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neighborhood of voluntary spies.
-Jane Austen

THE HUNGRY STREETS

*An adventure for Vampire: The Requiem
using the Storytelling Adventure System*

Written by P. Alexander Skokel Developed by Eddy Webb Edited by Genevieve Podleski
Layout by Jessica Mullins Art by Sam Araya, Matt Dixon, Andrew Hepthworth,
Travis Ingram, Tomasz Jedruszek, Rik Martin, Ken Meyer Jr



STORYTELLING ADVENTURE SYSTEM

SCENES

II

MENTAL
PHYSICAL
SOCIAL

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XP LEVEL
0-34

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Jonas Craft is dead, nothing left of him but grimy ash and a charred stake. His coterie's eyes have turned on his neighbors: you. Do they seek justice or something else? Is Jonas' murder an isolated incident or just the tip of the iceberg? Why have the living suddenly taken an active interest in a safer, cleaner neighborhood? Just who killed Jonas Craft and what did they want? When answers lead to more questions, only one question matters: Are you next?

Introduction

The Hungry Streets presents the characters with a fight on two fronts. On one hand, they face the threat of vampire hunters: humans who have taken up arms against vampires and decided to strike back. These vigilantes actively work to make their neighborhood a better place for the living and a worse for the dead. They're too connected to simply be murdered, but the alternative for the Kindred is a quickly dwindling food supply and the constant threat of a stake in the heart. On the other front, the characters' neighbors have begun fishing about for someone to take some of their territory off of their hands. Is their offer for real? Does it present the characters a chance to escape their rapidly degenerating feeding grounds? Do the neighbors have another agenda? Can the characters navigate these growing pressures or will the fragile bonds of Kindred loyalty shatter under the weight?



ABOUT THE STORYTELLING ADVENTURE SYSTEM

If this is your first Storytelling Adventure System (SAS) product, you've chosen a fine place to start. To keep this story kit lean and focused, though, we haven't included a lot of the core premises and Storyteller suggestions that are at the heart of the SAS. Whether you're a new Storyteller or an old hand, be sure to read the **free SAS Guide**, found at the SAS website:

www.white-wolf.com/sas

Here are some of the features available in **The Hungry Streets**:

- **Interactive links.** Clicking on anything in red will take you directly to the section referenced, or to an appropriate character sheet or prop. It may also take you to an external website that could be useful.
- **Scenes.** Clicking on a scene name in the scene flowchart or the page number in the scene card will take you to the full write-up of the scene.
- **Bookmarks.** This PDF is fully bookmarked, so you can jump to major sections at any time when the file is open.



What's Inside

In addition to the usual cast and scenes, **The Hungry Streets** provides extended advice for bringing vampire-specific pressures to bear on the characters, such as **resource limitation** and **antagonists** who can act during the day (see p. 4-6). Additional extras include **special abilities for vampire hunters** (p. IV), **territory maps** (p. VI) and a **chart for tracking character resources** (p. V).

Treatment

It begins with a murder. Jonas Craft, member of a coterie whose territory abuts the characters', is found dead, his body nothing but a pile of ash. The neighboring coterie asks to speak to the characters, primarily to determine whether or not they were involved in the slaying. If the characters ask around, they discover that Jonas is only the most recent in a line of Kindred to die in an area near the characters' territory. Evidence seems to point towards human vampire slayers. As the characters follow the trail, the hunters begin work to ensure the safety of their neighborhood. They push for a revitalization of the Neighborhood Watch program, obtaining police support and church approval for it. Suddenly the characters' neighborhood has become a much more dangerous place to hunt.

At the same time, the neighbors have realized that their feeding grounds are larger than they can realistically handle. They offer to cut off a slice for a member of the coterie, proposing to tender it to whichever character manages the largest bid. They hold private interviews to allow the characters to present their bids; the interviews are a ruse, however, designed to help the neighboring coterie get to better know the characters. They have no intention of giving up their lands, but instead plan to offer one of the characters a place in their coterie. If the characters realize what is going on, they may begin to prepare for betrayal... or become too paranoid to function. In the end, the neighbors pick a character and make an offer. Can she refuse it? If the characters haven't managed to solve their hunter problem, can she afford not to jump ship for greener pastures?

Theme: Survival

The theme of **The Hungry Streets** is *survival*, pure and simple. With the pressures mounting on every side, the characters must weather street-level Kindred politics, get their Vitae fix and avoid rampaging self-styled vampire hunters. This isn't the survival of a horror film or a video game; it's the nightly grind of the Requiem. It's what these new young Kindred have to accept as part and parcel of their new existence. This story takes place in the moment, illustrating the night-to-night difficulties of the newly dead.



Wood: Pressure

Ever-growing *pressure* makes that survival difficult (and the story interesting). Mortals try to take back the night while the Kindred continue their games of blood and territory. But the pressures stem from deeper places, from irreconcilable differences between predator and prey. Tensions between class and culture rear their heads, as those that have stopped aging clash with those who grow older with each day of toil. The vampires are young and privileged (in more ways than one); the hunters aging and struggling to get by. The hunters want to protect their families and friends, but their commitment to their avocation bears the green taint of envy.

A Chapter in Your Chronicle

The Hungry Streets focuses on the trials of a group of young Kindred who haven't made a name for themselves yet, which makes it a great starting point for a chronicle. It assumes that the characters have established a coterie and managed to obtain some small, unimpressive feeding grounds. If you want to explore that process, you might use preludes to flesh out the first nights of the coterie. Conversely, this story can be an excellent later story in your chronicle, after the characters have successfully established themselves, gained some territory and maybe even a little fame among the Kindred population. This could create yet more tension with the neighboring coterie of Sam, Tom and Lucretia, the city's other up-and-coming youths. Similarly, you can use **The Hungry Streets** as a subplot to a larger story: Using the plot points of this story as seemingly insignificant background details allows you to slowly build the pressure without the players noticing. They may be distracted from the threat in their own territory until it's almost too late. This story is specifically geared towards characters within the suggested experience range, however. If the characters are more experienced at the beginning of the story, it is suggested that you bolster the antagonists with additional experience points.

The localized nature of the story allows it to easily be used in most settings with only a few tweaks. The maps we provided are generic enough to be realistically dropped into any city, or you can use them as a guide when delineating boundaries on the map of a real city. The story doesn't involve any of the city's major players, so you can easily populate their setting with any personalities you see fit.

Using **The Hungry Streets** as a chapter in a larger chronicle allows you some narrative opportunities. You can seed characters from this story into earlier stories. Father Estevez, for example, can easily come into contact with a character or be involved in her background as a spiritual leader. A police officer turned Kindred might have once been partners with Nicole Abner.

Don't push this too hard, however, or players will suspect something. Similarly, the ramifications of this story can follow a chronicle for many stories to come. If the characters fail to contain the hunter threat, for example, hunter cells may appear throughout the city, becoming the chronicle's primary antagonists and destabilizing Kindred society. If one of the characters betrays the coterie and joins the neighbors, that character may shift to Storyteller control and become a memorable antagonist in the future.

Try to locate **The Hungry Streets** within the themes of the broader chronicle. If your chronicle focuses on a Carthian uprising against a corrupt Invictus Prince, for example, emphasize the similarities between the Carthians' struggles and those of the hunters while underscoring the neighbor's ploy as emblematic of backbiting Kindred politics. A chronicle focused on religious turmoil within the Lancea Sanctum can take on a biblical tone, with the neighbors playing the corrupting secular outsiders. If the Circle of the Crone serves as the focus of the chronicle, the story can take on mythic significance, the character's actions possibly fulfilling an obscure prophecy made by the Hierophant a hundred years ago. Adding these touches blends this story into the larger chronicle, allowing it to seamlessly and organically grow from the tensions you have already established.



A Story By Itself

The Hungry Streets can work well as a single story. It may be wise to give the players some time to establish their relationships to one another, as well as to establish the mood of the territory, before jumping into the story proper. This gives the characters a chance to understand their characters and what those characters find important. The characters are more likely to betray each other when using this story by itself, in part because the players know their time with the characters is limited, but also because the characters simply haven't had the time to form the kinds of connections that create bonds of loyalty. This is actually an advantage — such betrayals can create a kind of drama that isn't always found in a longer chronicle.

This story does not provide a city of personages in which to immerse the characters, however. It offers no Prince, Primogen or even a Sheriff. If using this story by itself, you will have to fill in these gaps. Populating a setting with vampires from scratch can be a daunting task, especially for a short story such as this. Luckily a few simpler options present themselves. The story can be set in a rural locale in which the characters, their neighbors and the lone victims of the hunters are the only Kindred at all. Alternatively, the story can be set in a city with largely anonymous and faceless leadership. There is The Prince, The Primogen and The Sheriff, but the characters haven't been around long enough and aren't important enough to know anything about these mysterious figures. Finally, you can drop this story into one of the fleshed-out settings provided by White Wolf. **The Hungry Streets** can work well both in New Orleans (presented in **Vampire: The Requiem** and **City of the Damned: New Orleans**) and Chicago (in **World of Darkness: Chicago**).

Backstory and Set-up

Several years ago a group of Kindred came together with a plan. Sam Loeb had uncovered evidence that an ancilla of his covenant had sold his soul and exchanged his Sanctified vestments for membership within the heretical Belial's Brood. He needed help and advice, and he wasn't going to take it to his elders, who would surely claim the rewards for the find for their own. The four Kindred spied on the heretic, learning everything about him that they could. When they were ready, they presented their evidence to the Prince, who immediately pronounced a blood hunt on the errant Kindred. The coterie of neonates, having already determined the location of the ancilla's secondary haven and other bolt-holes, managed to hunt him down first and kill him. They brought his ashes to the Prince and were

rewarded with prime feeding grounds near the Rack (most of the territory that had formerly belonged to the heretic). The Prince retained a sliver of the heretic's territory in trust for the next generation of Kindred.

The characters are that generation. When they formed a coterie, the Prince gave them the remainder of the heretic's lands, just across a major boulevard from the coterie that had killed the heretic. Since their early major success, the characters' neighbors have largely rested on their laurels. They still enjoy a reputation as rising young stars, but only because no one has risen to replace them (Kindred society moves much more slowly than mortal society).

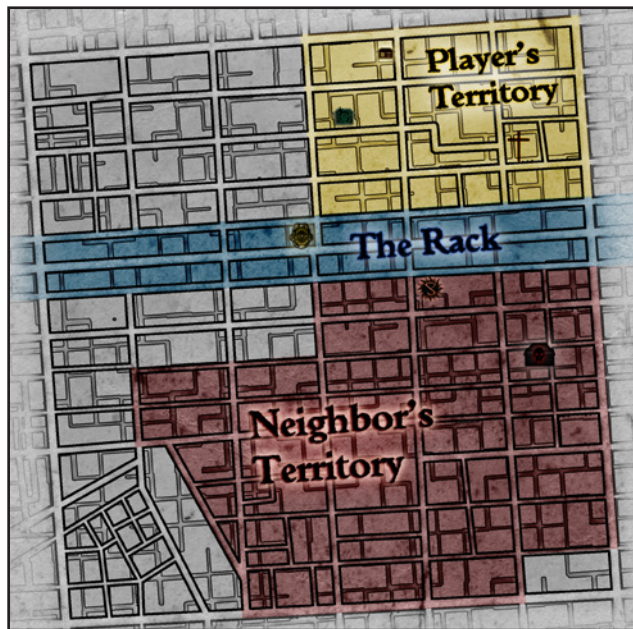
Recently one of the neighboring Kindred, a Mekhet named Jonas Craft, began feeding from the teenaged daughter of a local police detective and former soldier. He hasn't shown as much discretion with her as he normally does; the girl's mother discovered what he is, and has enlisted the aid of one of her old army buddies (now an EMT) and her priest to help her destroy the monster and any others of his kind. The story begins the night the vampire hunters have brought Craft to fiery justice for his crimes against humanity.

Set-up

The characters begin game with a chunk of territory near the Rack. While the Rack makes for good feeding, the characters' feeding grounds are located in a good neighborhood with friendly neighbors and a strong police presence, all factors that make feeding difficult. Feel free to add as much detail as you'd like to the map, populating it with a local market, a drugstore, a bank or any other landmarks you'd like. Most importantly, locate the characters' haven or havens within the territory. This work pulls the feeding grounds out of the realm of the abstract, giving it a personality.

Explain to the characters the location of the long, narrow Rack (a wide and busy boulevard boasting a collection of bars, stores, offices and late night eateries) and the neighbors' territory on the far side of that. The neighbors' feeding ground is a considerably more run-down neighborhood, making it prime feeding grounds. From the beginning the characters should realize that the neighbors have both more and better land. The other territories in the area can belong to other Kindred of varying ages at your whim. This is an excellent opportunity to seed future plot hooks. The grounds to the east of the characters, for example, may include Arkwright Cemetery (the setting of **The Resurrectionists** SAS), the hidden haven of Jacob Skinner (from **Night Horrors: Immortal Sinners**) or even the holy ground of a pack of shapechangers or cabal of magicians.

In addition to setting up the territory, you may want to explain any additional or unusual rules that you will be making use of in this story. This makes sure that everybody is on the same page regarding basic resources like Vitae. Of course, if this is the first story in your chronicle or you're using it as a story by itself, you can provide time for the characters to get to know one another and their territory through roleplay.



THE SLAUGHTERHOUSE V

For Storytellers hoping to get the story off to a start with the least possible amount of prep time, we recommend using the **Slaughterhouse V coterie**. This group works particularly well with this story, given their territory as described in that product. Over the course of this story, the gentrification of the Slaughterhouse V's territory turns out to have an unpleasant side effect for the characters: the rise of a neighborhood that cares about its populace. With that in mind, the Slaughterhouse V coterie can be used with little to no alteration.

Of course, that coterie, given its Carthian and Acolyte members, will probably feel some covenant tensions with the Sanctified Sam and the Invictus Lucretia of the neighboring coterie. That's hardly a bad thing.

Resource Tracking

While the scenes below provide the skeleton of the story, and the efforts of the Storyteller and the players supply the meat, the blood of this story is (appropriately) Vitae. With Vitae limited, Willpower and Health become more important and more difficult to replace. As the hunters circle their prey, they begin to interfere with the vampire's ties to society, the webs that they have spun to ensnare the unwitting. In a story focused on building pressure as resources dwindle, tracking the fall of resources and their effect on the characters becomes vitally important.

Vitae

Not every story told in **Vampire: The Requiem** focuses on the need for blood and its importance to vampires. This one does. This means two things for the Storyteller: you need to take care to keep track of the characters' Vitae levels, and emphasize the process of feeding during Storytelling. The first is relatively easy, and we've provided a **chart** (p. V) to help you do just that. This allows you to know at a glance how much blood the characters have gulped down and just how hungry and on-edge they may be feeling, allowing you to tailor scene descriptions to their emotional states. It assists you in helping the players keep their Vitae up. The converse is also true: if you notice that the characters have more Vitae than you'd like for the purposes of this story, it may be time to throw a threat at them to ensure they burn off a little more blood. Of course, if one or more characters manage to hold on to quite a bit of Vitae despite the difficulties presented here (especially likely for members of the Ordo Dracul), they shouldn't be punished for it. Additionally, tracking Vitae shouldn't be used as a policing tool. It's easier to keep track of one vampire's Vitae than it is five; if discrepancies occur, it's typically best to trust the player. The chart is a tool for telling a better story: nothing more, nothing less.

Over the course of the story, hunting and feeding become more difficult for the characters. If the group usually glosses over feeding, making a single dice roll and moving on with the night, this is an excellent opportunity to dig in to how the characters actually go about acquiring their fix. At the beginning of the story, these scenes should be short and simple, little more than acting out the manner in which the character usually feeds. As feeding becomes more difficult and the populace grows more paranoid,



you can involve additional complications during feeding and hunting scenes. These can start as simple as a 1 die penalty to hunting rolls and can evolve to challenges that necessitate the characters adopt different hunting tactics. Hunger Frenzy should be a threat for characters who allow their Vitae to drop too low. While penalties to feeding rolls should grow over the course of the story, avoid using them as a crutch for the difficulties of the hunt. Players will understand (and even enjoy) a description of careful, paranoid locals and increased police presence more than a simple 3 dice penalty.

Health

Health is an unusual resource for vampires, and one intimately tied to Vitae. The Kindred *must* expend Vitae to heal. As Vitae becomes an even more precious resource than usual in this story, that importance extends to Health. The players may not immediately make the connection, especially if they're used to stories that involve a great deal of combat, but by emphasizing the hunger a character feels after healing, you can quickly associate Health and Vitae in the players' minds. With Vitae reserves dwindling, physical threats become more threatening. You can use this to turn the tables on the characters. In this story, humans pose a credible and present threat to the Kindred; this need not be limited to the hunters.

More importantly, limiting the Vitae and Health available to the players limits their options in dealing with confrontations. Even the character that attacks anyone who insults him will think twice about simply trying to beat up the neighboring coterie if he's already down 2 Health points and only has 5 Vitae. This story benefits from applying pressure to the characters, especially those pressures inherent in the Kindred condition.

For the hunters, however, Health grants them a long-term resilience (as they don't have to worry about using Vitae to heal) but makes them fragile in any given combat. The hunters know this, which is why they never try to fight more than one vampire at a time. Eventually, however, the hunters will get in over their heads. If the characters decide to solve the hunter problem through violence, take care to describe the messiness of it in gore-laden detail. Remind them that human life, even at its most courageous, is fragile and precious. Half of the horror of **Vampire** exists in the distance between what the characters were and what they have become. This story provides an excellent opportunity to drive that point home.

