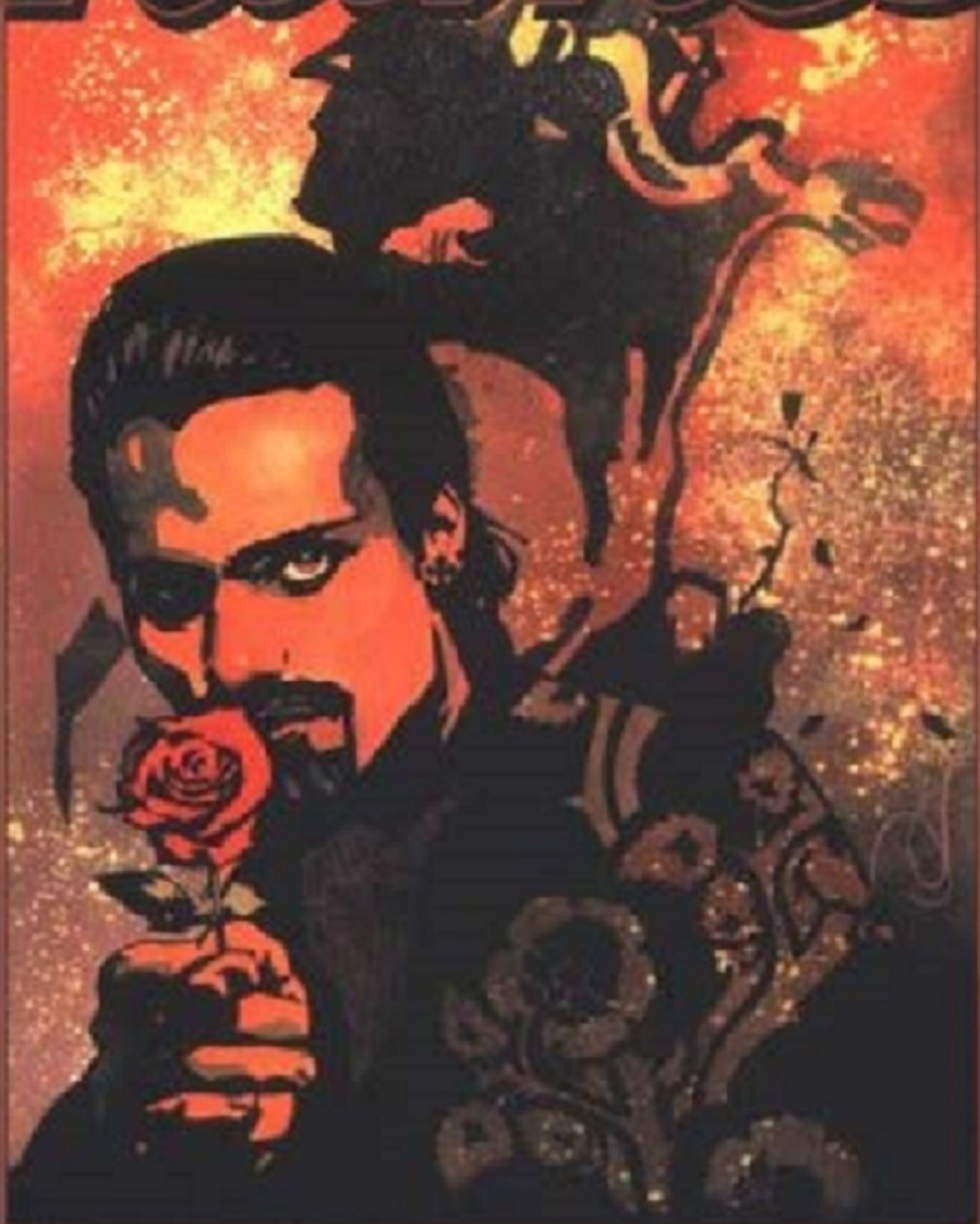


C L A S S I C O F

Rainbow



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SPECIAL THANKS

Two Small Mummies
Chadbot
Night Monkey
Angie Harmon
Boxed Boys James and Andy
The Camarilla
All that sediment in the bottom of my wine glass
The Fred Durst mullet skater
Paul van Dyk

DIED ON THE VINE

Monkey-Chickens: The Whip-Assing. Sorry, Dean.

DUH

The Mind's Eye Theatre credit for Alan I. Kravit was accidentally left out of Clanbook: Tzimisce. I am a cabbage.



