

## CREDITS

Written by: James and Ellen Kiley  
Developed by: Justin Achilli  
Editor: Cynthia Summers  
Art Director: Richard Thomas  
Layout & Typesetting: Becky Jollensten  
Interior Art: Mike Danza, Richard Kane Ferguson,  
Michael Gaydos, Leif Jones, and Christopher Shy  
Front Cover Art: John Van Fleet  
Front & Back Cover Design: Becky Jollensten



735 PARK NORTH BLVD.  
SUITE 128  
CLARKSTON, GA 30021  
USA

© 2000 White Wolf Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction without the written permission of the publisher is expressly forbidden, except for the purposes of reviews, and for blank character sheets, which may be reproduced for personal use only. White Wolf, Vampire the Masquerade, Vampire the Dark Ages, Mage the Ascension, World of Darkness and Aberrant are registered trademarks of White Wolf Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved. Werewolf the Apocalypse, Wraith the Oblivion, Changeling the Dreaming, Hunter the Reckoning, Werewolf the Wild West, Mage the Sorcerers Crusade, Wraith the Great War, Trinity, Guide to the Camarilla, Guide to the Sabbat, World of Darkness Blood Dimmed Tides, A World of Darkness, Laws of the Night, Children of the Night and Clanbook Gangrel are trademarks of White Wolf Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved. All characters, names, places and text herein are copyrighted by White Wolf Publishing, Inc.

The mention of or reference to any company or product in these pages is not a challenge to the trademark or copyright concerned.

This book uses the supernatural for settings, characters and themes. All mystical and supernatural elements are fiction and intended for entertainment purposes only. Reader discretion is advised.

For a free White Wolf catalog call 1-800-454-WOLF.

Check out White Wolf online at

<http://www.white-wolf.com>; [alt.games.whitewolf](http://alt.games.whitewolf) and [rec.games.frp.storyteller](http://rec.games.frp.storyteller)

PRINTED IN USA.

## SPECIAL THANKS

Tim "Snake Fighting" Avers, is very scary fighting snake rolled up newspaper setting on fire.

Ken "Out-of-Towner" Cliffe, for continuing his habit of party-dodging.

Rebecca "Nutritionist" Schaefer, for dragging Chad out of the damn house before he ate one more bowl.

Brian "Joe Six-Pack" Glass, for bringing random beer in the homemade carrying case.

## GET BENT

The raw, bone-chilling, ache-inducing, wet-ass, pre-SuperBowl weather.



C L A N B O O K :

# Gangrel™

## CONTENTS

AFTERMATH OF INDEPENDENCE	4
CHAPTER ONE: STONE, STEPPE, AND SEA: A HISTORY OF THE GANGREL CLAN	12
CHAPTER TWO: INSIDE THE GANGREL	40
CHAPTER THREE: BEASTS AMONG MEN	80

# AFTERMATH OF INDEPENDENCE

My shitkicker boots make a shuffle-then-thump sound on the city sidewalk. The sound isn't alien — they do have cement where I'm from. What's fascinating is the chorus of echoes my footsteps set off, reverberating through this corridor of glass and steel. If I stomp real good and listen real close, I can catch the echo whizzing back and forth across the street three times before the noise of the city overwhelms it. That game was fun, until the delivery truck roared past.

I must look like a rube, or worse, a cheap tourist. Who else would be walking around downtown on a Wednesday night with an armload of white-handed shopping bags, a baseball cap and these boots? It's a good thing I pay cash. The department store clerks might think I'd stolen a credit card. I don't care where they think the cash came from, so long as they don't sic the rent-a-cops on me. That would get complicated.

I might as well be a tourist. I only come into town twice a year to pick up consumables, comestibles and indispensables. On my way back to the subway station, I mentally check through my purchases. It would suck to get halfway home before I realized I'd forgotten something. Five pairs of jeans — I'm hard on denim. One pair of chinos, which pass for dressed up. Three white dress shirts, five flannel shirts, needles, buttons, thread — I may be a walking stereotype, but I can and do sew on my own buttons, thank you. Batteries, all shapes and sizes. Good soap, deodorant, and cologne — the trick to smelling like a human. People aren't stupid. Even if they don't know they can, they can smell a predator, and then they get panicky. Camouflage is the key. Not just sight, but smell and sound, too. That's why I bother to juggle this last bag with a greasy burger and fries — who expects to see a vampire carting around fast food?

Another two blocks to the subway, 45 minutes underground, then another eight blocks to the parking lot where I left my van. I hate leaving it so far away — it's got everything I own in it — but it isn't exactly built for city driving. My pride and joy is a '69 Chevy Sportsvan — no power brakes, no power steering, and it might as well be built out of cast iron. I once hit a really pissed-off



werewolf with it at about 60 miles an hour, and it felt like I'd gone over a speed bump. I call them werewolves, and not because I think that's what the furry bastards prefer to be called, but because when I see one slaving in the moon light, I think, "Oh, fuck, werewolf!" and not "Oh, fuck, Lycine!" He did leave a dent in my bumper, though.

One more block. I've got it pretty good, all things considered. I'm about the only Gangrel I know with a steady job. It's not much — I'm just the night ranger at the National Park. I wish they'd come up with a better job title than that, because I've heard all the '80s guitar-rock jokes I can take. Still, the job means a small but steady paycheck and a secluded place to park my van on the grounds. Management becomes very understanding of your odd schedule when the senator comes for a midnight nature walk, and his whiny kids get to see the deer and hear the wolves howl, no matter how much noise they make tromping through the forest. I know there are werewolves around, but so far they've left me alone. I guess we've got an understanding in place — as long as I don'tfang the kiddies who visit the park or devour wolf cubs, they'll turn a blind eye when the occasional poacher goes missing, or adventurous teens and lonely single mothers leave a little paler than they came in.

The mouth of a dark alley looms ahead, mid-block. As I pass, a quick slither of movement catches my eye. I freeze, and the shape freezes too. A voice that sounds like it's been scraped from the bottom of a barrel drifts to my ears. "Everett." I know that voice.

+ + +

I'm lying on the forest floor, face pressed into the rotting leaves and twigs. It's night, but the usual woodland sounds are hushed — something's on the hunt. In fact, she's standing right over me, her clawed feet just inches from my face.

She's been following me for some time now. I've seen her every couple nights for the past few weeks. I thought maybe she wanted to hook up. When I finally got the pluck to introduce myself, it turned out that what she really wanted to do was chase me through the forest until I died. So here I am, watching my blood soak into the humus, wondering, if this is what the pitch does for foreplay...

Then I can hear a new noise. I can't lift my head to see, but it sounds like booted feet, not bare and clawed like hers. For a wild moment, I imagine an ax-toting ranger come to rescue me, but the boots come to a stop not far from her and stay put. The man's gravelly voice sinks quickly to my level. "This is him?"

Her feet turn to face him, as I imagine the rest of her does. "Yep."

There's a grunt from above. "Doesn't look too likely. I wouldn't pick him," I am, strangely offended.

My soon-to-be-murderer is patient. "I didn't ask you to approve him, Sheperd. I asked you to help me stand the watch."

The man, Sheperd, I guess, squats down, taking some time to fold his bulk down low enough to look at my face. He's none too pleasant to look at — I wish he'd stayed standing. "You've beat him up pretty good, Jane. Think he'll make it?"

Her answer is couched in an amused tone. "I needed to make sure he wasn't the type to roll over and die. He'll be fine. They all make it unless you kill them, outright beforehand, stupid." I fail to see the humor in the current situation,



and I am, not feeling fine. My heart-beat is fluttering, and it's becoming difficult to keep my eyes in focus.

Sheperd stands back up. I am, momentarily grateful that his face will not be the last thing I see before dying. "I'll help you keep watch, Janey. But tell me you got somebody's okay on this?"

She laughs outright this time. "Who is there to ask permission, Sheperd? Do you see any princes here? Hear one, or smell one? The Gangrel do not ask here, Sheperd. We simply do. If I am, to ask anyone for the right, it should be the intended child himself."

Jane crouches beside me. Her face swims in and out of my vision, her glowing red eyes multiplying dizzily. Her voice comes in clear, calm, and I fasten on to that like a drowning man to driftwood. "It's a simple choice. Die, or survive. Do you want to survive?"

I lifted my head from the leaves with my last strength. I remember saying, "Yes." She was wrong, though — it wasn't, isn't a simple choice.

\* \* \*  
I step into the alley, out of the light. My vision blurs for

a moment; when it clears, I can seem him perfectly. "Sheperd." I should have smelled him a mile away, but his sour, oily scent is alarmingly similar to the odor wafting off the French fries I'm carrying. If I'm not mistaken, those are also the exact same boots he was wearing that night, so many years ago.

He shambles out of the doorway where he'd hidden from sight. I'd forgotten just how large he is. "You didn't present yourself to the prince, Everett," he growls.

I shrug, packages still draped along my arms. "I've been here two nights. I haven't fed, and I don't intend to. And the prince never attends Elysium, mid-week."

Sheperd smiles, and it isn't a nice smile. He enjoys his job far too much. "Rules are rules." He moves closer, sidling along the building wall, kicking trash out of his way as he walks.

"Bullshit," I reply. "I was here last winter, and six months before that. I'm like clockwork, Sheperd, and no one's complained about my

shopping habits before." I keep still, for the moment. He's not fast enough to cut off my exit.

Sheperd grunts an admission. "That was before," he says.



"Before what?" I ask. I know what he's going to say. I try to calm myself down; white shopping bags flapping around in dark alleys might draw unwanted attention.

"Before you left the Camarilla," Sheperd mumbles. He has the grace to look at his shoes for a moment, as though even he knows just how artificial this little scene is.

"Sheperd, this is crazy. Do you think I'm some kind of spy? Does the prince?" I watch him carefully. His suddenly guarded look answers my question. I don't believe I can keep the exasperation out of my voice. "Let me run through the logic for you. You're Gangrel, too, Sheperd. Have you suddenly turned into a Sabbat stooge?"

He practically snarls at me. "No."

"Then what makes you think that I have? What have I ever done that might give him that idea? And why does he let you run around loose if he thinks we're all devil-loving traitors?" I'm practically flailing now, arms flung wide in a messianic pose. I knew there were bad feelings over the affair, but I hadn't expected things to get this bad so quickly.

Sheperd stops dead in his tracks. Beads of blood sweat form on his forehead and slowly trickle down his temples. When he speaks, his voice is forced. "The prince can...trust me...."

My heart sinks as I hear those words. I can feel the anger welling up from deep inside — anger at myself for walking into this, at Sheperd and his paranoid prince for setting it up, even at Xaviar for causing this whole damn mess in the first place. "You fucking idiot!" my mouth is shouting. "You let him do that to you? You let him chain you up like a pet pit bull, so that he can sic you on whoever he wants? What kind of Gangrel are you?"

He moves faster than I thought he could, or maybe I'm just too busy spouting off to have caught the first hint of movement. I whirl around, but too late, his bulk is interposed between me and the street. Claws have sprouted from his fingertips — he wasn't going to just let me walk out of here before, but now I've made him mad. I drop my bags, finally, but not before he rakes one of them open with a vicious swipe.

I block his next two strikes, left — right. It's not easy; Sheperd is strong as a bull and those claws are sharp. I'm faster than he is, but I can't keep this up for long. I leap up, grabbing the end of a dangling fire escape ladder to deliver a two-footed kick to his head. It's enough to knock him back a few feet, and give me a second to consider my options. I could go up the fire escape, but Sheperd can probably climb faster, because he's stronger. The two doors I can see are metal, and if they're locked I'll be trapped in an alcove with no room to maneuver. Ten yards behind me, the alley ends in a brick wall. If I'm going to get out of here, it's got to be through Sheperd.

He's back at me now, claws swinging like scythes. I give ground back into the alley, sniffing out what I can of what's behind me while devoting hand-eye coordination to keeping clear of Sheperd's nasty fists. I catch a promising odor along the wall to my left: bleach, a little mildew, the slightest hint of old vomit. I get a little too distracted by my nose, and Sheperd catches me upside the head. There's pain, and blood — it was a glancing blow, but I think he just folded my scalp in half. I can see my anger now, like a red film in front of my vision. I



force the Beast back down — if I frenzy now, I'll throw myself at him, and he'll rip me apart.

Sheperd takes a moment to gloat over first blood, and I take the opening. I lunge to my left, hand out, hoping my senses haven't led me astray. My hand closes over the smooth wood of a mop handle, and I know I've got a chance. Flooding my muscles with as much blood as I can, I launch a quick flurry of attacks with wood, fists and feet. I catch Sheperd by surprise; I'm not hurting him, but I drive him back. Three steps, then another, and one more bring us back to just about where we started. A feinted kick to the knee and a real backhand to the chin rock him back one last step. His gigantic foot comes crashing down with all his weight into the pile of my belongings. The flat crunch of crushed glass is all the warning I get.

An almost visible plume of scent rises into the air from the pulverized cologne bottle. Even though I knew it was coming, it still nearly makes me gag. Sheperd turns around to see what the hell he just stepped in. I bring the mop handle down on my knee, snap the wood in two, and drive the sharp end up under Sheperd's ribcage and into his heart. For a panicked moment, I'm not sure that it worked, but it just takes him a moment to go rigid and topple.

I slump against the bricks for a moment, letting the anger and fear seep out of my body and into the cold clay. It doesn't look like anyone has noticed our little dust-up. I glance down at Sheperd; his face is a strange mix of hatred and resignation, his naked talons tensed and bent. Grunting with the effort, I haul his heavy ass further down the alley, out of sight from the street. His deputies might find him before morning. I'm hungry now, and for moment my fangs distract as I stare at the blood pooling in Sheperd's shirt. I force the teeth back up into my head — the last thing I need, or any Gangrel needs, is to reinforce the rumors flying around by doing something so stupid as diablerizing a sheriff. It's not Sheperd's fault, anyway. He just got caught flatfooted, in the wrong place at the wrong time when Xavier dropped his little bombshell — whatever that was. How many other Gangrel are paying for our freedom, and don't even know why?

Moving stiffly, I find my hat, fit my scalp back over my head properly, and use the hat to hold it in place while it heals. That'll take a few nights. I change shirts quickly, mopping the blood off my face with the old one and tossing it back down the alley. The last thing I need tonight is a hassle with some well-meaning token-taker who thinks I should pay a visit to County General. I stuff what I can into the remaining bags.

"That was 75 bucks you just cost me, Sheperd," I grumble over my shoulder. "Tell the prince he's lost my shopping dollar. I won't be back."

Sheperd's reply wouldn't have been very witty anyway. I limp out of the alley and the half-block to the subway. I never really need to come to the city. Just once in a while, it was nice to see the crowds of people, to walk through brightly lit, bustling shopping centers, to maybe catch a show, and, most important, to see some other Kindred for a change of pace.

Telling Jane about this isn't going to be easy when, or if, I see her again. I think next time I'll have to order my wardrobe over the Internet.



# STONE, STEPPE, AND SEA: A HISTORY OF THE GANGREL CLAN

*The savage in man is never quite eradicated*  
— Thoreau

This is an idiotic thing to do. It's probably going to get me killed. But if I don't take notes on some of what I've heard, I know I'll forget it. At least some of it. And for Chrissakes, if I'm going to live forever I'm going to be really pissed if I can't remember everything I was told. Yes, now the only thing going through my head is: *If I write all this stuff down there's no way I'll live forever.*

This project formally started a few years ago when I found a rambling set of papers written by someone calling himself Lord Ashton, '95 or '96. I don't think that Lord Ashton was altogether sane when he wrote what he wrote. I scanned a few of his more amusing screeds and e-mailed them around to various dead friends on the Net. I've got some of their responses here and there below. It looks like on the whole Ashton was right — in the grand sweep — but if the people I've talked to can be believed, he fucked up several of the details. I'm going to try to distill reasonable truth out of the stuff I've read, both in e-mails I've received from older vampires, from Ashton's writings and the commentary on it, a few conversations I've had with older Kindred, and history and common sense. I don't guarantee it's unassailable, but it's the best picture I can piece together out of the amalgam of myth, history and bullshit that I've gathered over the last 50 years.

## AXE AND JAVELIN

I don't know much archaeology or cultural anthropology. When I was alive, the subjects bored me, and now that I've got the perspective to appreciate them, it's too damned bright out to do any field work. I've done a fair amount of reading since I died, though. The scientific estimates I've explored put Caine's murder of Abel, and God's curse — if you're into this sort of thing — around 10,000 years ago. Or maybe 10,000 BC, which would be 12,000 years ago. This stuff is all legend. It may be that none of it happened. Hell, I've only heard the name of one reliable witness — "Pard" — and when I went searching him out, I made it as far as the Sahara before panicking and giving up.

One of the things I need to think about at this point is the real history of reality. That sounds stupid, I know. I can put it another way to make my problem clearer: Was Bishop Ussher right? Did the Creation happen on Friday, October 12 of 4004 BC? If Kindred are really the children of Caine, then we — okay, I — have to consider how closely the history of the world adheres to Judeo-Christian myth. Because if we're really the children of Caine in any sense, that means at least part of the Biblical creation



is true in some sense, and that throws a lot of science out the window. If we're the children of Caine, and Caine's the son of Adam, and Adam is the first man, created by God, then maybe God really did put the dinosaur fossils in place to fool archaeologists. Or do we take it all as allegory and assume that the Antediluvians are maybe 10,000 years old, and see where that leads the discussion? That's my preference. But there *has* to be a truth under there someplace. We are vampires. Sunlight does burn us, and moonlight, which is just reflected sunlight, does not. Starlight does not. Videotapes of sunlight do not. There is something mystical about the sun. Scientists don't talk much about such things. I don't think I'm going to be able to adequately figure out the line between scientific truth and the supernatural world of the Kindred. I'll try to collate the stories and hypotheses I've heard, in any case. I'm sure my sources have lied to me, repeatedly, but perhaps if we average the contradictory stories out we'll see a bit of truth. For the sake of discussion, say the first vampires came about during the late Stone Age. In fact, we'll make a few more grandiose assumptions, out of the *Book of Nod*: that Enoch existed between 10,000 and 8000 BC, that Caine ruled it, that the Third Generation killed the Second Generation there, and that Caine cursed them.

## ENOCH

I'll start with Ashton's commentary on our fabled progenitor, "Ennoia." In Gnostic mythology, it's worth noting that "Ennoia" represents the female half of God. I can't imagine that our Ennoia is *that* Ennoia, but one does hear regular references to our Antediluvian as "Mother Nature." I'm not convinced that Ennoia isn't a feminization of Enoch, who the *Book of Nod* names as one of the Second Generation. Perhaps she was one of his mortal children, or a favored vampiric child.

Ashton describes Ennoia as a child of Lilith raised by a pack of wolves. Leaving aside Biblical commentary on the whole Lilith issue and my opinion of feminists who've adopted this myth as their flag, consider what Ashton continues with: "[Ennoia] took a mate from the pack and... bore him children... and it is from them that Lupines trace their ancestry." This, apparently, explains the "special relationship" that Lupines and Gangrel have. I don't know to what Ashton was referring when writing this bit, but I've got to assume that he had something very specific in mind. We don't *have* a special relationship with Lupines. If you nuzzle up to a werewolf and try to be his buddy, odds are good that he'll rip you to tatters. But it becomes more complex.

Ennoia allegedly spent time in Enoch, the First City, after ditching the wolves. She slept with several men and bore them a few children before leaving the city due to the discord she'd caused. So, according to Ashton, she slept around, bore children, and then gave the kids to the men



and left town. So none of them realized that she was pregnant? Did she have kids by each man all at the same time? (I suppose that's no less likely than her having werewolf kids by a wolf father....) But here's the kicker—Ashton says these kids were rejected by their parents and became the Gypsies. Hasn't this guy read a history book? The Rroma, so-called "Gypsies," came out of India during the 10th or 11th century. There aren't references to them existing at all before this, unless you count one myth they spread around that they were the descendants of the innkeeper that told Mary and Joseph he had no room for them. Even then, that dates them back to, well, 1 AD. Enoch must've fallen before the rise of the Pharaohs, which even your ancient conspiracy mavens agree was around 6000 BC. That's a *long* gap to explain away.

## DIASPORA

Archaeologists say the earliest cities were contemporaries of the Mesopotamian city of Ur, which existed around 4000 BC. That gives a four-millennia period after Enoch during which humankind had been hunting and gathering and maybe building the occasional farming village. In any kind of hunter-gatherer society, Gangrel must have been virtual gods; even in comparison to other vampires, the Gangrel stood out as the ones who could do the most important things. They could travel with a nomadic group; they could help mortal hunters find the best prey; and they could stand up to any challenge. Of course, they couldn't travel by day, but that's a different story....

## CAINITE LEGEND

I have a pretty plain opinion on the Kindred legends about the fall of Enoch, and about Ennoia's relationship with the Ravnos Antediluvian, whom some call Ravana — I think they're mostly specious or legend misinterpreted as fact. I'll discuss this more later when we talk about the Rroma. For the time being, here's the legendry, as I understand it. Ennoia and Ravana were sister and brother in some sense. After the Ancients killed the Second Generation and Caine cursed them, the siblings wandered westward, onto the vast steppe of central Asia. They encountered native tribes, mostly nomads and wanderers, and they found sustenance and companionship in them. They Embraced childer, creating the creatures we now think of as Methuselaha of the Gangrel and Ravnos clans. A few myths place the number of fourth-generation Gangrel at four or five, but I believe that number might be too conservative. As I have said before and will say again, the only witnesses aren't talking. Legends say Ennoia did the same thing to her prospective childer that most Gangrel now do to their own: She Embraced them and then abandoned them for a while. Oh, sure, she watched from a distance or through the eyes of animals to make sure that the new childer was holding up under the strain. And

when it was obvious that the neonate would be able to survive on his own, our progenitor came to him and explained his true nature and heritage. Now, this legend might well be wrong — it strikes me as quite likely that it was made up to justify the practice of abandoning childer after the fact. Let's face it — many Gangrel are lax sires at best.

## AN INSCRIPTION

An acquaintance of mine found an inscription deep within an empty, tomblike cave on the shores of the Caspian Sea. Her best estimates say the cave has been empty for about 300 years. The writing was a pre-Alexandrian script, she tells me. After research with scholars familiar with old Turkic and Iranian texts, she put together the following translation. I have some theories about its origin, but for the time being I'm keeping my mouth shut.

*The great spider king gave me his silk when I was a boy. As a man I tired of its taste and spat myself from his court. The spider hunted the tiger queen and her pride. As the tiger queen had done me no wrong, I put an arrow in the spider's eye, spilling his fluid anew. His hunters struck me as they did the pride. The hunters were the sky and fire and the stone and the flood. We were only stooped and bloodied men. As we fled, the great spider king used fire against my name and destroyed it. The tiger queen carved a new name across my chest. She gave me her seed. For a third time was I born. Have I a court now? When I escape this cave, perhaps I shall learn.*

Something happened out there. Nobody knows exactly what. Either Ennoia and Ravana just had a falling-out, or one of them became infatuated with the other and that other rejected the first's advances, or maybe they fought over a favored servant. If you believe the legends, something happened to drive them to one another's throats. They fought for decades; they flung their childer at one another, and even encouraged their childer to Embrace new fledglings as soldiers. Ennoia's broods were far stronger, by all accounts, but Ravana was far more cunning and wielded the powers of deception.

At last, Ravana called down some kind of unholy devastation from the sky to destroy or disable most of Ennoia's forces. The handful that survived fled west into Europe or Africa. By the few accounts that I've heard — remember, this stuff is sketchy — the survivors then fought amongst *themselves*, scattering north, south and west. Those who went north latched onto the progenitors of Siberian tribes and the Vikings. Those who went south prowled the African plains above the Sahara or, if you like Ashton's interpretation, perhaps they became the shapechangers of the Serengeti. The few vampires who fled eastward were (perhaps incorrectly) presumed destroyed.





The majority went west; it is from these that most of the Gangrel clan traces its lineage. Our founder, Ennoia, drifted in and out of torpor for millennia after the fall of Enoch. The Jyhad with Ravana, if there really was one, didn't itself knock her into torpor for long. The scraps I've picked up suggest that Ennoia fell into a long torpor around the time of Christ; we continue to debate as to whether she's woken up from it yet.


#### OTHER MYTHOLOGY

Torvus the Viking (his name, not my appellation) told me an entirely different creation myth; it is his opinion that Caine was a favored and blessed warrior of Odin. I have no doubt that Gangrel such as the African Laibon and the Asian Anda have different ones as well. And they may well be right; I'm just passing along the stories European Gangrel share. The main problem with historical research among the Kindred, and the Gangrel in particular, is that we have maintained an oral tradition throughout history, and that over time our elders tend to degenerate into monstrous beasts who lack the capacity for speech. If you've heard something from a reliable, ancient source, by all means let me know.

#### PREHISTORY

When I passed around an early draft of this document, one copy of it fell into the hands of Dr. Nona Abbott, a Gangrel historian and critic. Dr. Abbott included 34 pages of corrections and footnotes as her initial response to my 20-page history, and though some of her text was pure unprovable intellectual wankery or resentful misanthropy, she had a few compelling points that I will now summarize.

*The rise of cities like Ur and Jericho in Mesopotamia in roughly the fourth millennium BC marked the end of a purer, simpler culture for mortals and Cainites. From prehistoric times, wandering tribes of mortals lived according to a matriarchal/matrilineal code. When the tribe spent every day on the move, its social leaders had to keep the tribe together through force of personality rather than threat of violence, for when a tribe is tied to no land it is trivial for a dissatisfied member or family unit to flee the rest of the group. Such a social structure did not lend itself well to domination by males, for the typical male tactics of possession and bullying would not be rewarded. After the fall of [Enoch], the Cainite/Lilian vampire entered this pristine mortal society. Of the presumed 13 vampire tribes, few were better suited to thrive than the Ennoian, tonight called the Gangrel. Indeed, a hunter/gatherer society might well represent the basis for a Gangrel "Golden Age," one in which other Kindred clans depended on the hardiness of the Gangrel for their very survival. With few established villages, Kindred needed to keep pace with mortal herds easily, regardless the availability of places to hide from the sun. That need made the Gangrel powers*



of swift travel and burrowing into the earth vital for almost every Cainite. In the simple barter/boon economy of early vampires, that Discipline therefore became the equivalent of a modern hot technology stock: greatly in demand and hoarded where possible. The Gangrel relationship between Lilith and Ennoia myths thereby becomes even clearer. The Gangrel symbolize the prehistoric matriarchy that other clans so resent. In the torpor of Ennoia, and in Jehovah's exile of Lilith, we see the Gangrel losing their favored status as the 12 other clans encourage the growth of agriculture and cities, developments that in themselves destroy the matriarchy in favor of a warfare-controlled patriarchy.

If you can divorce her point from her radical feminist mania, she might well be onto something.

### MESOPOTAMIA

Sumeria represented the first real human civilization, as far as the West is concerned. Of course, if you ask a Chinese anthropologist he'll talk about mythical dynasties until he's blue in the face, but such things have little importance to us as Cainites. Looking at the myriad of eccentricities about Sumeria — their language was unrelated to any other human language, they had writing, a monarchy and cities — it is very easy to leap to the conclusion that the Sumerians descend from the inhabitants of Enoch. This is the sort of question that keeps Kindred anthropologists up all day.

Historically, Gangrel lurked outside the cities of Sumeria, as we would do with other cities for the next six millennia. As other Cainites roamed these great cities, influencing the Sumerian culture to some degree or another, we withdrew, hid from the giants of the East, and sometimes marauded like barbarians. I get the impression that back in those nights, when the idea of a mortal city was a relatively new one, savvy Gangrel did everything they could to convince mortals to revert to a nomadic way of life. Gangrel threw hordes of enslaved animals at city walls; they grabbed the Beasts within hundreds of raiders and hurled them collectively at the greatest cities of the time, and so on.

And, of course, Gangrel capitalized on mortals' ideas. When the Semites invaded Sumeria, Gangrel followed the migration, hoping to stir an orgy of destruction. While there was certainly plenty of that, the Semites eventually settled into the Sumerians' territories, realizing the power of prosperous cities. This pattern repeated over and over throughout human history; within only a few centuries, our clan's elders realized that they weren't going to get humanity out of cities, or cause them to stop cultivating their fields.

By the Old Babylonian era, the elders of Clan Gangrel gave up on such plans (yes, that is a long time to change

one's mind — and here you thought that English Ventrue who still speak of the Empire were stubborn). They resigned themselves to eternal outsider status, for they truly found nomadic hunter cultures to be more vital than those nesting in such close quarters within the great cities of the time.

By the peak of Babylon, the Gangrel had scattered to the winds.

### GREEK CIVILIZATIONS

The Cimmerians destroyed the Mycenaean civilization around 1200 BC. We know hardly anything about the Cimmerians. They were tribal barbarians who lived north of Greece, and they fought a few wars against Scythia. The Cimmerians are said to have split into two groups; the Scythians drove one group northward out of their homeland, though if they popped up somewhere else, the historical record does not show it. The other group of Cimmerians fought to the death against the Scythians rather than give up their homes, and they did die, to a man. Now *that's* conviction.

The Greeks and Scythians fought multiple wars (in later years, Scythia was to become one of the few nations not conquered by Alexander of Macedon). Scythians were horse-riders, slave-takers, and fierce warriors; Herodotus described their ability to quell a slave revolt by standing firm and holding horsewhips. They fought the Greek Darius to a standstill. They describe themselves as descendants of Zeus or his equivalent.

Despite the general tendency that our clan has to follow barbarian movements — to “ride the wave,” so to speak — the prevailing theory that I have heard is that the war between Cimmeria and Scythia was exacerbated by a conflict among three Cainite broodmates, all children of the same Gangrel sire. I have names for only one of them (Egothha), so I will embellish by assigning them the Greek names for the three mythical founders of Scythia. The elder two were Agathysus and Gelonus; the youngest was called Scythes. The brood's sire found fault with Agathysus and Gelonus and exiled them to the west; the two of them fell upon Cimmeria and built up influence there. Scythes, by contrast, truly was probably more capable than his brothers, and aided the mortals in building a powerful nation. Cimmeria and Scythia fought several wars, Scythia winning the majority of them due in part to Agathysus and Gelonus' taking to the field of battle; Cimmerian warriors were particularly unnerved that two advisors to the king were such bloodthirsty berserks. On the other hand, Scythes stayed out of the fighting. Eventually Scythian soldiers forced the elder siblings into torpor, and conquered Cimmeria. Scythes himself (remember, that's a pseudonym) vanished from the world stage well before the rise of Rome.





## EAGLE AND ELEPHANT

### CARTHAGE AND ROME

We didn't have a great presence in either Carthage or Rome. Our abilities gave us the advantage in the wilderness, on the ride or the hunt. Vast empires and their capital cities held little attraction. Certainly some Gangrel spent time in Rome and Carthage, but both were seen as too dangerous — Rome because the Ventrue allowed the Malkavians to share dominance with them, and Carthage because the Brujah and Assamite plan for the city went against too many of Caine's edicts.

The Gangrel acted as Cassandras in both Rome and Carthage; Gangrel elders warned the Phoenician Cainites of the danger of Roman armies, but the Brujah and Assamites were confident in the strength of the Carthaginian navies. Still other Gangrel made it painfully clear to late Imperial Roman Kindred that tribes under Gangrel domain planned to attack the Eternal City; they, too, were ignored.

### THE INVICTI

During the late years of Imperial Rome, a Gallic Gangrel Embraced two worshippers of the Syrian god Sol Invictus ("Unconquered Sun"). One of the pair, whose name is lost to history, faced an early group of vampire-hunters who forced her to greet her deity the morning after her Embrace; she was destroyed instantly, of course. The other, a martyred soul who later took the name Constanus, chose to become a "protector of the undead," if such a thing can be believed. Specifically, Constanus took it on himself to hunt mortals who destroy vampires. Constanus told his childer that he took his mandate from the *Book of Nod* itself, wherein [YHWH] states that no mortal shall be permitted to raise a hand against those wearing the mark of Caine. Since all Kindred wear that mark, any mortal who destroys a Cainite forfeits his life. Constanus and his brood, the Invicti, took this duty.

Over time the Invicti earned a fair share of debts and boons, and obviously the enmity of witch-hunters. They became a powerful political group among Kindred in general, and were the premiere faction within Clan Gangrel. Around 600 AD, Constanus and his most powerful childer were caught unawares in a great fire in northern Italy; at least seven vampires met Final Death. Investigations by the scattered Invicti produced little evidence of a culprit; vengeful hunters, envious Kindred or a random lightning strike might have started the fire. The political fortunes and power of the Invicti fell over the next few years; by 650 AD few even remembered the word.

## THE FALL OF ROME

If you take a look at a map of Europe that is keyed to vegetation, you'll notice something quite striking. France, Germany, Italy, the Low Countries, England and Hungary are all dominated by cropland and pasture. Arable country — that is, the kind of land suited to the establishment of feudal states, manors and later large cities. These are the areas that we claimed. We went to the mountains, north into the forests of Scandinavia, onto the steppe, or south into uncharted Africa. As a clan, we Gangrel aren't good at staying put. The Beast in us cries out against settling down. When we move into a civilized place, some other vampire invariably has staked out terrain of his own, which leaves us without domain. So as we scatter to the winds, we usually *stay* scattered.

The oldest Gangrel punctuate the era of Rome with the two greatest sackings of the Eternal City: first by the Gauls, in the earliest days of the Roman Republic, and last by the Ostrogoths, at the end of the Western Roman Empire. The Gauls invaded Rome in 390 BC, in retribution for Rome's murder of one of their chieftains. The massed barbarians routed the Roman legions and entered the city; they burned, looted and killed. Eight hundred years later, in 476 AD, barbarians returned to the gates, this time in the form of Odoacer's Ostrogoths. Like their spiritual ancestors the Gauls, the Ostrogoths plundered, raped and killed. Odoacer exiled Romulus, Emperor of the Western Empire, and thus fell the Roman Empire.

It's important that I reiterate the barbarian mindset here. It was the will of the gods, the thinking went, that certain people settled down into cities and farms and ranches; it was the will of the gods that others live off the land, wandering as herds and weather took them from place to place. The wanderers couldn't help but learn to ride, fight and hunt better than sedentary folk, because that was how they stayed alive. Surely this, too, was the will of the gods (or of God, after most of Europe's barbarians converted to Christianity). Therefore it was obviously the will of God that barbarians plunder civilized towns and make off with valuables of all sorts, especially during lean years in the outlands. Many Gangrel of the period bought into all of this, of course. We were there with the Gauls and the Ostrogoths, and with all their relatives in the intervening 800 years. That's an enormous span of time: Consider that eight centuries years ago the Mongols invaded Europe (we were with them, too). The Gangrel clan didn't have much of a presence in the Roman Republic, nor one inside the Empire until the Romans began conquering Gaul. And even then we had our hands full: the Gangrel found themselves struggling to maintain the domains they already had against Ventrue, Malkavian and Toreador conquerors in the West and Tzimisce, Brujah and Nosferatu Kindred in the East.

## MARCUS SEXTUS

Marcus Sextus was born in Latinized Cairo in the first century AD; he traveled to Rome just after his Embrace by a Gangrel Methuselah and introduced himself to the Malkavian and Ventrue lords of the city as simply "the Egyptian." Sextus had lived as a nobleman, and greatly desired the approval and companionship of the city's undead leaders, but the greedy patrons of the Senate used the Gangrel's desires to pull him this way and that. During the closing years of the Empire, the Egyptian was nothing more than a pawn. At a Gangrel thing near Dacia in 475, the Egyptian had his only encounter with the barbarian terror Arnulf, and learned of the coming invasion of Rome. After returning to the city and spending months in contemplation, he quietly chose to abandon his erstwhile masters and flee across the Mediterranean into Africa. There he Embraced numerous tribespeople before meeting his end at the hands of his final childe, Inyanga, who now roams the northern United States.

# SWORD AND SHIELD

## EUROPE AFTER ROME

The broad sweep of European history between the fall of Rome and the Mongol invasions is much too complex to enter into in any detail here. European civilization retreated eastward, to Constantinople, while so-called barbarian kingdoms (the Visigoths, Ostrogoths, Saxons, Franks and so on) infested the rest of the continent. Succeeding centuries show a recurring theme: A wave of barbarians sweeps into Europe from the Russian steppe; the barbarians fight against the current residents of the area; the barbarians settle down and are assimilated into local society, and their descendants take up arms against the next wave of barbarians to sweep in.

Throughout these centuries, the Gangrel characteristically refused to stay put. Although our ancestors walked among the Angles, Saxons, Goths and practically any other groups in which they could find sustenance, when these peoples settled down into formal nations the Gangrel found it preferable to abandon them. After all, no sooner would the barbarians settle than a complement of Kindred would nest among them and revive their old treacheries and schemes. When Odoacer's Ostrogoths founded a kingdom on the corpse of Roman greatness, many Gangrel joined the Huns in the Balkans. When Clovis settled what is now France into a stable nation, Frankish Gangrel predators moved northward to join the Jutes, Lapps and Finns.

And so the centuries passed. Avar Khan subjugated the Huns and Slavs of the Balkans, and went to war with Justinian's Eastern Roman Empire. It wasn't long before the Avars settled in central Europe, and again we went wandering.

## LAIBON

In scouring libraries to research this work, I came across an epic Saxon poem alleged to have been written by the Gangrel Maraulf of Three Tales. The poem itself is a contemporary of the Venerable Bede, by my best estimate; I gave it to a particular Old English scholar for translation in '97. (At that point I was still part of the Camarilla, and when the prince found out what I'd done he had the scholar killed, but that's neither here nor there.) It seems appropriate to include a particular translated bit here:

*In Clusium I meet Otaoer the Black, he of the Laibon family/From the far south he comes, earth-spirit and vampire/Strong before fire and skilled on the hunt, the Beast troubles his kind not*

Beyond this I don't know much more about the Laibon. Torvus didn't answer any questions about them, and he's the oldest vampire I've spoken to. It is possible that the Laibon are descended from Gangrel blood; that description of Otaoer's powers matches our own to some degree. It's also possible that I have it backward — that the Gangrel descend from some sub-Saharan clan of Laibon. I assume that they're from Africa; I don't even really know if they're descended from Caine. I continue to search for information about these creatures, but most Kindred I talk to tell me that Africa's as dangerous as eastern Asia.


## CHARLEMAGNE

Charles, the eldest son of Pepin the Frank, became the first sole King of the Franks in 771. Over the course of his reign he consolidated a huge area, greater than modern France. Charlemagne, as Charles became known, was the first Roman Emperor of his day, crowned as he was by the Pope in 800 AD. By the time of Charlemagne's reign, the Gangrel roamed the forests of Germany, the Balkan and Caucasus Mountains, the steppe further east, and the frozen wastes of Scandinavia. The ancients of Clan Gangrel had relatively little to do with Charlemagne and his Frankish Empire save fight them, as they did when the great Emperor led his men onto the field against the Bulgars and Arabs. After Charlemagne's death, our ancestors rode with Viking and Varangian conquerors as they tore their way southward through Europe.

## GARGOYLES

The Tremere are a little cagey about their origins, but the impression I get from talking to the few really old





Gangrel I've had the privilege to meet is that they somehow made themselves vampires. As mortal wizards, they decimated another clan — whether Tzimisce or a much smaller one, the Saulots, seems to be up in the air — and used the blood they harvested to turn themselves into vampires. *Okay, you may think, no big deal. Me, I tend to think: Cripes, they must have been really powerful wizards.*

Here's the part that sticks in the craw of our elders. The Tremere decided they needed muscle. The Tzimisce had cannon-fodder childer, war ghouls and horrendously misshapen servants at their beck and call, and the Tremere had almost nothing. So they captured unfortunate Kindred and experimented on them. I don't know what other clans they captured, or what they did to them, except that they captured and tormented dozens of Gangrel, and the end result was the Gargoyle bloodline. They made Gangrel into those mindless slaves. That didn't sit well at all with the Gangrel who found out about it. Before long whole prides of us showed up at the drawbridges of ancient Tzimisce castles as *de facto* allies, offering our services as warriors in return for a chance to take revenge and rescue our lost broodmates and childer. The Tzimisce seemed happy for the help; some genuinely needed assistance against the Tremere, while others liked the idea of other Cainites doing their dirty work. The fighting went on for more than a hundred years; we rescued any Gargoyles we could, and killed them or set them free. The alliance with the Tzimisce ebbed with time, and in the mid-13th century just about *everything* came to a pause in Eastern Europe.

## THE MONGOL INVASIONS

I have no way to describe the chaos and madness that fled westward as the Golden Horde crossed the Volga River into Russia, and then the Balkans into Poland and Hungary. Genghis Khan said God Himself had chosen him to destroy the civilizations of Asia and Russia. When Genghis died, his children and grandchildren picked up the banner. It was Batu Khan, Genghis' grandson, who led the Mongols into Europe proper. Like an avalanche, they came down the mountains into civilized lands with armies larger than any fielded in Europe. And could they fight! It makes one's long-dead heart go pitter-pat to think of it.

