

The Man Himself: Count [REDACTED] Dracula

The Count is educated, sophisticated, a man of letters.
If you make this man beat you down, it'll piss him right the [REDACTED] off.

By Russell Bailey and Ben Baugh

Aliases: The Count, Big D.

The alleged "Count Dracula" comes hand-in-hand with vulgarity. Attempts have been made to keep this document readable.

- C. Hardiaken.

DIARY ENTRY: Felix

So I step out of the bar to get some air, figuring I'll leave D inside to enjoy his crowd of admirers. I don't know why anybody gets excited when a guy that big wins at arm wrestling. Probably they just like it when a guy that big does anything. I take my drink with me, and she only complains a little.

While I'm sipping, I notice a car driving low-speed about a quarter mile down from where the gravel parking lot starts. You can see a long way out here in the desert, especially when you're like me and your eyes are good for picking up trouble. My hands are good with trouble, too, but the girl in my arms isn't fighting it, so I hide out a little and watch the car over her neck.

Doesn't take me long to figure out why the rustbucket's going slow. It's only keeping pace with a woman, if one far better looking than the jailbait I'm draining. She's got dark skin, dark curly hair down to about her shoulders. She's not wearing much, but it's obvious she picked out what she's wearing. Her look makes me think Mexican, and I even start to wonder how hungry I am. But gradually she gets close enough I can see her tattoos, and I realize I'm not touching this one. D might kill me.

About thirty yards out she makes a sprint for the bar. Bad idea; she's already to the gravel and the guy in the car just floors it. Bumper hits girl, girl goes flying, and car comes spinning across the gravel. I gulp down the rest of my drink and get ready to fade back inside. Guys are getting out of the car and a scene like this watches just as well from a window.

But then I see where the car skids, see where it stops, see what it hits.

Dracula

You do not [REDACTED] with Count Dracula's bike. It does not matter whether the Count is riding a fine custom chopper or some Japanese machine with a pretentious viking name. It does not matter whether you have heard of me or not. The bike is mine and the bike does not get [REDACTED] with.

I am sad that I am going to have to make an example of these men, because they are holding blunt instruments in a fashion that suggests they do not fear the Count. That suggests that they are stupid, but also brave. The Count feels a little sorry as he separates the first one's arm from its socket.

I've cracked the second one's skull with it before somebody shouts "¿Quién es usted?"

Mother-[REDACTED], ain't you ever heard of Count Dracula?

If the sucker had, he might have realized that (swift dismemberment aside) the Count is not a brute. He approaches me from behind, cursing loudly, assuming perhaps that I will turn to face him, that I will lead with my head and my arms, that I will lunge. His assumption is incorrect, as it does not consider that my leg can kick backwards and smash his most important assets.

In the end four men have died in a waste of bravado and good blood. I am perturbed by this, and perturbed by the fact that the indirect cause of this altercation, the young woman is not being spirited away by Felix for immoral purposes. The Count may be a thinking man, but Felix is a pervert.

I help her to her knees, then her feet. The blood glazing the side of her face flatters her. The Count considers the merits of perversion.

And then I see her tattoo.

Dracula

The Count is a man who pays attention to details. It is a point of pride. Also, recognizing little things like how a man holds a knife can tell one a lot about how willing he is to stab with it, and how good his chances might be. Licentiousness aside, I am struck by the girl's tattoos, and realize her clothing was deliberately chosen to reveal them. The Count appreciates many fine things, and good ink is one of them, but this ink wasn't art. It was a writ, a contract. Of course the Count could read it. Educated, remember? These tattoos owed something to the Los Hermanos del Cadáver and something more to Huitzilopōchtli in his war-garb, feathers and gore-spattered cape, and about her throat hummingbirds flew, circling to her left, almost rockabilly.

She was a peace treaty - murderous old Huitzilopōchtli on her belly, his left-handed hummingbirds. Somewhere on her would be the names of princes worked into the ink like picture puzzles, a little of their blood in the ink to give the treaty a measure of their immortality. The girl would be a little more than mortal - not a thrill, but she wouldn't get sick, and she'd age gracefully. Treaties live a hundred years easy, unless a car full of legbreakers beat their brains out.

