
OWbN Ventrue: Societies, Orders, & Cults

A Sourcebook for One World by Night

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DARK PACK

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HOW THIS DOCUMENT WORKS

Each Group, Order, or Society will be formatted as follows:

NAME OF THE ORDER/SOCIETY

A quote related to the group goes here in italics

Stereotypes

Common stereotypes associated to other major groups by the members of this Order/Society will be listed here, in the sidebar.

Overview/History: A generalized section giving information in what the group's history is and current status within the Clan, what makes up their email list, and/or where the group commonly meets.

Address/Presentation: Alternate form of address for a member of the Faction

Role Within the Clan: Where the Group politically falls within the Ventrue.

Prerequisites to Join: Both the mechanical (if any) and role-playing rules to joining this Order/Society. The process of being inducted should also be included.

Benefits of Membership: If any. The email list will be clearly included in this section, along with any other benefits specific to being part of this group.

Detriments of Membership: If any. Also, which Societies/Orders this group allies with and who oppose them.

Prerequisites to Advance (and the level name, if any): How a member advances in the various levels of the Society or Order (if there are other levels). These level will have descriptions of where characters fall in the hierarchy of the particular group.

Benefits of Advancement (if any): The benefits for moving up to the next level in your Group or Society (if any). As characters progress, they retain the rights and responsibilities from previous level(s), unless otherwise noted.

Detriments of Advancement (if any): The drawbacks of moving up in your group. There may also be social drawbacks or flaws from allying yourself too deeply within one Society/Order over another.

Known Members & Important Locations: A list of NPCs (Canon or OWbN) who are known to be part of this Group/Order/Society, and any important locations to the group.

Media: Inspiring sources of movies, television, and/or books to help express the feeling of the particular genre

Sources: The published White Wolf sources used to help develop this group's write-up, with page references.

PUBLIC SOCIETIES AND ORDERS OF THE CAMARILLA

The following section details societies which are known institutions of the the Camarilla. These groups would be known to anyone with the proper amount of either Ventrue Lore, or Camarilla Lore.

THE SOCIETY OF THE HAGUE

Justice is incidental to law and order. - J. Edgar Hoover

Overview/History: The Society of the Hague is regarded as a Camarilla institution, open for any to join, though in truth no one outside of Clan Ventrue has ever been admitted. The public nature of the Society helps support the notion that the Ventrue are the keepers of the law and what is proper. Similarly, if there is a question by anyone of any clan as to how things *should* be done, they may seek out a Ventrue and, if possible, a member of the Society of the Hague for an answer. Each member of the Society of the Hague has mastered both the laws of the mortal world and the interpretations of the laws and edicts within Clan Ventrue and the Camarilla.

Ventrue and other members of the Camarilla - Elders, Princes, Primogen, and sometimes even Justicariate members - seek the assistance of the Society of the Hague when drafting new policies. Harpies sometimes allow for arguments to be presented during matters of Prestation and Boon negotiation where members of the Society of the Hague (and those Endorsed by the Society of the Hague) are employed by interested parties to negotiate on their behalf. The Society of the Hague representative often extracts whatever fee they deem worthy of their time and attention for these endeavors, though, by tradition, Hague members are forbidden to charge fellow Ventrue for their services. In the past when Children of Haqim were first allowed full membership in the Camarilla, the Society of the Hague was charged with keeping records of their confessions to the Justicariate, though the ability of Prince's to grant membership has largely eliminated this as an active responsibility.

Stereotypes

Assembly of Colors: There is no negotiation with the Law; Law is immutable and timeless, not subject to whim and need.

Hawk Royale: Their Order bears a similar purpose to ours, yet bases itself in the flimsy and fickle ways of social order. Tradition and law have their value highlighted when placed next to the Hawks

Knights of the Blood: They are the arm that swings the sword, but often pay little heed to the mind that wills the arm into motion; Arms should not have will of their own.

Order of the White Cross: I have seen this among the dark continent's big game hunter's lodges; Men proud of their accomplishments and displaying their trophies.

Address/Presentation: Those who carry the privilege of being Endorsed by an Advocate of the Society of the Hague add the title, "Esquire" after their name. For example: [Name], Esquire.

Those who hold actual membership in the Society of the Hague usually add "The Right Honorable" before their names, while announcing their exact position after, such as: The Right Honorable [Name], [Rank] of the Society of the Hague.

Role Within the Clan: The Society of the Hague's purpose is twofold. First, members serve as records-keepers, reporting and filing away landmark decisions and every edict passed down from an individual in authority, to their subordinate(s). These decisions are then catalogued and studied by the Society of the Hague. The Society of the Hague uses previous Camarilla precedent to argue in-favor of Ventrue interests, and to assist Ventrue in gaining power and prestige - the world, over.

Second, and arguably more importantly, the Society of the Hague serves as unbiased consultants for those who are accused of crimes, or for those Ventrue who have grievance with another Ventrue. Hague members may also serve as Judges at such Hearings, should an appropriate-level member of the Directorate be unavailable or unable.

Prerequisites to Join (Member): In theory, all any hopeful needs to do in order to apply to join the Society of the Hague is to send an application for membership, and wait. Though the Society of the Hague does not necessarily "deny" applications for entry, some hopefuls find that their application is "pending review" or "in review" for what seems like indefinitely. In actuality, only those Ventrue who are found acceptable by a panel of Members are usually accepted into the Society of the Hague.

Applications to the Society of the Hague are collected by the Librarian, who then presents them to the Society of the Hague. The exact nature of the review process is a closely guarded Hague secret, and is under regular revision at the annual meetings of the Society.

As part of the review process, candidates are usually screened by several Members. The battery of questions and expected answers will usually require the interviewee to possess the following qualities and/or abilities:

- Verifiable Ventrue Lineage proving the applicant is a Ventrue
- Academics x1
- Law x3
- Lore: Camarilla x3; or the Expert Ability: Camarilla Law x3
- Lore: Ventrue x1
- Resources x2

Benefits of Membership: When accepted into the ranks of the Society of the Hague, the newcomer is considered a "Member." Membership entitles an individual to use the title "The Right Honorable" before their name, which signifies the individual's legal expertise to members of the Camarilla.

All Hague members are entitled to access the impressive Library of legal information maintained by the Society of the Hague in the city of their namesake. Members may use this information to perform research, so as to offer Counsel to members of the Camarilla seeking legal guidance, though some materials may be considered "restricted" and require a senior member of the Society of the Hague to access.

Members are expected to contribute to the Society of the Hague Library, and are often tasked by Advocates and above with requesting information or reports from other Ventrue on matters within the Camarilla or the Clan which have a legal component. Though many Ventrue do not go out of their way to furnish the Society of the Hague with this information, when a Hague member specifically requests information regarding the outcome of a legal proceeding, they can usually expect that most will offer up the information rather than drawing the ire of the Society.

Hague members are often called on by plaintiffs, defendants, or judges during Ventrue Hearings in order to serve as Counsel - those who assist the party involved throughout the length of a legal dispute. the Society of the Hague

allows Members to serve as Counsel to (or preside over) Hearings for any Ventrue who serves in the role of Whip, Sheriff, Scourge, Keeper of Elysium, Eiren, or Quaestor; in addition to any Ventrue who does not hold a position in the Camarilla. In cases where a Ventrue holds both a Camarilla and Directorate position, the higher title is almost always used. Members are also accorded additional respect within the Camarilla; for details see the Camarilla Genre Packet.

Access to: Society-of-the-Hague@googlegroups.com and the Society Library website

Detriments of Membership: Members are usually expected to watch over those in his or her area who have earned their Endorsement, collecting and filing reports on their legal activities. Since the personalities of those who may obtain Endorsement can vary greatly, this can sometimes be quite a chore, but few excuses are accepted for late work.

Members may be dispatched by an Advocate in order to track down witnesses, gather information or reports from unpleasant individuals, or to deliver news or verdicts (usually bad) to aggrieved parties.

Finally, the Society of the Hague looks favorably on members who devote themselves to the practice of law, wholly and unconditionally. Many superiors will advise new members against spreading themselves too thin, and members who join other Societies often find their promotion opportunities stalled within the Society of the Hague.

Prerequisites to Advance (Advocate): Ventrue who have a proven record of successfully representing the Society of the Hague's interests in the field of Law and who have had positive reports and results in "the field" will come under review, or submit for advancement, to those of the rank of Advocate or higher.

The exact nature of the examination for advancement is under regular revision, but those who are judged worthy are welcomed into the ranks of the Advocates. In order to be taken seriously, it is suggested that the individual seeking promotion possess the following abilities and backgrounds:

- Academics x2
- Law x4
- Lore: Camarilla x4; or the Expert Ability: Camarilla Law x4
- Resources x3
- Lore: Ventrue x2
- Legal Influence x3
- Etiquette x2
- Must have been a Member of the Society of the Hague (in good standing) for at least 1 year (Active, IC)

Benefits of Advancement (Advocate): When an individual passes his or her review, that member is now considered an Advocate. The Society of the Hague allows Advocates to serve as Counsel to (or preside over) Hearings for any Ventrue that a Member may provide services for, in addition to: Primogen, Harpies, Seneschals, Archons, Aediles, Tribunes, and Lictors.

THE COURTS

Rather than maintain a permanent system of Courts and Judges, Clan Ventrue relies on an ad hoc system of dispute-resolution which is both simple and effective. When one Ventrue has an issue with another of equal or lesser station, and the two parties are either unwilling or unable to come to a resolution, a Hearing is sometimes requested.

Traditionally, both members involved in the dispute must agree to bring their case in front of a neutral Arbiter, but a Ventrue's superior may sometimes highly suggest that a Hearing is necessary, and since a Ventrue's superiors can usually levy many punishments on their subordinates which do not involve legal proceedings, many concede.

Once the need for a Hearing is confirmed, an Arbiter must be chosen who the two disputants agree on. For disputes among members of the same Regional Directorate, while one who is considered equal in rank may serve, most always an Arbiter is chosen who is of superior rank to both parties involved. For disputes which span Regional boundaries, the same process is followed, but it becomes more difficult to select an individual who is considered neutral. This is where The Society of the Hague is crucial. As neutral parties, Hague members of appropriate seniority can serve in the role of Arbiter for most any Ventrue.

Advocates of The Society of the Hague have authority to grant a member of the Camarilla, in good standing, the title of "Endorsed by The Society of the Hague." To do this, the member simply compiles a review of the individual, and presents it to a panel of Advocates (and possibly Judge-Advocates) who will give sign-off on the decision, after putting the candidate through an unofficial "bar exam." Those who pass the exam are entitled to add the term: "Esquire" to their list of titles.-For Ventrue, Endorsement is often seen as a precursor to Membership, but for Kindred of other Clans, it remains an unbreakable glass ceiling.

An Advocate may endorse as many Kindred as they desire, thereby enabling them to essentially create their own "legal offices" within the larger structure of The Society of the Hague, however, Hague higher-ups usually start becoming concerned if an Advocate retains more Endorsements than half their permanent Camarilla status (with

the absolute maximum ever observed being the total permanent status of the Advocate).

Advocates may call for a Disciplinary Review Panel for any individual who claims Endorsement, or any Member of The Society of the Hague.

Detriments of Advancement (Advocate): It is not unheard of for members of the Ventrue Clan to enjoy the privilege of Endorsement at a “premium,” paid in boons, or other wealth. Though the practice of “selling” Endorsement in The Society of the Hague is not specifically forbidden, going about it publicly is frowned on.

Additionally, the conduct of those that a member has Endorsed will reflect on The Society of the Hague official who presented the Endorsement, originally. Advocates are advised to be cautious when selecting individuals for Endorsement, and should remain vigilant, thereafter.

Prerequisites to Advance (Judge-Advocate): Ventrue who have represented The Society of the Hague in a positive manner, while simultaneously managing a staff of Members and Endorsements or who have made decisions as an arbiter that have had a lasting impact on the legal landscape of the Kindred-world are often reviewed for promotion to Judge-Advocate.

A panel of Judge-Advocates, supervised by the Judge-Advocate-General, reviews the case-files of the Advocate and all of those under his or her authority, usually calling the Advocate in front of the panel to answer questions about their personal accomplishments and defeats, and the work of their team.

Those with positive reviews are promoted to the rank of Judge-Advocate. Many who have made good impressions on the panel had the following skill-set, so it is highly suggested that, before an Advocate is presented to the panel, that they possess the following abilities and backgrounds:

- Academics x3
- Law x5
- Lore: Camarilla x5; or the Expert Ability: Camarilla Law x5
- Resources x5
- Lore: Ventrue x3
- Legal Influence x5
- Etiquette x4
- Must have been an Advocate of The Society of the Hague (in good standing) for at least 1 year (Active, IC)
- They have at least 2 subordinates working for to the Advocate for a significant length of time, or made a lasting impact on the legal landscape within the Kindred world, or the Clan.

Benefits of Advancement (Judge-Advocate): When an individual passes review, he is now considered a “Judge-Advocate” of The Society of the Hague. Judge-Advocates may offer Counsel to (or preside over) Hearings for any Ventrue that an Advocate may provide services for, in addition to any Ventrue in the role of Prince, Praetor, Justicar, or Strategos.

Judge-Advocates may also block or dismiss any Endorsement given by an Advocate under his or her assignment, or any Advocate who has no Judge Advocate to supervise them, and may call for a Disciplinary Review Panel for a member of Advocate or lower.

Detriments of Advancement (Judge-Advocate): A Judge Advocate is responsible for the Advocates under him (and

the Members and endorsed individuals under those Advocates), and may ultimately be held responsible for their conduct, and for their continuing education and development. Their performance as Legal experts, the decisions they make and the advice they give, and other legal matters under their authority is scrutinized much more strictly than those of the Advocates.

Judge-Advocates are often watched to ensure that they make decisions that are “for the greater good.” Due to this, Judge-Advocates are sometimes chosen or dismissed based on their willingness to tow the party-line rather than to make decisions which are based in the factual evidence, witness testimony, or other factors. Though such an expectation would never be openly discussed, the implications are more than real enough for the Judge-Advocates to remain in-line.

Known Members & Important Locations:

- **[NPC] Henri “the Even-Handed” Constantin Laroque, Judge-Advocate-General:** At the head of the Society is the Judge-Advocate-General whose duties include leading The Society of the Hague and providing Counsel exclusively to the Justicars and the upper echelons of the Ventrue, mainly on legal wording of proclamations. The Judge-Advocate-General also appoints the Librarian of The Society of the Hague.

Henri Laroque began his adult life in the French Navy, and after achieving the post of Quartermaster, discovered he had a knack for citing the rules and regulations of the Navy. An associate suggested that he look into the Law; after a few short years apprenticing in a solicitor’s office he began to excel and started a meteoric rise through the legal profession. He is known for a fair but strict temperament and insightful rulings.

The Judge-Advocate-General may advise anyone inside or outside of Clan Ventrue, though his advice is usually reserved for Justicars and Ephors. The Judge-Advocate-General is responsible for presiding over Judge-Advocates, and is the only individual within Ventrue Clan who may preside over Judicial Hearings involving the Ephorate - though such a thing has never occurred.

- **[NPC] Charles Stanforth II, Advocate; Former Secretary of The Society of the Hague:** The former Secretary of The Society of the Hague is the embodiment of tradition. Stately and always impeccably dressed for the occasion, Charles Stanforth II

[PC or NPC]: Secretary of the Society of the Hague: The Secretary is expected to dutifully serve to record the minutes of The Society of the Hague and forward announcements to its members so that all are well-informed and prepared to conduct themselves as the keepers of the law. The position may be little more than that, or may come with more responsibilities and a greater leadership role, depending on the wishes of the Judge Advocate General. It may be held by an individual of Advocate or above.

- **[PC OR NPC] The Society of the Hague Librarian:** The Librarian, usually a young Ventrue who has achieved the position of Advocate and shows promise, is responsible for maintaining the Library of Precedence and Case Studies, as well as maintaining a list of Esquires, Members and other member ranks.
- **[LOCATION] The Society of the Hague:** The Society of the Hague serves as the traditional meeting a place for members who convene for their yearly April (formerly February) meeting to discuss precedents, and to dissect and discuss noteworthy cases; though the Judge-Advocate-General has been known to periodically move the meeting location to whatever city stands at the forefront of legal innovation. The Society of the Hague contributes substantially to international politics and is home to over 150 international

organizations, including the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court.

The foundation of The Society of the Hague as an "international city of peace and justice" was laid in 1899, when the world's first Peace Conference took place in The Society of the Hague, followed by a second in 1907. Tonight, The Society of the Hague is the fourth major center for the United Nations, after New York, Geneva and Vienna.

Media: A Few Good Men (1992), The Verdict (1982), 12 Angry Men (1957),

Sources: CB:Ventrue (Revised) [WW2358], p.54;

MAJOR VENTRUE SOCIETIES AND ORDERS

The following section details societies and orders which are fairly well-known inside of Clan Ventrue to anyone with the proper amount of either Ventrue Lore. Some major societies or orders include members of Clan Ventrue who stand outside of the Directorate, and some even accept Ventrue who stand outside of the Camarilla.