Slowly, clumsily, heavily armored European knights led sullen peasants out onto the field, expecting a conventional, slow, predictable battle like every other one they'd fought for their lords. The Mongols were lightly armored when they wore armor at all; they rode hardy, fast steppe ponies, and they could fire arrows from horseback *backward* at a full gallop! The astute (or even not-so-astute) reader may note a tinge of envy at this point. The Mongol army had never met a match in the known world. But for a twist of fate — the death of Ogadei Khan in 1241 — the Horde would have overrun Europe to the Atlantic. Nothing like the Mongol Horde exists tonight, no unstoppable

barbaric force bringing terror to all who hear of it. I believe the closest equivalent in the Final Nights is a stock market crash.

Although the Mongols and their Great Khans were mortal, the Horde did not ride untouched by the supernatural. As the Mongols crossed the Volga, many Gangrel joined the Horde. As was the case with the Huns a millennium earlier, many vampires rode with the Mongols simply to capitalize on the chaos and ruin they sowed. Others were wistful for nights of pillaging gone by and joined the Mongols to recapture their youths. No doubt for each Gangrel in the Horde one could name a different motivation, but I note two important exceptions: Arnulf and the Anda.

Stories of Arnulf dominate our oral history. He — it? — is rumored to hail from Scythian times, or even earlier; they say he even fought Alexander the Great. Arnulf rode with the Huns to destroy Rome; Arnulf helped the Turks sack Constantinople; and Arnulf was with the Mongols when they destroyed Hungary and Poland. We don't know why he acted as he did; a follower of his own wiles, he had few words for chroniclers. Arnulf was more a force of nature than a vampire. He exemplified the barbarian's impulse to steal the fruits of civilization and move on. And they say that he took revenge on promising barbarian leaders who embraced the mantle of civilization after sacking a city. He wanted to demolish civilization and return to primitive, simple nights; for a barbarian to surrender his strength and fatten himself with the riches of cities was the ultimate crime. Fittingly, Arnulf was destroyed when he finally took sides between two warring states; in the early 16th century he fought alongside the Turks of the Ottoman Empire and paid the ultimate price for "choosing teams."

The Anda have a more complicated story. We Westerners are not entirely sure where they came from. They were Kindred, apparently descended from the Gangrel, of pure Mongol blood. This contradicts what we thought we knew about the Far East — the Giants, who we now call Cathayans, were assumed to have killed any Cainites who wandered too far east. The truth of the situation appears to have been more complex. The Anda were destroyed to the last, victims of a great curse laid down by the Cathayans in the last nights of the Mongol Empire. I suppose it is possible that some might persist, deep in torpor, but if they do, surely such thousand-year old creatures have no interest in ephemeral modern monsters such as ourselves. Childer of the Anda Embraced in the West are supposedly indistinguishable from "ordinary" Gangrel, and indeed many such vampires stayed in Europe after the Horde returned to Karakorum. The fires of the Inquisition destroyed many of those, and the rest claim to have no exceptional knowledge of their bloodline's more efficacious secrets.



Vampires are nothing if not fractious. While some European Cainites welcomed the ravages of the Mongol Horde, the majority of others fought fiercely to defend their territory. Doubtless the Europeans would have had more success had they joined forces with one another rather than attempting to undermine the others' positions. In truth, Eastern European vampires were more likely to find allies against the Mongols among the Lupines than in each other. Gangrel of all stripes died by the pack in Poland and Hungary.

## RROMA

Things this far back are always foggy, but let's try a theory on for size. When the Rroma (the Gypsies) left India, some of them had Ravnos traveling with them. I don't think a lot did, but some did. When companies of Rroma traveled from kingdom to kingdom, they had to get writs of passage from the local authorities. Sometimes they couldn't get the writs, and sometimes the writs weren't of much use — a note from the faraway king isn't of much use against bandits on the road — but for the most part they kept the Rroma safe. It seems a little strange that the Rroma, who were, by all accounts, generally mistrusted and accused of awful crimes, could easily gain audiences with kings and lords and obtain notes of safe conduct. That's where the Ravnos traveling with them came in.

The vampires had a much easier time gaining access, and in earning the writs. But of course, in Europe they didn't have such an easy time of things. Any given Ravnos was no more likely than his caravan herd to speak the language, and, as I mentioned, most companies didn't travel with vampires at all. When Rroma happened upon European Gangrel, some offered their own blood to the "shilmudo" in return for the favor of acquiring letters of safe passage. This scheme worked out well for both sides, and a few Gangrel acquired Rroma herds of their own. Eventually word of one particular Gangrel homing in on Ravnos "possessions" made its way back to a few Ravnos, and half a dozen Deceivers ambushed the Lithuanian Gangrel Intarn as he rested with his adopted family. Intarn died slowly, and when word of that got back to his childer, the fight was on.

Spend enough time dead around elder Gangrel and you're sure to hear stories about the Gangrel Antediluvian and the Ravnos Antediluvian being old lovers, or old enemies, or tennis doubles or something like that, but I don't put any stock in it. I'm not sure you can; surely, beings like that would be incomprehensibly alien and selfish in their vast power. Theories about 10,000-year-old sibling rivalry seem insanely simplistic. I find it more likely that feuding vampires from the period I just described latched on to old stories about their progenitors and fit them to the cause at hand. But then I'm a cynic.



### STORYTELLERS' SECRET: THE ANDA

The Cathayans forced the Gangrel out of Asia in prehistoric times. But some Gangrel stayed, hidden or in torpor; some made their havens in the forests of Siberia, and others hid among nomadic tribes — the Huns, the Tanguts and the Mongols. Most of the Gangrel who walked among the Asian nomads descended from a nameless Methuselah reputed to have burrowed under the Gobi Desert. This bloodline — whose members called themselves Anda, the Mongolian word for “blood brother” — spent their nights capitalizing on the Mongols’ conquests. As the Mongol Empire expanded, they came back into contact with Kindred society as a whole. Some assimilated, others didn’t, and still other Western Cainites joined the Mongols. The Anda and their converts didn’t last; around the time that the Mongol dynasty collapsed in China, the Cathayans rose up and slaughtered any Mongol Kindred they could get their talons on. Some may have escaped — more than one elder Gangrel claims to remember Genghis Khan — but as an entity, the Anda bloodline is no more.

## STAKE AND PYRE

The Inquisition was a horrifically dark time for us, as anyone with half a brain might suspect. Kindred elders had swaggered around as undying lords of the night since the fall of Rome. Even the normally not-bothered-with-that-sort-of-bullshit Gangrel got too big for their britches, terrorizing entire towns and marauding off with cattle, children, virgins, etc. In the 14th century the kine finally started to wake up and realize that vampires weren’t indestructible or omniscient. The Church waged war on heretics, Satanists, witches, Lupines, Cainites, anything it could get its hands on. The Inquisition hit the Gangrel no more or less than any other clan. You might think we’d end up on the pyre less often than other clans, since we don’t burrow into cities or lords’ manors like the Ventrue or Nosferatu do. But Gangrel have a hard time concealing their bestial natures; when Father Jean confronts a woman with clawed paws or spider eyes, he barely takes the time to shout “Demon!” before she’s on the fire. The Ventrue don’t stick out like we do, and the Nosferatu, who do stick out like we do, know how to hide their real faces. The Inquisition undoubtedly destroyed at least one bloodline of distant relatives of ours, a group known as the Lhiannan. This collection of Celts, Gauls and Slavs found itself unable to withstand the faith of the Holy Inquisitors; stories have come down to us that the Lhiannan were blood-witches, infernalists or worse.... I don’t know what to believe. I just know that they’re gone now.


Leif:

I fear that you were right. These Cainites of the south lack honor, and they hate us for the truth we speak. Two weeks ago, trapped in unfamiliar lands near Davon, I petitioned the Ventrue Lord Piter Arpad for shelter, and he nobly granted it. When I awoke the following evening, Lord Arpad and I sat for an hour, discussing mortal and Cainite politics. I daresay I did not follow most of what he had to say, but I endeavored to keep up. When talk turned to the rebellion spurred by the blind General Hus, it seemed to me that Arpad spoke of supporting both sides in the rebellion. I told Arpad as much. He flushed with anger, as though I had accused him of a grave sin; he called me a liar and asked me to leave his manor. I was no liar, Leif, and I told him so and drew my sword. It took this Lord Arpad and six of his men-at-arms to drive me from his hall, and I slew two of them in the doing. For a few nights after this I watched Lord Arpad’s manor as a raven in a nearby tree. Within a few nights a messenger ran from Lord Arpad’s manor to the local church. Now I hear that the Inquisition is in search of a demon with my very features, in this area. And they know my name, Leif. They know my name.

## THE ANARCH REVOLT AND THE CONVENTION OF THORNS

Speaker is Torvus Bloodbeard, a Viking; my luck in getting him to speak on tape continues to frighten me.

I’ll tell you about the Convention of Thorns. I was there; I would know what happened. The details aren’t all clear anymore — I remember a monastery, I remember caves, I remember a year’s worth of blood — but that’s not what matters. What matters is that the thing was a joke from the start. I had been in Prague, and when the prince of Prague was invited to the Convention he asked me to go in his stead. I suppose he respected my sense of honor; I wasn’t about to lie or misrepresent him. It was in England. Thankfully most of the conversation was done in a civilized language, or at least Latin. On one side you had the Founders: Hardestadt and his cronies. On the other side you had the leaders of the Anarch Revolt, a howling pack of honorless savages and villains. I hadn’t chosen a side, really; I had spent most of the Anarch Revolt in torpor, and I found both sides distasteful. In that last, it turned out that I wasn’t alone among my clan. Most of us preferred neither side in the conflict and had chosen the Camarilla as the path of least resistance. Many Cainites of note had been invited, you understand, but most did not come.



Most of us had the impression that a real discussion of the Anarch Revolt would take place, and that perhaps some kind of peace would be brokered. We were quite mistaken. The Founders had a plan coming in; they knew what kind of peace they wanted, and they were unwilling to accept anything else. The anarchs had plans, as well, and neither group seemed likely to compromise. The Founders offended the anarchs with a prewritten agenda and a treaty that changed not at all in response to the furious debates that swept across the courtyard in which we met. Both parties — Founder and anarch — instead spent their time wooing influential vampires like myself, who had yet to choose a side. It was rather flattering. But for me the choice was easy: I spent the early years after my death as a *vargr* in the far north, and for us diablerie was the worst crime. The anarchs considered diablerie a convenient tool. And when Karsh approached me, speaking of honor, loyalty and integrity, I knew I had no choice but to side with the Founders. I was not the only one Karsh or Petrenkov, the Gangrel among the Founders, spoke to, and for every Gangrel elder who went his way, four or five neonates swung the same direction. Certainly many young Gangrel sided with the anarchs and would not leave that side after the offense of the choreographed convention, but Gangrel elders had avoided alienating their childer with the worst offenses shown by the Lasombra, Tzimisce and Ventrue.

## GUN AND SHIP

At least a dozen Gangrel elders knew that another continent lay to the west of the Atlantic as early as 1200 AD. To a Kindred, these Gangrel descended from Vikings, and heard tales of Vinland from returning travelers. One — who we shall call Olaf, though his true name is lost to history — entertained optimistic thoughts of a wild land empty of European or Asian vampires. Some four centuries old even in 1200, Olaf captained a boatload of men through the gales of the North Atlantic in darkest winter, seeking this promised land. Eventually he did find it. The Vinlanders were beset by natives they called *skraelings*; the descriptions are spotty and embellished, but they are pretty obviously Native Americans. Over time the Vinlanders came to know the *skraelings*, and yes, I mean that in most senses of the word; it appears now that the Narragansett tribe is partially descended from Vinlanders. Some Vinlanders traveled south with their new families, while others either died or returned to Europe. In the end, Olaf and Karl, his childe, traveled south into the open lands of America. Olaf, somewhat paranoid, taught Karl the Nosferatu gift of obfuscation, and Karl found it quite useful, adding the art of the ambush to his tactics of predation. The travel was difficult, of course: Europe's population clustered together in towns and cities, but the seemingly primitive natives of America

did no such thing. When it was convenient for them to do so, Olaf and Karl posed as traveling spirits; at other times, they traveled quietly, in human or wolf form, hunting as necessary. Karl speaks of this time as a peaceful nighttime idyll, with no Cainites to trouble the pair. Trouble did come, of course; along the Atlantic seaboard a fierce tribe of werewolves and their native slaves hunted the duo for years, eventually driving Olaf into torpor. Karl escaped with his unlife and dwelt in peace for more than two centuries; he occasionally granted the Embrace to a native, but for the most part he spent his time as a quiet, hidden hunter of men. Karl's stories suggest that he was aware of slumbering Methuselaha in the Americas well before Columbus arrived, but he kept his distance and recommended that his childer do the same. To that end, Karl made sure to teach his childer the Nosferatu talent Olaf had given him, sometimes giving that Discipline preference over our clan's usual sway over animals.

## THE 16TH CENTURY

As humankind explored the West Indies and Americas, we scattered across the globe. Gangrel had established havens amid the wilds of the Songhai Empire in Africa, regardless of the danger posed by the supernatural creatures of the Dark Continent. Gangrel fought on both sides of Ivan the Terrible's reclamation of Russia from the Golden Horde. We fed from the Aztecs and their descendants. We rode with the Turks of Suleiman the Magnificent, conquering European towns and cities from the Black Sea across much of the southern Mediterranean.

It is certainly the case that many Gangrel — including the infamous Arnulf the Hun — rode with the Turks as they invaded Europe in the 15th and 16th centuries. Many Cainite historians look at that allegiance as an aberration. To them, Gangrel are creatures of barbarism, not Islam — and despite the prevailing opinions of European Kindred at the time, Suleiman's Turks were not barbaric at all, but rather had a culture as deep and advanced as any in Europe. Gangrel who rode with the Ottoman Turks saw them not as destroyers of cities but rather a means to an end. Elders who had made their havens in Europe for centuries built up an impressive list of enemies, and an allegiance of convenience with the Turks and their Assamite companions allowed the Gangrel to sack Tremere or Tzimisce holdings in ways unavailable to them while they skulked in Europe.

## THE SABBAT

I'm a lot spottier on the history of the Sabbat. It's not for lack of trying, but if you can imagine the problems inherent in interviewing Gangrel of any stripe, and multiply those by the risk to life and limb one takes when spending time with any Sabbat vampire, you should understand how I have less information on them than you






might want to see. If you have any more of a clue — a serious clue, please, I don't need more e-mail from dedthrashd00d talking about how totally /kewl\ it is that the Sabbat are like totally evul — feel free to drop me a line. Use some reasonable encryption, too, or I'll just drop the message. The Camarilla may be a bunch of bastards, but the Masquerade makes too much sense for me to blow it off this soon.

A few things are clear, though, and I'll try to address them. A few dozen anarchs were furious at the result of the Convention of Thorns. Despite the damage they'd done to elders across Europe — and, if you believe the Lasombra and Tzimisce, the destruction of two Antediluvians — most young anarchs just rolled over for their sires and grandsires when the time came to make a decision. As Torvus Bloodbeard mentioned earlier, the Gangrel didn't have all that many anarchs in the first place, since the clan's elders didn't abuse their childer nearly as much as other clans' elders did. (Well, maybe they did. But if so, who cares? It's not like the Gangrel anarchs had a much more organized social order than the parent clan.) But those who did join the anarch cause like the Mongol Jalan-Aajav believed in it fairly devoutly. (And don't ask me if Jalan-Aajav was one of the Anda. I don't know, and he does not answer my questions on the subject.)

By the middle of the 16th century or so, these anarchs were tired of running and hiding from the elders they'd assaulted after the Convention of Thorns, and they held clandestine meetings in Spain and southeastern Europe. These meetings generated a philosophy, a name and a new sense of direction for the harried anarchs. They called themselves covens and sabbats, and espoused a belief that they were the true scions of the Devil (or Caine, depending upon geography); they scorned the Masquerade and the elders who defended it. In my opinion, only two kinds of Gangrel joined the early Sabbat: those who were spoiling for a fight, and those who refused to "play human" with the Camarilla. The brawlers got all they could handle; most of them met Final Death fighting the Camarilla. But those who succeeded felt no qualms about diablerizing their opponents, increasing their own strength and improving their odds in the next skirmish. The fighting mostly took place in Spain and France, though some battles raged in the traditional Tzimisce homelands of the Balkans. It was guerrilla warfare, the kind of fight at which we Gangrel excel.

From conversations with Bloodbeard, Mortensen and one or two other elder Gangrel, I learned that many of our ancestors abandoned human morals and ethics as soon as it was convenient. Most of these were quickly consumed by their Beasts, but the more disciplined among them followed the Path of the Feral Heart, a code of ethics that encourages its followers to tame the Beast gnawing at them from within. The Camarilla, however, strongly



encouraged — some might say strongarmed — its membership to accept the ethic of “Humanity,” to allow Kindred to blend into human society better. It’s no easy task to abandon a code of ethics you feel strongly about. If you don’t believe me, try it sometime. In effect, the Founders were telling the Gangrel elders who developed the Path of the Feral Heart that their chosen morality was wrong, and that they were criminals if they couldn’t abandon it to return to the side of humanity. So yeah, some of them told the Founders to go to Hell, and joined up with the anarchists.

## THE 17TH CENTURY

The Thirty Years’ War between Catholics and Protestants in the Holy Roman Empire served to cover up a great deal of Camarilla-Sabbat maneuvering. Though I have no doubt that mortals caused and fought the war, I have to wonder if it would have gone on as long as it did were it not for the machinations of the undead. Gangrel are the fiercest Cainite warriors, as is pretty well acknowledged, and we saw plenty of action during the war. Not all Gangrel Kindred were die-hard believers in the causes they fought for; even back then, plenty of Autarkis Gangrel chose sides based on who could pay them better in gold or blood.

European colonists founded the first serious European settlements in North America in the 17th century. Some did not survive, but many thrived and before long, settlements dotted the East Coast. European colonists interacted with Native Americans at a variety of levels, from outright war to pleasant cooperation; this interaction brought the new American colonies to the attention of potent Gangrel who already made their havens in America. These Outlanders fed from the new colonists until European Cainites finally made their way across the Atlantic some decades later, at which time there were some... *exciting*... conflicts between the two groups.

## THE 18TH CENTURY

In none of these sections do I find myself pressed to say, “This was a boring time for the Gangrel and nothing much happened.” The 18th century was a time of exploration and revolution. Revolution we don’t generally have much truck with, but exploration is our gig. I won’t make the preposterous announcement that Lewis and Clark were Gangrel (or even Gangrel ghouls, or manipulated by a secret Gangrel Kindred and his legion of loyal followers, or any other ludicrous, Ventrue-esque proclamation), but many expeditions into the wilds of North America relied on grizzled trappers and traders with shady pasts and unusual habits. Surely you wouldn’t find it too strange to learn that at least one of them was one of us.

Revolutions raged in France and America. Both of them allowed for some hidden Sabbat-Camarilla violence, just like every war does, but other than that tidbit,

the Gangrel I spoke to about the revolutions didn’t have much of an opinion. Most of them liked the US as it was, but at the time the revolution didn’t matter to them. The only effect it had on vampiric society, according to my sire and his acquaintances, was that dozens of mortal institutions extricated themselves from European dominance, and that gave American Kindred a shot at getting some influence of their own. Of course, this didn’t do much for the Gangrel, who lacked the necessary connections to exploit such a power vacuum, but again, most Gangrel didn’t get too worked up about it.

## THE 19TH CENTURY

In the United States, the Civil War (or, as my brethren in Georgia prefer, the War Between the States) dominated the 19th century; from this perspective it’s easy to look at events leading up to the war and see them as precursors to it, and it’s certainly the case that much of the end of the century was spent dealing with the ramifications of the war.

As for the Gangrel, well, the unpleasant truth is that slave pens make good feeding grounds. The freeing of American slaves during and after the Civil War was something of a hardship to Gangrel who’d fed at the same plantation for a century or more. Personally I couldn’t care less if those Gangrel went through some tough times; I find the practice of slavery repugnant, and the act of feeding on slaves or prisoners downright repulsive. But let’s face facts: We often refer to mortals as kine. Cattle. Respect for human dignity and freedom isn’t universal among Kindred, and such things fade quickly after a century of unlife, to my observations. And let’s not even get into the Sabbat’s attitudes.

As for the war itself, it was a bloody, horrific mess. It was the last “traditional” war fought by Americans; in contrast to the “total war” mentality seen during the Great War, the Civil War was downright genteel. But thousands died; Grant knew that the Union’s only advantage was its vast population, and he hurled throngs of troops at Confederate positions. Like any nomadic scavengers would, Gangrel profited from these scenes of mass destruction. Once the sun went down, we crawled from the ground to feast on the recently dead and not-quite dead. Plenty of neonates came out of the war, and most of them retained prejudices from their mortal lives. For a short time in the 1870s, feuding Gangrel neonates in Virginia and West Virginia made the Appalachians all but impassable from north to south, but this skirmish resolved itself with only a few Final Deaths. A few fringe ancillae from this period still hold grudges, and viciously challenge any young Gangrel in their territory whose accent shows him to be from the wrong side of the Mason-Dixon line.

For all practical purposes, the Native American nations in the United States died during the 1800s. American



Indians were pushed westward, then forcibly herded onto reservations to allow whites the choicest territory. Those tribes that refused to capitulate to the demands of the US found the Army hounding them across the Great Plains. Many Gangrel counted themselves as allies of the native tribes; many others simply fed on them, with less concern given to the natives' political fortunes. Some Gangrel had the audacity to act against the relocation forces arrayed against native tribes; they might divert the forces for long enough to allow favored mortals to escape, but just as often they roused an otherwise nonplussed army group into taking drastic action against the Indians.

Relocation onto reservations wasn't itself that much of a problem for the undead. Gangrel are nothing if not mobile. But with relocation and reservations came a decline in the tribes' spirits. Their numbers decreased, and they found themselves to be nothing more than a token nod to long-broken treaties. Plenty of Gangrel took up residence in or near native reservations, which were not too radically different from the concentration camps of later wars; the natives were decent herds, and a few were willing to work as servants or even ghouls. For the most part, the other clans left the reservations alone, seeing them as too much work for relatively small gains.


#### CITY GANGREL AND COUNTRY GANGREL

The Sabbat has always been strong in North America, as we well know. Too many Gangrel broods converged on the continent simultaneously for me to have a hope of providing a general genealogy of those present at any point in history, but I can give you a couple of interesting facts. The first is that by the American Revolution, the broods of Karl childe of Olaf dominated the northern Appalachians. You may remember my earlier mention of Karl; he and Olaf come from the age of the Vinland settlement in what is now Nova Scotia.

Members of Karl's broods and European Sabbat Gangrel hit New York City in large numbers around the time of the American Civil War. By 1860, my sources indicate, as many as three dozen Sabbat Gangrel made their havens in the city (think about *that* for a minute). Curiously, many Sabbat Gangrel had left the New York-Philadelphia area in the preceding decade, ostensibly to brawl with the Camarilla in the Wild West.

Several Gangrel packs that prowled the New World during the Civil War had a surprising amount in common. Unlike their clanmates, these Kindred had no great affinity for the wilderness. Some were born in large cities in America or Europe; others had developed a (reasonable) fear of the forest and dark plain during their unlives. Many (though certainly not all) of these vampires had shown a tendency to develop insectoid or arachnid features — like the possibly legendary Tonio Eight-eyes — or the characteristics of decidedly urban beasts. Lastly, almost all





of them unconsciously preferred a different set of Disciplines than our clan usually favors. They eschewed rugged hardiness for supernatural speed, and chose the arts of concealment rather than the ways of beast mastery.

The packs declared kinship in spirit, if not in lineage, in a bloodcurdling ceremony in the tenements of Manhattan around 1870. The leadership of the Sabbat in New York acknowledged the "City Gangrel" as a separate bloodline from the "Country Gangrel" about a decade later, and by the turn of the century they spread through Sabbat holdings across North and South America. To this day, I'm told, City Gangrel are far less common in Europe, and almost all of them are childer or grandchilder of Americans. Those that aren't, I can make a guess as to their previous ancestry, but I'm not going to set it down here.

## ENGINE AND WIRE

### THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

The Industrial Revolution, which began in the late 19th century, had a curious impact on Cainites in general and the Gangrel clan in specific. Dozens of cities in the Great Lakes region — such as Pittsburgh, Gary, Cleveland or Detroit — were sleepy little burghs in the wake of the Civil War. They had relatively small populations, typically no more than the 100,000 necessary to support one Kindred under the guidelines of the Camarilla. In several cases, that lone Cainite was a Gangrel who'd claimed the area as her domain for over a century. By 1880, though, these cities' populations began to spike upward with an influx of immigrants and factory workers — Pittsburgh, for example, *doubled* its population from 1880 to 1900. A town that could feasibly support one Kindred in 1850 could support 10 just 50 years later. And when a city could support more Kindred, you better believe those Kindred came.

Gangrel caught in the population boom tried several different responses. Some declared themselves prince and each Embraced a childer or two to back their claim up with a brood. Some settled for behind-the-scenes roles, endorsing newcomers in exchange for major boons and perhaps serving as primogen. Some long-time Gangrel residents lost out to faster rivals; the new princes generally destroyed or de-fanged their Gangrel competitors. Many Gangrel caught in the industrial revolution simply left in search of wilder frontiers, away from the Kindred-come-lately.

The Wright Brothers' invention of the airplane further devalued the singular Gangrel ability to fly; trains already far outstripped flapping bats in terms of speed, but Gangrel were matched only by the rare Gargoyles and untrustworthy Tremere in their ability to provide aerial reconnaissance. With the airplane's invention, flight as a bat became more of a novelty than a serious form of long-distance travel or communication. At least, that's

the way I see it; it can be useful to turn into a bat in the city, or to elude pursuers, but I'd never consider traveling that way.

Massive industrialization concentrated wealth in the hands of a few individuals, and in many cases those individuals were under the sway of the Ventrue or Tremere. That shouldn't surprise you; it didn't surprise any of us. Keeping tabs on high-tech industries like pipe-fitting wasn't something the average feral Gangrel had interest or time for. There are always exceptions, mind you; several Gangrel had their talons in Standard Oil out at the wildcatting level, for instance. But as usual, when a new economic innovation came about, the other Kindred took the gold mine and left the Gangrel the shaft.

### THE CLOSING OF THE FRONTIER

The end of the American frontier as a palpable thing, early in the 20th century, was a blow against the American Gangrel. No longer could the default answer to their political problems be to flee westward, into the wilderness; the wilderness was still *there*, of course, but it wasn't a great unclaimed undefined free land any more. The wildest Gangrel ran into California and the Pacific Ocean. It would not be long, by vampiric standards, before westward-running refugees turned the West Coast into a Free State. Several broods of Gangrel ran to the wilderness of the West at the turn of the century. The childer of Luchenko fed in the mountains around Denver; a trio of North African expatriates in the desert around Las Vegas later extorted fantastic wealth out of the Camarilla vampires who later set up shop in town; and a pride of rustic Native American Gangrel led by one "Skysmoke" kept a low profile in South Dakota at least until the Great War.

### THE PANAMA CANAL

The French were the first to really try digging a canal across the Isthmus of Panama, at the end of the 19th century. They failed for many reasons, including the rapid spread of malaria from natives to Frenchmen. When the American government started its own canal project in the wake of Panama's 1903 revolution, malaria remained a huge problem. The presence of malaria-spreading Cainites in the area didn't help matters, of course.

A small brood of Gangrel hunted in the area we now think of as the canal zone around the turn of the century. They mostly kept to themselves, due to their inhuman features; they had multi-faceted eyes, buzzing voices and more. One in particular, called Jose by his broodmates, had lost much of the lower half of his skull in favor of a mosquitolike proboscis. Jose's broodmates insisted that he could consume blood faster than anyone else in the area, but he'd lost his ability to speak.

The insectoids spread malaria so much faster than would be expected that a number of American scientists traveled to the canal zone to investigate the presence of a new vector for the disease. After only a few weeks of study,





they were relatively sure that they'd discovered a new, large blood-drinking predator; the scientists even made a few forays into the nighttime jungle in an attempt to catch the beast in the act of feeding.

Thankfully for the Masquerade, things never got much farther than that; the insectoids attacked the group of scientists during one of those nighttime escapades. A few scientists were killed, and the others, terrified both at the violence and the nearly incomprehensible forms of their attackers, refused to continue their research afterward.


#### EXPLORING

By the beginning of the 20th century there wasn't much uncharted frontier left for our clan's wilder members to retreat into. Of course, by the same token, American Manifest Destiny had encircled the Lupines and the few remaining Native Americans, and the werewolves seem much more dependent on wilderness than even we are. We took the good with the bad.

Numerous brave souls explored the remaining uncharted lands of the world; in some cases that proved rather dangerous. For instance, as I mentioned before, a few extremely old Gangrel moved into the far north in prehistoric times; some took Siberian or Inuit tribes as herds. At least one expedition to the far north disturbed one of those tribes, and a few explorers died mysteriously in the night. I haven't heard about any Antarctic expeditions awakening anyone or anything, which I imagine is fortuitous. Then again, people die on all of those trips, and you can't say for sure that Kindred didn't kill them; we're only sure that it didn't look like Kindred killed them. Which, I suppose, is the point after all....

#### TURNCOAT

In 1912, Marvin Schellman, a German-American Sabbat vampire of our clan, made a big move: He broke free of the mutual blood bonds of the Sabbat and ran like hell for Europe. When he reached Munich, he abased himself before that city's prince and begged for shelter. The Camarilla of the city did not trust the apparent turncoat, of course, but after Munich's Tremere declared him safe (how, I don't know — presumably by looking for blood bonds), he gained some freedom. Schellman went to ground, literally, during the Second World War, and since that time has created two children. He sent both to America, and today they serve their sire's desires by hunting the Sabbat pack he fled. Justice delayed is only justice denied when the offended party is mortal.



But the surge in manly endeavor — personified in Teddy Roosevelt and later, the roaring, drunken Ernest Hemingway — had great side effects for some members of our clan. As land was declared to be part of the National Parks system, Americans were invited into the wilderness for camping trips, hiking expeditions and so on, and if a “bear” mauled the occasional hiker, hey, that’s the price they paid for having such luxurious wilderness all around. The really big national and state parks provided havens to Lupines, so the parks weren’t buffets for Gangrel who had staked them out, but some Gangrel relished the danger inherent in feeding within Lupine territory and others had no choice.

### EUGENICS

At the St. Louis World’s Fair in 1904, Dr. W. McGee presented a number of exhibits of “primitive” humanity; Indian tribes, African pygmies and aborigines from across the world were held in what was no less than a zoo for humanity, to show off their barbaric ways of life. The end of this series of exhibits, of course, was the presentation of Anglo-Saxon Caucasian Americans as the pinnacle of human evolution. I hear that at least one of the “exhibits” found herself Embraced near the end of the World’s Fair, by one of our number; I imagine she’s still in St. Louis and I don’t imagine she feels terribly charitable toward whites, even today.

I hadn’t been born, much less Embraced, when this stuff was going on, but I do remember that before the Second World War the term “eugenics” was much less loaded than it is today. It was an admirable goal, really: the improvement of humanity. Hell, if you believe their stories, vampire elders have groomed human bloodlines to fit their needs throughout history.

Okay, seriously. In the modern nights, the eugenics movement seems somewhat specious; now scientists are mastering the human genome and soon will be able to improve human genetics directly, rather than taking generations to breed the perfect human. I imagine that vampires who have spent generations breeding “improved” humans will take umbrage at this when it occurs.

In light of the emphasis on the difference between “civilized man” and “primitive man,” it may seem strange that many Americans chose to undertake a more primitive lifestyle. These people generally put great stock in the myth of the noble savage, and wanted to become barbaric again. I must wryly note that this was a great opportunity for my clan. Back-to-the-woods types provided plenty of blood, and those who worked in cities but spent weekends or summers in the countryside made excellent contacts for

politically distant Gangrel. More than one nature enthusiast joined the ranks of *Clan Gangrel* early this century.

### IMMIGRATION AND THE NEW CITY

During the years leading up to the Great War, Kindred and mortal immigration to the United States increased dramatically. Newcomers from southern and Eastern Europe came across the Atlantic in great numbers, and European vampires accompanied no few of them. Neonates of all clans in Europe were trapped; positions of power were not going to open up above them without a titanic war. Fearing a new Anarch Revolt, European elders encouraged their childer to immigrate to the US.

This immigration took place both among the Sabbat Gangrel and the Camarilla Gangrel, which surprised me when I learned of it. I’d assumed that there weren’t that many vampires left among the European Sabbat by 1900; certainly the one European Camarilla elder I’d spoken to implied that the Sabbat was no longer a problem there. But no — in Spain and the Balkans the Black Hand still held sway, and when population pressure grew too great, the sect’s elders “relocated” troublesome Kindred to the Americas, just as the Camarilla did.

Both sects fell in love, figuratively speaking, with the new image of the city in the early part of this century. More specifically, Gangrel of both sects found beauty in the skyscraper and the subway. The skyscraper expressed the desire to rise above the crowd; those who could reach the tops of such buildings spoke of a new perspective on the city below, literally and figuratively. Gangrel found skyscrapers to be great perches; when one has the powers of flight and keen senses, a skyscraper is a fine place from which to watch one’s prey.

Subway tunnels remain thoroughfares of opportunity for the undead. Any mechanism that lets a vampire move around a city without risking exposure to sunlight is bound to be quite popular with Kindred. More Nosferatu than Gangrel make their lairs in forgotten offshoots of subway systems, but many Gangrel do take advantage of such things.

I was surprised at first to find city planners and construction engineers among our clan, in both the Camarilla and the Black Hand. But it seems obvious in retrospect. The city is our nightly playground; Camarilla bastions must repel Sabbat invaders. The skyscraper and the subway are roosts, havens, bolt-holes and feeding grounds. Obviously, such specialists are relatively young; a Methuselah cannot be roused to learn the intricacies of excavation engineering. But such things are of great general interest to elders of most clans; secure underground and penthouse havens are necessary staples of our existence.



## THOSE OTHER COUNTRIES

Gangrel have never worried too much about national boundaries; no border patrol officer will prevent a crow from flying over his assigned booth or a coyote from running past, especially while he dismantles the car of suspected cocaine- or bomb-smugglers. Plenty of Gangrel who sought pristine wilderness found it north of the 55th parallel in Canada. Even in the modern nights, the Canadian Great Plains are vast, empty expanses, and Canada has more parkland than the entire United States has. Unfortunately, wherever one finds huge tracts of beautiful wilderness, one finds Lupines. I don't know if there are really more werewolves in Canada than there are in the US, or if it just seemed that way last time I went north. If you want to really get away from it all, the Canadian Great Plains or Rockies are the answer. Just be careful you don't get more than you wanted.

Mexico is more densely populated than Canada, but parts of it are just as wild. The Sabbat has infested Mexico as long as there's been a Mexico, of course, so travelers southward have always had to be careful lest they be invited to a blood-kegger. Modern Mexico City is a scary place for non-Sabbat vampires of any flavor, as they would put it, so if you're a Camarilla or independent Kindred, I suggest you avoid it. On the upside, there aren't as many Lupines in Mexico as in Canada, or at least there weren't the last time I went to Tijuana.

## THE GREAT WAR

Consider that you had five glacial empires stuck rammed up against each other, each one growing exponentially and becoming ever-more crowded every night; multiply it by rising nationalism, socialism and anarchism, and is it any surprise what happened when Gavrilo Princip killed Archduke Ferdinand and greased the stuck axle of the European war machine?

### A comment from Zeke J.

*Princip's anarchist group, the one that wanted the downfall of Serbia, called itself the Black Hand. I cannot bring myself to believe that this was mere coincidence — and believe me, with all the implications such a thing has, I'd prefer it was. The Black Hand is the Sabbat, as we all know, so the question that has to leap to mind is: what did the Sabbat gain from starting the First World War?*

*War doesn't inherently further the aims of the Sabbat, as I read things. Hell, in some respects it furthers the aims of the Camarilla, since we all know the Camarilla has all the world's arms dealers under its thumbs, and war makes breaches of the*

*Masquerade easier to hide. So there must have been some particular Camarilla holding that the Sabbat wanted to damage beyond repair. On the other hand, Serbia itself is in ancient Tzimisce territory. Maybe they needed to do something there. I'm sure that Tom will entirely ignore the significance of this tidbit, but that's why I'm here.*

Gangrel in Europe made a good opportunity out of a shitty situation. Let's face it: Entrenched armies and battlefield machine guns aren't conducive to leading a simple undeath. However, the Gangrel had a few things going for them that other clans didn't. Terence Arthur of England was arguably the first to realize that we could scout battlefields very easily, perhaps more easily than the Nosferatu. Arthur made a killing selling aerial maps to those elders with a vested interest in the war's outcome. Similarly, Gangrel made great messengers between those Kindred whose lines of communication had been cut by trenches. And in a bit more macabre fashion, I happen to know that battlefields make for good eating. Corpses are still good for our purposes several hours after they've dropped, and bodies sometimes laid in No Man's Land for nights at a stretch.

Karsh, the Gangrel Warlord of the Camarilla, did take advantage of the chaos of the war to direct sorties against the remaining Sabbat strongholds in Europe. On a number of occasions, mortal soldiers charged Sabbat strongholds, or were ordered by their superiors to defend locations that turned out to be the property of elder Kindred. Not that any of them found out the true nature of such assignments. On a few occasions, elite teams of vampires, some plucked still breathing from the trenches, were used in similar circumstances.

Let's not forget that the Great War was called a World War for a reason, and not just because Germany started it. Throughout Africa, South America and various islands in the Indian Ocean, aboriginal people died by the thousands, fighting other aboriginal people on behalf of their colonial masters back in Europe. Gangrel who had chosen to settle in these remote locations found many of the same benefits as their European sires — war means death, which means free blood for the taking — but often spread equatorial disease farther than they wanted, and were sometimes singled out as members of the wrong side during a skirmish. Embraced natives typically fared better than their sires, and of course some of them used such conditions to escape their sires.

Back in America, attitudes were more pragmatic than in Europe. A general sentiment spread among American Gangrel that the Old World was committing suicide, and should be allowed a graceful death. When names of European Gangrel destroyed by the fighting drifted across the Atlantic, only a few Americans chose to return to the Old World and seize their sires' territory. Most preferred their new home, even if it had once been a place of exile.



### ANDERSON'S FOLLY

Michael Anderson was a relatively young Gangrel with a great vision. Inspired by the building of the Panama Canal and the skyscrapers of New York and Chicago, in 1919 Anderson optimistically suggested to the primogen of Denver that they invest in the construction of a vast underground city for Kindred. In this fashion, he suggested, Cainites from across the world would have a safe, neutral haven, and be able to interact with the waking world day and night.

The primogen of Denver hardly had time to burst Anderson's flimsy bubble of a plan before the neonate tripped off to begin planning "New Enoch". He consulted geological surveys, old mine maps and so on. It was never built, of course; as you might imagine, a Pollyanna like Michael Anderson didn't stand a chance in negotiations with century-old vampires. He survived, at least; I hear he's got a commune outside Colorado Springs that accepts him as its guru. According to legend, Anderson's maps and schematics are still around somewhere; the prince of Denver seized them in 1920 and they haven't been seen since.

### THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

The Russian Revolution itself wasn't that big a deal for us Gangrel; mortal governments change all the time. The Brujah were up in arms, of course, but they get that way any time you let them capitalize the word "revolution". The only noteworthy event for the Gangrel was that Igor Strensky's brood, about half a dozen Camarilla Gangrel, left the sect for the Sabbat just as Czar Nicholas breathed his last. The pack fled their territory south of Moscow and found one of the rare European Sabbat strongholds, somewhere in the Balkans or Carpathians, I'm told. They bought their freedom with an enormous stash of stolen Russian Orthodox and pre-Christian Russian artifacts and idols; some of them were surely mystical and all were priceless.

### THE TWENTIES

The '20s were a time of turmoil and opportunity. From Prohibition to the women's suffrage movement, society in America turned upside down. In Europe things were far harder; resources were scarce in the wake of the Great War, and though the Allies tried to return to the *status quo antebellum*, changes in Italy, Germany and Russia made it clear that such a thing was impossible.

Now I'll discuss a topic that may make cultured, late-generation modern vampires a little uncomfortable. By that I mean race, of course. Hip modern vampires aren't supposed to care about race, you know; as my friend Alicia M. says, "They all taste the same." Back in the '20s, people





### THE CELTIC REVIVAL AND IRISH REVOLUTION


In 1914 the British Parliament passed an act giving limited home rule to Ireland. The start of the Great War delayed that law's effect, to the frustration of many Irishmen; a "Celtic Revival" spread throughout Ireland, emphasizing that nation's traditional arts and heritage, and its historical independence from the English. On Easter Monday, 1916, Patrick Pearse read a Declaration of Independence, proclaiming Ireland free of the United Kingdom; Pearse and his brethren in the Irish Republican Brotherhood assumed that Britain would be too busy fighting the Germans to waste its resources on a minor revolution in its own backyard. Pearse was wrong. The British decimated the IRB forces in a matter of weeks, and the 15 leaders of the revolution were swiftly executed. In subsequent years a somewhat more peaceable separation between the two nations would take place.