I say to the girl, "Take off your clothes."

The Count in the World of Darkness

The Count - if you even believe he exists - attracts rumor like flies to spilled blood. It's almost impossible to believe a modern vampire hip to the new age would even dare carry that name. Big D... there's no more iconic name associated with the vampire than that one. But one thing that's important to remember when dealing with the Count is that he has no sense of irony at all. He says he is Count Dracula, and **fuck** you if you have a problem with that.

In a weird way, he's guileless and honest. Look at the guy - he's a meat-grinder, a tattooed cycle viking nearly seven feet tall, and if you piss him off he'll punch in your teeth, grab your tongue and eat it. How could the Man's true nature be writ any larger? But there's the flip-side, because anybody big and willing to do horrible horrible things to people can be a thug, yet there's actual poetry in the Count's soul. Yeah, alright, it's mostly poetry about the beauty of atrocity, but it's lyrical. So if there's a big secret to the Count, it's that everything the Man says about himself is true, but he doesn't say everything. He's got no problem lying for expediency's sake, but there's absolutely nothing about himself he'd conceal with deception. He really is the rightful holder of the title. He really is a Man of Education. He really is a man one does not mess with.

DIARY ENTRY: Felix

The Count is not a man to waste time! He drags his eyes all over her exposed skin, and then tells her to get her kit off right there in the parking lot. I'd have had her shivering and goosebumped, watching the delicious things that happen when blood rushes to exposed skin, the blush of shame becoming a flush of wantonness... what was I saying? But the Count doesn't believe in mind-tricks, but then he's got a magic all his own - something about being a seven foot beefbus with eyes that could stare down his own reflection (if, of course, he had one).

And so she did.

The Count would call me an ignorant philistine, unable to appreciate art, but there's art enough in lines of a woman by moonlight and fizzing neon to fill my withered soul. The Count turned her around and around slowly with hands he'd just murdered four men with, and she let him do it with hardly a shiver. By the third turn, I was sure she'd been in hands as cold as his before. He squatted down, bringing his head level with her back, and nodded once at what he saw there, two complicated intertwined patterns I couldn't quite make out.

Then he stood, grabbed her with one arm and leaped over to his fallen bike. To me he roared, "Felix!"

As these things must, we broke the bar's windows peeling out in the gravel.

Multitasking is not talking on the telephone while sending email. Multitasking is riding a custom cruiser with drilled out pistons and more torque on the low end than a drag racer on a half-gravel road with a screaming naked woman clinging to your back while men in a half a ton of Detroit steel try and drill you with 9mm and .45 bullets. The Count will kill a motherfucker who complains about the workday to him.

Felix was following on his embarrassing recent acquisition - a shiny black sci-fi thing. One of those big Japanese scooters with 450cc engines. Possibly the worst thing about it was that it could keep up with the Count's machine. As the Count said, Felix is a pervert.

But the pervert could see to his own wellbeing.

The Count does not usually run from a fight, but unlike me, the treaty's delicate skin would

The names on her back were powerful in the South of the Americas, and the political algebra added up to an ugly war. A whisper of lust from the Beast suggested perhaps war would in the end be better - one Prince toppled, and the survivor more secure, but the Count did not become the man he is today by letting cock or fang do the thinking for him. Leave that to Felix. Preserve the treaty now, and in calmer moments determine whether war or the continued peace serves best. If it's to be war, well... I'd save a little for Felix.

The Count is a generous man.

be cut and her bones would be broken - the fragile magic in the ink destroyed. The treaty was supposed to be fragile, to symbolize the fragile peace, which is the only kind possible for Princes of our kingdoms.