ASSEMBLY OF COLORS

A real diplomat is one who can cut his neighbor's throat without having his neighbor notice it. ~Trygve Lie

Overview/History: Ventrue who excel in diplomacy may be admitted into a group of specialists in the field known as the Assembly of Colors; each color representative of a strategic alliance and relation with an individual Clan. Formerly referred to as the Court of Many Colors, this group is more than just a consortium of silver-tongued Blue-Bloods; the Assembly of Colors are an elite cadre of diplomatic specialists.

Each Consul of the Assembly of Colors has, over years of focused effort (and likely, favor-trading), developed a significant amount of contacts, connections, and favors with various Clans; connections that are sufficient to withstand the rigors of time. Whether serving as a calming voice asking for the unlife of a clan-mate to be spared, or as a crucial mediator to defuse or avoid hostilities before they begin, members of this group are viewed as the best and last chance for a diplomatic solution and are a resource utilized by the entire Clan.

In the modern nights especially, as the Camarilla faces more perilous enemies, Ventrue diplomats are called to quiet vocal opponents of public policy or to make deals which solidify the Clan's, and thus the Camarilla's future. More than simply amassing boons, contacts, and leverage of all kinds, Members are employed to build - and often mend - bridges for the clan.

Stereotypes

The Society of the Hague: Laws are simply a framework, not a replacement for common sense.

Hawk Royale: These Kings waste time sniping at other Ventrue and rumor-mongering when their talents could be put to so much better use.

Knights of the Blood: Be wary of the Knights, they see war as a means to an end, and the end-game of war without purpose is chaos.

Order of the White Cross: These Knights are engaged in a deadly game, for there can be no diplomatic end when dealing with beasts.

Address/Presentation: Member of the Assembly of Colors or, less formal: Member of the Assembly

For those who sit as Consul, they additionally identify their membership as follows: Consul of [Color], where the Color represents the Clan for which their membership applies; see below:

- Consul of Black (Assamite / Children of Haquim)
- Consul of Yellow (Brujah)
- Consul of Brown (Followers of Set)
- Consul of Green (Gangrel)
- Consul of Grey (Giovanni)
- Consul of Violet (Malkavian)
- Consul of Orange (Nosferatu)

- Consul of Red (Ravnos)
- Consul of Gold (Toreador)
- Consul of Blue (Tremere)
- Consul of Jade (Kindred of the East)

There are no Consuls for the Lasombra or Tzimisce. With the Anarch Revolt and the formation of the Sabbat, relationships with these two clans are no longer publicly claimed to be represented by the Assembly; their corresponding colors have fallen into obscurity from all but the Eldest Ventrue. Likewise, other “bloodlines” and illegitimate lines of Kindred undeserving of attention are denied such acknowledgement, but not completely forgotten by the Clan’s vigilance.

Role Within the Clan: Members of the Assembly are sought for their skill at diplomacy, for their panache for negotiating, or for their unique insight when a particularly volatile situation arises. When the need arises for specialized connections within a specific “field of expertise” (read: Clan), Consuls are brought in to advise and possibly even assist.

Prerequisites to Join: This Society is open to Ventrue who are members of the Camarilla and have a verifiable Lineage. All appointments, replacements, and removals of Members and Consuls are made by the Consul-General. Applications and nomination-packages for appointments or replacements are usually brought to the Executive Assistant’s attention. This compilation of documented diplomatic achievements are submitted by Clan Elders, Princes, Primogen, or the highest-level Directorate member in the candidate’s region; they are then reviewed based on the strength of candidate and his diplomatic accomplishments.

Benefits of Membership: As diplomats, Members of the Assembly often have unique insight into gaining advantage for the Clan through tested and proven diplomatic “methods.” The cornerstone of this insight is knowledge and the collected members of the Assembly possess a wealth of such knowledge. Members are usually willing to share (read: trade) their knowledge with other Members. This allows Members to enjoy access to Lore and information on other Clans that may have been otherwise unavailable to them.

Additionally, the Members of the Assembly of Colors are free to ask for recompense for their unique services, unlike The Society of the Hague. The Assembly has a limited number of Members, so it is important for those seeking assistance to understand that their services are not to be utilized for trivial matters and that the time, resources and favors expended in pursuit of a goal must be replenished.

Access to: court-of-many-colors@googlegroups.com

Detriments of Membership: For those Ventrue who claim membership in the Knights of the Blood, they may see their future in this group to be “extremely limited” - for if they must swing a sword, they have failed shamefully at diplomacy.

Additionally, to the higher-ups of The Society of the Hague, Members of the Assembly are viewed less than favorably. Like their legal counterparts, Members are often called in to deal with situations as a final measure, usually after many other methods and individuals have failed. At times, a Member may resort to methods of negotiation and resolution that are not strictly legal, or that could be seen as threatening to the integrity of the Camarilla and its laws. Hague members who also claim Membership in the Assembly of Colors may have their chances of promotion significantly diminished.

Prerequisites to Advance (Consul): Promotion from Member to Consul is a right enjoyed by the Consul-General and Vice-Consul-General, though rumor has it that the Executive Assistant's recommendations are always strongly considered. When a Member has displayed significant ties to a specific Clan and has proven his or her expertise over all others, that Member is advanced to one of the Consul positions.

Only one Consul exists for each color at any one time.

The biggest qualifier for this elevated position is significant role-play milestones and events, such as negotiating a treaty or administering (on behalf of a Clan) at a Court or Conclave. Any of these events may garner the Member the attention and praise he or she needs to advance to the role of Consul. Such events have sometimes turned out to be an audition themselves, unknown to the candidate at the time!

Benefits of Advancement (Consul): Consuls are Ventrue who have displayed a veritable arsenal of leverage with which to bargain (boons, out-of-clan prestige, lores, debt of gratitude merit) as well as the aptitude for continuing to curry favors with a specific Clan.

The Consul-General usually takes personal interest in the Consuls, and their development as a diplomat and Ventrue. At the discretion of the Ventrue Coordinator and with the approval of the Storyteller, the Consul may purchase the Background: *Mentor* in the Consul-General to represent this relationship.

Detriments of Advancement (Consul): Only one Consul exists for each color at any one time. This means Consuls are constantly under pressure to keep their diplomatic ties strong. Consuls understand, should another Ventrue with better connections rise to the eyes of the Assembly's elders, their position would be replaced - without hesitation.

Known Members & Important Locations:

- **[NPC] Democritus, Consul-General:** The first elected Ventrue Justicar, Democritus is renowned for his scientific approach to politics, diplomacy, negotiation, and for his zen-like maxims. Expressing that "equality is everywhere noble," Democritus created the Assembly on the belief that those in power should take it on themselves to aid those in-need, and of those who have met him, many consider Democritus to be the most calm, rational, and level-headed individual that they have ever met. Democritus heads the Assembly of Colors from his (secret) office in Geneva.
- **[NPC] Anushin-Rawan, Vice Consul-General:** Since establishing the entirety of the island of Yiaros, her personal haven and domain, as an Elysium where all Kindred of the Camarilla are welcomed freely, Anushin-Rawan, the Lady of Yiaros has gained much status and fame. This, and her Reputation as the Champion of the merits of Elysium have helped Anushin-Rawan advance to Vice Consul-General of the Assembly of Colors. Meetings of the full Assembly often take place on Yiaros.
- **[PC or NPC] Executive Assistant to the Consul-General:** This Assistant serves both the Consul-General and the Vice Consul-General and is responsible for taking submission of nominations-packages for Consul hopefuls; ensuring that any necessary correspondence sent to the Consul-General or Vice Consul-General is prioritized and complete; and for making announcements of new Members and Consuls. The Assistant also ensures that agendas are distributed and that all members are contacted when face-to-face meetings are required.
- **[LOCATION] Island of Yiaros, Greece:** The Island of Yiaros is the traditional meeting place for the Assembly

of Colors with Anushin-Rawan moderating most of the actual meetings of the Assembly. Due to several major events in previous years, the Assembly has been meeting more frequently, with an Annual all-member meeting on October 24th, a date commemorating the Peace of Westphalia. The entire Island of Yiaros is the personal Domain of Anushin-Rawan and is considered Elysium.

Media: Arts of Power: Statecraft and Diplomacy by Chas w. Freeman Jr. (1997); Rome, Season 1 (HBO Mini-Series, 2005); Charlie Wilson's War (2007);

Sources: CB:V (WW2058), pgs.46, 64; CB:V[R] (WW2358), pgs.58-59, 99;

KNIGHTS OF THE BLOOD

In times of war, the law falls silent. ~Cicero

Overview / History: In years before the Camarilla, during the Dark Ages, the Knights of the Blood were the militant extremists of the Ventrue. The Knights of the Blood were well-known for their brutal methods and as staunch believers in the divine right of Kings - the belief that one group was destined to rule over another.

The Knights' attitudes and beliefs, however, ran counter to the ideology of the Camarilla and by the end of the Anarch Revolt, the order was broken. All surviving Knights of the Blood now claimed allegiance with the Sabbat, as Antitribu.

Centuries later in the late-1990s, as the Ventrue of the Camarilla struggle to stay in control, those at the highest levels of power called for more and more radical methods of ensuring control in the turbulent and uncertain Modern Nights. It was in this moment that an ancient and mysterious Elder stepped forward to provide this radical solution - the Grand-Master of the Knights of the Blood.

Claiming to have been a high-ranking member of the original Knights of the Blood, in the Dark Ages, the Grand-Master met secretly with other like-minded Ventrue, slowly rebuilding the Order. Eventually returning to prominence in the last decade, the modern equivalent of the Knights of the Blood claims significantly fewer members than in the Dark Ages, but the modern members are just as blindly fanatical as they were hundreds of years ago.

Members of the Knights of the Blood work to maintain and hone their militant skills, combating threats to Ventrue, both internal and external. To many, the Knights seem focused more on ensuring Clan loyalty and solidarity than concentrating on any singular threat from without. To other Ventrue, attitudes and opinions on the effectiveness of these Modern Knights vary greatly.

Address/Nickname: [Name], [Position] of the Blood, where the position is the one held by the individual, such as:

- Squire of the Blood
- Knight-Errant of the Blood
- Knight of the Blood
- Master-Knight of the Blood

Role Within the Clan: Knights of the Blood are, first, the self-appointed internal police of the Ventrue, and second, the champions of Ventrue power. Knights of the Blood tend to not follow the standard protocol or decorum that many Ventrue are used to, but follow a strict "for the greater good" ideology when it comes to matters of the clan. Most members are fed a constant stream of dogma and propaganda by their superiors to keep them assured that their techniques are effective, and many of these zealots adopt an attitude of superiority to those outside the Knights of the Blood; because of this, some of the Elder members have become extremely paranoid.

Stereotypes

Assembly of Colors: In the end, the only currency will be violence. Shall we not waste time with petty things?

The Society of the Hague: Unnecessary. We have all the tools we need as Kings to decide on any situation for ourselves.

Hawk Royale: The worst of the Merchants, these Kings make themselves feel important, but are not.

Order of the White Cross: A poorly organized mirror of the Knights, only without sanction.

Knights of the Crimson Scepter: They are pretenders to a role that they have not earned.

Prerequisites to Join (Squire): No one “applies” to join the Knights of the Blood; potential recruits are chosen without their knowledge by a Knight of the Blood, or higher. The individual, their ability to cope with stress, their specific skills, and their methods are all observed by the Knight for an extended period of time before the individual is approached.

In addition to an almost fanatical devotion to the clan, Knights often ensure that the recruit is screened properly, and is in possession of the necessary abilities before standing behind their presentation. The most common of these are:

- Verifiable Ventrue Lineage proving the applicant is a Ventrue
- Fortitude x5
- Presence x2
- Brawl x3
- Melee x3
- Humanity x3 (or lower)

Benefits of Membership (Squire): Those who are newly initiated into the Knights of the Blood are known as Squires. These members are tutored under a Knight and trained in the protocols and laws of the Knights of the Blood. Squires usually have the opportunity to learn a variety of skills and disciplines as they are assigned to or shared between Knights, or perform tasks with or for Knight-Errants. It is usual for a Squire to assist in several tasks of varying difficulty before they are presented for promotion. Each Squire’s education is unique and reflects the personal views of the Knight or Knights from which they learn.

Most Squires, choose to shun learning any other powers (including other clan-disciplines) until they master the physical disciplines of Fortitude, Celerity, and Potence. This attitude has served the Knights well, since they do not maintain a defensive attitude of waiting for a fight to come to them, instead preferring to carry it to the enemies of the Clan, wherever they may be. Due to the willingness of the Knights of the Blood to invest in the martial prowess of its members, the group can usually assist its members in finding Mentors for many physical disciplines.

Finally, Knights of the Blood support each other, both publicly and privately, with unswerving fervor. Squires will usually always be assisted in tasks by Knights or Knight-Errants, and are afforded a great deal of supervision, oversight, and sometimes, if they fail in a task: leeway.

Access to: knights-of-the-blood@googlegroups.com

Detriments of Membership (Squire): Renowned and feared for their utter brutality, most Kindred with high humanity find the methods of this order extreme and disturbing. This, coupled with the fact that the Knights of the Blood almost never answer to local Ventrue authority in any form, make those associated with the Knights of the Blood shunned and notorious with many Ventrue Orders and Societies, including, in many cases, the Directorate.

Once a Squire accepts membership in the Knights of the Blood, it is made clear, in no uncertain terms, that membership is for life! While, technically, there are no formal rules against quitting, in practice, no one is allowed to walk away from membership in the Knights of the Blood. To do so would most likely earn the individual the ire of the entirety of the Knights of the Blood (in the form of the *Enemy Flaw*) and certainly be considered desertion. The intensity of this ill will would vary depending on the rank of the Knight of the Blood at the time of “desertion.”

Prerequisites to Advance (Knight-Errant): After a trial period of no less than one year, and after learning from several different Knights and Knight-Errants, a Knight may bring his Squire to be presented at the Knighthood

Ceremony. Though the Ceremony itself is purely a courtesy, it is a tradition which is considered of vast importance. A Squire who has been judged worthy by a Master-Knight will earn the rank of Knight Errant, and will receive a full set of traditional regalia.

The Master-Knight may choose to directly test the Squire during the Knighthood Ceremony, both in social or mental acumen, and in physical prowess. Candidates who make it to Knight-Errant usually have the following abilities and disciplines at a minimum:

- Fortitude x5
- Presence x2
- Brawl x4 (with a Specialization)
- Melee x4 (with a Specialization)
- Humanity x3 (or lower)
- Potence and Celerity x4
- Have held the position of Squire for at least 1 year (Active, IC)
- Be considered a member of the Camarilla in good standing for at least 1 year (Active, IC)

Benefits of Advancement (Knight-Errant): Knight-Errants are members of the Knights of the Blood who have proven themselves able to be trusted with continuing to learn necessary skills, completing assigned tasks independently, and opening investigations where necessary.

Knight-Errants are allowed, by the Knights of the Blood, the freedom to start and continue investigations into Ventrue who serve in the roles of: Whip, Sheriff, Scourge, Keeper of Elysium, Eiren, or Quaestor; in addition to any Ventrue who does not hold a position in the Camarilla, or who sits outside of the normal Directorate structure (for whatever reason). In the case that a Ventrue holds both a Camarilla and Directorate position, the higher title is usually used. If evidence of treachery or treason is discovered, the Knight-Errant is authorized (by the Knights of the Blood) to punish the offending Ventrue in a manner fitting both the crimes and the evidence. Knight-Errants are *highly* advised to consult with at least one other member, Knight-Errant or higher before executing any sentence.

Knight-Errants are generally advised by many Knights and above to turn over sentences of death to a higher authority, rather than carrying them out immediately.

Detriments of Advancement (Knight-Errant): It is quite common for Knight-Errants to be observed silently by one or more Knights during this period. It is also somewhat common for a Knight, or higher, to review the judgments and evidence of a Knight-Errant, and the Knight-Errant is expected to provide full details to the requester, as best as is possible.

Just as they do externally; internally, Knights of the Blood forgo the traditional system of Ventrue Courts and Hearings, instead acting as judge, jury, and executioner when the situation requires. Additionally, Knight-Errants discovered to be abusing his or her position, or falsifying evidence will be dealt with harshly, and swiftly, often suffering the same punishment as they have unfairly dispensed themselves.

THE KNIGHTHOOD CEREMONY

Called for by the Knight to which the Squire serves and presided over by a Master-Knight, the Knighthood Ceremony is basically the same as it was in the times of the Dark Ages. All surrounding members of the Knights of the Blood are invited. Knights and Knight-Errants who have had interactions with the Squire (and Master-Knights, if applicable) take turns speaking to reasons for or against the Squire's possible promotion. At the end of the Ceremony, the Master-Knight will accept or reject the request for promotion.

Storytellers are urged to Coordinate with the Ventrue Coordinator's office to either run the Ceremony at their local Chronicle, or at a national or regional event where other (PC) members of the Knights of the Blood will be present.

Prerequisites to Advance (Knight): After a period of no less than one active year as a Knight-Errant, a Knight-Errant may petition a Master-Knight to hold a Knighthood Ceremony. The Knight-Errant should be prepared to cite specific examples and bear witnesses which show that his or her investigations and judgments have reflected well on the Knights of the Blood, and that he or she has been an effective force at advancing the interests of Clan Ventrue.