Willpower

Willpower can also become a valued commodity over the course of the story. With Vitae running low, the players may use Willpower more often to add dice to rolls. Unfortunately for the characters, the process of regaining Willpower suffers from some of the same difficulties that hunting does. With the increased presence of the Neighborhood Watch, fulfilling one's Vice (or even one's Virtue) without drawing undue attention to oneself becomes harder. Members of the community watch each other with greater scrutiny, involve themselves in one another's lives more frequently, and question bruises, aches and pains with more interest than they would normally. In a way, the character's feeding grounds become, however temporarily, a slightly brighter spot in the World of Darkness (albeit a spot lit by the glaring spotlight of paranoia and suspicion).

Unfortunately for the characters, that bright spot is more likely than not to burn the Kindred. Part of **The Hungry Streets** revolves around the characters stamping out that light in order to make their own unives more comfortable. How do they reconcile their desire to make the world a worse place with how they view themselves, especially in the context of their Humanity? Can the characters walk the high path? Can they embrace their Virtues, fulfilling them to bolster their inner reserves of will? If they do, does their territory become a truly better place, a neighborhood free of malign influence (save for the occasionally sip from the herd)? Can they do so without making the hunt impossibly difficult (perhaps by ensuring the populace is so blissfully happy that they don't question the fiends that hunt the night)? Is such an oasis even possible in the World of Darkness, or will darker forces be drawn to the neighborhood like moths to a flame? What happens if one or more characters would rather take the easier path?

While regaining Willpower shares some difficulties with the hunt for Vitae, the characters also suffer intermittent nightmares over the course of the story (see the scene "Hunger," p. 31). On such nights, individual characters fail to regain the usual Willpower point for sleeping, leaving them feeling as exhausted as they did at the end of the night before. This is yet another way to limit characters' Willpower, and another reason to keep track of the information yourself. Be sure to spread the nightmares to multiple characters, though, even if one character has a wealth of Willpower and others are getting low. The nightmares only serve secondarily as a method of resource limitation; they primarily exist to enhance the mood of the story.



While some of the character's social Merits become less effective over the course of this story, you must handle those Merits differently than you might Vitae, Willpower and Health. Merits don't simply go away, and they can't be healed back with blood or restored in a debauched night of indulging in one's Vice. Players have paid experience points for their Merits, so they shouldn't be taken from them or broken (unless the character actively destroys his Herd, Retainer, Contacts or other Merit). Casually taking social Merits from characters devalues those Merits, making it less likely that players will purchase them in the future and leaving you with fewer story hooks and a more anemic setting.

A good way of reducing the effectiveness of social Merits over the course of the story without simply removing them is through dice penalties. While the practical difference between reducing all of a character's Allies rolls by 1 and reducing the actual Merit by 1 may seem largely academic, the reality is that the character still possesses the Merit. This is important for two reasons. First, even if the penalty applied to the pool equals or exceeds the character's rating in the Merit, the penalty is subtracted from a pool that includes the bonus dice from the Merit. Any Allies roll might be subjected to a -5 penalty if what the character asks the Allies to do is particularly dangerous or illegal; this method of handling Merit resources uses the same basic assumptions and mechanics. Second, even after penalties have reduced the bonus the Merit grants to certain actions to 0, the character can still take those actions. A character with Allies 3 and a -3 penalty to all rolls can still make Allies rolls, while a character who has had his Allies 3 taken from him cannot.

While judging what penalty to apply to Merits can be difficult, the **World of Darkness Rulebook** provides some good guidelines on p. 114. Asking an Ally to perform an action that could get her suspended from her job imposes a 3 dice penalty to the roll, while requesting a favor that could get her jailed or killed imposes a -5. Over the course of this story, the hunters may attempt to destroy the characters' connection to their Allies, Contacts and Herd, typically through a campaign of misinformation. Rolls for those Merits should follow the same basic rubric given above, with possible minor physical harm at -3 and major physical harm at -4. The difference, though, is in the fact that these penalties come from how dangerous the characters seem to the entities represented by the Merit (which is why it becomes a blanket penalty for all actions). Haven Location can similarly be sabotaged; the hunters

may spread the word that a certain area of town is dangerous and should be avoided, or they could step up surveillance by the neighborhood watch in the area. In this case, the danger of the locale in the public consciousness becomes a penalty to feeding rolls.

Vampires have ways to fight back against such manipulation, of course. Dominate and Majesty can be used to rob Storyteller characters of their free will entirely. While such rolls can be subject to the same penalties listed above, the larger dice pools for Disciplines offset that disadvantage. A vampire can use Auspex to glean a character's misgivings about her, and then assuage or manipulate those insecurities. Obfuscate can allow a character to get around a bad reputation by appearing to be someone she's not. Finally, a vampire can break a mortal's will over her knee through the Vinculum. While penalties based on reputation can still apply for a character who has had the first taste of Vitae, the second and third degrees of the blood bond put the hapless thrall beyond any concerns other than pleasing his vampiric master. Similarly, penalties don't generally apply for characters already initiated into the darker realities of the night (i.e., any who know about vampires and the other denizens of the World of Darkness).

Unfortunately, heavy use of Vinculum or Disciplines can have unpleasant side effects, sometimes leading to the loss of mortal servants or sources of information. At that point, it is appropriate to remove a character's related Merit from her sheet. The Storyteller didn't break the character's toys, she did.

Most importantly, remember that Merit management is a tool for telling the story. Simply couching it in terms of penalties and bonuses can be dry to read here, and it's doubly true at the table. Instead underscore the human element. Flesh out Contacts, Allies and Retainers, and inject a little fear into your portrayal of them. These aren't simple penalties to dice rolls, they're very human reactions to the unknown and the unpleasant.

Those Who Would Hunt Vampires

Humans don't generally take up torch and stake (or sawed-off shotgun and aluminum bat) to stalk the shadows in search of nightmares. Those that do often find themselves drawn into monstrous cults and bizarre conspiracies that distract them from their initial mission, sometimes leading them into transformations of their own. Very few gain the experience and skill necessary to be true vampire hunters. As such, hunters require some special consideration when used in a story.

The most important thing a Storyteller should keep in mind when using vampire hunters is that they are precious. **Even at their weakest (such as the neophytes presented in this story), hunters are rare and elite.** They probably aren't highly trained military-grade snipers (at least not at first), but they typically have an area of expertise to which they are particularly suited, often related to their career (a career being one of the first things Kindred shed along with their heartbeat). Furthermore, hunters often respond to the ever-deepening shadows by teaming up, something Kindred can be loath to do. Thus, three otherwise unremarkable individuals can become a cell with impressive ties to the community, combat ability and medical resources.

Vampire hunters realize that they're at a disadvantage. They work closely together to take down their quarry, developing specialized roles within their groups and carefully choreographed tactics that they practice regularly. They don't worry about fighting fair, and will try to keep the odds stacked in their favor whenever possible. They resort to underhanded tactics, piling on an enemy like football player, hoping to hold down a monster just long enough to put a stake through his heart and leave him for the dawn. If pressed, they can adapt desperate and chaotic tactics. A barrel of oil is one torch away from a burning wall between a cell's escape and their pursuers; a delivery truck can make a dangerous self-propelled battering ram if the hunter manages to hotwire the ignition. Try to keep in mind everything available to the hunters during a confrontation, and be willing to think outside the box. The hunters' mad flexibility should be one of the most frightening aspects for the static Kindred.

Each hunter in a cell values their compatriots, both as friends and allies against the night. Hunters will fight tooth and nail to save a fellow hunter. They risk their lives for one another. But this also means that they can't quickly replenish their numbers (if they can do so at all). A cell that loses a member lacks a vital link, especially a cell as young and small as the one in the story. Even a single casualty can cripple a group of vampire hunters for months, if not permanently.

They have faith in themselves, in each other and in their mission. As a result, common Kindred tactics such as subversion and manipulation through bribery, seduction and extortion are more prone to fail than not. Hunters will burn through Willpower to fend off interrogation techniques and should usually be granted bonus dice to any roll to avoid betraying another member of their cell. Of course this means that a betrayal stings more deeply than it does among Kindred, where

such vicissitudes of loyalty become rote almost to the point of being quotidian. (The extreme loyalty shown between the members of the cell can make a startling contrast to the ambiguous relationships among the characters and their neighboring coterie.) If the characters manage to turn a member of the cell, that treachery quickly unravels the cell if it doesn't outright destroy it.

Hunters are a cancer that will grow if left unchecked. Every success emboldens them and teaches them how to better hunt their enemies. Worse yet, they find converts, either fresh-faced recruits that have seen the hidden truth of the World of Darkness and seek vengeance for the wrongs perpetrated against them or veteran loners who have survived due to sheer luck, tenacity and toughness. (The monster hunter presented on p. 207 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook** is just such an individual.) These vigilantes may be slow to ally with or join other hunters, but when they do, they make a powerful team. Successful hunters often draw the attention of other similar cells; they reach out to one another, share tactics and information, and sometimes join together for the hunt. Over time these alliances may become formalized, birthing shadowy organizations that can provide significant resources to their proven members. Kindred often trade rumors of conspiracies and cults that have existed for centuries with the singular goal of wiping vampires from the face of the world.

You should keep this growth in mind, as well as the fact that such developments can happen almost overnight to the perception of the Kindred, who may see their political covenants shift in power only once in a human's lifetime. If the players ignore the growing hunter threat, fail to effectively engage it, attempt to turn it towards their own ends or otherwise neglect the living threats to their beings, you should feel free to build the threat that the hunters represent. They may do so by granting them additional experience (to be spent primarily on attributes, combat abilities and social Merits), developing new group tactics for them, giving them access to special benefits as they join a hunter organization (such as those listed in **Hunter: The Vigil** or **Night Stalkers**) or adding additional members to the cell by recruiting or allying with another local cell. The last option perhaps presents the most potential to Storytellers willing to create fully developed vampire hunter characters. Such hunters may even be the result of the characters' actions, whether they be the husband of the woman one vampire addicted to her blood or the ghoul another character mistreated... a ghoul with a dangerous amount of knowledge about the characters.

Hunters During the Day

Hunters do have one major advantage over those that they hunt: they can move by day unfettered by a susceptibility to sunlight. Furthermore, their quarry isn't merely homebound during the daylight hours; they're in a death-like torpor from which they're difficult to rouse. This can make it painfully easy for vampire hunters to enter a vampire's lair and ram a wooden shaft through her heart before she even realizes she's in danger. How, as a Storyteller, do you manage such potent advantages? By remembering the limitations that come with remaining a functional member of living society.

First and foremost, hunters aren't omniscient. They don't have access to the same information that you do. They don't know where a vampire sleeps until they've discovered it through research or luck. This almost always involves some opposed rolls between the hunters and the vampire (following, for example), but can be easier on the hunters if a vampire identifies herself by the same name she signed to her lease, mortgage or other home-owners' documents. Nicole, especially, can run a vampire's license plate number and find the house or apartment associated with it. Whether or not that building is the vampire's haven depends entirely on the cleverness of the vampire. Other clumsy behavior on the Kindred's part can result in the hunters finding out more about her than she'd like; if, for example, the coterie's Daeva always brings her dinner home for a lengthy game of seduction and feeding, Father Estevez may learn about it when he offers the blood doll confession that Sunday.

Only Father Estevez can actually sense the presence of Kindred, and even that advantage can be difficult to actually bring to bear. If, for example, the Kindred is in a crowd, Father Estevez has no way of knowing exactly which person is a vampire, only that a vampire is present. After identifying the presence of a vampire, he may be able to discern the creature's identity through careful observation. In short, the hunters can only find out what the players let them find out.

Furthermore, the hunters each hold day jobs that can keep them quite busy (and leave them utterly exhausted). Nicole can't stalk through the darkened halls of a vampire's haven if she's supposed to be on patrol any more than Father Estevez can perform mass for his congregants and last rites over a staked bloodsucker at the same time. On the other hand, each of the hunters' professions situates him or her perfectly to hear news of the unusual from three different fronts. Strange crimes will make their way to Nicole's ears, Will can hear about any local bizarre medical maladies and Father Estevez's congregation may offer up tales of forbidden sin in seeking absolution.

The hunters suffer other weakness reserved for mortals. Both Nicole and Father Estevez have people relying on them (a husband and daughter in the case of the former, a large congregation in the latter) who demand time of them and can be used to extort them. All three hunters have to worry about city and national law; they leave footprints and fingerprints and possess no supernatural powers that allow them to remain unseen by the very neighbors whose nosiness they inspired. They are no more capable of bypassing security systems than the Kindred are (less so, in some cases), meaning that they suffer penalties based on the Haven (Security) Merit when it applies.

Be respectful of your players. Don't have their characters staked and killed simply because hunters give you the excuse to. Require rolls on the part of the hunters to track the players or to penetrate their havens. Allow the players the usual chance to wake up if their surroundings are disturbed (p. 184, **Vampire: The Requiem**). But be respectful of the threat presented by the hunters, too. Handling your players with kid gloves can be as frustrating as throwing invincible, omniscient foes at them.

Catch and Release

It is possible, perhaps even likely, that the hunters will manage to identify one or more of the characters as vampires and successfully capture her. While they normally leave their staked prey to burn at dawn, such easy dispatch of a player typically doesn't make for a good story. Luckily, there are a few ways to handle this, allowing you to choose the one that best fits your chronicle, or even choosing more than one if the unthinkable happens multiple times.

Let Him Burn... Almost: The hunters can stick to their modus operandi without guaranteeing the death of the character. While most Kindred lead fairly isolated existences, the characters formed a coterie for a reason: mutual protection. If one of their number goes missing, the characters have a few hours to find her and pull the stake out. If the hunters got the jump on the character at a communal haven, chances are good the other characters will find her. If the characters don't share a haven, they might be able to check in on the missing character anyway. If the character kept his haven a secret from his coterie, a blood relation might sense his danger through blood sympathy (**Vampire: The Requiem**, p. 163) and either contact the coterie or do something about it herself. Of course, such aid doesn't come cheap, and the character can expect to be in debt to her savior (which can lead to another story down the road).



BLENDING DREAMS AND REALITY

Storytellers interested in more advanced techniques may elect to begin a session with a character staked as described above (likely in response to some glaringly foolish action taken the session before that left her at the mercy of the hunters). This allows you to narrate the staked character's dreams without her realizing (at least at first) that she has been staked. You may let the other players in on the game before play starts, or you might let them slowly realize that their coterie mate is missing.

Things begin normally enough for the dreamer, save she can't manage to get in touch with the other characters. As the character navigates the dreams, you slowly and subtly introduce more surreal imagery and nightmarish horror. Regular Storyteller characters act in ways both familiar and alien, and new dream characters arise to speak disturbing prophecies or make fiendish threats. Use the nightmare to explore the character's background, aspirations and insecurities. When the stake finally comes out, the character should be glad to be awake again but the player appreciative of the experience.



However you handle it, leaving a Kindred staked like this can add a great deal of tension to the story as the characters race against the dawn. Feel free to draw out small hurdles that you'd normally gloss over, such as slow trains, cars that won't stop, panhandlers that hinder progress and so forth. Such circumstances, usually minor inconveniences, can take on life-or-death proportions in this situation. The downside is that the staked character may feel left out of the action. Luckily, a staked Kindred falls immediately into torpor, allowing you to play with her perceptions in bizarre psychological memory plays or haunting nightmares. Integrating **imagery from the "Hunger" scene (p. 31)** can help tie it more deeply to into the story.

Interrogation: The character may be the first vampire the hunters have located in their own neighborhood. They want information on any other local leeches, so they haul him to an abandoned warehouse for questioning, making sure he's secured incredibly well before removing the stake. Again the other characters have to find their errant member, but this time he can be anywhere. While the encroaching dawn doesn't function as a clock counting down to an inevitable deadline in this scenario, the hunters will only keep the Kindred alive for as long as he remains useful (or until they manage to break him). Furthermore, the characters may have to navigate booby traps to get to him. The hunt-

ers may bolt when the first of their traps go off, escaping to menace the characters another night (and perhaps leaving some even nastier traps in their wake), or they may take up a defensible position in the hopes of killing all of the characters at once. The latter option could make for a climactic final confrontation between the hunters and the characters.

Baiting the Trap: Similarly, the hunters might leave a captured vampire somewhere they're certain the characters will find him, whether to draw out the characters for a final confrontation, to lure them all into a trap or simply to identify them for future hunting. They don't kill the character (ensuring that the other Kindred come out of hiding long enough to retrieve him), but then, they know where he sleeps, right? Hunters can be quick to capitalize on a gain.

Group Tactics

The cell has been working together for some time now, practicing regularly in preparation for the hunt and the inevitable consequences thereof. They have developed a couple different **tactics (p. IV)**, which they can only use when all three of them are together. Furthermore, using these can be exhausting. The cell can only use one per day; they suffer a -3 penalty for attempting a second ability within 12 hours of the first.