C L A N B O O K :

Ravnos

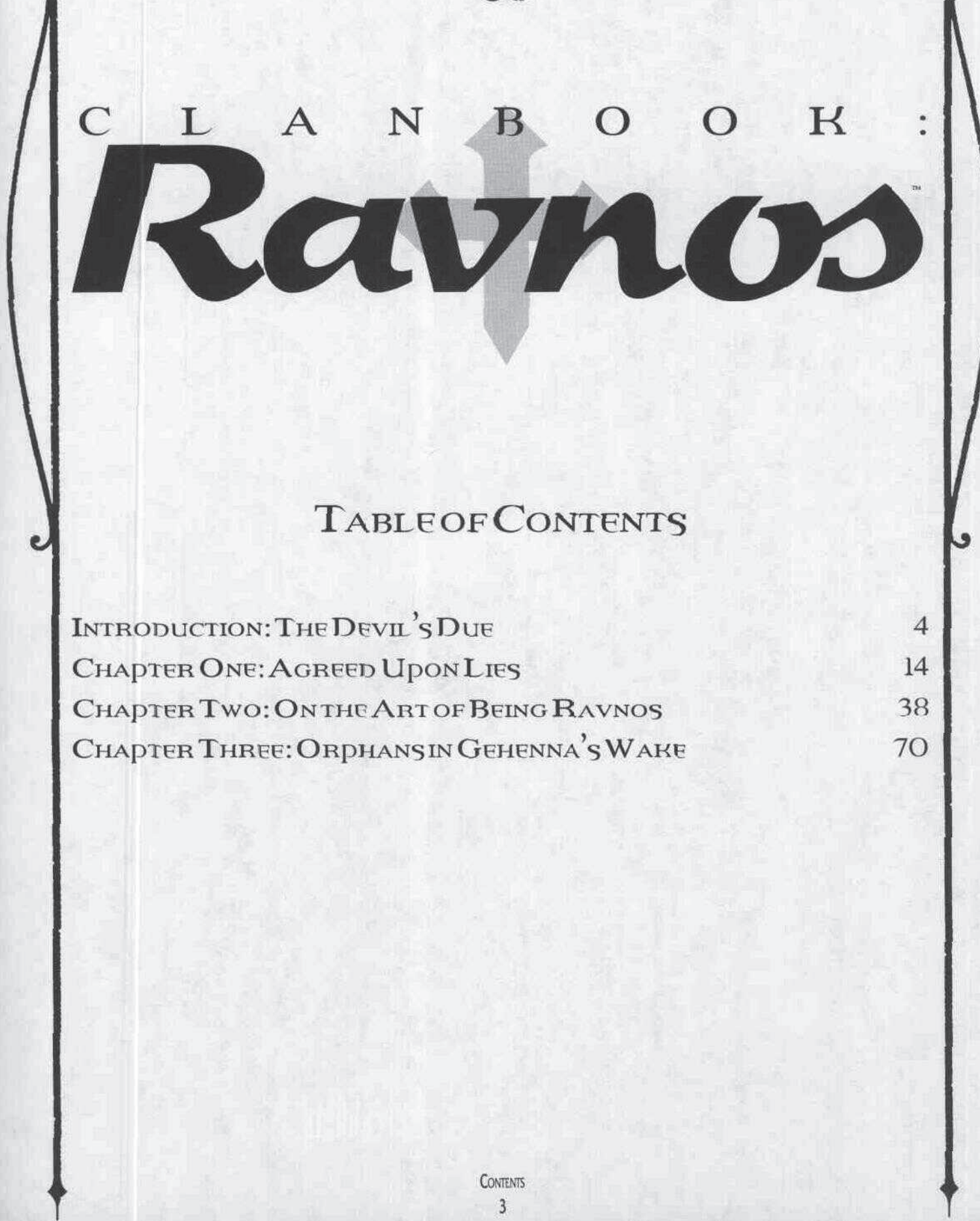


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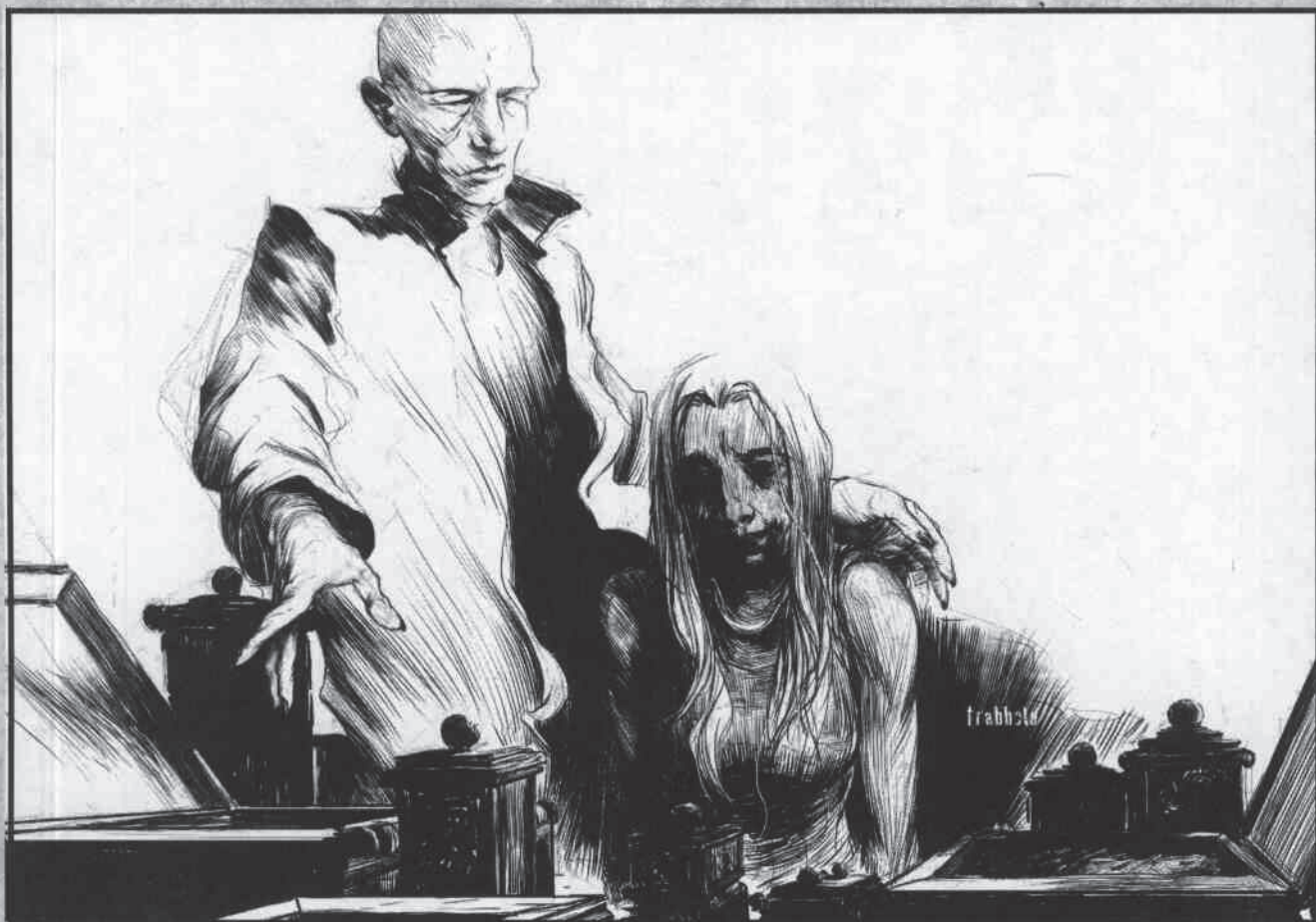
THE DEVIL'S DUE

"BLOODY HELL," GWEN MUTTERED INTO HER DRINK. "ONE LAST NIGHT OF FREEDOM." SHE DRAINED THE GLASS IN ONE GULP, SHUDDERING AS THE SCOTCH BURNED ITS WAY TO HER STOMACH TO JOIN THE PARTY ALREADY STARTED BY THE PREVIOUS THREE SHOTS.

GWENDOLYN BRAND, PH. D., FULLY INTENDED TO DRINK HERSELF INTO OBLIVION. SHE'D HAVE A HEADACHE TOMORROW, BUT SHE REGARDED THAT AS AN ACCEPTABLE COMPROMISE. WHERE WAS THAT BASTARD JOHANN WHEN SHE REALLY NEEDED HIM? THE LAZY FUCK GOT HER INTO THIS MESS, THEN VANISHED JUST WHEN SHE NEEDED TO GET OUT. A SMUGGLER LIKE HIM SHOULD HAVE NO TROUBLE SPEAKING

