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## **OWbN Ventrue: Genre Guide (Non-Binding)**

*A Sourcebook for One World by Night*

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Last Updated: 2013-01-03

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## INTRODUCTION

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### WHAT IS A VENTRUE?

Wherever they are, Ventrue are destined to lead. In the Camarilla, the majority of Princes come from the Ventrue Clan. In the Sabbat, Ventrue-Antitribu are found overwhelmingly in organizations such as the Inquisition and the Black Hand. Ventrue are drawn to ideas, groups, and organizations - all things which are larger than any one individual, and they usually end up in positions of responsibility and authority. For these reasons and more, the Ventrue Clan has earned the nickname, Kings... and that is exactly how Ventrue see themselves, as the Lords of all others.

Embracing from the smartest, boldest, and the most capable or successful; Ventrue embrace mortals who have a strong affinity for leadership. Historically, this included the regal Ladies and Lords of the Aristocracy and the honor-bound Knights of centuries-past. In the modern nights, the clan embraces from the stock of Mortals who have achieved the height of power in their field - from Lawyers, to Mobsters, to Financial Brokers, to Politicians, to the cut-throat CEOs of the business world and everything in between.

Once embraced, Ventrue are expected to rise to the top of the social order, and the Ventrue Clan is one of constant competition and high standards. Ventrue are expected to lead, not because it is convenient or easy, but because others do not have the strength or fortitude to shoulder the burdens of command. Ventrue are expected to set the standard to which everyone else tries to rise to meet. Ventrue are expected to always appear at the top of their game and form, never showing signs of weakness or of wavering resolve. Ventrue are expected to never lose their calm or cool - this would mean that the Ventrue could be perceived as lacking confidence. A Ventrue would rather die (some literally) than be perceived as having a lack of confidence.

### WHY PLAY VENTRUE?

Ventrue are the ultimate role-playing experience and are a class apart from all of the other Vampire Clans. Playing a Ventrue is certainly not for everyone, and even for veteran players, the experience can sometimes be considered a challenge. A Ventrue should have attitude and confidence, regardless of the audience; he or she should be capable of taking command of an entire room of people at his or her whim. A Ventrue should enjoy and aspire to build a reputation; rising through the political ranks with the application of personality, wit, looks or charm, and all other social tools available. A Ventrue should have an ego because he or she is an elite member of his or her society, but a Ventrue should always remember that condescension and bullying are tactics which are "below" his or her station.

As a Camarilla Ventrue, directing and influencing those around you without ever *needing* to take direct action yourself is the soul of Camarilla politics – the true heart of the game for Camarilla characters. For Sabbat

Ventrue-Antitribu, standing up for your cause and rallying characters several times more powerful than you to action is at the core of game-play.

Play a Ventrue if you can succeed without ever needing your sheet. Play a Ventrue if you want to be constantly challenged to succeed by your peers and superiors. Play a Ventrue if you enjoy planning and/or executing complex plans which require in-depth preparation, either at game, or in down-times. Play a Ventrue if you enjoy never letting them get under your skin. Play a Ventrue if you want to experience what being a leader might be like, or if stories of those born to lead are of interest to you.

## **INSPIRATIONS: IN PRINT - WHITE WOLF**

White Wolf published many books which are excellent references, detailing the history, backstory, and statistics for many, many Ventrue. Here are just a few books that we feel are the best resources to give you a good idea of what the Ventrue are like (or were like) when written in the original canon materials.

This list of source material is presented in order of relevance:

- Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised) [WW2358]
- Clanbook: Ventrue [WW2058]
- Midnight Siege [WW2422]
- Prince's Primer [WW2232]
- Gilded Cage [WW2420]
- Victorian Age Vampire: Core Rulebook [WW2470]
- Victorian Age Vampire: London by Night [WW2471]
- Dark Ages: Libellus Sanguinis I: Masters of the State (WW2708)
- Dark Ages: Players Guide to the High Clans [WW20007]
- Dark Ages: Road of Kings [WW20031]
- Dark Ages: Under the Black Cross [WW2836]
- Dark Ages: Europe [WW20020]
- Berlin by Night [WW2214]
- Dark Ages: Road of Sins [WW20033]

## **INSPIRATIONS: IN PRINT - OTHER**

There are many qualities and skills that one must develop in order to be a good leader. Below we have listed several books which might help you further develop these life-skills, and possibly explore topics and ideas that you can adapted to help you as you conceptualize or portray your Ventrue or Ventrue-Antitribu characters.

A few books that we recommend are:

- Arts of Power: Statecraft and Diplomacy (Chas W. Freeman Jr., 1997)
- The Color Purple (Alice Walker, 1982)

- Etiquette for Dummies (Hungry Minds Inc, 1999)
- The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo (Stieg Larsson, 2005)
- Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...and Others Don't (Jim Collins, 2001)
- How to Win Friends and Influence People (Dale Carnegie, 1936)
- Noble House (James Clavell, 1981)
- The Prince (Niccolo Machiavelli, 1532)
- Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (De Capo Press, 2011)
- The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People (Stephen R. Covey, 2000)
- Tai Pan (James Clavell, 1966)

## INSPIRATIONS: IN THE MEDIA

There are many films which contain either characters who embody elements of what it is to be Ventrue, or concepts and plots which could easily be adapted to help serve as inspiration for Ventrue characters, stories, or concepts. Below are several of our recommendations for the players of Ventrue and Ventrue-Antitribu.

The following sources are recommended for the players of Ventrue (of the Mainstream Clan):

- Barbarians at the Gate (1993)
- Boiler Room (2000)
- Casino Royale (2006)
- Margin Call (2011)
- Network (1976)
- Thank You for Smoking (2005)
- The Social Network (2010)
- To Kill a Mockingbird (1962)
- Wall Street (1987)
  
- Boardwalk Empire (HBO Miniseries, 2010)
- House of Cards (TV Mini-Series, 1990)
- John Adams (HBO Miniseries , 2008)
- Mad Men (AMC Series, 2007)
- Rome, Season 1 (HBO Miniseries, 2005)
- West Wing, Season 1 (TV Series, 1999)
- The Wire (HBO Miniseries , 2002)

The following sources are recommended for the players of Ventrue-Antitribu:

- The Baader Meinhof Complex (2008)
- Black Hawk Down (2001)
- Charlie Wilson's War (2007)
- The Duellists (1977)
- Fight Club (1999)
- Kingdom of Heaven (2005)
- Saving Private Ryan (1998)
- Valkyrie (2008)
  
- Rome, Season 2 (HBO Miniseries, 2005)
- The Wire (HBO Miniseries , 2002)

## GETTING CONNECTING: LISTS & GROUPS

The Ventrue and Ventrue-Antitribu have many internal orders, societies, and social divisions. The following list is a compilation of many of the groups and lists used to administer these organizations. Membership to these groups or lists is usually only by invitation, and possibly exclusive to certain segments or types of Ventrue. Many of the groups or lists will require you and your storytellers to provide additional information before you are subscribed. The lists are as follows:

### **Ventrue Out-of-Character Group**

Anyone who plays, has ever played, or is a Storyteller for a Ventrue character may sign up for, and immediately be accepted on the out-of-character forum:

- **OWbN Ventrue OOC Group:** [owbn-scepter-ooc@googlegroups.com](mailto:owbn-scepter-ooc@googlegroups.com)

### **Ventrue In-Character Group (for Camarilla Ventrue)**

For Camarilla Ventrue, getting on the Ventrue lists is fairly straightforward. All that is required is a completed Lineage (detailed further in the Lineage section of this document); a process which starts with your local game-staff and Sub-Coordinator. Once the Lineage is finished and accepted by the Ventrue Coordinator, the invites to the following lists will be sent out:

- **OWbN Ventrue IC Group:** [owbn-scepter@googlegroups.com](mailto:owbn-scepter@googlegroups.com)

### **Ventrue Directorate Groups**

OWbN Ventrue: Global Directorate (IC) - [owbn-directorate@googlegroups.com](mailto:owbn-directorate@googlegroups.com)

OWbN Ventrue: Western Region Directorate - [western-region-directorate@googlegroups.com](mailto:western-region-directorate@googlegroups.com)

### **Ventrue Regional Groups**

OWbN Ventrue: Mid-Atlantic - [owbn-ventrue-midatlantic@googlegroups.com](mailto:owbn-ventrue-midatlantic@googlegroups.com)

OWbN Ventrue: Midwest - [midwest-directorate@googlegroups.com](mailto:midwest-directorate@googlegroups.com)

### **Ventrue Society and Order Groups**

OWbN Ventrue: Assembly of Colors - [court-of-many-colors@googlegroups.com](mailto:court-of-many-colors@googlegroups.com)

OWbN Ventrue: Crimson Sceptre - [the-crimson-sceptre@googlegroups.com](mailto:the-crimson-sceptre@googlegroups.com)

OWbN Ventrue: Knights of the Blood - [knights-of-the-blood@googlegroups.com](mailto:knights-of-the-blood@googlegroups.com)

OWbN Ventrue: Order of the Ermine Robe - [order-of-the-ermine-robe@googlegroups.com](mailto:order-of-the-ermine-robe@googlegroups.com)

OWbN Ventrue: Order of the Hawk Royale - [order-of-the-hawk-royale@googlegroups.com](mailto:order-of-the-hawk-royale@googlegroups.com)

OWbN Ventrue: Order of the White Cross - [order-of-the-white-cross@googlegroups.com](mailto:order-of-the-white-cross@googlegroups.com)

OWbN Ventrue: Procuratori - [procuratori@googlegroups.com](mailto:procuratori@googlegroups.com)

OWbN Ventrue: Society of the Hague - [society-of-the-hague@googlegroups.com](mailto:society-of-the-hague@googlegroups.com)

OWbN Ventrue: Sorority of Amastris - sorority-of-amastris@googlegroups.com

**Ventrue Justicar and Archons**

OWbN Ventrue: Justicariate - ventruearchons@googlegroups.com

## **GETTING CONNECTING: THE COORDINATOR-TEAM**

Anyone should feel free to contact the Ventrue Coordinator Staff at the following address:

- [ventruecoords@googlegroups.com](mailto:ventruecoords@googlegroups.com)

If you have an issue that you wish to remain private, or would like to speak directly with the Ventrue Coordinator for any reason, please feel free to send an email to the following address:

- [ventruecoord@gmail.com](mailto:ventruecoord@gmail.com)

For an up-to-date listing of the Coordinator, and the Coordinator Staff, and Ventrue groups and lists, please check the OWbN.NET webpage located at the following URL:

- [http://ventrue.owbn.net/wiki//index.php?title=Coordinator%27s\\_Office](http://ventrue.owbn.net/wiki//index.php?title=Coordinator%27s_Office)

## VENTRUE & THE SECTS

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### CAMARILLA

During the times of the Crusades, and onward until the formation of the Camarilla, a divide was growing inside of clan Ventrue between those who believed in divine right - the doctrine that kings derive their right to rule directly from God and are not accountable to their subjects - and those who believed otherwise.

A new class of Ventrue emerged in the Dark Ages who, rather than tying their influence to the families of mortals who ruled as royalty or nobility, invested in trading, money-lending, and institutional power such as the Roman Catholic Church, in addition to seeking new and emerging industries and ventures. These Merchant Ventrue were extremely successful. Operating on the idea that "money is power" soon, many Ventrue all over Europe, and eventually the world, began replicating their success.

