know your character's motivations, wants, fears, how they got to where they are. Most character backgrounds fit this mold and so Coordinator Approval has not been particularly difficult. However, the complete lack of a background says you, as a player, are not serious about portraying this Clan.

ONCE IN PLAY

If you're reading this section, wondering how you can play your Samedi, you're going to be disappointed. Samedi are as different as the loa, it is said. But maybe you can take a couple of ideas from the following types of Samedi:

-**"Traditional"**: The traditional Samedi looks a lot like the ones in the White Wolf source material; they are creepy corpses who are obsessed with death. They perform their voodoo and worship the Baron. This is typically what other players will expect of Samedi and it is a stereotype for a reason.

-**"Trickster"**: When reading about the Baron Samedi, one thing is VERY clear: he is a trickster god. Much like the African myth of Anansi and the Native American Coyote myths, the Baron has a very dark sense of humor (wouldn't you if you were Lord of the Dead?) and he likes to employ that humor on poor bastards who don't know any better. Some Samedi have chosen to emulate this more jovial side of their existence. Now, make no mistake - this is not the pranks of the Malkavian Clan. This is more subtle and is almost never to teach a lesson - this is amusement at the expense of others. There is no enlightenment in the Baron's games - no matter what he may tell you afterwards.

-**"Loyalist"**: Be it the Baron, the Camarilla, the Anarch Movement, the Sabbat, a certain Prince, Archon, Justicar or even the epithet "To Thine Own Self Be True", some Samedi just serve something they believe to be higher than them. Choose what you believe and go for it. The World of Darkness holds many possibilities for those who can cross into the realm of the dead.

THANATOSIS

Many PCs have asked the question on teaching Thanatosis. Different games have treated it different ways and if your PC is motivated to teach Thanatosis, that's a decision they have to make for themselves. However, the question you need to ask is what is gained and lost by teaching it? Thanatosis is the Baron's greatest gift to his Favored Children. He gave them his name and the power to wither, ash and sunder. Along with Necromancy, it makes the Samedi valuable and explains why they would not just be executed as rabble or ignored like other Clans. To give away the discipline is to give away your own power and value. The other part of this is the person who gave you the power - what will the Baron think if you trade Thanatosis for Celerity? Do you value his gift so cheaply? Think deeply about a trade for Thanatosis.

On this topic - a note to STs. Since the Samedi are so rare, their 7th generation and lower should be rare as well. Therefore, they are Coordinator Approval only. In addition, 8th Generation NPC Samedi cannot teach Advanced Thanatosis without Coordinator Approval as well. This prevents the continued learning of out-of-clan Advanced Thanatosis in One World by Night. There is no grandfathering for either of these approvals.

A LITTLE ASIDE ON THE PRACTICES OF VODOU/VOODOO

by Colleen and Matt Nachtrieb

*“Roll outta my coffin
Drink poison in my chalice
Pride begins to fade
And y'all feel my malice*

*Put gris gris on your doorstep
Soon you'll be in the gutter
I can melt your heart like butter
A-a-and I can make you stutter”*

-Dr. John, Walk on Gilded Splinters

This is not a full or by any means an in depth description of the religion or it's practices but a simple basic understanding, I suggest the player to do further research on the topic if their character practices any form of Vodou. I have listed some references at the bottom. Names and spellings vary based on region, the main language used in Vodou is Creole, a mixture of French and African dialects.

Vodou is an adaptive religion, which is to say it is always growing and changing. The religion started from a mixture of several different African religions, Christianity, and Native American beliefs that were all blended together on the island of Haiti.

It started as a belief system of the slaves brought to Haiti by their French masters, and has now been spread and adapted in other regions such as the Caribbean and United States.

A LOOK AT THE LOA/LWA

Vodou does have a god, but it is an aloof and distant god. For the living creatures here, like Humans can not speak or be heard by god, all communication is done through the Loa/Lwa. Loa are spirits in general tied to a concept. Big concepts like love, war, death, or smaller concepts for “weaker” Loa like just cemeteries, knives.