A THIEF LIKE HER OUT OF THE LAW'S LONG REACH, RIGHT? GWEN SIGNALLED THE BARKEEP FOR A FIFTH SHOT AND TOOK A MOMENT TO WATCH THE ROOM SWIM AROUND HER. IT LOOKED UNREAL, LIKE HER TIME AROUND JOHANN. SOMETHING ABOUT HIM MADE THE WORLD FUZZ OUT AT THE EDGES.

THE BARKEEP TAPPED HER ON THE SHOULDER. "DON'T YOU THINK IT'S TIME TO GO HOME?" GWEN SHOOK HER HEAD AND TRIED TO FOCUS BOTH EYES ON THE BALDING OLDER MAN. HE WAS LOOKING ANNOYINGLY PATERNAL. "A YOUNG LADY LIKE YOU SHOULD BE HOME WITH YOUR BOYFRIEND ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS."



SHE SHOOK HER HEAD AGAIN, PARTLY IN DENIAL AND PARTLY TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF BARKEEPS IN HER VISION TO ONE. "POSSIBLY," DAMN, I'M SLURRING ALREADY. "NO... SIR, I'M WAITING FOR HIM. GIMME... GIVE ME ANOTHER SCOTCH, PLEASE." WITH ANY LUCK, SHE COULD PERFORATE HER LIVER ENOUGH TO DIE BEFORE SHE GREW OLD IN PRISON.