With the Ventrue as the architects, and against the backdrop of the fires of the Inquisition and the Anarch Revolt, the Camarilla was created - a global organization of Vampires with the policy that all vampires shall attempt to fit into and stay hidden from Mortal Society. The Camarilla is considered by most Ventrue to be their birthright, created completely suiting their natural abilities - no single Clan has a better set of natural talents (e.g. Disciplines) better suited towards succeeding in the social environment. The Ventrue, already used to serving as shadow government and behind the scenes puppet-masters, had found a new way to manipulate the world to their needs on a level which had never been imagined.

For more information on the Ventrue during the this time, please see *Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised)* [WW2358], pgs.22-25.

Some stereotypical concepts that might fit a new Ventrue character in the Camarilla would be risk-taking entrepreneurs, cut-throat CEOs, savvy politicians, wealthy investment bankers, high-powered lawyers, top physicians, heirs to fortunes, wealthy aristocrats, internet geniuses, technological moguls, successful venture capitalists, win-at-any-cost stockbrokers, and anyone coming from a background of old-money.

### SABBAT

As the Merchant Ventrue grew in power, some Ventrue felt alienated, especially those who were risking their lives fighting for the expansion of their domains into Eastern Europe and the Middle East. These Ventrue began to resent the growing trend of the Merchants and the majority of the Clan, believing the leadership of Clan Ventrue to be settling for the comforts of wealth over action and accomplishment.

Some of the more conservative members of Clan Ventrue tried to argue that money was simply a means to

maintain power in the newly emerging economies of the world. However, the would-be Antitribu refused to relax their position and by the time of the Anarch Revolt, the break between clan-factions was irreparable.

Though the Ventrue only comprised a minority of those who joined the Anarch Revolt, they made up some of the most devoted members of the Movement. The Ventrue-Antitribu believe that the Ventrue of the Camarilla have grown complacent, and that they have completely abandoned their noble legacy, and their divine right. Due to these reasons, and more, few clans in the modern nights hold such vehemence as the Ventrue Antitribu hold for their “mainstream” counterparts.

For more background information on the Ventrue during this time, please see *Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised)* [WW2358], pgs.22-25; *Guide to the Sabbat* [WW2303], p.78-79; and *MET: Sabbat Guide* [WW5018], p.56-57.

Some stereotypical concepts that might fit a new Ventrue-Antitribu character would be Soldiers or members of the Military, Warlords, Knights, Nobles and the Aristocracy, Labor Union Heads, Religious Fanatics or Extremists, and members of Organized Crime.

## **ANARCHS**

During the worst parts of the Inquisition, Sires of every clan commanded their Childer, often young and unsure of themselves, to stay behind to defend them against the fire-wielding mortals who hunted them in their havens, slew their servants, and tried to drag them to their deaths. While a great many, both Sire and Childer, perished - others rebelled. Refusing to surrender their lives for those of their Elders, these “Anarchs” rose up and slew their Elders.

As stories of this Anarch Revolt grew, nervous Sires tried to secure the loyalty of their Childer by forcing the blood-bond onto them - this just helped to push them further towards the Anarch Movement. When the Convention of Thorns forces the surrender of the Anarchs, there were very few Ventrue who accepted the terms of the punishment, turning Antitribu instead of submitting to the will of their Elders.

Many of the Ventrue who do claim themselves as Anarchs are young, and have shaken the oppressive and demanding yokes of their sires. They seek to live their own lives, and to build their own reputation, based on their

## **THE BLOODLINE OF DOMINIQUE**

In previous editions of *Vampire the Masquerade* (most notably, *Storyteller's Guide to the Sabbat*, p. 49-50), and even in the *Vampire the Eternal Struggle CCG* (for which continuity continued after the *Masquerade* timeline ended), an alternate Discipline set was used for many published Ventrue-Antitribu. When the Revised Edition was released, this difference was eliminated and the concept for the Ventrue-Antitribu changed slightly. While this changeover is never explained in the canon, in *OWbN*, this change is explained with the *Bloodline of Dominique*.

Known as the first Antitribu, Dominique rebelled against her sire very early in the Anarch Revolt. The spirit of rebellion and her defiance of authority led to Dominique, and all of her childer being unfairly branded as indignant and ungrateful low-lives by her Camarilla counterparts - an antithesis to the 'blue-blood' concept. Perhaps it is for these reasons or others that the Blood of Dominique's line runs true; no one can say for certain.

Players of Ventrue-Antitribu who are descended from the Lineage of Dominique may create their character with the alternate Discipline set of *Auspex, Dominate, Fortitude* instead of the normal Discipline set listed in *MET: LotN:R* or the *MET: Sabbat Guide*. These Ventrue-Antitribu are considered *Bloodline Antitribu* and outside of the Sabbat they are considered *Sect Defectors*. *OWbN R&U Bylaws*, 4.A.i.1.

own accomplishments or failures. In the Camarilla, a new Ventrue has a multitude of expectations that they may never live up to, while at the same time never truly being able to free themselves of the influence or commands of a domineering Sire. In the Sabbat, the oppressive chains of the blood-bond and the surrender of one's humanity are too great an asking price. For these individualists who have the courage to strike out on their own, sometimes alone, there is the Anarch Movement.

Since the Anarchs claim a wide variation of members, almost any concept that might fit within either the Ventrue of the Camarilla or the Ventrue-Antitribu of the Sabbat would likely fit within the Anarchs. This includes Ventrue who were part of the original Anarch Revolt, to Antitribu unwilling to part with their personal freedom or humanity, to former-Camarilla Neonates looking to move to a new place where all of the resources are not controlled by their Elders. Anarch Ventrue can provide a player with the best of both worlds as far as background choice.

For more background information on the Ventrue during this time, please see *Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised)* [WW2358], p.22-25, & 45; *MET: Anarch Guide* [WW5040], p.38, & 126-127; *Guide to the Anarchs* [WW2424], p.48-49.

## **ANATOMY OF A VENTRUE**

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### **CANDIDATES FOR EMBRACE: AN OVERVIEW**

The pool of candidates from which Ventrue, or Ventrue-Antitribu embrace are actually very similar, but with slight differences. Business savvy - the ability to earn compensation or win favors and connections - comes natural to any potential Ventrue or Ventrue-Antitribu candidate... *how* the candidate goes about acquiring these things is everything. While the Ventrue focus on mortals who demonstrate a penchant for the acquisition of power and wealth; the Ventrue-Antitribu gravitate towards mortals who have a strong sense of responsibility or duty.

The need for control, power, security, influence or respect are motivating forces of which, one could spend a lifetime in pursuit of - all of which the Ventrue might seek.

Almost all candidates are chosen because they are successful in their field. Successful people are usually well-presented in manner, look, and speech. Successful people (at least appear to) conduct themselves with dignity, and are often part of organizations where they are part of an environment of continuous challenge and competition. This keeps them “sharp.”

Most Ventrue consider it an honor to be embraced into Clan Ventrue, and Ventrue sires make sure only candidates meeting the high level of quality expected from the clan are deemed worthy to be admitted.

For more detailed information on the types of Mortals that Ventrue might embrace, please see *Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised)*, p.45-48

### **CANDIDATES FOR EMBRACE: TRADITION VERSUS INNOVATION**

Ventrue sometimes embrace because they require a certain skill or understanding. Vampires are stagnant creatures, and as the world moves on, they do not. This allows for a certain level of flexibility in your concept when creating a Ventrue character. Flexibility is good, and creative concepts are good; this helps keep the game and the experience new, or “fresh.”

Please keep in mind though, not to break with stereotypes too much or too often. Some players might believe the clan is all boring board meetings or all about unyielding rigidity and might feel the need to make a concept that strays too far from the defined stereotypes. Please remember to use caution when venturing too far outside the mold. You want to attract attention as your Ventrue, but you do not want to draw the wrong type of attention and gain the suspicion or the ire of your betters (unnecessarily).

For some basic concepts which might help you to generate some ideas about your Ventrue or Ventrue-Antitribu,

please review Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised), pages 79 to 94.

## THE AGOGE

Taking its name from the strenuous Spartan method of training warriors from childhood, the Agoge is a Ventrue tradition which prepares a childe for the challenges of the world. Once a Ventrue is selected and embraced, they are accompanied by their sire as they make the *Choice*, the first-feeding where their feeding preference will be determined forever. The sire then begins the *Training*, where a new childe is taught about the traditions, practices, and expectations of the Ventrue, or anything else they need to know. This somewhat formal education also prepares the Ventrue for the Presentation, where the childe gains entrance to his or her Sect.

Where other clans would consider the new childe finished, the Ventrue do not, and push the new childe through *Continued Training* where other Ventrue in the area are engaged, teaching the new Ventrue what they know. This prepares the childe for the *Test*, a rigorous trial prepared by the sire which the childe must complete without help from his or her fellow Ventrue. If this *Trail* is passed, the Ventrue is brought before the rest of the clan in the area and proudly stands and recites his or her accomplishments. It is only then that the Clan decides whether or not the new childe is to be accepted into the prestigious ranks of the Ventrue, releasing the new child on to his or her own.

Ventrue of each Sect have their own Sect-specific version of the Agoge which is tailored to the traditions, methods, practices and expectations of the Sect. While the Agoge has fallen somewhat out of favor in the modern nights, many more traditional Ventrue ensure that their childer undergo the process. The Agoge ensures that the new Ventrue has the tools to be successful in their future unlife.

For more detailed information each stage of the Ventrue Agoge, please see Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised), p.50-52

## HOW TO SUCCEED: PLAYING YOUR VENTRUE

The Ventrue are not vending machines who dispense influence to protect the Masquerade for others, nor are they ninja-assassins of the night. So, how (without blood magic and augmented form-powers) does a Ventrue player get ahead and command loyalty, debt, and the action of his or her peers? Below we have compiled some tips which are by no means exhaustive, but which players (both novice and veteran) may take as inspirational guidelines or advice.

First, appearing like you get along with your clan members may seem like a small first step, but it is essential. No matter how much you might not like some members of your clan, appearing to have an unassailable clan structure (both in-character and out) can go a long way towards making sure others cannot use you to get ahead on a member of your clan; some call this presenting a unified front. Regardless if an individual is Camarilla, Independent, Anarch or Sabbat, he or she should be worried that going against one King means going against all Kings... everywhere.

Second, you must command respect at all times. This should be done utilizing a delicate balance of decorum and firmness. You are a Ventrue, and thus, entitled to power, but remember, each domain has its own flavor; each domain is different. You may find, in many domains, you require access to social arenas currently closed to you - adapt! One surefire way to accomplish this in One World by Night is by making people laugh, or smile - as long as you do not do it by acting like a fool! You will quickly find that, as in life, finding a bit of humor in each situation takes you far with others.

Third, always remember that you are a King, and that your Kingdom has its subjects. Allow your subjects to shine - don't hog the scene. Your Court is there for a reason. Brujah smash, so keep them supplied with targets. Nosferatu provide valuable intel - pay them for it! Toreador keep humanity present and the beast at bay while manipulating the social scene, so make sure they are preaching *your* message. Malkavians provide insight (usually), so pay attention to it. Every individual has a role to play, even the Ventrue. When in doubt, the clan *does* have your back... and this is often what your enemies are not considering when wrapped up in their own affairs.

Next, is Allies. Allies! Allies! Allies! Only a fool believes he can rule without allies. Alliances wax and wane, trends rise and fall, enemies and scandals come and go. Remember that others in your local game need you just as much as you need them, but never assume their aid will be freely given. There are too many secrets whispered in the dark, and you must always know the climate of your area and stay one step ahead of the rest. One way to do this is through a strong network of allies.