Those who follow Vodou say that they are in “service” to the Loa, and the Loa serve you in kind. The relationship is very much “you scratch my back I scratch yours.”

THE LOA

You have three different types of Loa:

1. Rada – The original Spirits that traveled with the Slaves to Haiti. More on the positive side of the spectrum. Example: Ezili Freda (Love), Papa Legba (All Cross Roads), Ogun (War)
2. Petro – The spirits from the Native American Slaves of Haiti, tend to be more violent, potent but dangerous. Prices for asking service, is very high. When the Rada just don't seem to cut it people may be tempted to service a Petro Loa. This is often the negative aspect of a Rada spirit. For example the Petro version of Ezili Freda is Ezili Danto – a Loa of vengeance and jealousy.
3. Gede – These Loa are a little different than your other Loa. Gede are the Loa of the dead, when someone says a mortal has become a Loa they mean, that person became a Loa in this category. The Gede are raunchy, boastful and clever Loa that can help in several different matters. They often remind us not to fear death, and make jokes at life's expense. Baron Samedi is the head of the Gede and the keeper of the cross roads through death.

SERVICE TO THE LOA

Anyone can be in service to the Loa, becoming a priest or priestess is a whole other matter and depth to your devotion and service to your community and Loa. When the Loa are happy the community is happy, when the Loa are displeased the whole community suffers.

So what do I need to do to service the Loa? Feed them, find trinkets that they like, and be fair. Everyone has a shrine, a simple version is a table with white cloth, items that are favored by your Loa, and some food. This food is prepared especially for the Loa in mind that you are serving. This food is not to be touched, nor is anything of the Loa's that is on the shrine.

Different Loa like different types of fare.

For you Samedi: Baron Samedi enjoys these things –

- Food: Rum (there is a special Haitian rum used in most Vodou rituals, usually you put chile peppers in it, making it horrific for an ordinary person to drink but the Loa guzzle it.) Cigars, chiles, hot food in general.
- Symbols: Graves, coffins, crosses, top hats, skulls.
- Day: Saturday
- Colors: Purple & Black
- Animal Sacrificed: Black Rooster is his favorite

YOUR FIRST VODOU RITUAL

Big community Service to the Loa happen at the temple with a ritual. There are several different positions within the temple the head of which in Haiti is the Mambo (Priestess) or (h)ougan (Priest).

The temple is a large room with a pole in its center, this pole connects the martial with the spiritual. Around this pole is drawn vevers for the Loa, these are intricate designs that call out to certain Loa. The community brings food and there is a special animal prepared for the Loa as well.

The Mambo pours rum on the vevers, there are drummers and singers calling out to the Loa that are to be served that day. There are also flag carriers that have the colors and symbols of the intended and honored Loa on them. Certain Loa are always called. You can't start a party without opening the cross roads, so Papa Legba is always greeted. Once the main Loa are called the gates open and the Loa arrive to their party.

Now just because you called Elizi Freda doesn't mean she is going to show up. Sometimes you call for Ogun and the Baron Samedi comes instead. It really depends on what the Loa want to tell you. Usually the Gede show up at the end of the ritual to play jokes and get wasted, but if they come at the beginning then they have some serious business to attend to.

POSSESSION

When the Loa “show up” at a ritual, they show up by possessing someone, usually the Mambo, or one of her assistants, though anyone participating (including drummers, dancers, and even audience members) can be possessed. When a Loa posses someone it is always to talk to someone else, never about the possessed. In fact, when such a claim is made, it’s a dead giveaway that the possession is fake. (An exception to this would be if the Loa [like Baron Samedi] wants to make an ass out of the participant being ridden, however it is extremely rare.) Most Loa are confrontational. After being possessed there are some tell-tale ways of knowing you have a genuine Loa on your hands, and the members of the temple will test The Possessed by giving them red-hot irons to hold in their hands (the irons won’t burn them), etc. Temple members are educated in knowing genuine signs, and give the possessed the clothing appropriate for that Loa. Gender of the possessed versus the Loa doesn’t matter; Loa take whomever they find appropriate. After The Loa eat, the rest of the participants may eat and enjoy in the festivities. It’s an all out party. Participants that were possessed by the Loa remember nothing of the possession, and are usually exhausted by their host.