To Irish Gangrel, especially those of Celtic heritage, the Celtic Revival and the Revolution were like a lightning strike. Neonates and ancillae who had known nothing but British dominance throughout their lives and unlives were thrilled for the chance to lash out at their royal oppressors. A few younger Gangrel even styled themselves neopagan "Lhiannan," after a long-extinct bloodline. They surely were not members of that group, but appearances were as important as consanguinity back in those nights.

didn't care about race either, because it was self-evident that blacks, Indians, Italians, Irish and the rest of those people were inferior to the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant American. Oh, sure, we didn't keep the black man in chains anymore, but that didn't mean you even wanted him *looking* at your daughter.

Many Gangrel on the fringes of Cainite society found it easier to feed from the disenfranchised or the foreigner than from the city-dwelling Cracker businessman and his family. After all, some Ventrue or Tremere might have claimed that businessman's apartment building as domain. On the wrong side of the tracks the Gangrel had only to compete with the Brujah and Nosferatu and the odd Caitiff. This state of affairs began long before the '20s, of course, so I'm sure the modern reader won't be surprised that Clan Gangrel's membership hails from a pretty diverse group.

As a side note, I should point out that the Ku Klux Klan was *enormous* back in those nights. And it wasn't just a bunch of good ol' boys sittin' in a pickup truck lookin' for



a nigger to lynch. The KKK was a civic organization; in many towns nearly every white male was a member. The group did many good deeds, from supporting orphanages to cleaning up litter. To politicians the KKK's endorsement often meant the difference between re-election and retirement. KKK politicians held mayorships and state offices from Indiana to Oregon.

The Gangrel had their own interactions with the Klan. Jack Hanson, a Gangrel who was prince of Indianapolis for about three months in the 1930s, had been a Klansman in life. He preferred to feed from the "lesser races," as he called them; he killed them when he could. He Embraced at least one of his fellow Klansmen, a gentleman who asks to remain anonymous. Hanson's sloppiness in feeding brought him to an archon's attention, and prince or no, *I guess it's true that there's always a bigger fish*. Shame about old Jack. The flipside of Jack Hanson's story is Marcus Washburn, a black man. Marcus made the mistake of lingering a bit too long over his lemonade while cutting John Phillips's lawn one July afternoon; he compounded that by smiling once or twice at Mrs. Phillips. Two nights later, Marcus found himself hog-tied and on his way to his own funeral, where he would have met his end if it hadn't been for a Gangrel who freed him, killed two men, and Embraced Marcus.

Of course, Marcus didn't make it either. No one was surprised when he took his revenge on John Phillips; *everyone* was surprised when John's wife Mary turned out to be a Lupine, who ripped Marcus in half.

### PROHIBITION

I don't know where my parents' generation came up with stuff like this. The abolition of alcohol would have been a crisis for vampires everywhere if it had been taken seriously, as the elimination of the drunken target would have made the Hunt far more difficult. As it was, Prohibition was a great opportunity for Kindred with their fingers in *organized crime*. Of course, that wasn't usually Clan Gangrel, either collectively or as individuals. We got the scraps and the dregs; some of our contacts or ghouls might be mob enforcers or made men, but the *capos* were generally Ventrue, Brujah or Giovanni tools, at least those who were under the sway of Kindred.

So, as usual, something big occurs in mortal society, and because we're on the outskirts, for us it might as well have never happened.

### THE AUTOMOBILE

The automobile eventually reduced the value of the Gangrel cachet in a big way. Before this, of course, railroads could kick our ass for speed, but not for versatility: if you wanted something to get to an unusual destination and you *knew the railway stations were being watched*, you could go to a Gangrel and guarantee that it'd get there as fast and securely as possible. We had ways of moving

around the countryside quickly that no one this side of the Lupines could match.

But with the advent of the car, an elder could send ghouls — or even childer or other Kindred — to get to a remote destination in a hurry, fairly safely. Some Gangrel did their best to sabotage this in the early nights. My sire tells me proudly of the time he learned that the prince of Cincinnati was sending his favored childer to Toledo with some important paperwork in a brand new Model T. He scored all sorts of points by letting the Lupines of the Black Swamp in on the voyage; the Lupines thanked him, the anarchists of Cincinnati thanked him, and an out-of-favor childer of Cincinnati's prince thanked him. That sort of thing still goes on tonight, but it's much harder when four-lane superhighways usher thousands of vehicles in and out of major cities on a daily basis.

### THE GREAT DEPRESSION

It was all a big goddamn mess, of course. Nobody was sure why everything was going to hell, but everybody had a solution. We had the communists, the anarchists, the national socialists and, God save us, we had Hoover. I was a kid during the Depression. It wasn't much fun; my parents scrambled for work, scrimped to save money, and we had plenty of meatless days. We literally boiled shoes for broth at times.


My sire tells the story differently. The Great Depression was a bonanza for our clan. Part of the reason the Depression hurt so many people was that ordinary folks wagered big money on the stock market; really risky stocks were the best way to make a killing quick. And those folks who'd gambled on high-risk stocks lost their shirts. Vampires don't invest that way. When you have to be around for two or three centuries, you appreciate the power of compound interest on a low-risk investment.

My sire — no businessman — cleaned up during the Depression. As banks foreclosed on desperate landowners, he swept in and snapped up haven after haven at a fraction of their true value. When evicted impoverished renters left the cities in droves, hoping to eke out a subsistence lifestyle on the outskirts of town, my sire was there with sharp teeth and bright red eyes. To this night he speaks with great fondness of the Great Depression; he tells me he's looking forward to seeing the current stock market bubble burst.

### THE NAZI PARTY

In 1938 a pride of Gangrel rose up out of nowhere, all espousing a common political credo and vowing to take drastic action. This wasn't the first time such a thing had happened; it's a tradition dating back at least as far as the American Revolution. Most often, a Gangrel neonate holds a bit too tightly to his mortal politics after his Embrace, and then runs to Embrace a group of his cronies





as soon as his sire presents him to the local primogen as a recognized vampire. This kind of thing happens far more often among the Brujah, I'm told, and these nights it only really happens in certain cities. These anarchists were fascists; they made their havens in western Germany.

This brood, which called itself the Fist, supported Chancellor Hitler's nationalistic and racist fervor; its members terrorized enemies of the Fatherland whenever they had a chance. In later years, the Masquerade in Berlin would stretch sufficiently to allow the group great latitude, but before the Second World War, the prince of Berlin had several members of this pride blood hunted.

To compound things in Germany, around this time a new group calling itself the *Waelkyrige* sprang up in Scandinavia and spread their influence throughout north-central Europe. These Cainites upheld the Viking ethic to the fullest; they apparently believed themselves to be modern incarnations of the mythical Valkyries. They claimed to follow a female Gangrel called Brunhilde. If they really do consider themselves to be the choosers of the slain — for that is the mythical role of the Valkyries — one imagines that they made an awful lot of battlefield Embraces during the war. Regardless, you don't hear too much about them in the US anymore. I have no doubt that they're the hellraisers of the Black Forest, though. Anyone who voluntarily makes her haven in Lupine territory earns my respect as a powerful Kindred indeed.

## STALIN'S REVOLUTION

Stalin's paranoia killed 18 million people in the Soviet Union before the old man finally died, and he probably would have done it even without the Brujah leaning on him. To be blunt, Soviet Gangrel ate as many of them as they thought they could get away with. Fiercely independent Russian small farmers resisted being herded onto collectives; to spite their masters, they slaughtered millions of sheep, pigs and goats in a very short time. They feasted, for a year or so. Then starvation kicked in, and then Soviet Gangrel fed very well.

In Moscow, after one particularly close brush with the Masquerade, the Russian Brujah called for the destruction of especially animalistic or deranged elders. The close brush came from a very bestial Gangrel elder, and Muscovite Gangrel immediately assumed that this was the council's way of declaring war on the clan. This led to fighting in the streets and countryside; there would be little peace until the Second World War fell upon the USSR.

## THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Then came a hellish atrocity that we didn't have anything to do with.

That's a lie, of course. We had something to do with it, but we didn't start it and we didn't finish it. We changed


bits here and there; more than one Gangrel intercepted and changed battle orders to keep fighting away from a treasured haven. And we had a fair amount of work when Nazis, Jews, Frenchmen and Kindred all smuggled art and other valuables out of Europe.

I was Embraced during the Second World War, during fighting in the Ardennes; I'm an American boy. As you might imagine, my perspective on Gangrel activity in Europe during the war is a little skewed. My sire passed along some of the information below; after the wild times I went through right after my Embrace, it took a few years before we were on speaking terms once again.

Across Eastern Europe, the Nazis upended the local mortal populations and tossed centuries-old Kindred social structures to the four winds. As the Germans relocated Jews and other "undesirables," Kindred linked to their communities lost a great deal of influence. I'm told that Janos Beck, a Warsaw Ventrue with a taste for Jews' blood, had it particularly hard after the first couple of years of the war; eventually he chose a blood bond to a Jewish Gangrel companion of my sire rather than risk Final Death. Not too many Kindred faced the danger of Nazi death camps directly, but a fair number of them had to move around Europe when their herds were drafted, dissolved or slaughtered, and when Kindred have to move around Europe, Gangrel can make a profit.

But the relocations and camps certainly affected the Gangrel negatively. Plenty of our clan relied on Rroma or Jewish herds. Ashton's text has some commentary about a Gangrel, "Talos," who was captured by the Nazis and ended up in a death camp at Glödker along with a few dozen Rroma, his herd. If you believe Ashton, this moron went on to Embrace a score of the herd, enabling the bunch to destroy the camp and make their escape. I don't believe Ashton. He says this Talos was a member of the Seventh Generation. I've only met one seventh-generation vampire — I can't conceive of any way the Germans could have caught and contained one of those creatures; an armored platoon wouldn't stand a chance. Either Ashton is full of it, or Talos let himself be captured to Embrace his herd. I've never met anyone who claimed to know any of Talos' childer, and that makes me suspicious that Ashton made the story up to make his readers feel good about Gangrel activity during the Holocaust.

Many Gangrel behaved reprehensibly during the Holocaust. One possibly apocryphal tale concerns a Rroma Gangrel, Daria, whose company was rounded up and taken to a work camp. Unlike the Talos stories, our clanswoman did nothing to free her herd, but rather slept in the earth during the day and crept into camp after sundown to drink their blood. This situation remained until the SS moved Daria's Gypsies to a distant camp and she lost track of them.



Daria's story is not unique; the Fist, who I mentioned above, also apparently fed heavily from the camps. She and her ilk proved that many vampires are nothing more than opportunistic scavengers. Few Kindred of any clan, my Gangrel sire included, took any noble action during the Second World War; the typical Cainite ran for a safe haven.

In retrospect, I have to wonder what kind of monster lurks around mechanized battlefields looking for a potential childe. With my sire not around, I think I can safely answer this question: a pervert or a madman. The battlefields of the European and Asian theaters were far too deadly for vampires to just wander about looking for childer. Wandering around looking for blood is something else altogether; as with other wars I've described, plenty of blood was on hand for the enterprising vampire. As I've

#### BLETCHLEY PARK

That the British and American forces had as much success in the Second World War as they did can be partially credited to the hardworking men and women of Bletchley Park, in England. Bletchley Park was the world's first 24-hour cryptography unit; it was dedicated to the decrypting of thousands of Nazi radio messages throughout the war.

The Gangrel have been involved in some form of cryptography longer than any Kindred. When you have to leave messages out in the woods at night for your clanmates to run into, you get cautious, quickly. Codes (rather than ciphers) of previous centuries have revolved around *Beowulf*, the Bible or the collected works of Shakespeare; in the middle of the 19th century, however, ciphers became all the rage among educated Gangrel. Thus, Gangrel and their ghouls lurked in the halls of the math departments of Princeton and Cambridge, and at least paid some attention to the goings-on at Bletchley Park. Since the Second World War, most written Camarilla communications use the strongest possible encryption (to hell with the NSA), and this is largely due to the influence of those Gangrel who were familiar with codes and encryption and had either Xavier or Karsh's ear.

mentioned before, not too many clans other than the Gangrel had the ability to stay out in the open for long enough to take such advantage. Of course, plenty of WWII fighting took place in cities, which gave similar opportunity to Kindred of other clans.

A simple question of mathematics is at work here. Kindred have always been the sorts of creatures to push

numerical limits. The Camarilla tells us that for each vampire in a city there must be 100,000 humans. Experience with anarchs and the Sabbat tells us that figure is disproportionately low; there may be in some places as many as one vampire for each 10,000 humans. But let us use the 100,000 figure, as it is conservative enough to make a point clear. In the Second World War, 60 million humans died. By the most conservative estimate, then, 600 vampires lost their place in the world, most of those in Europe. Some of those would have been Cathayans, of course, and many Kindred were destroyed during the war, but the point remained: hundreds of the Children of Caine had no place left to them.

What to do? As the eyes of the world continued to gaze on America, the get of Caine did the same; entrenched elders who'd survived the war in Europe sent their most troublesome childer over the Atlantic to the States. The Gangrel Clan, never one to act as a unified whole, did not decide collectively to send particular vampires west. But the wilderness of post-war Europe was a sparse and fragile thing; there just wasn't that much space available for Gangrel neonates to claim territory of their own, and the mortal population was depleted sufficiently that elder Gangrel like Wilhelm Koenig expanded their own claims until they felt secure. Dozens of neonates and ancillae found passage to America aboard cargo and passenger ships. Some settled in the United States, while others migrated south to Latin America or north to the sparsely populated wilds of Canada.

#### THE SIEGE OF LENINGRAD

The German *Wehrmacht* laid in a siege against the Soviet city of Leningrad in August of 1941; the city would not be liberated until January of 1944, a span of more than 900 days. *Mortals starved to death by the thousands; stew made of weeds and bread made of wood shavings were both seen quite frequently in the city.* Cainites had it little better. By the end of the siege, the entirety of Leningrad's undead population had either fled, been destroyed or voluntarily entered torpor to escape the ravages of hunger. Those who fled had to rely on the "good graces" of Soviet Gangrel, many of whom were on the outs with the Soviet *Brujah council*. *Many of the debts that Soviet Kindred earned during the siege were repaid in the late 1980s and early 1990s with political influence or great sums of Western cash.*

It's worth noting, however, that most of the Kindred who were around Leningrad during the Siege remember three or four particularly powerful elders who voluntarily dropped into torpor in '41 or '42 who have yet to return to activity. They might have been destroyed; nearly everything of value in Leningrad has been looted at least once. Or, if you believe in fairy tales, something *else* might have gotten a hold of them...



## TWO TRAVELERS' TALES

Michael Flannery, an Irish Gangrel, became renowned throughout the Gangrel clan for "Flannery's Flight," a feat which may only be apocryphal. Flannery is said to have flown in bat form the distance from Donegal, Ireland, to Boston, Massachusetts, in the terrible winter of 1946-7. Rumors abound as to how he might have accomplished such a thing: Flannery was secretly a Methuselah who did not need to take time to feed and spent his days a few dozen meters below the surface of the Atlantic; Flannery flew northward to the Arctic Circle, where the sun remained below the horizon 24 hours a day, and fed on Eskimos and seals; Flannery took advantage of enormous transatlantic shipping volume to rest on (and feed from) cargo ships moving westward. The truth will never be known; a pack of Sabbat vampires fell upon him as he traveled through New York in '48, and he has not been seen since. So much for the Methuselah theory, at least. Maybe.

Vyechislav Dolcek, by contrast, came from Britain to the United States aboard the passenger liner *Queen Elizabeth*, whose primary duty immediately after the war was to transport American soldiers home. Dolcek, a Slavic Gangrel who had spent seven years in Warsaw through the war, had learned the arts of concealment and disguise from Polish Nosferatu. He managed to pose as a seasick American infantryman for the trip across the Atlantic, feeding sparingly from his bunkmates late at night. Upon arriving in the US, Dolcek moved into Appalachia, where he exists during the Final Nights.

## THE ANARCH FREE STATE

In 1944 anarchs across the West Coast erupted in a frenzy after the prince of Los Angeles took particularly harsh actions against an anarch figurehead named Jeremy MacNeil. When all was said and done, several cities in California were no longer strictly "Camarilla cities"; they had no princes, and were beholden only to their own sets of rules and some small amount of civic order. It was a crazy couple of decades; it was a time of great opportunity for many Gangrel neonates.

It has never been the case that newly Embraced Gangrel are oppressed members of a vampiric underclass. Sure, insofar as the Gangrel clan has always been a collection of outsiders, we have lacked material resources that are plentiful for our erstwhile counterparts in other Camarilla clans. But unlike neonates in those clans, we are relatively free to act, even just a few years after our deaths. Young Gangrel are kept on long leashes with sharp collars. We don't have much to rebel against, most of the time. That doesn't keep us from joining the local pack of anarchs; sometimes that pack makes a real good bunch of

people to know. But we don't join the anarchs as a way to try to, like, fight the power, man.

Xaviar apparently dispatched one of his most trusted archons, Seth Geddes, to California to attempt to parse the situation, but Geddes — whose great love for mysteries and conspiracies is currently matched only by my acquaintance Zeke J., and had no peer in the 1940s — met the Final Death mysteriously before heading west. A Tremere in Xaviar's entourage verified a pile of ashes found in St. Louis as being Geddes's only remains; they were found near the shore of the Mississippi. Geddes' personal files had been ransacked, and at least one of his havens burned nearly to the ground. I honestly don't know what he found. I think I'm glad.

## THE FIFTIES

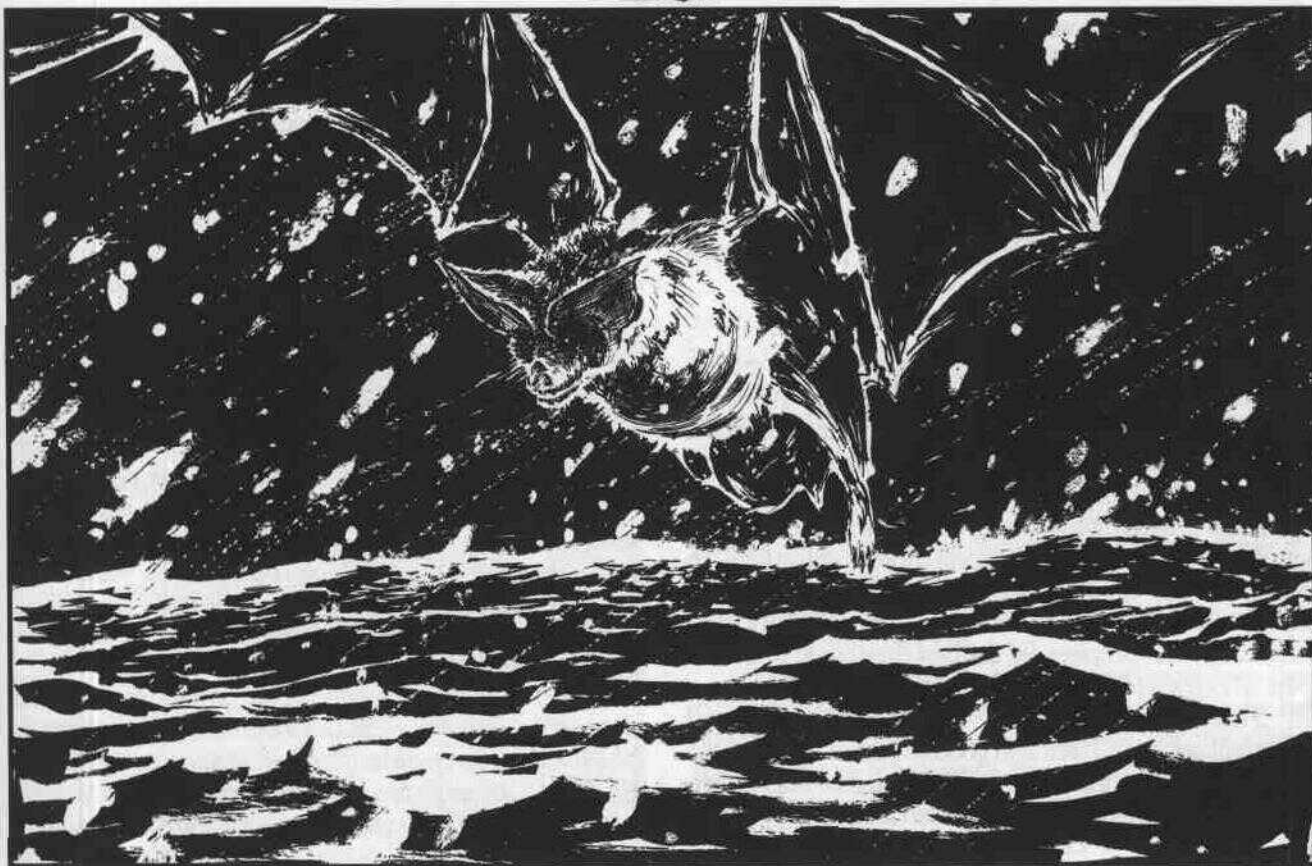
I've mentioned elsewhere that when a person receives the Embrace, she doesn't automatically abandon her life's priorities. Things shift around, sure, but if Jane Smith is an ardent Republican, she's not likely to become a Communist immediately upon her Embrace. Many people's lifelong convictions take precedence over Kindred sectarian struggles and the internal struggle against the Beast. At least, they do for maybe the first century, but that's a different story. Anyway....

That explains the number of Cainite spies operating throughout Central and Eastern Europe throughout the Cold War. Our clan weighed heavily among them. Like all periods of turmoil, the postwar years in Europe were a time of great opportunity for bold Kindred. Sure, Nosferatu were probably the top spies; they're built for sneaking. But we do not slouch, and the City Gangrel among the Sabbat can match the Nosferatu when they have to. Most of those working as operatives were nominally Camarilla members, but honestly, Camarilla membership didn't mean that much at that point. National loyalty and political alignment were far more important: It didn't matter whether a Sabbat City Gangrel or a Camarilla Nosferatu drove the black Mercedes tailing you. The point was that the driver was Russian, and that meant trouble.

## THE MCCARTHY ERA

Periodically every society goes through a period of rampant xenophobia and paranoia. McCarthy's rampage in the '50s wasn't even the first one for the US this century — the Red Scare of the early '20s takes that prize — but it is the one I remember best. The mad lookout for Commies was just the latest incarnation of the Inquisition.

Times of paranoia cause trouble for Cainites, regardless of sect. The dangers are great and the benefits are few. When mortals fervently look out for anyone suspicious or weird, vampires have a much harder time hiding. Ordinary nightly activity becomes nearly impossible. Sure, you can always try and sic the Red-crazed FBI on your enemies,



but they're probably trying to do the same to you. And I don't have to remind you how hard a time the average Gangrel has at pulling government strings.

Zeke J., the conspiracy theorist, tells me that McCarthy and Roy Cohn were "controlled" by the Camarilla, but as with many of Zeke's claims, I don't buy it. The Camarilla gets very little out of the House Un-American Activities Committee. If powerful DC vampires were trying to expose rivals' pawns, they put themselves at far too much risk in doing so. It's possible that a young, dumb Ventrue or Tremere had Tailgunner Joe under his thumb, but I imagine we would have heard about it beforehand.

Regardless of the goings-on in DC, Clan Gangrel was largely able to avoid trouble, simply by virtue of knowing when and how to go to ground. Hell, in some cases we even improved our lot: My acquaintance Josie T., from out toward Omaha, took regular heat from the local prince's boys until the prince was spotted in public one too many times and had to get out of town in a hurry. Josie T.'s a much happier Lick now.

In '55, I should mention, a good-sized pride of Gangrel that roamed the Florida Everglades ran into a pack of werewolves. Rodriguez's pride had reported Lupine activity to the prince of Tallahassee for years. I guess they ran into a holy site or something. Only one of Rodriguez's childer, Muñoz by name, escaped with his unlife, and he


was somewhat traumatized by the fight, so details aren't very clear. Eight Gangrel, all ninth and 10th generation, aged between 10 and 200 years, muddied the swamp with their ashes that night. If Muñoz is to be believed, they faced close to 50 werewolves. I don't know the truth. I know I stay out of the Everglades, even now.

### SUBURBIA

Unlike the sneers it draws from most Kindred, suburbia was tailor-made for Gangrel. God bless William Levitt, for he gave unto us the suburb. The Lupines get antsy when we get too far into the woods — and as you are aware, Lupines aren't renowned for their restraint. But we're not good at dealing with high-handed urban Kindred politics, especially not when the other big Camarilla clans are entrenched downtown already. 1950s urban planners surrounded their cities with rings of cookie-cutter homes, and many Gangrel broods had great success in the 'burbs after the Commie Menace retreated to a dull background hum.

This goes for Sabbat as well as Camarilla. During the '50s, '60s and even '70s dozens of turf wars were fought over pathetic subdivisions with names like Hartmont Acres and Beau Pines. Gangrel with perverse senses of humor might Embrace a lawn-mowing Dad or chainsmoking Mom, and I know one eternal teenager whose parents thought for 20 years that his sleeping habits and pale





complexion were "just part of a phase." The suburbs helped vampires conceal a lot of strange activity; after the McCarthy problems, many people were so eager to get back to a normal existence that they deliberately ignored even their neighbors' most *outré* habits. Don't believe me? Look at all the stories of childhood abuse, alcoholism, drug abuse and sexual perversion in the suburbs that we didn't hear about until tabloid TV got into the picture. That's not all they were hiding.

### CIVIL RIGHTS

Along with many fine other underprivileged groups, Gangrel certainly Embraced plenty of blacks in the southern US. After the Civil War, millions of African-Americans moved north; those vampires who used blacks as herd or servants moved with them. But across the country, blacks agitated for rights owed to them as American citizens, and several black Gangrel were among those pushing for such rights. For the vampires, existing in a situation of such supreme inequality made their lives unnecessarily difficult, and those vampires did the best they could to aid the kine who tried to better the lot of the black man.

There were race problems among the Kindred, and there still are. It's all well and good to pretend that we are united above humanity, but the Embrace does not happen in a vacuum. Plenty of white Kindred look down at black Kindred. Plenty of Gangrel choose their childer from among oppressed groups (out of sympathy, similarity, paternalism or simple convenience) and accordingly, the Gangrel take a disproportionate amount of abuse.

In 1962 we saw a near-perfect repeat of Seth Geddes's death. William Coolidge, another Gangrel — this time a confidant of the mysterious Madame Guil — had apparently spent four years investigating Cainite traffic back and forth across the Rio Grande. His goal, according to colleagues, was to identify Sabbat packs that regularly traveled from Texas to Mexico. No one knows for sure who got him, but, as with Geddes, Coolidge's remains were discovered on the shore of a nearby river (the Rio Grande), and his nearest haven ransacked and burned.

## THE '60S

### THE KENNEDY ASSASSINATION

This is an aside by the esteemed Zeke J. Zeke is less "together" than most people I hang around with; judging from the fur on his face and the length of his fangs he's seen more than his fair share of frenzy. He says he was an archon under Luchenko through 1975, but I'm not sure I believe him, since I was fairly certain that Xaviar was justicar since before my Embrace up through '98. I'm also not convinced that Zeke was ever stable enough to serve as an archon. But the hell with it — here's his posting. Believe what you want.

*The last time I checked, over 50 books still in print claimed to uncover the truth behind John F. Kennedy's death. Not one*

*of them has it right, but if you look at a couple of the more reputable books and mix it in with what we know as Kindred, you get a pretty clear picture of what's going on.*

*I can sum it up in two words: Kennedy knew. The Camarilla, not the Bavarian Illuminati, not the Priory of Sion, nor any of those other institutions, is the oldest conspiracy in the world, and, like those other conspiracies, its masters are willing to kill anyone to keep their secret.*

*How he found out the truth is anyone's guess. By virtue of his family's fortune and his association with mobsters like Giancana and high rollers like Sinatra, Jack had lurked around the fringes of our power structure for long enough to get an inkling of the truth. His girlfriend Marilyn may have spent time as a blood doll to a stupid Toreador anarchist in L.A., or she might just have rubbed elbows with Giancana's other dead friends. I'm not clear on the details, but they don't really matter. Jack knew, and the wrong people suspected that he was going to go public after the '64 election. Now, smart folk like you and me, we know that no sooner would the president say, "Vampires!" than everyone else in the government would say, "Impeachment!" but not everyone is as clever as me and you.*


*The Inner Council ordered the hit; the Gangrel Justicar at the time, Luchenko, coordinated the activity of our tools in the Mafia. Luchenko used a couple of surrogates, David Ferrie and Eladio del Valle, to get New Orleans mob boss Carlos Marcello to organize the hit. Marcello didn't have to learn hard on his boy Lee Harvey to persuade him to do the deed, and we all know that Jack Ruby owed his livelihood to the Mob.*

*It was a pain in the ass to clean up. I worked for Luchenko as an archon in the '60s and early '70s. Luchenko had me put down Eladio del Valle in Miami myself, and to make sure that no Kindred would get him, he insisted that I mangle the corpse pretty seriously. At the same time, others nailed David Ferrie in New Orleans. Marcello bragged to Sammy Giancana and Johnny Roselli, and both of those bastards got subpoenaed to the House. Putting them down was equally difficult. When all was said and done and the Johnson administration had made its own messes, we had to coordinate half the Nixon administration to clean up the rest of the paper trail back to us.*

### THE MOTHMAN

My conspiracy-nut friend Zeke J. loves stories about the Mothman. 1968, in the Ohio River Valley in West Virginia, authorities list dozens of sightings of a being who the locals called "the Mothman" (complete with moth-like wings and bright red eyes), along with many other strange events such as cattle mutilations, men in black and UFOs. He spouted off a few major prophecies (including one about the Pope's stabbing and another about RFK's assassination) and then, after a few months, vanished, never to return. The general public assumes that if the Mothman existed at all, he must have been an extraterrestrial.

Mothman was an insane, heavily disfigured Gangrel; no one is quite sure which sect he belonged to. It didn't



matter, really; he was a threat to the Masquerade no matter where he came from. Luchenko sent in several of his archons to manage the chaos slowly swirling into being around the Mothman; one archon in particular, who called himself Indrid Cold, made himself up as an extraterrestrial in order to help portray the entire Ohio Valley as a bunch of hysterical backwoods hicks. The rest of Luchenko's posse tracked, hunted and killed the Mothman without a lick of remorse; it took another month to tidy up

### A SURPRISE

If you're reading this, you know the usual result of a confrontation between Kindred and Lupines. Imagine my surprise when stories began to circulate in the early '80s that a pack of werewolves was found in northern Norway during the winter of '77, drained of blood and frozen solid. Norway is historically Gangrel territory, so my clanmates and I jumped to the obvious conclusion.

Some of my acquaintances dropped a line to some of their contacts in Oslo and called in a favor or two. Cainites in Oslo weren't talking, however; it seemed that nothing short of a personal visit was going to pry any information out of them. None of us had time for that, so we wrote the whole thing off as a random rumor. Until March of '82, when Kinssky had a disturbing dream about a two-handed Tyr ripping Fenris Wolf's skull apart and lapping at the blood pouring from his neck. He got the strong impression that it related to the Oslo incident, and told me so. Kinssky made it out to the Anarch Free State a few years later, and I heard that he was destroyed. I don't know what's going on in Norway these nights, except for the rumors about Brunhilde.

the Masquerade in the area by slowly scaling down the amount of weirdness to its usual background level.

### THE '80s

The '80s were all about money. Kindred I know who think we really control everything believe that this is the decade the Ventrue finally got their shit together, and let it trickle onto ghouls from Wall Street to Cali, Colombia. Wars between American and Soviet puppet states across the globe gave the Gangrel plenty of easy feeding. Petty revolts and counterinsurgency measures in Central America, South America, Africa and the Middle East frequently gave the Sabbat a shot at surging into a Camarilla city, or vice versa.

I receive a lot of international news. One nice thing about being part of a clan full of dead people who can turn into wolves, bats or mist is that we get around, and the

proper authorities are never the wiser. I imagine the Nosferatu feel much the same way, in their own fashion. Several Kindred reside in Ulanbaator, Mongolia; in theory they claim to keep their eyes on the Cathayan vampires in China. In practice they pull the same shit as Kindred in any other city do. Back in '83, one of the dead residents of Ulanbaator was a Gangrel archon named Yevgeny Bodunov.

Bodunov spread a story that a couple of neonates had sworn up and down was the truth. It seems that one night while they rode the southern steppe in the old Mongol style, occasionally feeding from their trotting horses, they passed a bit too far into the Gobi. There they swear they saw a huge, bestial vampire pull itself up out of the sand into vague consciousness. With a wave of its hand, their horses bolted from their own supernatural control to the distant vampire's side; he devoured both horses. While the monster was rapt, of course, our witnesses fled for Ulanbaator, screaming about newly awakened Methuselahs in the Gobi.

Bodunov admitted that the tale had more flaws than Andropov's last medical report; I won't even list the half dozen other things this story could be, for the sake of respecting your intelligence. But if you find yourself stuck in the Gobi in the near future, you might want to watch the sand.

In '87 we had the third in a disturbing series of archon murders. This one was a Gangrel appointee of Petrodon's, one Gail Lovett. I knew Gail; she was only about a century old. She was a strange one, to be honest; she was sort of a mathematical prodigy and hermit when she was Embraced and she never got much friendlier, though she did attend *althings* from time to time. Gail was an accounting whiz; she had a high-powered old minicomputer out in her cabin, in West Virginia, and she used to pore over business records, looking for hints of outside Kindred influence. When I spoke to her, in '85, she was actually going through century-old account books looking for discrepancies. Sort of monomaniacal, admittedly, but the work suited her.

Her ashes were found on the shore of the Kanawha River, near Charleston. Her cabin had been ransacked, the computer destroyed, and the rest of the place burned down. Never did find out what she was working on in '87. And now that Petrodon's dead, I don't imagine we'll ever know for sure.

In the late '80s there was a public resurgence in ecological awareness. Municipalities all over the US started recycling trash; corporations began espousing environmentally friendly policies, and so on. In truth, environmental activism is an old cause, dating back at least to the years of Teddy Roosevelt; Greenpeace has been around for decades. I'm told that Lupines tend to be hard-core eco-fanatics, as well.



Contrary to what you might have heard, Gangrel aren't always grizzled environmental warriors. Sure, some are, maybe even a sizable percentage. But not a majority. Most of us have unlives to worry about. Remember that Lupines thrive in pristine wilderness; it is not in our best interests to preserve such areas. Wild places are good; they are useful to us, and they are great places to escape from the pressures of city unlife. But spiking redwood forests or dismantling oil rigs is too much like work, and Kindred don't have day jobs.

## THE '90S

I'm a big fan of the Internet. I picked up access back in '94, just before the big boom. Many non-Gangrel assume that because we prefer to spend time away from other Kindred, and wear a lot of denim, we're technical idiots. Obviously these guys have never seen a cabin with a satellite dish. Only a minority of relatively young Gangrel are Net users, but like the joke goes, on the Internet, no one knows you're a dog. So we get more converts every year. Secure chat servers and encrypted mail routers are just too nice *not* to use. It's also a great deal easier to deal with other clans through the Net; the Toreador can concentrate on your deathless prose rather than the flea crawling across your forehead. *Oh, get that look off your face, you know who you are.*

As an additional bonus, when you're conversing with someone else through the Net, either via e-mail or in real-time, you can be much more sure that your listener isn't affecting your mind or words as you speak them. I have yet to hear of an emotion-affecting power that can be applied via modem. Admittedly, if someone's given you a long-term mental twisting, the Net won't make it go away, but every little bit of security helps.

Since about 1990 there's been an upswing in the number of Native American-run casino resorts across the US. Although many people are quick to judge gambling as an evil to be stamped out, these casinos bring wealth and prosperity to the reservations on which they sit. As was mentioned earlier, many Gangrel reside in or near reservations, and by the traditions of the Camarilla, the fortunes of Cainite's herd are often her own fortune. That means that at least half a dozen Gangrel that I can name have come into pretty fantastic unexpected wealth and influence. Of course, three others have lost that wealth and influence to Vertrue or Giovanni who just wanted to give them a hand with the intricacies of high finance....

I don't spend a lot of time with Sabbat vampires of any stripe. Too many of them are freaks or idiots or a charmless combination of both. After we went independent last year, though, I ran into a pack of Sabbat in neutral territory (Abilene, if you have to ask) and we got to sharing bullshit stories. Among the tales of diablerie, debauchery and fire-jumping, I got just one gem: These guys, who call themselves

the Silver Razors, ran into an amnesiac Gangrel in Massachusetts in '92. The Gangrel insisted that he had no idea who he was, where he came from, or who his sire was.

The Silver Razors had a Tremere *antitribu* among them back in '92 (and they clammed up when I asked what happened to him), and he wheedled Joe Anonymous until he donated a few drops of blood. The wizard then did his thing to the blood to learn Joe's sire's name, so they could track the guy down and find out what happened (or eat him; they weren't too clear on that point). They didn't recognize the sire's name, and they were awfully surprised by the results.

Seems Joe Anonymous's sire was a Gargoyle.

Joe sure wasn't, though; he was clearly a Gangrel. The Razors argued for a few minutes about what their late Tremere friend had said. He'd either thought that Joe Anonymous was so thin-blooded that the Gargoyle curse had faded from him entirely, or that some Kindred wizards somewhere had discovered how to separate Gargoyle vampires into their components. I don't know quite what to make of that. And the Silver Razors changed the subject in a hurry when I asked what ended up happening to old Joe.

## THE END TIMES

*I got together with a few friends at an empty truck stop just after the first of the year to discuss current events; here's a transcript of that conversation, for the curious.*

TOM: Does anyone know what happened last summer with the Ravnos? One of my guys back East says he knew a few, and hasn't heard from them in more than six months.

DINA: I honestly do not know. I believe that many of them died; at whose hands, I have no idea.

BETH: My sire plays cat-and-mouse games with a Ravnos of his distant acquaintance, and he hasn't heard anything from his old enemy since July. My sire's kind of paranoid, though, and he just assumes that the guy's putting together a serious attack.

ZEKE: I hear that the Tremere put together some kind of blood-serum that drove them all crazy. Kowalski says he saw two of them fight to the death, out in L.A. in July, and it was right after the two of them had fucked with a Tremere chantry outside of town.

TOM: Aren't the Ravnos big in India and Pakistan? Do you think the big monsoon there last year hurt them any?

CHUCK: Nah. They're undead; what's a little rain?

TOM: I suppose you're right.

CHUCK: While we're discussing current events, have you guys seen the Top Ten List of what Xaviar's sentence to the Inner Circle was, back in '98?

TOM: No, man, spill.

CHUCK: Okay (*the sound of rustling papers*):

10) "I've called NBC, CBS, and ABC, and the press conference is scheduled for January 1st, 2001 at 9am. See you then!"

9) "Caine said to tell you you're a bunch of losers."

8) "Did you know that we can also feed off of corn? Iowa, here I come!"

7) "Swing dancing, guys, it's the wave of the future."

6) "Would anyone like to know how to use the Gangrel arts to alter their gender at will?"

5) "If the Red Wings need a first-line forward, then by God I'm trying out for the team, Camarilla or no Camarilla."

4) "Rosebud..."

3) "No one ever caters these things."

2) "I want a raise."

1) "Either those drapes go or I go."

TOM: That was really lame, Chuck. I'm sure if Xavier sees it he'll kick your ass.

CHUCK: I didn't write it. Someone e-mailed it to me.

TOM: Whatever. So, anyone really know what happened with Xavier?

DINA: I believe I have a pretty good idea what went on there. I know that when I heard word at the *althing* outside Dallas last spring, I was happy to leave the Camarilla.

TOM: Sure, I left, too, but it was because everyone else was leaving and I didn't want Xavier to find me and kick my ass personally. I didn't make it to the *althing*. There have been a lot of dark rumors, but nothing concrete. Upcoming purges, or war with the Cathayans, or some kind of demonic pact with the Inner Council were the three big ones I heard. Other than the Gehenna thing, of course.

DINA: Xavier saw something vastly more powerful than he thought could exist. I am not sure what he saw.

TOM: Well, come on, there aren't any Antediluvians. The last one died in the Anarch Revolt or the fall of Carthage or the sack of Rome or your favorite historical tragedy. Xavier saw what he thought was one and panicked?

ZEKE: Wheels within wheels, man. It's the fucking Jihad.

TOM: Shut up, Zeke.

DINA: I don't have many facts. Xavier told the Inner Circle that they'd been lying to the Kindred for too long, and that he wouldn't stand for it any longer.

TOM: What were they lying about? And why does he suddenly get all altruistic?

BETH: Whatever he saw, obviously, or whatever somebody told him.

TOM: Xavier didn't run for the Sabbat, though, did he?

CHUCK: I hear he did.

DINA: No, he did not

CHUCK: Bullshit, what's your source?

DINA: I know people in the Sabbat.

CHUCK: My ass you do.

TOM: Guys, this isn't very productive. So nobody knows about Xavier. What about the other big guns? Karsh? Mark Decker? Inyanga?

BETH: Karsh and Xavier are *not* on speaking terms, if you ask my sire. They both call each other traitor.

CHUCK: Which one's Decker again?

ZEKE: Prince of Milwaukee since about '91. Real hawk.

CHUCK: Right. I guess he's still prince, then.

ZEKE: Yeah. And I think Inyanga helped set him up there. She left the Camarilla when Xavier did, but she hasn't gone Sabbat. Too smart.