Also remember that nothing is free and that it is better to be a jack-of-all-trades than worthless. Characters should know they can come to Clan Ventrue for help. If you cannot personally fulfill their request, your clan likely can. Better to "look into it" quickly and ask the clan for help, than let another clan claim that prize. Clan Ventrue has resources vast and beyond belief. That is one of the reasons you will be so valuable in your domain. Many Kindred of higher status expect a free handout, or do not like being "charged" to protect the Masquerade; always use tact in acquiring compensation.

Finally, do not dishonor yourself with deceit and tarnish the name of Clan Ventrue by backing out on deals. If you do decide to welch on a bet, at least have the common decency to not get caught!

## **HOW TO SUCCEED: THE PUBLIC STAGE - ONLINE**

Let's be honest - there are two "modes" this game is played, online and in-person. With regard to the online public scene in One World by Night, the scene is extremely fickle.

Often times, people get wrapped up or overcome by conversations on forums which would never escalate to the point they do if the conversation were to happen face-to-face. Just remember when a conversation over the internet becomes heated that people have short attention spans, and that some topics need time to die down before real progress can be made.

Remember, power is perception and topics die out quickly. True, the national game presents limitless opportunities for networking, but most of the people watching you angrily type emails are like hungry sharks, waiting for you to slip up in order to extort a boon from you. Do not be baited. Be aware of (and beware of) keyboard commandos -- those who are bold in forums, yet would never say that to your face.

If you have the opportunity to join the international Camarilla forum, do not be arrogant; the Camarilla looks to you and your Clan for leadership, not insults. While you likely are much smarter than your colleagues, it is bad form to so obviously show them up with 10-syllable words and condescension. Besides, you never know who is listening when your audience is the entirety of the Camarilla. Use this forum wisely, and remember, One World by Night is blessed to include a wealth of chronicles in different parts of the world. Do not overlook your ability to gain allies overseas.

Finally, if you don't like the current environment, change it. Topics shift like the winds. Wag the dog, divert attention, and direct the setting to be as you wish it, in order to thrive. This can be as simple as changing the subject in the forums, creating your own "public reality" where your peers come to you for advice or assistance. If you have not caught a break, find a way to make that break a reality.

## **HOW TO SUCCEED: THE PUBLIC STAGE - LIVE ACTION**

For the Live-Action portion of the public scene, this is where you can make the largest impact on the opinions and outlook of others. Attending event games are a great way to network and be visible. If you can travel outside your home game, remember, your name and influence travel with you!

New players, it is good to be bold, but be careful not to come on too strong until you know the lay of the land. Remember that initial gentleman's (or a lady's) courtesy that helped you rise in the ranks as you became acclimated to your new levels of power. With this in-mind, have confidence to wield your personality, social and mental acumen, and political chops. It will be a balancing act to do this without being too arrogant. Your goal now is to "own" the scene, and you will see, the others will fall in line. You are the masterful director and architect of all around you. Should you have to resort to using your disciplines, you likely have failed. Learn how to be better next time. Remember, a King gets what he or she wants.

Remember your public presence and your clan presence are two different things. Show proper decorum in both, but do not ever fight with or insult your clanmates openly or publicly. And of course, never use Directorate titles in non-clan settings.

The final thing to keep in mind is that YOU HAVE HELP! No matter the problem, always turn to your clan if you need help. If you have OOC questions, ask your Storyteller or contact a member of the Ventrue Coordinator staff who will be happy to help you!

## LAWS OF DECORUM: AN OVERVIEW

Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised), pages 52 and 53 detail a complex and interesting set of “strongly worded suggestions” which have been adopted and refined by the members of Clan Ventrue over time, taught to childer, and passed down through the Lineage as tradition. We cannot recommend highly enough that every Ventrue and Ventrue-Antitribu player read the Laws of Decorum section in its entirety.

From an out-of-character perspective, the guidelines presented in Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised) will help you, the player, to properly portray and maintain your character’s noble bearing and it will certainly help you as you interact with and play the politics of your game(s). Ventrue are expected to “maintain civility at all times,” but that is just a different way of saying that you have to be the one who always keeps his or her cool. After all, if you lose your cool, who will be there to assure everyone that “everything is going to be OK?”

In-character, breaches of decorum are handled quite seriously, partially because they are so rare. Even though the Laws of Decorum are only “strongly worded suggestions,” these traditions are strictly enforced by the various hierarchies and Elders of Clan Ventrue that can be found in any Sect.

## LAWS OF DECORUM: AN EXAMPLE

When speaking with others, it is important to treat them with the same respect you wish to be afforded with. It is easy to maintain a position of power or authority in the conversation with slight turns of phrasing, for example:

*[Ventrue-A & Kindred-B are speaking, Kindred-C walks up mid-conversation]*

*Kindred-C: “Excuse me, Ventrue-A, may I speak to you for a minute? Am I interrupting?”*

*Ventrue-A: “It’s alright. I will make time for you.” [To Kindred-B] “Please excuse me, I have urgent business to attend to and I would gladly resume or conversation at a later time, or perhaps reschedule.”*

Exits and entrances from conversation such as these seem long-winded, but they keep the Ventrue in a position of power; the speaker chose to have the conversation, therefore it happens on the speaker’s terms. The speaker was gracious in both exiting the previous conversation and in entering, earning no ill-feelings and possibly extra respect from each party concerned which allows further dealings with both of them to be amicable.

When someone speaks to you, wait for a silent count of a couple of seconds before responding (no more than five), while looking directly at them. You will find, more often than not, they will take the silent pause as a cue that they have not satisfied you, or that you believe they are not finished speaking and will continue to speak past the point they meant to have stopped - often revealing extra, unintended information!

Ventrue are subtle and their thoughts run deep. As a player of a Ventrue, do not hurry for others; running or rushing is for servants. You are important; they will wait for you (but do not make them wait too much). Being

Ventruie is not only what Clan is on your sheet but also how you act, how you feel, and how others perceive you. The Laws of Decorum are an excellent tool to use to achieve the proper effect.

## **DRESS TO IMPRESS**

Storytellers should consider the suggestions on costuming found in almost every MET book, and encourage players to come to game in-costume; it will help promote an atmosphere of immersion where people are comfortable enough to play the game, and will improve the whole of the game.

For Ventruie players, looking successful can literally mean the difference between actual success or failure. Your clothing makes a statement about you long before you actually speak to anyone, and first impressions are often formed in seconds, based on image and appearance alone. Since people prejudge others based on their appearance, looking great all the time is an easy way to avoid this obstacle. Your clothing and appearance should be a positive influence on your character, his or her political career, and future-potential. After all, if you dress like you are successful, most people will assume that you are!

There are countless articles and books on why people should always look their best. We have chosen to not address the “why,” and to try to provide you with some helpful suggestions as to the “how.” Hopefully, the link below can help with some tips and suggestions to keep you looking your best while playing a Clan that relies so much on appearances and impressions.

These style tips may be found at the following link: [OWbN Ventruie: Style Tips \(Google Doc\)](#)

## **A SPECIAL NOTE ON GENDER AND RACIAL BIAS**

Sure, Clanbook: Ventruie (Revised), pg.38 tells us that *some* Elders of Clan Ventruie are simply sexist, bigoted products of their time. Many Ventruie were chosen from the ranks of military leaders, nobles, and those who commanded great wealth and power, and in Western culture, those individuals happened to be men. This has led some to observe that Clan Ventruie is a sort of “boys club.” While it may seem that way to outsiders, those who do not adapt, like the monarchs of old, fall by the wayside and may eventually be discarded. Many Elders know this, and fear it.

More importantly, the Laws of Decorum are more important than the personal opinions (or Mortal failings) of any Elder. No Ventruie who values his or her personal reputation would dare to openly or publicly impugn the Dignitas or station of another Ventruie based on sex or race. What is thought of in private is one thing. To unnecessarily make enemies based on a mortal failing is simply a waste.

The larger, simpler truth is that no matter how many sexist or bigoted Elders Clan Ventruie has, the value placed on accomplishment outweighs any kind of limitation dependent on race or sex. Such examples as Justicar Lucinde, Anushin Rawan, Anne Bowesley, are undeniable examples of Ventruie accomplishment.



## **FEEDING PREFERENCE**

Though Ventrue never discuss or share their feeding preferences (and asking would be considered strictly, taboo), all Ventrue have acquired a very specific feeding preference. While some Vampires refuse to feed off of a certain type of mortals (such as police officers or those within the medical professions), Ventrue can *only* feed on one specific group or class of people.

The player should work with the storyteller to define a feeding preference for his or her Ventrue character. It is suggested that a feeding preference be comprised of two separate common factors, or one uncommon factor. Examples of two common factors would be such as young women, or businessmen (meaning men), An example of an uncommon factor would be only feeding from individuals who are experiencing a strong emotion, such as fear or pleasure.

No matter the situation, Ventrue cannot drink the vitae of mortals other than their chosen type. Ventrue may, however, always drink from other Vampires without issue (otherwise the Vaulderie would be extremely difficult).

For more detailed information on Ventrue Feeding Preferences, please see Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised), p.49

## IN-GAME ADVANTAGES

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### LINEAGE: AN OVERVIEW

Every Ventrue can recite his or her Lineage all the way back to Ventrue, himself. This is one feat that the other clans are not capable of, and it is a point of pride for the Ventrue. Additionally, since attempting to research and learn every Lineage of every Ventrue ever is a futile effort for outsiders, this tradition helps ensure infiltration of the Ventrue is nearly-impossible. Besides security, Lineages serve several other useful functions.

A Lineage is a sort of living history of all of the members of that line. Many of the accomplishments or failures, philosophies or truths, and abilities or faults are laid out when a Ventrue recites the members of his or her line for others. While some Lineages may grant entrance into circles frequented by the most prestigious members of Clan Ventrue, others can embroil the Ventrue in scandal simply by being spoken, or involve him or her in alliances or feuds which may be centuries old and completely unknown to the newly embraced Lineage-member.

When being formally introduced to another Ventrue for the first time, it is considered polite to recite or list your Lineage. Some Ventrue take this so far as to list complete Lineage, and the accomplishments or other embellishments of some of the more prominent members of a Lineage.

While lineages are widely known and displayed within the clan, they are kept a complete secret to outsiders.

### LINEAGE: FAKING IT

Even if a non-Ventrue imposter were able to accomplish the near impossibility of being able to accurately research, memorize, and recite a Lineage, the imposter would still need an identity that was part of said Lineage in order to pass as legitimate. In order to gain this identity, a character might attempt two methods.

First would be to kill a Ventrue and assume his or her identity. The other method would be to have an actual Ventrue cover for the infiltrator as his or her "Sire." Utilizing any of these, or any other methods in order to circumvent the Ventrue Clan Advantage listed in LotN:R, p.41 requires a Majority Vote of the OWbN Council for PCs and a Notification to Council for NPCs, [R&U Bylaws, 4.F.i.1.].

### LINEAGE: TIPS FOR PLAYERS

As the above section notes, every Lineage has accomplished members, and possibly infamous members. The important things to remember when choosing a Lineage is to choose one that best fits your character, and one which will allow you to develop either through story, or through your connections to the other members of the Lineage.

For example, being descended from a Chronicle-level NPC might provide you an immediate way to get into game-play, and allow for the option of a permanent Mentor who can provide stability and assistance when necessary. For those who want to explore the networking aspect of the clan immediately, feel free to join the Scepter-OOC group and post a few notes about your concept while asking if there is anyone that feels their concept can strongly mesh with yours.

Many Ventrue players feel that having an in-game PC-sire is the fastest and best method for selecting a Lineage. In this method, not only do you have someone who can assist you with researching the accomplishments of the other members of your Line, but you have already accomplished becoming part of an in-character network which will be of great use in the months and years ahead.