REFERENCES

I have listed some good reference materials (books):

- “Idiots Guide: Voodoo” - Shannon R. Turtlington
- “The Serpent and the Rainbow” - Wade Davis
- “Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn” - Brown, Karen McCarthy (Good for NY Vodou and New Orleans Flavor)
- “Divine Horsemen: The Living Gods of Haiti” - Deren Maya
- “The Faces of the Gods” - Desmangles, L.G
- “Vodou: Visions and Voices of Haiti” - Galembo, Phyllis

THE BARON

*“She said there ain’t no rest for the Wicked.
Money don’t grow on trees.
I got bills to pay, I got mouths to feed.
There ain’t nothing in this world for free.”*

-Cage the Elephant, Ain’t No Rest for the Wicked

The first question typically asked about the Baron Samedi is this: is he a Kindred? A loa? A spirit? A wraith? The simple answer to all of these is yes. The Baron, quite simply, is whatever he really wishes to be at the time. Almost nothing is known about the Baron. However, this is one of the stories broken into several possibilities of how the Baron may have come to be.

The Baron Samedi loa has existed since far before any Kindred discovered the people worshipping him. He is thought to have come from the Gaelic Pagan religion and passed off through the slaves in Africa and finally to the Caribbean. Only the Baron truly knows - and he intentionally spreads several versions of the tale. What is known is that Baron Samedi (also Baron Saturday, Baron Samdi, Bawon Samedi or Bawon Sanmdi) is the loa of the dead and the leader of the Guede family of Loa: the spirits who embody the powers of death and fertility.

A long time ago, some say around the mid-1440’s and some say far longer, a vampire came to the island. Some say he was a hideous monster before the Baron touched him and some say he was tall and pale, with taunt skin like a corpse. All that is known for sure is this vampire was terrified and running from something. He came across a Vodoun tribe practicing their beliefs and calling on the loa. He arrived towards the end - the Baron’s favorite time to come and visit. The Baron loa saw this new figure and knew him for what he was and, as the Baron is wont to do, he appeared to the vampire and eased his worry. He said he could protect him and would the vampire

let him in. The vampire said yes. It is said that most nights the person possessed by the loa will do wild things. This night, the stories say the loa did not only dance, but he threw objects impossibly far. Some say he walked through the fire while others say he called the very animals from the forest and disappeared at will.

The vampire became a favored vessel of the Baron. He rode him constantly, almost every night, for many, many years. And since the vampire physiology is physically and spiritually different, the vampire began to change. And after a century or two he became the reflection of the spirit inside of him. The body began to retain the memories of the loa, mixing it with the ones inside the brain of the body until the two could not separate the vampire from the loa. A slow and terrifying process to be sure, as the vampire eventually lost everything that he was to the Baron and now the Baron had a physical form to accompany his spiritual side.

It is even said that Papa Ghede, the first corpse dead and guide to the afterlife, came to this poor soul one night and offered him passage to the crossroads and beyond, as he felt sorry for him. The vampire/Baron alternated between cursing him and begging for his help but in the end, the Baron side won and he refused Papa Ghede's kindness.

A DEAL WITH THE DEVIL – NECROMANCY AND ITS PRICE

*“So come on in. It ain't no sin. Take off your skin and dance around your bones.
So come along with the Black Rider. We'll have a gay old time.”*

-Tom Waits, Black Rider

Before we get to the powers section, there are several questions to ask first.