A GREATER THREAT

Storytellers familiar with **Hunter: The Vigil** may notice some similarities between the characters and abilities presented here and those in that book. Feel free to use **Hunter** to further flesh out these characters, especially in regards to the motives and attitudes of those who take up the Vigil. This story assumes that the characters make up a relatively young cell, just starting out. Though it assumes that they are tier-one hunters, feel free to assign characters to a conspiracy or compact if you feel it fitting. Granting these characters access to some of the special powers of the conspiracies, however, will make them a far greater threat, and should only be done if the players' characters possess a significant amount of experience.

If you want to take advantage of the Professional Training Merit, replace the three hunter's Contacts Merit with the Professional Training Merit at the same level. Nicole's Profession is Cop, Will's is Doctor and Father Estevez's is Religious Leader.

If you don't have access to **Hunter**, don't worry; you don't need it to make use of this story. Everything you need to use these hunters is in this kit.



The Cast

The Neighbors' Coterie

These three Kindred form a coterie that holds much of the territory adjacent to the player characters' feeding grounds. If they have a name for themselves they don't flaunt it, instead usually referring to themselves in the first person plural ("we" and "us"), or sometimes as "my associates." Most of the city's Kindred see these three as the next big thing.



THE NEIGHBORS' HOUSE

Shared Haven (Location •••, Security •••, Size •••)

With the exception of the deceased Jonas, who kept a small apartment overlooking the Rack, the neighbors share a haven in their territory. A large, old home, the neighbors' house boasts a garage, a sizable yard for a home within the city, tall wrought-iron fencing, an automated gate and an expensive security system with motion-sensitive floodlights and CCTV. The coterie always approaches the home via a circuitous route to weed out any followers. The main floor of the house is decorated to fool prying eyes with utilitarian furnishings and a fully stocked kitchen.

The two upstairs bedrooms have been light-proofed. The front bedroom seems like a study or a library, with a large oaken desk and shelves of books ranging from paperback novels to esoteric religious and occult texts. The room includes a foldout sofa, though Sam usually just sleeps on the couch cushions. The back bedroom seems like a high-end studio apartment with white walls, track lighting and sleek furnishings. The flat-screen television gets satellite, and the expensive computer has the fastest Internet connection available. Lucretia keeps a small bookshelf of legal texts and a smaller cabinet that contains a few of the awards she won in life. She sleeps on a long, thin bed with pristine white sheets.

Tom claims the basement as her domain. The space is a jumbled disaster, with piles of clothing, books and records strewn haphazardly about the floor. Posters cover much of the wall and ceiling, and large hand-made speakers rest in all four corners. Several musical instruments line one of the rooms, ranging from guitars to a trumpet and trombone. Tom owns a portable turntable, a PA system, hundreds of records and CDs and thousands of MP3s, and has been known to provide the music for Kindred gatherings.

A character invited to join the coterie would be expected to find his or her own lodging, though both Sam and Lucretia might provide financial and legal assistance in doing so.



A few years ago they (with their deceased fourth member Jonas) got the drop on a powerful ancilla who had been blood hunted when it came to light that he was a member of Belial's Brood. The four neonates were publicly lauded, given prime feeding grounds and courted by covenants that had previously ignored them.

That was several years ago, and these vampires haven't done anything terribly impressive since. Kindred society is slow to forget, however, and until another group of talented young up-and-comers (such as the characters) draws the fickle attention of the city's undead populace, the neighbors will remain the area's prominent promising young leeches.

Sam Rao, Leech by the Numbers

Quotes: "The numbers don't lie."

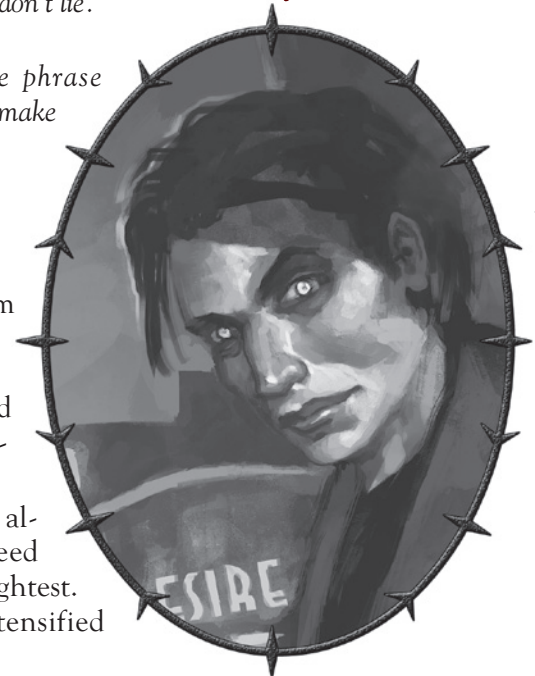
"I've always liked the phrase 'mutually beneficial.' Let's make that happen."

"How did you do that?"

Virtue: Hope. Sam knows the score and is a pessimist at heart, but he feels it's his duty to shield others from the stark hopelessness of reality.

Vice: Envy. Sam has always been driven by a need to be the best and the brightest. The Beast has only intensified this competitive streak.

Background: Born mixed-race in a small town in West Virginia (his mother was a local girl and his father an Indian immigrant physician who took over the town's single medical practice), Sam never quite felt like he fit in. Yearly visits to his extended family in New York instilled a loathing for rural life, and he resolved to do anything necessary to get



The Hungry Streets

The Cast

the hell out of the Mountain State. After a typically unpleasant high school experience, he secured a scholarship to a good out-of-state university, then attended graduate school in accounting. Sam was only beginning to repay his student debt at a Fortune 500 company when he met the woman who eventually Damned him. She charmed him with her beauty, her expensive tastes and occasional glimpses of a world of movers and shakers he hadn't even known existed. Though their whirlwind romance cooled as quickly as Sam's body temperature, the Daeva remains grateful to his sire for ushering him into the true elite. Now a member of the city's more liberal Sanctified, Sam studies Theban Sorcery with the same intensity he once pursued his academic career; he's sure that a thorough understanding of magic is his key to climbing the social ladder of the Damned.

Description: A handsome young man whose slightly unkempt dark hair and permanent stubble combine with his expensive suits to give the impression of a debonair playboy. His skin has retained some of its olive complexion in death, and his eyes seem to shift color to match his wardrobe. His ever-present smirk contrasts his deep, haunted eyes, as if he's always on the verge of laughing and crying at the same time.

Storytelling Hints: Sam is both deeply resentful and envious of almost everyone around him. The other members of his coterie are perhaps the only Kindred fully spared from these feelings, largely because Sam has convinced himself of his superiority over them. He is driven to prove himself, but tends to latch on to narrow schemes in order to do so. He tries to hide these aspects of himself, however, putting on a veneer of easy friendliness, not unlike a salesperson. He seems to think that no one has a right to be as miserable as he is, and thus tends to try to cheer those who seem unhappy.

Sam's need to excel can be used against him or his compatriots. His loyalty to himself is greater than his loyalty to Tom and Lucretia, and offering a sufficient bribe could lead him to turn coat. He wouldn't betray those who helped make him for anything less than a powerful mentor within his covenant.

Tom, Sound Junkie

Quotes: "Don't you ever shut up?"

"Did you hear that?"

"Have you ever heard them live?"

Virtue: Faith. Tom knows there's something out there, hidden in the music, a set of answers that the covenants couldn't provide even if they were trying. She intends to find it.

Vice: Gluttony. Tom needs music like she needs Vitae. Sometimes she neglects the latter for the former, holing herself up in her haven with her records.

Background: Thomasina White's life has always been about the music. She grew up jumping from instructor to instructor, collecting a menagerie of instruments through which she would cycle. Her upper-middle class parents indulged their beautiful daughter and were proud when she won a small scholarship to a prestigious liberal arts college with an excellent music program. They didn't mind footing the rest of the bill, but they encouraged her to make the most of college, to open up to other people, maybe even find a husband (preferably one in the pre-med program). College did pull Tom out of her shell, but not in the ways her parents expected (nor would have approved of had they known). She dated musicians, joined band after band and started doing drugs. She often quoted Elton John's line about "solid walls of sound," claiming that all rock had been in pursuit of that wall-to-wall music that filled the gaps in the human soul. Her last project involved a complex layout of speakers, a multi-channel sound system, three guitars, a bassist, two percussionists, half of the school's choir and a pipe organ (played by her). This sprawling band played one show. Then Tom disappeared. The police gave up the pretense of looking for her after six months. Her parents have never quite lost hope.



Description: Tom is as tall and thin as a lamppost, and her hunched shoulders and unruly mop of light blond hair do nothing to belie that impression. She's pretty, with her translucent skin, large emerald eyes and high cheekbones, and could maybe even be beautiful if she put a modicum of effort into her appearance. Instead she wears baggy clothes (or, on formal occasions, men's suits) that utterly hide what few curves she possesses. She's almost never without headphones of some kind (usually large, bulky ones that block ambient noise).

Storytelling Hints: Tom certainly cuts the strangest figure of the three neighbors. She communicates almost solely in questions, but never gives away much about herself. She fades into the background of social gatherings unless others call attention to her. She often seems to be listening to some sound no one else can hear, giving her a distracted air. Tom's particularly evasive about her lineage; she claims no clan and answers any enquiries into the identity of her sire with an enigmatic "the sound took me."

Tom may be extremely difficult to menace. One can threaten to take away her music (or even deafen her), but she'll find something new to listen to, even if it's only in her imagination. Were one of the characters to uncover her true identity, locate her parents and reveal her current location to them, he could cause a great deal of trouble for Tom and her coterie.



THE VICTIM

Jonas Craft joined up with the Invictus the moment the covenant started sniffing around the coterie after they did in the Brood traitor. He had always considered himself one of the best and brightest, and had been angling for a position in the Estate for some time, a prospect made significantly more difficult due to his Embrace at the hands of a shadowy Acolyte priestess. Though he wasn't as highly educated as most of his compatriots, he had a strong street sense, and his attractive face and easy-going attitude made him a natural with women and men alike. When the coterie lost Jonas, they lost their most effective hunter and, ironically, their most humane member.

Jonas's destruction has left the rest of the coterie reeling. Jonas was a Shadow who took particular care in secretly hunting and feeding. If he drew the attention of vengeful mortals, how likely is it that they too could be sowing the seeds of their own destruction with every drop of blood they take?



Lucretia DeSalle, Kindred of Many Courts

Quotes: "Teamwork's important, even for us."

"Well... here's what I propose."

"I can't let you do that."

Virtue: Fortitude. Lucretia's never been one to give up, even under the greatest of pressures.

Vice: Pride. She is confident in her abilities. Sometimes too confident.

Background: Lucretia's family never hurt for money. Her mother authored a popular series of children books and her father owned a series of successful nightclubs.

Lucretia attended an expensive private school at which she was one of three black students (one of which was her own younger sister). She dated nice boys, received excellent marks in her classes and was the breakout star of the school's basketball team. Her athleticism served her well when one of those nice boys tried to force himself on her one night, but the police dismissed her claims of attempted rape against the well-heeled teen. Afterwards she devoted herself to women's rights. She took (and later taught) self-defense courses, passed through law school with flying colors and joined a firm dedicated to the legal defense of women. But her fear of being taken advantage of again came home to roost one late night as she left the office. He was too fast, too strong and too unimpressed with her swift kick to the groin to be human. She fought him off and ran. He caught her. She fought him off again. He ran her down again. Exhausted and weakened from the bloody wound in her neck, she could do nothing as he ushered her into the night.

Description: Six years of constant study and greasy food robbed Lucretia of the lean, toned body she enjoyed as a teenage basketball



hero. Had she known in advance that she'd be frozen for eternity in the worst shape of her life, she might have hit the gym more often. Now she's bulkier than she once was, with chubby cheeks. She wears her long, curly hair pulled back into a tight ponytail or bun. She dresses almost exclusively in pantsuits tailored to emphasize her intimidating height and bulk.

Storytelling Hints: Lucretia's ruthless. When the Prince called a blood hunt on her sire for turning her, she helped put him down. When a hunt was called on a local member of Belial's Brood, she was there again, slaying yet another older Kindred. She's lost more than a little of the idealism that defined her living days and filled the gaps with iron-cold survival instincts. She still *seems* civilized; she wears nice clothes, drives an expensive car and can discuss politics, music and art with ease. But the animal's always there, just below the surface, aching to break free and punish those who would try to take advantage of her. As a Hound, Lucretia's the only member of the coterie with official standing in the city's court, and as an Invictus, she has accepted the mantle of leadership, though she would never be so crass as to openly say so. The other two look to her for their cues, however, and she watches over them like a protective (if sometimes disapproving) parent.

Lucretia's difficult to threaten; like an animal backed into a corner, she becomes vicious when menaced. Her overconfidence could be taken advantage of, if one were to do so cleverly (she's not stupid and is unlikely to fall for obvious ploys). If presented with evidence that one of her coterie has betrayed her, she might lose control of herself in a night of bloody retribution.



CLAWS TO A GUN FIGHT

Chances are that killing other Kindred is against the city's laws. Claws of the Wild, however, are deadly weapons, one of the few things capable of quickly and permanently ending a vampire's Requiem. Sprouting claws are a clear escalation of violence, like pulling a gun during a knife fight. As a Hound, Lucretia is beholden to the city's laws, and as a particularly confident and tough vampire, she's unlikely to use her own Claws of the Wild save in the most dire of circumstances, when her life or that of one of her coterie is on the line.



The Hunter's Cell

Teen Alice Abner recently worried her mother Nicole with a drop in grades and a recurrent sickness. Nicole, unsure of what to do about her daughter's late night liaisons at clubs around town, called on the aid of an old army friend Will Jeffries. When the pair's investigation turned up that Alice was part of a vampire's stable of victims, they turned to their priest, Father Jose Estevez, for guidance. The priest told them of the demons of the night, and taught them that the only path of the righteous was to slay them. Since then, the cell has killed four vampires in the area, most recently the one that had Nicole's daughter in thrall. They've grown confident and competent, and show no signs of letting up.

Unfortunately, they all live in the characters' domain. The only thing that has protected the characters so far has been their own carefulness and the prejudice on the part of the hunters that vampires are something that happens in other people's neighborhoods. If Nicole, Will and Father Estevez realize just how close to home the threat is, they'll stop at nothing to end it.

Nicole Abner, Detective and Vigilante

Quotes: "Good police know the people they're protecting. They walk the beat."

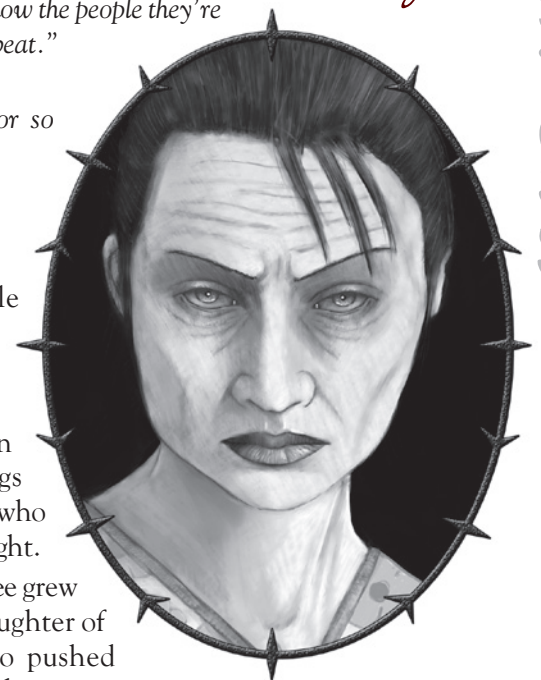
"Stay away from her, or so help me God..."

"On the ground, now!"

Virtue: Justice. Nicole believes that right and wrong exist. She intends to enforce the right.

Vice: Wrath. She's seen too many terrible things over the years to let those who wrong her go without a fight.

Background: Nicole Lee grew up in the suburbs, the daughter of Korean immigrants who pushed her to succeed in their adoptive country.



Her older brother attended Harvard Law on scholarship, and similarly great things were expected of her. They were horrified by her decision to attend West Point. Nicole served in the First Gulf War, where she met military medic Will Jeffries. The pair's unit came under fire on more than one occasion, and they formed a tight bond. After leaving the military, Nicole joined the police, met her husband (Assistant District Attorney Arthur Abner) and gave birth to her daughter Alice, now 17. She made Detective just over a year ago, but is already risking her position with her late-night monster hunting. She hasn't confessed her nocturnal activities to her husband (who suspects that she's having an affair) or partner (who wonders if she isn't cut out for the job). She's more likely to try to recruit the latter than inform the former.

Description: Nicole is a short, stout woman with a broad face and broader shoulders. Her face is beginning to line with age and her hair streaked with gray, but she carries herself with the easy energy of the physically fit. She usually dresses in casual suits (the uniform of the detective) that hide her lean muscles. She is almost always armed.

Storytelling Hints: For Nicole, this is vendetta half-born from the embarrassment of having the wool pulled over her eyes for so long. Vampires exist, and they laugh at the ignorant masses that think otherwise. Nicole plans to stop the laughter, both for the sake of her daughter and for those people she protects every day when she puts on her badge. If the law can't be brought to bear against these beasts of the night, a nightstick can. Nicole has little patience for vampires who make claims of innocence; the leeches are thieves and murderers by their very natures.

Nicole's narrow-minded dedication to the extermination of vampires makes her incredibly difficult to reason with. Threats against her family, especially her daughter or her elderly parents, stand the greatest chance of forcing her to back down, but they also guarantee that she'll be back to bring a permanent end to the threatening party when the odds are in her favor. Ruining her professionally can help, especially if the characters find a way to alienate her fellow police from her. Unfortunately, if Nicole loses her job, she has little else to lose and can dedicate herself fully to the hunt.