Finally, players may choose to be descended from any other member in the Lineage listing as each Line has its own advantages and disadvantages.

The Lineage listing may be found at the following URL:

- <http://ventrue.owbn.net/wiki//index.php?title=Lineage>

Players should feel free to work with their staff in order to complete the character's background with enough NPCs to fill any Generational gap that may need to be filled between the Generation of the highest Generation NPC they can find on the list, and their PCs Generation. Please keep in mind though that 6th Generation and below NPCs must have the approval of the Ventrue Coordinator to be created, or must go to the OWbN Council to be voted on, [R&U Bylaws, 6.A.i.1.].

## **LINEAGE: TIPS FOR STORYTELLERS**

When choosing a Lineage for your NPCs, or when helping a player select a Lineage for a new character, start by doing some research. The Lineage listing noted above is an excellent start. The other chronicles of One World by Night might also be a good place to go if you are looking to connect with other existing lineages for Elder characters. The Scepter-OOC group (for player-characters) and the OWbN-ST group (for NPCs) are both good starting points, in addition to the Ventrue Coordinator's office.

When a player creates a new Ventrue, they will likely have a concept already, and your job will be to help them establish a sire, a grandsire, and brood-mates up and down the line which will help compliment the character concept in ways which enhance that character's stories.

For example, having the PC be descended from a chronicle-level NPC could help you tell stories where a young Ventrue tries to get out from under his sire's ultra-traditional control. Maybe that same sire embraced the PC because he or she is a social butterfly, and the NPC sire requires someone who can "work a room." Many Ventrue bring on assistants to help them adapt to the modern world - those who have skills which they do not. In this case, the NPC sire could serve as a Mentor, or an influential ally.

Another take on the sire-childer relationship, perhaps the NPC has gained so much power and responsibility that he or she requires a childer in order to continue to expand their “empire.” Now, a bold Storyteller could run that same story, only with many competing childer to the same NPC, all hoping to outshine his or her brood-mates in order to gain a larger piece of the prize, and the glory.

Any Storyteller may add their NPCs to the public Lineage listing by sending a request to do so to the Ventrue Coordinator’s Office, and they are encouraged to do so. A note will be added to the NPC indicating the Chronicle to contact for anyone who is interested in knowing more, or using the NPC in their Lineage.

## **ASSISTANCE: THE ETHIC OF SUCCOR**

A sacred and cherished tradition dating back to the days of Rome, the Ethic of Succor is an understanding between all Ventrue that, should assistance or help be asked for by another, it shall be provided - no excuses, no exceptions. Ventrue sires teach that Succor should only be requested in the most dire of circumstances, when all other options have been exhausted.

In the modern nights, younger Ventrue who are not afraid to use tradition to their advantage have excelled by using Succor in order to gather influence, money, favors, or information. Even asking for a light might technically be within the bounds of the Ethic of Succor, but abusing the tradition in such a manner would certainly draw the wrath of the subject of the request - who could legitimately refuse the request without repercussion. Many older, more traditional members of Clan Ventrue would consider the use of the Ethic of Succor something only done when one’s life is in danger, and any other such use would be an offense worthy of punishment - the severity of which would be in-line with the flagrancy of the violation.

In order to request Succor, the Ventrue must simply ask by stating the following phrase, in-person: “I implore your assistance, cousin,” or one of several other well-recognized phrases. Though requests are traditionally made individually, if the request is called of a group of Ventrue, such as all of the Ventrue in a city, it should be done in front all of those Ventrue at once. If it is impossible for the request to be made in-person (if a Ventrue is imprisoned, for example), the request can be made at a distance, but should be done by direct personal contact such as a letter or (secure) phone conversation. If a Ventrue needs help, but does not know who can help, he or she may be forced to invoke the Ethic of Succor multiple times, each time moving further and further towards the individual who can help.

For more detailed information about the Ethic of Succor, and Ventrue Assistance including several examples, please see *Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised)*, pgs. 35, 53, and 71.

## **ASSISTANCE: WORKING TOGETHER**

*Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised)*, p.71 contains many excellent quotes about how and why the Clan works together.

One quote that we would like to highlight is this one about Ventrue cooperation, “The mere fact that Ventrue can expect succor (or at least a non hostile approximation) in a crisis puts them head and shoulders above most clans, particularly those without the grace or demeanor of kings.” Now, really think about that for a second.

Many times people think of Clan unity and structure as forces which hold characters back from achieving personal goals. The Ventrue should be quite the opposite, using Clan cooperation as a vehicle to launch a character to that next level of power or achievement. Cooperation, however, requires time for planning and the courage to ask for assistance.

While the courage part may come naturally, the time required for the planning is sometimes in short reserve when dealing with a game session that may only be 4 or 5 hours. Due to this, we suggest possibly gathering the involved Ventrue players for a non-game-night event. This could be something as simple as in-character drinks while making secretive plans to an all-out Embrace Night celebration with the new player/character being the featured guest of the evening’s events.

Mini-events such as this could serve two purposes. First, they will get the characters used to working together, and second, they will give the Ventrue time to plan and strategize outside of the time-constraints of a normal game session. The Ventrue of a city could plan to divide the various influences of a city, with each Ventrue planning to take control of a separate influence, or they could plan to weave a complex web meant to ensnare and topple a particularly challenging political opponent.

Storytellers should encourage their players to hold small gatherings like this a few times per year, possibly even facilitating them with Storyteller or Coordinator-level NPCs to get a tradition started that can be eventually be handed off to the players.

## **VENTRUE COURTS & DISPUTES: AN OVERVIEW**

Rather than maintain a permanent system of Courts and Judges, Clan Ventrue (except the Antitribu of the Sabbat who rely on traditional Sect methods of dispute-resolution) relies on an ad hoc system of dispute-resolution which is both simple and effective. When one Ventrue has an issue with another of equal or lesser station or reputation, and the two parties are either unwilling or unable to come to a resolution, a Hearing is sometimes requested by one of the involved parties, or by a superior.

Traditionally, both members involved in the dispute must agree to bring their case in front of a neutral Arbiter, but a Ventrue's superior may sometimes "highly suggest" that a Hearing is necessary. Since a Ventrue's superior can usually levy punishment against a subordinate which does not involve legal proceedings, many concede.

Once the need for a Hearing is confirmed, an Arbiter must be chosen who the two disputants agree on. For disputes among members of the same leadership structure (i.e. Directorate, Society or Order, etc), while one who is considered equal in rank or stature may serve, an Arbiter is most always chosen who is of superior rank or stature to both parties involved. For disputes which span the above mentioned boundaries, the same process is followed, but it becomes more difficult to select an individual who is considered neutral. This is where The Hague is crucial.

As neutral parties, Hague members of appropriate seniority can serve in the role of Arbiter for most any Ventrue. For more information on the seniority of Hague members, and for what Clan roles they may serve as arbiter for, see the OWbN Ventrue: Guide to Societies and Orders, at the following URL:

- <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1V3oaP4VPxwcdSe9whrcL8U63cIA15p7hJC-IAHDe46Y/edit?authkey=CLHizMYM>

## **VENTRUE COURTS & DISPUTES: THE HEARING**

In the time leading up to the night of the Hearing, all parties involved (including the Judge if he is not part of The Hague) are encouraged to make use of the services of The Hague for counsel and advice. Once an Arbiter is agreed on, he or she sets the time and place for the Court to convene, and all interested Ventrue in the area are invited to attend. Typical Court Hearings start with opening statements and proceed to the presentation of evidence and witness testimony, all the while showcasing the skills of each party in displays of verbal rhetoric and monologuing.

In Court, each party must speak for themselves, and must rely on their personal skills of debate and showmanship; making use of an advocate, or consulting with others is strictly forbidden while a Court is in session. A party may not ask the other party questions directly, but asks the Arbiter who, in turn, rephrases the question as to avoid any unintentional (or intentional) insult.

Once arbitration is completed, the Arbiter may impose any penalty that he or she deems necessary, usually based

on precedent, with Final Death being warranted only for the most heinous crimes (Amaranth, Patricide/Matricide, or the outright Murder of another Ventrue). Once a decision is handed down, it is in each parties best-interest to accept it; refusing an Arbiter's decisions is, at best, a shocking display of ignorance and disrespect for the time-honored traditions of the Ventrue; at worst, it is viewed as a personal attack on the dignitas of the Arbiter himself. It is not uncommon for those who refuse to accept the decision of a Court presided over by a member of The Hague to have their names circulated among the members of the Knights of the Blood... somehow.

## **VENTRUE COURTS & DISPUTES: JUDGEMENT AND PUNISHMENT**

Serving as Judge in a Ventrue dispute is a serious affair. Not only is the Dignitas of the accuser and accused on the line, but the precedent set by a Court may have far-reaching implications and may even reflect on the Dignitas of the Judge. When a Judge is chosen by two Ventrue who are locked in a dispute, it is a gesture of great praise towards the chosen Ventrue, but it is also a great burden on that Ventrue.

Once the Judge is chosen, the responsibility of deciding the verdict and the sentencing is at the complete discretion of the Judge. A Judge can decide to impose any sentence he or she wants, many Judges are cautious to hand out punishments which meet the crime. Some common punishments are as follows:

- Rendering of an announcement or apology
- Reductions in status, prestige and title
- Forfeiture or tithe of holdings, influence, or resources
- Boons
- Blood-bonding, either to the aggrieved party, or another more responsible Ventrue
- Imprisonment, sometimes by staking

Finally, though Final Death is an extreme option which *could* be imposed, due to the Traditions of the Camarilla, death sometimes is too complicated an option for the involved parties. In extreme cases, however, the Ventrue may just find a way...

For more detailed information on Difficulties and Disputes or The Courts, please see Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised), p.54.

## **VENTRUE CLAN STRUCTURE: THE DIRECTORATE**

Cities with a significant presence of Camarilla Ventrue will usually have an organization known as The Board. This is a council made up of the most highly respected Ventrue in the area. The Board is usually lead by the member holding the highest Camarilla office (who is almost always the Eldest Ventrue in the area). Called the Gerousia (an antiquated term) by some, the Board serves to oversee the local Clan's resources, act as local arbiters in Clan disputes, and generally provide leadership to the Ventrue of their domain. All of the local Boards together, globally, make up The Directorate (sometimes called the Ephorate, another antiquated term), which is helmed by a shadowy body of a dozen Elder Ventrue.

A large advantage of membership in the Ventrue Directorate is that its members may loan influence to one another at a 1:3 ratio, regardless of the level of the Fame background of the characters involved.

For more on The Directorate, its positions, and how it operates, please see *Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised)* [WW2358], pgs.38-44.

## MECHANICAL ADVANTAGES

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### MERITS

Laws of the Night (Revised) offers a fairly good selection of Merits and Flaws for Ventrue concepts. However, Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised) offered very few additional merits or flaws for Ventrue characters (in comparison to other expansion sources). Due to this, we have noted some Merits present in various books and sources which Storytellers may want to consider making available to Ventrue characters.

#### Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised)

**Paragon** (6 Trait Merit) - Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised), p.77

Though the MET mechanics for *Paragon* are sufficient for organized gameplay, it is suggested that the Storyteller only allow this Merit to only be purchased by Ventrue characters, and that Ventrue characters be allowed to purchase this Merit multiple times. Additionally, Storytellers should consider allowing the level gained from *Paragon* to not count towards the character's maximum influence cap (of Traits + Retainers).

Even though this merit allows access to some, more esoteric backgrounds (such as *Black Hand Membership*, *Sect Status*, or *Clan Prestige*), anything which requires approval still requires that same approval to gain the level of the background provided by *Paragon*.