DINA: Karsh remains Warlord of the Camarilla.

TOM: But in any case, it isn't like the movers and shakers have upped and joined the Sabbat.

BETH: My sire says that Karsh hates Jalan-Aajav even more than he hates Xavier, so I guess Karsh isn't likely to do that.

DINA: You're right, Tom: even though a lot of Gangrel left the Camarilla, only a fraction joined the Sabbat. I know I don't want any part of their bullshit Ozzy parties.

TOM: Some of you may have heard about the Chronicle of Secrets; it's a series of verses which prophecy the End of Days, if you believe that kind of thing. There's a couplet in there, about the End Times: "*You will know them by the Wild Ones, who will hunt us even in the strongest city...*" Some of my other people and I have talked about those lines a lot. Everyone assumes that it means the Lupines – remember Chicago in '92? – but you know the thing about assumptions. My guys and I think that the Wild Ones aren't Lupines at all, but rather elder Gangrel. Some of the oldest Gangrel are serious animals, if you get my drift: they look like beasts, and they think like beasts. And they are hungry, if you believe the stories. This sounds a lot like "Wild Ones" to me (and to my buddies), and to be truthful, it scares me a hell of a lot more than stories about pissed-off werewolves do.

DINA: Perhaps the Chronicle of Secrets is a call to arms, then, for those who believe the old stories and detest the vampires of the Camarilla.

BETH: Maybe it's just the Sabbat? I mean, aren't they supposed to be pretty wild, too?

TOM: I really doubt that the Chronicle of Secrets is written from a pro-Camarilla perspective, if it's as old as everyone says. I mean, it predates the Camarilla. And for that matter, the justicars and princes denounce the fucking thing every chance they get. What did Modius call it? "Spiteful lies to make children out of monsters," or something like that.

ZEKE: Wheels within wheels, man. Denounce the book all you want, and when the other dead guys are terrified of the boogeyman you can rob them blind.

TOM: Oh, come on. I hate that *X-Files* crap, Zeke. What the hell kind of elder master manipulator Methuselah is going to come up with a plot so simpleminded that you can see through it?

BETH: What other stuff is in the Chronicle of Secrets?

TOM: There's a line about the Time of Thin Blood, and vampires that cannot create others. I forget how it goes precisely, but I guess that means that Caitiff are the heralds of the end.

DINA: Ah, then it seems wise to eliminate Caitiff where possible, no?

TOM: Yeah, I guess so, though we're about the worst clan about creating them. Maybe if everyone just calmed down and agreed not to Embrace everyone for a year or two, this whole Gehenna thing would just blow over.

ZEKE: You're pathetic, Tom.

TOM: Well, what choice do we have? Wait for our some monster to wake up and devour us all?

BETH: You think that myth is for real? I mean, I really don't know what to believe at this point, it is all very new to me.

TOM: I don't know. Sometimes I think I believe it.

ZEKE: What if I told you that our Founder was already up and about?

TOM: Zeke, if you told me that, I'd tell you to stick it where the sun still shines.

ZEKE: Hey, earlier you said that there were plenty of Gangrel who believe that she comes up out of torpor periodically. Why not now?

DINA: Have you any evidence of this whatsoever?

ZEKE: If an Antediluvian didn't want you to know she was up and about, do you think you'd know?

DINA: Absence of evidence is not proof of anything, you dimwit.

TOM: Guys, this isn't productive. If you don't have anything more useful to add, I'll just close the log up and end the document there.





# INSIDE THE GANGREL

*Live with wolves, howl like a wolf.*  
— Russian proverb

The Gangrel, taken as a clan, are a contradiction. This is to be expected, as a stereotype cannot by its very purpose describe diversity. The stereotypical Gangrel is sullen, uncommunicative, ill-mannered and prone to spend great stretches of time alone in the wilderness. This stereotype is not false, but at the same time Gangrel who are boisterous and well-spoken stalk the night. Many Gangrel make their havens in the teeming warrens of the big city, and some spend their days slumbering in bucolic farmlands. The common wisdom says that the Gangrel do not play in politics and despise the maneuvering of the Jyhad, but the clan has representatives in positions of great power in all the major factions of vampire politics. And not a single member of the clan has been left untouched by the upheavals of the modern nights.

Like most clans, the Gangrel have no official, clan-wide organization. They have common ground in their traditions and their basic natures, which make complex organizational schemes superfluous and unnatural. Every Gangrel knows the best tactics for dealing with others of her kind in the very pit of her soul — respect and defer to the strong. A child too young and too human to instinctively

grasp this basic concept has it beaten into him. Contrary to popular opinion, not all meetings between Gangrel entail flying fur. The Gangrel are very aware of their position in the power structure, and adept at sizing up the physical capabilities of new arrivals.

Not surprisingly, this basic approach to social navigation does not work well when applied to vampires of other clans. First, it offends them, and second, it does not take into account the levels of deceit and intrigue of which they are capable. The organizations invented by the other clans are useful — or necessary — in dealing with the rest of vampire society. The Camarilla, the Sabbat and the anarchs all harbor Gangrel members of convenience.

Not all Gangrel relationships are forged along the path of least resistance. The clan has never been short on passionate bravos looking for a fight. These Gangrel support an organization or a cause on principles alone (although detractors would claim they simply look for the roughest fight). The Camarilla, the Sabbat, the anarchs and even the enigmatic Inconnu benefit from the fervor of Gangrel members.

## THE GANGREL EMBRACE

The Gangrel are a wide-ranging clan, spread across the world in defiance of, or blissful ignorance of, mortal and Kindred boundaries. The one thing clan members most often share is the method of their Embrace. Gangrel neonates are frequently abandoned moments after their first draught of vitae, left without assistance or comfort to cope with the terrible changes Caine's curse wreaks on body and spirit. A childe who survives this harrowing episode and takes on her new existence is considered worthy. Sires reclaim these childe, who are taught the Gangrel ways and treated with the respect due to bearers of proud blood. Those who do not survive are forgotten. Those driven insane by the experience are hunted down by their sires and destroyed. This is how the Gangrel have chosen their progeny since the earliest nights, and the reasons are clear. Only the strongest, the fittest, survive to be called Gangrel.


As always, exceptions to the practice arise. Childe whose skills or resources are considered too precious to risk losing, or a sire's love interest, may be tutored through the Embrace and carefully managed at every pitfall. Gangrel legends highlight common fates of such "soft" sires and

their nurtured issue. The son of a chieftain, chosen for his remarkable martial prowess, falls prey to a creeping insanity and slays his sire and the rest of his brood. The delicate youngest daughter of a minor lord, brought into the night by a smitten suitor, leads the knights of the Inquisition to her sire's door in her naiveté. The harshness of the Gangrel's tradition is intended to break these inferior specimens quickly and cleanly, for the good of the Kindred themselves. The Gangrel sometimes scorn clan members known to have been Embraced without the common trial of isolation. Sires who provide such an easy out for their childe are sometimes treated similarly. Gangrel *antitribu* indulge in Creation Rites with some reluctance; as a way of making up for the complete lack of appropriate caution taken during wartime or in mass Embraces, they spend lavish amounts of time and care on selecting childe who will become True Sabbat.

The Gangrel sire inordinate numbers of Caitiff — arguably more so than even the Brujah. This is due almost entirely to an unfortunate combination of the Gangrel traditions and the thinning of Caine's blood through generations. In ages past, a neonate whose sire was destroyed or somehow prevented from claiming his childe might still be easily recognized as Gangrel. The fortunate were taken under the wing of a mentor; the less fortunate were destroyed or cast out to live like beasts in the wilderness. In the modern nights, confused fledglings may







prefer the familiarity of the cities and lose themselves in the crush of humanity. The Gangrel sire may track as well as a bloodhound, but limits certainly exist on what he is willing to endure for a childe who makes a fate different from his. A childe of high enough generation becomes virtually indistinguishable from the Caitiff, and is often forever lost to his clan.

Gangrel who remain in the Camarilla sometimes find that their right to create progeny is one of the first to be taken from them by princes and jealous rivals. Particularly wily Kindred have turned the masses of Caitiff to their advantage — by surreptitiously siring childer, abandoning them in the traditional manner, then taking the poor, disadvantaged “Caitiff” under their tutelage. The sire comes out smelling like a rose; not only does he have a childe of his blood, he has aided the prince by teaching a potential rabble-rouser to respect the Masquerade. This is a dangerous game to play, but few have been caught at it — yet.

## PRIDE, LOYALTY AND HONOR: GANGREL ALLEGIANCES

### THE CAMARILLA

The Gangrel have left the Camarilla. That one phrase sums up an average vampire's thoughts on this matter. However, the situation is certainly more complex than most Kindred understand.

Xaviar's apparent self-removal from the ranks of the justicars was, and still remains, cause for a great deal of debate among the elders of the Camarilla — after all, they've never had a clan leave before. No precedent exists for dealing with the substantial political fallout, and members of other clans rightly worry about the example that this incident sets. Elders of Clans Ventrue and Toreador have argued that no one vampire, no matter what his or her status within his clan or the sect proper, has the power to remove his or her entire clan from the Camarilla. Although some of these elders profess concern for Gangrel interests, a simpler motivation is self-interest. *What if, one night, an esteemed Ventrue or Toreador should resign herself and her clanmates?* These elders insist that the Inner Circle (whoever they may be) should simply have elected a new justicar to represent the Gangrel within the Camarilla. The situation is not too far gone to be remedied — a new justicar could still be appointed and matters made right. These few but determined dissenters have vowed to make their voices heard at the next conclave, while worrying quietly to themselves at just what Xaviar's message to the Inner Circle must have been


to produce such results. Not surprisingly, the remaining justicars have not moved swiftly to call a conclave.

Other Camarilla elders point out that only one Gangrel among the Founders was enough to bring the clan into the Camarilla at its inception. These elders, most notably from Clans Tremere and Toreador, agree with the Inner Circle's action (or lack thereof), claiming that allowing the Gangrel to retain representation at this point would be as ludicrous or distasteful as allowing a lesser, politically impotent bloodline to elect a justicar. The most dogmatic of these elders have insisted that members of Clan Gangrel should be removed from what positions of power they hold, as their loyalty is now questionable, and evicted entirely from the sect. These protestations have, to this point, been made quietly, as no one is ready to tell Warlord Karsh that he must step aside.

The point of debate is mostly moot, as many Gangrel have followed Xaviar's lead in leaving the Camarilla. Whether they have done so out of simple respect for Xaviar personally (unlikely, as it's not probable that the majority of the Gangrel have even met him), or out of some heretofore disguised clan unity is unknown outside the clan. The content of Xaviar's famed single-sentence declaration to the Inner Circle is also unknown to members of other clans; it is the subject of hushed speculation and wild rumor. Those who have bothered to ask the Gangrel have received either sullen non-answers, or one of the ridiculously manufactured phrases that have perversely become a great farce to the Gangrel, and are traded among clan members.

Every Gangrel who hasn't gone completely wild or spent the last decade in torpor can guess the crux of Xaviar's disagreement with the Inner Circle, with varying degrees of accuracy depending on how many iterations the story has been through. They know that Xaviar has seen, with his own eyes, some creature of incredible, earth-shaking power, a being greater than the Camarilla's Inner circle will admit exists. Xaviar himself does not, by all accounts, know what the creature was. Speculation among the clan results in wild tales of waking Antediluvians, or savage beasts foretold in the *Book of Nod* running amok. Whatever the creature is, its very existence points to the fact that the leaders of the Camarilla have been less than honest with those who have put their unives on the line with the organization. The remaining Gangrel archons quietly spread the rumor amongst themselves that one of the remaining justicars has moved to add Xaviar to the Red List for spreading this heresy. If this is true, that justicar has yet to receive the additional support needed to make such a move, but if he or she does, the effects could be explosive.

Even knowing that the Camarilla may have lied to them, there are still Gangrel who have chosen to remain in the sect. First among them is Karsh, the Warlord, and



any number of Gangrel archons still serve the justicars. In addition to these "official" representatives, any number of Gangrel in cities and princely fiefs across the globe have declared their intention to remain Camarilla members for reasons of their own. Many Gangrel have chosen to stay because they have contacts within the sect, or because they have made promises of service to uphold. These reasons are usually respected by their clanmates; loyalty and honesty are greatly prized among the Gangrel. Those who appear to remain in the Camarilla to protect their interests, whether territorial or otherwise, are accorded less respect by those who have left.

In addition to losing the respect of their peers, the Gangrel who have interests within Camarilla-dominated cities are in danger of losing those interests as well. They are no longer trusted in many Camarilla cities because other Kindred sometimes say, "The Gangrel have gone over to the Sabbat." Even in areas less prone to hysteria, other vampires cannot help but notice the Gangrel's sudden lack of political currency outside the individual. As a result of both situations, the Gangrel slowly find themselves scapegoated by the Camarilla as their territories and hunting grounds are parceled out to vampires with more clout and more favors to trade. Wise Kindred are wary of making enemies of the Camarilla Gangrel; doing so is more or less inviting the proverbial wolves to bay at your door. Unfortunately for the Gangrel and for the Camarilla itself, not all Cainites are wise.

## THE SABBAT

The Gangrel have had a presence in the Sabbat since its inception. Gangrel sires, past and present, rarely choose the fainthearted or tradition-bound for the Embrace. These willful Cainites often sided with the anarchs in their bloody battles for independence. Their sires were little inclined to dissuade their rabble-rousing progeny, so long as the bloodthirsty packs weren't headed in their direction. Many of the older Gangrel nurtured centuries-old grudges against the politically inclined clans for the incursions of the Christian Church and temporal government into uncivilized lands. And if idealistic notions about freedom and responsibility or ancient resentments weren't enough to stir the blood, Gangrel from elder to fledgling were dragged into the fray by the Tremere magi of Eastern Europe, who needed Gangrel vampires as raw materials for the ensorcellment of their Gargoyle minions.

Most of the Gangrel *antitribu* who helped to shape the early Sabbat are no longer active. The most notable exception to this is Jalan-Aajav, Seraph of the Black Hand. The majority of the others have fallen to the Gangrel curse and can no longer manage even the broad and brutal politics of the Sabbat. They have retreated to the wilderness or the oblivion of torpor. They are still fervent believers in the cause, and can still be called to

righteous battle by the Sabbat's leaders, but the feral Gangrel who erupt from the earth are dangerous and unpredictable allies. The Sabbat eliminates — or has attempted to eliminate — those so far gone to the Beast that they are an ideological and tactical liability.

The Sabbat has no shortage of neonate *antitribu*. They serve as scouts and front line troops in the war against the Camarilla. They infiltrate cities, equally at home pounding the pavement or scaling skyscrapers. They roam the countryside "keeping an eye on the Lupines," proselytizing the anarchs, and generally peddling the Sabbat's most precious resource — freedom.

These young Gangrel come to the Sabbat in several ways. Most are Embraced by the City or Country Gangrel, and go through the Creation Rites and Acceptance Rites as normal. A significant number of Gangrel have joined up more or less by accident. These poor suckers happen to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. A lone Gangrel who meets up with a Sabbat pack might figure her best chance at survival lies in playing along, and before she knows it, she's joined the pack and a crusade. Some of these "converts" slip away, given the chance, but others stay of their own free will. The Sabbat offers much to the Gangrel. The idea of a pack comes naturally to some, and even those who prefer lone wolf status know that's usually a short and brutal existence (even by Sabbat standards). Also, the Paths of Enlightenment (particularly the Path of the Feral Heart) are like a life preserver to a dying man for those Gangrel who feel their Humanity slipping away under the ferocious pressure the Beast exerts.

The sudden influx of Camarilla defectors has placed considerable strain on the Gangrel *antitribu*, however. The Sabbat is used to wheedling, cajoling, terrorizing and bullying converts, who might spend years trying to earn the right to an Acceptance Rite from a Sabbat pack. The incoming Gangrel are experienced, tough and generally not willing to put up with bullshit. Indeed, the Sabbat does not count many of what can be called ancillae as its members, yet many of these have flocked to the sect after deserting the Camarilla. Established Gangrel *antitribu* react in any number of ways to this quandary, from sticking their necks out for clanmates, to challenging the threatening newcomers to no-holds-barred duels. Pack priests and ducti struggle to stamp out the powder-keg fuse, under guidance from sect leaders — politically, martially and spiritually, these new *antitribu* are a resource that cannot be wasted.

Even the Sabbat's regent knows only as much about Xaviar's reason for leaving the Camarilla as the incoming Gangrel can tell her. These jumbled descriptions of Wild Ones, supernatural threats and unknowably old vampires have sent the sect's Noddist scholars into a fury, quoting chapter and verse, re-interpreting and retranslating old



passages and recalculating the night of the Antediluvians' rising. The Sabbat is stepping up its planning for the final battle of Gehenna, but does so as quietly as possible. Rushed preparations would tip the Sabbat's hand, and every night that the slumbering Ancients and their Camarilla pawns squander may garner some advantage for the Sword of Caine.

## ANARCHS

When most vampires think of anarchs, they think of refugees from the set of *Easy Rider* or *The Lost Boys*, tooling about rural America on incredibly loud choppers, black leather jackets worn over natty T-shirts. The Gangrel among the anarchs don't do a whole lot to dispel this particular stereotype. North American Gangrel who are too young or too gregarious to head for the forests and too rebellious to play the political games of the Camarilla and the Sabbat sometimes wind up with the nomad bike gangs. These gangs are not the sum of anarch culture, but they are about the only part of interest to the Gangrel — any Gangrel who spends more than a year in the urban hell that is the Anarch Free State is either doing someone a really big favor or is a City Gangrel on the lam. This is true in the modern nights more than ever, as the alien Asian vampires who spill out of Chinatowns up and down the West Coast have chosen Gangrel with pronounced bestial features as a favorite target. These attacks increase in frequency as the invaders grow bolder; the Gangrel are not sure why those with animalistic appearances are targeted, other than the simple fact that they are easy to pick out of a crowd.

Despite their numbers and the respect they have accumulated as a group, Gangrel rarely stay with the anarchs permanently. They don't have the political motivations common to their traveling companions. Most anarchs are, behind all the tough-guy poses, running from something. The Gangrel who travel with them are mostly just running, or they're running from checkered pasts and have become anarchs by default. When they can no longer hide their bestial features, or when all their friends have gone home or brightened sunsets, the Gangrel leave their bikes at the curb and go to ground.

Anarchs still make their havens in places all around the world (they have not all moved to California, no matter what aggrieved West Coast princes may think). The anarchs of northern Europe have experienced a recent groundswell of support from the region's Gangrel, most specifically from an all-female group calling themselves the Valkyries. These vampires have the appearance and capabilities of great age, yet they mingle with restless young vampires and rowdy young humans, offering moral and material support with seemingly few strings attached. European princes are agog, to say the least, but their retributive crackdowns on anarch activity only lead to

## PATHS OF ENLIGHTENMENT

Most Gangrel, including the *antitribu*, follow the *Path of Humanity*. Many of those who survive long enough to erode their Humanity choose to follow instead the *Path of the Feral Heart*. Gangrel do on occasion choose the road less traveled. (Information on the *Path of the Feral Heart* and the Paths that follow can be found in the *Guide to the Sabbat*. Rules for switching from Humanity to a Path can be found in *Vampire: The Masquerade*, page 288.)

**Path of Caine:** Gangrel followers of the *Path of Caine* are rare, but those intelligent and tenacious scholars who make the cut stand out in a crowd. Gangrel have been recruited in increasing numbers, as the Noddists have taken a fancy to searching after quaint and curious volumes of forgotten lore.

**Path of Cathari:** City Gangrel are likely to be found on this Path, in addition to a fair number of their Country cousins. It seems that the *Beast Within* can be convinced to wallow in excess, rather than in sticks and mud.

**Path of Death and the Soul:** This Path holds little interest for Gangrel. Its followers are dispassionate in the extreme, and few Gangrel care to so completely ignore the pull of their blood.

**Path of Evil Revelations:** The Sabbat's Inquisitors keep a close eye on nomadic and solitary Gangrel, lest they be swayed to infernalism. In truth, very few Gangrel have any interest in enslaving themselves for eternity to demonic masters. The rare exceptions give Inquisitors nightmares, marauding through Sabbat territories and Camarilla princedoms with equal disregard for any but their own concerns.

**Path of Honorable Accord:** Followers of this Path are few in number but accorded great respect among the Gangrel. Upright and honest ass-kicking is always in style.

**Path of Lilith:** The apocryphal clan connection to Lilith makes this Path attractive to those trying to get back to their very earliest roots. Unfortunately for the recruiting drive, being a heretic means you can't hang up posters. Gangrel may refrain from brawling with Bahari, but most don't pursue the matter further.

**Path of Power and the Inner Voice:** The extremely rare Gangrel who succeed on this Path are incredibly formidable opponents. Young Gangrel with political aspirations attempt to emulate them, but most go down in flames, distracted and hamstrung by their own Beasts.



greater unrest and greater numbers of vampires gathering under the outstretched claws of the Valkyries.

The Valkyries do not restrict their activities to the European theater. Intrigued by reports of the anarch "paradise" on the far west shores of Vinland, the Valkyries have sent a full four of their number to investigate and agitate within the Anarch Free State. These four are cutting quite a swath through the West Coast ranks — tall, blonde and dressed to kill in the latest European anarch fashions. They are finding California much to their liking, and are having little trouble gathering a group of men and women (and vampires) interested in the old Viking ways. The quartet is starting an investigation of the attacks on Gangrel anarchs, and it is only a matter of time until East meets North in what is sure to be a knockdown, drag-out fight.

## INDEPENDENTS

The Camarilla insists on calling these Gangrel "Autarkis," which seems to mean nothing more to them than "selfish son-of-a-bitch." The Sabbat refer to them as "fencesitters" on polite nights. To themselves, they are simply Gangrel. They have been the heart's blood of the clan, keeping cordial ties with their brothers and sisters on both sides of the Camarilla-Sabbat divide, with the anarchs, and even with the occasional Inconnu. The Camarilla has existed for only five centuries, and the Sabbat for mere 350 years; this time period is only a long chapter in Gangrel history, and an overly windy one at that. The independents hold the rest of the book, or perhaps they have dug a deep hole and buried the book in it.

The Gangrel curse is the most common reason so many are independents. These vampires have become so animalistic that continuing to move among others is tantamount to suicide — they cannot help but be outmaneuvered and taken advantage of. While these Gangrel will undoubtedly have vast stores of knowledge and experience, they are also certain to be, to some degree, incapable of or unwilling to share it.

A new breed of Gangrel Autarkis has hit the streets — a breed that may have never even heard that strange word before. These are the orphans of the Camarilla, those vampires who paid honor to Xaviar's word by leaving the sect with nothing more than his example to go on. These vampires are sorely challenged to be on their own; most have only a decade or three of Camarilla existence under their belts. No matter how rough and underprivileged their undead existences were, many are completely unprepared to make it without the safety net of the Masquerade and the Camarilla's resources. It's no wonder that so many of the Gangrel who left went straight to the Sabbat, or even the anarchs. Those trying to make it alone are courageous, if foolhardy.




The Gangrel independents do not have an overarching organization — that's part of the point of leaving the sect, after all. They do organize on a smaller scale, usually according to geography, or the charisma and reputation of a mentor or sire. The geographical organizations may respect mortal political divisions (the state of Michigan), or terrain features (the Ohio River valley). Gangrel whose territory falls within the agreed-upon bounds sometimes gather for seasonal *althings*, and carefully consider invitations to less formal gatherings (knowing that the inviter just might come to personally kick some ass if invitations are "declined"). Vampires who are no-shows frequently enough can count on a pack of concerned neighbors dropping by to make sure there's nothing shady going on — after all, what's a few hundred miles' travel among Outlanders? Political and physical divisions can and do overlap, and Gangrel living in the intersections must consider their manners carefully.

The Gangrel gathering around influential leaders and sires re-enact ancient ways that often lay fallow through the Camarilla years. Gangrel culture still bears the indelible thumbprint of the hardy Vikings and the fierce vampires who prowled among them as lords through might and cunning. Those elders who remember the glorious nights of raiding themselves, and those who listened closely to the tales told by sire or grandsire, set themselves up as jarls, accepting oaths of loyalty in exchange

for promises of looting and feasting. The Vikings are not the only tribe of violent barbarians represented: Huns, Goths, Mongols, Gauls, Aztecs and Sioux are coming out of the woodwork, gathering up neonates and ancillae in need of guidance (or siring their own), and setting up tribes across the Americas and Europe. These "ethnic" broods invariably influence the surrounding Gangrel; the expedient thing to do when the Vandals move in next door is learn to speak German. Camarilla princes and Sabbat bishops alike observe these developments with some trepidation — after all, that feasting and loot has to come from somewhere, and the gleaming cities of the 21st century are undoubtedly even more appealing to the barbaric hordes than the stone and mud cities of centuries past. (For information on the Vikings and the vampires who roamed with them, see *Wolves of the Sea*, a supplement for *Vampire: The Dark Ages*.)

Some of those newly Embraced Autarkis who have not been swept up in historical culture factions, and who aren't too busy just trying to stay in one piece, have decided to find Xaviar and ask him a few questions. Xaviar is not an easy Kindred to find. Young Gangrel sometimes mutter that just finding him is part of some kind of test. Two prides of Gangrel claim to have successfully tracked Xaviar down. The members of these groups haven't known each other for long, and don't seem to get along terribly well in some cases. They are making a concerted effort to





work together, however, and they all have the bearing of young heroes charged with an important quest.

## BLOODLINES

The Gangrel clan has produced more divergent bloodlines over the course of history than any other clan. At least, these bloodlines are of *suspected* Gangrel origin. The Lhiannan of Western Europe, split in ancient times from the main clan, are now gone; the fierce Anda of the Central Asian steppe have disappeared as well. The reclusive Laibon, perhaps spawned from Gangrel blood millennia ago, hide their reduced numbers in the wilds of Africa. The Sabbat alone has spawned two Gangrel bloodlines in its mere centuries of existence: the City Gangrel and the Ahrimanes. The Mariners lurk outside the boundaries of sect and even of geography, making their way in the last great unexplored frontier — the ocean.

### THE LAIBON AND THE LHIANNAN

The Laibon and the Lhiannan are detailed in the *Dark Ages Companion for Vampire: The Dark Ages*. The attentive reader will note that, as originally presented, the Laibon are not described as being a Gangrel bloodline. Indeed, those elders who consider themselves experts in vampire genealogy will likely derive hours of pleasure from debating the veracity of the claims presented in the main text. Storytellers are welcome, at present, to make such blood relations either rock-solid truth or just theories

The propensity of the Gangrel blood to deviate into bloodlines is a matter of great interest to many vampires. The Tremere are always interested in matters of blood and power. The Assamites wonder to themselves just what they may be drinking in with an elder Gangrel's blood. Any potent Kindred who has considered just what might be necessary to set up a tribe of childer and grandchilder all bearing his name looks to the Gangrel with curiosity mingled with jealousy. Can this elusive quality of the blood be pinned down or distilled?

Perhaps the sanguinary culprit can be identified, but it has not yet (or whoever has made the discovery is not sharing). Mystical and scientific theories abound, of course. Some claim that it is the magical legacy of the clan's connection to Lillith, through her daughter Ennoia. Others claim it is simply an expression of the laws of nature, natural selection in action with a Lamarckian twist, which the Gangrel have somehow activated by their closeness to the Beast Within.

## AHRIMANES

The Ahrimanes are — or were — a secretive bloodline from the time of their creation in the early nights of the Sabbat expansion into the Americas. They are not a bloodline in the usual sense of the word, as they do not pass their blood from sire to childer. Instead, the first Ahrimane, a Gangrel *antitribu* named Muricia, enacted a powerful ritual that set herself apart from her clan, forever destroying her ability to create progeny or even a blood bond. The ritual also imbued her with an innate connection to the world of spirit. Every Ahrimane since Muricia has been created from a female Gangrel, though few know whether this is simply preference or something mandated by the ritual itself. Cainite anthropologists maintain two theories on this subject. The first is that only Muricia herself can enact the ritual that creates an Ahrimane, and she refuses to perform it for men. The second is that they have in fact tried to create male counterparts — and none survived the transformation. Most Ahrimanes were chosen from Native American tribes of both North and South America. African-American women make up the next largest segment of the group, with women of Asian or European descent bringing up the rear.

All of these points are moot, now, except to those Kindred who consider themselves historians. The Ahrimanes disappeared in early 1998 — or at least that's when the Sabbat first noticed them missing, as they were never the most social creatures. No one knows why or where they have gone. The more paranoid members of the Sabbat claim that the Ahrimanes have fallen victim to a second Tremere purge of thaumaturges. Whatever the truth may be, their havens lay empty, and inquiries go unanswered.

### AND THEN THERE WERE NONE

For players and Storytellers who would like to include the Ahrimanes in their chronicles, rumored disappearance or no, the following details are provided. The Ahrimane bloodline Disciplines are Animalism, Auspex and Protean. In addition to these, almost every Ahrimane learns the bloodline's own peculiar Thaumaturgy that operates by invoking the spirits of the natural world (file the serial numbers off the Lure of Flames and Movement of the Mind from *Vampire: The Masquerade*; and Elemental Mastery, the Green Path, Neptune's Might, Spirit Manipulation and Weather Control from the *Guide to the Camarilla*).

The clan weakness is the artificial thinness of their blood — they may not sire childer or blood bond vampires or mortals. They may still create ghouls, and they may still be blood bound by others. Also, since all Ahrimanes were once Gangrel, most will bear at least a few animalistic traits earned before they renounced their clan.





*Christian,*

*We always knew there would come a time when we must part. That time has come and gone without your notice, I fear. I have gone, and it is likely that you will never see me again. I prefer it this way, I think; I would rather we were torn apart by fate than by jealousy or a lack of trust. I can only hope you agree.*

*You will want to know why I have gone. The simple answer is that we are running out of time. The signs come fast and furious, like stars falling from the heavens. They cannot be mistaken or denied. We have so much still to learn and do, but soon we must act whether ready or no.*

*I can tell you these few things. Put aside your Book of Nod, for the moment — it is older than ashes, and as bitter. There is still hope; the Lord is bountiful. The ancient wisdom of the Nephites can still be found, even though the Lamanites slew every one. We can commit no sin that cannot be forgiven. Hands black with ancient blood can still be washed clean.*

*You have always wanted to know what we are. We are the candle on the altar, we are the mani chha-khor on the windy mountaintop. Woman is always the agent of man's downfall — can she not bring him salvation as well?*

*Use your time wisely, my love. If we fail, the battle will fall to your shoulders, for you are the last hope. If we meet again, it will be in sunlight.*

*Juliana*

## ANDA

These fierce warriors rode with the barbarians among the nomads of the Central Asian steppe and followed the hordes led by the Mongol Khans. The Anda ("blood brother" in Mongolian) were supremely adapted to survival on the high plains, both in life and unlife. They had no fear of travel, and put more land beneath their mounts' feet than many vampires have seen in centuries of existence. They practiced the Gangrel Disciplines of Fortitude and Protean, and their own unique variation of Animalism specifically suited to the needs of the nomad. Unfortunately for the Anda, the Asian nights do not belong to the Kindred alone. The mysterious vampires of China rose up collectively against the Anda at the close of the Yuan Dynasty, exacting retribution for every city sacked and village burned by exterminating the bloodline to a man. Any Anda left in the world have been in torpor for seven centuries or more and show no signs of returning. Any intelligent Cainite knows that the Anda truly are no more.

## CITY GANGREL

The descendants of the first Sabbat Gangrel packs of the New World have made a place for themselves apart from their "Country" brothers. Almost as many City Gangrel claim membership in the Sabbat as do representatives of the main clan. The bloodline has proliferated with astonishing speed, undoubtedly aided by the high turnover rate of Sabbat vampires—most City Gangrel are 10th generation or higher. Some Sabbat observers have suggested that the gory ritual enacted by the original seven packs, the founders of the bloodline, had significance beyond the social—that it, in fact, mystically tied the participants together and imbued each one with the blood of a new line. None of the members of the seven packs has given a blood sample for testing, however, nor are those still surviving willing to disclose what happened on that night.

The City Gangrel are urban killers without peer in the cities they choose to inhabit, using a combination of city-wide knowledge, martial prowess and their unique set of Disciplines to strike hard, fast and without warning. They are equally at home in the bright lights and glitz of happening downtowns and poorly lit, trash-strewn slums.

City Gangrel are almost always members of the Sabbat. Some few, the casualties of typical Gangrel Embrace habits, are independents or Autarkis. City Gangrel who join the Camarilla put themselves on a short list for the Wild Hunt; apathetic anarchists and independents can be ignored, but going over to the enemy in the middle of a holy war can't. Most City Gangrel are Embraced into the Sabbat, undergo their Creation and Acceptance Rites, and go on to lead short, productive and brutal unlives.

City Gangrel inherit the Celerity, Obfuscate and Protean Disciplines. The bloodline suffers the same clan weakness as the rest of the Gangrel. They tend to favor Physical Attributes, but they also produce urban tacticians to direct Sabbat packs when the Great Jyhad hits the city streets. Talents and Skills are equally valued. Mentor, Contacts and Allies are the preferred Backgrounds for keeping vital information flowing. City Gangrel who leave behind their Humanity usually adopt the Path of the Feral Heart, but not a few seek spiritual enlightenment along the Path of Lilith, or temporal power on the Path of Power and the Inner Voice.

### OBUSCATE FOR THE INCREDIBLY UGLY

Gangrel who have lost their human looks may wish to use the Obfuscate power Mask of a Thousand Faces to circumvent that particular social handicap. This is possible, but not easy. The "face" created by Mask of a Thousand Faces defaults to an Appearance rating of 2. To use Mask of a Thousand Faces to improve a character's Appearance beyond 2 requires spending two points of blood for each dot's worth of improvement. Also, if the Gangrel character has specific, large body features to hide (a hunchback, a tail, etc.), the player must also achieve enough successes to pull the transformation off. Three successes will usually be required, but the Storyteller may lower that to two for inventive uses of makeup or costuming.

## LAIBON

The Laibon connection to the Gangrel, if it exists at all, must be buried under centuries of the sands of time. The Laibon have dwelt, often openly, among the peoples of Africa since the Kindred first took note of their movements. Noddist scholars theorize that the Gangrel Antediluvian was among those who disobeyed Caine by illicitly siring childer far from Enoch, where she imagined her trespass would go unnoticed. The Laibon are a possible result. Some also speculate about similarly diverse and mysterious Gangrel in the deepest recesses of South America.

The evidence that the Laibon may be wayward Gangrel is tantalizing. They share the Animalism and Fortitude Disciplines in common. The Abombwe Discipline used by the Laibon seems to involve some sort of pact with the Beast Within; by tithing vitae to that ravenous part of the vampire psyche, the Laibon have escaped the slow crumbling of self and personality that plagues the Gangrel.

The Laibon are now fewer in number than ever. Those few who have contact with vampire society closely regulate their numbers to less than a dozen. Others may lurk in places where non-natives fear to tread.



## LHIANNAN

The proud and stubborn vampires of the Lhiannan bloodline were eradicated by the coming of Christianity — as much for their pagan ways as for the fact that they were bloodsucking monsters. The Inquisition's traveling judge and jury burned out the Lhiannan, and often their mortal devotees with them, wherever they were found. Even those Lhiannan with the *sense to go into hiding* were helpfully pointed out by the Ventrue, Toreador and Lasombra, who had an investment in the new Church and needed a suitably gory distraction from their own depredations.

Although a true member of the bloodline has not been seen since the 14th century, the past 50 years have seen a relatively tame revival of the Lhiannan's blood-spattered legends (but not practices) by Gangrel in Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Astute observers of the mortal world point to the *Irish Revolt in 1916*. Undoubtedly, fervent and courageous patriots were among those Embraced by the Gangrel; given time they would learn of the heritage "lost" to them and attempt to recreate those golden pagan times with their own covens. These neo-Lhiannan do not have access to the mystic powers of the ancients, but they are eager to learn. Gangrel of an age to know such secrets watch the *upstarts* closely, in case they would take by force what has not been offered freely.

## MARINERS


The uptight sorcerers of Clan Tremere refer to the Gangrel who have taken to the sea as "Gangrel *aquarii*." These Gangrel don't give a damn what the Tremere call them, however, and refer to themselves as Mariners on the odd occasion that they speak of themselves as a group. The Mariners take the forms of sea creatures and eschew both mortal and Kindred society for the lightless deeps of the ocean.

The Mariners are problematic as a bloodline. They practice the same Disciplines as Clan Gangrel as a whole. Their common variations on the Protean Discipline (sonar and razor-sharp webbing) may be picked up by any Gangrel with the inclination to learn. The blood of the Mariner sire does not necessarily ensure the child an

### ARE FISH THAT UGLY?

The Mariners have historically been shunned as *monstrosities* even by their own clan for the sheer bizarreness of their animal flaws. In the Final Nights, however, insectoid and ichthyoid features have become increasingly common among Clan Gangrel as a whole. At the Storyteller's discretion, this explosion of shared ugliness may serve to bring the Mariner's weakness back into line with the main clan's; *lose one Social Attribute point* for every five animal features gained.





aquatic form, although only rarely does a carefully chosen Mariner child fail this critical shapechanging test. The only difference that sets the Mariners apart as a potential bloodline is their rapid acquisition of extreme animal features — scales, tentacles, squid beaks, fins and even stranger appendages from creatures who never see the light of day have been spotted on relatively young Mariners. (Mariners suffer a more potent version of the Gangrel curse, losing a Social Attribute for every three animal flaws acquired instead of every five.)

The Mariners have, as a group, been extended membership in both the Camarilla and the Sabbat in times past. They have, as individuals, shunned such offers and continue to do so. Their reaction to the news that the Gangrel have left the Camarilla has been underwhelming — on average a piscine shrug of the shoulders, at best a watery “We could have told you so.” The Mariners are covered in more detail in *World of Darkness: Blood-Dimmed Tides*.

## GANGREL AROUND THE WORLD

The Earth is a vast place, and the Gangrel can be found all over it in the strangest nooks and crannies. Therefore, the following material is by necessity an abridged account of Gangrel activities and interests across the globe. For more details, and information on what everyone else is up to, see *A World of Darkness Second Edition*.

### ANTARCTICA

There are no known Gangrel in Antarctica. Few Gangrel doubt that there must be something fiendish there, buried deep in earth that never thaws or frozen solid in ice that never melts. Antarctica is the logical retreat for those who never want to see civilization again.

### AFRICA

The continent of Africa encloses boundless deserts, towering rainforests and broad savannahs. The hand of man has tainted many of these natural wonders, but some impressive pristine areas remain. Those areas usually belong to the Lupines and other fierce and strange shapechanging creatures. The Gangrel make their way well enough in the great spaces that remain. The truly powerful Kindred who roam the continent go where and when they please; it is rumored that Ennoia may be among them. In the north, Gangrel explorers tread the dunes of Egypt in growing numbers in defiance of the country's overwhelming Lupine presence. Like many outsiders before them, they come to sift through the sands in search of the mysterious past.

**Gangrel of Note:** A group calling itself the Nyayo maintains a surprising amount of influence in Kenyan politics. They use this influence to keep their home country as free as possible from European and American influences, with the goal of keeping out the Camarilla and the Sabbat. A pride of Communist sympathizers in the Sudan known as the Red Menace (a mocking appellation they took on as a badge of honor) refuses to take down the hammer and sickle. They provide financial and technical backing to Communist revolutionaries across Africa.

### ASIA

The past decade has been tumultuous for the Gangrel of Asia. Western Kindred have not freely roamed the vast lands of China since the nights of the great Khans. For centuries they wandered through Mongolia and further north, until a twisted magic settled over Russia, trapping those inside and keeping others out. Foreigners may chuckle at tales of Baba Yaga and her chicken hut, but inside the Shadow Curtain her name was whispered with reverence or not spoken at all. Recently, the Curtain fell; those Gangrel who valued their freedom made themselves scarce before such a phenomenon could occur again, traveling west, south or even north over the pole to escape the hag's influence. The Gangrel of India are locked in a losing battle with the tide of humanity that spills out of the cities and across the countryside. As the wilds disappear, they are forced into increased conflict with the Ravnos, feeding the flames of enmity on both sides, and with the Cathayans. The Gangrel do not have a presence in Japan or Indonesia, though the occasional traveler may have tales to share of her visits.

**Gangrel of Note:** A group of three Gangrel run a smuggling operation across the northern border of China into Russia, moving large quantities of Chinese-manufactured goods and risking the wrath of Beijing's Cathayans. The motivations of these Kindred, who have taken great pains to remain nameless and faceless, are completely unknown — but one must imagine they don't involve money. An unusual coalition of Gangrel in the Barents Sea claims to have recovered a nuclear warhead from a Soviet submarine scuttled off the island of Novaya Zemlya. Whether they are making this announcement in hopes of securing bids for the item, or starting their political careers with a bang, or if they actually have the device in their possession are all unknown.