Will Jeffries, Conspiracy Theorist

Quotes: "He's losing blood... give me your belt!"

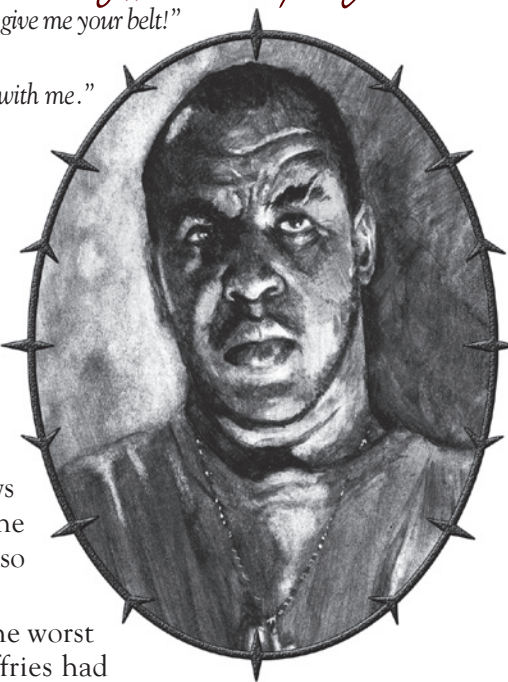
"Nothing about this sits right with me."

"They're everywhere, you know? Roaches in the walls."

Virtue: Faith. Will believes everything fits into a larger pattern. He feels a rush whenever he believes he's brushed that vast conspiracy.

Vice: Greed. Will always needs to know more. If he hurts others in getting it, so be it.

Background: Born in the worst part of town, William Jeffries had seen more blood and death by the time he was eighteen than most people see in their lifetimes. He couldn't see any way out, not until he saw a military recruiting poster in the window of a derelict storefront. Will enlisted his way out of the slums, taking advantage of every ounce of training he could get. Will ended up in Iraq as a medic, where he saw things that made him question not only his government but also the fundamental truths of the world. He began to see shadowy manipulators behind everything. When governments or companies made decisions that could have no rational explanation, Will's imagination filled in the gaps. He never married, in part because he couldn't trust anyone enough to let them into his life. Instead his life mostly consisted of his career as an EMT associated with the local fire department, and his alone time spent digging into the dark underbelly of the hundreds of conspiracy theories that circulate the Internet, bookstores and newsstands. Will has recently become closer to his younger sister Yvette, who managed to rise from the squalor in her own way to become a member of the city council on a platform of reform.





Description: Will is a slender figure whose incredibly dark skin clings tight to his bones. His stubble-laden cheeks seem hollow, his eyes sunken, his lips thin. He prefers utilitarian clothes, favoring jeans with multiple deep pockets and military-style vests. He has sewn pieces of protective gear from several different sports into some of his bulkier clothing, converting it into an armor of sorts for hunting that has the added effect of making him seem larger and more imposing.

Storytelling Hints: Will has always been a little jumpy, a trait that years in the military, as an EMT and a monster-hunter has only exacerbated. Now he seems perpetually jittery and on-edge. He picks at his clothing compulsively and rarely meets another's gaze. His fingernails are ragged from biting at them, and he goes without shaving for days at a time. He speaks quickly, in long, circuitous sentences that don't always find the point.

Will aches for companionship and, given half a chance, will regale characters with stories of conspiracies local and global, past and present. Breaking through his neuroses can be a challenge, but once the barriers are down, a clever character can twist Will around her little finger. She must be careful to keep up the charade, however. Will is naturally suspicious to the point of paranoia, and will always be second-guessing the character's motives.

Father Jose Estevez, Spiritual Guide

Quotes: "God divided the light from the darkness.
Man brought the darkness back."

"There is a devil within you.
I can see it in your eyes."

"How long has it been since
your last confession?"

Virtue: Hope. Father Estevez sees himself as a shepherd, a leader of the lost. He shields others from their darker desires, leading them by the hand back from the brink.

Vice: Wrath. He doesn't always hold the same standards for himself. When he feels hopeless he lashes out,

willing to put to the torch those he believes responsible for the horrors of the world.

Background: Jose Estevez grew up in a small, dirty town in south Texas, where the local police were in the unapologetic employ of the regional criminals. He took to the church at an early age, both for its teachings and its trappings. He eventually became a man of a cloth, only occasionally moving between parishes. He alighted in the chronicle's city five years ago, and has since become a familiar sight in the community. Both Nicole and Will were devoted members of his flock, and when the pair came to him baring evidence of the undead, he felt compelled to share some of the darker lore he had been taught in his early days in the church. Since then he has felt the thrill of the hunt; each time he crushes a servant of the adversary, he feels as if he's doing God's work with his own hands. He's wise enough to treat such feelings as suspect.

Description: Father Estevez is an aging Mexican man with salt-and-pepper hair, a thin frame born from years of self-denial and rough hands the result of decades of service in the name of the Lord. He smiles easily but never widely, and sometimes sports a beard streaked with gray. He often dresses in the uniform of his office.

Storytelling Hints: Father Estevez usually gives the impression of being particularly collected and confident. He speaks slowly and calmly, with only a hint of an accent, and can pull dozens of religious anecdotes at a moment's notice to elucidate a point or assuage a congregant's fears. When on the hunt, however, he becomes hard and silent, like a weapon that's only seen the moment before it strikes.

Unfortunately, Father Estevez has some doubt about his new holy mission. He's done things in pursuit of the hunt that he'd never condone in a member of his flock, and he feels as if his spiritual health is failing for it. A character who widened this crack, perhaps through a clear display of humanity, might make Father Estevez turn from the hunt, crippling the cell. Conversely, a grossly monstrous display might fortify the priest's resolve, driving him to take to the hunt with a zeal that can only be mustered by the truly faithful.

Scenes

Layered Narratives

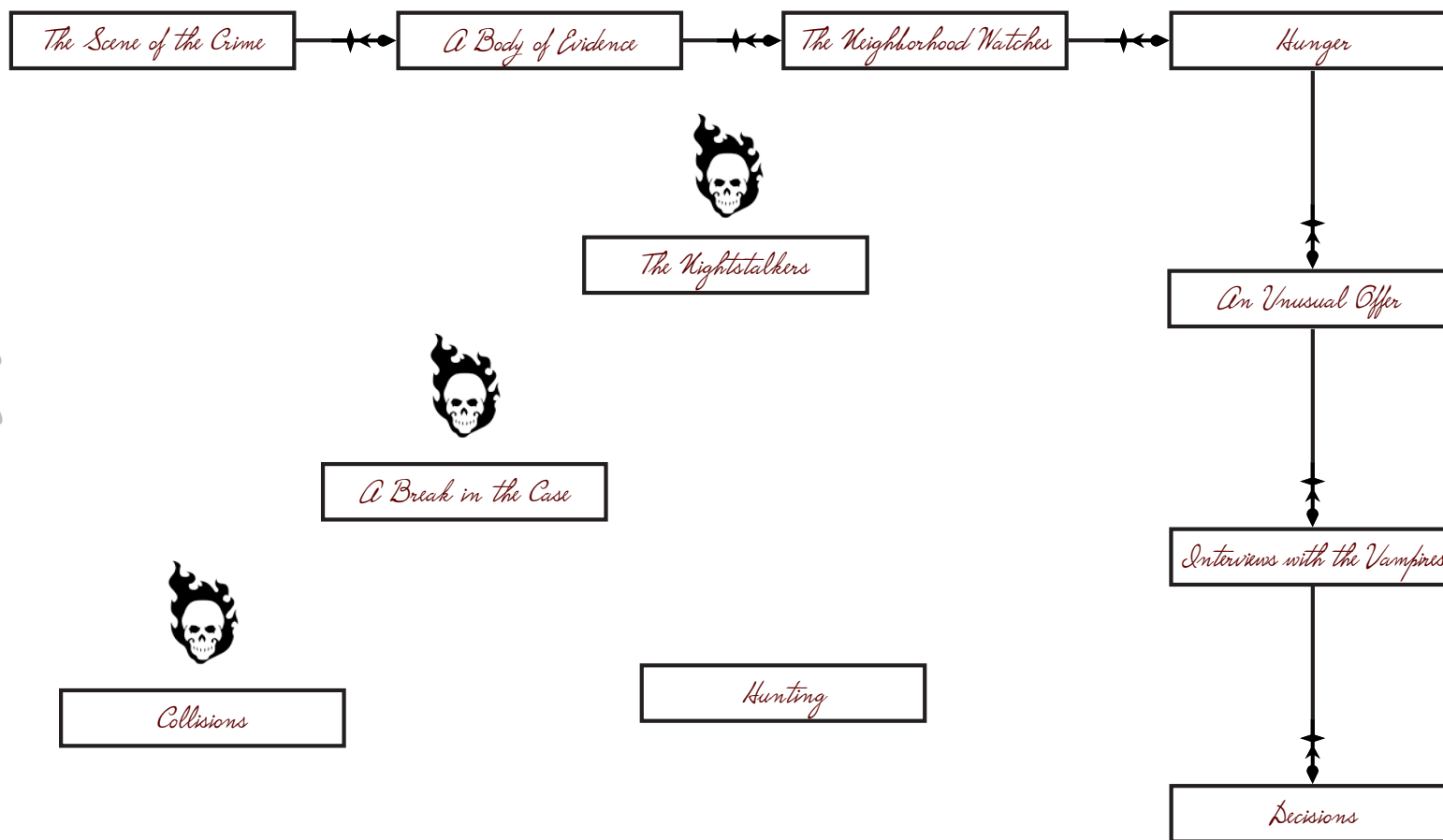
The scenes presented below represent the core of a story, the rocks from which to anchor your narrative. The Storyteller and players create the real story at the table. As presented here, **The Hungry Streets** possesses two storylines. The primary story presents the neighboring coterie and their

attempt to hold on to a sprawling territory after having lost one of the number. The secondary plot presents the vampire hunters Nicole, Will and Father Estevez, and their burgeoning attempts to make life unpleasant for vampires throughout the area (especially in the characters' neighborhood). The secondary plot primarily exists to drive and complicate the primary plot, and while we present a fairly solid order to the events in the primary plot, the action of the secondary plot is left largely up to you and the players. We present a problem and leave it up to the characters to fix or ignore it at their whim. Their decisions strongly affect the way they interact with main plot. The scene "Decisions," for example, will seem

much different for a group that has already neutralized the hunter threat than it will for one that hasn't unearthed the hunters' identities. The optional scenes, "The Nightstalkers" and "Collision," can help guide the secondary plot, but neither is strictly necessary (nor must they be used in the order presented).

Much of the advice in this SAS is geared towards fleshing out this particular story. For more information on nesting this narrative in a larger chronicle, see "A Chapter in Your Chronicle" (p. 2).

Scene Flowchart



The Scene of the Crime

MENTAL ...

PHYSICAL –

SOCIAL ...

Overview

The characters visit the scene of Jonas Craft's untimely death. They may speak with their neighboring coterie, investigate the scene and learn a little about a new threat that may be growing in their own territory.

Description

The air at the corner feels heavy and thick, as if particles of soot hang in the air, brushing past you as you move through the evening crowd. The apartment itself seems a gaping black eye in the brick façade, utter blank darkness ringed by a flat scar of singed walls that crawls up the corner of the building. A scent hangs on the air, familiar yet far away. It almost smells like blood. You see a brief arc of light, perhaps the beam of a flashlight, within the burned-out apartment. That's when you feel them, when you feel the predatory push and pull of the Beast at the presence of your neighbors.

The scene begins with the characters on the prowl near the Rack. They may be on the hunt for blood, patrolling their territory or just meeting up before a social function. They notice the damage to the building down the street without a roll. The destroyed apartment is located on the border between the public Rack and the neighbor's territory. The characters sense the presence of other Kindred nearby and notice that someone is in the burned-out apartment. They likely either choose to steer clear or investigate further.

If the former, let them go about their night for a scene or two. After a while, the most social of the characters (or whoever is considered the leader or face of the coterie) receives a call from Lucretia, asking the characters to come to the apartment. In this case, the neighbors have had plenty of time to search the apartment top to bottom and compose themselves.

If the latter, the characters probably either openly announce themselves to the neighbors or attempt to hide and spy on them. Sneaking up on the neighbors is nigh impossible for any character without Obfuscate 2, and even then Tom has Heightened Senses active and will likely hear any attempt at approach short of an exceptional success.

A character with Obfuscate 3 or higher can attempt to get by Tom's Auspex, sparking a Clash of Wills (p. 119, **Vampire: the Requiem**). If the neighbors catch one or more of the characters attempting to spy on them or sneak into the ruined apartment, they will react with suspicion and remain wary of the characters for the remainder of the story, or until they prove themselves trustworthy (barring a particularly strong social roll on the part of the characters to talk themselves out of hot water).

As the characters are entering the hunting grounds of a group of older predators, feel free to play up the sensations of the Predator's Taint, but unless the coterie have never met before (unlikely) or have extremely tense relations, no roll is necessary to refrain from Frenzy. If the characters approach the neighbors openly, whether called in or not, the neighbors will greet them with guarded cordiality. This is not unusual; guarded cordiality almost serves as the *lingua franca* of Kindred society.

If this is the players' first introduction to Sam, Tom and Lucretia, describe the three, perhaps giving the players a line or two of what they know about each of the neighbors. If the characters immediately approached the haven rather than waiting to be called, Tom's cheeks are smeared with Vitae and her eyes ringed with red. If asked about it, she replies:

"Can you hear it? Their heartbeats and their ragged breathing? Like a cornered dog, all hisses and growls. Do you know the sound that pain makes?" She turns over an object in her hands, a foot-long, charred piece of wood. Her eyes are closed, pinched at the edges as if trying to make out a quiet sound in the distance.

Sam or Lucretia will explain that Tom sometimes hears the past. (She used The Spirit's Touch on the stake used to immobilize Jonas. The neighbors don't put it in terms of the Auspex Discipline, however, nor does Tom think of her abilities in those terms.) If the characters had to be invited to the apartment, Tom has cleaned her face off and placed the stake back where she got it: the ash remains of Jonas.

Whether invited or not, the neighbors quickly reveal what happened. Lucretia does most of the talking, with Sam occasionally adding or correcting a small detail. Tom's eyes remain closed as if she's listening to some music only she can hear. She remains this way throughout the scene;



she's using Aura Perception to "listen" to the characters' words, examining their emotions and parsing out any lies. Lucretia reveals the following:

- The characters are standing in the haven of Jonas Craft, the missing member of the neighbors' coterie.
- The apartment burned during the day. The fire was put out during the early morning hours and the investigators were done with the scene before the sun had set.
- Investigators have been unable to determine the cause of the fire. They suspect arson, due to evidence found at the scene (the neighbors don't have access to the details of this evidence), but no known accelerants were found at the scene.
- No bodies were found, and no one is believed to have been harmed in the fire. Police are looking for a man named Eddie McCabb in connection to the fire.
- McCabb is the pseudonym Craft used to rent the apartment.

The neighbors suggest that a vampire murderer in the area is something that concerns the characters and offers to let them investigate the space. The characters may guess from this that the neighbors have hit a dead end in their investigation; in truth, the neighbors have invited the characters over to watch their reactions to the news and see if they try to muck up the investigation. They consider the characters suspects.

Storyteller Goals

Set the scene for the story to come; establish the neighborhood (the characters' territory, the Rack and the neighbors' territory, as well as their spatial relationships to one another), introduce the neighbors and allow the characters to garner information on the crime. Based on this scene alone, the story to follow should seem like a standard murder mystery, even if the plot twists in a different direction in later scenes.



"I'M NOT STICKING MY NOSE INTO THIS!"

If the characters reject the neighbors' invitation and refuse to investigate the burned apartment on their own, they learn all of the information above but the last from their favored news source, be it televised, print or web-based. This can be the way to start the story for a character who doesn't get out much.



Character Goals

Carefully navigate their relationship with their neighbors. Figure out what happened to Jonas Craft.

Actions

The characters may scoff at the idea of investigating a crime in the neighbors' territory, but if they choose to lend a hand (likely for non-altruistic reasons), you can use the roll below to represent their investigation. This action may particularly appeal to some players, so feel free to draw it out and describe things in great detail, allowing characters to muse over their findings to one another and having Sam occasionally interrupt with a clarification or idea. Television is rife with investigative procedurals that can serve as inspiration for this scene.

A character with Auspex may attempt to use The Spirit's Touch on one or more of the items she finds in the apartment. Most objects return little valuable information, containing only dull impressions of investigators or occasional bland memories of Jonas. A few items may have had strong significance to Jonas, presenting you with the opportunity to add a little depth to that character in a way that has no bearing on the investigation. Using The Spirit's Touch on Jonas's remains or the area about them result in confused and nightmarish memories of blood and fire, as well as flashes of hundreds of faces, none of which resolve into a meaningful image. A successful Wits + Occult roll may correctly identify these as nightmare images, implying that Jonas was in torpor when he met Final Death. Using Auspex on the stake returns an image of three individuals dressed in black with black masks raising the stake over Jonas's sleeping form. With an exceptional success, the character sees these three enter the room, drive the stake into Jonas, pull his body in front of the window and tear the boards from the window with a pry bar. An exceptional success also reveals that the murderers were breathing and sweating.