THE BARKEEP NODDED AND SHRANK INTO THE SHADOWS, LEAVING GWEN IN PEACE. SHE STARED INTO HER EMPTY SHOT GLASS. "BASTARDS. YOU BUY THEM BOOKS, YOU PAY THEIR WAY, AND WHAT DO THEY DO? THEY EAT THE BLOODY TEACHER. FUCKING BASTARDS."

THE FINAL TIME HAD BEEN IN ISTANBUL. SHE'D MET WITH JOHANN IN THE KUMKAPI DISTRICT, IN A NICE, MODERN NIGHTCLUB. THE

DANCE FLOOR FLASHED WITH A MILLION COLORS WHILE YOUNG PEOPLE FROM A DOZEN DIFFERENT NATIONS THRASHED AROUND EACH OTHER TO THE MUSIC OF AN ISRAELI POP SENSATION NAMED DANA INTERNATIONAL. THE MINGLED SMELLS OF SWEAT, ALCOHOL AND A LESSER CLOUD OF ILLICIT DRUGS LENT AN AIR OF UNREALITY TO THE PROCEEDINGS. GWEN SAT AT A CORNER TABLE, HER FLIGHT BAG FILLED WITH PORTABLE TREASURES FOR JOHANN TO AUCTION IN THE STATES.

JOHANN, THE BASTARD, WAS LATE AGAIN. HE'D NEVER BEEN ON TIME AND REFUSED TO TRY TO CHANGE HIS HABITS. THE TREASURES SHE WAS HOLDING FOR HIM HAD COME FROM ONE OF THE ENDLESS DIGS INTENDED TO IDENTIFY THE REAL PLAIN OF ILIUM, WHERE THE TRO-

JAPS AND GREEKS SUPPOSEDLY FOUGHT THE TROJAN WAR. THE TRINKETS CERTAINLY LOOKED LIKE THEY DATED FROM THE ACHAEAN PERIOD, BUT COULD EASILY HAVE BEEN LATER IMITATIONS. GWEN DIDN'T CARE BEYOND THE GENEROUS FINDER'S FEE JOHANN ALWAYS HAD READY.

SHE THOUGHT SHE RECOGNIZED AN ANGLO FACE NEAR THE BAR, BUT THE LIGHT WAS TOO DIM IN CONTRAST TO THE STROBES FOR HER TO BE SURE. BEFORE SHE COULD TAKE A CLOSER LOOK, JOHANN APPEARED AND SAT OPPOSITE HER. SHE STUDIED HIS NARROW, PALE FEATURES, MARKED BY AN UNUSUALLY HIGH FLUSH IN HIS CHEEKS — PROBABLY FROM THE CLOSE HEAT IN THE CLUB. AS USUAL, HIS PUPILS WERE SLIGHTLY DILATED AND HIS OTHERWISE STYLISH CLOTHES UNKEMPT, AS IF HE'D BEEN SLEEPING IN THEM FOR A WEEK. HE STARED AT A POINT JUST BEYOND GWEN'S LEFT SHOULDER, FOCUSING OWLISHLY FOR A MOMENT BEFORE ASKING IN HIS CLIPPED NEW ENGLAND ACCENT, "WHAT'D YOU BRING ME THIS TIME? I HOPE YOU HAVE SOME INTACT POTTERY. ONE OF MY BUYERS HAS BEEN ON MY CASE FOR AGES—"

"HUSH!" GWEN CUT HIM OFF AND GLANCED AROUND. NO ONE WAS LOOKING HER WAY — WAIT, HAD THE ANGLO AT THE BAR JUST TURNED AROUND FAST ENOUGH TO GET WHIPLASH? HE WAS LEANING AGAINST THE BAR NOW, HIS POSE CASUAL. SHE KEPT HALF AN EYE ON HIM AS SHE SPOKE TO JOHANN. "I CAN'T EVEN COUNT ALL THE LAWS I'M BREAKING BY MEETING YOU HERE. COULD YOU AT LEAST KEEP IT DOWN?"

JOHANN'S EYES WIDENED AT HER IMPERTINENCE. HE STARED FOR A FEW MOMENTS, THEN SHOOK HIMSELF AND SHRUGGED WITH A FORCED SMILE. "SORRY BABY, GOT CARRIED AWAY. THE

HASH HERE IS THE LIVING END, I TELL YOU. SO, WHAT'D YOU BRING ME?"

MOLLIFIED BY HIS SOFTER TONE, SHE TICKED OFF THE ACQUISITIONS AGAIN, FORGETTING ABOUT THE ANGLO, THE MUSIC AND THE CLUB IN GENERAL. THE GWEN IN THE PRESENT-DAY HORSE BRASS PUB CURSED HERSELF FOR THE HUNDREDTH TIME FOR THAT MOMENT OF INATTENTION.