1. Are you a Serpent of the Light? - Serpents of the Light are not covered in this packet - and nor should there be. The Setite Coordinator has a brilliant Vodoun packet for the Serpents and I would encourage you to use that.
2. Are you a Samedi? - Samedi, the Baron's chosen and favorite, do not follow the rarity listed below. They can order off the menu, as it were, without any sort of Coord approval or oversight. It is important to state, however, that Samedi cannot teach Necromancy itself. Only the Baron has the ability to grant his powers to others. So if a Samedi met up with a non-Samedi Vodounic necromancer, they could not teach them Knowing Stone or any other ritual. These go on a case-by-case basis and are Coordinator Approval only.
3. Have you gone through your first Baron scene with the Samedi Coordinator? By this point, most PCs know that to summon the Baron, all it takes it to draw a circle in sand and sacrifice a chicken in the middle of it. The Baron himself has gone and possessed most of his followers to put such in Wikipedia and confirm it. However, if a PC is to do this, the Samedi Coordinator MUST be contacted. A scene is then run in which the PC is tested by the Baron and if they are awarded Necromancy, two things MUST happen. First, a binding agreement must be made between the player of the PC with Necromancy, the STs and the Samedi Coordinator. This binding agreement states that the Samedi Coordinator, STs or any other ST team of a game the PC has signed into can “take over” the PC with the Baron for the purposes of placing them in a situation wherein they are to be tested. More on that later. The second part is, to represent this, the Derangement “Fugue” is placed on the PC's sheet and cannot ever be bought off. Once you allow the Baron in, you can never get him to leave.
4. Have you been tested for your next level? - After the first scene, STs are free to use the Baron as they see fit. The only requirement is that all tests and their results are to be reported to the Samedi Coordinator within two weeks of the scene in which the Baron has been used. The STs and Samedi Coordinator then decide on the next appropriate level of Necromancy for the PC from the list below. Soul Steal (and, by extension, Daemonic Possession) and Knowing Stone are the absolute last things the Baron will bestow unto non-Samedi houngans and only if they have risked their very unives multiple times to earn them.

PATHS

Sepulchre Path: This is the primary path for all Vodounic houngans. The changes to the path, as per Blood Magic: Secrets of Thaumaturgy page 111, are as follows:

- Summon Soul is two traits more difficult if the target is a loa-racine, an ancestral spirit.
- Haunting is also two traits more difficult if a loa-racine is the target.
- Souls of houngans can never be summoned.
- Ash Path: This is generally the second Path the Baron bestows upon those who have come to him for necromancy. The changes to the path, as per Blood Magic: Secrets of Thaumaturgy page 111, are as follows:
 - Ex Nihilo must involve the houngan submerging themselves into a body of water and walking to the underworld. The travel takes six hours and no house rule or homemade ritual can shorten this. Only the Baron can shorten this trip.
 - Bone Path: This is almost always the last Path the Baron will teach to any non-Samedi houngans. The changes to the path, as per Blood Magic: Secrets of Thaumaturgy page 111, are as follows:
 - Soul Stealing is called “Make Living Zombie”.
 - Daemonic Possession is called “Make Zombie”.