Crime Scene Investigation

Dice Pool: Wits + Investigation

Action: Extended (5 or more successes necessary; each roll represents 10 minutes of investigation)

Hindrances: Limited light (-1); scene thoroughly disturbed by mortal investigators (-3); scene largely destroyed by fire (-3)

Help: Flashlight (+1); Heightened Senses (+2); unrestricted access to the scene (+3). This action can benefit from the teamwork rules. Feel free to grant 1 to 3 additional bonus dice for good ideas from the characters as to how to proceed at any step in the investigation.





Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character misinterprets a piece of evidence and receives a dramatically inaccurate impression of the events surrounding Jonas's death. She may believe that he faked his own death or that an important Kindred in the city government committed diablerie on Jonas and tried to hide the evidence. The character can make no further rolls to investigate the scene.

Failure: The character makes no progress in uncovering the truth behind Jonas's destruction. Further rolls suffer a -1 penalty, cumulative with each additional failure.

Success: The character uncovers a clue and makes progress in putting together the puzzle. Each time the character reaches one of the success thresholds listed below, provide her with the appropriate piece of information.

Exceptional Success: The character makes an intuitive leap or finds a key piece of evidence, making significant progress in her investigation.

Successes	Information
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5	The investigator locates what remains of Jonas's corpse: a pile of greasy ash, some burned and tattered fabric and a charred wooden stake. The ash of Jonas's body is almost indistinguishable from that coating the rest of the floor.
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10	The investigator finds an almost invisible trail leading from the remains of Jonas's bed to the current location of his remains. Apparently he was dragged to the window after being staked. The fact that Jonas was staked on the bed indicates that he may have been asleep at the time, which means that ghouls or mortals may have accessed the haven during the day.
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15

The investigator notices some lighter areas in the burnt surroundings that seem to indicate the police removed one or more items with 90-degree corners. She also uncovers a bent and burnt nail. Glancing at the window reveals matching nail holes around the window frame. It seems that boards were removed from the windows prior to the fire. This is likely the evidence that has led the police to suspect arson.

20+

The fire seems to have started with Jonas's corpse, likely from exposure to sunlight. The lack of signs of forced entry implies that the door was either unlocked (unlikely), the lock picked or that the murderer had access to Jonas's haven. The lack of further evidence indicates that the culprit may have a background in arson investigation. (The neighbors have already determined this, aided by Tom's Auspex.)

Consequences

The characters establish the relationship they'll have with the neighbors for the remainder of the story (antagonistic or courteous, helpful or uncooperative). They may get a jump on the mystery presented by Jonas's death, or they may ignore it entirely (or worse, get a false impression). Sam, Tom and Lucretia keep a careful eye on the characters to see what they uncover, how much of what they discovered they reveal, and whether or not they try to mislead the neighbors.

Unfortunately for the characters, the investigation at the scene grinds to a halt almost immediately. There are no witnesses to any intrusion, and no cameras caught the culprits. The characters may be able to get the investigators' files, either through Merits or duplicity, but they don't discover anything aside from what is listed above. Such an undertaking may be the only way for the characters to find out the above information if their own investigative efforts failed.

A Body of Evidence

MENTAL ...

PHYSICAL -

SOCIAL ...

Overview

Their primary avenue of investigation stymied, the characters begin to look elsewhere for answers. They discover that the problem of Kindred murders may be more widespread than they initially realized.

Description

As you look out over the gently sloping asphalt street of your neighborhood, your mind drifts back to the death of Jonas Craft. Someone entered his haven, his private sanctum, and staked him. The mystery nags at the back of your mind, reminding you of something that you can't quite put a finger on...

This scene grants the characters the opportunity to follow any further avenues of investigation that they might have. Such investigations don't turn up anything specifically regarding Jonas Craft (though a socially savvy character who asks about him around the Rack might learn something of his feeding habits), but they do reveal a few frightening pieces of information.

The first, which can be discovered through investigations of police or fire department records, studies of old newspapers or even contacts within Kindred society, is that Jonas's apartment wasn't the first unexplained fire in the area. In fact, three similarly unexplained fires occurred in the last six months, all within the same general area of the city. One fire was ruled an accident caused by a homeless individual's fire, but the other two investigations remain open and unsolved.

The second, discovered by speaking with any contacts the characters may have within Kindred society (sires, mentors, elders or even the neighbors), is that three Kindred have gone missing in the same period. The characters may be able to attach one of the missing Kindred to one of the fires in a vague way, but the vampires were nobodies and no one looked into their disappearances. Their names were Jamie Cochran (Unaligned Nosferatu), Eli (Unaligned, clan unknown) and

Audrey Palmer (Carthian Daeva). The three had no known ties to one another. Attempting to find out more about these characters through Kindred society quickly becomes a losing battle, as most Kindred find conversation about such topics distasteful. Unfortunately, the apparent scenes of their demise have long been cleaned up.

If the characters dive into the social scene (vampire or mortal) of the Rack, however, they may find out that all three missing Kindred (and Jonas) were regular feeders in the area. Jonas had a preference for young women, Audrey for young men, Eli tended bar at a club and fed from whatever was too drunk to realize what was happening and Jamie mugged people in alleys, taking a little of their life along with their wallets.

Storyteller Goals

Each new bit of information the characters find should give them more reason to be afraid. They're not looking at a murderer, but a serial killer with a preference for Kindred victims. Worse yet, the murderer seems to be picking his targets from the same feeding grounds that the characters have been taking advantage of for months if not years. Take this opportunity to establish some paranoia: who knows how long the murderer observed his victims before striking. Are the characters already in the killers' sights? Use the crowded streets of the city to further this paranoia. Is that man following one of the characters or just on his way home? When the eyes of that bum in the alley follow the characters each time they pass, is it their money he wants or something else? Begin turning the characters' territory (and the people in it) against them, if only in their imaginations.

ALAS, WE KNEW HIM

Feel free to replace one of the hunters' victims with a character established earlier in the chronicle. Perhaps the characters have met a Kindred in the Rack in the past. Whether or not the characters were on good terms with this Kindred, learning of his death should strike a chord of recognition, raising the tension. In many ways, the loss of an antagonist to these hunters can hit harder than the loss of an ally: not only does it inspire conflicted feelings, but it also drives home just how dangerous these mortals are.

Character Goals

Find out some more information about just what happened to Jonas Craft and what, if any, implications it might have for the characters.

Actions

The number of actions available in this scene are almost endless: they can include investigations like the one in the last scene, attempts to wring information out of Contacts and Allies, schmoozing with local Kindred, buttering up Mentors for information, sending out Retainers during the day to question people on the street or canvassing the local bars of the Rack. It may occur to the characters to examine the relationship of the deaths to one another, whether simply as a sketch on a bar napkin or with pushpins and an oversized map of the city.

Tracking the Deaths

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Investigation

Action: Extended (5 successes required; each roll represents five minutes of activity)

Hindrances: Vague information regarding the location of one or more of the fires (-1 to -3); lack of map (-3)

Help: Ruler, compass or other cartographic tools (+1 to +2); large, detailed map of the area (+3). This roll can benefit from the teamwork rules.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The characters wrongly place one or more of the deaths, giving them an utterly inaccurate sense of where the murderers are operating from. They might peg the neighbors' territory as the source of the deaths, putting some suspicion on those Kindred.

Failure: The characters have difficulty locating one of the deaths on the map or making sense of what they've uncovered.

Success: The characters make progress towards setting up and interpreting their map. If they achieve five successes they realize that, with the exception of Jonas, each death is almost equidistant from their own territory.

Exceptional Success: The characters don't even finish putting pegs in the map before they realize what the pattern means: the murderers seem to be in the characters' territory.

Consequences

The characters begin asking questions that the Kindred community was willing to ignore and find that the threat of a serial killer may be dangerously close to home. The characters may have some theories regarding who the killers are (possibly including mortal hunters, Belial's Brood looking for vengeance on the neighbors, the mysterious VII or even some figure from one or more of the characters' pasts). Feel free to toss some red herrings their way, dropping inconclusive clues that seem to point at whoever they suspect to be guilty.

This is also when feeding should start becoming more difficult; it always seems as if minor interruptions plague the characters' hunts. At this point in the story, the interruptions are largely the result of paranoia on the characters' parts (or fear on their Beasts' parts) granting additional emphasis to little things that the character would probably usually ignore. Sirens seem closer than usual, people seem to be watching them more closely than usual and the rattling in the dumpster seems to come from something significantly larger than a rat or raccoon. Characters may work to assuage their fears, checking out the source of the siren, questioning the person watching them or checking the dumpster for stalkers (in the cases above), but while the characters' fears may be temporarily allayed, their hunt has been thoroughly disrupted. Don't make it impossible to get blood (interrupting a character in the process of feeding is a good way to manage Vitae levels), but hunting needs to become more difficult with time.

The Neighborhood Watches

MENTAL ••

PHYSICAL –

SOCIAL ••

Overview

The characters learn of a new threat rising in their own community: a neighborhood watch group dedicated to keeping a vigilant eye on the streets for any signs of suspicious activity. The initiative has strong support from both local law enforcement and the local churches, and it seems to have inspired the local populace. These are all bad things for a vampire.

Meanwhile, the characters may have amassed enough information to take it to a higher authority, whether a sire, mentor, Sheriff, Primogen or the Prince. Ideally, this scene can be used to contrast the mortals' bid for a safer neighborhood with the Kindred's unwillingness to raise a finger to help another in need.

Description

The television buzzes with the various telltale signs of the local news: a too-polished set, too-flat color and a too-friendly anchor. You catch the words "Neighbors Watching Out" at the bottom of the screen before the image cuts abruptly to a daylight scene. You twitch instinctively at the image. A woman stands before the local police department in the Rack. "Thanks Mark," she says. "Police announced today their support of the new Neighborhood Watch initiative. This grassroots program caught fire in the popular consciousness earlier this week when several local clergy came out in support of it. With police approval, including a hotline for tips from Watch members, this project finally has the legs to run the distance. Back to you, Mark." The image shudders, and anchor Mark fixes you with his eyes. "Thanks, Bev. We wish the Neighborhood Watch luck and success."

The characters learn about the growing Neighborhood Watch movement through either the news, as shown above, or through some other medium, possibly the Internet, Allies, Contacts, fliers posted about the territory or even via a recruiter. The characters may attempt to delve into the program to find out who created it, but they come

up suspiciously short. The leadership is a small group of locals with no common background, and they seem to be precisely what they claim to be: a group of concerned citizens. The local clergy seems to have come to a consensus regarding the program, and no one is able to pinpoint who first suggested they do so. The police chief seems to be backing the program out of both a desire to take advantage of a positive political situation and a genuine respect for the idea. These characters are left to you to flesh out, based on what avenues the characters investigate, granting her another opportunity to bring the neighborhood to life.

This scene is best used after the characters have taken their concerns (garnered from the first two scenes) to the city's leadership. While players are likely to take this route after their investigation has slowed down, they may not, and that's fine. If the characters seem unlikely to bring the situation to the Kindred court, go ahead and use this scene when the story seems to be slowing down.

If the characters *do* take their evidence to the Kindred court, the court greets it with a shrug. The missing Kindred were nobodies, the Kindred in danger (namely the characters) are essentially nobodies and the threat doesn't seem to be overtly supernatural. They assign the area's Hound, Lucretia, to look into it before returning to their usual machinations. This will likely annoy Lucretia, and she'll take it out on the characters in small ways, such as using her position to regularly patrol their territory and possibly deputizing them in the investigation. The latter is useful if the characters take an attitude of "Well, we did our part, it's out of our hands now." Storyteller characters with a vested interest in the characters (such as sires and Mentors) will show slightly more concern, but offer little aid aside from advice. Their general attitude is that a vampire needs to be able to handle threats to her territory without running to her elders for help.

Storyteller Goals

Add another layer of threat, the Neighborhood Watch, to the story. If possible, contrast the willingness of humans to band together in the face of danger with the apathetic and self-serving nature of Kindred society.

Character Goals

Avoid the Neighborhood Watch, and possibly figure out who is behind the group. Get support from the Kindred court for the investigation.

WARNING



NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM IN FORCE

**ALL SUSPICIOUS PERSONS AND ACTIVITIES ARE
IMMEDIATELY REPORTED TO OUR LOCAL POLICE DEPARTMENT.**

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR
INFO ON STARTING A GROUP IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD.
LEARN CRIME PREVENTION TECHNIQUES THAT LEAD
TO INCREASED SECURITY AND IMPROVED QUALITY OF LIFE.

Actions

A variety of actions can occur during this scene, from backroom deals or impassioned pleas for assistance from the court (Cutting a Deal and Oratory, pp. 82-83, the **World of Darkness Rulebook**), to tailing the chief of police (Shadowing, p. 76), to breaking and entering a clergyman's office (Lockpicking, p. 74), to diving into legal records for blackmail material on the Neighborhood Watch's leadership (Research, p. 55). While this work can provide the characters a wealth of information about those they choose to investigate, it gets them no nearer to unraveling who's actually behind the formation of the Neighborhood Watch. Furthermore, the usual Kindred tactics of manipulation (blackmail, extortion and bribery) fail due to the sheer size of the budding program. Like a snowball building into an avalanche, the program has gained too much momentum to be so easily stopped.

Consequences

The characters may make friends or enemies through their investigations, and those may help them stop the hunters at some point down the road (and possibly pave the way to future purchases of Merits). They learn of the Neighborhood Watch, possibly associating it with the Kindred murders, but they have no strong evidence of such a link and no reliable way of slowing the growth of the Watch. From this point forward, feeding becomes significantly more difficult. The people of the neighborhood have taken a vested interest in one another's safety, resulting in a paranoid, aware society. Even when taking the utmost precaution, Kindred must fear for their safety when feeding.

Optional: Hunting

MENTAL ••

PHYSICAL ••

SOCIAL –

Overview

This scene can be used any time one or more characters hunt another. It provides a basis for scenes of feeding from the flock or fleeing from vampire hunters.

Description

The scent of his cologne hangs on the air like an invisible street sign. Your eyes slip to the footprint stamped across a damp newspaper at your feet. You glance in the direction the print points just in time to see a door close at the far end of the alley. You're close.

With all of the above discussion of hunting, whether it's mortals tracking the depredations of the undead or the characters desperately searching for their next ounce of blood, one might wonder how exactly to handle hunting and tracking. **Vampire: The Requiem** provides a barebones mechanic for feeding on p. 164, but for a story as focused on the pressures of being a Kindred as this, you may want to put more emphasis on the hunt. Here we have provided some advice and a mechanic for hunting that can be used by vampire and vampire hunter alike.

Storyteller Goals

For the Storyteller, the hunt provides an excellent opportunity to drive home the differences between vampires and their living counterparts. It allows you to paint things in vivid, sensual strokes, meditating on the strange sensations that are part and parcel of the Kindred condition: the hunger, the scent and taste of blood, the earthy scents of the living, the passion of feeding and the unbridled wildness of the Frenzy. This is particularly important to the scene "Hunger" (p. 31), in which the characters can't help but see walking buffets everywhere they look. Everything that marks an individual as living (her breath on the air, the tiny throb of a vein at her wrist, neck or temple, or the gleam of sweat clinging to her brow) stands out to the characters as indicators of a potential victim ready to be used. Some vampires may have unusual methods of tracking (such as a Morbus's ability to sense disease in a vessel), which offer you even greater opportunities for bits of unusual details.

The antagonist hunters allow you to make the Kindred the prey. Turning the usual hunting dynamic on its head can be particularly effective if you can work in details from earlier feeding scenes. If, for example, one of the players left a woman wearing a badge for a local political candidate lightheaded in an alley during a feeding scene, he may notice a sign for the same candidate as he hides in a dumpster, furtively hoping the three hunters just outside think he continued down the alley. These details don't have to be emphasized to drive the point home; just mention them in passing as one more aspect of the World of Darkness.

Character Goals

Scenes focusing on the hunt give the players the chance to revel in what makes their characters so cool: being vampires. They stalk the shadowed alleys, blending into the darkness. They inspire dread with a glance, herding their chosen prey towards their waiting embrace. They can hijack a person's mind either directly or through his emotions, and they can take the form of a beast to track the wounded with senses unavailable to the living. They may also hunt as a pack: a group of roving undead monstrosities chasing a terrified accountant through the abandoned alleys of the financial district.

Actions

Tracking can be used by vampires to trail potential victims or follow enemies or by hunters to pursue vampires. Creatures with acute senses, such as animals or vampires with Shape of the Beast or Heightened Senses, can track by smell, while humans and vampires without recourse to supernatural scent or hearing must track by eye.