JOHANN INTERRUPTED HER HALFWAY THROUGH THE LIST. "HEY, KIDDO, THAT SOUNDS GOOD, BUT CAN YOU SHOW ME SOMETHING? I'D LIKE A LOOK BEFORE I COMMIT TO ANYTHING." HE PATTED HIS JACKET, WHERE HE USUALLY KEPT HIS WALLET. HIS CAVALIER ATTITUDE ALWAYS AMAZED HER. THE COCKY BASTARD COULD WALK THROUGH THE NASTIEST PART OF ANY CITY IN THE WORLD IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT AND SHOW NOT A SINGLE CARE FOR THE FACT THAT HIS PRESENCE SCREAMED "VICTIM!" TO THE MOON, STARS AND EVERY PREDATOR WHO WALKED THE STREETS. EVEN MORE AMAZING WAS THE FACT THAT HE NEVER SEEMED TO SUFFER FOR IT. THE 800.

SHE SLID THE GREEN FLIGHT BAG OVER TO HIM. LET HIM OPEN IT UP. SHE DIDN'T WANT TO GET CAUGHT HANDLING THIS STUFF IN PUBLIC, BUT SHE COULDN'T LET JOHANN GO. SHE NEEDED THE CASH. JOHANN SEEMED HAPPY ENOUGH WITH THE TRINKETS AND TOSSED HER AN ENVELOPE STUFFED WITH HUNDRED-DOLLAR BILLS. BLOODY YANK COULDN'T BE BOTHERED TO EXCHANGE THE MONEY BEFORE PAYING OFF HIS FAITHFUL THIEVES.

APPARENTLY SATISFIED WITH THE TRANSACTION, JOHANN GOT UP, SLUNG THE BAG OVER HIS SHOULDER AND HEADED FOR THE EXIT. A BLACK-HAIRED WOMAN GWEN HAD SEEN A DOZEN TIMES BUT NEVER MET CAUGHT

UP WITH JOHANN HALF WAY, AND THE TWO LEFT THE NIGHTCLUB FOR THE WARM, MEDITERRANEAN NIGHT.

A WEEK LATER AND BACK IN LONDON, GWEN RECEIVED A LETTER FROM DEAN WELLESLEY. THE MISSIVE DEMANDED AN IMMEDIATE MEETING AND EXPLAINED LITTLE, THOUGH SHE HAD A DEFINITE FEELING THE MAN WANTED HER HEAD ON A PLATTER.

DEAN WELLESLEY WAS WELL INTO HIS 50S, PROBABLY ON THE VERGE OF HIS SEXAGENARIAN DECADE. HIS AGE ONLY ADDED TO HIS FORMIDABLE PRESENCE. RUMORS AROUND THE COLLEGE CLAIMED HE COULD STARE DOWN THE MOST INCORRIGIBLE STUDENT IN SECONDS, WITH ONLY THE LIFT OF AN EYEBROW TO INDICATE HIS DISPLEASURE. DESPITE THE STORIES, GWEN WAS NOT PREPARED FOR THE FULL FORCE OF THE MAN'S ANGER THAT ASSAULTED HER THE MOMENT SHE ENTERED HIS OFFICE. "WHAT ON EARTH WERE YOU THINKING, DOCTOR BRAND?" HIS EMPHASIS ON "DOCTOR" GAVE HER THE DISTINCT IMPRESSION THAT HE DID NOT VIEW IT AS AN HONORIFIC.

STARTLED INTO SPEECHLESSNESS, GWEN COULD ONLY SHAKE HER HEAD. THE DEAN BARELY NOTICED HER REACTION AND THUNDERED ON. "OXFORD IS ENGLAND'S MOST PRESTIGIOUS UNIVERSITY. IT EXISTS TO PROVIDE THE YOUTH OF EVERY GENERATION THE VERY BEST OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION TO BETTER THEIR LIVES AND THEIR CAREERS." HE PAUSED, HIS GAZE BORING INTO HER SKULL.

GWEN NODDED, SUSPICIONS DEVELOPING. "YES, SIR." SHE TOOK A BREATH AND STARTED TO ASK WHAT WAS GOING ON, BUT THE DEAN WAS OFF AGAIN.

"OXFORD IS NOT HERE TO PROVIDE PETTY CRIMINALS WITH A VENUE IN WHICH TO PRAC-

TICE THEIR ILLICIT ACTIVITIES. DO YOU THINK THIS UNIVERSITY HAS STOOD FOR AS LONG AS IT HAS, MAINTAINED ITS REPUTATION FOR AS LONG AS IT HAS, BY CODDLING REPROBATES?" HIS VOLUME INCREASED UNTIL THE FINAL WORD LITERALLY RATTLED THE WINDOWS.

"NO SIR." NOW GWEN KNEW THAT THE DEAN HAD LEARNED OF HER DEALINGS WITH JOHANN. BUT HOW?

THE ANSWER ARRIVED MOMENTS LATER. DEAN WELLESLEY TURNED FROM GWEN AND SPOKE INTO HIS INTERCOM. "MISS WALLACE, COULD YOU PLEASE SEND THE BOY IN?" HE BARELY WAITED FOR THE AFFIRMATIVE AND WAVED GWEN TO SILENCE BEFORE SHE COULD ASK A QUESTION. "ALL WILL BE CLEAR IN A MOMENT, ALTHOUGH I AM CERTAIN YOU ALREADY KNOW WHY YOU ARE HERE."