The Master-Knight may choose to directly test the Knight-Errant during the Knighthood Ceremony, both in social or mental acumen, and in physical prowess. Candidates who earn the title of Knight usually have the following abilities and disciplines at a minimum:

- Fortitude x5
- Presence x4
- Brawl x5 (with a Specialization)
- Melee x5 (with a Specialization)
- Humanity x3 (or lower)
- Potence and Celerity x5 (or the highest level attainable by the home-Chronicle's rules)
- Auspex and Obfuscate x1
- Have held the position of Knight-Errant for at least 1 year (Active, IC)
- Be considered a member of the Camarilla in good standing for at least 2 years (Active, IC)

Benefits of Advancement (Knight): Knights are the core of the Knights of the Blood. They are independent operators, with total autonomy to investigate, punish, detain, harass, or destroy as they see fit. Answerable only to Master-Knights, Knights have the right to select a Squire that they may train, teach, discipline, or destroy as they see fit.

Knights are allowed, by the Knights of the Blood, the freedom to start and continue investigations into any Ventrue that a Knight-Errant may investigate, in addition to: Primogen, Harpies, Seneschals, Archons, Aediles, Tribunes, and Lictors. If evidence of treachery or treason is discovered, the Knight is authorized to punish the offending Ventrue in a manner fitting both the crimes and the evidence.

Knights also provide leadership and direction to Knight-Errants and may call on any Knight-Errants in their area to perform tasks when necessary.

Detriments of Advancement (Knight): Knights may sometimes be called on by Masters to perform tasks specific to their skills which may, or may not, be sanctioned by the Clan or technically legal by Camarilla laws and traditions. This can often lead to situations where the Knight must be forced to relinquish status, boons, and prestige in order to cover for something done in-line with official Knights of the Blood duties, but outside of Camarilla laws or the Traditions.

A Knight discovered to be abusing his or her position, or falsifying evidence will be dealt with harshly, and swiftly, often suffering a harsher punishment than the ones suffered by those who have been unfairly punished. Standard punishment for Knights discovered laying false accusation against another Ventrue is either maiming, or being branded in a visible location, neither of which are allowed to be healed for the sentenced amount of time. Lesser punishment involves demotion or the tribute of Retainers, Influence, or Resources; as well as imprisonment for a predetermined amount of time.

Prerequisites to Advance (Master-Knight): After a period of no less than one active year as a Knight, one may petition the Grand-Master-Knight to hold a Knighthood Ceremony. The Knight must be prepared to endure a

rigorous, sometimes multi-night combat, often with several Master-Knights for opponents.

Though tests are seldom as straightforward as they seem, the candidate can expect to be tested for their maximum limits in mental acuity and physical endurance. Those who earn the title of Master-Knight usually have the following abilities and disciplines at a minimum:

- All Cardinal-8 Disciplines at level 5 (or at the highest levels attainable by the home-Chronicle's rules)
- Brawl x5 (with a Specialization)
- Melee x5 (with a Specialization)
- Humanity x2 (or lower)
- Have held the position of Knight for at least 1 year (Active, IC)
- Be considered a member of the Camarilla in good standing for at least 3 years (Active, IC)

Benefits of Advancement (Master-Knight): Master-Knights of the Blood may be called on to conduct and/or preside over the Knighthood Ceremony of all members below the rank of Master-Knight. They have the privilege of promoting Squires into Knight-Errants, and Knight-Errants into Knights, ensuring candidates' abilities in any way they choose. Master-Knights may also be called on to test the skill and abilities of Master-Knight candidates.

Finally, Master-Knights are empowered with starting and continuing investigations into the upper echelons of the Ventrue, where care and delicacy must be taken to avoid causing an incident that could have implications for the entirety of the Knights of the Blood. Master-Knights may investigate any that a Knight or below may investigate, in addition to: Princes and Praetors. If evidence of treachery or treason is discovered, the Knight is authorized to punish the offending Ventrue in a manner fitting both the crimes and the evidence. In cases where a Prince must be removed, the Master-Knight is expected to either find a suitable Ventrue replacement, or to claim Praxis himself. This is considered the height of extremity.

Detriments of Advancement (Master-Knight): Master-Knights are charged with the nightly operations of the group, and with continuing development and assignment of the Knights and Knight-Errants. Failures of Knights or Knight-Errants during tasks assigned by Master-Knights will reflect directly on the Master-Knight who assigned the task. Additionally, Master-Knights are expected to become involved in potentially scandalous situations before they can cause any permanent damage to the group, as a whole.

A Master-Knight is expected to be the pinnacle of propriety, and most any crime where a Master-Knight would be discovered to be abusing his or her power would be punishable by death.

Known Members & Important Locations:

- **[NPC] Grand-Master-Knight of the Blood:** The Grand-Master is an enigmatic figure whose identity is kept a secret from the majority of the clan; simply being referred to by his title. Though some rumor that the Justicar, Strategoi, and Ephors know the identity of the Grand-Master, no one can be certain.

The Grand-Master is the ultimate authority with regard to the Knights of the Blood, and claims to have been with the organization since its inception in the Dark Ages. The Grand-Master makes final decisions regarding many of the problems that the group faces, is ultimately responsible for the conduct and discipline of the Master-Knights, and has the authority to promote, demote, or discipline any member of the group. Those who do know of the Grand-Master understand that his fanatical nature means that he will stop at nothing to see the safety of the Knights of the Blood maintained.

- **[NPC] Stephan of the House of Waldburg, Knight** - Stephan is a British national and grand-childe of Prince

Wilhelm Waldburg. While it is well-known that Stephan's sire was a disgrace to the line, what is less widely spread is that Stephan's sire was quietly removed by the Prince of Berlin. Stephan has since been taken under Waldburg's wing, training him as he would intend for his own. Stephan is bold, brash, and sometimes quite vulgar. He has been chastised by many over his seeming disregard for the etiquette that so many Ventrue observe as the norm.

Media: The Duellists (1977); A Few Good Men (1992),

Sources: Libellus Sanguinis I: Masters of the State (WW2708), pg.87; Berlin by Night (WW2214), pg.62

THE WHITE CROSS

The opportunity to secure ourselves against defeat lies in our own hands, but the opportunity of defeating the enemy is provided by the enemy himself. - Sun Tzu

Overview / History: Though few remember exactly how the White Cross originally started, what is known is that time and again, members of the White Cross are called on by Ventrue for strategic assistance when faced with the direst of circumstances - life-threatening conflict. While many consider the senior members of the White Cross archaic or austere, in the chaotic modern nights, there is no doubt that the expertise of the White Cross is as necessary as it is valued.

In the past, the White Cross was reserved for only those Ventrue who have, by themselves and unaided, destroyed a member of the Sabbat. However, in the dark, desperate days of the Year of Fire, the Order has quietly expanded membership to include those whose expertise includes the slaying of the Infernal, Lupines, and several other such threats to the stability of Ventrue and their assets, worldwide.

Address/Nickname: [Position] of the White Cross, where the individual positions are as follows:

- Apprentice to Knight [Knight's Name] of the White Cross
- Knight of the White Cross
- Master of the White Cross

Stereotypes

The Society of the Hague: They serve a vital role, ensuring disputes are resolved quickly and fairly.

Hawk Royale: If they want to be Harpies, let them be Harpies in the Camarilla, or not at all.

Knights of the Blood: Self-important thugs who spend far too much time warring on their fellow Ventrue and not nearly enough protecting the Clan against its foes.

The Court of Many Colors: The honeyed words of a single diplomat may save a thousand lives, but when diplomacy fails, we must be ready.

Role Within the Clan: Members of the White Cross are clan Ventrue's chief experts when it comes to conflict or defending against violent threats. Though many perceive them to be just another outdated martial order, in actuality, members of the White Cross are more like a global brotherhood and sisterhood of experts. These Ventrue "experts" are sought out by other Ventrue who are seeking the most efficient or effective means of dealing with a threat to Clan Ventrue and their creation, the Camarilla.

Prerequisites to Join (Apprentice): Any Ventrue (with a verifiable Lineage) who has killed a member of the Sabbat, or an Infernalist, either in combat, or through unaided use of directed influence may be eligible for admittance into the White Cross. In order to become eligible, the Ventrue's direct Superior should make contact with a member of the White Cross to inform them of the Ventrue's accomplishment; contacting the White Cross directly is considered uncouth, and gauche. A Ventrue Prince can always recommend an individual for membership.

After the White Cross is notified, it will dispatch the closest Knight to verify the kill(s). Once the accomplishment is verified, the Knight or Master will make his or her full report to the Council of Masters, who will usually approve or decline the candidate based on the recommendations of the interviewer.

Benefits of Membership (Apprentice): Each member who joins begins as an Apprentice, and Apprentices are assigned to Knights. Apprentices are almost always assigned to Knights who are close to their geographical area, so as to ensure the Apprentice continues to learn and behave in a manner consistent with the honor accorded to the White Cross.

As the strategically-inclined wing of the Ventrue, members of the White Cross see it as their duty to ensure the education of their brethren; ignorance in the boardroom can bruise your ego, while ignorance on the urban battlefield can get you and your allies killed. Knights usually assist their Apprentices by helping them to find teachers for abilities, lores, and disciplines which can help them become better strategists and soldiers.

Access to: order-of-the-white-cross@googlegroups.com[@googlegroups.com](mailto:order-of-the-white-cross@googlegroups.com)

Detriments of Membership (Apprentice): Apprentices of the White Cross are not accorded the same respect and autonomy as Knights. Apprentices must constantly prove themselves, never refusing service when the opportunity arises, and never failing in their duties in a manner that would impugn on their personal Dignitas, or the honor of the White Cross. Apprentices are expected to defer to the closest Knight, or one who is present, when representing the interests of the White Cross.

The Knights of the Blood and the White Cross share, what some consider, a healthy rivalry. Many Masters, however, consider the Knights of the Blood an organization that promotes reckless schemers and honorless witch-hunters. Though this outlook is not openly discussed, the prejudice is apparent to those who share membership between the White Cross and the Knights of the Blood, as advancement for these members is constantly questioned and blocked from “on high.”

Finally, though more basic than any type of organizational feud, many find that the lifestyle and skill choices practiced by members of the White Cross is simply is not conducive to life in The Society of the Hague. As such, these two groups share very few members, and those that do cross usually do not advance far into one group or the other.

Prerequisites to Advance (Knight): During the minimum 1 year of Apprenticeship, a Knight prepares his or her Apprentice to advance to the role of Knight. In order to do this, the Knight must present that Apprentice to two separate Masters, though not necessarily all at once.

Each Master will present the Apprentice with a task, which vary widely in style, depending on the personalities of the Masters involved. Some tasks involve riddles, while others involve questions only answerable through knowledge of ancient or obscure Lores. Masters sometimes even task aspiring Knights with targets to track, detain, or harass, or locations or objects to be protected.

Though Knights are specifically barred from assisting an Apprentice with his or her tasks, Knights often remain vigilant, watching how their apprentices behave while attempting to accomplish their tasks. When an Apprentice has completed all tasks, they are presented to a gathering of their assigned Knight, and the involved Masters. Those who pass (assuming the necessary time has been spent as an Apprentice) are promoted to Knight. Those who fail continue their Apprenticeship, or may be expelled, depending on the circumstances and severity of their failure.

Benefits of Advancement (Knight): Knights are afforded autonomy by the White Cross and are considered indispensable experts in their field of study to Clan Ventrue. Each Knight’s particular skill-set is unique, refined by the methods in which they conduct warfare. Like-minded Knights tend to gravitate towards each other for particularly challenging tasks, and a group of Knights with varied “techniques” are sometimes assigned as a team to accomplish a goal which has evaded one or more Knights, individually.

Knights are encouraged by Masters to take on Apprentices; individuals who have taken the first step towards superiority in the realm of warfare. Knights also tend to develop positive reputations, both within clan Ventrue and

without. Knights might earn respect for their personal skill in combat; for their resourcefulness, finding ways to accomplish things with little or no assistance; for their skill at executing raids on enemy assets and hideouts; or for their skill at reconnaissance or covert operations.

It is not uncommon for Masters and fellow Knights to reward Knights for aid and services rendered with public accolades, status, boons and other types of rewards.

Detriments of Advancement (Knight): Knights often get assigned tasks by Masters. Tasks sometimes have to do with watching or protecting places or individuals that Clan Ventrue has a vested interest in keeping guarded or safe, or eliminating targets that pose significant risk to Clan Ventrue, or its interests.

Knights are ultimately responsible for the development and safety of their apprentices, and while many Knights are respected for their accomplishments, those who become known for “losing” too many Apprentices in the line of duty often take on poignant reputations.

Known Members & Important Locations:

- **[NPC] Godefroy, Master:** Starting in the 1980s, Godefroy served just one term as the Justicar for Clan Ventrue. In that time, he made very few new friends, sticking to his straight-talking, direct-to-the-point attitude; of course, some clans and individuals came to respect Godefroy because of that alone. However, many inside of Clan Ventrue considered him too difficult to influence, and too polarizing of an individual to remain Justicar. Despite this, Godefroy has made significant inroads with Clan Assamite, and serves as a vocal proponent of their entrance into the Camarilla wherever his voice can be heard.

Godefroy is the current Head of the Council of Masters. The Council of Masters is a body made up of several of the eldest Masters from around the world who meet regularly to discuss trends, share information, and coordinate the requests of the Knights assigned under them. Council positions change only when a member dies, steps down, or is voted down by the Council, usually due to some major failure or scandal.

- **[NPC] Lord Edward Kinsley, Master:** Lord Edward Kinsley has somehow remained mostly anonymous outside of London, but inside of London, Lord Kinsley is better known as one of Mithras’ most effective Sheriffs. For almost 200 years, Mithras depended on Lord Kinsley and his appointed Deputies to enforce his policies and decisions over Anarchs, Sabbat, Tremere, political enemies and conspirators, and a variety of other troublesome supernaturals.

Lord Edward Kinsley was so effective a “troubleshooter” that he was often dispatched to particularly distressed regions of the British Empire in order to track down notorious criminals, or to instruct Ventrue in the colonies on how to better prepare and defend the interests of the clan against outside forces and other types of opposition. For Lord Kinsley, however, World War 2 would signal the end of an era.

Mithras, as one would expect from someone who had a tendency to disappear for lengths of time, afforded Lord Kinsley fairly expansive freedom with which to perform the role of Sheriff, and by the time Lady Anne Bowesley claimed Praxis, most Kindred were happy to see the old Sheriff disappear with the old regime. Lord Kinsley spent the next few decades travelling the world, quietly contemplating and training in anonymity - a tool of an age that many hope to forget.

In the last 15 years, and during the Year of Fire in particular, Lord Kinsley’s services have been as requested

and as necessary as ever. Those who know him have noticed a renewed vigor as he has shaken the ennui of the last several decades and has been reinvigorated with the opportunity of once again teaching his skills. Lord Kinsley has sat on the Council of Masters for well over 150 years..

Media: Rome, Season 2 (HBO Mini-Series, 2005); Kingdom of Heaven (2005); Black Hawk Down (2001); Excalibur (1981);

Sources: CB:Ventrue (WW2058), pg.62; CB:Assamite (WW2059), pg.23; Children of the Night (WW2023), pgs.49-50;

MAJOR VENTRUE-ANTITRIBU SOCIETIES AND ORDERS

The following section details the societies and orders which are fairly well-known inside of the Ventrue-Antitribu of the Sabbat, with the proper amount of Ventrue Lore.

THE BLACK CROSS

You ask, what is our aim? I can answer in one word. It is victory. Victory at all costs. Victory in spite of all terrors. Victory, however long and hard the road may be, for without victory there is no survival.
- Winston Churchill

Overview / History: Originally a secret society inside of the Teutonic Knights of the Dark Ages, the Black Cross quietly recruited members from the well-trained forces available to them. Commanding almost one hundred loyal Knights at its height, the Black Cross was a force to be reckoned with, accomplishing great feats of military might throughout the Holy Roman Empire, Prussia, and into the Middle East. However, after prolonged fighting in the Middle East and against the Tzimisce forces of Transylvania, the order took heavy losses and was eventually decimated, almost destroyed completely.

Then, in the heat of the Anarch Revolt, the unthinkable happened - Hardestadt betrayed and executed Lord Jurgen von Verden.

Enraged, Lucretia von Hardtz gathered all remaining members of the Black Cross in secret. The meeting was short, and when it was finished, the few remaining members of the Black Cross agreed to fight against the betrayer, Hardestadt, and his new allies - the Camarilla.

Over the past several hundred years, the members of the Black Cross have been rebuilding and learning. Observing conflict around the globe, both mortal and Cainite, the group has been training themselves on the latest in weaponry, tactics, and warfare. Tonight, the Black Cross stands ready to attack and destroy the Ventrue of the Camarilla, and any who stand beside them. Every member of the Black Cross is pledged to give up their unives in the pursuit of that goal.

In the modern nights, the ends justify the means for the Black Cross. International terrorism, kidnapping, causing mass panic, and random bombings are all tools that the Black Cross use to take their fight to the enemy. Members of the Black Cross aim to be the embodiment of terror in order to undermine the institutional power that gives the Camarilla Ventrue the resources to prolong the inevitable.

Address/Nickname: [Position] of the Cross, where the individual positions are as follows:

- Initiate
- Brother or Sister
- Commander
- Marshal (and Role) [NPC Only]
- Deputy Grand-Master
- Grand-Master [NPC Only]

Goals of the Group: The Black Cross exists to seek out, impede, and destroy Hardestadt and everything that he created, to include the Camarilla. The modern Black Cross has evolved from its roots of a military organization, and has learned to fight an enemy of superior resources and numbers with modern terrorist-style tactics. On any given night, members of the Black Cross engage in bombings, bio-terrorism, kidnappings, and assassination in pursuit of their goals.