Storytellers are urged to consider these recommendations for *Paragon*. Though some of them may seem powerful, the suggestions provided here will help you, the Storyteller, illustrate the Ventrue Clan's control over mortal institutions as an element of the genre. Providing mechanical encouragement for your Ventrue players is a means to an end in order to help your Ventrue continue to use influences, favors, and backgrounds as the preferred solution (which is a huge boon for Storytellers running a Camarilla Chronicle).

#### Counsel of Primogen

**Slowed Degeneration** (2 Trait Merit) - Counsel of Primogen, p.105

The character is considered to have +1 Trait on all Conscience/Conviction challenges. This merit originally cost 5 Traits in tabletop, but was reduced since the other Merits in Counsel of Primogen (like Natural Leader) were also reduced in cost after conversion in MET:LotN:R.

#### Dark Ages: Libellus Sanguinus 1 - Masters of State

**Vindictive** (3 Trait Merit) - Libellus Sanguinis 1: Masters of State, p.61

The character with this Merit is up +2 Bonus Traits in combat challenges against the target of his or her

vengeance. Storytellers should be careful to make sure this target has truly done something worthy of such vindictive hatred, and should feel free to force the character to expend temporary Willpower Traits when they feel that the character is not persistent enough when pursuing the target of their hatred. It is also suggested the Storyteller only allow this Merit to focus on one individual at any one time.

## **Dark Ages: Player's Guide to the High Clans**

**Ability Aptitude** (1 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.204

For the MET mechanics for this Merit, please reference the Merit: *Natural Aptitude* printed in MET:LotR (Revised), p.159

**Artful Visionary** (2 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.204

You gain +2 Traits on all Expression and Crafts tests, and others tests which call for creativity, at Storyteller discretion. You are also down -2 Traits on all challenges which involve repetitive or menial tasks.

**Cathartic Fury** (2 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.204

After you come out of Frenzy, perform a Static Courage challenge against a difficulty of 3 Traits. On a success, you regain one spent Trait of temporary Willpower. Storytellers are cautioned to restrict the gaining of Willpower back in this method to once per night.

**Controlled Thirst** (1 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.203

The character is considered at +1 Trait on Self-Control/Instinct challenges made to resist Frenzy, or to Ride the Wave when encountering the sight, smell, or taste of blood.

**Discipline Prodigy** (5 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.207

Characters may only purchase this Merit once. Characters with this Merit are up +2 Traits on all challenges involving one of their Clan-Disciplines, to be determined at the time this Merit is purchased. These bonus traits cannot be utilized in combat, nor do they extend to Combo Disciplines which utilize the Discipline.

**Iron Will** (5 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.205

It is suggested that the MET mechanics for the Merit of the same name from MET:LotR (Revised), p.117 be used with the stipulation that the listed Bonus Traits gained against Thaumaturgy be extended for use against Dominate or any other mind-altering powers.

**Lion-Hearted** (1 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.204

It is suggested that this Merit only be purchased by characters on a Road of Kings path (or Via Adversarius). This Merit allows the character to spend a temporary Willpower in order to have his or her Self-Control and Courage current ratings be brought up to match his or her current Morality rating. This

lasts for the scene and this benefit may only be used once per story. It is suggested that a story be considered by the Storytellers to be about a month and a half, or 3 game sessions - whichever is greater.

**Mark of Pure Blood** (2 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.203

No additional mechanics are necessary for this merit

**Master of Protocol** (1 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.206

Storytellers should consider allowing this Merit to be purchased multiple times. For each separate Merit purchased, characters may purchase one additional specialization in one of the following abilities: Academics, Etiquette, Politics, Lore: Sect-Specific (Camarilla Lore for Camarilla characters, Sabbat Lore for Sabbat characters, etc.), Lore: Ventrue.

**Meticulous Planner** (2 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.204

For the MET mechanics for this Merit, please reference the Merit: *Danger Sense* printed in MET:LotR (Revised), p.150 which is mechanically very similar to the effects of this Merit.

**Obsessive Savant** (2 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.204

When utilizing the chosen Specialization, you receive +2 Bonus Traits as you throw yourself fully into the pursuit of your obsession. You are also down -2 Traits on all Social challenges and interactions with others while you indulge yourself. Storytellers should be careful to not allow characters to take this Merit for common or combat-related abilities, or to use it in conjunction with Disciplines or rituals. In tabletop, it is mainly meant to be used for Knowledge Abilities (e.g. Academics, Computers, Finance, Investigation, Law, Linguistics, Lores, Medicine, Occult, Politics, and Science)

**Pure Blood** (5 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.206

No additional mechanics are necessary for this merit

**Sweet Blood** (1 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.207

MET mechanics are provided by the source

**Trained Scent** (2 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.203

This allows you to throw a static Mental Challenge versus a difficulty set by the target Mortal's Mental traits. A success will allow the Ventrue to determine if the Mortal is a match for the Ventrue's preferred feeding type. The challenge may be thrown en masse when attempting to "sniff out" individuals of your preferred feeding type in a crowd.

**Unimpressed** (5 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.205

The character with this Merit is considered to be up, +2 Traits when defending against any Presence or magic challenge aimed at influencing his or her emotions. In order to purchase this Merit, the character

should have a Self-Control/Instinct rating at 4 or higher, and 6 or more Willpower.

**Well Educated** (3 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.205

You gain +2 Traits on tests in which you do not have any levels in the requisite ability. Characters must have Academics x3 in order to purchase this Merit. Storytellers should still disallow characters from entering challenges which require a high-level of understanding in an ability which the character does not possess.

## **Dark Ages: Road of Kings**

**Destined for Greatness** (5 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Road of Kings, p.75

MET mechanics are provided by the source, but it is suggested that a story be considered by the Storytellers to be about a month and a half, or 3 game sessions - whichever is greater. Please note that this may not be used to gain a Status Trait that brings the character over the allowed cap for their Sect.

**Noble Bearing** (2 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Road of Kings, p.75

MET mechanics are provided by the source

**Noble Blood** (1 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Road of Kings, p.74

MET mechanics are provided by the source

**Powerful Gaze** (1 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Road of Kings, p.74

MET mechanics are provided by the source

## **Dark Ages: Road of Sin**

**Innocent** (2 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Road of Sin, p.73

MET mechanics are provided by the source

**Unshockable** (1 Trait Merit) - Dark Ages: Road of Sin, p.73

MET mechanics are provided by the source

## **MET: Laws of Elysium**

**Holdings** (1 to 5 Trait Merit) - MET: Laws of Elysium, p.31

MET mechanics are provided by the source

**Loyal Childe** (3 Trait Merit) - MET: Laws of Elysium, p.32

MET mechanics are provided by the source

**Prestation Gifts** (2 to 6 Trait Merit) - MET: Laws of Elysium, p.32

MET mechanics are provided by the source

## FLAWS

As with the above merits, below are several Flaws present in various books and sources which Storytellers may want to consider making available to Ventrue characters.

### Counsel of Primogen

**Bad Liar** (1 Trait Flaw) - Counsel of Primogen, p.105

For the MET mechanics for this Flaw, please reference the Flaw of the same name printed in MET:LotR (Revised), p.163

### Dark Ages: Player's Guide to the High Clans

**Atrophied Heart** (4 Trait Flaw) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.205

The character gains the mechanical equivalent of the True Brujah Clan Disadvantage which may be found in MET:Storyteller's Guide, p.21.

**Degenerate** (1 to 4 Trait Flaw) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.206

No additional mechanics are necessary for this Flaw, but no additional free points are awarded for dropping these levels of Morality. Additionally, the Storyteller should consider not allowing the character to regain Morality, or the levels of Conscience/Conviction until the Flaw is reduced in value, equally.

**Disgrace to the Blood** (2 Trait Flaw) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.206

No additional mechanics are necessary for this Flaw. Storytellers should consider not allowing characters to regain levels of Sect status, or Clan Prestige until this Flaw is bought-off.

**Fierce Bigot** (2 Trait Flaw) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.205

This flaw adds +1 Trait to the difficulty of any Self-Control/Instinct challenge made to resist or control frenzy when faced with target(s) of your bigotry.

**Noble Arrogance** (1 Trait Flaw) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.205

Characters with this Flaw are considered down -2 Traits in any non-Intimidation-related Social challenge when interacting with those "beneath" you. Since exactly who is considered "beneath" you is relatively based on opinion, if the Storyteller would like to define a mechanic, it is suggested that everyone who has less Status be considered "beneath" the character with this Flaw. Finally, if the character with this Flaw should ever drop below 2 Status, the Storyteller should consider forcing the Flaw to be bought off.

**Poor Digestion** (5 Trait Flaw) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.204

No additional mechanics are necessary for this Flaw

**Poor Taste** (1 Trait Flaw) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.205

The individual with this Flaw is down -2 Traits on all interactions involving artists or art critics, and at any attempts at Intimidation in any form.

**Prestigious Rival** (1 to 5 Trait Flaw) - Dark Ages: Guide to the High Clans, p.206

No additional mechanics are necessary for this Flaw. The Enemy Flaw can be found in MET: LotN:R, p.119.

Unless your Storyteller allows otherwise, the Enemy described in this flaw should be of your same Sect.

## **Dark Ages: Road of Kings**

**Onerous Vow** (1 to 3 Trait Flaw) - Dark Ages: Road of Kings, p.75

This flaw is only really applicable to characters on a Road of Kings path. Characters who are not Scions should either only be allowed to purchase the 1 Trait version of this flaw, or be disallowed from purchasing it completely.

## **Dark Ages: Road of Sin**

**Jaded** (3 Trait Flaw) - Dark Ages: Road of Sin, p.73

MET mechanics are provided by the source

## **MET: Laws of Elysium**

**Matricide/Patricide** (4 Trait Flaw) - MET: Laws of Elysium, p.34

MET mechanics are provided by the source

**Recently Arisen** (3 Trait Flaw) - MET: Laws of Elysium, p.34

MET mechanics are provided by the source

## **OWbN Custom Flaws**

**Censored** (2 to 4 Trait Flaw) - Custom for OWbN, Available for only Camarilla members

You have been declared Censored by your peers and Elders. This may have been a result of your actions (4 points) or those of your sire or childe (2 points). Regardless, you may not call upon the Ethic of Succor, nor may you hold a position within the Clan. You are considered without Dignitas, and many Ventrue will consider you the primary suspect of any crime or offense against the clan. Only through the most strenuous of deeds may you regain your place among the Clan of Kings. This flaw is intended to be taken at character creation. If it is taken later, it must be earned by in-character action, and it is suggested that it be worth no points.

### **Failed Agoge (2 Trait Flaw) - Custom for OWbN**

Either your sire abandoned you or you simply failed your Agoge. Either way, you have earned no Clan Prestige for yourself, and you have not yet proven that you are worthy of your place among the Ventrue. While not as serious as Censorship, it could certainly lead to that very shortly.

### **Tainted (6 Trait Flaw) - Custom for OWbN, Available for only Camarilla members**

Your place in your lineage has been declared Tainted by your peers and Elders. You have disgraced the Clan, your sire, and your entire lineage through your unworthiness. Many elders seek your death, and many more want nothing to do with you. You may no longer call on the Ethic of Succor, or your fellow Ventrue in any way. If you do not soon gain overwhelming evidence of your innocence or have a master plan to redeem yourself, you will not survive long. *Storytellers should actively plot the death of characters with this flaw.* Nearby Knights of the Blood or other glory-seeking Ventrue will go out of their way to destroy the Tainted Ventrue, and will expend considerable effort to do so if the Tainted one is a descendant or Lineage-member. Even if the Tainted Ventrue flees to another Sect, word of his or her disgrace will likely not be far behind and the Ventrue (or Ventrue-Antitribu) of his or her new Sect may destroy the Tainted Ventrue out of desire to preempt any losses at the hands of the traitor. This flaw is intended to be taken at character creation. If it is taken later, it must be earned by in-character actions, and it is suggested that it be worth no points.