WHEN THE DOOR OPENED, GWEN STARED. THE YOUNG MAN STANDING IN THE DOORWAY WAS EDWARD TAYLOR, HER RESEARCH ASSISTANT FROM THE ILIUM DIG. WITH A SUDDEN CHILL, SHE REALIZED IT WAS HIM SHE'D SEEN IN THE *KUMKAPI* NIGHTCLUB. THE DEAN DIRECTED EDWARD TO SIT — SOMETHING HE HAD NOT INVITED GWEN TO DO.

"NOW, MR. TAYLOR," WELLESLEY SAID IN A MORE CONTROLLED TONE. "COULD YOU REPEAT FOR DR. BRAND WHAT YOU TOLD ME A FEW DAYS AGO?"

GWEN'S HEART SANK AS ED — WHOM SHE HAD CONSIDERED A FRIEND — PRODUCED PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE STOLEN MATERIALS AND DESCRIBED HER RENDEZVOUS WITH JOHANN DOWN TO THE EXCHANGE OF GOODS FOR MONEY. ED ALSO PRODUCED THE NOTE JOHANN HAD SENT TO ARRANGE THE TIME AND PLACE — NOT DAMNING IN ITSELF, BUT IN COMBINATION WITH THE REST....

WELLESLEY TURNED HIS FORMIDABLE GAZE BACK TO GWEN. "NOW, YOUNG LADY, HAVE YOU ANYTHING TO SAY IN YOUR DEFENSE? BEFORE YOU BEGIN, YOU SHOULD ALSO BE AWARE THAT I HAVE AUTHORIZED THE HIRING OF INVESTIGATORS TO CHECK MR. TAYLOR'S CLAIMS BEFORE SUMMONING YOU HERE. SUCH ACCUSATIONS LEVELED AGAINST ONE OF OUR FACULTY — EVEN ONE AS NEW AS YOURSELF — ARE VERY SERIOUS INDEED. WE HAVE EVIDENCE OF YOUR THEFTS FROM DIG SITES STRETCHING BACK TO THE BEGINNING OF YOUR ARCHAEOLOGICAL CAREER. I AM APPALLED THAT YOU WOULD NOT ONLY RISK YOUR OWN PROFESSIONAL STANDING, BUT ALSO THE REPUTATION OF OUR ALMA MATER."

GWEN STOOD STRAIGHTER AND MET WELLESLEY'S GAZE. "YES, DEAN, I DO HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY." IF HE COULD USE HONORIFICS AS WEAPONS, SO COULD SHE. "I DID IT. WHAT ELSE COULD I DO? I COULDN'T AFFORD TO LIVE ON THE PITTANCE THIS UNIVERSITY LAUGHINGLY CALLS A SALARY. PERHAPS IF THE ANCIENT AND FAMED OXFORD UNIVERSITY PAID ME AS MUCH AS ANY MALE PROFESSOR RECEIVES, I WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN COMPELLED TO SEEK AN ALTERNATE FORM OF INCOME. HOWEVER, I HAVE COMMITTED NO CRIME ON ENGLISH SOIL. MY SOLICITOR WILL CONTACT YOU SHORTLY." BEFORE WELLESLEY OR TAYLOR COULD STOP HER, SHE STORMED OUT OF THE OFFICE, SLAMMED THE DOOR AND RAN FOR HER AUTOMOBILE.



SHE DROVE TO PICCADILLY CIRCUS, SPENT SEVERAL MINUTES LOOKING FOR A PARKING SPACE, AND THEN TOOK THE TUBE SOMEWHERE ELSE. SHE DIDN'T CARE WHERE, SHE JUST RODE UNTIL SHE FOUND SOMEPLACE PROMISING AND STOPPED. SHE HAD NO INTENTION OF CALLING A LAWYER, BUT SHE DID WANT TO CALL JOHANN. THE BASTARD GOT HER INTO THIS MESS, HE COULD GET HER OUT. SHE DIDN'T BELIEVE SHE COULD STAY OUT OF PRISON FOR A MINUTE, NOT WITHOUT HELP.

SHE DIDN'T DARE RETURN TO HER FLAT OR HER CAR. THE FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS WAS TO CALL JOHANN AND LAY OUT HER SITUATION WITHOUT INCRIMINATING HIM AS WELL AND TO ARRANGE A MEETING. THE SECOND WAS TO KEEP MOVING UNTIL JOHANN COULD REACH HER. SHE PLACED THE CALL AND WAITED, STOMACH ROILING.

"HELLO?" CAME JOHANN'S VOICE ON THE OTHER END OF THE LINE.