Though the Black Cross does not have a dedicated intelligence gathering wing, members usually gain information (which they use to plan their attacks) through various Sabbat-centric sources. When that is not enough, blackmail, extortion, and the buying of information are considered well within reason. The Black Cross sometimes charge their members with paramilitary mercenary-type operations to pay for favors and information purchased in this fashion, which Black Cross higher-ups are usually fine with as long as the exchange is justified.

Prerequisites to Join [Initiate]: Membership in the Black Cross is more like a cult than a paramilitary organization with terrorist overtones and Initiates, more than any other rank, are scrutinized closely to ensure they are dedicated and loyal to the cause.

Initiates are chosen for the Black Cross in one of two ways:

1. The Initiate is selected, pre-embrace, based on their cunning, viciousness, or propensity for the tactics used by the Black Cross.
2. The Initiate is selected, post-embrace (from the Ventrue-Antitribu of the Sabbat), based on their actions which define their beliefs. This is especially important since the Black Cross weighs actions over talk.

Any current full-member (Brother or Sister) may select an Initiate to the Black Cross to serve under them. Once a member chooses an Initiate, they become the Initiate's handler and it is their duty to get them ready, training them and preparing them for their first assignment - a task which is usually very difficult or taxing, and is meant to test the limits and loyalty of the Initiate.

Sometime during their training, the Initiate's handler brings him or her to the Regional Commander. The Regional Commander will question the Initiate, assessing their abilities (and checking their level of indoctrination into the group). Then, in front of the Commander, the Initiate will be embraced by the handler into the ranks of the Ventrue-Antitribu (if necessary). Once embraced (or if the Initiate is already embraced), the Initiate is administered the Holy Sacrament by the Regional Commander at a simple ceremony.

Benefits of Membership [Initiate]: Being an Initiate to the Black Cross carries with it almost no benefit besides those directly provided by his or her handler. For example, Initiates can usually get arms and equipment which directly relate to their task at hand, but only by requisitioning it through their handler

Occasionally, a handler may assist their Initiate by helping them to find teachers for abilities, lores, and disciplines which can help them become better or more effective killers. Handlers usually like to watch how the Initiate goes about finding these skills on their own first.

Access to: the-black-cross@googlegroups.com

Detriments of Membership [Initiate]: Initiates of the Black Cross must respect each and every senior member of the Black Cross who asks something (reasonable) of them. Initiates must constantly prove themselves, never refusing service when the opportunity arises and never failing in their duties (in a manner that would make their superiors question their integrity).

On taking the Holy Sacrament, the Initiate will gain a Vinculum of 6 to the Leaders of the Black Cross (all members above the rank of Commander), the Regional Commander administering the rite, and his or her handler. This Vinculum will never decrease and is enough of a bond so that the new member feels no reservation about risking his or her life to defend the leaders of the Black Cross.

Finally, members of the Black Cross are advised to stay clear of the Knights of the Blood. The Knights consider the members of the Black Cross honorless, and do not accept anyone who claims membership in the Black Cross into their ranks.

Prerequisites to Advance (Brother/Sister of the Cross): An Initiate will participate in several operations for the Black Cross over the period of (at least) one year. During this time, the Initiate must successfully accomplish the goals put to them by at least 3 different Brothers or Sisters of the Cross (or higher). The order in which these tasks are assigned or accomplished does not matter, only that at least one of them must come from a Commander.

The Commander's assignment is rarely straightforward, must always be undertaken without assistance, and is never accomplished easily. Some examples of an assignment include kidnapping a ranking Camarilla Ventrue, infiltrating the Haven of a Ventrue Elder, discreetly possessing the ghoul of a Camarilla Primogen and discovering a secret, or rescuing an asset.

When their handler has confirmed the requisite accomplishments, and believes that his or her Initiate is ready, they are presented to their Regional Commander.

Benefits of Advancement (Brother/Sister of the Cross): If an Initiate accomplishes his or her assignments to the satisfaction of the handler, they are then brought to the Regional Commander who will verify the completion of the assignments. When confirmed, the Initiate will be given the Holy Sacrament, and then welcomed into the ranks of the Black Cross as a Brother or Sister of the Cross.

Brothers and Sisters of the Cross make up the main body of the organization, operating independently throughout their region, planning and carrying out operations by themselves or in small groups and may serve as Handler to one or more Initiates. Though a group of Brothers or Sisters of the Cross are sometimes assigned to a team in order to accomplish a goal which is deemed as very difficult or extremely important, the Black Cross rarely commits such a force at any one time or location. Brothers or Sisters are expected to

THE HOLY SACRAMENT

Members of the Black Cross do not speak of the Holy Sacrament to those outside of the group, and with good reason. Packmates sometimes observe that their Ventrue-Antitribu pack member's demeanor and motivations change after "hanging out with his (or her) new friends." The fanaticism and devotion of members of the Black Cross grows equally to the speed at which they gain seniority.

By the time a Ventrue-Antitribu gains full membership as a Brother or Sister of the Cross, they will usually be more loyal to the Black Cross and its goals than they ever will ever be to any other Sabbat.

Administered by the Regional Commander, the Holy Sacrament is the spiritual cleansing and purity ritual used by the Black Cross since the Dark Ages. Though the ritual, a form of Ignobilis Rite, has changed over the years, its goal is the same as it was hundreds of years ago - to ensure the members of the group stay true to the tenants of the Black Cross, even in the face of certain defeat or death.

The ceremony itself is simple. First, the individual administering the oath gives a short speech about honor, and the would-be member swears an oath of Loyalty to his superiors. Next, the one administering the rite gives a short speech about the importance of commitment and the Duty of all members of the Black Cross. The would-be member then swears an oath of Duty. Finally, the would-be member swears to protect and stay true to the ideals of the Black Cross against all odds and pledges that they would lay down their life to accomplish their goal rather than face failure. This pledge of courage is the climax of the Rite, when the one administering the Holy Sacrament gives the chalice to the oath taker. The oath taker must then drink the entire contents of the chalice; after which they are welcomed happily into their new position among their fellow

complete their operations with little or no assistance.

Brothers and Sisters.

Mechanically, the Holy Sacrament is similar to the Auctoritas Ritae of the Vaulderie, and the Ritae will fail if the individuals participating are not genuine in any of their statements. The Holy Sacrament has been used for centuries to ensure the loyalty of the men and women of the Black Cross.

Brothers or Sisters of the Cross are encouraged to seek out (or develop) like-minded Ventrue-Antitribu so that they can one day serve as Initiates. A Brother or Sister who takes on one or more Initiates is thereafter completely in charge of that Initiate, and may assign said Initiate(s) orders as they see fit. Only a Commander or higher can countermand the order of a Brother or Sister to his or her Initiate.

Detriments of Advancement (Brother/Sister of the Cross): Brothers and Sisters of the Cross usually receive tasks from their Regional Commanders and, once an order is issued, it is expected that it will be followed. Though every member of the Black Cross looks forward to the opportunity of proving him or herself against the Ventrue of the Camarilla and their servants, the majority of these assignments have to do with training and the rendering of mundane services as payment. Some examples are guarding an assigned individual or location, creating a distraction in a city hostile to the Sabbat, or delivering important messages or instructions behind enemy lines.

Since members of the Black Cross are expected to carry out orders in a timely fashion and without question, Brothers or Sisters who hesitate, or fail in their missions soon find themselves earning the ire of their Regional Commander. When a Brother or Sister has earned the displeasure of his or her Regional Commander, they soon find themselves assigned to more and more dangerous tasks.

On gaining full membership as a Brother or Sister of the Cross, the new member is administered the Holy Sacrament again, only this time the ritual is attended by all of the Brothers and Sisters in the region and the ceremony is more elaborate. Administered by the Regional Commander, the vinculum of the member is now increased by +1 to the Leaders of the Black Cross (and the Regional Commander). A normal vinculum is gained to the other members in attendance (which should be determined in the same manner in which the chronicle runs the Vaulderie Ritae).

Prerequisites to Advance (Commander of the Cross): A Brother or Sister of the Cross, after participating, and even leading several operations for the Black Cross over the period of (at least) one year will likely have gained quite a reputation, if not among the Camarilla Ventrue, then definitely among his or her peers of the Black Cross. Members at this level will likely be observed to see how they handle their assets, and how effective their tactics are.

First, a potential-Commander must show that he has the ability to indoctrinate individuals into the group. This is usually done by simply referencing at least two former Initiates who have, under the potential Commander risen to the rank of Brother or Sister of the Cross.

Second, the Brother or Sister's tactics must have been effective. They must have engaged in a minimum of three different campaigns against the establishment of Hardestadt, one of which afforded the member the personal glory of accomplishing the goal that every member of the Black Cross aspires to - personally slaying a Ventrue of the

Camarilla (the higher ranking, the better).

Benefits of Advancement (Commander of the Cross): Commanders of the Cross have earned their place through guile, blood, and suffering. Highly important members of the group, Commanders are responsible for multiple cities or regions, and may be called to participate in campaigns all over the world.

Commanders of the Cross almost never personally carry out attacks, but spend the majority of their time helping members plan attacks, identify goals within their regions, and ensuring that each member under them continues to bring new members into the group.

A Commander gives assignments to his Brothers and Sisters and to their Initiates; as long as the assignment is reasonable, a Commander can be assured that the Ventrue-Antitribu will either accomplish the mission, or die trying. This loyalty is partially because of the dogma and propaganda which the members of the Black Cross are constantly fed, and partially because of the vinculum which members share with their Commander.

Commanders of the Cross are sought out by Brothers or Sisters who are ready for their Initiate to be administered their first Holy Sacrament, and when those same Initiates are ready to join their Brothers or Sisters as peers. All Commanders are taught the proper ceremony for the Holy Sacrament, and every member of the Black Cross, by the time they ascend to the rank of Commander, considers the tradition sacrosanct.

A Commander retains the right to refuse the Holy Sacrament to any potential Initiate or Brother or Sister under his command that he deems not ready for advancement.

Detriments of Advancement (Commander of the Cross): When a new Commander is appointed, they are administered the Holy Sacrament. This ceremony, is much more elaborate than previous ones and is attended by all of the Brothers and Sisters in the region and administered by a Marshal (or sometimes Lucretia herself if the Commander has shown great skill or achievement). The vinculum of the member is now increased by +1 to the Leaders of the Black Cross.

Commanders of the Cross are held responsible for the loyalty and actions of all members assigned under them, regardless of rank. Though this may seem burdensome, in actuality, all but the most serious crimes are simply passed down the ranks to the highest ranking superior of the individual who requires punishment. For example, in the case of a Brother or Sister who is accused of committing a crime, it would be up to their Commander to determine guilt or innocence, and what to do about it.

Conducting criminal investigations against people who are, by profession, criminals themselves can be a daunting task.

If a Commander discovers that an Initiate (or Brothers or Sister) has broken her vow of loyalty, a tenant of the Holy Sacrament, the responsibility falls on the Commander - and no one else - to punish the individual. The method of execution varies from Commander to Commander. Some Commanders prefer to send the offender on an assignment which will mean certain death, giving the offender the chance to redeem themselves by killing as many enemies as possible before they die. Other Commanders prefer to simply make the offender disappear quietly.

Known Members & Important Positions:

- **Lucretia von Hartz, Grand-Master of the Cross** - The Grand-Master is the highest position in the order. The

leader of the group, the Grand-Master is responsible for promoting the highest levels and for ensuring the Loyalty of those members. The current Grand-Master (and the only one to claim the position since Jurgen von Verden) is Lucretia von Hartz (also spelled Lucretia von Hardtz). Lucretia was Sheriff to Lord Jurgen of Madgeburg, and a former Prince of Madgeburg herself, after the betrayal and execution of Jurgen at the hands of Hardestadt. She is one of the original Antitribu from the Anarch Revolt.

- **Deputy Grand-Master of the Cross** - Officially, the Deputy Grand-Master reports directly to the Grand-Master and is attributed equal seniority to a Marshal, participating in formulating and effecting policies and plans which will affect the entirety of the Black Cross.

In reality, the Deputy Grand-Master commands the mandate to act with all the power normally attributed to the Grand-Master wherever they go. This ensures that, in addition to being the eyes, and ears of the Grand-Master, the Deputy Grand-Master also serves as a very active right-hand of the Grand-Master.

- **Marshal of the Cross** - Rather than having a structure based on Regional proximity, the Black Cross is organized based on role. Over each role, a Marshal is assigned whose responsibility is to ensure those under him or her have everything they require to perform their tasks. The Marshals of the Order are as follows: Marshal of Military Operations & Affairs, Marshal of Public Relations & Recruitment, and the Marshal of Logistics & Procurement. The three Marshals together, with the Deputy Grand-Master all are equal in rank and importance and all serve as advisors to the Grand-Commander.
- **Lord Jurgen, The First Grand-Master** - Also known as Jurgen von Verden, Jurgen of Magdeburg, or Jurgen the Swordbearer, Lord Jurgen was Prince of Magdeburg, Germany and served as the original Hochmeister (Grand-Master) of the Black Cross, building the shadow order of knights from within the mortal Teutonic Knights.

As the War of Princes broke out, Jürgen represented his sire's interests in Hungary and Livonia, where he fought many conflicts against the Tzimisce voivode Vladimir Rustovich and negotiated a tentative peace with the Gangrel warlord Qarakh.

For all his accomplishments, Jürgen was betrayed and destroyed by his sire, Hardestadt, in 1271 AD. With no real reason or evidence for this foul murder, it is unclear what exact conditions precipitated Jürgen's death, whether military failure, political failure, his lapses from the Road of Kings, because he was poised to become more powerful (either politically or personally) than his sire, or for some other reason. What is certain is that Jürgen's name is legend to members of the Black Cross, and that his death as a martyr helped steel the resolve of the Black Cross, globally.

Media: The Baader Meinhof Complex (2008); Carlos (Miniseries, 2010); Black Hawk Down (2001);

Sources: *Under the Black Cross*, pgs.15-16;

KNIGHTS OF THE BLOOD (ANTITRIBU)

In times of war, the law falls silent. ~Cicero

Overview / History: In years before the Camarilla, during the Dark Ages, the Knights of the Blood were the militant extremists of the Ventrue. When Ventrue forces were in chaos because of infighting or treachery, “aid” would be dispatched in the form of the Knights of the Blood, usually at the behest of an Elder. The Knights of the Blood were well-known for their brutality in enforcing the will of the Clan, much to the displeasure of the individuals they “assisted.”

During the Dark Ages, and climaxing around the end of the Anarch Revolt, an irreparable rift opened between those Ventrue who believed in divine right - the idea that one group was meant to rule over another, and those who did not. Many Ventrue felt that the leaders of the clan had eschewed their aristocratic roots, and had turned their backs on their divine right. Already a minority in the Clan of Kings, the Knights of the Blood were being slowly torn apart by grudges, infighting, and the inevitability of obsolescence as the trend of institutionalized power turned from the exception to the rule. Many Knights felt powerless against the spread of these changing ideas.

By the Camarilla’s first Justicarial election, the Knights of the Blood had decided their path: the Sabbat.

Over the last several hundred years, these few Ventrue-Antitribu participated in many of the Sabbat's major conflicts and civil wars. Over the years, attrition has taken its toll and few former-members survived to the modern nights. After the last Sabbat Civil War, the few remaining former-members of the Knights of the Blood (and their childer) met in secret and began quietly rebuilding to the cries of returning to their roots, and divine aristocracy.

Now, after several decades, the reformed Knights of the Blood organizational structure looks very similar to the one utilized hundreds of years ago. However, though reformed with the help of several former members, the truth is that the majority of modern “Knights” are young. This has led to a group that, as a whole, looks and operates more like a gang than anything else, with chapters and members around the world.

A typical member of the modern Knights of the Blood will usually display a blindingly fanatical devotion to the organization and their methods. Members spend their nights working to maintain and hone their militant skills, and combating threats to Ventrue-Antitribu interests. To many, outside of the Ventrue-Antitribu, the Knights seem focused more on spreading their hatred and enforcing their bigoted agenda than anything else.

Address/Nickname: [Name], [Position] of the Blood, where the position is the one held by the individual, such as:

- Squire
- Knight-Errant (sometimes Questing Knight or Wandering Knight)
- Knight (sometimes Master-Knight)
- Count
- Duke (sometimes Lord) (NPC Only)
- Chancellor (NPC Only)

Role Within the Clan: Knights of the Blood are the self-appointed protectors (and sometimes internal police) of the Ventrue-Antitribu. They are the champions of Ventrue-Antitribu power, both inside the Sabbat, and out. Many Knights of the Blood are considered creatures of extremes, willing to make personal sacrifices or step into harm’s

way, all “for the greater good” of the clan or Sect. Few among the Ventrue-Antitribu doubt the loyalty or effectiveness of the Knights of the Blood as a group.

Elitists of the highest order, the Knights of the Blood are bred and trained to believe that the role of all Ventrue is to lead the Cainite race. Truly believing themselves to be “superior,” each member is fed a constant stream of dogma and propaganda by their superiors at every level to keep them assured that their attitudes and actions are justified. As far as the Knights of the Blood are concerned, the Ventrue-Antitribu are simply better suited to lead the rank-and-file of the Sabbat, viewing themselves as “above” the petty games of manipulation and politicking played by others such as the Lasombra.