### **A Note on Revealing Clan Secrets: Teaching Combos or Lore**

During each Ventrue's Agoge, they are taught that the Clan's secrets are sacrosanct. Teaching Ventrue Clan Secrets to non-Ventrue is essentially betraying the Secrets of the blood and is considered one of the most taboo and perverse crimes that one can engage in. Any Ventrue who is discovered to be betraying Clan Secrets would most certainly suffer shame, humiliation, pain, and eventually - the Final Death.

## **COMBINATION DISCIPLINES**

The following section includes Combination Disciplines which are either Ventrue-specific, or otherwise lend themselves to Ventrue concepts. Mechanics only appear in this section for Combination Disciplines which did not originally have a printed MET Conversion.

### **Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised)**

**Denial of Aphrodite's Favor\*** (Dominate 3, Fortitude 3; Cost 10 XP) – Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised), p.77

The MET conversion is provided in the source material, but Storytellers should consider allowing this power to block any Combination Discipline which employs a level of Presence blocked by this power.

*\*This power requires Coord-Approval when learned by non-Ventrue. [R&U Bylaws, 4.F.xx.]*

**Lifesong\*** (Dominate 1, Presence 1; Cost 2 XP) – Clanbook Revised: Ventrue, p.77

The MET conversion is provided by the source.

*\*This power requires Coord-Approval when learned by non-Ventrue. [R&U Bylaws, 4.F.xx.]*

## Counsel of Primogen

**Approximation of Loyalty Absolute** (Dominate 5, Presence 5; Cost 15 XP) - Counsel of Primogen, p.104

After establishing eye contact, spend a Willpower and engage your target in a Social Challenge, retest Leadership. If successful, you may spend a variable number of Social Traits to assert a blood-bond-like effect on the victim. For each Social Trait spent (to a maximum of 3), the victim is considered blood-bound one additional step to the user.

The effect of this power is not an actual blood-bond; the mechanical effects of the blood-bond (as listed in MET:LotN:R, p.211-212) do not apply - only the role-play aspects. This power lasts the night, and part of this power's effect erodes the memory of the night in a permanent manner.

After the night, the victim will only remember the experience as a haze, but with the feeling of intimate loss towards the user, as described in the source. If a victim is forced to perform acts which flagrantly violate his or her morality, instead of the feelings described above, the victim will instead feel an all-encompassing hatred for the user of this power, also described in the source.

*\*This power requires Coord-Approval when learned by non-Ventruue. [R&U Bylaws, 4.F.xx.]*

**Distant Friend** (Dominate 2, Presence 4; Cost 10 XP) - Counsel of Primogen, p.104

After defeating the target in an offensive challenge where Presence was used, spend a Temporary Willpower and immediately engage the target in another Social Challenge. If you are successful, you may spend up to 3 Social Traits. Whenever the victim speaks about the character, they will act as if they were under the effects of Presence 3: Entrancement when speaking about the user of this power. This effect lasts for an amount of time dependant on the Social Traits spent, as follows:

- 1 Trait - One Night
- 2 Traits - One Week
- 3 Traits - One Month

Storytellers should be careful to monitor the behavior of the victim, encouraging him or her to role-play the effects of this power.

*\*This power requires Coord-Approval when learned by non-Ventruue. [R&U Bylaws, 4.F.xx.]*

## Dark Ages: Player's Guide to the High Clans

**Measure the Will** (Auspex 2, Dominate 2; Cost 7 XP) – Dark Ages: Players Guide to the High Clans, p.168

Make a Static Mental Challenge against a the target's Mental Traits. On a win, you may discover one of the following pieces of information about the target: amount of permanent Willpower, amount of Temporary Willpower, or their rating in one of their Virtues. Each failure adds +1 Trait to the difficulty of the challenge for the rest of the night. Subsequent uses of this power allow the user to ask for another piece of information from the list above. This power does not require eye contact or a comparison of

Generation, but does require line-of-sight.

*[Note: This power is also listed in the OWbN Tremere Arcane Compendium and is listed as R2, p.66. The Rarity listed in the Tremere Doc is only for Tremere characters.]*

**Stunning Awe** (Dominate 2, Presence 2; Cost 7 XP) – Dark Ages: Players Guide to the High Clans, p.169

After establishing eye contact, engage your target in a Social challenge, retest Intimidation; the target may retest with Willpower only, as per the rules of Dominate. On a success the victim is considered down a number of Traits on all challenges equal to the Social Traits spent by the user after succeeding on this power (to a suggested maximum of 3). This effect lasts for a number of rounds equal to the Willpower of the user. After these rounds expire, the Traits return to the victim at a rate of 1 Trait per round. This is a Dominate effect and will not affect Vampires of lower Generation. If the user fails the challenge, perform a simple test with the target. If the user fails this test, the would-be victim is considered immune to the user's Dominate and Presence for the rest of the night.

*[Note: This power is listed in the OWbN Tremere Arcane Compendium and is listed as R3, p.69. The Rarity listed in the Tremere Doc is only for Tremere characters.]*

## Dark Ages: Road of Kings

**An Ear for Lies** (Auspex 2; Cost 14 XP) – Dark Ages: Road of Kings, p.73

MET mechanics are provided by the source. For ease, it is recommended that the challenge simply be a Static Mental challenge against a difficulty of half the Mental Traits of the target (rounded up).

**Aura of Inescapable Truth\*** (Dominate 4, Presence 4, Optional Prerequisite: True Tongue; Cost 14 XP) – Dark Ages: Road of Kings, p.73; Libellus Sanguinis 1: Masters of State, p.95

For MET mechanics, see the power True Tongue as the only difference between this power and True Tongue is the number of individuals which may be targeted at once. Since this power appears on its own in Libellus Sanguinis 1, and as an extension of True Tongue in Road of Kings, it is up to the Storyteller if they wish to require the character to first purchase True Tongue.

*\*This power requires Coord-Approval when learned by non-Ventrue. [R&U Bylaws, 4.F.xx.]*

**Inspire Greatness** (One Target: Presence 3, Fortitude 2 or Potence 2; Cost 21 XP) (Multiple Targets: Presence 5, Fortitude 2 or Potence 2, Inspire Greatness - One Target; Cost 14 XP) – Dark Ages: Road of Kings, p.72

Storytellers should consider making the mass Social challenge required to activate this power a mass Static Social challenge against all targets involved. Each Trait of Blood spent during the activation will equate to one level of Fortitude or Potence (and Physical Traits for Mortals) that the recipient(s) of this power all receive, up to the maximum. With both versions of this power purchased, every individual past the first who gains the benefit from this power requires the Scion to spend a Social trait, to a maximum of 5 (which will allow the Scion to affect everyone he wishes who is in his immediate vicinity). This power lasts until the deed is completed or the scene, whichever is shorter.

For example, A Ventrue Sheriff makes an impassioned speech before a Sabbat attack about standing true in the face of certain defeat. When finished, the player of the Ventrue Sheriff engages in a Static Social Challenge with his Sheriff's Deputy, winning the challenge outright. The Ventrue Sheriff then spends 4 Blood Traits to grant his ally Fortitude: Resistance. The target's original level of Fortitude is irrelevant; Resistance is the highest level gained, and powers granted do not stack with those the target already has. The Ventrue may then make another test with the Deputy in order to grant levels of Potence.

For Storytellers who are concerned about the power-level of this Combo Discipline, there are several suggestions. First, consider limiting the use of this power to only those who are in a subservient position to the Scion, since the power was originally intended to be used by a leader on his or her followers. The example above, a Ventrue Sheriff and his Deputy serves as one example of this. A Ventrue using this power on his or her Ghouls would be another. Finally, the Storyteller could choose to restrict this power to only individuals on an actual Morality Path from Road of Kings.

**Sound of a Breaking Oath** (Auspex 4, Dominate 4 or Presence 4; Cost 28 XP) – Dark Ages: Road of Kings, p.73

Storytellers are encouraged to make this challenge on behalf of the Scion, in secret, so that he or she does not know whether the test was successful or failed. This power has limited uses in the modern nights since oaths of vassalage or loyalty are no longer common from peers, associates, allies, or servants. However, this power will work on anyone who is Blood Bound to you, and it is recommended to allow this power to also affect the character's childer.

**True Tongue\*** (Dominate 2, Presence 2; Cost 14 XP) – Dark Ages: Road of Kings, p.73

MET mechanics are provided by the source. This is a Dominate power, and is subject to the limitations of that Discipline.

*\*This power requires Coord-Approval when learned by non-Ventrue. [R&U Bylaws, 4.F.xx.]*

## BACKGROUNDS

Below are a few non-Influence Backgrounds from various MET sources which the Storyteller might want to consider modifying and making available to Ventrue players in order to place emphasis on Clan Ventrue's natural penchant for garnering power.

The following are recommended to be made available for Ventrue-Antitribu characters:

- **Arsenal** [LotR: Revised, pg.121]
- **Berserk** [LotR: Revised, pg.124]
- **Grace Under Pressure** [LotR: Revised, pg.136]

Below are a few suggestions for modifications to Backgrounds which you, the Storyteller, can make for your

Chronicle in order to help emphasize the massive scope of power Clan Ventrue in the Camarilla and the Anarchs have over Mortal Influence.

**Allies** (Dark Epics, p.53)

Allies can be called on to loan influence on the behalf of the character, or to provide special access to abilities at a level past what a character may have. This can be extremely useful to Ventrue PCs and it is highly recommended that players consider this, as Allies is one of the most flexible Backgrounds available to Ventrue. As written in the source, Allies cannot be extended outside of your local area via the Fame background like other Backgrounds can. Storytellers might want to consider either allowing Allies to be utilized through the Fame background for Ventrue characters.

**Fame** (Dark Epics, p.54)

Fame can extend the Contacts, Influence, or Resources of a character beyond their local Chronicle. However, when characters “loan” their Influence to others in order to accomplish larger or more sweeping goals, they generally do so via the Combine action (Dark Epics, p.66) which means that, for every two Traits of Influence that a character “loans” to Combine, the character you are helping gains one. If the Storyteller would like to emphasise Clan Ventrue’s dominance of Mortal influence, one suggestion would be to allow Ventrue characters performing the Combine action with other Ventrue characters to “loan” Influence at a full 1:1 ratio, rather than the listed 2:1 ratio.

**Retainers** (Dark Epics, p.56)

In addition to extending your allowed Influence cap by one per Trait, Retainers can perform simple tasks on your behalf; this can be extremely useful in game-play. A simple adjustment that some Storytellers make to Retainers is to allow Ventrue characters to purchase levels of the Retainer background which is only used for extending their Influence cap and does not figure into their normal background of Retainers which is used in-game. This allows the Ventrue character to have both a dedicated team working on his behalf, assigned to managing his Influence empire while still having a cadre of loyal servants available to carry out the menial, everyday tasks.

## **INFLUENCE: SUGGESTIONS FOR STORYTELLERS**

The Ventrue of the Camarilla are known for their unparalleled power and influence throughout Mortal Society. In One World by Night, however, this advantage is somewhat impaired by the reality that not every Chronicle runs influence in a uniform manner.

This section details some ideas and methods that you, the Storyteller, may use in order to ensure that your Camarilla Ventrue players; who “compete” in the game using political sway, well-planned influence backgrounds and downtime actions; have the same level of involvement and enjoyment as any other player in your game.