But where the Count is elemental, he's surrounded by the spectral – if he's a Count, where are his lands? He's highly mobile, seems independent of factionalism, and yet seems to pop up in places where secret Kindred cold wars turn hot. On nights of long knives, his is often the longest, making some think he's some kind of freelance enforcer, but that's not the case at all. The Count has an agenda, and he's got an insight into Kindred politics few can guess at. The elder Dracula fought monsters, within himself and without, but what he really fought was chaos. In his life and his Requiem, he sought to impose order and stability through the judicious application of extreme brutality. His namesake does the same astride a massive custom motorcycle, engine thundering subsonic like summer storm-call. He arrives and to all appearances throws a situation into frenzied pandemonium, with limbs and blood and innards thrown about the place with an almost festive profligacy. Yet when he roars off racing the dawn, and the survivors pick up the pieces and get their Requiems back on track, they find that things generally work smoother, like the machinery of Kindred society had been tuned up, been well greased. This leads some to reconsider the intrusion of the Count into their lives, until they remember that the machinery has been greased mostly with blood.

The Count's agenda is simple: the Kindred will survive... though he makes no guarantees about whether *you* will.

Rumors

"Yeah, okay, so he's scary and all, but what you really gotta worry about is his mom."

Nomadic Kindred may be numerous, but to the settled kind, they're still scary and exotic. City vampires get all superstitious and look for connections where there might not be any. The number one speculation surrounding the Count, and one he has never been known to confirm or deny, is his specific lineage: that he's the grandchilde of Dracula, by way of the Unholy.

Story goes like this: Dracula Senior had this prim and proper bride, right? And somewhere along the way, she snapped or she got snapped and went crazy on the back roads of America, and maybe there were Indians and now she's got claws and blackbird powers or something. That's the Unholy, and you best get out of her way.

So one time some guy doesn't get out of her way and she claws his guts out and he bites her ear off and she's *impressed*. So she brings him back to life, but there's more to it. He's smart. She makes him smarter. She takes him to some crazy monastery and teaches him discipline and control and self-knowledge and all of the things the original Dracula taught her.

And then she tries to snap him, like she snapped. And she fails. He stays cool and collected and practically zen, and she flies off in a cloud of black-winged birds. And the Count just dusts himself off and finds himself a dive bar and a good book.

"He's a biker, right, so he's got girls. Only he's Dracula, so they ain't girls; they're Brides."

Old Dracula started a revolution. He was methodical, eventually even enlightened. In many ways, *the* man for his time and place in the Fog of Ages. Some Kindred say that this Count is also the man for his time, and that he, too, leads a revolution. They say that the Count is taking the beautiful and the bestial and the badass and making them into something more, that he is teaching them not to hide behind mortals but to take what they need and never look back. These Kindred have become his Brides.



The Brides, supposedly, are a group of roving Kindred structured like an outlaw motorcycle gang. None of them were turned by the Count – there's still just one Dracula – but they follow his way of life, his philosophy. Whether or not he actually leads them is a subject of debate, mostly because nobody wants to imagine the Count at the head of an army.

Brides of Dracula can be boys or girls, and they don't heed the Traditions as such. Instead, they make their own way, help each other out, and have a good time every night of their Requiems. Like the Count, they leave big messes behind. But somehow, mortals still haven't twigged yet that they're out there.

In the Southwest, folks say the Brides have been repatching Bruja. Folks say there's a war coming.

"Eight feet tall, pierced and tattooed, completely indestructible... come on, does that sound like a vampire to you?"

Yes, there are those who doubt the Count, who do not believe that he could really be Count Dracula. Those who doubt, however, still fear, and still talk. They say that he is not Dracula's grandchilde, but his creation.

In his quest to understand the Kindred condition, the story goes, the original Dracula sought to understand life and death directly. If fire was the bane of vampires, then it must be the basis of humanity in some way. So Dracula spent years seeking the fire within humanity, and ways to transform and refine it. He sought to transcend vampirism by creating a creature like a vampire, yet with the fire of a man.

His creation was a hideous failure. Indeed, the massive corpse he raised could face the sun, and did not suffer a hunger for blood. It even burned within. Yet where the Kindred were cursed within, this creature carried a curse without, blighting any land it slept upon, forever ruining everything it touched.

Dracula abandoned the monster in disgust. Yet, in its crude way, it aped him and took on his identity, eventually becoming the Count of modern legend.