Prerequisites to Join (Squire): In theory, a potential Knight of the Blood is a Ventrue-Antitribu who is part of the Sabbat and has been identified because of his or her ability to cope with stress, or to deal with a tense situation before the outbreak of violence, and a proven talent for mediating (or otherwise ending) disputes. In practice however, potential Squires are selected from those Ventrue-Antitribu of the Sabbat who display a fanatical attitude towards protecting and shepherding the clan. Attitude is key to the selection of a Squire.

Once chosen, a prospective Squire is tasked with killing a target specified by the Knight whom he or she will be assigned to. This “blood-in, blood-out” mentality has served the Knights over the years as an almost foolproof method of ensuring the loyalty of potential Squires, and the more personal the target is to the potential Squire, the better.

Benefits of Membership (Squire): Those newly initiated into the Knights of the Blood are known as Squires and are assigned to a Knight of the Blood to be trained in the traditional rules and procedures of the organization. Reality often finds Squires learning from whomever they are around through a kind of informal on-the-job training.

Due to this informal training period; the Abilities, Lores, and Disciplines a Squire may learn during this time varies wildly, reflecting the specialty and personality of the Knight or Knight-Errant(s) they mainly interact with.

MARKINGS

Knights of the Blood earn marks for their accomplishments and enjoy displaying these markings visibly and proudly. Each one is unique to the individual, but many given for similar purposes are similar in design. Some examples of the most common of these are as follows:

- *The Brand: First Mark, indicates that the member has killed for the Knights of the Blood*
- *Blue Star (of Life): Recovering a Ventrue-Antitribu from enemy hands*
- *Broken Crown: Killing a Camarilla Prince, Primogen, Archon, or other such official (the specific regalia or writing on the crown detailing the kill)*
- *Broken Scepter or Sword: Killing a Ventrue*
- *Coins: One coin to indicate a Trial by Combat fought; displayed face-up (win) or face-down (loss)*
- *Devil Horns: Given to those who kill a demon or infernalist*
- *Key(s): Taking a Prisoner alive, multiple keys denote one for each prisoner*
- *Latin Cross: Given for being found guilty of a crime, imprisonment, or betrayal (the specific regalia or writing on the cross detailing the ordeal)*
- *Military Epaulettes (with insignia): To denote the rank of Count or above*
- *Reaper or Skull: To represent that the member has dealt out a punishment of death to someone who he has accused, tried, and executed.*
- *Scroll: Possessing Thaumaturgy or Necromancy (or any kind of magic)*
- *Specialty: For example, a Cat for stealth or thievery, a lion for prowess in combat, an imp for social feats such as turning members of the enemy*
- *Tombstone (with name and date): Usually indicate Squires and/or Knight-Errants that have been lost under the Knight’s command*
- *Winged Sandals (of Hermes): Carry messages successfully through enemy lines*
- *A Brain: Discovering crucial information that was used to score a major victory*

It is an age-old tradition in the Knights of the Blood for a new Squire to shun learning any other powers (including other clan-disciplines) until they master the physical disciplines of Fortitude, Celerity, and Potence. This attitude has served the Knights well, since they do not maintain a defensive attitude of waiting for a fight to come to them, instead preferring to carry it to the enemies of the Clan and the Sabbat, wherever they may be. Due to the willingness of the Knights of the Blood to invest in the martial prowess of its members, the group can usually assist its members in finding Mentors for physical disciplines.

Access to: sabbat-knights-of-the-blood@googlegroups.com

Detriments of Membership (Squire): Once a Squire accepts membership in the Knights of the Blood, it is made clear, in no uncertain terms, that membership is for life! While, technically, there are no formal rules against quitting, no one is allowed to simply walk away from membership in the Knights of the Blood. To do so would most likely earn the individual the ire of the entirety of the Knights of the Blood (in the form of the *Enemy Flaw*) and certainly be considered desertion. The intensity of this ill will would vary depending on the rank of the Knight of the Blood at the time of desertion.

A newly appointed Squire is given his or her first mark: “The Brand” (black sun with a scepter inside, or in front of it). “The Brand,” like others that may be awarded later, is some kind of permanent mark on the skin of the Ventrue-Antitribu placed there by one of the Knight-Surgeons employed by the group. Nothing can permanently remove a mark created by a Knight-Surgeon, but it can be hidden or otherwise disguised when necessary.

Squires are not afforded leeway. Any task they undertake must be directly supervised by another member of the Knights of the Blood of a ranking of at least Knight-Errant. It is considered normal (and in some opinions, healthy) for a Squire to assist in this manner with several tasks of varying difficulty before they are considered for any type of promotion.

Most Knights of the Blood support each other both publicly and privately and will sometimes “lend” their Squires to other Knights or Knight-Errants to assist with tasks or engagements. Though Squires are at the bottom of the social structure, a very strict chain-of-command based in tradition keeps Squires from being “forced” into this type of service. A Squire is usually assigned this temporary role only when their commanding Knight allows it. Doing otherwise to a peer or higher would be considered impugning the honor of another Knight of the Blood, and would certainly lead to further action.

Prerequisites to Join (Knight-Errant): After a period of no less than one year spent training and learning from various Knights and Knight-Errants, and after the Squire has been converted to a proper Path of Enlightenment, the Squire is brought to a gathering of the Knights of the Blood to be tested.

At this gathering, the prospective Knight-Errant should be able to show at least 3 marks, and to tell the story of how each was earned. This litany is taken very seriously by every member in attendance and those Squires who are seen as overly boastful can expect to be in serious peril during the subsequent test.

Known as the Gauntlet, the test is an often brutal rite of passage where Knights from all throughout the region (and perhaps further) are invited to test the would-be Knight-Errant in any way they see fit. The prospective Knight-Errant must not waver, or show that his resolve is weak during the Gauntlet.

Failing the Gauntlet usually means that the prospective Knight-Errant has died painfully, or that they have submitted - showing themselves to be too weak to succeed (likely leading to execution). Though certain members

who have become attached to the prospective Knight-Errant may feel the compulsion to hold back during the Gauntlet, members are encouraged to be as brutal as possible.

Knights are advised to ensure their Squires have at least the following capabilities before beginning their Gauntlet:

- Fortitude x5
- Potence x4
- Celerity x4
- Brawl x4 (with a Specialization)
- Melee x4 (with a Specialization)
- Survival x4 (with a Specialization)
- Be on an appropriate Path of Enlightenment

Those who survive the Gauntlet have proven to everyone in attendance that they are not weak, and that they have the resolve to survive against all odds. These Ventrue-Antitribu are afforded the rank of Knight-Errant of the Knights of the Blood.

Benefits of Advancement (Knight-Errant): Knight-Errants are members of the Knights of the Blood who are trusted to operate with significantly more autonomy than Squires. While still assigned to a Knight, these members often are retained for one specific skill or talent and are assigned tasks or investigations that they are expected to handle independently, reporting their results to their Knight when complete.

Knight-Errants are divided into two simple divisions, Questing Knights and Wandering Knights. Questing Knights are simply those Knight-Errants who claim membership among the Clergy of the Sabbat while Wandering Knights do not. Operationally, Questing Knights are charged with the spiritual health and indoctrination of Squires while Wandering Knights focus exclusively on regional operations and the development of their Squires' tactical abilities.

Both Questing and Wandering Knights are expected to be equally effective on the battlefield.

Knight-Errants are encouraged, by the Knights of the Blood, to join Sabbat offensives at their leisure and may direct any Squire assigned to them to assist. Since Ventrue-Antitribu understand that it is their role in unlife to lead, many look for opportunities to join engagements either at the start, before strong leadership is present, or where poor or wavering leadership has caused less-than-desirable results. Even the presence of a Knight of the Blood can serve as an inspiring rallying point for an offensive, sometimes being the difference to other Ventrue-Antitribu of an offensive with "real potential" as opposed to just another hot-headed Cainite who happened to be charismatic enough to get a couple of packs together.

Finally, at this level, the Knights of the Blood sometimes dispatch a Knight-Errant to conduct investigations into Ventrue-Antitribu who serve in the roles of: Ductus, Pack Priest, Abbot, or any Ventrue-Antitribu who does not hold a Sect-specific position in the Sabbat. If evidence of treachery or treason is discovered, the Knight-Errant is authorized (by the Knights of the Blood) to behave as the Judge, Jury, and Executioner for that Ventrue-Antitribu.

Knights of the Blood usually punish the offending clan member in a manner fitting both the crime and the evidence, though they rarely concern themselves with crimes outside of the clan (leaving that to sect-justice instead). Knight-Errants are *highly* advised to consult with at least one other member, Knight-Errant or higher before executing any sentence and to ensure the judgment and punishment are in-line with Sabbat doctrine.

Detriments of Advancement (Knight-Errant): It is quite common for Knight-Errants to be observed silently by one or more Knights during this period. It is also somewhat common for a Knight (or higher), to review the methods, judgments, and/or evidence collected by a Knight-Errant; the Knight-Errant is expected to provide full details to the requester, as best as possible.

Internally, the Knights of the Blood forgo the traditional system of Sabbat justice, instead resolving disputes between members quickly and efficiently. Whenever a Knight-Errant becomes involved in a dispute with another Knight-Errant, either party may request a trial by combat (a special *Ritae* similar to the *Monomacy*), the results of which determine the victor of the “debate.” These disputes are rarely to-the-death, and are almost always overseen by a Knight, or by a Master-Knight or Count.

Knight-Errants discovered by their superior to be abusing his or her position, or falsifying evidence will be dealt with harshly, and swiftly, often suffering the same punishment as they have unfairly dispensed themselves. A Knight-Errant who knowingly avoids his or her punishment can expect to be charged with dereliction of duty - a crime punishable by death.

Prerequisites to Advance (Knight): After a period of no less than one year spent accomplishing tasks and earning personal fame and glory on behalf of the Knights of the Blood, the Knight-Errant may be brought, by their Knight, to a gathering of Knights to be tested at a special Gauntlet. Promotion of a Knight usually only occurs at a national-level gathering.

At this gathering, the prospective Knight should be able to show at least 6 marks, and to tell the story of how each was earned. Stories vary as widely as the types of marks, but normally an attendee can expect to hear stories of the Knight-Errant’s investigations and judgments, and of how they have advanced and defended the interests of the *Ventruue-Antitribu*.

This litany is taken very seriously by every member in attendance; many attendees decide how harsh they will (or will not) be during the Gauntlet based on the prospective Knight’s ability to convey meaning to his or her accomplishments. No one is impressed by an individual who has accomplished the bare minimum of a task in order to have “more markings than anyone else.”

Knight-level Gauntlets are legendary for their brutality as members often come from all over the globe to test the mettle of a would-be Knight, bringing with them their own personal pain implements - each attempting to outdo the others. A Knight will often ensure that their prospective fellow-Knight has at least the following capabilities before beginning their Gauntlet:

- Fortitude x5
- Potence x5
- Celerity x5
- Brawl x5 (with a Specialization)
- Melee x5 (with a Specialization)
- Survival x5 (with a Specialization)
- Be on an appropriate Path of Enlightenment
- Athletics x2
- Presence x5
- Any Form-changing power (such as *Protean*, *Serpentis*, *Obtenebration*, or *Vicissitude*) at 4

Failing the Gauntlet, at this level, means that the prospective Knight has died - usually in a spectacularly painful and memorable way. Knights will tell of your failure for years to come, warning those who would seek the Gauntlet to avoid making the mistakes that you have made.

Benefits of Advancement (Knight): Knights are the core of the Knights of the Blood. They are independent operators, with total autonomy to investigate, punish, detain, harass, or destroy as they see fit. Answerable only to those superior to them (Master-Knights, Counts, or above), Knights not only have the right to select a Squire that they will train, teach, and discipline; but they are expected to bring fresh blood into the group. Knights are expected to keep their underlings strong and prepared to defend the Ventrue-Antitribu and the Sabbat at a moment's notice, against any threat.

Knights are expected to join Sabbat offensives whenever they can. Knights may call on Knight-Errants and any Squire under them to assist. Regardless of the "official" leader of an offensive, the Knights of the Blood expect any Knight who actively participates in a Sabbat offensive to be the leader of the campaign, if not in name, in spirit at least.

When necessary, Knights may start or continue investigations into any Ventrue-Antitribu that a Knight-Errant may investigate, in addition to those clan members who serve in the role of Bishops or their Templars or Paladins. If evidence of treachery or treason is discovered, the Knight is authorized (by the Knights of the Blood) to punish the offending Ventrue-Antitribu in a manner fitting both the crime and the evidence. Knights are advised to ensure that their sentences are in-line with Sabbat doctrine (if possible).

Knights are responsible for the conduct of those assigned under them and may investigate and punish their assigned subordinates, at their whim. When calling for punishment of a Knight-Errant or Squire assigned to another Knight, however, the traditional method observed is to bring the evidence of the offense or crime to the Knight responsible for the member; that Knight is then expected to punish his or her Knight-Errant or Squire appropriately. This tradition is only broken in the most dire of circumstances, and has certainly been the cause of more than one Trial by Combat between Knights in recent history.

When multiple Knights gather, usually for a planned action, the right of leadership falls on the most senior Knight gathered. For that operation, the Knight is known as Master-Knight. A Master-Knight is responsible for the outcome of a planned action or engagement, as well as for every Knight under his field-command. This type of field-promotion usually never lasts longer than a night or two, or the length of time that the engagement lasts. Engagements which last longer than a night or two and involve multiple Knights will usually attract the attention of a Count (or higher).

Detriments of Advancement (Knight): Knights may sometimes be called on by their superiors to perform tasks based on their individual skills. These tasks may, or may not, be sanctioned by the Clan, or technically legal by Sabbat doctrine. This can often lead to situations where the Knight must be forced to relinquish standing, boons, or even his or her unlife in order to cover for something done for the greater good of the Ventrue-Antitribu, or the Knights of the Blood.

Knights adhere to the same internal system of "might-makes-right" as Knight-Errants; resolving disputes between members in a simple Trial by Combat overseen by a Master-Knight or Count. Regardless of the outcome, a Trial by Combat of two Knights is a serious matter, and the victory could mean anything from a forced Vaulderie for the losing party, to the destruction of a Squire or Knight-Errant, or the loss of rank. Master-Knights or Counts rarely

allow combat to-the-death, preferring instead to keep the losing party alive in order to serve as a warning to those who would challenge (or incite a challenge) unnecessarily.

A Knight discovered to be abusing his or her position, or falsifying evidence will be dealt with harshly, and swiftly, often suffering a harsher punishment than the ones suffered by those who have been unfairly punished. Standard punishment for Knights discovered laying false accusation against another Ventrue-Antitribu is either maiming, or being branded (temporarily or permanently) in a visible location, neither of which are allowed to be healed for the sentenced amount of time. Lesser punishment involves demotion or the tribute of Retainers, Resources, or a prized Squire or Knight-Errant; as well as imprisonment for a predetermined amount of time. A Knight who knowingly avoids his or her punishment can expect to be charged with dereliction of duty - a crime which will ensure an immediate and painful death.

Prerequisites to Advance (Count): After a period of no less than one year, Knights who have excelled in their position may attempt to court the favor of a Duke in an attempt to become a Count - the highest position in the Knights of the Blood that someone who was not a member of the original Anarch Revolt may ascend to.

Counts are nominated by a Duke, and are confirmed by the Chancellor of the Knights of the Blood. There are usually no more than one or two Counts per continent, so a Count is a revered position and one which is usually filled by a Knight who has reached almost legendary status in the organization.

The method of winning appointment to Count is considered, by most, to be purely political in nature. However, any Knight hoping to ascend to Count must spend a monumental amount of time, effort, and resources attempting to attract the attention of, win the favor of, and become indispensable to whichever Duke they hope will appoint them.

Dukes have been known to ask for favors, displays of loyalty, or for goals to be accomplished that most would consider to be impossible before seriously considering the appointment of a prospective Count. For example, a Count might ask for the torpid body of a Camarilla Ventrue Prince be brought to him, or for the Knight to turn one of the members of the local Camarilla to the Sabbat, or even for the destruction of all of the Followers of Set or Giovanni in a specified region.

Knights who have been appointed to the role of Count in the past have shown a propensity for both superior mental acuity and extraordinary physical endurance. Some capabilities Counts would say have helped them during their attempts to gain appointment would be:

- All Cardinal-8 Disciplines at level 5 (or at the highest level allowed in the home-Chronicle)
- Mastery of any Form-changing power (such as Protean, Serpents, Obtenebration, or Vicissitude)
- High levels of useful Backgrounds, such as: Allies, Resources, and Retainers
- High levels of useful politically-oriented abilities, such as: Academics, Etiquette, and Politics
- Several useful Lores at a moderate level, such as: Sect Lores, Clan Lores, or Lores in other creature types

Benefits of Advancement (Count): All the Knights in a regional area are assigned to one Count. The size of the Regional area is dependent on strategic (or political) divisions. Usually, not more than one or two Counts operate on any one continent at a time.

Counts are well-known for their efficiency at violent action, and for their keen strategic minds. A Count likely has a wide network of individuals that he or she can mobilize to carry out tasks, and is even given the right to call for

resources, reassignments, and all-out campaigns - calling for the participation of all Knights under his or her purview.