### 1. **Make Influence Valuable**

Making Influence something that characters actually aspire to gain is a quick first-step towards helping not just Ventrue, but all of the Clans who do not rely on physical Disciplines to survive from night-to-night. For example, having characters occasionally be pulled over could turn into a huge issue if the driver does not have a driver's license (or a legit vehicle). Havening in an abandoned building is fine, but eventually something will happen unless the individual using the Haven actually owns it, or otherwise keeps others from purchasing it. Many Chronicles find it easiest to assign a full-time Narrator or Storyteller the responsibility of overseeing Influence, and you may find that, when Influence does become more valuable, there might be a rush to gain it from all characters in your Chronicle.

### 2. **Empower Ventrue Influences**

Many of the suggestions given in this Guide are aimed at making Ventrue Influences and Backgrounds more powerful when used in conjunction with other Ventrue's Influences. Some might complain that these suggestions make Ventrue influence better than other Clans' Influence, or that it is unfair to the players of other Camarilla Clans. You, the Storyteller, must decide what is best for your Chronicle, the suggested changes throughout this document help emphasise the fact that the Ventrue Clan structure is one of synergy; a tremendous conglomeration of businesses, influences, and resources, all combined and organized by ancient elders, and intended to do nothing but protect and advance the interests of the Clan.

### 3. **Day Raids / Haven Raids**

You might not like them, and you might feel that they are cheap, but if the majority of characters in your Chronicle have all of the physical Disciplines at Advanced (and/or Thaumaturgy), and Influence is not capable of effectively killing a character during the daytime, it is time for an intervention.

Day Raids / Haven Raids are good for your Chronicle. They are terrifying experiences for the target(s) involved because of the feelings involved in the violation of a "safe" place, and because fighting mortals in the day is extremely difficult, mechanically, for any Vampire. Storytellers should not pass on any opportunity to inject more horror into your Chronicle.

### 4. **Directorate Involvement**

In addition to making sure that your Ventrue are using Influence, for Camarilla Ventrue, a larger opportunity exists for the Storyteller to help reward Ventrue for organizing and planning their Influence interactions - the Directorate. You do not need the Coordinator for Ventrue NPCs to help your PCs by amplifying the effects of their combined influence use. Even if your Ventrue Elder NPC normally prefers to stay to his or her own interests, nothing is lost by cultivating a few favors with other Clan members by something as simple as loaning Influence.

## ABILITIES

Several MET sources offer many good Abilities which would fit well for Ventrue concepts. Below are a few of the abilities from various MET sources which the Storyteller might want to consider making available to Ventrue characters.

The following are recommended to be made available for Ventrue characters:

- Interrogation [MET: Laws of Ascension - Companion, pg.52]
- Media [MET: Laws of Ascension - Companion, pg.54]
- Negotiation [MET: Laws of Ascension - Companion, pg.54]

The following are recommended to be made available for Ventrue-Antitribu characters:

- Acting [MET: Laws of Ascension - Companion, pg.48]
- Disguise [LotR: Revised, pg.112]
- Jury-Rig [MET: Laws of Ascension - Companion, pg.52]
- Terrorism [MET: Laws of Ascension - Companion, pg.58]

The following are recommended to be made available for Ventrue or Ventrue-Antitribu characters:

- Conspiracy Theory [MET: Laws of Ascension - Companion, pg.48]
- Networking [MET: Laws of Ascension - Companion, pg.55]
- Psychology [MET: Laws of Ascension - Companion, pg.57]
- Tactics [LotR: Revised, pg.119]

Ventrue are able to identify the blood of their feeding preference simply by its scent. *Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised)*, p.49 describes how this skill gets more refined with time, allowing certain Elder or well-trained Ventrue to discern some, more advanced properties of the blood. The following new Expert Ability places provides players and Storytellers with quick and easy mechanics that they can use to allow Ventrue to take advantage of this affinity for Blood.

### **NEW Expert Ability: Blood Scent**

*Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised)*, p.49

Some speculate that this ability grows from the Ventrue's proclivity for the taste of specific vitae, but no one really knows for certain. However, what is certain is that Ventrue Elders or other Ventrue vitaephiles have, with experience, learned a unique ability to discern the properties of blood in a similar manner to a mortal sommelier, or other connoisseurs of fine wines.

When able to smell blood of an individual, the Ventrue concentrates on separating and then identifying the

various olfactory clues inherent to the “vintage.” The Ventrue’s player declares to the Storyteller which property they are specifically looking to learn, and then spend a number of rounds equal to the level of that information. After that short period of uninterrupted study, the Ventrue’s player may perform a Static Mental Challenge versus a difficulty set by the Mental Traits of the victim, retest with this ability.

**Blood Scent x1:** Can discern gender of a mortal, dietary preferences and habits relating to the type of cuisine or drink regularly consumed by a mortal, or the gender or dietary habits of the last mortal that a Vampire fed on. The presence or absence of drugs, alcohol, or other foreign substances would also be detectable with this level.

**Blood Scent x2:** Can discern the stage of life a mortal was (or is) such as child, teenager, young adult, adult, middle-aged, senior, or elderly in addition to any health problems the mortal might have been experiencing, such as high cholesterol, obesity, blood-borne diseases, hemophilia, or other illness. These traces are also detectable within vampiric vitae, but only for the last mortal that a Vampire fed on.

**Blood Scent x3:** Can discern age of a mortal to within 5 years, or within 50 for Vampires. Can now also discern any Merits or Flaws which relate to Blood, as well as the Generation of a Vampire with respect to higher or lower than your own.

**Blood Scent x4:** Can accurately discern Generation

**Blood Scent x5:** Can generally discern Clan, with respect to determining High Clan or Low Clan

**Blood Scent x6:** Can accurately discern Clan, though Lore checks may be applicable for certain Clans

Ventrue may not discern properties attributed to levels of this ability that they do not have. Storytellers are encouraged to perform the test in private for Ventrue players who start to overuse this ability, furnishing them with false information when they fail. Successive uses of this power should require separate tests.

Clanbook: Ventrue (Revised) notes that this ability gets more potent with age and practice. Due to this, we suggest restricting the maximum level that players be allowed to purchase in this ability be made equal to the Traits of Generation that the Ventrue has.

## **LORE: CLAN VENTRUE**

Please consider the below guidelines not only when determining what a character might know, but also what level of Lore they should purchase. Sections listed as “For Ventrue” should be knowledge that is at least one level higher for those not of the clan. As always, use common sense – there are some things non-Ventrue simply should not know, like accurate Lineage and Bloodline information.

### **Ventrue Lore x 1 (for Ventrue)**

*What the youngest of Ventrue should know by the end of their Accounting, Agoge, or Initiation.*

- Knows the Ventrue Disciplines are Dominate, Fortitude, and Presence
- Each Ventrue has a rarefied taste for vitae and each one is different
- Knows how the Ventrue Clan views the other Clans (Ventrue Clan Book)
- Understands Ventrue Etiquette and Decorum
- Understands the tradition of Succor and of the Agoge
- Knows and can recite his or her own Lineage
- Can perform a simple check on other Ventrue to verify if a Lineage is valid
- Have heard of the Major and Public Societies and understand their basic roles
- If a member of the Directorate, has basic understanding of the local Gerousia, roles, and current leadership, and is familiar with the concept of Dignitas

### **Ventrue Lore x 1 (for non-Ventrue)**

- The Ventrue disciplines are Dominate, Fortitude and Presence
- The Ventrue are often very rich, in control of a lot of things such as influence, and are called Blue Bloods
- The belief that the Ventrue are the Clan of Kings, thus the rightful rulers of the Camarilla, is the most common thought within the Clan
- Understands the role of the Society of the Hague and how to go about applying for membership

### **Ventrue Lore x 2 (for Ventrue)**

*This is what the typical Ventrue serving in the role of Primogen, Aedile, Ductus, or Pack Priest would know.*

- A good understanding of Clan Ventrue in the modern nights
- Can perform an in-depth check on other Ventrue’s Lineage and/or Dignitas
- Knows the general history and stereotypes accorded to your lineage line; can name the most prominent members
- If a member of the Directorate, has a strong understanding of your Regional Gerousia Directorate and know how to contact your Strategos and Lictors properly.
- Understand the Ventrue Tradition of Courts and Hearings
- Generally understand the role and function of the Major and Public Societies. May have heard about some of the Exclusive Societies.

- Heard of legendary Ventrue, such as Hardestadt, the founder of the Camarilla itself, and Mithras, the Methuselah upon whom the god of the same name is based

## Ventruel Lore x 2 (for non-Ventruel)

- Ventruel have a strict etiquette and decorum when dealing with each other
- The Ventruel have rarefied tastes for vitae and each member of the Clan has a different taste
- Clan Ventruel has some type of highly centralized internal structure
- Have heard the term "Dignitas" and may have a sketchy understanding of what it means
- Knows a rudimentary history of the clan and that it views itself as the founders of the Camarilla
- Aware of a few of the public (non-secret) Awards/Achievements and Major Societies

## Ventruel Lore x 3 (for Ventruel)

*What a Ventruel who is considered an Ancillae, or who serves in the role of Praetor, Prince, or Bishop would know.*

- A good understanding of Clan Ventruel's history, from your point of view
- Knows a great deal of history and knowledge about members of your line.
- Knows the general history and stereotypes accorded to the other lineage lines; can name the most prominent members of each.
- If a member of the Directorate, has a strong understanding of the other Gerousia on your continent and knows how to contact any Strategos or Lictor in the region properly.
- Has in depth knowledge of the workings of the Major and Public Societies and knows of most of the Exclusive Societies. May have heard rumor about a Secret Society or two.
- Aware of the various organizational methods that the Ventruel employed before settling on the model of the Directorate including the Venture "Senate"; dividing the Clan into smaller sub-Clans; and perpetuating the growth of numerous secret societies with the Clan
- Heard, in passing, of famous Ventruel, such as Fabrizio Ulfia who holds powerful sway over the Catholic Church, Jürgen of Magdeburg, a childe of Hardestadt was responsible for major onslaughts against the Tzimisce in the War of Omens. Jan Pieterzoon, another childe of Hardestadt who seeks to stamp out Noddist teaching from the Camarilla. Kyle Strathcona, the Antitribu Cardinal of Canada, and Dominique - the progenitor of the Antitribu Bloodline.
- Heard the legend that Ventruel was the Eldest of the Third Generation, and was chosen by Caine to be his retainer and advisor, and to rule over his brethren.