Tracking

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Survival (if by eye) or Wits + Survival (if by other senses); vs. Wits + Survival if contested

Action: Extended (10–20+ successes; each roll represents 1 minute of tracking) or extended and contested (if the quarry attempts to throw off pursuit)

Hindrances: Quarry crosses a stream, street or other avenue that disrupts the trail (-1), tracker attempts to move faster than half speed (-2), heavy rain (-2 to -5), quarry group splits up (-3), tracking by sight over concrete (-4), tracker attempts to move faster than three-quarters speed (-4)



Help: Quarry consists of more than one individual (+1 for each after the first), quarry travels through a substance that leaves easy prints (such as mud, snow, or city refuse) if tracking by sight (+2), quarry is bleeding (+2), tracker is a vampire in wolf form (+2), vampire is using Heightened Senses (+3). This roll can benefit from teamwork (p. 134, the **World of Darkness Rulebook**)

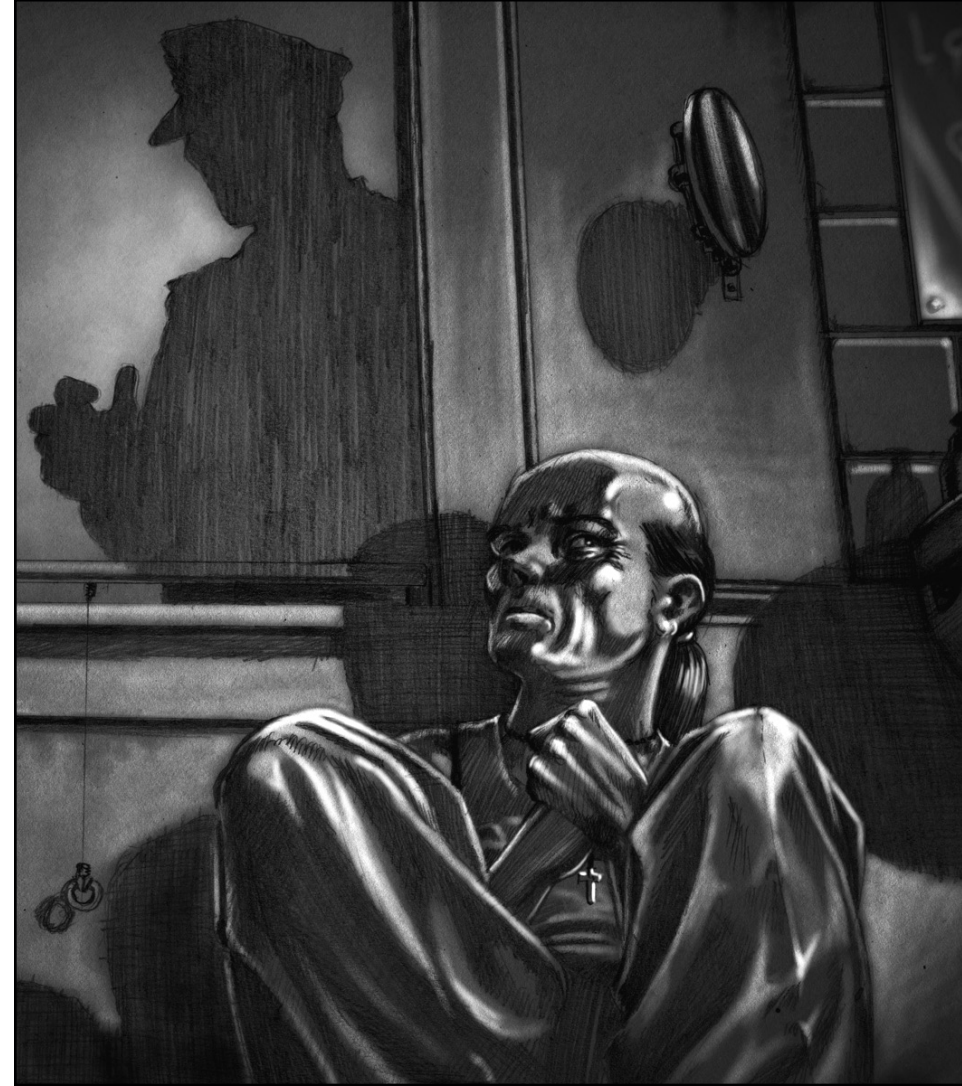
Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: A dramatic failure on the part of the tracker results in her losing the trail entirely. She cannot pick it up again and must wait for a new opportunity to pursue the quarry. She may, at your discretion, pick up the wrong trail and begin following it instead. If the quarry rolls a dramatic failure while attempting to hide her trail her efforts are obvious, making the trail easier to follow (necessitating no further rolls for the tracker).

Failure: The tracker makes no further progress towards finding the quarry. If contested, the tracker loses the trail if the quarry accumulates more total successes than the tracker. If the tracker loses the trail, she can attempt to pick it up again in successive intervals by garnering more successes on a single roll than the quarry rolled on the most recent roll. If, for example, the quarry garnered 3 successes on the roll in which her total successes exceeded the total successes for the tracker, the tracker must roll 4 successes to pick up the trail again (regardless of the total number of successes on either side). Rolls made to pick up the trail once lost do not apply their successes to the total needed to complete the extended action.

Success: The tracker makes progress towards finding the quarry. If she garners the requisite number of successes, she follows the trail to its end (ostensibly the current location of the quarry, but it can just as easily be a bus bench, train station or curb side). She receives no special insight into the current whereabouts of the quarry (if, for example, the quarry is hiding or waiting to spring a trap).

Exceptional Success: The tracker makes significant progress in following the trail. If the tracker surpasses the requisite successes by five successes, she gets some small insight into the current location of the quarry or gains a +2 bonus on any immediate rolls to avoid being



surprised by the quarry. If the quarry exceeds the tracker's success by five in a single roll, the tracker loses the trail utterly, as if he had rolled a dramatic failure.

Consequences

Either the quarry catches her prey or she doesn't. If it's a close call, however, the pursuer may find some relevant information about her quarry, such as the neighborhood in which she lives.

Optional: The Nightstalkers

MENTAL ••

PHYSICAL ••••

SOCIAL –

Overview

This scene can be used at any point after “The Neighborhood Watches.” This scene is best used to emphasize the danger that this new program has put the characters in if they’re not treating it with due concern. Specifically, this scene can be used whenever a character toes the line of the Masquerade or involves herself in any other suspicious or criminal activity. The character finds herself stalked by three individuals seemingly intent on her destruction.

Description

As you move down the darkened street, with only the sounds of the still-bustling Rack blocks away in your ears, you notice a pair of figures step into the sidewalk ahead of you. They seem lumpy and misshapen, and it takes you a moment to realize that they’re wearing masks. You hear a scrape of rubber on concrete from behind you; you don’t even have to look back to know there’s a third one, maybe a fourth. The monster in your gut twists in fear, urging you to flee, either to bolt across the street or dive into the alley.

Three living individuals confront the character on the street late at night after she engaged in some Masquerade-toeing behavior (most likely in pursuit of the hunt). These aren’t Jonas Craft’s murderers, but rather a trio of vigilantes inspired by the Neighborhood Watch to enact a little street justice (use the traits for the Gangbanger, p. 207 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, but with +1 bashing weapons like baseball bats and metal pipes instead of Glocks).

This scene can also be used to introduce the hunters. This is best done after the scene “Interviews with the Vampires” (p. 33).

Two figures step into the mouth of the alley as you approach. Your predatory instinct immediately flares, urging you to flight, recognizing an ambush even before your conscious mind notices that the pair are wearing black masks, and that the smaller of the two has a long, sharpened sliver of wood clenched in her hand. Then the other shoe drops: a voice from behind you whispers, “Don’t run.”

The hunters won’t attack the characters as a group, but will try to gang up on a single character, typically the one most flagrant in his feeding or otherwise clumsy with the Masquerade. While the Storyteller wants to stack the odds against the character, she doesn’t want to make it impossible for the character to survive. For example, if a character hasn’t taken care to shake possible followers on his way home to his haven, this scene may occur when he awakens in said haven with two hunters holding him down and a third about to drive the stake home. In this case, you don’t want to simply kill the character. A great deal of story can be made, however, from the hunters taking the character hostage and interrogating him for information about the other characters. Adopting this tactic allows the character opportunity to escape (or influence the hunters from within) or allows the other characters to come to the rescue. This has the added advantage of letting the hostage character get to know his captors.

The main difference between using the vigilantes and the vampire hunters is that the former just want to beat something up, while the latter focus on using their group tactics to subdue and stake the character. The hunters behave professionally, almost silently, while the vigilantes scream catcalls and insults as they drive their boots into the vampire’s ribs.

Storyteller Goals

Use this scene to inject a little body horror and physical violence into the story, especially if one of the characters is getting bored with the investigations. Invert the usual relationship between the Kindred and their so-called prey, illustrating just how dangerous humans can be. This scene can also serve to underscore the dark side of the Neighborhood Watch. In the World of Darkness, even a group as ostensibly altruistic as this program inspires the worst tendencies in people.



Character Goals

Get out alive.

Actions

This scene either breaks into combat or becomes a chase scene. Combat is handled as usual, though with a three-on-one fight the antagonists can afford to go All-Out every round (p. 154, the **World of Darkness Rulebook**). The vigilantes are ultimately cowards, however, and any one that loses five or more Health to any type of damage flees. While the stalkers will stick around for a two-against-one fight, if one is left by himself he makes a run for it.

The rules for chases can be found on p. 65 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**. Take time between rolls to describe the terrain the characters are running through, perhaps even peppering the chase with obstacles to be climbed and death-defying rooftop jumps. While the character would normally need to garner 13 successes (the Speed of the vigilantes) to get away, the labyrinthine nature of the city makes it easier to go to ground. If the character accumulates eight or more successes, she may attempt to escape (see below) and end the chase early. This represents diving into a dumpster, breaking into a storage closet or doubling back to lose pursuers. A similar roll can be made as a combat action to break free from combat and shift to a foot chase (in the likely situation that the three-on-one combat goes poorly for the character).

If the vigilantes lose the chase or are forced off, they'll give up and go to a bar. The vampire hunters, however, will attempt to track the character to her haven.

Escape!

Dice Pool: Wits + Stealth (character) vs. Wits + Composure (pursuer)

Action: Instant and contested

Hindrances: Brightly lit area (-2); abandoned area (-2)

Help: Distance put between the character and the pursuers (+1 per total success difference in the foot chase roll); particularly dark area of town (+2); character was running towards the Rack and attempts to lose herself in the crowd (+3)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character thinks she's gotten away, but instead calls attention to herself. The pursuers may pretend they don't see her while taking time to regroup and prepare for an assault on her hiding place.

Failure: The character can't find a place to hide and better keep running.

Success: The character finds a hiding place of some sort. So long as the pursuers don't roll better, the foot chase ends as they pass her by.

Exceptional Success: The character finds an excellent hiding place that's easily defensible. Even if the pursuers find her and decide they want to try to drag her out, she garners a Defense bonus of 2 so long as she remains in her hiding place.

Consequences

The character either escapes or she doesn't. If the latter, she's likely lost Vitae and Health, making those resources just that much more valuable. She may even be left in an alley in torpor, in which case she'd better hope that one of her compatriots finds her before the sun rises (alternatively, the character may awaken in a container at the morgue).

Characters may use vampiric powers to escape, but any blatant use of Disciplines only makes things worse, inspiring a new group of vampire hunters with a cruel streak the width of a city block.

If using the vampire hunters, the character may end up captured. Extensive advice is given on handling such a situation above.

Optional: A Break in the Case

MENTAL ...

PHYSICAL –

SOCIAL –

Overview

The characters unearth some small piece of new information or put together an old piece of information in a way that points them towards one or more of the vampire hunters. Alternatively, the characters rescue a captured comrade (see “Catch and Release,” pp. 8-9) who can identify one or more of the antagonists.

Description

With this new piece of information, things finally begin to fall into place. The involvement of the clergy and the police, they can't be coincidences. And then there's the ability of the murderers to foil the fire department's investigators. The shape of the conspiracy forms in your mind. It's all starting to make sense.

This simple scene serves as a guidepost, a turning point in the story. Use it sometime after “Hunger” (p. 31), based on how effective and persistent the characters' investigations have been. The new clue or old clue seen in a new light points the characters towards one or more members of the cell. Some possibilities include:

- A police Ally or Contact realizes that Nicole Abner, the officer appointed as the department's liaison to the Neighborhood Watch, was off duty on the night of the fire at Jonas's haven. Similarly, a character studying old police schedules will find that she was off-duty the night of each of the fires.
- A Contact in the religious community (including any Contact that might attend Father Estevez's church) mentions in passing Father Estevez's particularly zealous support of the Neighborhood Watch. Similarly, one of the characters or a Retainer may overhear one of his sermons on the evils that stalk the night in the guise of man.
- A character who frequents conspiracy theorists newsgroups online may find repeated posts that indicate a knowledge of the existence of Kindred. Tracing his information back uncovers a man named Will Jeffries, a fireman residing in the characters' neighborhood.

After uncovering even one of the likely hunters, the characters can more easily associate them with the other two, whether by asking around or simply spying. After that, it's simply a matter of making sure that they are, in fact, the hunters. Simple interrogation is unlikely to work, and even attempting such risks revealing the characters' identities to their most dangerous prey. Furthermore, the characters' investigations should make it clear that these three are thoroughly connected within the community. They can't simply die or disappear.

Storyteller Goals

Make the last piece of the puzzle of the vampire hunters available to the characters. Note that this scene is *optional*. It should be a reward for characters who stuck to the investigation (or as a reward for saving a member of the coterie captured by the hunters). Perhaps the characters have a strong idea of what is going on based on what they know of Jonas's death and the locations of the Kindred murders; perhaps they've even gone so far as to link the Neighborhood Watch to the murders. If the characters haven't put any effort into investigating the murders, however, they don't deserve this scene; don't give it to them. It'll make the decisions made at the end of the story that much more difficult.

Character Goals

Find out more. Figure out what to do.

Actions

The characters will almost certainly want to know more about the threat in their own backyard. They may do so by shadowing them (p. 76, the **World of Darkness Rulebook**), breaking into their homes (p. 74, the **World of Darkness Rulebook**) or simply digging into their past through public records.

Investigating the Vampire Hunters

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Academics or Investigation

Action: Extended (5+ successes necessary; each roll represents an hour of research, and each hunter must be investigated separately)

Hindrances: Characters possess no Internet (-1) or library card (-2); characters utterly lack appropriate Contacts or Allies to gain access to the information they're looking for (-3); characters wholly rely on Retainers who can operate during the day to find information for them (-4).



Help: Characters possess Contacts (+1) or Allies (+1 per dot) who can aid them in their search; characters supplement their own information with public records obtained by Retainers during the day (+1 per dot of Retainer); character has Internet access (+1) or a library card (+2). This roll can benefit from the teamwork rules.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character finds a piece of misinformation or makes an incorrect assumption regarding what she does find. Perhaps she comes to believe that one or more of the hunters is on the payroll of an elder Kindred of the city.

Failure: The character uncovers no further information.

Success: The character makes progress towards finding out more about the hunters. Each time the character reaches one of the success thresholds listed below, provide her with the appropriate piece of information. Keep in mind that any given research task only applies to one of the three hunters.

Exceptional Success: The character makes significant progress towards uncovering the secrets of the vampire hunters.

Successes	Information
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5	Nicole has served on the force for years, but has only recently made detective and assigned to the vice unit. Before that, she was in the military. Will works for the local fire department as an EMT and has done so for years. He is unmarried and lives alone. Father Estevez resides over the local Catholic church and has done so for years. He is a beloved member of the community involved in numerous charities.
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15

Nicole is married to the Assistant District Attorney, Arthur Abner, who has a daughter named Alice. Alice is a familiar face in the Rack, though she hasn't been seen since Jonas's death. **Will** has a vibrant second life as a conspiracy theorist, spending much of his time on the Internet researching his most recent ideas and conversing with the like-minded. His sister, Yvette, serves on the city council. **Father Estevez** is from a small town in Mexico known for its crime, corruption and poverty. While loved by his congregants, he seems to have a strained relationship with his superiors in the Church.

25+

Nicole and **Will** served together during Desert Storm. **Nicole** graduated from West Point with honors. She works out every day. Her partner seems incredibly loyal to her. **Will** has an interest in the occult, visiting websites about vampires, magic and similar subjects, and reading books on these subjects at the library. He owns a confusing array of mismatched sports equipment, despite having no apparent interest in sports. **Father Estevez** believes fully in the supernatural aspects of his faith, including angels, demons and witches. He's also a student of the old school of Catholicism, and is rumored to know rites of exorcism.

Consequences

The characters uncover the source of their troubles, but realize that they will be difficult to remove or subvert. They may attempt to find more information, in which case they might be able to garner something useful in their conflict with the hunters. On the other hand, if they're at all clumsy in their investigation, they may tip off the cell, causing them to close ranks and hunker down, perhaps even painting a big target on the investigator's head.



Optional: Collision

MENTAL •••• PHYSICAL •••• SOCIAL ••••

Overview

While the characters may manage to make it through this entire story without ever crossing paths with the hunters that are slowly making their lives hell, chance are they'll take a proactive interest in protecting their lands and unives from human predation. You can use this scene when the Kindred characters and mortal hunters finally collide.

Description

They're not what you expected, even given what you know about them. They're older than you thought and seem weary. Not one of the three lacks a gray hair. But their eyes contain a hard glimmer, like moonlight on metal, which tells you that they can't be reasoned with.

How the characters eventually confront the hunters is largely up to the players. If the characters don't proactively take the fight to the hunters, the cell will pick off the characters one by one. So while the final confrontation may take place over the staked body of a member of the coterie (when the others have come to the rescue), chances are the combat occurs at a time and place of the characters' choosing.

In a straight fight, the hunters don't have much of a chance against a group of three or more armed vampires, assuming that the vampires have average combat ability. They don't fight fair, however, so a final combat with the hunters is an opportunity for you to throw action-packed twists (explosives, jury-rigged flame-throwers, rented industrial machinery, chainsaws and so on) into the fight.