Counts are the ultimate (visible) operational authority of the Knights of the Blood, and are only given orders by one of the Dukes, or the Chancellor. Counts are most often called on to conduct and/or preside over Gauntlets of members hoping to earn the rank of Knight and are given the privilege of announcing the promotion of Squires, Knight-Errants, and Knights within their region.

Finally, Counts are empowered with starting and continuing investigations into the upper echelons of the Knights of the Blood, where care and delicacy must be taken to avoid causing an incident that could have implications for the entirety of the Knights of the Blood. Counts may investigate any that a Knight or below may investigate, in addition to: Archbishops and their Templars or Paladins. If evidence of treachery or treason is discovered, the Count may call on the resources of his region to carry out any punishment he deems fitting of both the crime and the evidence.

Counts may always investigate, question, or punish any Knight assigned under them at their whim.

Detriments of Advancement (Count): Counts are charged with the strategic planning and operational efficiency of the campaigns and Knights in their region. Counts are also charged with ensuring the Knights under them continue to operate efficiently, and that their judgments and sentences are administered properly. Failures of Knights or Knight-Errants during tasks assigned by Counts reflect directly on the Count who assigned the task.

A Count is expected to be the pinnacle of propriety, never having their reputation tarnished by scandal or failure due to poor leadership. If a situation ever developed because of something that a Count did or ordered which would cause permanent damage to the Knights of the Blood, or if a Count were ever discovered to be abusing his or her power, the only punishment applicable would likely be death, or something far worse. Due to this, Counts often lose themselves in their own webs of paranoia and lies as they have Knights, Knight-Errants, or others cover for their sins.

Known Members & Important Locations:

- **The Round:** The highest levels of leadership sometimes convene when necessary to discuss recent events, plan strategy, or to amend policy. These gatherings are called a "Round." All Dukes and the Chancellor are expected to attend a Round, and a great deal of pomp and circumstance made by the Duke whose territory is chosen for the site of a Round. It is not uncommon for Counts, Knights, and anyone else in the region that a Round is occurring to be required to ensure the security of the gathering, and all in attendance. Due to this tradition, many members have taken to calling any gathering of Knights of the Blood where important matters are to be discussed, a "Round."
- **[NPC] Gaius Mamilius, Knight-Surgeon:** Gaius Mamilius is a strange and unique creature. As ancient as the original Knights of the Blood itself, Gaius Mamilius is truly alien-like individual; discomfiting to be in the presence of, and even rumored to not be Ventruue himself. With a body twisted and disproportioned by countless battles and Vicissitude experiments, the Knight Surgeon serves the Knights of the Blood by travelling the world and applying the special markings which Knights use to identify their achievements. Whether Gaius Mamilius was the original creator of the Ritae used in the actual marking is open to speculation, and he does not talk about where, or from whom he learned this mysterious art.
- **[NPC] Duke:** A Duke is always addressed as "Lord" by those who serve him, and Duke by all others. There are currently four Dukes, each assigned to a region of the world as follows: North America and the

Caribbean; South and Central America; Europe and Africa; and Asia, Australia, and The Middle East.

- **[NPC] Chancellor of the Knights of the Blood:** Similar to the position of Grandmaster in the Dark Ages, the Chancellor of the Knights of the Blood is the head of the order, and the final arbiter for all issues and decisions. Elected from the Council of Lords/Dukes, the Chancellor is the leader of the Knights of the Blood, both spiritually and tactically. The Chancellor is the one individual ultimately responsible for the conduct and discipline, failures and accomplishments, and ongoing direction of the Knights of the Blood. The Chancellor has the authority to promote, demote, or discipline any member of the group at any time, and for any reason.

Media: The Duellists (1977); 300 (2006); City of God (2002); The Wire (2005);

Sources: Libellus Sanguinis I: Masters of the State (WW2708), pg.87;

EXCLUSIVE SOCIETIES AND ORDERS

The following section details the societies and orders which may be known (with the appropriate level of Ventrue Lore), but whose operating methods are a mystery to most outside of the Society or Order.

THE CRIMSON SCEPTRE

Honi soot qui mal y pense (Shamed be he who thinks evil of it) ~ Motto of The Most Noble Order of the Garter

Overview/History: The Crimson Sceptre is one of the youngest organizations within Clan Ventrue. Membership is considered ambitious, daring, dangerous and, depending on the Kindred's reputation and location, scandalous. Rumored to have been created by order of Lady Anne Bowesley and the Royal Directorate at the end of the Victorian Era in response to the Tremere attacks on Mithras, the Crimson Sceptre emulates the British Secret Intelligence Service and the royal spies of Sir Francis Walsingham from centuries prior.

Publicly, the Crimson Sceptre gathers intelligence about the actions and intentions of the enemies of the Camarilla. In reality, the Crimson Sceptre gathers intelligence about the actions and intentions of the enemies of Clan Ventrue, both in England and abroad, and members perform tasks directly related to the results of that intelligence. To members of the Crimson Sceptre, the idea that the Camarilla is Clan Ventrue is taken very seriously.

Though some Elders view the members as upstarts attempting to emulate the much older Knights of the Blood, much of the group's legitimacy is drawn from its rather loose similarities to the medieval Knights of the Blood, and the two organizations have a history of one-upmanship and rivalry.

Address/Nickname: Within the Crimson Sceptre, whether on-assignment or not, members maintain anonymity, referring to each other only by their assigned positions or code-names, a usually a call-sign or number. If there is a pattern or structure to the assignment of call-signs, no one has yet to figure out what it is.

Role Within the Clan: The Crimson Sceptre compiles extensive dossiers on the interests of London while abroad, and serves to provide global reach as the invisible hand of Lady Anne Bowesley. Members often maintain watch on other Ventrue or Camarilla members, conduct extended surveillance on locations and individuals, and are dispatched against particularly troublesome members of the Sabbat, or other such direct threats. Occasionally, members will be asked to guard a specific Ventrue Elder, or watch a Kindred for signs of treachery.

Members are expected to use all tools at their disposal; stealth, political machination, deception, and even violence to achieve the goals of the organization for the "greater good." Many ambitious Ventrue view activities performed

Stereotypes

Assembly of Colors: With the right encouragement, they can be utilized to greatly assist us.

The Society of the Hague: Try never to get them involved in your affairs, but do not hesitate to utilize them when operating on behalf of the law.

Hawk Royale: A simple smile and some kind words should be enough to keep the Hawks away.

Knights of the Blood: They are so very, very useful when you need a bludgeoning tool.

The White Cross: Not as useful as the Assembly of Colors or as effective as the Knights of the Blood, but simpler to encourage, nonetheless.

in service to the Crimson Sceptre as the first step to becoming Archon.

Prerequisites to Join: Any member of the Crimson Sceptre (and many other agents of the Queen) may recommend a Ventrue of English descent for membership. Candidates, sometimes unwittingly, have to endure a background check of sorts to ensure that neither they, nor anyone in their Lineage has a scandalous history which could compromise the potential member. This check is usually limited to the candidate's direct Lineage (sire and childer), but can sometimes go further in-depth.

Only those Ventrue with a verifiable Lineage proving the applicant is a Ventrue, and whose familial lines are found to be in good standing in the Camarilla make it through to the next step where they are given a task, or series of tasks and/or choices. These are sometimes administered by the individual who recommended them, or by the other, more mysterious higher-ups of the organization. Depending on the performance in the test(s), when a new member is accepted into the Crimson Sceptre, they are assigned to one of two roles: Analyst or Specialist.

ANALYST: Typical Analysts are expected to have mastered techniques involving gathering information, such as:

- Dominate x5
- Auspex x2
- Obfuscate x2
- Investigation x2
- Stealth x2
- Allies or Contacts x3
- Demonstrated ability to gather information discretely

SPECIALIST: Typical Specialists are expected to have mastered certain physical techniques, such as:

- Fortitude x5
- Potence x2
- Celerity x2
- Melee or Firearms x2
- Survival x2
- Allies or Contacts x3
- Demonstrated ability to perform tasks discretely

Benefits of Membership: The benefits of becoming a member of the Crimson Sceptre vary depending on the role to which the individual is assigned. These benefits are as follows:

ANALYST: An Analyst's main role in the Crimson Sceptre is the gathering and categorization of intelligence. Analysts usually have a variety of methods at their disposal for the gathering of intelligence to include physical and supernatural stealth and surveillance, as well as a variety of interrogation methods, and physical and mental torture techniques. It is rumored that Analysts are, on occasion, asked to infiltrate a specific group, Clan, or Sect.

Analysts deliver all gathered information to their superior(s) via anonymous methods or (when instructed) to appropriate Camarilla official such as a Prince or a Justicar's Archon. While some Analysts use discrete methods and tactics to gather information, each individual is unique, as are their methods, but all are highly encouraged to employ Dominate where applicable to remove all traces of an incident.

SPECIALIST: Specialists serve as the bodyguards and sometimes assassins of the Crimson Sceptre, and are sometimes likened to the Ventrue Knights of the Dark Ages. Specialists are known and respected for valor and prowess, both on the battlefield and behind enemy lines. Since the simple presence of a powerful Kindred is often enough to stop most assassinations, Specialists are commonly assigned as bodyguards. Since some Kindred become concerned in the presence of bodyguards, Specialists sometimes have to develop a relationship with the ward so that they may travel in the guise of an “advisor” or business partner.

Specialists are also called on to defeat the enemies England, of Clan Ventrue, and the Camarilla. Using knowledge and intelligence gathered, sometimes by Analysts, the Specialist can maneuver to a position where an attack has the most chance of success, be it by gaining a city position so as to use the greater assets of the Camarilla, or simply by conducting a day-raid on a previously scouted Sabbat haven using the significant influence and resources of Clan Ventrue.

Regardless of the specific role to which the individual is assigned, the resources available to the Crimson Sceptre are vast and plentiful. Any Analyst or Specialist may request additional funding in the form of Influence or Resources which may be granted at the leisure of Control, the handler to which the member is assigned. Members on assignment can usually request trivial or minor expenditures, many times in the form of specific technological gear, cash, safe havens, or weaponry with little to no inquiry as to its specific use. More unique or taxing requests often require a more in-depth explanation as to the nature of the need.

Access to: the-crimson-sceptre@googlegroups.com

Detriments of Membership: Though some members of the Crimson Sceptre (with appropriate approvals) may choose to reveal themselves, all members are held to a strict standard of secrecy regarding the operations of the Crimson Sceptre. The internal divisions of the Crimson Sceptre, as well as the specific rank and structure held by each member are not discussed outside of the Crimson Sceptre, even with Clan-mates.

When a member joins, they take two oaths, the Oath of Service, and the Oath of Silence. These oaths are administered by the individual assigned as their handler, who is always in possession, during a short ceremony. Through a combination of Elder level disciplines and the Ventrue Combination Discipline: Sound of a Breaking Oath, the loyalty of the individual is not only affirmed, but it is ensured that should the individual ever betray the Crimson Sceptre or break his silence, regardless of circumstance, the sequence which will lead to his destruction will have begun.

Additionally, depending on the role to which the individual is assigned, there are certain role-specific expectations. These are:

ANALYST: Analysts who are in danger of being captured or discovered during their information gathering efforts are expected to egress before English interests become endangered or to prevent causing further incident. Those who cannot are expressly forbidden from being captured, and are expected to “do what is required” to avoid capture at all costs.

SPECIALIST: Specialists who are assigned to protect English interests abroad are expected to protect them at all costs. Failure to protect their ward is a terrible blemish on the Ventrue’s Dignitas, and he is not likely to receive such an honorable assignment for some time, if ever, again.

Prerequisites to Advance (Agent): Accomplished Analysts and Specialists who display aptitude in the abilities of

their opposite role (an Analyst who shows physical prowess, for example) may petition for advancement to the position of Agent. Agents are independent operators in the Crimson Sceptre who use information gathered by Analysts and strategic actions performed by Specialists to conduct operations which are larger and more daring, in scope.

In order to be considered for advancement, the Ventrue must display all of the qualifications listed for members of the opposite role (Analysts must meet the prerequisites for membership as a Specialist, for example). The individual must also be careful not to neglect the duties or tasks assigned to them, and must have a record that is nothing short of impeccable.

- Dominate x5
- Presence x4
- Auspex x4 (or Obfuscate x2 and Auspex x2)
- Fortitude x5
- Potence x2
- Celerity x2
- One year as either an Analyst or Specialist, in good standing (Active, IC)

Benefits of Advancement (Agent): Agents may be assigned tasks of either the Analyst or Specialist, and Agents now have the ability to request more resources, calling for the additional resources in the form of an additional Analyst and/or Specialist to assist with the assignment. The requests and resources assigned are always at the leisure of Control, to which the Agent is assigned. While assigned, these resources are considered under the “command” of the Agent.

Agents also often have access to information provided by Specialists and Analysts, though the specific source of the information may not be provided.

Detriments of Advancement (Agent): While leading a team, the Agent is responsible for the safety of the team members, and more importantly, for the success of the mission. While the Crimson Sceptre places a good deal of faith in the abilities of individual Agents and allows them a fair amount of freedom to choose the methods and techniques that they use to complete tasks assigned to them, Agents who consistently fail at their tasks find themselves slowly relieved of their duties and responsibilities as Control judges them unfit for service in the field.

Agents who are taken off of active service often find themselves performing menial duties in remote locations such as guarding high-risk prisoners at some obscure facility in the middle of nowhere. More common, however, is for an Agent’s movements restricted to one city, or regional area until the Agent earns back the respect of Control.

Rumored Members & Supposed Locations:

- **[NPC] Lady-Anne Bowesley; Prince of London, England:** Lady Anne Bowesley is an exceptionally skillful and adept politician who rose to Prince in London after the disappearance of Mithras during the Second World War. Aristocratic bred, she was born with natural leadership ability and a keen strategic mind. Rumor has it that Lady Anne Bowesley is using the Crimson Sceptre organization to extend her power, and the power of the British Empire, throughout the world. When asked about such matters, Lady Anne dismisses this rumor as a paranoid delusion.
- **[NPC] Control; Codename: “C”:** The only interaction that many members have with the shadowy body of leadership known only as “Control” is through their assigned, direct superior. Members look to Control for mission assignments, informational briefings, requests both fiscal and mundane, and as a tool for mission

coordination when necessary. In every sense of the word, Control is essential for a member's well-being and development within the Crimson Sceptre.

While on-assignment, members may not necessarily work for the same Control all the time, but that fact is usually concealed behind the call-signs assigned to the Control of various members;..

- **[NPC or PC] Public Affairs Spokesperson:** In the present media-sensitive world, as it is in the Kindred-world, many organizations are increasingly likely to employ professionals who have received formal training in journalism, communications, public relations and public affairs in roles which ensure public announcements are made in the most appropriate fashion and through the most appropriate channels. A good public affairs professional has the unique ability to maximize the impact of favorable messages, while minimizing the impact of unfavorable ones.

For the Crimson Sceptre, this position is currently held by the unflappable Hector Bowes-Lyons.

Media: Spooks/MI-5 (BBC Series, 2002-2011); Munich (2005); Casino Royale (2006);

Sources: A World of Darkness: The Promised Lands (WW2220), pgs.35-36; Children of the Night (WW2023), pgs.58-60;

THE HAWK ROYALE

Good manners will open doors that the best education cannot. ~ Clarence Thomas

Overview/History: The Hawk Royale views themselves as Clan Ventrue's social elite, those who know what is, and is not, right and proper. Ventrue of the Hawk Royale embody the civilized demeanor and courtly grace which Ventrue, the world over, value as both a mark of distinction and a social safety mechanism. The Hawks scorn those unfortunates who mistake limited accomplishment and grandiosity for good breeding, taste, and refinement.

Those who aspire to the ranks of the Hawk Royale face a long and often treacherous climb up the social ladder. As the name suggests, the Lords and Ladies watch their contemporaries like hawks, alert for the slightest misdemeanor that may be held to the light or filed away for later. Many liken the Hawk Royale to a chess club, where every public move is scrutinized and watched for what might come next, and compared painstakingly to the eventual outcome.

In a society where social grace is king, an unexpected play may either bring disgrace or accolade.

Stereotypes

Assembly of Colors: They are not unlike us, but they view diplomacy as a lifestyle while we know it to be just another tool.

The Society of the Hague: It is important to forge a close relationship with one of these. When we come calling, we want to be answered as quickly as possible.

Knights of the Blood: They disregard tradition and protocol, and are not above destroying a Ventrue if it suits them... sound like anyone to you?

Order of the White Cross: Though noble in intention, in actuality, they are anything but!

To Ventrue outside of the Hawk Royale, the exact method of gaining membership is a mystery, with neither achievement nor longevity seeming to guarantee acceptance. While most members seem to be of at least moderate standing in the Camarilla (and in the form of Clan Prestige), occasionally, Neonates are invited to join as well as more infamous Ventrue, who often walk a fine line in between what is considered normal, and deliciously scandalous. What is certain, however, is that the overwhelming majority of members display unswerving style, wit, and dignity in public, and in private.

Address/Presentation: Members of the Hawk Royale present themselves with the title of “Lord” or “Lady.” Occasionally, members have been known instead to add the title “Lord of Kings” to their regalia, such as: [Name], Lord of Kings.