## Ventruel Lore x 3 (for non-Ventruel)

- Heard the word "Directorate" and suspect it is related to secret internal clan structure
- Heard names of other groups that may not be directly part of this "Directorate" (i.e. Houses and Societies)
- If a Ventruel did tell you his or her Lineage, you might be able to guess accurately if it is the truth
- Know the history of a few modern important Ventruel and what they are generally known for (Reference Ventruel Lore x 2 Ventruel Only)
- Know some of the Public and Major Societies and what their goals and symbols are
- Basic history of Clan Ventruel from their point of view

- A good working knowledge of Clan Ventrue today
- Know that the Ventrue hold sires accountable for their childer, even after they are officially released

## **Ventrue Lore x 4 (for Ventrue)**

*\*The purchase of this level of Ventrue Lore requires a notification to the Coordinator [R&U Bylaws, 3.G.i.]*

*What a Ventrue who is considered an Elder, or who serves as a Strategos would know*

- Has in depth knowledge of the workings of the Major, Public, and Exclusive Societies and knows of one or two Secret Societies
- You suspect the locations of some of the older members of your line.
- Have read some portions of the Book of Nod as it applies to the Ventrue Clan only, though you do not know where the excerpts come from without the proper Lore
- Have heard some of the legends of the First City - from the Ventrue perspective
- Heard the legend that the uprising of the Third Generation against the Second was done at the suggestion of Ventrue who did so following Caine's own council. After the revolt, Ventrue ruled over the Second City in peace.
- Hushed whispers concerning a group called "The Secret Masters"
- Knows a great deal of history and knowledge about members of other lineage lines.
- If a member of the Directorate, has a strong understanding of the Global Directorate. Knows how to contact any Strategos properly, and suspect how to ensure a message reaches the eyes of a Euphor.
- Know the various splinter groups that formed in Clan Ventrue after the collapse of Rome and for a good time the Clan, like the former Empire, was divided between Western and Byzantine factions

## **Ventrue Lore x 4 (for non-Ventrue)**

*\*The purchase of this level of Ventrue Lore is Coord Approval [R&U Bylaws, 3.D.1.]*

- If a Ventrue were to tell you his or her lineage, you can be reasonably sure if it is real or not
- A good working knowledge of the Clan's history from your point of view
- Know the history of important Ventrue and their achievements since Camarilla was formed (Reference Ventrue Lore x 3 Ventrue Only)
- Know most of the Major and Public Societies and what their goals/roles are and has some simple ideas about one or two Exclusive Societies or Houses
- Know most of the various public Awards/Achievements and what they are given out for
- Understand how Dignitas works and how a Ventrue would go about acquiring it
- Heard of some Directorate title position and an idea of their relative importance, but not completely accurate
- Understands the extensive preparation involved in siring a childer (Agoge)

## **Ventrue Lore x 5 (for Ventrue)**

*\*The purchase of this level of Ventrue Lore is Coord Approval [R&U Bylaws, 3.D.1.]*

*What those who who have spent several lifetimes pursuing might know... this is knowledge that makes others nervous, and which could be considered heretical or illegal in some circles. Things which Vampires kill over.*

- If a member of the Directorate, you might have met a member of the Euphorate (whether you know it or not), and/or may be able to pass messages to one.
- You highly suspect the locations of some of the oldest members of your line, and have a general idea of where others may lie.
- Has knowledge of all of the Ventrue Secret Societies and is likely a member of one.
- Has developed his or her own version/ideas of the true role of Clan Ventrue, what the Societies and Orders are for, and who really controls what.
- Is familiar with some of the scripts from [Ventrue] about the First and Second city.

## **Ventrue Lore x 5 (for non-Ventrue)**

*\*The purchase of this level of Ventrue Lore is Coord Approval [R&U Bylaws, 3.D.1.]*

- Have a good idea of directorate titles and position
- Have a good idea about the names of most dignitas and how Ventrue get earn them
- Know Ventrue lineages better than most neonate Ventrue
- Know the history of important Ventrue and their achievements from before the Camarilla was formed to the beginning of the Roman Empire

## STORYTELLING

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Below are some suggestions for plotlines that Storytellers can use to enhance the personal stories of Ventrue characters. Please feel free to use these suggestions as you see fit, changing or modifying them as it suits your Chronicle and characters.

### 1. **Combat**

Smaller sheets and influence-driven characters need a different type of story. Something personal, and something which lends itself to the gothic-horror genre of Vampire the Masquerade. Throwing shovelheads at characters encourages them to purchase combat abilities and powers, and while there's nothing wrong with that, Ventrue usually require the use of Backgrounds in order to set themselves apart, and distinguish themselves in the manner that their source material intended. Do your Ventrue players a service and try throwing a little less combat at them, if for nothing else, just to see how they respond.

Simple... either offer guidance from NPC Ventrue that suggests other means to handle the situation, or push back with combat while continuing to offer other solutions. A Ventrue with Endurance isn't likely to want to tangle with even a weakened Horrid Form. A Ventrue with 3 Traits of Street Influence is likely to keep people out of that Horrid Form's feeding territory, enabling the Sheriff to step in and take out the threat, gaining a boon from an officer or possibly even Status for his or her efforts.

What if your Ventrue like combat? Fine. Let them throw chops all night long. This game is all about enjoyment, after all. There are also plenty of ways for Ventrue to use warfare as a vehicle to success within the Clan. However, help challenge your players by encouraging stories that require them to maintain their decorum while doing it, or where combat is not the end-goal.

### 2. **Local Elder NPCs**

Many games use local elders to flesh out the setting, or to help encourage elements of genre. A Ventrue NPC is especially helpful to a new game, where new Ventrue may need advice from an ST-guided NPC. This Elder can help with specific information on plots, or with Influence growth. This Ventrue could be a Camarilla Elder, or possibly a Ventrue-Antitribu in hiding (or vice-versa for Sabbat games).

If you have an established game, and you want to add Directorate participation, you might want to work towards having the NPC be an Aedile of a nearby city in your Chronicle's territory, but be careful to not take positions from deserving PCs. Keep the NPC as a tool for plot, or even the plot itself, but don't steal the show.

With regard to Elders teaching Advanced Disciplines, any Advanced Discipline has the potential to save

a character's life, and should be treated as such a gift. Earning the discipline should be expensive, and is an excellent opportunity for the Storyteller to gain boons, favors, or to significantly alter the political landscape in favor of the Ventrue. If boons are exchanged, try to use or trade that boon to those who would make the most of it, whether they are other player-characters, or Coordinator-level NPCs.

Finally, try to be aware of Clan Ventrue's global agenda. Subscribe to the Scepter-OOC list so that you can be aware of genre changes and adjustments, and ensure your PCs take note of important decisions such as the naming of an individual as a friend or enemy of the Ventrue.

### 3. **Sabbat/Camarilla Influence War**

Midnight Siege is an excellent resource for plots such as this. This is the bread-and-butter of Ventrue success in the Camarilla, and to some extent, the Sabbat as well. Camarilla Ventrue spend part of their Agoge learning about techniques and strategies for flushing out or cornering Sabbat, and nothing short of a full-scale invasion can dethrone a deeply entrenched cadre of Ventrue. Use a lot of information about your setting when describing things in your players' downtimes, and perhaps use strategies introduced by your NPCs. Help them gain information that lets them deduce where the enemies are, and what influences can be used to influence things like feeding, police patrols, curfews, and local business closing times. Remember that these plots can run any length of time, from weeks to years, and may impact the other things that your Ventrue can do with their influences (or what Ventrue-Antitribu can do because of them). Try not to make things impossible, but do not hand out free information either; let the PCs figure out as much as possible, and you might be surprised by the strategies they come up with...

### 4. **Territory Games**

Abandoned factories and mills, projects or ghettos, skyscrapers of glass and steel, and the docks are all areas which can serve as iconic backdrops for Vampires and their influence. Each Clan has their own areas of the city that stereotypes claim them to prefer. Vampires fight with each other over the precious limited resources a city has to offer, such as security (a place to build a haven), Influence (a place which is important to a resource in a city), or the availability of blood (such as a club or entertainment district). For Ventrue, controlling the city is another route towards controlling its residents, and could serve as a logical stepping stone to power.

Use the area's current residents as antagonists, and you might not even have to bring elements of the supernatural to find enemies and challenges for your Ventrue. Making territories and the acquisition of Blood important in your Chronicle is also another great way to encourage the Ventrue players (and really anybody) to make alliances with other Clans in while trying to find support for their plans of acquisition.

### 5. **The Occult**

Vampire the Masquerade is a game of personal horror, not an action/adventure game. Though the game can certainly have some elements of action/adventure, and it is important that your players have fun, it is also important to maintain the horror and mystery of the game. Before starting a plot involving artifacts, other realms, or anything magic please make sure that the plot is something that your Ventrue *can* deal with in some fashion. Players might feel overwhelmed or even exasperated by a story which, already out of their character's comfort zone, presents little value to the genre of game that the player is used to playing.

Scaling the challenge of the plot to the capabilities of the characters involved can go a long way towards mitigating this risk, and if you do throw a plot out there that seems too powerful for the character(s) to deal with, always remember that there are secret Ventrue Societies out there that deal with issues of the Occult, or of the Church. Sometimes, plots about the Occult could make for great opportunities to get connection to or noticed by members of these Secret Orders and Societies.

## 6. Influence-Only Solutions

Ridding yourself or your city of Mortal Hunters (either Church-related, or otherwise) or Werewolves is a great example of a problem which could have an Influence-only solution. Hunters, much like the Mortal Police, have power in numbers, and the only thing that killing a single individual will do is enrage and attract others. Storytellers could start plotlines like this by going after Vampires for their sloppy feeding. Situations like these could quickly escalate into an all-out Influence war as Hunters have Influence themselves that they could use to trace Influence actions, Werewolves have ways to identify Vampiric thralls, and both groups will usually move to nullify the sources of Vampiric power in the city. In this situation, the character's best option would be to play the Influence game better and faster than the opposition, making smart decisions to keep them at bay and eventually push them out of the city. Types of plots like this give Ventrue characters a chance to shine where other clans might not. For some ideas on plotlines or interactions regarding Werewolves, check out *Dark Alliance: Vancouver*.

## 7. Challenging Your Ventrue

Once a Ventrue's character sheet grows to a large size, it becomes more difficult to actively challenge that character. Long-term plots or introducing of a nemesis might be the way to give those players a more satisfying experience. Forcing a Ventrue to use their Influences for an extended amount of time, and for in-depth purposes can provide a heavy impetus to draw a long-term character into a plot. Lasombra and Lasombra-Antitribu rivals, would-be Voivodes, and politically powerful Toreador might all make powerful, challenging adversaries who do not rely on combat to attack the Ventrue.

When a Ventrue overcomes this obstacle, the player will feel a real sense of accomplishment, and this will show in-character as the Ventrue is recognized, or potentially awarded accolades for his or her achievement. Everyone hates the guy who got something for free that everyone else had to work for. If your Ventrue work harder than the rest, they will raise the bar for the Ventrue in their area, which will

end up raising the quality of Ventrue throughout the entire organization.

## 8. **The Secret Masters**

Long-time Ventrue players might enjoy the paranoia of this mystery-style plot. A throwback to the first Clanbook, the mysterious “true” enemies of Clan Ventrue can appear in any form. Devise these as something custom to the player, find a way to work some kind of device into several separate stories as a common clue which leads your character to believe the Secret Masters have their influence everywhere. A great way that you can go an extra step is to talk to your surrounding Chronicle staffs so that you can truly create an atmosphere of paranoia for your player. Nothing this big should belong to just one game! Also, feel free to ask your local Sub-Coordinator (or the Coordinator) for advice and assistance.

Most importantly though, take your time. If the PC is Sherlock Holmes, you are creating his or her unseen Moriarty. Your job is to devise a type of plot that will scare your PC into questioning the motivations and actions of every single character they come up against. Though rumors and misinformation should abound, actual details should be handled out with mystery, terror, and a real possibility of character death (either for the Ventrue character or his or her Allies), and the details should never be mundane or straightforward.

## CONTRIBUTIONS

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This document was written by Brian Orlando ([brianfromwa@yahoo.com](mailto:brianfromwa@yahoo.com)) for use in One World by Night.

I would like to give special thank the following people for their contributions to this document:

- Kenny Lull
- Sue Burnett
- Trey Naivar

Thanks go to the OWbN Ventrue 2012 Coordinator Team who helped put this document together, and to all of the players of Ventrue - past, present, and future - for helping shape the world in which we all take so much enjoyment from.

Brian Orlando

Ventrue Coordinator, 2011-2013