The downside to a straight fight is that it usually leaves one side or the other dead. As described above, that's not the ideal solution given the importance these hunters have in the community. Their deaths will only provoke investigation (possibly drawing state or federal attention, which is sure to piss off the city's vampire leadership), further empower the Neighborhood Watch and possibly inspire a new generation of vampire hunters.

Instead, the characters may approach the problem obliquely, perhaps by subverting a member of the cell (difficult but hardly impossible, especially given the powers at a Kindred's disposal). Such a betrayal will quickly un-

ravel the group, but may lead to each member forming cells of their own, effectively tripling the original threat. Another solution may be to somehow link the trio to the fires (or frame them for a new fire), effectively ruining their standing in the neighborhood. The advantage to this plan is that it can kill the Neighborhood Watch in its tracks, revealing to the people just how corrupt their leaders are and making it seem pointless to try to fight the darkness. The down side is that it puts the cell members' backs against the wall, leaving them with nothing to lose (a dangerous proposition).

The characters may try to divert the threat rather than end it. They may even try to direct the cell at their enemies (either vampires or other monsters of the night). This can work well, but like any other tactic, it has its drawbacks. First, it probably ends with either the hunters dead or the patsies dead. On the other hand, it either leaves the hunters even more experienced and dangerous, or the characters' enemies incredibly pissed off. Then there's the fact that hunters have a tendency to eventually turn on the vampire that manipulates them.

The characters have lots of options. What they choose is up to them.

Storyteller Goals

Bring some form of closure to the vampire hunter subplot. Keep pressure on the coterie through the use of this plot and the main plot. Let the characters make the decisions, but enforce the consequences.

Character Goals

Defeat the hunters, either by destroying, ruining or subverting them.

Actions

The characters have dozens of potential options, many of which are covered above. Interrogation, seduction or even oratory (**World of Darkness Rulebook**, p. 81, 84 and 83, respectively) can be useful in overcoming the hunters. The Dominate powers of Mesmerize and the Forgetful Mind (**Vampire: the Requiem**, pp. 125-126) can be useful, as can Conditioning (**Vampire**, p. 127) if a character has that ability. The Majesty powers of Revelation and Entrancement (**Vampire**, pp. 129-130) can aid characters hoping to manipulate the cell, while The Familiar Stranger (**Vampire**, p. 137) can be used to trick the hunters.

Consequences

The characters either make things better or worse for themselves, probably causing the reverse for the neighborhood in the process. At the least they may be able to buy some time and release some of the pressure from the hunters in order to deal with their other concern: their neighbors.



Hunger

Character Goals

Actions

Poaching

Consequences

MENTAL •• PHYSICAL ••• SOCIAL ••

Overview

This simple scene presents a **nightmare to one of the characters**. Afterwards she feels particularly hungry, risking Frenzy. This scene shouldn't be presented to the group as a whole, but rather individually. If possible, present it to different characters on different nights over the course of the story.

Description

You feel the little life you can lay claim to flee your body with the rising sun, plunging you into the cold darkness of sleep. But tonight, something's different.

This scene is largely a psychological reaction of the characters' young Beasts to the building pressures in their unives. The Beast tries to communicate in its limited way through the medium of dreams, then attempts to force itself to the surface during the waking hours. The dreams should be tailored to the individual characters if possible, with images that represent their personal anxieties, but the underlying message should be the same in each: the characters aren't getting what they need. They may feel themselves literally starving, or it may be more abstract. A character obsessed with wealth may find her bank accounts dry while a character starved for attention finds that people constantly turn away from her.

When the character wakes up she feels hungrier than usual and on edge. She suffers a -1 to all Frenzy rolls for the remainder of the night or until she consumes 3 Vitae, whichever comes first. This is in addition to any penalties she may already be suffering for hunger (p. 179, **Vampire: the Requiem**).

Storyteller Goals

Add a little surreal personal horror to the story. Underscore the importance of the Beast in a Kindred's psychology. Add another point of pressure to the characters' situation.

Keep control.

Clearly the **rules for Frenzy** (p. 178, **Vampire: the Requiem**) will be useful in this scene and **any that follow**. Some characters may attempt to cheat, relieving the hunger by poaching in safer feeding grounds as their own territory becomes harder to feed in.

Dice Pool: Wits + Stealth (poacher) vs. Wits + Composure (territory tenant)

Action: Instant and contested, but must be repeated every five minutes the character continues to hunt in another Kindred's territory.

Hindrances: Poacher is unfamiliar with the territory (-2); poacher causes the Predator's Taint (-3)

Help: Poacher possesses Obfuscate (+1 for each dot after the first); tenant possesses Auspex (+1 each dot); tenant utilizes Retainers to patrol his territory (+1 per dot of Retainer set specifically to that task)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Poacher draws attention to himself, possibly even attempting to feed from a favored vessel. Conversely, the tenant may become distracted, allowing the poacher to feed with ease.

Failure: Poacher does not manage to conceal himself or the tenant does not discover his presence.

Success: The poacher gets away with his crime or the tenant uncovers him.

Exceptional Success: Additional successes are their own reward.

The Kindred feel the squeeze of their predicament, possibly taking illegal measures to assuage their hunger... and perhaps even getting caught for it. If caught poaching, the characters find yet another difficulty piled on their plate, and likely end up owing one or more Kindred favors.

An Unusual Offer

MENTAL ••

PHYSICAL –

SOCIAL •••

Overview

The neighbors, having decided that they cannot maintain the whole of their territory without Jonas, make the characters an offer: they'll shave off a significant portion of their territory and sell it to the highest bidder.

Description

You see Sam, Lucretia and Tom sitting at a table near the back the moment you walk in. Your eyes are drawn to them as their Beasts silently challenge yours. Lucretia and Sam stand, inviting you to the table. "Good evening," Lucretia says. "Please, have a seat."

The neighbors make a simple but unusual offer: they explain plainly that they have more territory than they can maintain given their recent loss. They offer to provide it to one of the characters, provided they can make an appropriate bid. If asked what they'll do if more than one character makes an offer, they reply that they'll give it to the highest bidder. They reveal that other Kindred have expressed interest in their feeding grounds, but that they'd prefer to open the offer to their neighbors. If the characters make a noble show of solidarity or other form of outright refusal, the neighbors tell them to think it over. After their offer has been put on the table, the neighbors excuse themselves.

Storyteller Goals

Demonstrate the tension of the backroom deals so common in vampire society. Show that land politics don't exist solely among the city's elders.

Character Goals

Hear the neighbors out and figure out their motives in making this offer.

Actions

The characters may try to schmooze with the neighbors (Carousing, p. 85 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**) or berate the neighbors for not taking the hunter threat seriously. At least one of them will want to try to figure out why the neighbors are making the offer at all.

Sussing out their Intentions

Dice Pool: Wits + Empathy (characters) vs. Manipulation + Persuasion (neighbors)

Action: Instant and contested

Hindrances: Character is hungry (-1) or starving (-2); character doesn't try to read their motivations until after the offer has been made (-2); character suspects the neighbors' intentions are something that they're not (-3)

Help: Character ignores Tom to focus on Lucretia and Sam (+1); a character utilizes Aura Perception (+1 per success on the activation roll). This roll cannot benefit from the teamwork rules.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character picks up the false impression. Perhaps they believe that the neighbors are attempting to distract them from the vampire hunter situation for some reason.

Failure: The character cannot glean any hidden motivations.

Success: The character realizes that the neighbors have a hidden agenda, but not what it is. They do seem to be telling the truth about granting some of their territory to a member of the coterie, however.

Exceptional Success: As success, but the character also realizes that the neighbors are probing the characters for information, and that the neighbors revealed their inability to maintain all of their territory to give the characters the perception of power.

Consequences

The neighbors make their offer. The characters may realize that the neighbors have something up their sleeve, or they may be too distracted with other concerns and accept the offer at face value. They may even begin plotting against one another to make a grab for the fat new slice of territory.

Interviews with the Vampires

MENTAL ••

PHYSICAL –

SOCIAL ••••

Overview

Even as the threat of the **Neighborhood Watch** grows, the neighbors invite the characters over one by one for an interview. They're asked ahead of time to have any offers for a slice of the neighbors' territory prepared.

Description

"Come in," Sam says warmly as he opens the door to the hotel room. The space is clearly not their haven: no heavy curtains or wooden boards block the view of the neighborhood beyond the large window set in the far wall. A table sits in the middle of the room with three chairs. Lucretia stands behind one of the chairs, her hand resting on its back. Tom reclines on one of the beds, a pair of bulky headphones hiding her ears. She doesn't open her eyes, though you somehow doubt she'd need to in order to know you had arrived.

Lucretia gestures to one of the chairs. "Please, have a seat."

The neighbors conduct the interview with unfailing politeness, assuming the characters do nothing to offend. They do insist on one-on-one interviews, and refuse to see anyone unwilling to abide by that. (Tom's presence serves largely to prevent Obfuscated characters from sneaking in.) They ask a lot of questions about the character, his take on "that unpleasant murder business" and his relationship with the rest of his coterie. In return, they're fairly open about their relationship to one another, watching carefully for anyone who takes umbrage at any aspect of it. They do not, however, reveal either the

location of their haven or even that they share a haven. Finally they get down to business, explaining that they're looking to unload a few blocks abutting the Rack (across from the characters' territory) and hearing the character's offer. Afterwards they politely thank and dismiss the character.

Storyteller Goals

Personalize the neighbors. Make their relationship with one another seem pleasant. Make the land they're offering seem desirable. The overall effect should be to make the option to jump ship and join the neighbors extremely realistic and desirable when they make the offer in the next scene.

Character Goals

Impress the neighbors or figure out what their actual motivations are, possibly both.

Actions

The characters may socialize with the neighbors during this scene or make another attempt to figure out their motivations. An exceptional success (or a single success if they achieved a success on the similar roll in "An Unusual Offer") on the latter reveals their plan: that they hope to convince a member of the characters' coterie to join theirs. If the characters remain under the false impression that the neighbors are somehow involved in Jonas's murder and the Neighborhood Watch, they may probe for evidence of such.

Consequences

The neighbors determine which characters they'd admit as members of their coterie and which they'd refuse based on these interviews. A character may come out of the interview with a good idea of the neighbor's intentions, though he may or may not share that information with the others.

Decisions

MENTAL •••

PHYSICAL –

SOCIAL •••

Overview

The neighbors gather the characters again in a quiet corner of a restaurant and offer their deal. They then leave the characters to their decisions.

Description

“Thank you again for coming,” Lucretia says when you’ve all found your seats. “My compatriots and I,” she gestures to Sam, then Tom, “would like to clarify our previous offer. We intend to grant territory to one of you, but only if that individual will revoke their old allegiances and join us. We have your current bids. Knowing the full scope of the deal, you may, of course, either remove your bid or increase it. Now is the time to do so.”

If all of the characters reject the neighbors’ offer, they nod politely and thank them before leaving. If a bidding war ensues, the neighbors do their best to keep the peace between characters who may feel betrayed. In the end, the neighbors thank the coterie for their time and tell them that they’ll be in contact with their decision. This leaves the characters with some decisions of their own.

Storyteller Goals

Present the offer to the characters, perhaps pulling the carpet out from under them. Make the offer seem genuinely attractive (this is made much easier if the characters haven’t taken care of the hunter problem yet). Make sure that the players understand what leaving the coterie means in the context of the game.

Character Goals

Outbid one another, refuse the deal outright or try to find some way to turn this to their advantage.

Actions

The action in this scene is largely relegated to roleplaying, though the characters may make the occasional Empathy roll against one another to figure out each others’ motivations. Combat may even break out. You will need to adjudicate this carefully. When player characters face off against one another, make sure to stick closely to the rules. While bending the rules can often work in the service of story when the characters are working together, using the rules as the primary framework for resolution when characters collide helps keep tensions in the story from growing into tensions between the players. While high drama makes for great stories (and memories), if emotions become too intense it can be helpful to take a break from the game to cool off. As Storyteller, it is up to you to watch your players, keep their feelings in mind, and react accordingly.

Consequences

The characters are left with an offer and the possibility of inner betrayal. They’ve been shown exactly how much the cost of loyalty is. Worse yet, they may not have found the figures behind the Jonas Craft murder. The characters must either stand up under the pressure of their situation or risk the coterie’s implosion.

Aftermath

The story ends on an open note, at the moment of the final twist. What happens from here depends entirely on the characters’ decisions and how far they’ve progressed with the hunters by the time the neighbors’ offer is made. There should be no doubt that the neighbors’ offer is tempting, but are any of the characters so self-serving as to accept it? If the characters haven’t made any progress towards solving Jonas Craft’s murder, they may not feel they have much of a choice: their own territory is quickly becoming untenable. This could lead to some vicious backstabbing by the characters.

You need to be prepared to deal with the repercussions of one character betraying the others. On one hand, it can be a convenient way of writing an old character or a Storyteller character who outlived her usefulness out of the story. On the other, it can cause some tension within the group. Make sure that you’ve made it

clear either here or in the past what a character leaving the coterie means for the player of said character. The most obvious and simple option is that the character reverts to your control. If this occurs, be sure to use the character again in the future; his strong ties to the coterie will increase any drama involving him. If, on the other hand, you have an interest in running a solo game or you want to revisit the character in the future, you may take one of those routes. Trying to tell a single story for both the coterie and the betrayer, however, will probably be difficult. (Further advice for handling this kind of betrayal can be found in “A Knife in the Back,” **New Wave Requiem**, p. 41).

Some characters may realize that an opportunity has been laid before them. The neighbors have obviously been weakened; if the characters move quickly, they may be able to grab some of their territory. This could be done by having one of the characters accept the neighbors’ deal only to act as a double agent and bring the neighbors down from within. The primary obstacle to stealing some of the neighbors’ land is that the Prince legally granted it to them. If the characters manage to solve the hunter problem and prove (or manufacture evidence) that the problem initially arose due to the neighbors’ inability to keep their territory under control, they might just be able to convince him to grant it to them instead. This, of course, will make long-term enemies of the neighbors.

Finally, if the characters did not resolve their problem with the vampire hunters, it is likely to grow. The current cell may enlist new members or train new cells in the area. Over time, the hunters

will become extremely competent and dangerous, building into a network. This conspiracy may be based around the Neighborhood Watch or some other framework. Among the Kindred, they may become known as the hunters that the characters failed to stop before they got out of hand. Vampire hunters can be an excellent source of drama, especially if they shake up the status quo by assassinating elder leaders.

Experience

Experience points should be given out as usual, as described on p. 229 of **Vampire: the Requiem**. In addition to the usual reward, feel free to grant the following:

- One point to any character who survives the scene “The Nightstalkers.”
- One point to any character involved in the defeat of the hunters and an additional point to the character who orchestrated or planned that defeat.
- One point to any character who followed one of the investigation actions to the maximum number of successes.

Furthermore, if a player lost her character by having him leave the group for the neighbors’ coterie, consider granting her five experience for her new character (if given a base starting character) or one point if you let her to transfer all or part of her experience to her new character. This is a bonus for roleplaying her character at her expense as a player.

SCENE: *The Scene of the Crime*

17

MENTAL ●●● PHYSICAL — SOCIAL ●●●

HINDRANCES

Limited light (-1)

Scene thoroughly disturbed by mortal investigators (-3)

Scene largely destroyed by fire (-3)

HELP

Flashlight (+1)

Heightened Senses (+2)

Unrestricted access to the scene (+3).

OTHER

None

STs

Set the scene and establish the neighborhood. Introduce the neighbors; allow the characters to get information on the crime.

PCs

Navigate relationship with neighbors. Figure out what happened to Jonas.

SCENE: *A Body of Evidence*

20

MENTAL ●●● PHYSICAL — SOCIAL ●●●

HINDRANCES

Vague information regarding the location of one or more of the fires (-1 to -3)

Lack of map (-3)

HELP

Ruler, compass or other cartographic tools (+1 to +2)

Large, detailed map of the area (+3)

This roll can benefit from the teamwork rules.

OTHER

None

STs

Each new bit of information the characters find should give them more reason to be afraid. Use the crowded streets of the city to further this paranoia.

PCs

Find out what happened to Jonas Craft and what it might mean for the characters.

SCENE: *The Neighborhood Watches*

22

MENTAL ●● PHYSICAL — SOCIAL ●●

HINDRANCES

None

HELP

None

OTHER

None

STs

Add another threat, the Neighborhood Watch. Contrast the willingness of humans to band together in the face of danger with the apathetic and self-serving nature of Kindred society.

PCs

Avoid the Neighborhood Watch while finding out who's behind it. Possibly look to Kindred elders for aid.

SCENE: *Hunting*

24

MENTAL ●● PHYSICAL ●● SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

Quarry crosses a stream, street or other avenue that disrupts the trail (-1)

Tracker attempts to move faster than half speed (-2) or faster than three-quarters speed (-4)

Heavy rain (-2 to -5)

HELP

Quarry consists of more than one individual (+1 for each after the first)

Quarry travels through a substance that leaves easy prints (such as mud, snow, or city refuse) if tracking by sight (+2) or is bleeding (+2)

Tracker is a vampire in wolf form (+2) or using Heightened Senses (+3)

OTHER

None

STs

Increase focus on the hunt for vampires or invert the usual predator/prey relationship between vampires and mortals.