RITUALS

| RITUAL NAME | LEVEL | REFERENCE |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--|
| Call of the Hungry Dead | Basic | Laws of the Night revised page 157 |
| Casting of Bones* | Basic | Players Guide to the High Clans page 197 |
| Eyes of Despondent Revelation* | Basic | Players Guide to the High Clans page 198 |
| Eyes of the Grave | Basic | Laws of the Night revised page 157 |
| Howl From Beyond* | Basic | Players Guide to the High Clans page 198 |
| Knell of Doom* | Basic | Players Guide to the High Clans page 198 |
| Knowing Stone | Basic | Blood Magic: Secrets of Thaumaturgy page 111 |
| Part the Veil* | Basic | Blood Sacrifice page 85 |
| Spirit Beacon | Basic | Laws of the Night revised page 157 |
| Spirit of the Centimes* | Basic | Blood Magic: Secrets of Thaumaturgy page 111 |
| Baleful Doll* | Intermediate | Blood Magic: Secrets of Thaumaturgy page 112-113 |
| Blood Dance* | Intermediate | Blood Magic: Secrets of Thaumaturgy page 112 |
| Cadaver's Touch | Intermediate | Laws of the Night revised page 157 |
| Call of the Shadow's Grace | Intermediate | Laws of the Night revised page 157-158 |
| Eyes of the Dead* | Intermediate | Blood Sacrifice page 85 |
| Graveyard Mists* | Intermediate | Players Guide to the High Clans page 200 |
| Nightmare Drums* | Intermediate | Blood Magic: Secrets of Thaumaturgy page 112 |
| Ritual of the Unearthed Fetter | Intermediate | Laws of the Night revised page 158 |
| Dead Man's Hand* | Advanced | Blood Magic: Secrets of Thaumaturgy page 113 |
| Garb of Hades* | Advanced | Blood Sacrifice page 85 |
| Grasp the Ghostly | Advanced | Laws of the Night revised page 158 |

*= Most of the rituals above are self explanatory and require no actual chops save the normal ritual chops (basic vs. 3 traits, intermediate vs. 6 traits and advanced vs. 9 traits). However, the above rituals do not have conversions for MET. STs should feel free to read the section listing the ritual and come up with their own rules to fit their game. On Homemade Rituals - As can be seen above, there is not nearly as much available to houngans as to the

Giovanni or Tremere. Due to the individual versatility of the worship, homemade rituals are not only allowed but encouraged. The character should have Occult of at least 3 to create a homemade ritual and all said rituals are Coordinator Approval to ensure they stay in-line with genre. No rituals will be approved that mimics another form of magic or ritual.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

(Or, "I Didn't Really Want To Read ThePacket So Answer My Questions Here")

*"Meanwhile in Salem's quarters
There's shadow that moves
Into a room full of secrets of life
Into a room only few have survived
There is a cross upon the wall
The cross of Baron Samedi"*

-King Diamond, Cross of Baron Samedi

Can Samedi teach Thanatosis?

If the price is right, sure. If the price is too low in the Baron's estimation, he will come talk to your PC. And his opinion changes a lot.

How does my character know how to reach the Baron?

The Baron has taken great measures to ensure that the general populace knows how to summon him. To this end he has said so loudly at several Camarilla events, posted it on the national communication network and even possessed his followers to all verify it as truth on Wikipedia. Past that, if you haven't heard in character then you don't know. As with most things, it is up to your STs and you to work out.

How can my PC get Necromancy?

As stated before, the Baron has stated how to contact him. The actual process is drawing a circle in sand and sacrificing a live chicken in the middle of it. This will get his attention. The rest is up to you. However, if you do get Necromancy, two things will happen. First, a binding agreement must be made between the player of the PC with Necromancy, the STs and the Samedi Coordinator. This binding agreement states that the Samedi Coordinator, STs or any other ST team of a game the PC has signed into can "take over" the PC with the Baron for the purposes of placing them in a situation wherein they are to be tested. The second part is, to represent this, the Derangement "Fugue" is placed on the PC's sheet and cannot ever be bought off.

I heard that the Samedi are a branch of the Giovanni/Nosferatu/Harbringer of Skulls, is that true?

Could be. There are several answers floating around in character. Go find them.

If I summon the Baron will he teach me Thanatosis?

The count for PCs GNC'd for asking (by very nice STs who would work with the Samedi Coordinator) is seven. They couldn't meet his terms. You are free to try.

CREDITS

Josh Wasta, current Samedi Coordinator
Trey Naivar, current Setite Coordinator
Colleen and Matt Nachtrieb