Name: Count Dracula

Clan: Gangrel

Covenant: Unaligned

Apparent Age: Mid-30s, difficult to tell with tattoos and piercings

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 3, Wits 4, Resolve 3

Physical Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 4

Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulate 2, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Academics 3, Investigation 3, Occult 3, Politics 1, Science 1

Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 5 (Dirty), Drive 2 (Motorcycle), Firearms 2, Larceny 1, Stealth 1, Survival 2, Weaponry 2

Social Skills: Intimidation 3 (Staredown), Persuasion 1, Socialize 1, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 1

Merits: Brawling Dodge 1, Dirty Fighting 5, Fame 1, Giant 4

Willpower: 6

Humanity: 4

Virtue: Fortitude

Vice: Wrath

Health: 10

Initiative: 6

Defense: 3

Speed: 12

Blood Potency: 3

Disciplines: Animalism 1, Protean 2, Resilience 3

Devotions: Serpent in the Belly

Vitae/per Turn: 12/1

Legacy

Fighting Style: Dirty Fighting (• to •••••)

Prerequisites: Strength (•••), Brawl (•••)

Effect: Your character has learned a brutal, artless form of fighting intended to inflict the most punishment on the most people as quickly as possible – no elegance, no style, no forms, katas, training regimes or coaches. This is a way of kicking ass learned by doing it, by kicking ass until it's as natural as breathing. Fighting dirty also teaches your character about getting his ass kicked, because there's no safe way to learn. You learn it by fighting in gutters and poolrooms, alleys, trenches, prison yards and biker bars. Hit first, hit hardest, hit last, and then kick his teeth in when he falls down. The best opponent is the one who's choking on his own puke and rolling on around on the ground clutching his smashed testicles. It says a lot about your character that she's fought often enough and hard enough to get this good at it.

Low Blow (•)

Effect: This suggests a male target, but there's places on the female body just as sensitive and just as dishonorable to stick your boot in. Nail your opponent with a really nasty blow to a really sensitive area, and leave them swaying on their feet, trying not to vomit from the sick vision-twisting pain. A successful Brawl attack that generates more successes than your target's Composure causes them to lose their next action.

Shank (••)

Effect: You can fight with knives, small blades, shanks and other small improvised weapons using your Brawl skill rather than Weaponry.

Suck it Up (•••)

Effect: As much as you know about dishing out the pain, you've also learned something about taking it. Quit whining and suck it up. Spend a point of Willpower, and ignore all wound penalties for the remainder of the scene.

One or a Dozen, It Don't Matter (••••)

Effect: You know all the tricks for fighting more than one guy at the same time – how to get them in each other's way, hurt one bad to scare another, and psyche them out. Each opponent beyond the first you're facing in close combat adds 1 to your Defense and you can spend a point of Willpower each to make simultaneous additional brawl attacks on two or more of these opponents.

I Said Stay Down! (•••••)

Effect: After making a successful Low Blow, your victim has to make a Stamina roll. If successful, they only lose their next action like normal. If they fail, they go down in a mewing pathetic heap and clutch their ruptured vitals, turtling up in hopes that you won't keep hurting them.

New Devotion: Serpent in the Belly (Fortitude••, Animalism•••, Protean••)

Learn this devotion and a serpent wakes in your belly, rising up in coils around your spine and whispering in your ear when your allies call. There's some mystical hoodoo involved – you mark them at their temples and lips with your blood when you teach them how to whisper the magic words, and they sacrifice a little of their blood to the serpent when they do – but once invoked you can sense their presence, their general condition, and you can find them wherever they are. Marking a friend costs 1 Vitae, and they remain marked until you decide to withdraw your protection of them. When they call the serpent, they spent a point of Vitae (or if mortal, take a point of bashing damage) and you can immediately sense them and know which direction they are in. You can't read their thoughts, but you know if they're in pain and their general emotional state. If they are in trouble, you know it. If they move while the serpent is awake, you know how far and how fast based on how their proximity to you changed. Each call lasts a whole night, and then your ally must re-invoke it after sleeping.

Serpent in the Belly costs 21 XP to purchase.



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