PCs

Track down the quarry or foil a tracker.

SCENE: *The Nightstalkers*

26

MENTAL ●●		PHYSICAL ●●●●		SOCIAL —	
HINDRANCES		HELP		OTHER	
<p>Brightly lit area (-2)</p> <p>Abandoned area (-2)</p>		<p>Distance put between the character and the pursuers (+1 per total success difference in the foot chase roll)</p> <p>Particularly dark area of town (+2)</p> <p>Character attempts to lose herself in the crowded Rack (+3)</p>		<p>None</p>	
<p>STs</p>		<p>Inject a little horror violence and physical action into the story by inverting the relationship between the Kindred and their so-called prey.</p>			
<p>PCs</p>		<p>Get the hell out alive.</p>			

SCENE: *A Break in the Case*

28

MENTAL ●●●		PHYSICAL —		SOCIAL —	
HINDRANCES		HELP		OTHER	
<p>Characters possess no internet (-1) or library card (-2)</p> <p>Characters utterly lack appropriate Contacts or Allies to gain access to the information they're looking for (-3)</p> <p>Characters must rely on Retainers who can operate during the day to find information for them (-3)</p>		<p>Characters possess Contacts (+1) or Allies (+1 per dot) who can aid them in their search</p> <p>Characters supplement their own info with records obtained by Retainers during the day (+1 per dot of Retainer)</p> <p>Character has internet access (+1) or a library card (+2)</p>		<p>None</p>	
<p>STs</p>		<p>Make the last piece of the puzzle of the vampire hunters available to the characters.</p>			
<p>PCs</p>		<p>Find out more. Figure out what to do.</p>			

SCENE: *Collision*

30

MENTAL ●●●●		PHYSICAL ●●●●		SOCIAL ●●●●	
HINDRANCES		HELP		OTHER	
<p>None</p>		<p>None</p>		<p>None</p>	
<p>STs</p>		<p>Bring closure to the vampire hunter subplot. Keep pressure on the coterie through the use of this plot and the main plot.</p>			
<p>PCs</p>		<p>Defeat the hunters.</p>			

SCENE: *Hunger*

31

MENTAL ●●		PHYSICAL ●●●		SOCIAL ●●	
HINDRANCES		HELP		OTHER	
<p>Poacher is unfamiliar with the territory (-2)</p> <p>Poacher causes Predator's Taint (-3)</p>		<p>Poacher possesses Obfuscate (+1 for each dot after the first)</p> <p>Tenant possesses Auspex (+1 each dot)</p> <p>Tenant uses Retainers to patrol his territory (+1 per dot of Retainer set specifically to that task)</p>		<p>None</p>	
<p>STs</p>		<p>Add a little surreal personal horror to the story. Add another point of pressure to the characters' situation.</p>			
<p>PCs</p>		<p>Keep control.</p>			

SCENE: *An Unusual Offer*

32

MENTAL ●● PHYSICAL — SOCIAL ●●●

HINDRANCES

Character is hungry (-1) or starving (-2)

Character doesn't try to read their motivations until after the offer has been made (-2)

Character suspects the neighbors' intentions are something that they're not (-3)

HELP

Character ignores Tom to focus on Lucretia and Sam (+1)

A character utilizes Aura Perception (+1 per success on the activation roll)

This roll cannot benefit from the teamwork rules.

OTHER

None

STs

Revel in the tension of the backroom deals so common in vampire society.

PCs

Hear the neighbors out and figure out their motives.

SCENE: *Interviews with the Vampires*

33

MENTAL ●● PHYSICAL — SOCIAL ●●●●

HINDRANCES

None

HELP

None

OTHER

None

STs

Personalize the neighbors. Make their relationship with one another seem pleasant. Make the land they're offering seem desirable.

PCs

Impress the neighbors, figure out what their motivations are, or both.

SCENE: *Decisions*

34

MENTAL ●●● PHYSICAL — SOCIAL ●●●●

HINDRANCES

None

HELP

None

OTHER

None

STs

Present the offer to the characters. Make it seem genuinely attractive.

PCs

Outbid one another, refuse the deal outright, or try to find some way to turn the situation to their advantage.

SCENE:

MENTAL PHYSICAL SOCIAL

HINDRANCES

HELP

OTHER

STs

PCs



Name: Sam Rao Virtue: Hope Clan: Daeva
Concept: Leech by the Numbers Vice: Envy Covenant: Lancea Sanctum

Intelligence	●●●●●	Strength	●●●●●	Presence	●●●●●
Wits	●●●●●	Dexterity	●●●●●	Manipulation	●●●●●
Resolve	●●●●●	Stamina	●●●●●	Composure	●●●●●

Skills	Merits	Health
Academics ●●●●●	Allies (Business) ●●●●●	●●●●●●●●●●●●●●
Computer ●●●●●	Contacts ●●●●●	□□□□□□□□□□□□
(Financial Software)	(Stock Traders)	
Investigation ●●●●●	Covenant Status ●●●●●	Willpower
Occult ●●●●●	(Lancea Sanctum)	●●●●●●●●●●
Politics ●●●●●	Herd ●●●●●	□□□□□□□□□□
Science ●●●●●	Language (Hindi) ●●●●●	
(Mathematics)	Resources ●●●●●	Vitae
Athletics ●●●●●		□□□□□□□□□□
Brawl ●●●●●		■●●●●●●●●●
Drive ●●●●●		Vitae per turn <u>10/1</u>
Empathy ●●●●●		
Expression ●●●●●		
Intimidation ●●●●●	Disciplines	Blood Potency
(Subtle Threats)	Majesty ●●●●●	●●●●●●●●●●
Persuasion ●●●●●	Theban Sorcery ●●●●●	
Socialize ●●●●●	Vigor ●●●●●	Flaws
Subterfuge ●●●●●		

Notes

Theban Rituals: Vitae Reliquary, Liar's Plague

Attacks:

Type	Damage	Size	Special	Dice Pool
Swift Punch	0(B)	—	+1 if Vigor active	4

Humanity 6
Size 5
Speed 9
Defense 2
Initiative Mod 5
Armor 0



Name: Tom Virtue: Faith Clan: Mekhet
Concept: Sound Junkie Vice: Gluttony Covenant: Unaligned

Intelligence	●●●●●	Strength	●●●●●	Presence	●●●●●
Wits	●●●●●	Dexterity	●●●●●	Manipulation	●●●●●
Resolve	●●●●●	Stamina	●●●●●	Composure	●●●●●

Skills	Merits	Health
Academics ●●●●●	Barfly ●●●●●	●●●●●●●●●●●●●●
Computer ●●●●●	Contacts ●●●●●	□□□□□□□□□□□□
Crafts ●●●●●	(Club Scene)	
(Sound Systems)	Danger Sense ●●●●●	Willpower
Investigation ●●●●●	Meditative Mind ●●●●●	●●●●●●●●●●
Occult ●●●●●	Resources ●●●●●	□□□□□□□□□□
Science ●●●●●	Striking Looks ●●●●●	
Larceny ●●●●●		Vitae
Stealth ●●●●●		□□□□□□□□□□
Empathy ●●●●●		■●●●●●●●●●
Expression (Organ) ●●●●●		Vitae per turn <u>10/1</u>
Socialize ●●●●●		
Streetwise ●●●●●	Disciplines	Blood Potency
Subterfuge ●●●●●	Auspex ●●●●●	●●●●●●●●●●
(Blank Expression)	Celerity ●●●●●	
	Obfuscate ●●●●●	Flaws

Notes

Note: If Tom uses Aura Perception when combat begins, she gains a bonus to her Initiative equal to the number of successes to activate (p. 120, *Vampire: The Requiem*). Tom experiences her Aura Perception and Spirit's Touch abilities through sound.

Humanity 6 (Fixation 6)
Size 5
Speed 10 (20)
Defense 3 (4)
Initiative Mod 5 (6)
Armor 0



Class: Gangrel
Covenant: Invictus

the World of Darkness®

Name: Nicole Abner Virtue: Justice Faction:
Concept: Detective/Vigilante Vice: Wrath Group Name:

Skills		Merits		Health
Academics	●○○○○	Contacts	●●○○○	●●●●●●●○○○○
Investigation	●○○○○	(Criminal Informants, The Community)		□□□□□□□□□□
Medicine	●○○○○	Direction Sense	●○○○○	
Politics	●○○○○	Disarm	●●○○○	Willpower
Athletics	●●○○○	Iron Stamina	●●●○○	●●●●●○○○○○
Brawl	●●○○○	Resources	●○○○○	□□□□□□□□
Drive	●○○○○	Status (Police)	●○○○○	
Firearms	●●○○○	Weaponry Dodge	●○○○○	
Stealth	●○○○○		○○○○○	
Survival	●○○○○		○○○○○	
Weaponry	●●●○○		○○○○○	
(Nightstick)			○○○○○	
Empathy	●●○○○		○○○○○	
Expression	●○○○○		○○○○○	
Intimidation	●○○○○		○○○○○	
Persuasion	●○○○○			
Socialize	●○○○○	Flaws		
(Carousing)				
Streetwise	●○○○○			
Subterfuge (Lying)	●○○○○			

Morality	6
Size	5
Speed	10
Defense	2
Initiative Mod	5
Armor	2/3 (Bullet-Proof Vest)

Humanity 5
Size 5
Speed 13
Defense 2
Initiative Mod 5
Armor 0

Note: -1 Defense when wearing the bulletproof vest. Nicole also has a Glock 22, her service weapon, though she only uses it in emergencies. The gun listed above is her preferred weapon for hunting.

Attacks:	Type	Damage	Size	Special	Dice Pool
	Nightstick	2(B)	2	+1 Defense	9
	.45 ACP Handgun	3(L)	1	—	7
	Punch	0(B)	—	—	4

Name: Will Jeffries Virtue: Faith Faction:
 Concept: Conspiracy Theorist Vice: Greed Group Name:

Intelligence ●●●●●	Strength ●●●●●	Presence ●●●●●
Wits ●●●●●	Dexterity ●●●●●	Manipulation ●●●●●
Resolve ●●●●●	Stamina ●●●●●	Composure ●●●●●

Skills	Merits	Health
Computer ●●●●●	Allies ●●●●● (City Government)	●●●●●●●●●●●●●● □□□□□□□□□□□□
Crafts ●●●●●	Contacts ●●●●● (Conspiracy Newsgroups, Medical, Military)	
Investigation ●●●●● (Conspiracies)	Encyclopedic ●●●●●	Willpower ●●●●●●●●●●●●●● □□□□□□□□□□□□
Medicine (First Aid) ●●●●●	Knowledge	
Occult ●●●●●	Resources ●●●●●	
Politics ●●●●●	Stunt Driver ●●●●●	
Science ●●●●●		
Athletics ●●●●●		
Brawl ●●●●●		
Drive (High Speed) ●●●●●		
Firearms ●●●●●		
Survival ●●●●●		
Weaponry ●●●●●		
Empathy ●●●●●		
Expression ●●●●●		
Streetwise ●●●●●		
Subterfuge ●●●●●		
●●●●●		
●●●●●		

Notes

Attacks:				
Type	Damage	Size	Special	Dice Pool
.357 Magnum	3(L)	1	—	8
WWI Trench Knife	1(L/B)	—	Doubles as brass knuckles	4
Punch	0(B)	—	+1 if armed with trench knife	4
Punch	0(B)	—	—	4

Name: Father Jose Estevez Virtue: Hope Faction:
 Concept: Spiritual Guide Vice: Wrath Group Name:

Intelligence ●●●●●	Strength ●●●●●	Presence ●●●●●
Wits ●●●●●	Dexterity ●●●●●	Manipulation ●●●●●
Resolve ●●●●●	Stamina ●●●●●	Composure ●●●●●

Skills	Merits	Health
Academics ●●●●● (Religion)	Contacts ●●●●● (Local Shelters, Parishioners, Church Leadership)	●●●●●●●●●●●●●● □□□□□□□□□□□□
Crafts ●●●●●	Language ●●●●● (English, Spanish, Latin)	
Investigation ●●●●●	Resources ●●●●●	Willpower ●●●●●●●●●●●●●● □□□□□□□□□□□□
Occult ●●●●●	Status (Clergy) ●●●●●	
Brawl ●●●●●	Unseen Sense (Vampires) ●●●●●	
Larceny ●●●●●		
Weaponry ●●●●●		
Animal Ken ●●●●●		
Empathy (Motives) ●●●●●		
Expression ●●●●●		
Intimidation ●●●●● (Fire & Brimstone)		
Persuasion ●●●●●		
Socialize ●●●●●		
Streetwise ●●●●●		
Subterfuge ●●●●●		
●●●●●		
●●●●●		

Notes

Note: Father Estevez may use exorcisms (p. 214 of <i>The World of Darkness Rulebook</i>), though he suffers a -1 penalty due to his faltering Morality. He may attempt to use these rites on one of the Kindred. The effects of any such attempt is up to you, but the beliefs of the vampiric victim likely have the greatest effect on the rites' efficacy.				
Attacks:	Type	Damage	Size	Dice Pool
	Stake	1(L)	1	4
	Punch	0(B)	—	4
	Torch	2(L)	1	3

Success +2 lethal. Targets may catch fire & suffer damage in consequent turns. Aggravated damage against vampires.

MORAL SUPPORT

Tactic:

Two of the three hunters come from a military background, while the third is a member of the clergy. Each recognizes the importance of teamwork, and the boon camaraderie can be when facing the terrors of the world. Before facing a vampire the hunters believe will be capable of mental manipulation, Will and Nicole psych each other up, reminding one another of their days together in the service, and how they always saw them through. Then Father Estevez leads the group in a prayer, steeling their minds in the holy service of their mission.

Action: Instant

DICE POOL:

Will and Nicole each roll Wits + Expression (4 dice for Will, 3 for Nicole). Their successes are then added as dice to Father Estevez's Presence + Empathy (6 dice).

Modifiers: The group has been together for over six months with no change in membership (+3 to all rolls; this is true at the beginning of the story); their last encounter was a victory (+1 to all rolls; this is true at the beginning of the story); their last encounter was a defeat (-1 to all rolls); a member of the group has died within the last month (-3 to all rolls); a member of the group has become a monster or otherwise betrayed the group within the last month (-5 to all rolls).

Role Results:

Dramatic Failure: The Father's blessing raises doubts in the minds of all three about the righteousness of their cause. Each hunter immediately loses a point of Willpower, and the characters suffer a -2 penalty on attempts to use Moral Support or Staking within the following 24 hours.

Failure: The prayer, while comforting, does not provide any mechanical benefits to the group.

Success: The prayer bolsters the characters' defenses against supernatural mental attacks. Each character gains a number of bonus dice to any rolls to resist mental manipulation (such as Dominate, Majesty and Nightmare) equal to the number of successes Father Estevez rolled. This effect lasts for one scene.

Exceptional Success: As above. Furthermore, Father Estevez's prayer heartens the characters, and each immediately regains a spent Willpower point.

STAKING

Tactic:

Father Estevez taught the other two hunters that driving a stake through a vampire's heart would render it inert. It was Nicole's idea to develop a quick, reliable series of actions that would allow the hunters to quickly immobilize an opponent and drive a stake into its heart. When utilizing this ability, Father Estevez and Will grab the target, forcing it to the ground. Will then slams his hand against the target's chest, pointing out the location of the heart to Nicole, who gives Will only a split second to get his hand out of the way before she drives the stake home. Father Estevez makes the stakes himself, carefully crafting them from ash wood, writing scripture on them in dark ink. Before a hunt, he usually gives Nicole a stake and keeps a second for himself.

Action: Instant

DICE POOL:

Estevez & Will each roll Strength + Brawl (4 dice for each of the characters; the target's Defense applies, but if 1 of the 2 hunters scores a success, the tactic can continue) to force the target down. Will rolls Wits + Medicine (5 dice) to show Nicole where to strike. Nicole rolls Strength + Weaponry (6 dice) to stake the Kindred; she gains a bonus to this roll equal to the number of successes accumulated by Estevez and Will on their actions.

Modifiers: Stake is sturdy (+2 to Nicole's roll); Will or Father Estevez has a lower initiative than Nicole (-3 to all rolls); Will's Wits + Medicine roll fails (-3 to Nicole's roll); the vampire's heart isn't where it should be (-3 to Nicole's roll; if the heart isn't even in the chest, the attempt automatically fails).

Role Results:

Dramatic Failure: Something goes horribly wrong. Nicole makes a second Strength + Weaponry roll, without modifiers, and applies the successes as lethal damage against one of her fellow hunters.

Failure: Nicole fails to pierce the vampire's ribcage. She can try again the following turn, but the vampire can attempt to break the grapple in the meantime (p. 158, *The World of Darkness Rulebook*).

Success: The vampire suffers one point of lethal damage per success and is rendered torpid (p. 176, *Vampire: The Requiem*). If the hunters attempt to use this tactic against a living being, the target suffers aggravated damage rather than lethal. Note that this ability ignores the usual rules for staking; a single success is enough to put a Kindred into torpor. Carefully choreographed teamwork has its advantages.

Exceptional Success: Additional successes inflict additional damage, but have no further effect.

	NAME	VITAE	WILLPOWER	HEALTH	MERITS	DISCIPLINES	NOTES
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							

PLAYER'S TERRITORY

THE RACK

NEIGHBOR'S TERRITORY