### AUSTRALIA

Australia and New Zealand are the closest thing on Earth to a Gangrel paradise. The wilderness is mostly unsettled, the people are tough and resourceful — and those damned Lupines are nowhere to be seen. The cities house the usual squabbling Kindred and invading Sabbat, but no other clans want what the bush has to offer. Many





Gangrel who come to visit never leave; more than one native insurgent has suggested setting up one or the other island as a Gangrel Free State. In New Zealand, the Sabbat succeeded in establishing a presence, drawing members from the young Polynesian minorities who feel cheated by the white government.

**Gangrel of Note:** A venerable Maori Gangrel, Nyrie Waaka, has hit the warpath against the Sabbat incursion in New Zealand. She has no real quarrel with Sabbat ideology, but the young vampires, many of them City Gangrel, have appropriated the ritual *moko* face tattoos into their pack style — distinctions they have not earned. The ashes of the newest Sabbat converts have been found scattered in the patterns they improperly appropriated.

## EUROPE

Europe is not a particularly quiet place to be Gangrel. More wilderness disappears every year despite the best (and disjointed) efforts of humans, Lupines and the occasional vampire. Gangrel elders here may be over a millennium old; if crowding occurs, the neonates and ancillae find themselves pushed into the cities, where they are often scorned by polite Kindred society, or off the continent entirely.

**Gangrel of Note:** Brunhilde, the leader of the Scandinavian Valkyries, is detailed in the final chapter. She and her recently awakened host of female warriors preside over a revival of Viking ways and raise hell among Europe's anarchists. Rufus of Andorra, who has watched the Sabbat's depredations in Spain from atop his mountain peaks for centuries, has begun stockpiling weapons and Embracing broods in secure havens. Sources of somewhat dubious repute say that Rufus has shattered the Masquerade by openly approaching Andorra's government (such as it is). Archons have been dispatched to investigate.

## MIDDLE EAST

The Gangrel hold a respected place in Kindred society in the Middle East. Perhaps vampires who struggle for survival in the harsh, arid climate have a greater understanding of the clan's steadfast strength. The mortal population of the area, caught between modernization and religious fervor, has made existence uncomfortable for vampires of any clan. The numbers of people with True Faith have risen, and vampires fear the fiery bombs of extremists as keenly as any human. Still, in the rural and wilderness areas favored by the Gangrel, life and death go on as they have for years.

**Gangrel of Note:** Respected Islamic scholar Ebi Raboud has spent years wandering warily among havens in Islamabad, Kabul and Tehran, avoiding Assamite assassins and the fetid *pisacha* while composing and disseminating his commentaries on Islamic law as it



applies to Kindred. He now encounters a new class of Assamite — faithful vampires fleeing the civil war on Alamut seek him out for advice and help. He cannot turn these refugees away, but he fears that he may not see the assassin among the supplicants until it is too late.

## NORTH AMERICA

The Gangrel of North America have taken the brunt of the abuse in the wake of the clan's separation from the Camarilla. All along the East Coast, where tensions between the Sabbat and the Camarilla are taut, Gangrel are treated with suspicion at best, or destroyed on sight at worst. The besieged princes figure that those Gangrel who are not outright traitors are deserters; loyal Camarilla Gangrel stay close to their havens and bolt-holes to avoid identification mishaps. Further west, the tension ebbs and the Gangrel are subject only to the peculiarities of local leaders. Along the West Coast, the Gangrel also have the Cathayans to worry about.

**Gangrel of Note:** The Free Minutemen of Pocatello are a small group of independent Gangrel chosen from the ranks of local militias and survivalist groups. These revolutionaries are angry (and not just about the pallets of canned food going to waste in their bunkers) — they've gotten the idea that the vampires are controlled by the United Nations as part of a nefarious plot to overthrow the US. They intend to turn the enemy's tools against him. Quebec's Cree Indians have a protector in a bestial creature known only as Muskuuchii — the name of the mountain it lives on. Other Gangrel report that this elder has approached them, most often in the form of a bear, to ask for their help in preventing the secession of Quebec from Canada, a development which might see the Cree's aboriginal lands taken from them. The ursine creature is of the opinion that there is an individual or organization with great influence thwarting its efforts. On the other hand, its efforts have most likely been naïve and less than subtle.

## SOUTH AMERICA

The hot, wet geography of South America is a extensive haven for the Gangrel. It also shelters shapechanging cats and terrible lizard-monsters, but most local Gangrel accept the test of their survival skills as a fair exchange. Even though the continent seems to encourage this bravo nature in its nocturnal residents, only the truly foolish head into the Amazon basin, where the Lupines battle some horrendous technological manifestation. Gangrel Embraced from the indigenous tribes of the area claim that there is a strange bloodline of native vampires in the jungles who share many Gangrel's affinity with the bat — creatures who wreak devastation when awakened without proper propitiations and rituals. Those inclined to believe



such tales keep an eye on the rainforest — assault weapons and chainsaws are usually not appropriate ritual gear.

**Gangrel of Note:** Xotli the Toad, a hideous creature with bulging eyes, oozing skin and a long sticky tongue, has made lone guerilla strikes against well-defended targets a specialty in his native Guatemala. He has grown greedy, the profits accumulated from years of working for both sides of a Sabbat/Setite conflict whetting his taste for more. He'd also like somewhere a little nicer to spend it all, and is considering taking his show on the road.

## THE BEAST RAMPANT: THE GANGREL FLAW

The Gangrel clan's greatest strength is also its greatest weakness. The Gangrel are tied to the Beast Within in ways that no other vampire could understand; their greatest gifts come from that primal connection, but with every slip of control into frenzy, the Beast leaves its mark. The mark is usually a visible feature, a physical change to the Gangrel's body. More rarely the mark is on the vampire's soul, affecting his behavior or his very identity.

Other clans speak derogatorily of the Gangrel's animalistic features as the results of "losing control." This is not strictly true: Any frenzy, whether entered willingly or fiercely resisted, inflicts the same penalty upon the Outlanders. Gangrel entering Röttschreck may not suffer this curse; so long as the vampire obeys the "flight" tenet of the Red Fear, she does not acquire an animal feature. A cornered Gangrel who resorts to the "fight" half of the equation will regain her senses to find another feral feature, as even necessary violence brings the Beast bubbling to the fore.

The rules governing frenzy — what causes it, its effects and when it ends — are purposely left open for the Storyteller's interpretation (see *Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 228). The Storyteller should use his discretion in situations where the line between fight and flight is thin; a glancing blow from a Gangrel in the grip of Röttschreck may hurt its target, but not register to the Gangrel's Beast as anything more than simply clearing the path.

Most of the features caused by the Beast are visible and clearly animal or even insectoid in origin: growing fur, feathers or scales; changes to the structure of facial features, hands or feet; sprouting additional appendages like a tail or antennae; or developing truly odd features like nictating membranes, a marsupial pouch or a working musk gland. Dramatic changes are unlikely to occur all at once, although some particularly unlucky or rabid Gangrel may find themselves with some of the drastic modifications listed below. It is far more likely that each subsequent

Bruce,


I am intrigued by your theory concerning the antisocial tendencies expressed by so many Gangrel; i.e. that the Gangrel remove themselves from the company of other Kindred in order to avoid frenzy. The idea has some merit; it is certainly true that entering the state of heightened aggression commonly termed "frenzy" invariably has consequences for members of our clan that are not experienced by other clans. I would personally hesitate to credit the majority of frenzies to Kindred influence. You should be able to test your theory, however, simply by observing Cainites in their natural habitat, so to speak. If you have Camarilla contacts, it may be possible to arrange a self-reporting survey on frenzy frequency and probable cause from a sizable number of participants. Such results will not be particularly reliable, but they may point you toward certain areas of consideration. And, if you will excuse my saying so, the soft sciences have never required rigorous mathematics.

My own personal inclinations on this matter, which I admit to be of a completely non-scientific and untestable nature, draw heavily on Jungian inspiration. Bear with me, good colleague: Even Einstein prayed to a god. It is my belief that the Gangrel founder was not only a woman, but also the possessor of such qualities as may be termed archetypally feminine. Along with her blood, we have received a portion of her spirit, an *anima* to complement the *animus*. We are, as a result, more complete beings, less desiring or necessitous of others to complete our selves. I will admit that I have yet to summon the strength of will to mention this pet theory of mine to the female members of our clan, but I will point out to you the Ahrimanes as a possible example of *anima* unchecked.

In any case, I look forward to your results. If you wish me to comment on a proposed methodology for your study, I would be more than happy to do so.

Yours,

Allan J. Woodstock



frenzy adds incrementally to the effect, so that a full coat of fur may sprout on the vampire's chest, then later appear on her back, legs, hands and face.

The marks left by the Beast are not always so easily seen. Some can be smelled or heard, like a pungent musk or shrill, cawing voice. In some cases, the Gangrel is left with animalistic impulses and behaviors as result of frenzy. These are psychological aberrations, similar to derangements, but far less crippling individually. The Gangrel may unwillingly find himself circling a chair three times before sitting down, marking his territory (with blood), or toying with his prey. These behaviors might seem comic, but in situations where proper etiquette, grace, stealth or speed are important, there's nothing to laugh at. The afflicted Gangrel may spend a Willpower point to avoid acting out his animal habits for a scene.

The variation of animal features within the clan is astonishing. No two Gangrel have ever developed the exact same set of features, although basic trends may be passed from sire to child. Gangrel past the age of fledgling rarely exhibit features from only one animal; the Beast's myriad expressions in the animal kingdom provide a broad palette.

The animal feature that results from a frenzy should always be approved by the Storyteller, especially in cases of drastic modification or animal behavior. Ideally, the Gangrel character's inevitable descent into the clutches of the Beast should be a collaboration between the player and the Storyteller, but in some instances the Storyteller should feel justified in inflicting a monstrous or jarring feature on a character. The Gangrel do not evolve into cuddly humanoid pets, they devolve into chimerical monsters; the Storyteller may occasionally need to reinforce this point.

Every five animal features the Gangrel character accumulates, whether physical or mental, reduces one of her Social Attributes by one point. Appearance is usually the first Attribute to be affected, since the vast majority of features the character will acquire are physical. Charisma and Manipulation can be affected by purely physical changes, as well. The character's animal features might be distracting or embarrassing, reducing her social effectiveness, or they may simply do so much damage to her self-image as to severely impact how she deals with others. Acquiring a mental animal feature makes it much more likely that the Gangrel's Charisma or Manipulation Traits will be affected.

It is possible for Gangrel to buy back Social Attribute points lost to the cumulative effects of frenzy. This should be roleplayed in detail and approved by the Storyteller — perhaps the character finally takes to wearing concealing clothes and combing his hair. Perhaps he has taken charm or voice lessons. Whatever the reason, regaining lost Social Attributes is never easy. The player should keep

track of the values of all three Social Attributes prior to any frenzy-based losses. That prior value determines the experience point cost to increase a Social Attribute. Also, the limits imposed on Attributes by the vampire's generation apply to the higher, initial value. For example, Angry Sam arises from his Embrace with an Appearance 3. Ten frenzies later (how do you think he earned his name?), Sam's Appearance has dropped to 1. If Sam's player wishes to buy Sam's Appearance back to 2, the experience point cost will be calculated as if he were buying the Attribute from 3 to 4 — 20 experience points. Sam's Appearance is now effectively 4 for figuring the experience point cost to buy another Appearance point; if Sam is eighth generation or higher, he can only buy one more Appearance point ever, no matter how bestial he becomes.

### MIXED BLESSINGS

The animal features below represent drastic and sudden changes to the vampire's physical form. They immediately and permanently reduce one of the vampire's Social Attributes by one. Usually they reduce the Appearance Attribute, but if the character is already so ugly that adding a scaly tail or a set of ultra-wide ears really won't make matters worse, or the shock of becoming poisonous is more of a self-image hit than an image problem, other Social Attributes may be affected instead. These modifications are serious enough that they offer some fringe benefits, though rarely enough to make up for their hideousness.


These features can pose a serious problem: The vampire has become a walking breach of the Masquerade. Precautions can be taken — these features can all be hidden with varying degrees of success — but many princes do not wish to take chances. The same qualities make these deformed Gangrel prized shock troops in the Sabbat's full-bore attacks on Camarilla-held cities.

Any of these animal features, if not carefully hidden (roll Dexterity + Subterfuge, difficulty set by the Storyteller according to the degree of the aberration), will cause a +2 difficulty to all Social rolls. Other Gangrel and Nosferatu may not impose these social penalties, at the Storyteller's discretion.

It is recommended that these features occur only in extreme circumstances (the result of a botched roll, or a particularly protracted and bloody frenzy), and that a Gangrel only ever acquires one such feature.

**Frog Eyes:** The Gangrel's eyes migrate painfully to the sides of his head, in the process swelling to roughly the size of saucers. The eyes usually have the slit pupils of an amphibian or reptile, but certain rare specimens have manifested insectlike faceted eyes. Sunglasses simply aren't going to cut it anymore, but the vampire may add two dice to all sight-based Perception rolls due to his new 270° field of vision. He becomes very difficult to sneak up on, obviously, and suffers one less than the standard





multiple-opponent difficulty penalties in close combat (no penalty for two attackers, +1 for three, etc. to the normal maximum of +4).

**Exoskeleton:** This particularly vile feature wracks the vampire with pain as her skeleton excretes itself as a chitinous shell. The vampire gains greater use of her natural strength in the form of an additional two dice to Strength-related Athletics rolls, and a reduced difficulty of 8 instead of 9 on Willpower rolls to perform feats of Strength. The hardshell also provides one additional soak die against bashing and lethal damage. This physical power comes at a terrifying cost, however, one which many Gangrel do not discover until it is too late. Because *the vampire's skeleton is all but gone*, her rib cage and sternum provide no protection for her heart. An opponent with a stake need only inflict one health level of damage (after soak) with a hit difficulty of 9 to effectively stake the vampire instead of the usual three.

**Hide/Carapace:** This effect manifests in a variety of ways: dense, coarse fur; tough, elephantlike hide; or a calcified covering. The covering provides a natural armor, adding two to the vampire's soak dice for even aggravated damage, excluding fire and sunlight. In addition to the difficulty of hiding this full-body mutation, the thickness of the armor invariably reduces the vampire's Dexterity by one.

**Maw:** Discreet fangs give way to a mouthful of teeth as the vampire's jaw stretches and lengthens to accommodate the new dentition. Whether needle-sharp and ratlike or serrated like a shark's, these teeth do not retract. A vampire with these teeth cannot simply hide them by keeping her mouth closed — her exaggerated jawline shows the size of her mouth, and the teeth often jut out past the lips. *The vampire's bite does Strength +2 aggravated damage in combat, and can drain two extra blood points per turn during feeding.* The wounds caused by these teeth cannot be closed in the normal manner.

**Sonar:** The visible component of this mutation is a truly huge pair of batlike ears, each easily the size of the vampire's palm if it were stuck on the side of his head. The Gangrel's voice box is also modified to produce high-frequency sounds (those with the Medicine Knowledge may make a Perception + Medicine [difficulty 8] roll to notice). Using this sonar organ to navigate through darkness, smoke or fog reduces the vampire's difficulty penalty by one in such situations. The ears cannot be hidden while *in use; not only does any covering interfere with the sonar reception, but the ears must be able to move independently to properly echolocate.*


**Spinnerets:** Somewhere noticeable on the abdomen, the vampire develops silk glands and the spinnerets to use them. The silk glands transform the vampire's blood to webbing; one blood point and one round of concentration will generate 10 square feet of spider web, or 100 feet of a

single, strong strand. The vampire must decide ahead of time whether the web will be sticky or not, but the vampire is never stuck in her own web, as it is made from her own blood. The webbing is incredibly strong, requiring a Strength 5 to break, or a Strength 4 to cut with claws or a knife. The spinnerets are conspicuous protuberances in any sort of normal clothing except a heavy coat or robe (Perception + Alertness, difficulty 5 to notice) — *hunting Casanova-style is nearly impossible.* It is certainly worth noting that the Gangrel must not be wearing pants to make use of her spinnerets. In addition, the webbing is very sensitive to light, spun as it is from vampire blood. Sunlight disintegrates it immediately; even the dim glow of a streetlight or the beam of a flashlight will destroy the web within 10 turns.

**Tail:** The Gangrel's spine lengthens dramatically past the coccyx, fleshing out into a muscular, heavy tail. The tail is usually long enough to drag on the ground and bulky enough that it does — it must be bound or tied to keep it off the ground, and even then it is relatively easy to notice (difficulty 4 on a Perception + Alertness roll). The tail does serve well as a blunt weapon; so long as the vampire fights with natural weapons in close combat, he may make a free normal attack or sweep maneuver on flanking and rear opponents with no multiple-opponent penalty (other attacks suffer the usual penalties). The tail inflicts Strength bashing damage.

**Talons:** These claws are equivalent to the Feral Claws provided by the Protean Discipline — with the important drawback that they cannot be retracted, and are always present on both hands and feet. Aside from the social difficulties that come from never being able to disarm, the vampire will find it difficult to manipulate small objects like car keys or computer keyboards. Gangrel with Talons suffer a +1 difficulty penalty for any task involving fine manipulation, especially if such manipulation has to be done under stress.

**Venom:** The Gangrel's fangs hollow, and poison reservoirs form in her head or neck. The venom is only mildly poisonous, in comparison to some in the animal kingdom. The victim of a successful, *damaging bite must make a Stamina roll (difficulty 7, 9 for normal humans and animals) or lose one point from a Physical Attribute.* The Gangrel should choose which Physical Attribute her venom affects when this feature is acquired, and it may not be changed. If the Attribute reaches zero, the victim falls unconscious or into torpor. Attributes lost in this fashion return as though they were aggravated damage. The drawbacks to this ability are twofold. First, the vampire's hollowed fangs are more susceptible to breaking. Any botch on a bite attack roll breaks one or both fangs, which must be regrown on the same schedule as aggravated damage. Second, nature does not provide poison without a *visible warning* — the vampire is visibly venomous,



whether showing the vibrant colors of a poisonous tree frog, or the pitted face of a viper.

**Wings:** The bat or bird wings that sprout from the Gangrel's back are not strictly useable; they are stunted, much too small to bear the vampire's weight in flight. They are, however, easily big enough to be noticeable — bound to the vampire's back, they simply give him the appearance of being a hunchback instead of a winged freak. The wings can provide some stability in precarious situations or help break a bad fall, if not bound or wrapped. In these situations, add two dice to Athletics rolls involving balance, and assess one die of bashing damage for each 15 feet of a fall instead of each 10 feet.

#### MET SYSTEMS FOR ANIMAL TRAITS

**Frog Eyes:** These add two Traits to all sight-based perception tests, and subtract one from the standard multiple-opponents Trait penalties.

**Exoskeleton:** The Gangrel gains two Physical Traits for strength-related tests and one additional level of armor against bashing and lethal damage. However, anyone attempting to stake the Gangrel needs to win or tie just one Simple Test after winning a Physical Challenge.

**Hide/Carapace:** The vampire gains two levels of armor against bashing and lethal damage, and one against aggravated damage, but suffers a one-Trait penalty on all tests involving dexterity.

**Maw:** The vampire's bite does two levels of aggravated damage and can drain three Blood Traits per turn during feeding.

**Sonar:** The vampire has a two-Trait bonus on tests while navigating in darkness, fog, smoke and the like. People with the *Medicine* Ability may make a Mental Challenge to notice the voice alterations.

**Spinnerets:** Spend one Blood Trait to generate a square yard of webbing or 10 feet of a single, tough strand. Anyone attempting to break it must win a Static Physical Challenge against a total equal to the Gangrel's Physical Traits (one-Trait bonus if the would-be breaker has claws, a knife or some other sharp instrument). Observers may make a Mental Challenge to notice the spinnerets, and the vampire takes a two-Trait penalty for this test.

**Tail:** Observers may make a Mental Challenge to notice the tail (if concealed), and the vampire takes a three-Trait penalty for this test. The tail inflicts two levels of bashing damage.

**Talons:** These work like Wolf Claws on both hands and feet, except that they can't be withdrawn. The vampire suffers a one-Trait penalty on tests involving fine manipulation.

**Venom:** When the vampire successfully bites a target, the target must make a Static Physical Test against eight Traits. If the target loses this test, subtract one Physical Trait; this damage heals like aggravated damage. A victim

who reaches two Physical Traits falls unconscious. Whenever the vampire fails a bite attack, make two Simple Tests. If the vampire fails both, one or both fangs break and must regrow as if they'd been lost to aggravated damage.

**Wings:** These add two bonus Traits on tests involving balance, and the vampire suffers one level of bashing damage for every 15 feet she falls, rather than every 10.

## THE OTHERS

### KINDRED

#### ASSAMITE

The Gangrel and the Assamites have clashed on the battlefields of Europe and Asia for centuries. They have also fought side-by-side, perhaps even during the same battles — both clans are known for mercenary tendencies. *Both clans have learned to respect each other for their martial prowess and brutal honesty.* Lately, however, the Gangrel worry about what the Assamites are oh-so-honestly saying since they shrugged off the Tremere curse: It's open season on the Kindred of other clans. For the Gangrel, killing is a matter of survival, not a religion. On the Assamites' part, at least they realize that much easier prey may be brought down.

#### BRUJAH

The Brujah and the Gangrel relate well on a superficial level. Violence is fun, and rebelling against authority is entertaining too. Relationships that dig deeper run into problems. The Brujah's tendency to frenzy unnerves the Gangrel, who scarcely need encouragement down this path to ugliness and ostracism. The Gangrel's reluctance to support the cause *du jour* with wild eyes and fervor alienates the Brujah. The Gangrel's readiness to survive and fight another night comes across as cowardice rather than wisdom — and occasionally some young punk actually says that out loud. The clans work best together when the cause is clear and straightforward, and the participants can part ways when the sun rises.

#### FOLLOWERS OF SET

The Followers of Set have very little positive to say about the Gangrel, and the Gangrel return the favor. Both sides also have very little negative to say in exchange, as the urbane Setites and the forthright Gangrel scarcely cross paths. Tensions run high in those few areas where contact is common, such as northern Africa and extensive city parks along the US coasts. Tension frequently gives way to bloodshed or treachery on those occasions that one side or the other is accused of stealing the art of shapeshifting. Gangrel inclined to the reptilian in form and personality have been known to become amicable with Setites, presumably in some strange snake-y way that outsiders wouldn't understand.



## GIOVANNI

The Giovanni and the Gangrel have practically nothing in common. They don't even have anything meaty to argue about. As remarkable as this fact is among vampires, it does not make them allies. Their worlds simply do not meet.

## LASOMBRA

Respect is the key word in the relationship between the Gangrel and the Lasombra. The Gangrel respect the Lasombra for their capable leadership and their appearance of honesty. The Lasombra respect the Gangrel's strength of character and ferocity. The Gangrel don't trust the Lasombra, of course, and the Lasombra still attempt to make the Gangrel into political pawns. But at least the Gangrel know that the Keepers will think long and hard before screwing them over.

## MALKAVIAN

The Gangrel fear the Malkavians — any rational, survival-oriented Kindred does. The Malkavians are insightful and unpredictable — oh, and they're also insane. Gangrel take great pains to weed instability out of their broods, at least in the young; the Beast inevitably claims the minds of the old, who must be strong to start to withstand its ravages. The Malkavians, for their part, seem to sense the Gangrel's uneasiness. Like a cat that knows who it can discomfit most, they seem to take some strange joy in keeping the Gangrel company.

## NOSFERATU

Kindred of these two clans have established an understanding between them, a very sad and resigned sort of arrangement. Neither clan can truly understand what the other experiences: for the Gangrel, the slow dissolution of personality; for the Nosferatu, the sudden obliteration of self-image. But it is empathy, not sympathy, that defines this relationship, and that's something rare for both groups. Gangrel and Nosferatu do not screw each other over lightly. Most will not do it at all, if it can be avoided.

## RAVNOS

The Gangrel and the Ravnos share a turbulent relationship that is centuries old, if not more so. Every Gangrel does not attack every Ravnos on sight, or vice versa; nothing keeps individuals of both clans from being acquaintances, members of a coterie, or even just mutually civil. What is certainly true is that most Gangrel who have spent time with educated sires have heard stories, whether about the mythical rivalry between the Antediluvians, the bad blood stirred up over the Gypsies in 15th-century Europe, or a more personal tale of deceit and thievery. The Ravnos must tell such stories to their childer as well, as even initial contacts between new members of both clans seem predisposed to go poorly.

Rebellious types will always embrace "the enemy" just because someone told them not to. Among the anarchs, Gangrel often feign a devil-may-care attitude toward the Ravnos, while keeping a close eye on their gear and bolt-holes. Unlike an anarch is tough enough without worrying whether your sire was actually right about those bastards. Sabbat vampires seem to take perverse pleasure in creating Ravnos/Gangrel alliances, but these undertakings usually turn out like so many other Sabbat affairs — short-lived and bloody. At the extreme, some ill-fated pairings insist that the continuing feud between the Gangrel and Ravnos is the will of the Antediluvians acted out through the centuries. Like Shakespearean heroes, they rebel against their families' wishes — but tragedy is not much fun for Romeo and Juliet.

## TOREADOR


It would be difficult to think of two vampire clans with less in common than the Toreador and the Gangrel. The Toreador consider the Gangrel to be crude, uncouth, dirty, pungent and lacking culture. The Gangrel, in return, consider the Toreador to be stuck up, elitist, domesticated and prone to navel contemplation. Both sides are usually right; with these differences out in the open and acknowledged, very little open conflict ever occurs between the Toreador and the Gangrel. They simply move in different circles, and are content that way. Rare instances of intense inter-clan cooperation usually center on particularly pleasant pieces of land. These partnerships are fleeting, as the Toreador usually loses interest in ecological matters once the patch of ground has been preserved as money in the bank or assets on the social registry.

## TREMERE

Old, bad rivalry festers between the Tremere and the Gangrel. The clans have been at each other's pale throats since the Dark Ages, when the Warlocks encroached into the lands of Eastern Europe. Gangrel go missing all the time — and some of them, it is rumored, still wind up in Tremere laboratories. Resentment simmered under the Camarilla "truce", and now that it no longer applies, many Gangrel are itching to rake their claws through their ancient foes. The Tremere, for their part, would like to see the Gangrel put down for good — perhaps to punish the affront to the Camarilla, and most certainly to put a dangerous enemy out of the way.

## TZIMISCE

Outsiders occasionally express surprise that the Gangrel and the Tzimisce do not get along famously, since they share such a talent for shapechanging. Gangrel prefer to use words like "warp" and "mutate" to refer to the Tzimisce's hellish art, while the Fiends simply cannot



understand the Gangrel infatuation with animals, of all things, when the ability to be true monsters must surely be within their grasp. Philosophical debates aside, the Gangrel and Tzimisce of a certain age share a vague resentment born of the conflict with the hated Tremere. Sires and their childer who remember those times in memory or in story might at least act politely — at first.

#### VENTRUE

The Ventrue saw the Gangrel as useful. Sold on the metaphor, they thought of the Gangrel as hunting dogs, bloodhounds, even the occasional retriever. Now the hound has turned to bite the hand that ordered it around. The Gangrel attitude toward the Ventrue is unchanged — the uptight, self-important bastards couldn't understand that, all along, the Gangrel were doing what they wanted to do, and not simply what they were ordered to do.

#### THE GYPSIES

The Roma, or Gypsies, share much in common with the Gangrel; one of these traits to never forget a debt owed or a favor performed. When the Roma entered Europe en masse in the 15th century, their bands sought out letters of safe passage from local religious and secular authorities. Without such letters, the roving bands were driven out or even attacked. European Gangrel, whether implored by their eastern clanmates or out of a desire to bring Roma companies into their debt, traded in favors and took on political boons to secure these letters of passage from lords and ladies under the influence of other clans. Even tonight, a Gangrel might introduce himself to a Gypsy band by stating that his grandsire obtained a letter of safe passage from the Abbot of Shropshire for Duke Michael and his band. There's no guarantee that this will earn the Gangrel a favor or a safe resting place for the day, but it's a better introduction than most. Of course, the Roma take favors owed to them just as seriously.

### THE LUPINES: OR, HOW TO KEEP WEREWOLVES FROM KILLING YOU

*An Aside by Early Knox, Gangrel of the 10th Generation*

This is a lot easier than you might think. The first step is simple: Avoid the Lupines whenever possible. They are not your friends. They don't care if you're on the outs with Kindred society. They don't care if you have a Sierra Club membership. They don't care if you drive spikes into redwoods to save them from chainsaws. As far as I can tell, they have religious issues with us. Consider the werewolves to resemble an angry, fanged fanatical group and you've got the right idea. While you might be able to befriend one who's on the outs, or sell favors to a fleabag who needs help in a hurry, you are not part of the tribe, and you never will

be. I don't know all the details, because I follow step number one as closely as I can.

The Lupines have a fair number of holy sites, usually out in the wilderness. Stay far, far away from these places. Even if you have a Lupine contact who invites you out to one. Either your contact is an idiot, or it's a trap.

Do not pretend to be a werewolf to fit in better with the other werewolves. They'll know. I don't know how, precisely, but for starters they've got incredible senses; they can tell that you're a corpse because you're something called a worm. And they have their own language, which they don't teach to outsiders. And their own mythology. If they start quizzing you about "the great wooden monkey spirit Shimmy-ho-ho", you're going to sound like a goddamned idiot no matter how you respond.

If you can't avoid a group of werewolves, keep your contact to a minimum. You might be able to sell them some information, but they're unstable; they can't be trusted not to try to kill you after you tell them what you know. If you must engage in conversation, keep it light and agreeable. Don't talk about the hippies you just drank dry, and don't debate points of ecological warfare with them. In a perfect world, after a few light conversations you might be able to negotiate a simple "leave each other alone" relationship, but it's likely to require some unpleasant concessions on your part and none on theirs. They're not much for negotiating, you see, and consider us to be one down on them just by existing.


If they're pissy and you're on their turf, leave. They can't fly, and many of us can, so if they start to pursue you, turn into a bat and grab some sky. I can hear some of you — especially those wearing horny Viking hats — shouting about honor and territory and valor. You guys do what you want. I'll light a candle for you in Van Halla or whatever.

Lupines are a fucking nightmare in a fight. I've only seen them in action on videotape — footage stolen from Chicago — and it did frighten me. Their "war-form" is an eight- or nine-foot-high wolfman like out of *The Howling*, only a lot more muscular. They're strong and very fast. They seem to be able to turn invisible at a moment's notice. They use weapons as well as we do — the tape I saw opened with a barrage of gunfire followed by a frontal assault — and they seem to have Disciplines like we do as well. I've heard that a pack of werewolves could take down a Methuselah. Certainly a pack did rip apart Lodin, an elder and no slouch, in Chicago back in '92.

If you fight one, you might be able to beat him, if you get the drop on him and have a gun. If you can get your hands on silver bullets — don't laugh — you'll be about even. If no silver bullets, try silver *anything*. Forks, knives, sharpened spoons, baseball bats or crucifixes. Anything. They really hate the stuff, and it seems to burn them.

A lot of other Kindred think that us Gangrel have a special relationship with the Lupines. Most of us do not,





but the Ventrue and Tremere don't know that. You can use this to your advantage in a couple of ways. First off, if you have a few travel routes on which you know you don't get much werewolf hassle, you can make a profit in money or favors by selling that information off. This applies just as well if you know a couple of routes that are exceptionally dangerous; warnings to your fellow Cainites can score points with people who are good to know. Of course, if you're leaving town or otherwise have your ass covered, and you want to take a shot at offing an enemy, you can always sell him a safe path through what you know to be Lupine Highway One. Just make sure he doesn't survive, and that no one knows it was you that told him to go through there ("Yeah, I just heard about John. Terrible thing, too — you know, I warned him that the werewolves watch US 19, but he wouldn't listen...").

A final disclaimer: What I said above is all true, but it's not the whole story. Lupines don't think with a single unified mind. It is possible, albeit unlikely, that two individuals could overcome racial difficulties and become friends. I'm never going to try such a thing, but you may find yourself in a bind sometime. Good luck, you betcha.

## DISCIPLINES

### ANIMALISM

The Animalism Discipline is, naturally, one of the Gangrel's strongest links to the Beast Within. At the earliest levels of ability, the Gangrel interact with literal representations of the Beast — animals and insects. Advancing in power, the vampire affects the abstract Beast (although any Gangrel who heard you refer to the Beast Within as "abstract" might well tie your esophagus in knots as an object lesson), the primal nature common to animals, humans and vampires.

The most practical use of *Animalism* is feeding. The thrill of the hunt may be addictive and the blood of humans more tasty, but the ability to call four-legged supper to you using *Beckoning* is invaluable to a hurt or otherwise indisposed vampire. Animalism grants both the ability to attract animal companions and ghouls and to call those same animals for sustenance. This concept may cause some cognitive dissonance to coddled humans who buy nicely wrapped packages of meat in a well-lit supermarket, but to farmers, hunters and vampires the world over it's completely natural. Animals can be warm and snuggly, but when the food runs out it's you or them. The red hunger eventually breaks even the most fastidious human habits. These same basic abilities can be used offensively, as well. Imagine, if you will, the pest control problem suffered by the Eastern European Tremere, having earned the ire of the Gangrel, *Nosferatu* and *Tzimisce* — all users of Animalism.

The Gangrel are very fond of *Subsume the Spirit*, and sometimes even call upon it as entertainment, for the simple joy of seeing, smelling and tasting with an animal's senses. The delight and terror of safely seeing the sunrise again can be freeing — or it can hurl even the most practical Gangrel into the throes of depression. The Gangrel usually don't mind the side effects of frequent use of this power — the tendency to act like an animal. They make allowances for such behavior among themselves, as many of their number have similar derangements, and they learn to modify their conduct for outsiders — by possessing appropriate animals, if necessary. A Gangrel about to do a bit of investigation, for example, might possess a magpie to acquire its curious habits, while another Gangrel going to visit the prince might possess a wolf to ensure that his animal quirks include proper deference to authority.

### QUELL THE HERD (ANIMALISM LEVEL SIX)

This power functions along the same lines as *Quell the Beast* — the Gangrel asserts her will over mortal animals (or humans), subduing their Beasts with the terrifying power of her own. Passionate, powerful emotions, or even simple attempts to assert individuality or will are squelched, rendering those affected apathetic and lethargic for the duration. Multiple targets may be affected; the only requirement is that the individuals must be able to see or hear the Gangrel. It may be necessary in some extreme situations to get the targets' attention, but that is not likely to be difficult for a monster of this power.

**System:** The player rolls Strength + Intimidation (difficulty 7) — the Gangrel always forces the Beast into submission through fear. This is an extended action requiring as many total successes as the target has Willpower (each individual target is cowed as soon as his Willpower is reached). The Gangrel may subdue twice her Willpower rating in animals and/or humans. If the crowd, herd or pack is too large for the vampire to subdue them all, the individuals with the lowest Willpower scores are necessarily affected first. Failure on any roll in the sequence means that the vampire must re-accumulate successes, but those individuals already subdued remain so. A botch on any roll in the sequence means that the previously subdued creatures seethe violently into frenzy — they immediately attack the Gangrel who tried to knuckle them under, or anything that stands in the way.

When a mortal's beast is cowed, he can no longer use or regain Willpower. He ceases all mental and physical struggles, not even defending himself if assaulted (the Storyteller may allow a Willpower roll if the mortal's life is threatened). To recover from this power, the animal or human rolls Willpower (difficulty 6) once per day until he accumulates enough successes to equal the Gangrel's

## OPTIONAL SYSTEMS FOR ANIMALISM

Storytellers may choose to allow the following modifications to Animalism as written in *Vampire: The Masquerade*. Or, they may not — players are hereby advised to ask nicely if they see an effect they like. Note that all of these powers build upon the extant levels of Animalism — Storytellers who do not wish those Kindred wielding the Discipline to have more potency should disallow these options.

### THE UPRIGHT ANIMAL

Some Gangrel *antitribu* and independents following Paths of Enlightenment have claimed the ability to use Animalism on humans. For example, some Gangrel insist that they have called the homeless to a secluded haven, or spoken intelligibly to a human while wearing an animal form. Kindred have long expressed their contempt for the kine (literally, cattle), so this success may not be surprising. Storytellers will want to think carefully about allowing this option to be used in their chronicles; it helps to starkly illumine the vampire's place in the grand scheme, but it is also a capability that may be abused. Also, referring to the less fortunate as animals isn't particularly enlightened, though it may serve the story. If this option is allowed, the difficulty of such tasks should increase sharply.

#### Quell the Beast (Animalism Level Three)

The Beast Within of supernatural creatures is far more resilient and stubborn than the Beast of a normal mortal. Vampires, Lupines, fae, the strange undead of the East and other unusual creatures will never be cowed by the use of this power, but the violent extremes of their behavior may be limited. Storytellers may allow Gangrel using this ability to attempt to pull any supernatural entity out of a frenzylike state using the same system as to subdue a mortal.

#### Subsume the Spirit (Animalism Level Four)

Multiple successes with this power allow the use of various mental and spiritual Disciplines while in the host animal's body. At the Storyteller's discretion, the player may instead use these successes to directly reduce the number of Willpower points that must be spent to completely overcome the power's aftereffects. Particularly generous Storytellers may allow the player to allocate the extra successes on the fly, and to use the successes that remain when the power is terminated toward reducing the Willpower expenditure.

#### Drawing Out the Beast (Animalism Level Five)

The Gangrel generally understand the Beast Within. At the Storyteller's discretion, losing the Beast when the subject of this power leaves the Gangrel's line of sight or hearing is only a temporary inconvenience, as there is probably no place the Beast would rather be. This may not always hold true — other Gangrel, members of clans with Animalism or (gulp) Lupines may provide comfortable homes for the Beast. A wise Gangrel does not use this power on anyone she suspects might be as feral as she.

Willpower. Kindred are not affected by this power, generally, but their ghoul retainers are.

**MET System:** Make a Social Challenge simultaneously against any number of targets, up to twice your current Willpower. Use the Mob Scene rules in *Laws of the Night*, p. 196 — bid Traits and resolve the simultaneous challenges as if you were attacking multiple targets in physical combat. As with *Quell the Beast*, targets who fail to resist cannot use Willpower Traits and gain *Submissive* x 2 for the rest of the night.

### STAMPEDE (ANIMALISM LEVEL SEVEN)

A deep, innate knowledge of animal instinct allows the Gangrel to trigger a very specific fear in his victims — a unthinking panic that pushes hundreds of creatures into headlong flight. This ability only works on large groups of people; too few, and the aggregate fear will not be enough to override sensible plans of action. Also, the crowd or herd must be already agitated by some mundane occurrence, such as the smell of a large predator, a lost football

game by the home team or a shortage of this year's fad toy during prime shopping season. (The Gangrel may *cause* the "mundane" situation — by being the large predator, influencing the outcome of the soccer match, or waylaying the toys — but this is not necessary or even wise.) Once this power takes hold, its victims will flee until they escape the vampire's influence or until they are rendered unable to run.

**System:** This power must be activated within sight of a crowd of roughly 50 agitated mortals (the Storyteller may allow this power to be used on smaller groups of *really* pissed-off mortals). The player rolls Stamina + Animal Ken (difficulty 7). The resulting waves of terror roll 50 yards in all directions from the Gangrel for each success achieved. Any unsettled mortal within this radius will immediately flee toward the nearest escape or exit unless the Gangrel chooses to direct the Stampede by force of will. The vampire may set a direction or path for the fleeing multitudes, but may not change or alter it once the



flight has begun. Members of the Stampede will ignore many potential sources of danger, such as running into the road or through a firing range, but will not take obviously suicidal actions like leaping off tall cliffs or skyscrapers. In some cases, however, the crazed mob will not see potential danger in time — or be forced into it anyway by the pressure of the crowd behind them.

Mortals who were not initially affected may be caught up physically or emotionally in the tide, as the Gangrel's projected Beast wreaks havoc for a scene unless he chooses to end the madness earlier. Upon leaving the affected area, *mortals may recover their senses and stop their mad rush*. If the area is bottlenecked, however, such as a long hallway or valley, the mortals may opt to continue fleeing rather than be trampled. It is worth noting that this power can go awry, even without a rolled botch — the power of hundreds of Beasts, even those of mortals, can be too much for the vampire to control. Animals pushed too hard may frenzy, and people have a disturbing tendency to riot.


**MET System:** Make a Static Social Challenge against a number of Traits equal to the highest Willpower of anyone in the target crowd. The Stampede affects everyone within 50 yards of you; each additional Social Trait you spend extends the range another 50 yards. Individuals whose Willpower is equal to or less than half your Social Trait total succumb automatically. Individuals whose Willpower is at least half your Social Traits may spend a point of Willpower to make a Static Social Challenge against your Social Trait total; if they succeed, they resist the urge to Stampede. Characters whose Willpower equals or exceeds your Social Trait total may make the same test without spending a point of Willpower.

#### CRIMSON FURY (ANIMALISM LEVEL EIGHT)

This power is the subject of much rumor and conjecture, as it has very little visible effect. Upon reaching this level of mastery, the Gangrel may choose to allow his Beast to roam freely through his veins. His blood causes *frenzy in mortals and vampires who taste it*. Should a diablerist successfully consume the Gangrel's soul, she may well meet a grisly end as the Gangrel's Beast eats her away from the inside.