First-class members usually do the same, but adopt a self-styled moniker, one which relates to the avian or hunting theme of the group; for example, “Lord [Name], [Chosen Appellation] of Kings.”

Though Members usually only use their titles in Clan communications, no great degree of secrecy is expressly required from members corresponding with the rest of the Camarilla; however, discretion is suggested.

Role Within the Clan: Members of the Hawk Royale are sometimes referred to as the Harpies of Clan Ventrue, and are acknowledged as authorities on “right” behavior. Proper behavior does not solely refer to manners, but also encompasses grace, social propriety, scandal, and respect for the establishment of order. Many members of the Hawk Royale hold prestigious and high-ranking positions in Clan Ventrue’s internal hierarchy, and many hold the title of Proctor.

Hawk members are regarded as *the* authority on matters of Dignitas, and commonly serve to clarify and resolve issues regarding Dignitas before they erupt into a formal dispute. Though there are no written rules as such, many Elders will commonly suggest contacting a member of the Hawk Royale before such disputes are brought officially to the attention of a higher Directorate authority.

Prerequisites to Join: New members are nominated for entry by any current member of the Hawk Royale, who presents the member's name to the rest of the group, usually with a brief description of why the individual is being nominated for entry. A short discussion and ratification of the membership is usually all that it takes to either deny or accept the entrance of the individual, as more than one or two detractors is all it takes to cost a potential member their opportunity.

New members are expected to show a particular grace in social interactions, and a member not having the requisite abilities usually find that they are unable to "compete."-Most new members to the Hawk Royale have the following qualities:

- Verifiable Lineage proving the applicant is a Ventrue
- Member of the Camarilla
- Etiquette x2
- Politics x2
- Lore: Camarilla x2
- Lore: Clan: Ventrue x2

Over the years, some few individuals have dared or erred in aping or demanding membership in the Hawks, or have attempted to use the Hawk's titles and addresses without membership. Such cases are both sweetly and sharply shown the error of their ways or heartily assailed by a very public verbal roasting.

Access to: order-of-the-hawk-royale@googlegroups.com

Benefits of Membership: While the Hawk Royale may be referred to as the "Harpies of the Ventrue", membership in the group confers no special benefit or power with which to remove Camarilla Status or Clan Prestige (Dignitas). Though many Ventrue take recommendations from members of the Hawk Royale seriously, some who do not, and refuse to correct their aberrant behavior usually find themselves in contention with the entirety of the Hawk Royale.

The Hawk Royale claims members in the highest positions of Clan Ventrue and the Camarilla. Members who believe another Ventrue to be in "the wrong," but for whom the offending party is of superior station (either in terms of Directorate rank, or Camarilla position) can seek out a fellow Hawk to support their claim - someone who can match the target in rank or title and who is willing to take burden of laying the accusation themselves, calling for a formal Hearing..

Once a grievance has been aired between Hawks, a discussion on the issue will take place. During this discussion, the Hawks will reach a general consensus on whether or not to pursue the issue, who will accept the responsibility of lobbying for punishment, and what steps to take before the grievance reaches a formal Hearing.

Though some may have the expectation that the slightest shred of scandal would see Members of the Order forcibly ejected from its ranks, this belief is incorrect. While Members commonly enjoy watching their fellows embroiled in scandal (any Kindred worth a second glance is), for the Hawks, what is important is observing how the individual reacts to the scandal, and whether or not they emerge with a relative degree of public favor or interest,

however begrudging. This is the part of the political and social culture at which the best Hawks excel.

Detriments of Membership: Hawk Royale Members need to choose their “fights” wisely, as constantly begging for others to fight your fights for you can quickly become boorish and alienate a Member from the rest of the group. Members are constantly reminded to focus on what is important, as participation in the Order of the Hawk Royale compounds the issue of social scrutiny.

Gaining and maintaining Clan and Court positions, status, and Clan Prestige is extremely important to the Hawk Royale, and those Members who seem to have stalled in their advancement for too long can expect to draw scrutiny, usually in the form of inquiries by First-Class Members.

The Hawk Royale often try to cooperate with other Societies, and members can be found in many other Ventrue Societies. The First-Class Members of the Hawk Royale watch Members as they progress, however, and Members who achieve particularly high rankings in other Societies can quickly fall out of favor with the Hawks, as many other Societies are viewed as hollow pursuits by some members, especially First-Class ones.

Finally, due to the constant disregard that they show for the traditional decorum and procedure of Clan Ventrue, those who claim membership with the Knights of the Blood may find great difficulty at becoming or remaining a Member.

Prerequisites to Advance (First-Class Membership): Little is known outside of the Order about ascension to First Class Membership. Though only the members know what the entry requirements are, and they are not making them public, the commonly noted traits for someone who ascends in the Hawk Royale are fairly specific.

Members hoping to advance to First-Class Membership in the Hawk Royale are expected be nearly flawless in their social interactions. Truly held above all others, the First-Class Members are the undisputed masters of the global social arena. First-Class Members are generally expected to have at least the following qualities:

- Verifiable Lineage proving the applicant is a Ventrue
- Member of the Camarilla in good standing
- Etiquette x4
- Politics x4
- Lore: Camarilla x3
- Lore: Clan: Ventrue x3 (with a specialization in Dignitas)

As with the selection process for new Members, becoming a First-Class Member involves more than one’s abilities. On rare occasion, admittance has been conferred upon those with lesser technical skill, but great social aplomb, poise, and grace while under “fire.” Those who are lacking can expect to be mentored and instructed by those existing First-Class Members... though it is in turn expected that the great honor is met with equally focused study.

Benefits of Advancement (First-Class Member): First-Class Members of the Hawk Royale whom have served for a significant length of time sometimes adapt their signature to “Lord” or “Lady” [Name], [Appellation] of Kings”. The appellation seems to vary, but usually carries an avian or hunting theme.

The word of a First-Class Members is usually taken as the end of any discussion between Members of the Hawk Royale regarding whether or not something should be pursued. Though the First-Class Hawk Royale members can usually deal with most issues themselves, they occasionally may politely ask a Member to see a particular punishment or mediation through to completion.

First-Class Members may decide to bring grievances to formal Hearings with just the approval of any other First-Class Member as long as they have the Sect Status, Position(s), and Clan Prestige necessary to lay the accusation.

Detriments of Membership (First-Class Member): First Class Members are expected to police the general Members of the Hawk Royale, bringing any issues to light and resolving them before they turn into larger challenges.

Beyond this, being accorded the honor of becoming a First-Class Member of the Hawk Royale is a major sign of respect from the other First-Class Members. First-Class Members expect that each and every First-Class Member will do great service to the name and reputation of the Hawk Royale, but this steadfast dedication can sometimes cost an individual chances to advance in many other Societies and Orders due to the fact that those persecuted by members of the Hawk Royale sometimes have seniority in said Society or Order, over the Hawk.

Known Members & Important Locations:

- **[NPC] Lady Theresa Wickham, Nisus of Kings; Berlin, Germany:** The presence of Lady Theresa Wickham in the Order of the Hawk Royale is surprising to some with longer memories. Once one of the most esteemed Harpies in the world, this Hawk served Queen Anne's London court. However, a verbal attack on the Princes of the Americas landed her in political hot water as the public was outraged at her claim, and she was dismissed. Her voice gone from the public communications of the Camarilla, she was all but forgotten as their attention quickly turned elsewhere.

In late 2007, she resurfaced in Ventrue communications in her position as Primogen in Berlin. The Hawks require no leaders, but Lady Theresa fills an almost secretary position as she encourages discussions, calls members to vote, and is sought for guidance. It would seem that those that matter did not entirely disagree with her assessment, they appreciated her recovery, or something else has led her to continue to remain in membership and foster the growth of the Hawks worldwide.

- **[NPC] Lady Datura, Bubo of Kings; Strategos of the Midwestern United States:** Datura has served as a Strategos for many years. She is a calculating and cunning business-woman who has survived and prospered through hard times, with only her wit and intelligence to help her succeed. Datura has, time and again proven that she can out-shine many of her male counterparts, as is evident from her meteoric rise through the ranks of the clan. Datura is hailed as the founder of the "Aquitaine," using her profound influence and position to create something which represents the achievements of a woman within the male-dominated Ventrue-culture. Additionally, Datura is one of the highest ranking members of the Sisterhood of Amastris.

Over the years, and especially in recent nights, Datura has managed to stay out of the Camarilla's public eye, concentrating instead on her responsibilities to Clan Ventrue. A respected member of the Hawk Royale, Datura seldom speaks unless to break a tie, or solve a dispute that cannot be solved in some other manner.

- **[NPC] Lady Justania, Asio Otus of Kings:** Embracing only ever from noble stock, Lady Justania embodies everything it means to be a noble. Though some may dismiss Lady Justania as an arrogant noblewoman, she has been known to be quite generous to those that she favors and considers of the same rare social class as she. Lady Justania is also no stranger to pain and suffering, and has several hundred years of

wealth and favors built up to ensure that she never again will endure the rigors she once was forced to during the Dark Ages. Many believe that Lady Justania genuinely enjoys lecturing young Kindred about proper etiquette and protocol.

Media: Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (De Capo Press, 2011); The Tudors (Showtime Series, 2007); Etiquette for Dummies (Hungry Minds Inc, 1999);

Sources: CB:Ventrue (Revised) [WW2358], pgs.52-53, 57; Tzimisce Chronicles II: Son of the Dragon, pg.98; Chicago by Night 1st Ed [WW2201], pgs.118-119;

THE SISTERHOOD OF AMASTRIS

In politics if you want anything said, ask a man. If you want anything done, ask a woman. ~ Margaret Thatcher

Overview / History: There have always been women who have risen to prominence within Clan Ventrue, proving themselves to be the equals of their male clan-mates in almost every arena. The Sisterhood of Amastris inducts the women of Clan Ventrue who have proven successful in the field of leadership, and have earned exceptional personal accomplishment.

Founded in the name of Amastris, wife of Dionysus of Heracluria, who established her own city-state by conquering and uniting four settlements, invitations to join the Sisterhood are a rare form of prestige for a female Ventrue. Only those who have striven to achieve a great deal personal prestige, whether through the leadership of Sect position(s), achieving a position in the Ventrue Directorate, or some other undeniable accomplishment which garners prestige, fame, or accolade.

Address/Nickname: A member of the Sisterhood of Amastris identifies herself simply by adding the title Sister or Matron to her name, depending on her seniority within the group. For example:

- Sister [Name]
- Sister [Name] of the [Sister-House Name]
- Matron [Name]

Stereotypes

Assembly of Colors: Being a diplomat sometimes means you have to work harder and longer than most others, something we have experience with.

The Society of the Hague: Truly the "old boys" club, this institution could use a few good women...

Hawk Royale: When the weapons are poise and grace, we are natural predators

Knights of the Blood: Let them not cross us, for together, we are stronger than any army

Order of the White Cross: They preach the camaraderie which we have been practicing for centuries.

Role Within the Clan: The Sisterhood of Amastris exists to support female Ventrue and to assist them in achieving their goals. Members often develop bonds and relationships which resemble the commitment and loyalty often reserved for Lineage-members, Coteries, or even Houses. In a Clan so thoroughly dominated by men throughout its history, this group sometimes serves as a necessary tool for a female Ventrue looking to reach greater heights.

Prerequisites to Join: When a female Ventrue (with a verifiable Lineage) rises through the ranks of the Camarilla, the Directorate, or achieves some accomplishment which brings her great fame or prestige, the closest member of the Sisterhood is expected to bring the success of this potential member to the group. Though any member may sponsor a female Ventrue, only those who have shown great success and tact are considered.

Once approached by a sponsor, the potential member must pass the Rites of Initiation. The rites are administered in the form of three tests. The purpose of each test is to illustrate to the rest of the group which area the pledge excels in. The tests may vary depending on the candidate and the patron, but the general spirit of each remains the same and each test requires that the pledge to display a certain amount of inner strength and personal determination. The tests are as follows:

1. The first test illustrates the candidate's loyalty to her Sisters of Clan Ventrue
2. The next test focuses on the candidate's strengths in her Sect
3. The final test is one of focused on the candidate herself, often in the form of a social puzzle, or even a hypothetical situation, which she must solve.

If for any reason the candidate is found lacking in any area, both she and her patron may be subjected to a certain amount of ridicule or humiliation. The degree to which this is taken depends upon the station of the individual, and the magnitude failure.

Benefits of Membership (Sister): When a potential member passes the Rites, she is presented with a traditional Chinese fan, made of silk and bamboo. The sponsoring Sister chooses the fan based on the personality and achievements of the candidate. The mythological and symbolic significance behind the creatures and scenes on the fans is very important and it is up to the Sister to choose wisely.

Once a new member has been accepted into the Sisterhood, they are welcomed by all as a “Sister.” Sisters may sponsor other successful female Ventrue for membership in the group.

Finally, Sisters can usually rely on assistance from other Sisters with little to nothing asked in return. Sisters who are especially helpful or effective may develop positive relationships with the Matrons of the various Sister-Houses; relationships that are justified by the ability to purchase the following Background:

- Mentor (up to level 3, at the discretion of the PCs Storytellers, and the Ventrue Coordinator)

Access to: Sorority-of-Amastris@googlegroups.com

Detriments of Membership (Sister): Many male members of the clan do not take the Sisterhood seriously, dismissing it as a progressive fad inspired by the women's liberation movements of the last two centuries, and unlikely to last. Though not forbidden or illegal in any way, male Ventrue in positions of authority over a Sister may come to view the loans and support that Sisters gain from each other with fear and suspicion, drawing scrutiny to members who flaunt or over-utilize their new-found support.

Prerequisites to Advance (Sister of the [Fury, Horae, or Siren]): After one year as a Sister, one or more of the three Sister-Houses which exist in the Sisterhood may choose to invite the member to join their ranks. Though there is no formal process by which Sisters are accepted, each Sister-House chooses candidates in a different manner. While the Matron Mother of the Horae may hold a vote of all Horae, the Matron Mother of the Siren may require proof of a potential Siren's abilities or claims.

The Sister-Houses are as follows:

- *The Fury (Erinyes):* In Greek mythology, the Erinyes were also known as the Furies, with this in mind, any Sister chosen to join the Erinnyes must show a particularly fierce attitude or dedication. The Fury uphold and enforce the social order, to include Status and Clan Prestige. Membership usually requires the Sister hold a certain reputation of strength, though not necessarily through the application of brute force.
- *The Horae:* Originally, the Horae were known as Order, Justice, and Peace; so it comes as no surprise that the Horae are the socially responsible wing of the Sisterhood. These Sisters are particularly noted for their political achievements within the Camarilla. Horae often display their political leanings by wearing a silk ribbon in corresponding colors: Order (blue), Justice (red), or Peace (white).
- *The Siren (Helenites):* This group encourages the use of seduction to win political favor. Competition is fierce among these women, but Helenites are rather informal about their dealings. Particular acclaim is given to a sister who successfully destroys a male Kindred's political career through such tactics. Though the Siren still maintain a place as a Sister-House, there have been very few Siren admitted in the last decade, which has left some Sisters to wonder if this Sister-House is slowly becoming obsolete, or if something more secretive or sinister is occurring.

Benefits of Advancement (Sister of the [Fury, Horae, or Siren]): When a Sister is inducted into a Sister-House that fits their individual specialty, they become known as a “Matron.” Matrons are expected to be extremely cooperative with other Matrons of their own Sister-House, and many Sisters respect the tradition of complying with the advice of a Matron when it involves her specialty... though there are no written rules regarding such compliance.

Any Matron may sponsor a Sister for entrance into her own Sister-House. Once sponsored, the candidate is reviewed by the Matron Mother in accordance with the tradition of that Sister-House.

Finally, a Sister at this level will likely have come to rely on her Mentor over time, gaining confidence and strength from the strong guiding leadership that she has provided. In order to better represent this maturing relationship, the Sister may now increase their Traits in the Mentor Background to the maximum amount allowed by the character’s Generation (usually 5, at the discretion of the PCs Storytellers, and the Ventrue Coordinator).

Detriments of Advancement (Sister of the [Fury, Horae, or Siren]): A Sister may only join one Sister-House, and once an offer is extended, if a Sister turns it down for any reason, they risk drawing the ire of every Matron in the opposing Sister-House(s). It is not common for Sisters to receive an invite from more than one Sister-House because it is assumed that Matrons of all Sister-Houses discuss potential members before an offer is made. However, very successful Sisters are sometimes the source of fierce competition between Sister-Houses.

Known Members & Important Locations:

- **[NPC] Natacha Dimitriva Radocara, Sister of the Fury; Primogen of St. Petersburg, Russia:** A short, slender woman with raven-hair and ice-blue eyes, Natacha Radocara is the power-behind-the-throne in St. Petersburg, Russia. The kind of individual who could easily dominate a situation, Radocara has a natural gift for administration. Through carefully planned and controlled action, Natacha Radocara has forged a reputation as a master politician, and one who never loses her composure.

No stranger to different parts of the world, Natacha Radocara has lived in both Europe and the United States, when she served for several years as Archon. During this time, Radocara spent many nights learning directly from the Matron Mother of the Fury, Datura, who considers Natacha her protégé.