"LISTEN, YOU YANK IDIOT. I NEED HELP. MY BOSS SAID HE KNOWS ABOUT US AND I KNOW HE'S CALLED THE POLICE. THEY'VE PROBABLY PUT OUT A BULLETIN WITH MY PICTURE ON IT. IF YOU DON'T HELP ME, I'LL TELL THEM EVERYTHING I KNOW —"

"WHOA, WHOA. SLOW DOWN, BABY. JUST HOW DEEP IS THE SHIT YOU'RE IN?"

"I COULD DROWN YOU IN IT."

"RIGHT, THEN. I'LL BE OVER AS FAST AS I CAN."

THEY HAD MADE ARRANGEMENTS TO HOOK UP AT THE HORSE BRASS PUB. AND SO NOW HERE SHE WAS, GETTING DRUNK ON SCOTCH. NEVER A BRILLIANT MOVE WHEN YOU HAVEN'T SLEPT IN TWO DAYS, BUT SHE WAS SO TIRED OF RUNNING.

JOHANN ARRIVED AT THE PUB FOUR HOURS LATE. GWEN HAD CHASED OFF A SECOND ATTEMPT TO WAVE HER HOME WITH A TIP IN THE DOUBLE DIGITS. THE YANK WAS HIS USUAL UNFLAPPABLE SELF. "SO, WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU — HOLY SHIT, HOW MUCH HAVE YOU BEEN DRINKING?"

GWEN LOOKED AT HER GLASS. "ALL OF IT."

JOHANN GRINNED. "WELL, AT LEAST YOU MADE IT INTERESTING. LET'S GO, SHALL WE? I'VE PREPARED A ROOM AT THE ROYAL GARDEN. ONLY THE BEST FOR MY LADIES." HE HELPED GWEN TO HER FEET. "WHEN YOU GET IN TROUBLE, YOU DON'T DO IT IN SMALL DOSES, DO YOU?" SHE MUMBLED AN ANSWER, FATIGUE AND ALCOHOL CARRYING HER BEYOND VERBAL RESPONSES. BY THE TIME JOHANN GOT HER INTO HIS RENTED CAR, SHE WAS OUT COLD.

SHE AWOKE BRIEFLY ON THE MOST COMFORTABLE BED SHE'D EVER SLEPT IN. HALF-CONSCIOUS, SHE WAS AWARE THAT JOHANN — WHO ELSE COULD IT BE? — WAS DOING SOMETHING TO HER THAT FELT GOOD — BETTER THAN THE BEST SCOTCH AND THE BEST SEX ROLLED INTO ONE. SHE'D TAKE HIM TO TASK IF SHE COULD ONLY STOP MELTING INTO THE MATTRESS. SHE SLIPPED BACK INTO SLEEP, HAUNTED BY DREAMS TAINTED WITH THE PARANOIA OF THE PAST TWO DAYS.

SHE AWOKE FULLY SOMETIME IN THE LATE AFTERNOON. THE SUN'S RAYS SHONE THROUGH THE OPEN CURTAINS AND HAMMERED AT HER EYELIDS LIKE A BAD BASS RHYTHM. SHE FORCED HER EYES OPEN THROUGH THE POUNDING HEADACHE. SHE COULD TASTE HER TONSILS — AND THEY DID NOT TASTE GOOD. SHE TURNED HER ACHING HEAD AND SAW A NOTE ON THE PILLOW NEXT TO HER, IN PRECISE HANDWRITING:

DON'T GO ANYWHERE, DON'T USE ROOM SERVICE. I'VE LEFT YOU FOOD AND DRINK FOR THE DAY. I'LL BE BACK THIS EVENING AND WE CAN LEAVE.

KISSES.