**System:** This power is activated once, when the Gangrel learns it. It cannot be turned off. The smallest taste of the vampire's vitae causes agitation in the taster, who must make a Self-Control roll (difficulty 7) or frenzy immediately. This applies to newly created childer, ghouls, attackers who bite and any vampires who would drink from the Gangrel. This is the equivalent of a warning shot for would-be diablerists. Should the attacker resist the urge to frenzy, she may continue to drink as normal, but the supernatural agitation she experiences should be a clear sign that something is unusual about this vitae. If the attacker succumbs to the frenzy, she must spend a Willpower point for each turn she continues to drink.





Should the diablerist be successful, she immediately suffers a +2 difficulty on all frenzy rolls for a duration determined by the Storyteller. She must also make an opposed Willpower roll against her victim's Beast (which has the same Willpower rating that the now-deceased vampire had). The loser of this contest forfeits one permanent Willpower point. This contest takes place every month for the first year past the diablerie and once a year thereafter. As the diablerist loses Willpower, she becomes more feral and impulsive (this should be roleplayed, and the Storyteller should feel free to require frequent Self-Control rolls from the diablerist's player). If the diablerist loses her last Willpower point, she becomes a crazed, bestial monster (and a Storyteller character). If the invading Beast loses its last Willpower point, it becomes quiescent, ceding victory to the diablerist. The evidence of diablerie in the perpetrator's aura persists until the Beast is subdued.

Humanity or Path rating loss may result from the actions the "possessed" diablerist takes, but they are not lost as a direct result of this power.

Gangrel legends suggest that some incredibly powerful "victims" of diablerie have eaten their way through their attackers, consuming the diablerist's soul in turn, and then taken over the new body. This is not the normal result of this power, but the rumors do circulate....

**MET System:** Anyone feeding on you must make a Self-Control Test against four Traits to avoid entering frenzy. Anyone attempting to diablerize you must spend one Willpower point each turn for the duration of the attempt. If someone does successfully diablerize you, the diablerist suffers a permanent one-Trait penalty on all future frenzy checks. (A vampire who reaches Self-Control 1 falls into immediate Wassail then, instead of doing so upon reaching Self-Control 0.) The diablerist must also make a series of Willpower Tests against her own Beast, which gains (for this purpose) the Willpower total of the vampire who used *Crimson Frenzy*. The loser of each challenge loses a point of permanent Willpower, until the diablerist or her Beast loses control altogether. The diablerist must make one of these Willpower Tests each week for the first year after diablerie, once per month during the second year, and once per year thereafter.

#### EYES OF THE FOREST (ANIMALISM LEVEL NINE)

This awe-inspiring power is at the root of many folk tales about brooding forests and forbidding mountains. The vampire inters herself in the ground of her chosen domain, spreading her physical and spiritual self through the area. Unlike a vampire using Earth Meld, the Gangrel cannot be simply dug out of the ground. The animals and even insects within the area serve as the Gangrel's eyes and ears, providing her with an intimate knowledge of the nighttime goings-on of her domain.

**System:** This power costs six blood points to activate and it lasts as long as the Gangrel wishes to remain beneath her domain. The area itself should be relatively well-defined geographically, although it can be quite large: a mountain or valley, an isolated wood, a plateau. The vampire sees and hears everything within the enclosed area through the animals and insects that inhabit it. Additionally, the Gangrel may use mental Disciplines that do not require physical or eye contact to initiate. While the power is active, it is impossible to attack the Gangrel directly. Significant damage to her domain, however — fires, strip mining, explosives, chemical contaminants — will also damage the vampire, and are likely to drive her from the ground.

The area under the Gangrel's influence reflects the vampire's nature. Even the most cheerful wood during daylight becomes a place of terror for mere mortals when the sun sets.

Should two masters of Animalism somehow "claim" the same area, the Cainite with the greatest Willpower achieves success. This may result in an established Kindred being forced to rise and flee the area, or it might rouse the other Kindred on a quest for vengeance on the trespasser.

#### FORTITUDE

Fortitude needs little discussion, but that is not to say that the Gangrel take their preternatural hardiness for granted. Any vampire who has ever escaped a forest fire, caught an unexpected glimpse of the desert sun over the rise of a dune or narrowly avoided destruction at the claws of a Lupine knows how vital this simple Discipline is. To add a little spice to the issue, note that Fortitude's protection against fire and the sun counters the apocryphal curse of the angels. Some might suggest that the use of Fortitude in this manner is sacrilegious or blasphemous, but the Gangrel aren't the type to go belly-up in the sunlight just to appease some legendary holy guy with a sword.

Gangrel elders have developed some unusual extensions of the basic Fortitude ability to protect and fortify. These powers protect the senses, the mind and the spirit instead of the physical body.

#### SENSORY SHIELD (FORTITUDE LEVEL SIX)

A Gangrel using this power supernaturally hardens his senses against injurious input. The vampire cannot be blinded by spotlights or sudden bursts of radiance, or deafened by explosions or gunfire; even his capacity to withstand pain is improved. His eyes, ears, nose, and open wounds glow with an eerie light while this power is active.

**System:** Spending two blood points activates this power for a scene. Mundane sources of overwhelming sensory input, such as searchlights, muzzle flash or pepper spray have no effect, even if sensory-enhancing powers





like Heightened Senses are in use. The effects of supernatural sensory attacks or unusual circumstances (like being at ground zero for a massive explosion) may be soaked with the vampire's Fortitude dice, with each success reducing the effect or duration of the sensory damage, or negating it all together. In addition, the Gangrel's wound penalties are reduced by two; he feels no pain whatsoever until he reaches the Crippled level, when he runs into only a three-dice penalty. At the end of the scene, wound penalties for all accumulated damage are applied as normal.

The phosphorescent glow streaming from the vampire's orifices and wounds is nearly impossible to hide, and inflicts a two-dice penalty on social interactions with mortals (other than intimidation).

**MET System:** Spend two Blood Traits. You become immune for one hour to normally overwhelming sensory input — searchlights, gunfire, pepper spray and the like — even if you're using *Heightened Senses* and other powers that increase your vulnerability to sensory overload. You take two fewer Traits' penalties from wounds than usual while *Sensory Shield* remains in effect; any damage you suffer during the hour takes full effect when *Sensory Shield* wears off. You may make a Static Test of your levels of *Fortitude* against the Trait penalty imposed by particularly severe environmental problems, like being at ground zero of a massive explosion. If you succeed, you can reduce the penalty by one Trait, plus one per Physical Trait you spend.


Your wounds and orifices glow while *Sensory Shield* remains in effect; you suffer a two-Trait penalty in all Social Challenges against mortals during this time.

#### RESILIENT MIND (FORTITUDE LEVEL SEVEN)

At this level of accomplishment, the Gangrel extends her preternatural resistance to the very depths of her personality. Upon acquiring this power, the vampire may suddenly shed centuries of paranoia, tics, quirks and other perturbations that have accumulated in the cobwebby recesses of her brain. Additionally, it becomes more difficult to use mental Disciplines against the vampire. Unfortunately, this mental stability comes at a cost to the Gangrel; upon learning this power, the vampire must acquire physical animal flaws exclusively.

**System:** Upon learning this power, the Gangrel makes a Willpower roll (difficulty 7). For each success, the vampire may choose to eliminate one derangement or two animal behavior flaws (any Social Attribute points lost due in whole or part to those flaws remain lost). This effect of the power occurs only once and is immediate.

The vampire permanently gains three extra dice to resist the effects of any mind-altering Discipline or magic. This bonus does not apply to Presence or other Disciplines that affect the emotions.



Finally, if the vampire gains a derangement for any reason after learning this power, the player may immediately make a Willpower roll (difficulty 6). If she achieves three successes, the derangement persists through the night and the following day, but is sloughed off as the vampire rises with the sunset. Willpower may not be spent on this roll.

**MET System:** When you learn this power, make an Extended Static Willpower Test against eight Traits. Each success lets you choose one derangement or two animal-behavior flaws to discard (the Social Traits lost to these flaws remain lost).

You permanently gain three bonus Traits in challenges to resist mind-altering Disciplines and magic, though you are not immune to *Presence* and other powers that affect the emotions rather than the intellect. If you develop a derangement, you may make an Static Willpower Test against seven Traits. (The Trait bonus applies to resisting the circumstances that forced the derangement on you, but not to this test to cure it.) If you succeed, spend three Mental Traits. The derangement remains in effect that night and through the next day, then vanishes on the following sunset. You may not spend Willpower for retests in this challenge.

#### KING OF THE MOUNTAIN (FORTITUDE LEVEL EIGHT)

The most formidable opponents are not only hard to hurt, they are also hard to even touch. This power combines some of the effects of the Personal Armor power with an aura of resistance that impedes attackers, making it trivially easy for the Gangrel to block the incoming attacks of numerous opponents.

**System:** The Gangrel spends three blood points to activate this power, which lasts for a scene. The vampire does not gain the benefits of this power when he actively attacks. Instead, the vampire must block or dodge all incoming attacks, and may use his full dice pool against each attack. Every time an attack is made with a weapon against the Gangrel, his player rolls Fortitude (difficulty 6) in addition to the Dexterity + Brawl roll to block. If the Fortitude roll grants more successes than the attacker rolled, the weapon used in the attack shatters on contact with the vampire (mystically imbued weapons may be resistant to this effect at the Storyteller's discretion). If the roll to block succeeds, the vampire suffers no damage from the attack (if the block fails, the vampire may soak the damage normally, using Fortitude).

Hand-to-hand attacks may also be blocked. Successful hand-to-hand attacks inflict the attacker's damage on both the attacker and the vampire using this power. Blocked hand-to-hand attacks inflict the attacker's damage only on herself. In both cases, the damage may be soaked normally. Additionally, the defending vampire

does not suffer the standard multiple-attacker penalty, no matter how many assailants he faces.

**MET System:** Spend three Blood Traits to activate this power, which lasts for one hour. You get full Trait total for all defensive actions, rather than splitting your Trait pool. (This benefit doesn't extend to offensive actions, which suffer the usual penalties for multiple actions.)

Any attacker must succeed in a two-part challenge. First, make the initial Physical Challenge as usual. The vampire defending with *King of the Mountain* wins on ties. If the attacker fails the initial challenge, his weapon shatters (unless enchanted or supernaturally reinforced) and he suffers the damage that would normally go to the defender. If the attacker ties, his weapon shatters, but he escapes personal damage. If the attacker wins, then he must make a Simple Test. Only if that succeeds does he actually inflict damage on the defender. (Vampires with Superior *Potence* get to skip this second test and inflict damage if they succeed in the initial attack.)

## PROTEAN

The Protean Discipline is native to the Gangrel. They are the only vampires to whom the Discipline comes as primarily as the need to drink blood and avoid sunlight. The Discipline is a primal expression of the Beast Within, a harnessing of the feral power in every vampire but especially abundant in the Gangrel.

If the world were a fair place, the vampires of the other clans would thank the Gangrel for discovering such potential in the vampiric form. Over the millennia, the abilities granted by the Protean Discipline have saved countless vampires from Final Death by providing sight in the blackest nights, protection from enemies and protection from the deadly rays of the sun. In the nights of the First City, the Gangrel freely shared to any who would learn the art of coaxing and threatening the Beast into obedience. Any vampire who wished to travel more than a night away from his haven learned, as a matter of necessity, how to meld with the earth at the coming of dawn.

Since those earliest times, most Gangrel have become miserly in sharing their secrets. The other clans have carefully passed their second-hand knowledge of the art from sire to childe, or else offered something of value to the Gangrel in exchange for instruction. The Discipline has also become less vital to survival — covered carriages, trains, automobiles and other modern conveyances have reduced the risks of travel for even the weakest vampire.

Still, the Gangrel hold tightly to the Protean Discipline, teaching it carefully to their broods and pushing the limits of their abilities as they make their way alone. The Gangrel know that Protean is not about convenience — it is about survival, now and always.





## ANIMAL FORMS

The Gangrel display their mastery of the Protean ability most dramatically with the Shape of the Beast. This ability usually grants the vampire the shape of a wolf or bat. In fact, vampires who are not Gangrel can only ever take these two forms. Gangrel vampires are not limited in the same manner, however — they take the shapes of lions, eagles, bears, crows and uncountable others.

Some restrictions do exist to the Gangrel's shapechanging ability. First, the Gangrel must establish her forms upon learning the Shape of the Beast, and she may not assume other forms. Second, the vampire's forms must always reflect the twin urges of the Beast: fight or flight.

The Gangrel's "fight" form is large and naturally well-equipped for hunting and fighting. The animals represented are usually predators, but may also be scavengers — all consume the flesh of others to survive. The animal shape assumed is hale and apparently healthy, and generally tends to large size for its type — although in the case of animals of great size, such as a grizzly bear or sharks among the Mariners, the Gangrel may even be small compared to normal creatures. The City Gangrel of the Sabbat are a large exception to the above. They may assume animal forms that are mangy and downright diseased-looking, such as city mutts or rats of uncommon size. The camouflage provided by such nasty-looking forms far outweighs the flea collar jokes these Gangrel must put up with.

It has become more common in recent years for the rare Gangrel to assume the gigantic form of an animal that does not ever reach such size in nature — spiders, wasps, scorpions, rats, hyenas and others. This hasn't caused a great outcry among the clan's elders. It is possible that these forms were common in the distant past, and faded from use for some strange reason. It has been the cause of some social upheaval among the young and active members of the clan; Gangrel who assume these exotic forms, particularly the insectoid varieties, often have very strange, even alien ways of thinking and behaving. These Gangrel sometimes migrate toward the Sabbat, where they quickly leave their Humanity behind and turn their terrifying hive mentality to the service of the sect.

It is rumored that in the past, the Gangrel could assume the forms of noble prey animals, such as the stag or the horse. Such Gangrel, if they exist, have not been seen in the Final Nights, and the modern Gangrel would be hard-pressed to see any need to transform themselves into the eaten instead of the eaters.

The Gangrel's "flight" form need not literally be a winged creature. It may be any form best suited for running away, whether that method is taking to the air, scrambling through tunnels, or simply fleeing pell-mell on four legs. Even though the focus of this form is on raw survival and not sustenance, the Gangrel only assume the forms of

predators or scavengers — the nature of the vampire's Beast is inextricably linked to the need to consume others, even if the other in question is a bug.

Actual flight is usually the best method for escape, in addition to being incredibly useful for scouting and information gathering. The bat remains a popular form for the Gangrel, along with birds like ravens, crows and falcons. Particularly warlike Gangrel may take the forms of hawks, eagles and even vultures, but these relatively huge "flight" forms lose some of the escape benefits that come with a smaller shape.

Earthbound "flight" forms rely either on speed or the ability to slip through small spaces to escape. Snakes, gophers, house cats and rats are common forms. At least one Gangrel in the American South has been known to take on a possum shape, which, while eminently flawed against intelligent enemies, serves the purpose when dealing with lesser creatures. Like the "fight" forms, these animal forms are usually apparently in the prime of health, but they are not unusually large for their type — that would defeat the purpose.

## ADOPT A PET

Sabbat Gangrel, both City and Country, are fond of a game usually called "Adopt a Pet." The vampire assumes a suitable animal form, such as that of a dog or cat, and makes soulful eyes at nighttime passerby until some soft-hearted animal lover takes her home. The game usually ends before sunrise with a houseful of victims bloodily slain in their beds — the Gangrel rarely have the patience to carry on the charade for longer than one night. A lot of prestige can be gained by playing along for longer periods of time; the risks of getting caught in daylight are not small ("Why does Patches sleep in the basement all day, Mommy?"), and the results of a carefully planned assault can be spectacular. Inciting domestic violence and a shoot-out with the police, or taking down several family generations at the Thanksgiving dinner table, all earn a great deal of respect. "Son of Sam" is the height to which all participants aspire. A game of "Adopt a Pet" that goes wrong will get the Gangrel heckled forever; Sabbat Gangrel spread apocryphal tales of vampire mutts hauled to the vet to be "fixed."

## SHAPE OF THE BEAST REVISITED (PROTEAN LEVEL FOUR)

This version of Shape of the Beast applies only to vampires of Clan Gangrel. The Gangrel may transform into a "fight" form and a "flight" form; these forms are chosen when the power is acquired and may not be changed. The vampire keeps his own personality, memories, and skills and can also use the natural abilities of the

animal form — these are increased physical attributes in the “fight” form, and escape abilities in the “flight” form. Both animal forms grant improved senses; the Gangrel may choose to reduce the difficulty of Perception rolls in one appropriate sense group — sight, hearing, or smell/taste — by two in his animal forms (the sense group may be different in the two forms).

**System:** The character spends one blood point to assume either animal form. The transformation requires three turns to complete (spending additional blood points reduces the transformation time by one turn per point spent, to a minimum of one). The Gangrel remains in his beast form until the next dawn, unless he wishes to change back sooner. Clothing and small personal possessions transform with the Gangrel.

The Gangrel’s “fight” form grants a total of five additional Attribute points split among the vampire’s Physical Attributes. These points must be applied to at least two of the Attributes. For the standard wolf form, these are allotted as +1 to Strength, +2 to Dexterity, and +2 to Stamina. A bear form may increase the Gangrel’s Strength by +3 and Stamina by +2. These points must be allocated when the “fight” animal form is chosen and may not be thereafter rearranged. In addition, the Gangrel’s bite inflicts Strength aggravated damage, and claws inflict Strength +1 aggravated damage (these damage values may be adjusted by the Storyteller as necessary to reflect the animal’s primary mode of attack — an alligator form may allow a greater bite bonus, but no claw damage). Running speed is usually doubled, unless an alternate method of locomotion like swimming is available.

The Gangrel’s “flight” form reduces the vampire’s Strength to 1, but allows him to fly at a speed equal to his running movement rate (Gangrel whose “flight” forms do not fly may take a +2 bonus to Dexterity). In addition, attacks made against the “flight” form are made at +2 difficulty due to the animal’s small size (those Gangrel who take large forms like the eagle may keep their full Strength by sacrificing this size bonus).

While in the animal’s shape, the vampire can use any Discipline he possesses except Necromancy, Serpents, Thaumaturgy or Vicissitude. The vampire loses all use of his hands and all facility of speech — the vampire must use the Animalism Discipline ability Feral Whispers speak to animals. All Attributes and Abilities granted by animal forms are subject to the Storyteller’s approval and modification at the time of definition.

It is curious to note that animal features acquired by a Gangrel after a frenzy do not necessarily conform to those of her beast forms. Most Gangrel seem to be patchworks of feral features rather than changing to resemble one specific animal.

Dr. Netchurch:

Tonight 20 years of careful experimentation have come to fruition in a most disappointing way. I have been attempting for years to learn more about our Protean Discipline through scientific means. My first experiments were conducted on my own childer with the purpose of learning more about how we of Clan Gangrel assume — or choose, perhaps — our animal forms. These experiments met with a measured degree of success. It appears that the form a given subject assumes can be influenced to some degree, which thereby implies a similar degree of conscious or unconscious choice in the matter.

My experiment of tonight was an attempt to learn more about Protean by studying how it is practiced by other clans. To wit: I have made an attempt to discern why vampires of other clans seem quite incapable of transforming themselves into any shape other than that of a wolf or a bat. To do this, I procured an infant immediately after birth, and raised the infant to young adulthood in a precisely controlled environment. My subject (I have named her Anna) was never permitted to see or hear of the existence of either the bat or the wolf.

(Regrettably, this has left her education sparse in terms of both biology and literature, but I believe I have done well by her in terms of mathematical education. But I digress.)

Upon the reaching the mature age of 14, the subject was brought into the vampiric state by a member of Clan Toreador, with all necessary approvals and considerations obtained by me (at considerable cost, I might add). I then personally taught the young vampire the Protean Discipline, refraining at all times from any mention of the wolf or bat forms. Anna knew only that on achieving a certain degree of control over her form, she would assume an animal shape.

This night, under laboratory conditions, Anna transformed herself into a wolf. At times like this I despair of describing our condition and our abilities in any terms that could be considered scientific. I cannot explain or discern any quality of the blood that would allow this control to the Gangrel yet to no others. I console myself with the thought that one subject does not constitute a full study.


I will procure a fresh infant and begin my study again. Perhaps, if I am feeling unscientific in 14 years, I will instead choose to experiment with the strange qualities of the blood of the 14th and 15th generations.

I must leave my assistants to enter the formal lab notes on this experiment. Anna is upset with me for some reason, and her Toreador sire has abandoned her simply because she does not have the ability to appear as an exotic creature. I am a poor scientist, I fear; I have become attached to my subject.

Sincerely,

Dr. Allan J. Woodstock





It is often difficult to predict what forms a Gangrel will assume when she learns Shape of the Beast. Three factors play an important role in the process: the vampire's personality, his sire's animal forms and the local environment at the time of the vampire's Embrace.

The vampire's personality and beliefs are perhaps the most important factor — after all, the animal forms assumed using Shape of the Beast are an expression of the Beast Within. Vampires with strong personality traits often transform into the animal most often attributed that trait by superstition: wolves with cunning, lions with courage, reptiles with callousness, ravens with curiosity, etc. These superstitions are culturally based, and their interpretations will naturally change between cultures. Individuals who felt a strong affinity with a particular animal when alive, who considered the animal to be a totem or protective spirit, will usually transform into that animal upon learning Shape of the Beast.

The role of the sire is a matter of some dispute among Gangrel researchers. It is possible that the sire's influence affects the childe's expectations; if the childe sees her sire transform into a tiger, she may assume that she will do the same so completely that her assumption becomes reality. The Discipline exhibits lines of descent, however, in which grandsire, sire and childe all share the same animal forms. Given the tenacity of the Gangrel blood, elders interested in such matters do not consider it to be out of the question that such preferences are a factor of blood.

The influence of the local environment can perhaps be credited with the popularity of the wolf and bat forms even among the Gangrel —wolves and bats of varying species populate the globe. The vampire's Beast, in the absence of overriding personality or blood-related factors, provides the vampire with the most survivable form available in the surrounds; a form that provides not only hunting or escape, but also camouflage, offers an undeniable advantage. It is unlikely that a vampire raised and Embraced in the Great Plains will transform into a tiger or a shark. The forms of wolf and hawk, in this instance, are both useful and safe. They are native creatures suited to the environment.

**MET System:** Decide on a "fight" form and a "flight" form when the vampire acquires this power. Spend a Blood Trait to active either one. The transformation takes three turns (two if you spend a second Blood Trait, and only one if you spend three Blood Traits) and lasts until dawn or earlier if the vampire chooses to regain human form.

Each form adds five bonus Traits. They must be divided among at least two of the categories given in **Laws of the Night, Revised Edition**, p. 80-83: Strength-related, Dexterity-related, Stamina-related, Perception-related and Wits-related. The classic wolf form, for instance, gains *Quick* and *Lithe* (Dexterity-related); *Tireless* (Stamina-

related); *Attentive* (Perception-related); and *Alert* (Wits-related). The usual bear form adds *Brawny*, *Ferocious*, and *Tough* (Strength-related), and *Enduring* and *Robust* (Stamina-related). Assign the specific Trait bonuses when choosing the forms. They remain fixed thereafter.

Your animal form's bite does two levels of aggravated damage, and claws do one level of aggravated damage. In some cases, the Storyteller may wish to adjust this: an alligator form might have a stronger bite but no claws, for instance. The animal form runs at double your normal speed, or at normal speed with an additional mode like swimming or burrowing.

The flight form has a limit of three Physical Traits, chosen from among your regular Trait list, and flies at your running speed. Quick but ground-bound forms get three bonus Traits for purposes of initiative and evasion. Attacks made against the flight form incur a two-Trait penalty, though you may choose to keep all Strength-related Traits and sacrifice this advantage.

The flight form allows you to declare Fair Escape once at least five paces from the nearest pursuer, unless the pursuer has more levels of heightened speed.

### SHAPE MASTERY (PROTEAN LEVEL SIX)

Gangrel who have mastered this level of shapeshifting may use the power of their blood to force other shapechangers to resume their normal forms. For the power to function, the Gangrel must have some portion of her blood in contact with the target, whether unwillingly or willingly. (One Gangrel wag has referred to using this power on the Tzimisce Bloodform as "throwing good blood after bad.")

**System:** The Gangrel must first place her blood on the target. If the target has successfully attacked the Gangrel with natural weapons, or with a short weapon like a knife, this requirement is fulfilled. Otherwise, the Gangrel must smear at least one blood point worth of her vitae on the target by making a successful attack or sprinkle it surreptitiously on an unsuspecting target. This may be done in advance, but the blood must still be wet for the power to work. The Gangrel activates the power of her blood by spending an additional blood point and making a Perception + Survival roll (difficulty 7). Two successes are required to force the target out of his shapeshifted form.

The power persists for a full scene, or until the target removes the Gangrel's vitae from his body, whichever is sooner. (The amount of time necessary to clean up the blood is subject to the Storyteller's discretion, taking into account the quantity of blood and the availability of cleaning supplies. The process should take at least one full turn of action even with large quantities of water available.) If the target has actually consumed the Gangrel's blood, tough luck — the power will persist for the full scene. The target must reactivate his shapeshifting ability

when and if he chooses to resume his adapted form, incurring any associated costs.

This power is effective on the shapeshifted forms of the following Disciplines at Levels Six and below: Obtenebration, Protean, Serpentinis, Thaumaturgy, and Vicissitude. Most importantly, it also confounds the native shapechanging abilities of Lupines and other werereatures.

**MET System:** Apply a Blood Trait's worth of vitae onto the target, as discussed in the main text. A successful Physical Challenge allows you to pin a target long enough to smear on blood, and a Mental Challenge lets you sneak up to pour blood on an unwitting target. Spend a second Blood Trait. Make a Social Challenge. If it succeeds, the target must revert to human form and stay that way for one hour or until the blood is entirely removed, whichever comes first.

#### ANIMAL SWARM (PROTEAN LEVEL SEVEN)


Upon activating this power, the Gangrel dissolves into a swarm of small creatures such as rats, crows or scorpions. The creatures remain under the Gangrel's control, and he may direct them in unison or as individuals. The vampire may reform from all or any of the creatures, but forfeits the blood carried by any creatures that do not rejoin the whole.

**System:** The Gangrel may disperse into as many creatures as he has blood points, with each creature carrying that one blood point; he may choose to form fewer creatures, in which case the blood points are divided as evenly as possible among them. The creatures may act in concert, or individually follow a simple plan such as "scatter and hide." The Gangrel may pay close attention to only one component creature at a time. For example, he may listen in on a conversation using the body of one rat, while directing the dozen others to keep moving and avoid being seen.

This power lasts until sunrise, or until the Gangrel chooses to retake his humanoid form. At that time, all of the component creatures present are re-absorbed into the Gangrel's body, along with the blood points they carried. If this leaves the vampire with less than three blood points, he must immediately check for frenzy — the Gangrel who is forced to re-incorporate himself from a crow carrying a single point of his blood is potentially in bad shape. Creatures who do not rejoin the Gangrel's body may be reabsorbed through the course of the night. Any creatures left running around at dawn instantly dissolve into small piles of ash and blood, whether they are in direct sunlight or not. The vampire must reform at sunrise, even if only from a single creature, although he may choose which creature to re-incorporate from.







The vampire may use the following Disciplines while in this myriad form: Auspex, Celerity, Fortitude, Obfuscate, and Potence. Any Disciplines that require the expenditure of blood must be fueled from the individual creature that uses the power; component creatures reduced to zero blood points are immediately destroyed.

This power takes one turn to take effect, regardless of the size of the creatures into which the Kindred disperses.

**MET System:** The vampire disperses herself into one small creature per current Blood Trait she possesses, or fewer, larger ones who share the Blood Traits as evenly as possible. The power otherwise works as presented in the main text. This power can be very difficult to simulate in play; Storytellers are advised to think carefully about how a single player can represent a swarm of rats before allowing this into their chronicles.

### MYTHIC FORM (PROTEAN LEVEL EIGHT)

Using this power, the Gangrel transforms himself into a creature of myth, complete with the terrifying abilities that such creatures must have possessed. The mythical beast form usually has roots in the Gangrel's cultural tradition: e.g. ancient Scythian vampires often chose the form of the griffin, Egyptian Gangrel may choose the sphinx, and Native American vampires may opt for the form of the thunderbird. In addition to the great size and terrifying mien of these creatures, the Gangrel also acquires any special abilities commonly attributed to the mythical beast; a griffin, for example, would have the ability to fly and a devastating claw attack.

**System:** The player spends three blood points to trigger the change. The transformation requires three turns (additional blood points may not be spent to speed the change, but the Gangrel may continue to act without penalty as the transformation occurs). The transformation lasts until the next sunrise, or until the vampire voluntarily returns to her natural form. Note that characters hailing from cultures that have no mythic tradition, such as modern American cultures, cannot assume any mythic form.

The mythic beast represented and the Physical Traits of the form must be determined when the vampire first learns this ability, and may not be changed at a later time. The mythic form adds a total of nine points to the character's Physical Attributes; at least +1 must be added to each Physical Attribute. The character also gains two Bruised health levels and two Hurt health levels. The character's powers of perception are greatly enhanced in the mythic form: The vampire gains the effects of the Auspex power Heightened Senses and the Protean power Eyes of the Beast upon assuming the mythic form, along with the drawbacks associated with these powers. While transformed, the character retains the ability to speak, although her voice will be changed to reflect the nature of the assumed form. Finally, the vampire in mythic beast

form radiates an aura of legendary force that acts as the Presence power Awe. Offensive action taken by the vampire nullifies the Awe effect as per the standard rules.

The special abilities of the mythic form are subject to the Storyteller's approval, as they can and should be dramatic and terrifying. As a guideline, the mythic form should have one enhanced movement ability, one defensive ability, several close combat attacks, and one special power, including ranged attacks.

Enhanced movement abilities include flight, swimming, running at incredible speeds or even tunneling.

Armor (3-5 points) is the standard defensive ability, but certain mythic creatures may instead be invulnerable to strictly defined forms of damage (excluding fire, sunlight, and Faith).

Close combat attacks cause aggravated damage at a minimum of Strength +2. Having more than one close combat attack, such as both claws and teeth, does not grant additional combat actions; the vampire must split her dice pools normally, or use Celerity.

Ranged attacks cause three levels of aggravated damage per blood point spent for the attack. The range of such attacks is the vampire's Stamina x 2, and the area of effect is a diameter of her Stamina rating in feet. Dexterity + Athletics (difficulty 6) should be rolled to hit; extra successes do not add to damage.


Other special powers, like the mesmerizing ability of the sphinx's riddle game or the purifying power of the unicorn's horn, must be worked out in detail with the Storyteller on a case-by-case basis.

#### Sample Mythic Form: Dragon

+3 Strength, +2 Dexterity, +4 Stamina. Flight at normal running movement rate. Three dice of armor usable against aggravated damage. Bite and claw attacks at Strength +2 aggravated damage. Fiery breath as per standard ranged attack above.

**MET System:** Spend three Blood Traits to activate this power. The transformation takes three turns; you cannot spend extra blood to hasten it, but can act without penalty during the process.

Choose a mythic creature at the time of transformation; you may only choose *one* mythic form. You have a total of nine bonus Traits to allocate while in mythic form. One of each *must* go in each of the three categories on **Laws of the Night, Revised Edition**, p. 80: Strength-related, Dexterity-related and Stamina-related. Each of the other six can go into one of those three categories; into Miscellaneous Physical-related; into Manipulation-related or Appearance-related; or into Perception-related or Wits-related. You automatically receive two extra Bruised health levels and two extra Hurt levels while in mythic form, along with the effects of *Heightened Senses*, *Eyes of the Beast* and *Awe*. You have a total of three levels of aggravated



damage to inflict in close combat attacks, divided between appropriate natural weapons. A single massive set of jaws might do three levels, or you might choose (for instance) a tail that does two levels and a horn that does one level. You can make one ranged attack per turn, with a Physical Challenge to inflict two levels of aggravated damage per Blood Point spent. This attack has a range in feet equal to your Physical Trait total, and covers an area one foot across for every two Physical Traits you possess (rounded down).

For other effects, see the main text.

This power is, to put mildly, huge. A Storyteller should think long and hard about the effects of having a dragon, thunderbird or dire wolf showing up in game.

#### Sample Mythical Form: Dragon

*Brawny, Tough* (Strength-related), *Graceful, Quick* (Dexterity-related), *Resilient, Robust* (Stamina-related), *Commanding* (Manipulation-related), *Alert, Wily* (Wits-related). Flight at normal running movement rate. Three levels of armor, usable against aggravated damage. Bite and claw attacks for one level of aggravated damage each. Fiery breath as per standard ranged attack, given above.

## COMBINATION DISCIPLINES

Gangrel elders of considerable age and great talent have developed the following abilities that draw on the synergy of two Disciplines used in combination. The abilities below are often passed from one Gangrel to another with absolutely no theoretical underpinnings or particular insight into why they work — just like a driver's ed teacher doesn't need to know how to build a car. The elders undoubtedly keep the best tricks to themselves; even the most egalitarian Gangrel elder secretly dreads the night that his childer come howling for his blood.

#### CLAW IMMUNITY (ANIMALISM ●●, FORTITUDE ●●●●)

Quite a number of Gangrel even of the higher generations have developed the ability to shrug off the natural claw and bite attacks of normal animals; this is not surprising considering the usefulness of the ability. Some vampires have claimed that it even provides some protection against Lupines in their wolf forms — no one has volunteered to go out and field test that assertion, however.

**System:** The player spends two blood points and specifies an animal type: wolf, lion, steer, etc. For the remainder of the scene, the Gangrel receives extra soak dice equal to his Animalism + Fortitude Traits to resist damage from the specified animals (these dice are in addition to the vampire's usual Stamina + Fortitude, i.e. Fortitude is counted twice). Soaking the bite or claw of a wolf-form Lupine may occur, at the Storyteller's discretion, but remember that even in wolf form, those creatures are not truly animals.

It costs 18 experience points to learn this power.

**MET System:** Spend two Blood Traits and specify a type of animal: wolf, deer, bear, etc. Double the effects of *Fortitude* when soaking damage from that type for the next hour. Damage that makes it through these and other defenses remains in effect after *Claw Immunity* wears off, without modification.

#### FLESH WOUND (FORTITUDE ●●, OBFUSCATE ●●●)

This disturbing ability is common among City Gangrel of all generations, regardless of the fact that Fortitude is no longer a clan Discipline for them. Using this power, the Gangrel gives the appearance of taking no damage from attacks that hurt like hell. In reality, it *does* hurt like hell, but the Gangrel maintains a façade of invulnerability that can do much to unnerve opponents. Particularly canny vampires may convince foes that they are, in fact, immune to bullets. Using this power in any of the Sabbat's *ritae*, however, is asking for a beating or worse if the pack priest finds out.

**System:** The player spends one blood point to activate this ability. For the duration of the scene, the Gangrel appears as she did when this power was activated; any wounds or scars already present remain visible. The visible effects of any further damage are mystically omitted from the vampire's appearance — both the wounds themselves, and any logical results, such as limping or leaking blood. This power ends abruptly if the Gangrel reaches the incapacitated health level, or is staked.

In addition to seeming unstoppable, the Gangrel character receives a -2 difficulty to any Subterfuge-oriented rolls concerning her physical capabilities.

It costs 15 experience points to acquire this power.

**MET System:** Spend one Blood Trait. For the next hour, no damage you suffers produces a visible result: no wounds, no limps from lameness, no fountains of blood from inconvenient holes. Characters with *Auspex* may attempt to pierce this with the usual challenge of *Auspex* against *Obfuscate* (see *Laws of the Night, Revised Edition*, p. 137). Bystanders who see particularly ludicrous lack of evidence may attempt a Mental Challenge to see through the illusion. While using *Flesh Wound*, you have a two-Trait bonus to Social Tests related to your physical capabilities.

#### SEE THE REFLECTED FORM (AUSPEX ●●●●, PROTEAN ●●●●)

Those Gangrel who are both incredibly perceptive and have mastered the most basic full-body change become sensitive to the potentiality of shape in others. Using this power, the Gangrel may pull detailed information from his subject's aura. He may see the beast forms of Gangrel or other vampires using Protean; the progression





of forms of the Lupines and other shapechanging beasts; the half-real dream forms of fairies; and the forms that vampires may assume using Disciplines such as Obtenebration, Serpents and Vicissitude. Skilled practitioners may be able to spot such subtle items as which form the subject is most comfortable in, or which is her native form. A few Gangrel have claimed to see the forms a Gangrel child will assume upon learning Shape of the Beast, or even totemic animals in the auras of normal humans.

**System:** The player rolls Perception + Occult (difficulty 7). One success gives the character knowledge of his subject's Protean beast forms, or the most powerful form assumed using another Discipline or ability. Three successes allows the character to see all of his subject's defined forms (if the subject vampire commonly assumes a certain body shape using Vicissitude, that will be seen, but the fact that he stretched his nose like Pinocchio last night will not). Upon reaching five successes, the character may see potential forms, or the emotions connected with the changes in shape at the Storyteller's discretion.

This ability may be resisted with Obfuscate in the usual Auspex vs. Obfuscate manner. Also, this ability does not give any information about the "faces" worn by a vampire with Mask of a Thousand Faces — that ability clouds the mind, and is not a true shapechange.

It costs 24 experience points to learn this power.

**MET System:** Make a Mental Challenge. If you succeed, you can see the target's Protean beast forms, or the most powerful form the target assumes with some other Discipline. You may spend an additional Mental Trait to see all of the character's defined forms, the ones regularly adopted regardless of the Discipline used, and another Mental Trait to see potential forms and emotions connected with the target's shapechanging. *Mask of a Thousand Faces* is not considered a true shapechange, and therefore is not subject to this power.

#### BEAST MELD (ANIMALISM ●●●, PROTEAN ●●●●●●●)

Gangrel this familiar with bestial nature and the malleability of form may hide themselves away in the beasts of the earth, rather than in the earth itself. The vampire does not directly control or possess the animal for this period, but the animal will follow certain pre-set directions or instructions to the best of its ability. This allows the Gangrel remarkable latitude for travel, as the animal's body shields her from the rays of the sun. It is also an exceptionally good way to hide; like with Earth Meld, the vampire's essence is suspended mystically, but the animal's essence enshrouds her, making detection next to impossible without involved thaumaturgical rituals or similarly arcane means.

Some Gangrel put this ability to more violent use in setting up ambushes. More than one poacher of exotic

animals has been sent eternally packing when his fur-bearing prize disgorged a vengeful vampire.

The animal host chosen by the Gangrel is affected by his passenger's nature. The animal avoids bright light where possible, and becomes noticeably bold and aggressive, although it will not frenzy in a vampiric manner. Those creatures that carry Gangrel for decades become legendary and may develop supernatural characteristics; locals may speak of the puma with eerily glowing eyes, or the stag with horns of iron that families have seen for generations.

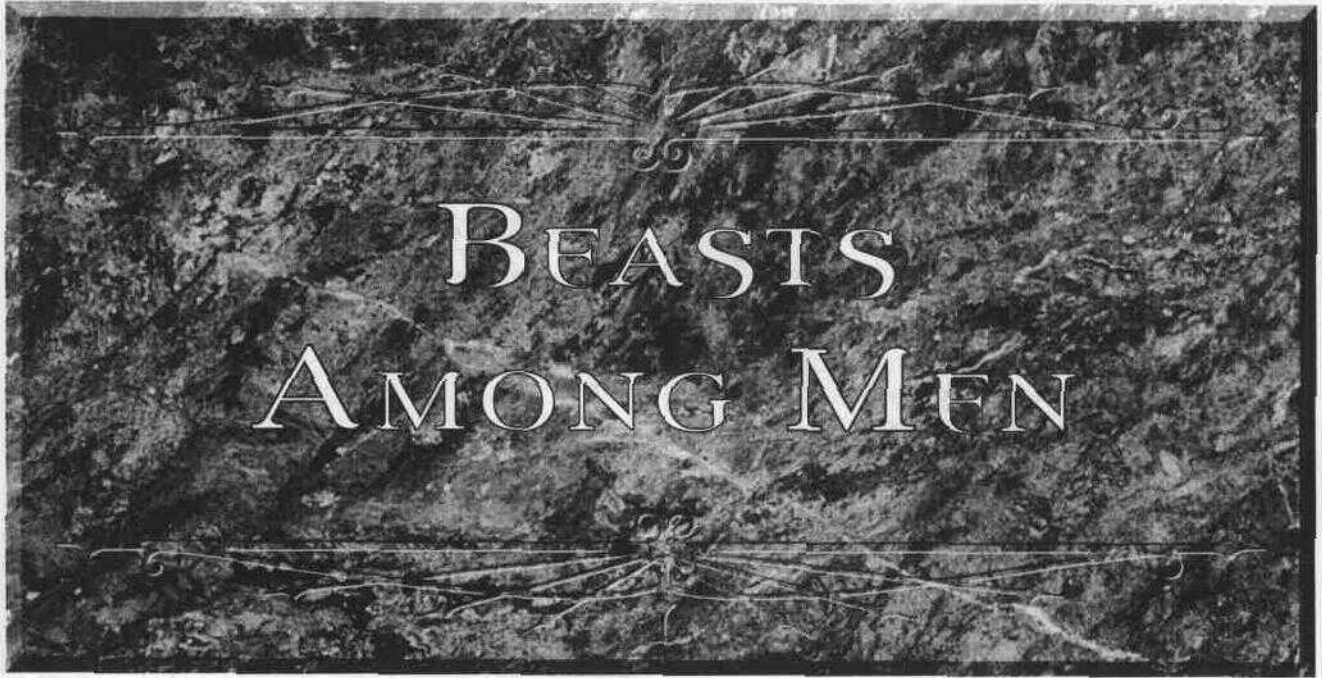
**System:** The character must choose a suitable animal vessel to "ride," one that is large enough to cover at least her smallest beast form as a guideline. The player spends three blood points and makes a Charisma + Animal Ken roll (difficulty 6). The interment is automatic, and the successes on the roll indicate the vampire's degree of success in communicating his wishes to the animal. Three successes are enough to ensure total compliance (within the animal's ability); with only one or two successes, the vampire may find herself somewhere she didn't wish to go, only part way to her destination, or just plain lost. The animal may be instructed to travel to a certain place, to remain in a certain area, or to find a person meeting a simple description.