- **[NPC] Madame Hoteph, Matron of the Horae (Blue):** Known only as Hoteph before she served as Justicar, Madame Hoteph is a Ventrue who espouses the virtues of the Camarilla every chance she gets. Madame Hoteph teaches that, through cooperative accomplishment, and mutual resource-sharing, any feat both great and small can be accomplished.
- **[NPC] Genevive deMontaigne, Matron of the Horae (Red):** Most recently active as a Lictor to Datura, Genevive has spent most of her Kindred years in Europe. Her longest time was spent in Brussels, Belgium, where she is rumoured to have had a hand in the creation of the European Union, and the settling of its headquarters in Brussels.

Media: Elizabeth (Film, 1998); Dangerous Liaisons (Film, 1988); The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo by Stieg Larsson (Novel, 2005); Samantha from Sex in the City (TV Series, 1998-2004); The Queen (Film, 2006); The Color Purple by Alice Walker (Novel, 1982);

Sources: The Red Sign (WW2431), pgs.96-97; A World of Darkness (WW2220), pg.9;

CULTS

The following section details the secret cults that exist within the Ventrue. Characters may discover or be approached by members of Cults during gameplay.

THE CULT OF MITHRAS

Overview

The Cult of Mithras is an ancient pagan cult which has existed since before the time of Christ. Appealing to soldiers, nobles, and generals (both living and unliving) members of this secret warrior-cult revere Mithras as a powerful conqueror and a figure of god-like power. The members of the cult gather in small, traditionally underground, chambers known as Mithraea (*singular: Mithraeum*).

Though the concept of Mithras (the Greco-Persian god) was once separate from the ancient Ventrue Methuselah of the same name, over the centuries the two have become one in the same. Mithras is viewed as a solar god (similar to Apollo and Helios) who protects and empowers soldiers and watches over their battles. The most iconic symbolism for Mithras is the *tauroctony* - the slaying of a sacred bull - a ritual which represents the participant enhancing himself with the qualities of power, strength and fertility.

Members seek a condition called *aeternitas* - a Masquerade-friendly term for the Embrace and the expansion of the self through extreme conditioning and continual testing. The cult has seven ranks, each with a name and associated astrological planet.

Joining the Cult

The primary ritual of the cult involves the sacrifice of a bull to Mithras, followed by the consumption of its flesh and blood by the worshipers, who gain the strength and other qualities of the bull into themselves. Masked Vampire-Priests of the cult usually conduct the rituals and it is not uncommon for them to add a small amount of their own vitae to the blood in order to strengthen the congregation's loyalty (by making them ghouls).

Initiation into the cult is difficult, after numerous trials of physical strength and endurance, bravery, worthiness, whipping and flagellation, branding and bloodletting (always attended to by Vampire-Priests) the potential member swears ***oaths of loyalty and secrecy**** to the cult. The potential member is then baptized with the blood of a sacrificed bull and admitted into the first rank of the cult, followed by a celebration and feasting on the sacrifice's flesh. Those who prove worthy are given aid and access to the secrets of the Cult; those who prove unworthy through cowardice or treachery are destroyed.

*[*These Oaths are supernatural in nature and require a Binding Agreement]*

Benefits of Membership

Many of the brutal rituals practiced by the Cult's members often lead members to elevate their understanding of themselves and the universe around them, thereby *Climbing the Ladder of Heaven* [see the section of the same name in *Blood Sacrifice*, p.37-41 for more information on this process].

Due to this, members often begin to develop a limited understanding of the rudimentary levels of Dur-An-Ki. A Cult member's access to and use of these "discoveries" is limited to their Status in the Cult of Mithras and administratively, will adhere to the following guidelines:

- Membership in the Cult of Mithras at any level is considered Ventrue Coordinator Approval, as is each level of Status attained by the member (as seen in the next section).
- The initial learning of Dur-An-Ki requires Assamite Coordinator and Ventrue Coordinator Approval.
- Once both of the above have been gained, the member may purchase paths/rituals, as governed by the character's Status in the Cult. Every Ritual and Path purchased requires Notification of both Coordinators.
- No mechanics are published below, please see the OWbN Guide to Dur-An-Ki (Assamite Sorcery) for any binding mechanics or suggested MET conversions

NEW BACKGROUND: STATUS: CULT: CULT OF MITHRAS

This background represents the undefinable amount of respect and deference that other members of the Cult of Mithras have for any one member and it can be gained and lost depending on the actions and accomplishments of the individual. It is up to the discretion of Storytellers whether or not to charge (or refund) XP for changes in the level(s) of this Background, but we recommend that whatever rule is used for Sect Status also be adopted for Cult Status. Below is a short description of what is expected of a Ventrue at each level:

A Note on Lower Level Members

There are two lower "levels" of membership in the Cult of Mithras which are reserved for mortals who are potential candidates and the newest of recruits. These ranks are the Raven or Crow (Mercury) and the Bride or Gryphon (Venus).

Status: Cults: Cult of Mithras x1: Soldier (Mars)

A ghoul-member of the Cult who is being trained for the embrace may achieve this level. Vampires initiated into the cult begin at this rank. Your martial talents have been satisfactory to attract the attention of the Cult and to pass the most basic tests for membership. Members at this level are overseen by a Priest of the Cult.

Status: Cults: Cult of Mithras x2: Lion (Jupiter)

Those mortals who were members of the Cult and raised (and eventually embraced) by Cult members start at this rank. Your martial talents have been tested by the Cult once or twice and you have impressed a member or two with your bravery or cunning. Characters at this level are normally figures of regional importance to the Ventrue.

The member may learn one Path from the list below (one total):

- Elemental Mastery
- Spirit Manipulation

Members of the Cult of Mithras who learn Blood Magic for the first time will gain a free Ritual per level, as per the normal rules for Blood Magic. These rituals may be purchased from the list of Rarity 1 (non-Assamite-specific) Dur-An-Ki Rituals. Members may purchase additional rituals (of the same type) at the following rates:

- Basic: 6 Months
- Intermediate: 12 Months
- Advanced: 18 Months

Status: Cults: Cult of Mithras x3: Persian (Moon)

No longer simple members, these members are considered capable guides and mentors of their own and likely run smaller “cells” of the Cult within their Regional area. Characters at this level are normally figures well-established regional figures, and have likely achieved some level of national or global importance.

The member may learn one additional Path from the list noted at the previous level (for a total of two), in addition to the following:

- Lure of Flames
- Path of Blood

The following Rituals are now additionally available:

- Astral Portent (Intermediate) [*BS: tTC, p.47*]
- Mark the Blood Oath (Intermediate) [*DA: PGttLC, p.181*]

Status: Cults: Cult of Mithras x4: Courier of the Sun or Heliodromos/Sun-Runner (Sun)

These members are most involved with ensuring the safety and security of the smaller “cells” and for continually testing those at lower levels of membership. These characters have likely recruited members at all previous levels into the Cult and are well-established figures of national or global importance. Wherever these members go, their reputation precedes them.

The member may learn one additional Path from the list noted at previous levels (for a total of three), in addition to the following:

- The Evil Eye
- Music of the Spheres

The following Rituals are now additionally available:

- Warding Baptism (Basic) [*BS: tTC, p.47*]

Status: Cults: Cult of Mithras x5: Father (Saturn)

At this ultimate level of initiation, the Cultist is considered a Priest. Priests enjoy the sole

responsibility of fully initiating others into the Cult and are considered the most elite members of the Cult of Mithras. Globally recognized for their power and status within the Cult, every word that these members speak can be considered holy or sacred.

The member may learn one additional Path from the list noted at previous levels (for a total of four), in addition to the following:

- Awakening the Steel

The following Rituals are now additionally available:

- Apsu Portal (Advanced) [*BS: tTC*, p.50]

Members

One of the oldest members of the Cult is the Ventrue James Mannerly of Dover. Mannerly was a former regional Prince whose ambitions overcame Mithras' "challenges" and earned his respect. The Cult is, however (as Mithras was), very much aware of the difference between "amusingly innovative" and "dangerously rebellious." Another member of the Cult has re-appeared in the world after a long absence - the Ventrue legend, Cret.

Sources

Ashen Cults, p.44-47; *Blood Sacrifice*, p.36-37; *Dark Ages - British Isles*, p.90, 91, 118; *Lair of the Hidden*, p.83-88

PLAYER-CREATED SOCIETIES AND ORDERS

The following section details the societies and orders which were created in gameplay, by player-characters.

THE PROCURATORI

Overview / History: Created in the desperate nights of the Year of Fire, the Procuratori is a collection of Ventrue who hold the Recognition of Paragon. After the Year of Fire, the Procuratori remained together in order to continue their work protecting the Masquerade, manipulating situations in order to favor Ventrue positions, and any other special projects determined to strengthen Ventrue portfolios.

Address/Nickname: [Position] of the Procuratori, where the individual positions are as follows:

- Member
- Trustee (and/or Vice-Chair)
- Chairman

Role Within the Clan: Members of the Procuratori are called on mainly in emergency situations, such as when a large coordinated response is required in order to cover a breach of the Masquerade. Members have specialized talents for coordinating and concentrating a large number of assets to ensure that even the most problematic issues are dealt with quickly and quietly.

The Procuratori further add to the reputation of Clan Ventrue by reinforcing the idea of the power the Ventrue hold due to their unity and willingness to cooperate in order to accomplish greater goals.

Prerequisites to Join (Member): To join the Procuratori, the applying Ventrue must already hold Recognition as a Paragon (whether it be over an Influence, or another Background). Each application is then reviewed for verification of the Ventrue's assets which make them eligible by a minimum of three Trustees who must endorse the new Member for admittance. Only then is the member's application forwarded to the Chairman for confirmation.

The Chairman will usually confirm a new Member after verifying the following:

- Member of the Directorate in good standing
- Possess the Paragon Merit, and have that Influence or Background at the Paragon level
- Endorsement of a minimum of three Trustees
- It is suggested that would-be Members have been Recognized with the *Procurator*, but not required

Benefits of Membership (Member): Members work with Trustees in order to aid in the directing and collection of mass amounts of Influence and resources. Members advise Trustees and sometimes are called on to help plan and execute the coordinated efforts of the group in their region.

In times of emergency, such as a breach of the Masquerade, Members may request emergency aid from the Procuratori. Emergency aid is usually considered a project which will require a small to moderate amount of

influence for a relatively short amount of time. For emergency requests, individual Members or Trustees will usually grant their private holdings to the requestor immediately.

In order for a Member to access Procuratori resources on a larger scale, the Member must bring a formal request to the group and earn the support of at least three Trustees. Once this request is supported, only the Chairman may override this decision.

Access to: procuratori@googlegroups.com@googlegroups.com

Detriments of Membership (Member): The Chairman, or Vice-Chair, will designate the Member or Trustee to handle the logistics of each operation that the Procuratori is engaged in (whether that Member or Trustee enjoys the task he or she is assigned is another matter). This choice is usually made based on regional proximity to where the resources will be utilized. The designated Member or Trustee will be expected to be the point-of-contact with regard to the collection of information, and will be expected to provide reports and analysis to the Procuratori.

Many Elder members of the Ventrue Directorate see the Procuratori as an upstart organization - a Directorate within a Directorate. Due to this, Members may find their motives scrutinized when requesting aid from local and regional Directorate members. The “secret projects” that the Procuratori engage in are undeniably unnerving to some of the group’s more paranoid cousins.

Prerequisites for Advancement (Trustee): Trustees are chosen from the ranks of Members who possess the Merit: Paragon in a vacant seat. In order to be considered for a vote, a potential Trustee must be endorsed for the vacant seat by three Trustees. Once the necessary endorsements are given, the potential Trustee is then confirmed by the Chairman for vote. After all potential Trustees have received the necessary endorsements, a majority vote of the current Trustees is held.

The Chairman will usually confirm the vote for a new Trustee after verifying the following:

- Member of the Directorate in good standing
- Possess the Paragon Merit in either Fame or an Influence, and have that Influence or Background at the Paragon level
- Endorsement of a minimum of three Trustees
- It is suggested that would-be Trustees have been Recognized with the *Puppet’s Hand*, but not required

Benefits of Advancement (Trustee): The Trustees sit as heads of their appointed area of Influence and act as voting entities when projects and new Trustees are proposed. Trustees may propose long-term projects of all types without the need for confirmation or support of other Trustees. Only the Chairman may block these proposals.

*A note to Storytellers: As noted in the **OWbN Ventrue: Genre Guide - Non-Binding (p.34)**, “if the Storyteller would like to emphasise Clan Ventrue’s dominance of Mortal influence, one suggestion would be to allow Ventrue characters performing the Combine action with other Ventrue characters to ‘loan’ Influence at a full 1:1 ratio, rather than the listed 2:1 ratio.” We highly suggest that members of the Procuratori be allowed to take advantage of this suggestion in order to emphasize the group’s ability to assert their influence on a massive scale.*

Detriments of Advancement (Trustee): There are only 16 members of the Board of Trustees at a time, one for each Influence area and one for Fame.

Though any Ventrue may seek punishment of another through the Clan's normal protocols, the Procuratori prefers to handle internal problems quietly. Due to this, any Trustee may bring forward a motion for the punishment of a Member or another Trustee. These motions are handled in a manner similar to normal Ventrue Courts and Hearings with the stipulation that the Chairman serves as the Judge (deciding sentencing) while allowing a vote of the Trustees to determine the guilt or innocence of the accused.

Votes such as these are usually the result of some failure on the part of the accused with the harshest penalties dispatched being the Member's ejection from the group, or the demotion of a Trustee to a regular Member. More heinous offenses would likely be handled outside of the Procuratori.

Prerequisites to Advance (Vice-Chair): Serving at the pleasure of the Chairman, the Vice-Chair handles the nightly operations of the Procuratori including organizing and attending meetings, ensuring the rules of the group are observed, and organizing proposals and new members for the review of the Chairman.

The Chairman may appoint a Vice-Chair, and will usually verify the following before doing so:

- Member of the Directorate in good standing
- Be a seated Trustee
- It is suggested that would-be Vice-Chair have the Recognition: *Iron Circlet*, but it is not required

Benefits of Advancement (Vice-Chair): The Vice-Chair serves in a very powerful position, having more direct and frequent contact with the Chairman than most. Many believe that the Vice-Chair's word goes a long way towards tipping the balance of decisions made by the Chairman, whether it be about group projects or the confirmation of new Members.

The Vice-Chair remains vigilant of the nightly operations of the group, ensuring the individual Trustees remain active, carrying out the duties of their chairs. He or she heads all meetings that the Chairman does not attend, and ensures that the Procuratori, as a group, does not lose sight of its goals.

Appointed directly by the Chairman, the Vice-Chair may execute most of the rights of the Chairman when directed to do so, including:

- May call for a meeting of the group when necessary
- Brings the nomination of a new Member to the Chairman for confirmation
- Brings the pre-vote nomination of a new Trustee to the Chairman for confirmation
- May veto Emergency Requests or Project Proposals that are deemed out-of-scope or not in accordance with the goals of the group
- May serve as Judge at Courts and Hearings over Members and Trustees in Internal issues such as failure, abandonment, or other such disciplinary issues

Detriments of Advancement (Vice-Chair): Holding the position of Vice-Chair comes with an equal amount of responsibility as well as liability. The Vice-Chair is usually the first to receive blame when projects "stall" or suffer delays, or when the group is seen as moving too slowly.

The Vice-Chair must also strive to remain an active Trustee of the Procuratori, in addition to an exemplary member of both the Camarilla and the Directorate. Any damaging scandal inside of the Procuratori or Clan Ventrue would likely be enough for a Hearing to remove the Vice-Chair from his or her position as the Vice-Chair may be removed from his or her position at any time by the Chairman, with or without reason or cause. Finally, ejection from the Directorate or Camarilla would cause the Vice-Chair to be removed from his or her position, and likely the Procuratori.

Known Members & Important Locations:

- **[NPC] Richard Westhill, Chairman:** The Chairman sits at the top of the Procuratori hierarchy advising the Trustees and Members when necessary and serving as a tiebreaker in any vote which requires it. The Chairman may make project proposals as he sees fit, and has extensive veto power over projects and promotions. The Chairman is appointed through a vote of the Trustees and serves until retirement, death, or removed from the group by the judgement of a Ventrue Court or Hearing.

Sources: Created via Council Prop on 2011-08-13 titled: PLOT - YEAR OF FIRE - Ventrue Addendum and Ventrue Dignitas Packet Addendum [autopass]

CONTRIBUTIONS

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

On behalf of Team-Ventruue, I would like to give special thanks to the following people for their contributions to this document:

- Guajará Gazzalle
- Trey Naivar
- Lawrence Jacob Siebert

Many thanks go to the OWbN Ventruue 2011-2013 Coordinator Team who helped me put this document together, and to all of the players of Ventruue - past, present, and future - for helping shape the world in which we all take so much enjoyment from. Also special thanks to the Current Team Ventruue for the fantastic work they have done in fostering player agency so we can get this and the coming changes implemented so quickly

Chris Barrs

Ventruue Coordinator, 2018 - Present

A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

The intent of this publication is not to only enhance the gaming experience of playing in One World by Night, but for any fan of the Old World of Darkness. Team-Ventruue has worked hard to bring you this document, in the hopes that you will use it to help each other create a richer and more fulfilling game experience while playing a Ventruue character, or story-telling for Ventruue. The characters and groups presented within were crafted so as to take care to preserve the role-play of years past, while at the same time making sure that as many resources as possible were available for future years.

Most importantly though, please remember to have fun!