The vampire must also set a condition for emerging from her animal host, such as "after one week," "when attacked," or "upon reaching my destination" — although the last is dangerous if the Gangrel does not establish sufficient rapport with the creature. The animal host gains the benefit of his rider's Fortitude for purposes of resisting damage. If, however, the animal host is killed by violence, the Gangrel is immediately expelled from the body. Animals will not die of old age while "ridden" by a vampire, but will expire quickly after the vampire's emergence. The Gangrel does not take the damage inflicted on her host unless that damage is caused by fire, in which case she may soak with her Fortitude as normal.

The Gangrel continues to spend one blood point at sunset as is usual. A vampire who drops into torpor due to lack of blood will remain in the animal until awakening, unless the animal is violently killed.

This power costs 30 experience points to learn.

**MET System:** Spend three Blood Traits and make a Physical Challenge. If successful, you merge with the target animal, which must be at least as large as your smallest regular beast form. The animal then behaves normally, unless you make specific effort to control it. Spend one Mental Trait to give general directions, or two Mental Traits to give specific commands. As discussed in the main text, you must also specify a condition upon which you move out of the *Beast Meld*.



*I have lost the immortal part of myself, and what remains is bestial.*

— Othello, Act II, Scene iii

Hundreds of Gangrel lurk in the wild lands of the World of Darkness. Here is just a small sampling.

The 10 characters on the following pages can be used as the basis for players' characters, if a player wishes to use one as such. They can be customized as the player and Storyteller see fit, but currently serve as starting characters. *Mind's Eye Theater conversions* are provided for those players who wish to use these template characters with the **Laws of the Night, Revised Edition** rules in live-action Storytelling.





**BACKGROUNDS**

ALLIES x1 \_\_\_\_\_  
 FAME x1 \_\_\_\_\_  
 RESOURCES x2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 RETAINERS x1 \_\_\_\_\_  
 INFLUENCES \_\_\_\_\_

**PHYSICAL**

AGILE TENDACIOUS x2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 ENERGETIC TOUGH \_\_\_\_\_  
 RUGGED x2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 CHARMATIC MAGNETIC x2 \_\_\_\_\_

**SOCIAL**

FRIENDLY \_\_\_\_\_  
 ALERT \_\_\_\_\_  
 CLEVER \_\_\_\_\_  
 KNOWLEDGEABLE \_\_\_\_\_

**ABILITIES**

ACADEMICS DODGE \_\_\_\_\_  
 ANIMAL KEN x2 SURVIVAL x2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 ATHLETICS \_\_\_\_\_

**DISCIPLINES**

ANIMALISM (FERAL WHISPERS) \_\_\_\_\_  
 BECKONING (FORTITUDE) \_\_\_\_\_  
 FORTITUDE (ENDURANCE) \_\_\_\_\_

**MERITS & FLAWS**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**CONSCIENCE/CONVICTION**  
 ●●●●○

**SELF CONTROL/INSTINCT**  
 ●●●○○

**COURAGE**  
 ●●●●○

**BLOOD**  
 ●●●●●●●●●●○○

**WILLPOWER**  
 ●●○○○○○○○○○○

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHARACTER** Intrepid Explorer

**CHRONICLE** \_\_\_\_\_

**CLAN** Gangrel

**GENERATION** 13th

**AGE** \_\_\_\_\_

**NATURE** Masochist

**DEMEANOR** Visionary

**LAW'S Night**

**BACKGROUNDS**

FAME x2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 GENERATIONS x2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 RESOURCES x1 \_\_\_\_\_

**SOCIAL**

STALWART x2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 NIMBLE TOUGH \_\_\_\_\_  
 ENDURING STEADY \_\_\_\_\_

**PHYSICAL**

ENDURING STEADY \_\_\_\_\_  
 NIMBLE TOUGH \_\_\_\_\_  
 STALWART x2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 BEGUILING x2 EXPRESSIVE x2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 CHARMATIC SEDUCTIVE \_\_\_\_\_  
 EMPATHETIC \_\_\_\_\_  
 CREATIVE \_\_\_\_\_  
 INSIGHTFUL \_\_\_\_\_  
 REFLECTIVE \_\_\_\_\_

**ABILITIES**

ANIMAL KEN DRIVE \_\_\_\_\_  
 BRAWL PERFORMANCE \_\_\_\_\_  
 DODGE SURVIVAL x2 \_\_\_\_\_

**DISCIPLINES**

FORTITUDE (ENDURANCE) \_\_\_\_\_  
 PROTEAN (EYES OF THE BEAST) \_\_\_\_\_  
 FERAL LAWS \_\_\_\_\_  
 PRESENCE (AWE) \_\_\_\_\_

**MERITS & FLAWS**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**CONSCIENCE/CONVICTION**  
 ●●●●○

**SELF CONTROL/INSTINCT**  
 ●●●○○

**COURAGE**  
 ●●●○○

**BLOOD**  
 ●●●●●●●●●●●●

**WILLPOWER**  
 ●●●○○○○○○○○○○

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHARACTER** Country Musician

**CHRONICLE** \_\_\_\_\_

**CLAN** Gangrel

**GENERATION** 11th

**AGE** \_\_\_\_\_

**NATURE** Rogue

**DEMEANOR** Rogue

**LAW'S Night**



## COUNTRY MUSICIAN

**Quote:** *Sometimes, you just gotta sing what's in your heart. Even if your heart don't beat no more.*

**Prelude:** You used to joke that you played country music because your life story sounded like a country song. Raised by a single mother who drove an 18-wheeler, you saw most of the country through the passenger window before you were eight. When the authorities caught on and demanded that you go to school, you had to live with your grandparents — which involved no running water, farm chores and homework by kerosene lantern light. Toss in a fair amount of beer and a few memorable failed romances, and you've had plenty of material to work with.

At least there was always the music. You had a natural flair for the guitar, a smooth voice with just the right twang, and a repertoire based on years of country radio consumption. You chose to hit the road after high school; it was either that or wash dishes for an all-night diner. For years you had no regrets. You weren't a technically brilliant musician or an inspired songwriter, but your instinctive understanding of the mood in the bars and clubs you played led to repeat gigs and a comfortable enough living for always being on the road. You found an agent and hired an old flame to help you set up and break down your one-man show.

Things got strange one night about three years ago. A shaggy, agitated fellow with dirt under his fingernails requested Patsy Cline's "Walking After Midnight." To this day, you're not sure whether your instincts damned you or saved you, but the man visibly relaxed as you sang and left the bar contented. But he came back for your blood, and to give you his. You haven't seen him since.

You've managed all right, considering the circumstances. You're still touring — it's the only life you know. You've light-proofed the van. Fans and groupies are relatively easy to feed from, but any mishaps permanently reduce your fan base and raise your profile unnecessarily. Your skill at crowd handling has only improved, but sometimes you wonder why you bother singing to your supper.

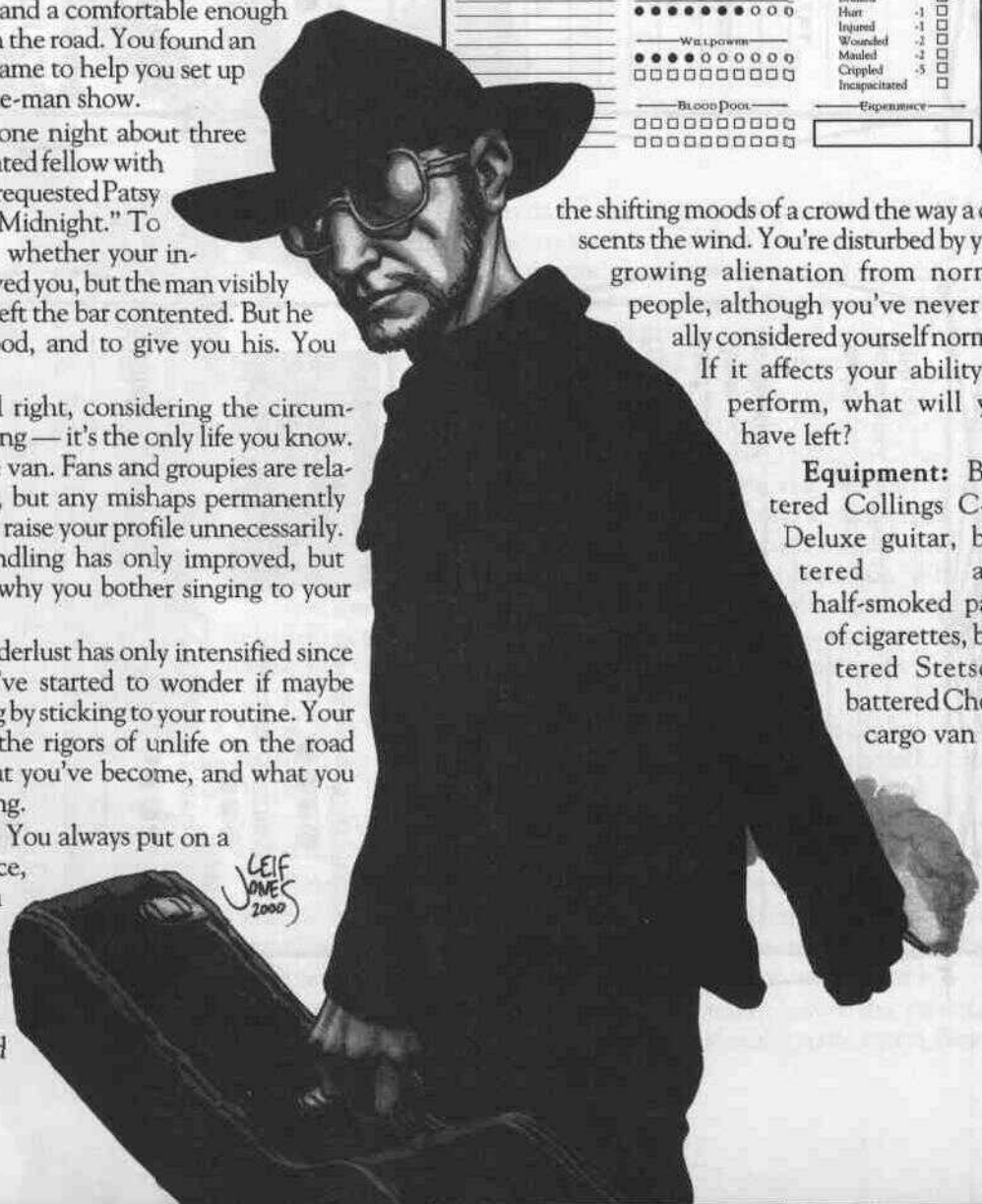
**Concept:** Your wanderlust has only intensified since your Embrace, but you've started to wonder if maybe you're missing something by sticking to your routine. Your cheerful acceptance of the rigors of unlife on the road hides a deep fear of what you've become, and what you might be capable of doing.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You always put on a good face for the audience, but at the same time you keep a watchful eye on the emotions of the people around you, and you always know where the back door is. You read

VAMPIRE THE HASTUR TRADITION		
NAME:	NATURE: <b>Rogue</b>	GENERATION: <b>11th</b>
PLAYER:	DICTIONARY: <b>Rogue</b>	HAVEN:
CHAROCTER:	CLAN: <b>Gangrel</b>	CONCEPT: <b>Country Musician</b>
ATTRIBUTES		
PHYSICAL		MENTAL
Strength: ●●●●	Charisma: ●●●●	Perception: ●●●●
Dexterity: ●●●●	Manipulation: ●●●●	Intelligence: ●●●●
Stamina: ●●●●	Appearance: ●●●●	Wits: ●●●●
ABILITIES		
TALENTS		KNOWLEDGES
Alertness: ●●●●	Animal Ken: ●●●●	Academics: ●●●●
Athletics: ●●●●	Crafts: ●●●●	Computer: ●●●●
Brawl: ●●●●	Drive: ●●●●	Finance: ●●●●
Dodge: ●●●●	Etiquette: ●●●●	Investigation: ●●●●
Empathy: ●●●●	Firearms: ●●●●	Law: ●●●●
Expression: ●●●●	Melée: ●●●●	Linguistics: ●●●●
Intimidation: ●●●●	Performance: ●●●●	Medicine: ●●●●
Leadership: ●●●●	Security: ●●●●	Occult: ●●●●
Streetwise: ●●●●	Stealth: ●●●●	Politics: ●●●●
Subterfuge: ●●●●	Survival: ●●●●	Science: ●●●●
ADVANTAGES		
BACKGROUNDS		DISCIPLINES
Fame: ●●●●	Fortitude: ●●●●	Virtues
Generation: ●●●●	Friction: ●●●●	Conscience/Conviction: ●●●●
Resources: ●●●●	Presence: ●●●●	Self-Control/Firmness: ●●●●
●●●●	●●●●	Courage: ●●●●
●●●●	●●●●	
●●●●	●●●●	
●●●●	●●●●	
●●●●	●●●●	
●●●●	●●●●	
●●●●	●●●●	
●●●●	●●●●	
●●●●	●●●●	
MERITS/FLAWS		HEALTH
		Brained <input type="checkbox"/>
		Hurt -1 <input type="checkbox"/>
		Injured -1 <input type="checkbox"/>
		Wounded -2 <input type="checkbox"/>
		Mauled -2 <input type="checkbox"/>
		Crippled -5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		Incapacitated <input type="checkbox"/>
		EXPERIENCE
		<input type="text"/>

the shifting moods of a crowd the way a dog scents the wind. You're disturbed by your growing alienation from normal people, although you've never really considered yourself normal. If it affects your ability to perform, what will you have left?

**Equipment:** Battered Collings C-10 Deluxe guitar, battered and half-smoked pack of cigarettes, battered Stetson, battered Chevy cargo van



**HACKER**

**Quote:** *Unless you're running 1,096-bit encryption on a secure SQL server, you may as well deposit all of your assets into my account. I can hack anything I can reach.*

**Prelude:** Your mouth has always gotten you in trouble. Caught up in the excitement of your first hacker bulletin board, you claimed to be close personal friends with the Legion of Doom. It was difficult to explain to your parents why they had to change the family's telephone number. A few years later, the feds paid you a visit after you claimed to be able to break into the Treasury Department's computers in a Usenet post. Ironically, your tendency to shoot your mouth did force you to become a better hacker; eventually you learned how to cover your tracks — most of the time.

Then one day you fed the wrong guy a line. The local coffee-shop crowd knew from long experience to take your stories with a grain of salt. But the stranger at the counter didn't; and when you told him that you could write a program that would incorporate subliminal commands into the user's desktop environment, or manipulate the electricity going to his household appliances, he believed you. He followed you home, dragged you out of bed and forced his blood down your throat. You spent the last year of high school as a ghoul. It didn't take very long for your regnant to figure out that you were full of crap; he kicked your ass once to let you know not to do it again, but he seemed to find your *bravado* humorous. And even though you couldn't do all those things you said, you were knowledgeable enough to be of use to him. After you graduated from college (with a computer science degree), he made you a vampire.

You barely survived your Embrace; your sire stuck you in the middle of a national park without even a cell phone. When you crawled out of the woods a week later, scraped raw and really tired of squirrel blood, he dragged you to another godforsaken green spot to introduce you to all his friends. Your mouth still gets you in trouble, but you've mastered the art of rolling over and showing your throat, which usually makes everything okay

**Concept:** You are ideally suited to the role of omega, the bottom of the pecking order. You've got the skills to make yourself useful in ways that the rest of your clan is only beginning to understand, though, and you're going to make sure you use them. When all the other creatures of the night finally plug in, they'll find that you're the top dog.

**VAMPIRE**  
*THE MASQUERADE*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ NATURE: **Canniver** GENERATION: 10th  
 PLAYER: \_\_\_\_\_ DEMONSTRATION: **Gallant** HAVEN: \_\_\_\_\_  
 CHARACTER: \_\_\_\_\_ CLAN: **Gangrel** CONCEPT: **Hacker**

---

**ATTRIBUTES**

<b>PHYSICAL</b>		<b>SOCIAL</b>		<b>MENTAL</b>	
Strength	●●●●●	Charisma	●●●●●	Perception	●●●●●
Dexterity	●●●●●	Manipulation	●●●●●	Intelligence	●●●●●
Stamina	●●●●●	Appearance	●●●●●	Wits	●●●●●

---

**ABILITIES**

<b>TALENTS</b>		<b>SKILLS</b>		<b>KNOWLEDGES</b>	
Alertness	●●●●●	Animal Ken	●●●●●	Academics	●●●●●
Athletics	●●●●●	Crafts	●●●●●	Computer	●●●●●
Brawl	●●●●●	Drive	●●●●●	Finance	●●●●●
Dodge	●●●●●	Etiquette	●●●●●	Investigation	●●●●●
Empathy	●●●●●	Firearms	●●●●●	Law	●●●●●
Expression	●●●●●	Melee	●●●●●	Linguistics	●●●●●
Intimidation	●●●●●	Performance	●●●●●	Medicine	●●●●●
Leadership	●●●●●	Security	●●●●●	Occult	●●●●●
Streetwise	●●●●●	Stealth	●●●●●	Politics	●●●●●
Subterfuge	●●●●●	Survival	●●●●●	Science	●●●●●

---

**ADVANTAGES**

<b>BACKGROUNDS</b>		<b>DISCIPLINES</b>		<b>VIRTUES</b>	
Contacts	●●●●●	Fortitude	●●●●●	Conscience/Convent	●●●●●
Genealogy	●●●●●	Protean	●●●●●	Self-Control/Restraint	●●●●●
Mentor	●●●●●		●●●●●	Courage	●●●●●
Resources	●●●●●		●●●●●		
Status	●●●●●		●●●●●		
	●●●●●		●●●●●		
	●●●●●		●●●●●		

---

**STATISTICS/PLAYS**

<b>HUMANITY/PRY</b>	<b>HEALTH</b>
●●●●●○○○	Bruised <input type="checkbox"/>
	Hurt <input type="checkbox"/>
	Injured <input type="checkbox"/>
	Wounded <input type="checkbox"/>
	Mauled <input type="checkbox"/>
	Crippled <input type="checkbox"/>
	Incapacitated <input type="checkbox"/>
	Experience <input type="checkbox"/>



**Roleplaying Hints:** You have a hard time passing up any opportunity to embellish your reputation, or to make a joke at someone's expense. You expect to get your butt kicked now and then, and take your lumps with good grace. You can count on your reputation as a wimp to keep you from seeming like a threat — at least among the Gangrel.

**Equipment:** Gateway laptop on Your:)Ware lease, Gateway tower on Your:)Ware lease, dirty clothes, old Saturn coupe











**PATH/HUMANITY** ●●●●  
**PHYSICAL**  
 Brawny x2 Nimble Robust  
 Ferocious Tenacious  
 Lithe Tough  
 Social  
 Commanding  
 Intimidating x2  
**MENTAL**  
 Cunning Patient  
 Determined Wily  
 Disciplined  
**ABILITIES**  
 Animal Ken x2 Investigation  
 Crafts Melee x2  
 Intimidation  
**DISCIPLINES**  
 Animalism (Feral Whispers)  
 Fortitude (Endurance)  
 Protean (Eyes of the Beast)  
 Feral Claws (Feral Meld)  
 Merits & Flaws  
**BACKGROUND**  
 Mentor x1  
 Influences

**CONSCIENCE/CONVICTION**  
 ●●●○○  
**SELF-CONTROL/INSTINCT**  
 ●●●○○  
**COURAGE**  
 ●●●○○  
**BLOOD**  
 ●●●●●●●●●○○  
 □□□□□□□□□□  
**WILLPOWER**  
 ●●●○○○○○○○○  
 □□□□□□□□□□

**LAWS Night**  
 NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
 CHARACTER Drilling Rig Technician  
 CHRONICLE \_\_\_\_\_  
 CLAN Country Gangrel Antitribu  
 GENERATION 13th  
 AGE \_\_\_\_\_  
 NATURE Monster  
 DEMEANOR Director

**PATH/HUMANITY** ●●●●  
**PHYSICAL**  
 Agile Vigorous  
 Quick x2 Wily  
 Tireless x2  
 Social  
 Commanding x2  
 Magnetic  
**MENTAL**  
 Alert Shrewd  
 Clever  
 Disciplined  
 Observant  
**ABILITIES**  
 Animal Ken Intimidation  
 Dodge Security  
 Firearms Survival x2  
**DISCIPLINES**  
 Celerity (alacrity)  
 Obfuscate (cloak of shadows)  
 Unseen Presence  
 Protean (Eyes of the Beast, Feral Claws)  
 Merits & Flaws  
**BACKGROUND**  
 Mentor x1  
 Herd x1  
 Generation x2  
 Influences

**CONSCIENCE/CONVICTION**  
 ●○○○○  
**SELF-CONTROL/INSTINCT**  
 ●●●○○  
**COURAGE**  
 ●●●○○  
**BLOOD**  
 ●●●●●●●●●○○  
 □□□□□□□□□□  
**WILLPOWER**  
 ●●●○○○○○○○○  
 □□□□□□□□□□

**LAWS Night**  
 NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
 CHARACTER Eco-Terrorist  
 CHRONICLE \_\_\_\_\_  
 CLAN City Gangrel Antitribu  
 GENERATION 13th  
 AGE \_\_\_\_\_  
 NATURE Enigma  
 DEMEANOR Survivor











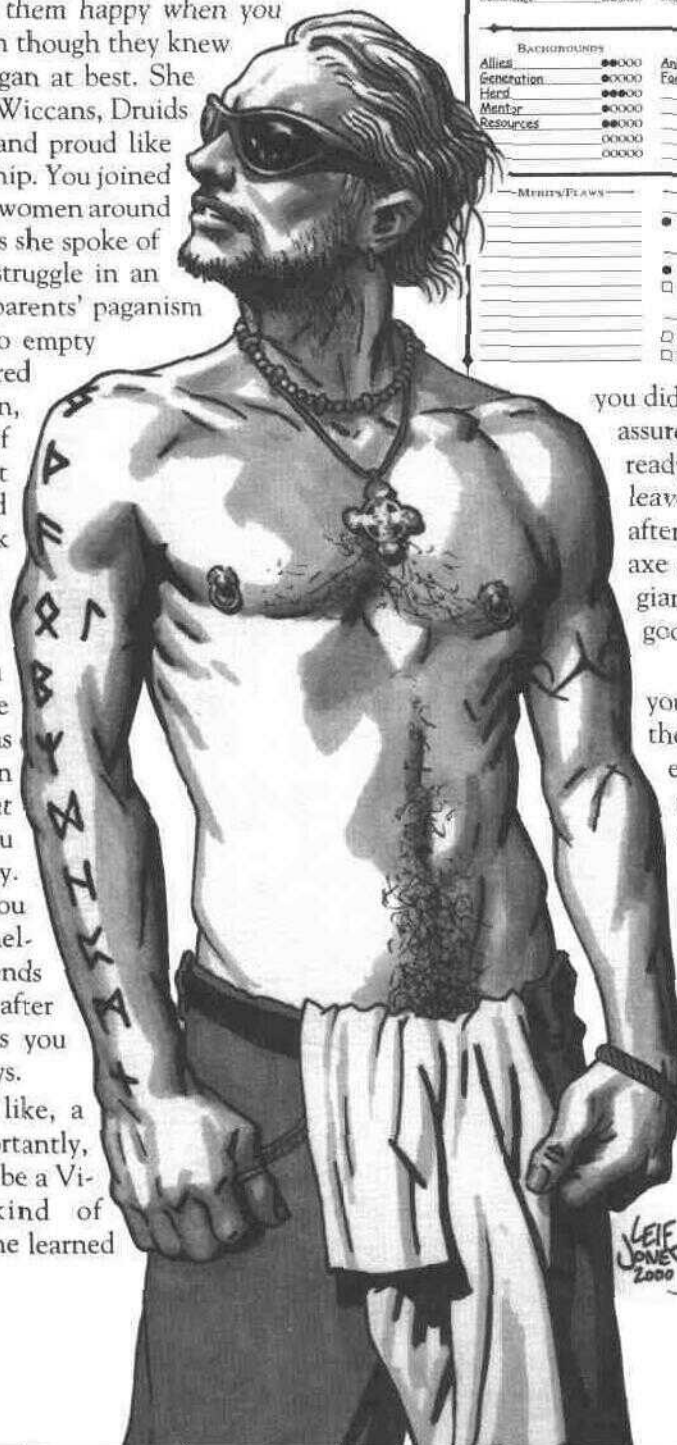
**NEW AGE VIKING**

**Quote:** *Blood for the blood god, dude, blood for the blood god!*

**Prelude:** Your life was cool. Mom and Dad moved to California and got into attachment parenting and other primitive child-rearing practices, so you got to do whatever you wanted. The teachers at school didn't want to damage your self-esteem by flunking you, so made it all the way to 10th grade before you decided to drop out and surf full-time. You were young, blond and tan, and that was all you needed to be happy.

Then you met the woman of your dreams. You had gone to an interfaith pagan sabbat with your parents; it always made them happy when you joined the circle, even though they knew you were a lapsed pagan at best. She stood out among the Wiccans, Druids and Unitarians, tall and proud like the carved prow of a ship. You joined the crowd of men and women around her, listening raptly as she spoke of honor, courage and struggle in an exotic accent. Your parents' paganism had always seemed so empty and bloodless; she assured you that in her religion, there was plenty of blood. As the night wore on and the crowd thinned, you got to talk to her personally. She didn't understand what "surfing" meant, but when you said you rode the waves, the gleam in her eye was unmistakable. When you left with her that night, you thought you were going to get lucky. You had no idea. You thought the horned helmets and her three friends were just kinky, but after they kicked your ass you couldn't move for days.

So now you're, like, a vampire. More importantly, she's teaching you to be a Viking. She was kind of disappointed when she learned



**VAMPIRE**  
THE HASSLE BADE

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Nature: **Celebrant** Generation: 12th  
 Player: \_\_\_\_\_ Deceased: **Bon Vivant** Haven: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Character: \_\_\_\_\_ Clan: **Gangrel** Concept: **New Age Viking**

---

**ATTRIBUTES**

<b>PHYSICAL</b>		<b>SOCIAL</b>		<b>MENTAL</b>	
Strength	●●●●●	Charisma	●●●●●	Perception	●●●●●
Dexterity	●●●●●	Manipulation	●●●●●	Intelligence	●●●●●
Stamina	●●●●●	Appearance	●●●●●	Will	●●●●●

---

**ABILITIES**

<b>TALENTS</b>		<b>SKILLS</b>		<b>KNOWLEDGES</b>	
Alertness	●●●●●	Animal Ken	●●●●●	Academics	●●●●●
Athletics	●●●●●	Crafts	●●●●●	Computer	●●●●●
Brawl	●●●●●	Drive	●●●●●	Finance	●●●●●
Dodge	●●●●●	Etiquette	●●●●●	Investigation	●●●●●
Empathy	●●●●●	Firearms	●●●●●	Law	●●●●●
Expression	●●●●●	Music	●●●●●	Linguistics	●●●●●
Intimidation	●●●●●	Performance	●●●●●	Medicine	●●●●●
Leadership	●●●●●	Security	●●●●●	Occult	●●●●●
Steerwise	●●●●●	Stealth	●●●●●	Politics	●●●●●
Subterfuge	●●●●●	Survival	●●●●●	Science	●●●●●

---

**ADVANTAGES**

<b>BACKGROUNDS</b>		<b>DISCIPLINES</b>		<b>VIRTUES</b>	
Allies	●●●●●	Animalism	●●●●●	Conscience/Conversion	●●●●●
Generation	●●●●●	Fortitude	●●●●●	Self-Control/Inner	●●●●●
Hard	●●●●●		●●●●●	Courage	●●●●●
Mentor	●●●●●		●●●●●		
Resources	●●●●●		●●●●●		
	●●●●●		●●●●●		

---

**MERITS/FLAWS**

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

---

**HABASHELY/PSYCH**

Willpower: ●●●●●○○○○○

Blood Pool: ○○○○○○○○○○

---

**HEALTH**

Bruised	□
Hurt	-1 □
Injured	-1 □
Wounded	-2 □
Mauled	-2 □
Crippled	-5 □
Incapacitated	□
Supernatural	□

you didn't actually have a boat, but she assures you that when she has a crew ready, she'll find one. You've had to leave your board, since the waves suck after sundown, but you keep busy with axe and shield training and Norwegian lessons. Monterey looks like a good place to go a-Viking.

**Concept:** Everything in life fell your way, and now you've been given the opportunity to fight in the greatest battle at the end of time by the most gorgeous woman you've ever seen. What could be better?

**Roleplaying Hints:** No wave is too big, no enemy too fierce. You throw yourself into your new role, partying, boasting and brawling with spirit. You know you're not the sharpest knife in the drawer, but that's okay. Your job isn't to think too much.

**Equipment:** Two automatic pistols, driftwood stakes, sunglasses, ultra-casual surf clothes

LEIF JONES  
2000



## PROVINCIAL SCOURGE

**Quote:** *It'll hurt less if you quit squirmin', you stupid sumbitch.*

**Prelude:** Mama always said you were a little high-strung. Not your fault. You tried to calm down — ain't no one can tell you you didn't try, dammit — but it just wouldn't happen. *Went to school, got a job, did all the shit you're s'posed to. Kept gettin' fired. Kept gettin' in fights. Fought with the boss. Fought with that dumbass TV repairman. Fought with the preacher, even. Not too proud of that one.*


Weren't even regular fights, sad to say. Sometimes you were drunk. Other times it weren't even you who started it — some fool who crawled up your tailpipe got what he deserved and that's that. Ended up bouncin' at the stripper bar over on Highway 50. Never could bring yourself to strike a woman, which was prob'ly your saving grace in that job. Kicked a lot of trucker ass, though. Heh.

Funny how you never see some things comin'. Got in one fight too many there in the strip bar. Last one was nasty. Lost a lot of skin. Grows back, though, 'least it does now. That guy was bad news. Made you into a damn vampire. Brought you into some political bullshit, now you gotta work for the vampire king or some crapola and he's out there howlin' across the plains. *King's work ain't bad, though. You know, if you gotta be stuck doin' somethin' you may as well get your kicks from it.*

**Concept:** Rather than destroying you, the prince spared your unlife in exchange for you undertaking a certain responsibility. He made you the scourge. Now, you thin the ranks of the Kindred, culling the thin-blooded from the herd. It all makes sense to you — you alleviate the overpopulation and it keeps the prince from worrying about some deranged prophecy. Whatever, at least it's not you meeting the Final Death. Apparently, princes have that right.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You are a coward and a bully, thankful for your position because it allows you to victimize those weaker than you. Anyone stronger than you earns your resentment immediately. Anyone strong enough to kill you earns your grudging respect. You get along with some folks, like this coterie thing, but most people are simply there for you to push around or hurt. Or, in some cases, kill. Hey, it's the hand God dealt ya.

**Equipment:** Boots with razors taped to the heels, the watch daddy gave you, pocketknife with a blade an inch over the legal limit, Chevy pickup



**VAMPIRE**  
THE MASQUERADE

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ NATURE: Sadist GENERATION: 11th  
 PLAYER: \_\_\_\_\_ DISMEMBER: Bruvo HAVEN: \_\_\_\_\_  
 CHARACTER: \_\_\_\_\_ CLAN: Gangrel CONCEPT: Provincial Scourge

---

**ATTRIBUTES**

PHYSICAL		SOCIAL		MENTAL	
Strength	●●●●●	Charisma	●●●●●	Perception	●●●●●
Dexterity	●●●●●	Manipulation	●●●●●	Intelligence	●●●●●
Stamina	●●●●●	Appearance	●●●●●	Will	●●●●●

---

**ABILITIES**

TALENTS		SKILLS		KNOWLEDGES	
Alertness	●●●●●	Animal Ken	●●●●●	Academics	●●●●●
Athletics	●●●●●	Crafts	●●●●●	Computer	●●●●●
Brawl	●●●●●	Drive	●●●●●	Finance	●●●●●
Dodge	●●●●●	Etiquette	●●●●●	Investigation	●●●●●
Empathy	●●●●●	Firearms	●●●●●	Law	●●●●●
Expression	●●●●●	Melee	●●●●●	Linguistics	●●●●●
Intimidation	●●●●●	Performance	●●●●●	Medicine	●●●●●
Leadership	●●●●●	Security	●●●●●	Occult	●●●●●
Streetwise	●●●●●	Stealth	●●●●●	Politics	●●●●●
Subterfuge	●●●●●	Survival	●●●●●	Science	●●●●●

---

**ADVANTAGES**

BACKGROUNDS		DISCIPLINES		VIRTUES	
Generation	●●●●●	Fortitude	●●●●●	Conscience/Conviction	●●●●●
Mentor	●●●●●	Protean	●●●●●	Self-Control/Instinct	●●●●●
Resources	●●●●●	Potency	●●●●●	Courage	●●●●●
Status	●●●●●				

---

**MERITS/PLAUS**

\_\_\_\_\_

---

**HUMANITY PATH**

●●●●●○○○○○

Willpower

●●●●●○○○○○


Blood Pool


□□□□□□□□□

□□□□□□□□□



LEIF  
JONES  
2000

<p>Occult</p> <p>Brawl Survivalx2</p> <p>Animal Kenx2 Stealth</p> <p>Abilities</p> <p>Patient</p> <p>Intuitive x2</p> <p>Alertive</p> <p>Alert</p> <p>MENTAL</p> <p>Friendly</p> <p>Charismatic</p> <p>Alluring Patient</p> <p>Enduring x2 Willy</p> <p>SOCIAL</p> <p>Energetic Tenacious</p> <p>Agile Rugged</p> <p>PHYSICAL</p> <p>Generationx5</p> <p>Backgrounds</p>	<p>  </p> <p>CONSCIENCE/Conviction ●●●○○</p> <p>SELF CONTROL/Instinct ●●●○○</p> <p>COURAGE ●●●●●</p> <p>BLOOD ●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●</p> <p>WILLPOWER ●●●●●○○○○○</p> <p>NAME _____</p> <p>CHARACTER <u>Chupacabra</u></p> <p>CHRONICLE _____</p> <p>CLAN <u>Gangrel</u></p> <p>GENERATION <u>8th</u></p> <p>AGE _____</p> <p>NATURE <u>Child</u></p> <p>DEMEANOR <u>Deviant</u></p>
--	--

<p>Intimidation Survival</p> <p>Brawl Dodge Streetwise</p> <p>Animal Ken Melee</p> <p>Abilities</p> <p>Shrewd</p> <p>Intuitive</p> <p>Alertive</p> <p>Alert</p> <p>MENTAL</p> <p>Willy</p> <p>Disciplines</p> <p>Fortitude (Endurance)</p> <p>Protean (Eyes of the Beast)</p> <p>Feral Claws)</p> <p>Potency (Prowess)</p> <p>Merits &amp; Flaws</p> <p>Backgrounds</p> <p>Contacts x1 Resources x2</p> <p>Generation x2</p> <p>Influence (Street x1)</p> <p>Mentor x1</p> <p>Influences</p> <p>Intimidating x3</p> <p>Quick Tough x2</p> <p>SOCIAL</p> <p>Ferocious x2 Rugged</p> <p>Brawny Robust</p> <p>PHYSICAL</p> <p>Generation x5</p> <p>Backgrounds</p>	<p>  </p> <p>CONSCIENCE/Conviction ●●●○○</p> <p>SELF CONTROL/Instinct ●●○○○</p> <p>COURAGE ●●●●●</p> <p>BLOOD ●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●●</p> <p>WILLPOWER ●●●●●○○○○○</p> <p>NAME _____</p> <p>CHARACTER <u>Provincial Scourge</u></p> <p>CHRONICLE _____</p> <p>CLAN <u>Gangrel</u></p> <p>GENERATION <u>11th</u></p> <p>AGE _____</p> <p>NATURE <u>Sadist</u></p> <p>DEMEANOR <u>Bravo</u></p>
---	--



# CHUPACABRA

**Quote:** ...Sangre... desea sangre...

**Prelude:** Tales of the blood-sucking devils always plagued your town. Farmers never left their goats outside; parents sent their children to bed before night had fully fallen. The marauding blood-drinkers had terrified the town for so long, it had finally begun to die — no one ever came there, and people were too afraid of the monsters to try to flee. Night after night, the entire population cowered in its shanty houses and prayed for the first rays of the sun.

Of course, no one had ever seen the monsters up close. It's not that the *chupacabra* would murder people in their homes, but they would certainly drink dry rats, cats and anything else left outside after dark. Every now and then a drifter would disappear without a trace, but no one doubted that his blood fed the beasts just past the porch lights.

One night, you stayed too long at the market, even as the proprietress hurried you out. Out of the shadows, the creature dragged you down, gorged itself on your blood — and then dragged you into its wretched unlife. It was lonely, it said, but you knew within a few nights that the two of you could not stay together — it was too monstrous, you couldn't relate. You lacked the conviction to step into the next sunrise, so you fled.

And so it has been since then, fleeing, hiding and fleeing again when your "hosts" raise their rifles and pitchforks against you.

**Concept:** You are the night-monster, more afraid of yourself than even the terrorized others are of you. Unlife is a vagabond ritual; you're just going through the motions and following your urge. Every now and then, you remember some bit of what your life used to be, but those memories fade as the hunger burns in your dead belly. All you want is blood, anymore — and the more blood, the better. In fact, you might even take it from a person sometime soon.

**Roleplaying Hints:** Only with the greatest effort can you be social, and that becomes more difficult with each passing night. You don't hate the other *chupacabra*, you just don't relate to them. Every now and then you fall in with a pack of them, but rarely for any length of time — your solitary nature drives you to leave the pack and hunt on your own.

**Equipment:** Filthy tatters of the clothes in which you were Embraced, random bones and feathers



VAMPIRE THE MASQUERADE			
<b>NAME:</b> _____		<b>NATURE:</b> Child	<b>GENERATION:</b> 8th
<b>PLAYER:</b> _____		<b>DISORDER:</b> Deviant	<b>FLAVOR:</b> _____
<b>CHAROUBLE:</b> _____		<b>CLAN:</b> Sangre!	<b>CONCEPT:</b> Chupacabra
ATTRIBUTES			
<b>PHYSICAL</b>	<b>SOCIAL</b>	<b>MENTAL</b>	
Strength 00000	Charisma 00000	Perception 00000	
Agility 00000	Manipulation 00000	Intelligence 00000	
Stamina 00000	Appearance 00000	Wits 00000	
ABILITIES			
<b>TALENTS</b>	<b>SKILLS</b>	<b>KNOWLEDGES</b>	
Alertness 00000	Animal Ken 00000	Academics 00000	
Athletics 00000	Crafts 00000	Computer 00000	
Brawl 00000	Drive 00000	Finance 00000	
Dodge 00000	Etiquette 00000	Investigation 00000	
Empathy 00000	Fitness 00000	Law 00000	
Expression 00000	Melee 00000	Linguistics 00000	
Intimidation 00000	Performance 00000	Medicine 00000	
Leadership 00000	Security 00000	Occult 00000	
Streetwise 00000	Sleuth 00000	Politics 00000	
Subterfuge 00000	Survival 00000	Science 00000	
ADVANTAGES			
<b>BACKGROUNDS</b>	<b>DISCIPLINES</b>	<b>VIRTUES</b>	
Generation 00000	Animalism 00000	Conscience/Emotion 00000	
00000	Pretern 00000	Self-Control/Inner 00000	
00000			
00000			
00000			
00000			
00000		Courage 00000	
00000			
00000			
MERITS/FLAWS			
	<b>HUMANITY/PATH</b>	<b>HEALTH</b>	
	●●●●●○○○○○	Bruised <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Hurt -1 <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Injured -1 <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Wounded -2 <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Mauled -2 <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Crippled -5 <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Incapacitated <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Experience <input type="checkbox"/>	
	<b>Willpower</b>		
	●●●●●○○○○○		
	<b>Blood Pool</b>		
	□□□□□□□□□□		
	□□□□□□□□□□		



## OUTLANDERS OF NOTE

The following Gangrel might be encountered by any group of player characters in an ordinary chronicle; each of them can fit into several slots, and should be customized to fit a given chronicle. Perhaps it fits the Storyteller's needs for Ramona to be a male, or for Mark Decker to have become prince of Chicago. Storytellers are encouraged to make such changes as best fit their games.

Some of these characters are shown in greater detail in *Children of the Night*; their descriptions here are intended primarily to introduce them and give an idea of their activity since the release of that book. Storytellers are encouraged to use any of the following characters in whatever fashion seems most appropriate, giving them Traits as necessary. Players might wish to tie their characters' backgrounds to such potent individuals; they should be sure to consult with their local Storyteller before doing so.

### BECKETT

The Gangrel explorer/historian who calls himself Beckett does his best to remain an enigma. He is a Noddist in the truest sense of the word. Though he does not follow the Sabbat's Path of Caine, his driving goal is to determine the true history of the Kindred race, and especially the early history of Caine and the Antediluvians in Enoch. Forces ranging from the impersonal and destructive hand of entropy to the very personal vampires of the Sabbat and Camarilla conspire to keep him from learning the truth, as he sees it. Therefore he attempts to avoid vampiric conflict where possible, preferring only to face the sorts of problems that mortal archaeologists must confront. He has had moderate success with this, for surely not every vampire of the Sabbat and Camarilla is arrayed against him.

By most accounts, Beckett is an elder — perhaps three centuries dead — but he possesses a pragmatic attitude toward the Camarilla and Sabbat that is more frequently seen among only those Kindred who predate the existence of both sects. Rumors abound that Beckett is very old indeed but has undergone something of a revival in the last 300 years, perhaps adopting the "Beckett" identity at that time. Beckett has, in his fashion, been an independent Gangrel since well before Xavier's recent proclamation. He was one of the primary commentators on a short print run *Book of Nod* put together partly by his sometime mentor Aristotle de Laurent back in 1992. In that book, Beckett was the first to publicly suggest that the Caine legend was simply a myth representing historical conflict between nomadic hunter-gatherers and the first agricultural people. He suggested that "Caine" was nothing more than the impersonal force driving humanity to cultivate fields to better sustain a large population, and that force

was the blow that killed "Abel," the archetypal wandering herder. How such a thing would create vampirism is unclear.

Beckett has a dry sense of humor that suits him well in dealing with the immortal undead; during many conversations, only his closest friends would recognize that he sprinkles quiet, personal jokes throughout his questions and responses. Truly elder vampires often miss the humor in his statements, or choose to ignore such trivialities. Beckett's wit is easily turned on his enemies; it is a simple thing for him to rile an opponent to berserk fury.

Beckett and the Sabbat priscus Sascha Vykos have fought repeatedly since the Gangrel's Embrace. These conflicts have earned Beckett a reputation of being very difficult to kill; indeed, one story says that he escaped his foe during a daytime battle by dashing across a hundred yards of sunlight to safety. The nature of Beckett's conflict with Vykos is not clear to most Kindred, but it is clear that the two have often sought the same Noddist artifacts. Of course, neither shows a particular willingness to share such toys.

Beckett's closest allies are the independent pair Lucita and Anatole. Lucita, a Lasombra *antitribu* assassin, shows a curious platonic love for the Malkavian prophet Anatole; the three have worked together in the past to learn the true nature of the Antediluvians and forestall the coming Gehenna.


### BRUNHILDE

Brunhilde remembers little of her mortal life; she was the daughter of a Viking chieftain and respected for her own strength and courage. She no longer remembers the sun. Even her Embrace more than a millennium ago is a blurred memory here in the Final Nights. Her sire is a mystery; she knows only that it was *not* the All-High. Her sire paid his fealty to the All-High, and Brunhilde needed no supernatural compulsion to do the same. She walked among the *vargr* of the far north, taking the role the All-High gave her and her packsisters. They acted as *Waelkyrige*, the Choosers of the Slain, who picked the finest warriors to join them in the afterlife.

Brunhilde fought the Christians when they came north. For more than two centuries, with her liege-lord and comrades falling to torpor or Final Death all around her, the Gangrel ambushed southern vampires and scattered their ashes as warning to the invaders' brethren. But it did no good. Eventually, Brunhilde herself fell into a wearied torpor, not rousing until the First World War. She gathered her remaining *Waelkyrige* to her in central Sweden, where they kept a low profile for decades.

One cold winter night in 1977, the Choosers of the Slain found their greatest hope and fear come true. Only an hour after sundown, one of Brunhilde's sisters reported that a coterie of Camarilla Kindred a few miles from the *Waelkyriges'* haven had made a gruesome discovery. A pack of six werewolves had been drained of blood and left





to freeze solid on the icy plain. On a hunch, Brunhilde became a raven and flew to the cave in which the All-High's icy form had rested for hundreds of years.

There she found the ice a little thicker on the ground, and the All-High's great ice cairn melted away. The Methuselah himself lay torpid on bare stone, where once the block of ice had rested. Fresh blood flecked his beard, but the elder Kindred did not move or respond to speech or touch. The All-High did not move again for five years; in 1982 he similarly devoured a group of what the *Waelkyrige* describe as "Wild Ones." He has not budged since, but since a particularly vivid dream of Ragnarok last summer, Brunhilde has spent her days in the ancient's cave, close — but not too close — to her liege.

In 1986 Brunhilde took the life of Swedish Prime Minister Olaf Palme. This is not rumor; it is fact that the *Waelkyrige*'s leader gladly admits — she claims his blood tasted rather bitter. However, Brunhilde is unwilling to discuss her motives for the killing. Her packsisters believe that Brunhilde killed the Prime Minister either to declare her return to activity to the collective princes of Scandinavia, or she was nudged into doing so by the torpid All-High.

Since her dreams of Ragnarok, Brunhilde has become more curious about the state of the world at large. To satisfy some of this curiosity, she recently sent four of her youngest packsisters to California, the Anarch Free State. The young vampires of California have as little regard for the bureaucrats of the Camarilla as Brunhilde and her sisters do, and she considers the area to be a potentially prime recruiting ground.

The *Waelkyrige* recruiting movement among the anarchs has recently seen some resistance; it seems that the former Justicar Xaviar also desires the aid of the independent members of his clan. Representatives of each group play to the anarchs' desires as best they can. Certainly four blonde, Nordic warrior women can make quite an impression on newly Embraced men of the clan, but their description of unlife on the high seas, and honor and service to a higher cause, has risen to the attention of more than one anarch. It remains only a matter of time before that pitch comes to the attention of Xaviar's group.

In the meantime, the *Waelkyrige* in Europe have made it powerfully clear to the princes of the north that they have no interest in any sectarian politics, nor in joining the circus they call the Camarilla. That is not to say that they desire any allegiance with the Sabbat, which is clearly a collection of dishonorable monsters. For the time being, Brunhilde watches the vampires of the world scramble around in response to her. Decisive action can wait.

(For more information and Traits for Brunhilde, see *Children of the Night*, p. 80.)

## INYANGA

Inyanga is truly ancient; Embraced by a Roman expatriate just after the Ostrogoths' sacking of that city, she has championed the cause of the mortals underfoot in what Kindred too often see as their world for more than a millennium. Inyanga has been active in the Great Lakes area of North America since emerging from torpor in the late 18th century. She travels regularly, throughout both North and South America, but of late has concentrated her attention on Chicago and Milwaukee.


In the years after her Embrace, Inyanga walked the wild parts of the world. She had no kinship with the shapechangers of Africa or the wilds of Europe, of course, but she was wise and fleet of foot, and she had an edge that many Cainites of her clan lacked. In life she'd learned a ritual to become a living leopard. That ability got Inyanga out of one nascent conflict with cat-changers, as she convinced them that a vampire that could become a living being couldn't be entirely cursed by their earth and sun gods.

She spent her first centuries in Africa, where she met the secretive Kindred known as Laibon who populate Africa's great cities. In the modern nights she maintains contact with only a few of them; most of her contemporaries have long since returned to the earth from which they sprang. She traveled into Europe only a few times during her first millennium; she felt European Cainites' distrust almost palpably and recoiled from it. She had nothing to do with the Camarilla, and indeed was ignorant of it for several decades. Inyanga challenged a monstrous Malkavian along the Ivory Coast in 1537; though she was victorious, she fell into a long torpor.

When she awoke, Inyanga was in Baltimore; her vast hunger caused her to kill several mortals before regaining her senses. She fled westward, to the growing city of Chicago, where she helped found a relatively independent Kindred stronghold. She saw her share of conflicts with the other Cainites of Chicago, but her tendency to travel far and wide left her out of the most vicious Cainite politics of the city.

Inyanga was away from Chicago when the horde of Lupines descended. Some preternatural sense had warned her of impending danger, and she took that opportunity to roam the Great Plains once again. When she returned she found chaos. Prince Lodin had met Final Death, torn limb from limb by enraged Lupines. A dozen others all competed for his title, and she refused to support any of them. The contenders saw the great city Lodin had built as a jewel; they did not see the labor and sacrifice required of the now-destroyed prince.

Inyanga had never particularly championed the Camarilla. It is a European organization, and one in which Africans are not well-represented. Additionally, due to



the circumstances of her Embrace, Inyanga has always tried to keep the best interests of mortal humanity in the front of her mind. While she understands that the Masquerade helps protect Kindred from kine, she knows full well that the Camarilla uses the Masquerade to dominate and abuse humanity.

When Xaviar approached Inyanga to describe the creature he had seen and explain why he had chosen to leave his post as justicar, he found an interested ear and a tentative ally. Inyanga took her leave of the Chicago primogen quietly. Of that group only the Nosferatu Khalid knows that she has left the sect, while the others imagine that she has undertaken another tour of the Americas, and go about their business. The Gangrel of Chicago are aware that Inyanga has left the Camarilla, though she left them to make their own decisions in that regard. The Wolf Pack coterie remains staunchly part of the Camarilla; most others in the city have chosen the independent's path.

(For more information on Inyanga, see *Chicago by Night, Second Edition*, reprinted in *Chicago Chronicles, Volume 2*.)

#### JALAN-AAJAV

Aajav-Khan, as his subordinates call him, is a potent warlord of the Sabbat. At massive gatherings of the sect, he tells of the ancient nights, when he rode with Temujin-called-Genghis-Khan. It does not take long before such stories bring even the most boisterous Sabbat packs to awed silence.

Aajav-Khan's aura is not merely streaked with the spidery black lines of diablerie — it is black, mottled by patches of color. He has committed diablerie dozens of times throughout his unlife, starting with his own sire in nights long past, and continuing through vampiric enemies of all sorts. Perhaps obviously, the Seraph has not restricted his Amaranth to enemies of greater power. The horrid ecstasy of consuming another vampire's soul is too great to avoid simply because a foe might be further removed from Caine than he is.

Only half a dozen members of the Sabbat rival Jalan-Aajav in terms of raw power, and politically only the regent has more authority. He is steadfastly loyal to the sect, and appears willing to sacrifice his unlife to defeat the blasphemous Antediluvians. He has been a part of the Sabbat since before its members called themselves Sabbat; he was loyal to Lugoj's ideals throughout the Anarch Revolt and to the Sicilian Lasombra as they spilled their progenitor's unholy vitae.

Although his activity goes unquestioned by other vampires, occasionally Jalan-Aajav does drop out of sight for years at a time. Few other members of the Sword of Caine would even mention such a thing in passing, but when the subject does come up, Jalan-Aajav refers to

"hunting expeditions," torpor and the "need to roam." The eldest vampires of the Sabbat might mention that the Seraph has always felt such urges, but then, they're never asked about such things, and freely acknowledge that any vampire of such advanced age has foibles.

Aajav-Khan knows more than a few secrets from the Sabbat at large. Chief among them is that he knew the nature of the *manus nigrum*, the so-called True Black Hand. And he knows that the *manus nigrum* is no longer a power among Cainites. They have been decimated, their power base destroyed and their morale sapped. The members of the Black Hand whom Jalan-Aajav has come across in recent months have been hollow shells of themselves; former glory echoes inside their corpses, with little of the old fire to spur them onward.

Currently, Jalan-Aajav works with the other Sabbat Black Hand Seraphs to coordinate a massive push against Camarilla holdings across the United States. Recent activity in the Southeast has been moderately successful; Jalan-Aajav urges his fellow Seraphs to agree to a plan centered on the scuttling of Chicago, after which the other cities of the north central US should be relatively obtainable targets. For the time being, this plan centers on the activity of Philippe Rigaud, a Gangrel agent already in Chicago. Rigaud was successful in provoking a Lupine attack on the city, but disagreement between the various Seraphs of the Black Hand made it impossible to take advantage of Chicago's chaos and strike decisively there.


(For more information and Traits for Jalan-Aajav, see *Children of the Night*, p. 9.)

#### KARSH

Karsh tells those few who he trusts that he was a citizen of the Ottoman Empire some eight centuries ago. He was a great general in life, though perhaps a bit too headstrong. His sire was a wild spirit, a wolf of the desert sands; Karsh rarely speaks of him. Karsh is something of a rarity among Camarilla Kindred. He follows the Path of the Feral Heart rather than the Path of Humanity. He makes no apology for this; Karsh is older than the Camarilla itself, and would not abandon his moral code simply because some self-important Toreador insisted that Kindred should conceal themselves among humankind. Over the centuries, those few who dared raise a hand against him found example made of themselves as they were left as piles of ashes on a riverbank. No Camarilla vampire has challenged Karsh in this way in centuries.

Karsh was one of the first Gangrel to pledge his allegiance to the Ventrue Hardestadt's nascent Camarilla in the mid-15th century. Only Milov Petrenkov is notable as having come to the group earlier. Karsh's presence and stern demeanor won over several elder Gangrel during the sect's formative years; his tactical prowess won over at least a few others.





Karsh is a vampire of few words. His true motivations are often a mystery even to those who consider him a close ally. He is an honorable creature; he does not use assassins, nor does he strike at his enemies through surprise. Karsh is a master of small-group tactics, however, and is willing to use whatever advantages present themselves in close combat. Karsh's directions have led the Camarilla to establish themselves in several Sabbat cities over the last 10 years, and more than one of those was recaptured without a single gunshot or sword thrust.

Karsh has personally overseen the direction of those former archons serving under Xaviar who did not leave their posts when Xaviar departed. Those archons have been split up; they do not serve as a single group, for what should be obvious reasons. Karsh uses those archons for non-critical research and investigation. Other Kindred attend him when he comes into conflict with Sabbat targets.

Although Karsh and Xaviar were never close, the Warlord now refuses to speak of the former justicar. For Karsh, it is as though Elijah was the last justicar of Clan Gangrel. He considers Xaviar to be a traitor to the Inner Council—Karsh has made it clear to Gangrel who remain part of the Camarilla that any tales that filter back into Camarilla cities of Xaviar's brush with vast power are nothing more than the cries of schoolchildren. He seems to believe that Xaviar fled the Camarilla out of irrational fear, and in so doing weakened the sect's foundation.

Karsh's archons recently began to infiltrate Xaviar's "independent Gangrel" movement. Xaviar has powers to read a Kindred soul, but Karsh's spies can hide their true motives from even such a deep reading. Or so they hope—Xaviar seems to have adopted them into his group and has given them assignments for the time being.

(For more information and Traits for Karsh, see *Children of the Night*, p. 67.)

#### XAVIAR

Xaviar de Calais was a warrior in the Hundred Years' War. His valor in service of the English crown earned him a knighthood and his boldness on the field earned him the Embrace of Rhun the Minstrel, a Gangrel ancient of some repute. Rhun abandoned the fledgling "Xaviar," as is often the Gangrel way. After too many nights and corpses spent mastering his primal urges for blood and darkness, Xaviar headed north into the wastes of Scandinavia. There he hunted men and beasts for more than a century; most of the bestial features of his current visage date back to this wild time.

Eventually, Xaviar returned to civilized lands; he learned of the Camarilla and its Masquerade, and, approving of the latter, joined the former. He quickly rose in its ranks, gaining a wide reputation as a fearsome sergeant of Kindred. In 1704, in America, Xaviar presented the Inner

Council with the remains of his mad late clanbrother, the former Justicar Elijah. With this, Xaviar became the last Gangrel justicar.

Xaviar knows better than any other Cainite that the get of Caine have truly entered the Final Nights. Of the seven justicars of the Camarilla, he was ostensibly the best-traveled. Certainly the other six went from city to city when events called for it, but for the most part they stayed in their home cities, cowing the resident princes into quiet near-inactivity while they coordinated the actions of archons across four continents. Xaviar traveled—and he still does.

So it was Xaviar who first heard reports of the disaster in Kashmir, and it was Xaviar who faced the bearer of an obscenely powerful artifact in upstate New York. Perhaps unfortunately, it was Xaviar who fled this last challenge. And—so the rumors have it—it was Xaviar who encountered something else in the warm New England nights. Something ancient beyond words; something that *scared* him.

Of course, those are just rumors. All the average Gangrel knows for certain is that Xaviar went to the Inner Council of the Camarilla and demanded something. When his demand was not met, he resigned his posting as justicar and vowed that his clan would no longer walk with the other six. Was there no Gangrel representative on the Inner Council, someone who might countermand such a proclamation? Apparently not, unless one counts Warlord Karsh, for he alone stood forth to contradict Xaviar's announcement. The harpies have a dozen questions and a hundred answers, but the Inner Council is not known for its proclivity to gossip. Xaviar and Karsh most certainly hate each other now; each speaks of the other as being a traitor.

Xaviar is confident that the Antediluvians of myth exist, and that some of them may once again stalk the nighttime world. To this end, he has attempted to sway any Gangrel who approach him openly and honestly—if they stand outside the great sects of Kindred society. He has no love for either Kindred who hide behind the Camarilla nor monsters of the Sabbat. Once again he acts as sergeant, coordinating packs of Gangrel who stand by his cause. He insists that they remain mobile, for a moving vampire is a harder meal for the Antediluvians than one who remains in the city, and he periodically requires them to provide "scouting reports" of territory through which they have recently passed.

Slowly, Xaviar has amassed an enormous database of supernatural activity. Of course, this database is only in his head; Xaviar wouldn't know a computer if an enemy dropped one on him. But he spends hours each night attempting to correlate disparate reports from packs under his command.

The truth, which loyal packs rarely discuss even among themselves, is that Xaviar may be simply obsessive and paranoid. Something terrified him once, and he builds an army to defend himself from it. Or, more frighteningly, this is all a ruse. *Xaviar is building an army; it may not be to find the Antediluvians and defend the world from them. It might just be that Xaviar decided he wanted an army.*

(For information and Traits for Xaviar, see *Children of the Night*, p. 91.)



#### RAMONA

**Background:** (Ramona is the protagonist of *Clan Novel: Gangrel*. If you'd like to read the book with its plot points intact, read no further here.)

Ramona was alive just three years ago, but already it seems like a lifetime away, memories bleached down to black and white. Los Angeles was a shitty place to live, but at least it was predictable: Staying away from drug dealers, pimps and gangs of any color kept her alive to see another day. Ramona followed all the rules, but the vampire found her anyway — or maybe he found her *because*. Alone and starving in the city, she fled friends and family before she couldn't resist their blood. The memories from this time have all bled into each other, shades of all the Los Angelenos who died while Ramona learned to control her hunger and her new powers. The city was pretty crowded with vampires, *some of them a brutal gang called the Sabbat*, so Ramona and three other "orphans" hit the road for a better place to eke out survival. Eddie died again in Texas, ripped in half by a werewolf's claws. Unable to find a place to settle down, Ramona and the others, Jen and Darnell, kept driving until they ran out of road in New York City.

Here things became confusing for Ramona — events happened fast, and quickly snowballed out of control. She saw, stalked, saved, almost killed, then buried a beautiful young girl, Zhavon. A mysterious stranger, Tanner, followed Ramona from Los Angeles to New York, saving her from the Sabbat, the sun and a stake. And worst, the monster, human-shaped but for that ichor-dripping eye, who tied the whole mess of them together in a flesh-colored knot. The monster stole Zhavon, and warped and destroyed Jen and Darnell.

Tanner called the Gangrel together, and suddenly Ramona had a clan and a sire, a father and a family who expected her to know her place and listen to directions. There was even a grandfather, Xaviar, who treated Tanner like Tanner treated her.

It didn't last long, though — the monster with the eye destroyed most of the assembled pack, leaving Ramona, the whelp, to drag the crippled Xaviar away from the fire and blood. Ramona remembers this last, the destruction of her newfound clanmates, with a horrifying clarity. She bears a gift from the *Cherokee medicine man, Blackfeather*, and the curse of his prediction of the future: "The Final Nights are at hand, and your road will be a difficult one." The ghost sight he pressed into her burned images of the lost and the chant of their names into her brain.

Ramona ran, from the creature with the eye, from Xaviar, from the field of so much death. She learned what she is, Gangrel, and who made her what she is. The litany of dead names does not allow her to rest, though. She must give the list, and the story, to every Gangrel she encounters in her frantic wandering. And so the story spreads among the clan, and lost friends are mourned.

**Image:** Ramona is lean and wiry, her skin a light bronze under all the dirt. The tumultuous events of her short life and shorter existence as a vampire make her visibly wary. Her dark hair is wild but short, barely covering the furred and pointed tips of her ears. Her deformed, digitigrade feet are impossible to hide; she goes barefoot by necessity, showing unmistakable talons and elongated toes.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You've been dead such a short while, and you've seen so much: Lupines, Sabbat monsters, the terror of the attack on the strange vampire in New York. Blackfeather said that your road would be difficult, and you're sure you haven't seen the worst of it yet. Some nights you regret that you didn't continue trying to make it on your own. Still, wherever you are, nobody pushes you around. When the big boys clean up the mess they made, *then* they can give you orders.

**Clan:** Gangrel

**Sire:** Tanner

**Nature:** Rogue

**Demeanor:** Rebel



**Generation:** 11th  
**Embrace:** 1998  
**Apparent Age:** Late teens  
**Physical:** Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 3  
**Social:** Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 2  
**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 2, Wits 3  
**Talents:** Alertness 4, Athletics 2, Brawl 1, Dodge 3, Empathy 2, Leadership 1, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 1  
**Skills:** Drive 2, Firearms 1, Security 1, Stealth 3, Survival 3  
**Knowledges:** Academics 1, Investigation 1, Law 1, Linguistics (Spanish) 1, Medicine 1  
**Disciplines:** Animalism 1, Fortitude 2, Protean 3  
**Backgrounds:** Allies 1, Contacts 2, Status 2  
**Virtues:** Conscience 4, Self-Control 2, Courage 3  
**Morality:** Humanity 6  
**Willpower:** 5



**SUTTON GASSAWAY,  
 WISHFUL ANACHRONISM**

**Background:** Sutton Gassaway was born in Montana in 1861, just before it became the Montana Territory. His parents were ranchers who had fled westward to escape the risk of war when the South declared its independence. He worked long, hard days on his parents' ranch, and in the evenings the Gassaway family escaped into books and song. Sutton never received any formal schooling, but by age 19 he certainly read with greater proficiency than any young man within 50 miles.

One evening, on a long ride home from a shopping trip to Bannack, Sutton noticed that his horse was acting strangely; it would shift from a canter to a walk and back without his command, and more than once in resistance

to his command. When the horse bucked, threw him, and galloped away, Sutton, thankfully only bruised, furiously shouted after the beast. The shouting did no good, and distracted him from noticing the undead predator who assaulted and Embraced him.

It took Sutton Gassaway a month to grow accustomed to his unliving state; at the end of this period, his sire, a Gangrel named Aaron, explained that he'd been watching the Gassaway ranch for months and had decided to pass the "gift of immortality" to Sutton. Sutton was only mildly discomfited as Aaron told him of his new true nature; pragmatic, he accepted vampirism as the cost he would have to pay for eternal "life."

Gassaway had a few run-ins with anarchists and Sabbat vampires through the Pacific Northwest, but Aaron had warned him to keep his distance from Lupines, and he did that quite well. Still voraciously literate, he spent his long, empty nights reading everything he could get his hands on. H.G. Wells was a particular favorite, and when pulp science fiction magazines became popular after the Great War, Sutton spent night after night on distant planets or at the bottom of the ocean, entranced.

In the late 1930s, Sutton's luck ran out. After too many nights alone in the wilderness, he came to the attention of a pack of anarchists that had fled the Free State to the northern Rockies. The battle, which ran through the streets of Helena, was rather one-sided. Gassaway didn't have a chance against the anarchists' numbers. Finally, he broke into the new Hammond Building, dove into the basement, and found a patch of bare earth large enough for him to sink into to recover from his wounds. By the time he emerged from his torpor, he found himself trapped — the Hammond Building's basement had been cemented over and he could not break out. Resigned to a long entombment, Gassaway slipped into a deep unconsciousness.

He awoke from his long imprisonment in 1999; the Hammond Building in Helena was scheduled for demolition, and since he was under the basement, the building's implosion knocked him out of torpor and into consciousness. Several nights passed in which Sutton only hunted and fed; Montana game wardens are still on the lookout for Gassaway, who they think must've been a bear. When Sutton regained the ability to speak, he learned that it was 1999. Driven by curiosity, he headed for more populous territory.

It took Sutton Gassaway two nights to reach Seattle, and he was astonished and overjoyed at what he saw: he really *was* in the future. But certain things just weren't right. For one thing, the anarchists were still around; he was sure they'd be eradicated by now. But more importantly, where were the personal air cars? Where were the rocket platforms for transportation to the Mars and Venus colonies? Where were the damned ray-guns?! The kine of 1999

were obsessed with Internets and megahertz and, of all things, the stock market. Sutton heard no talk of space colonies or undersea cities, and he got strange looks when he asked about them in the library or the coffee shop.

Gassaway has learned of his clan's departure from the Camarilla, but he's not sure what he thinks of it yet. For the time being, he stays in Seattle, working as an assistant professor of English (specializing in Victorian literature) and looking for a clue as to what modern society is all about, while doing his best to stifle the activity of any anarch vampires he runs into. He's a little concerned about the rumors of Gehenna, and has been trying to figure out a way to help kick-start the American space exploration program, so that if Gehenna does come, these poor mortals, who lack personal force fields, can flee to a safe planet.

**Image:** A tall, thickly built man, Gassaway presents the archetypal "mountain man" Gangrel appearance when he first wakes up in the evening. If he has the time to do so, he shaves his bushy beard and trims his scraggly, shoulder-length brown hair before going out in public; when pressed for time he's a furry beast-man barely recognizable as the clean-shaven Dr. Gassaway.

**Roleplaying Hints:** Affect an air of erudition combined with a real lack of understanding of the modern world. Expect technology that doesn't exist; show confusion when presented with real tech ("Mobile telephone? Why wouldn't you just use your wrist communicator?"). You're not an idiot; in fact, you're bright and well-read. But you're utterly unfamiliar with popular culture, and you expected that since you woke up in the year 1999 things would be significantly more futuristic. You're a little disappointed that they are so mundane. You don't really consider yourself to be cursed; yes, your temper has worsened, and you're hairier and perhaps a bit uglier than you once were, and there is the blood issue, but for the most part you're thrilled with the opportunity to watch the future come to you.

**Clan:** Gangrel

**Sire:** Aaron the Coward

**Nature:** Competitor

**Demeanor:** Curmudgeon

**Generation:** 9th

**Embrace:** 1881

**Apparent Age:** 21

**Physical:** Strength 4, Dexterity 2, Stamina 4 (Tireless)

**Social:** Charisma 2, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1

**Mental:** Perception 4 (Careful), Intelligence 3, Wits 3

**Talents:** Alertness 2, Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Dodge 2, Intimidation 2, Leadership 1

**Skills:** Animal Ken 2, Drive 1, Firearms 2, Stealth 3, Survival 2

**Knowledges:** Academics 4 (Victorian Literature), Finance 1, Investigation 2, Law 1, Linguistics 2, Medicine 1, Occult 1, Politics 1, Science 2

**Disciplines:** Animalism 2, Auspex 2, Fortitude 2, Protean 3

**Backgrounds:** Contacts 2, Herd 1, Resources 2

**Virtues:** Conscience 3, Self-Control 3, Courage 4

**Morality:** Humanity 6

**Willpower:** 7




**DR. ALLAN T. WOODSTOCK**

**Background:** Dr. Woodstock's promising research career at Cambridge University was cut short by the Great War. He was drafted by the armed forces, marched quickly through officer training and hurried into a lab full of scientists whose job was to refine and develop delivery systems for deadly mustard gas and other chemical weapons. Troubled by thoughts of his young wife and daughter alone at home, he turned his tremendous intellect to the grim task of killing thousands of enemy soldiers. The military tested his weapons on rats, rabbits, dogs — whatever could be caught and caged to see how quickly it would die. Lieutenant Woodstock's commanding officer was not satisfied with animal testing, and ordered the scientists to run their tests on human subjects: soldiers wounded in the field, perhaps beyond hope, some of them prisoners of war. The horrified Woodstock refused, and the major busted the principled scientist down to sergeant and sent him out with the infantry. Sergeant Woodstock died at the Battle of Verdun, in the sixth month of the conflict.

A scavenging Gangrel found him on the field, his blood pumping weakly into the mud, breath barely rattling from his lungs. Dr. Woodstock does not remember his sire, and wonders to this night whether the shadowy





creature sensed that he was somehow different from the other doughboys dead and dying on the battlefield, or whether it was simply his warm blood and his sire's sloppiness that bought him immortality. The Kindred vitae filled his broken body with enough strength to sink deep into the bloodstained ground. The war was long over when he reemerged, the Germans pushed back, his infantry company gone home; and his young wife, who thought him dead, remarried — which was undoubtedly for the best. Dr. Woodstock took refuge in his science with a pharmaceutical company willing to make scheduling allowances for a talented but shell-shocked young veteran. His brilliant and steady work brought him to the attention of London's Lady Anne Bowesley, who sent her retainers to explore the niceties of bringing the promising mortal into Clan Ventrue. She took his prior Embrace with good grace, and eased his introduction to Kindred society with her influence — in exchange for certain investigations.

Dr. Woodstock kept his head down during World War II. It was a convenient time to leave London for the wide expanse of Greenland in the company of his clanmates, to learn the ways and traditions of the Gangrel.

The doctor has remained active and mobile since the close of that war, maintaining a permanent haven in London but moving his compact laboratory facilities from city to city — sometimes countries or continents away. The focus of his research has changed through the years. Although he finds the human body and its interaction with Kindred vitae fascinating, the unexplainable, magical abilities possessed by vampires keep him awake during the day, designing studies that will allow him to define Disciplines precisely, mathematically, scientifically. His results have been frustrating, since it has proven nearly impossible to repeat the results of any given study. The variations and exceptional uses of Disciplines that he has recorded in decades of study are of interest to princes and elders. Dr. Woodstock doesn't really understand why such unreliable results would be valuable to anyone — indeed, he has read compiled research by one Douglas Netchurch, which seems much more complete than his own. Nonetheless, they are the currency with which he has maintained his good relations with the Camarilla and the princes in whose domains he resides.

He takes advantage of his unnatural span of years by conducting experiments that take exceptionally long to complete. Among other schemes, he has blinded young vampires and Embraced the congenitally blind to compare their adaptation of the Protean Discipline; and Embraced and ghouled identical twins to compare their learning speeds and skills. His experiments with human and Kindred subjects, and the occasional deaths of those upon whom he feeds, cause him occasional twinges of conscience — twinges he pushes down with reminders of

the horrors humans invent for themselves, and that conscience cost him his life so many years ago. The subject of his most recently completed experiment is a young Toreador named Anna. Dr. Woodstock watched her grow from infancy to a beautiful young woman; the addition of Toreador blood to two decades of careful devotion has sent the normally reserved scientist into a tizzy. He has traded in a king's ransom in prestation debt to secure Anna's continued existence. Her sire, perturbed by the experiment's lack of positive results, had threatened to invoke his right of destruction, but Dr. Woodstock cannot imagine his existence without her after so many years.

Dr. Woodstock maintains a small (but expensive) laboratory with two ghouled research assistants (his retainers). He fills the gaps between his Discipline experiments with more conventional research, and publishes his results through a network of scientists in universities and the corporate world. His appearance has degraded over the years: his left leg now bends backward at the knee like the hind leg of an animal, and his habitually worn lab coat hides the patchwork of assorted fur that covers most of his torso.

**Image:** Dr. Woodstock prefers pressed wool trousers, crisp shirts and ties under his worn but clean lab coats. On extended trips he will relax his wardrobe into colonial-style khakis. The bifocals perched on the end of his nose are part affectation, and part handy magnifying glass.

**Roleplaying Hints:** Science used to be the most important thing in your life. You haven't fallen out of love with your experiments, but you have become enchanted by one of them. Anna is the only thing that can tear you away from your studies without frustration, and you would do absolutely anything to maintain her affection for you.

**Clan:** Gangrel

**Sire:** Unknown

**Nature:** Perfectionist

**Demeanor:** Pedagogue

**Generation:** 10th

**Embrace:** 1916

**Apparent Age:** Late 20s

**Physical:** Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5

**Social:** Charisma 3, Manipulation 2, Appearance 1

**Mental:** Perception 3, Intelligence 5, Wits 3

**Talents:** Alertness 4, Athletics 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Empathy 2, Intimidation 2, Leadership 2, Subterfuge 1

**Skills:** Animal Ken 4, Crafts 2, Drive 2, Etiquette 2, Firearms 3, Melee 2, Stealth 2, Survival 3

**Knowledges:** Academics 4, Computer 1, Finance 1, Investigation 3, Linguistics 3, Medicine 4, Occult 3, Politics 2, Science 4

**Disciplines:** Animalism 2, Auspex 2, Fortitude 2, Protean 4

**Backgrounds:** Allies 3, Clan Prestige 2, Contacts 3, Generation 5, Influence 2, Resources 4, Retainers 2, Status 3

**Virtues:** Conscience 2, Self-Control 5, Courage 4

**Morality:** Humanity 5

**Willpower:** 5



### MARK DECKER, RELUCTANT PRINCE OF MILWAUKEE

**Background:** Lucian, a Roman-era Gangrel, Embraced Decker during the American Revolutionary War. The young commander was a "sorrow Embrace", to hear him tell it. Lucian couldn't bear to kill him when he'd only intended to feed from the dead or dying, so he gave Decker the Embrace. In some form or other, Decker has been fighting ever since.

He took over an Alabama plantation with his sire in the early 19th century, feeding well and regularly from the slaves, but the War Between the States forced him to take up arms again. After the war, the plantation destroyed and his slaves freed, Decker traveled north, finally settling in the sleepy little town of Milwaukee. Decker maintained a simple haven there until a pack of Lupines ambushed him, forcing him into panicked flight. When he awoke after his terrified frenzy, Decker found that he'd killed and drained his small herd of mortals. He vowed vengeance and formed the Anubi, a group dedicated to defending the Kindred from Lupines. Over the next century, the Anubi set themselves apart from Milwaukee's Kindred society and triumphantly claimed nearly a score of Lupine scalps as prizes.

All would have continued in the same vein if the domain of Milwaukee had not been shaken with three successive shocks from early 1992 to mid-'93. First, Justicar

Ulisyan Thracs was found to have been destroyed near Racine. Less than a week later, a group of neonates destroyed an obviously insane Prince Terence Merik — who, it seemed, had been responsible for Thracs' death. Several months after that, Lupines attacked Chicago *en masse*, killing its prince and decimating its undead population.

Milwaukee's Kindred society splintered after Merik's death. Some took the side of the corpulent Ventrue Gracis, while others sided with the Brujah Scott. A few refugees fled north from Chicago, but many simply sat back, biding their time and waiting for a bold vampire to claim the title. The power struggle lasted months, and while the Kindred fought and argued, Lupines and a German vampire-hunter picked off Cainites throughout Milwaukee.


When the horde of Lupines struck Chicago, Decker finally gave up his self-imposed exile from the Council of Milwaukee. He believed that if the infighting paralyzing the Kindred of Milwaukee did not cease, they could not avoid Chicago's fate. He approached the ancient Ventrue Hrothulf — whether to secure the old one's assistance or assure his noninterference is unclear — and then paid a visit to Gracis' haven. Decker slew the Roman Ventrue then returned downtown. With the Anubi arrayed behind him, Decker entered Elysium and declared himself prince.

Decker's gambit might have failed at once, but the remaining council members saw him as an unknown, and as such preferable to an enemy otherwise jockeying for the throne. Additionally, years of Lupine fighting had taken Decker's martial talents to an unheard-of level; though Scott had designs on the throne, he showed no interest in duelling the leader of the Anubi.

Due mainly to the Lupine threat, Decker keeps Milwaukee on a war footing. Former Anubi fill most major positions in the city, and meetings with the council have become an oft-forgotten formality. He enforces the Traditions strictly, and regularly disallows even ghoul creation as a Masquerade risk. Whatever understanding he reached with Hrothulf has since faded; he prevented the ancient Ventrue from siring a child a few years ago, earning that elder's enmity.

Xaviar's break with the Camarilla has complicated Decker's unlife even farther. The prince did not know the justicar well, and mistrusted the rumors he'd heard, choosing to remain nominally a part of the Camarilla. But an old ally from the Cold War, the ancient Gangrel Inyanga, now spends as much time in Milwaukee as Chicago. Inyanga has left the Camarilla, as she is far more concerned with her own well-being than sectarian struggle. Decker and Inyanga have become close, the young warrior learning secrets from the old witch; her influence has him giving serious consideration to pulling Milwaukee out of the Camarilla and declaring it a free city.





**Image:** Mark Decker is a tall, slim man. Like most Kindred, his skin is nearly white; his hair is coal black. If it were not for the aura of menace he exudes, he might seem sickly. His voice rasps when he talks, due to a throat scar earned in a long-ago Lupine battle. He is haggard and seems more tired than an immortal should. His eyes flick back and forth in a somewhat frantic fashion when he is forced to stay in long meetings.

**Roleplaying Hints:** You're distracted most of the time. You've been fighting a war of some kind or other for more than two centuries, and you're tired, but you cannot rest. You know that if you rest, more of your (former) people die (again), and you're sure that if you let go for long enough to really rest you'll drop into torpor for a decade or three. You are exhausted, drawn and paying attention to too many things at once.

**Clan:** Gangrel

**Nature:** Fanatic

**Demeanor:** Survivor

**Generation:** 9th

**Embrace:** 1777

**Apparent Age:** mid-20s

**Physical:** Strength 5, Dexterity 5, Stamina 5

**Social:** Charisma 4, Manipulation 3, Appearance 2

**Mental:** Perception 5, Intelligence 3, Wits 3 (formerly 5, before his nerves began to fray)

**Talents:** Alertness 4, Athletics 2, Brawl 5, Dodge 5, Intimidation 3, Leadership 4, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 3

**Skills:** Animal Ken 2, Drive 3, Etiquette 2, Firearms 5, Melee 5, Security 4, Stealth 5

**Knowledges:** Academics 1, Camarilla Lore 2, Investigation 3, Linguistics 2 (French, German), Medicine 2, Politics 2

**Disciplines:** Animalism 3, Auspex 2, Celerity 5, Dominate 1, Fortitude 3, Obfuscate 4, Potence 3, Protean 5

**Backgrounds:** Allies 2, Resources 3, Retainers 5, Status 4

**Virtues:** Conscience 2, Self-Control 3, Courage 5

**Morality:** Humanity 5

**Willpower:** 7



# Gangrel™

NAME:

NATURE:

GENERATION:

PLAYER:

DEMEANOR:

SIRE:

CHRONICLE:

CONCEPT:

HAVEN:

## ATTRIBUTES

PHYSICAL		SOCIAL		MENTAL	
Strength	●0000	Charisma	●0000	Perception	●0000
Dexterity	●0000	Manipulation	●0000	Intelligence	●0000
Stamina	●0000	Appearance	●0000	Wits	●0000

## ABILITIES

TALENTS		SKILLS		KNOWLEDGES	
Alertness	00000	Animal Ken	00000	Academics	00000
Athletics	00000	Crafts	00000	Computer	00000
Brawl	00000	Drive	00000	Finance	00000
Dodge	00000	Etiquette	00000	Investigation	00000
Empathy	00000	Firearms	00000	Law	00000
Expression	00000	Melee	00000	Linguistics	00000
Intimidation	00000	Performance	00000	Medicine	00000
Leadership	00000	Security	00000	Occult	00000
Streetwise	00000	Stealth	00000	Politics	00000
Subterfuge	00000	Survival	00000	Science	00000

## ADVANTAGES

BACKGROUNDS		DISCIPLINES		VIRTUES	
_____	00000	_____	00000	Conscience/Conviction	●00000
_____	00000	_____	00000		
_____	00000	_____	00000		
_____	00000	_____	00000	Self-Control/Instinct	●00000
_____	00000	_____	00000		
_____	00000	_____	00000		
_____	00000	_____	00000	Courage	●00000

### MERITS/FLAWS

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### HUMANITY/PATH

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

### WILLPOWER

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

### BLOOD POOL

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

### HEALTH

Bruised

Hurt -1

Injured -1

Wounded -2

Mauled -2

Crippled -5

Incapacitated

### WEAKNESS

Incurable Derangement







# Gangrel™

## EXPANDED BACKGROUND

ALLIES

MENTOR

CONTACTS

RESOURCES

FAME

RETAINERS

HERD

STATUS

INFLUENCE

OTHER

## POSSESSIONS

GEAR (CARRIED)

EQUIPMENT (OWNED)

FEEDING GROUNDS

VEHICLES

## HAVENS

LOCATION

DESCRIPTION