JOHANN

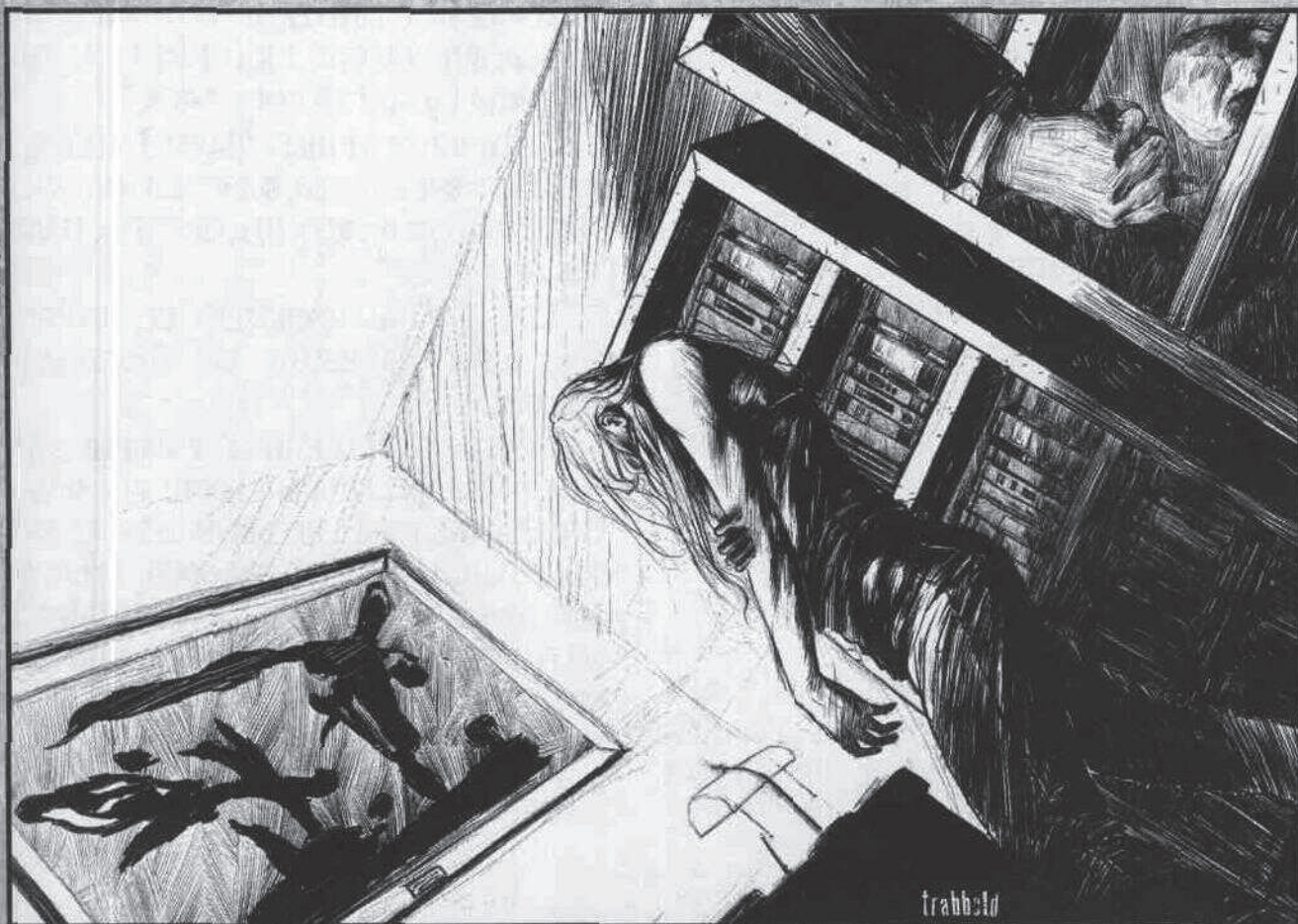
"WONDERFUL," SHE MUTTERED. "TRAPPED IN A HOTEL NEXT TO KENSINGTON PALACE WITH THE POLICE NO DOUBT SCOURING THE STREETS FOR ME." SHE STRAGGLED OUT OF BED, CLOSED THE CURTAINS, SHUT OFF ALL THE LIGHTS, AND SIPPED AS MUCH WATER AS SHE COULD HOLD DOWN. SOLID FOOD WAS BEYOND HER. "I'M SUCH A BLOODY FOOL." THROUGH A MIRACLE OF BIOLOGY, SHE DOZED OFF BEFORE EVENING.

JOHANN WOKE HER HOURS LATER, ON TIME FOR ONCE. "I'M SORRY I HAD TO LEAVE YOU. YOU'LL UNDERSTAND WHY SOON ENOUGH." HE

HELPED HER INTO A CHAIR. "I HAD HOPED TO HOLD OFF FOR AWHILE, AT LEAST UNTIL I COULD EXPLAIN EVERYTHING, BUT THINGS ARE TENSE, AND THE ONLY WAY I CAN GET YOU OUT OF LONDON — ANYWAY, WHATEVER YOU DO, WHATEVER HAPPENS, DON'T PANIC."

GWEN OPENED HER MOUTH TO ARGUE, BUT ALL THE FIGHT SUDDENLY DRAINED FROM HER. SHE KNEW THAT JOHANN HAD SOMEHOW CAUSED HER LETHARGY, BUT COULDN'T FIND THE STRENGTH TO CONFRONT HIM OR EVEN MOVE. SHE EVEN LACKED THE ENERGY TO FIND THE EXPERIENCE FRIGHTENING.

A SMALL PART OF HER MIND REMAINED ALERT THROUGH THE LAST VESTIGES OF HANG-OVER AND WHATEVER WAS SMOTHERING HER SOUL. THAT PART SAW JOHANN'S PERFECTLY NORMAL TEETH GROW INTO FRIGHTENINGLY SHARP FANGS. THAT PART OF HER MIND



SCREAMED BLOODY MURDER WHEN HE SANK THOSE KNIFE-LIKE TEETH INTO HER THROAT. SHE SWOONED AS HE DRAINED HER BLOOD IN SWIFT GULPS. SHE BARELY FELT THE INTENSE PLEASURE THE FEEDING INSTILLS IN VICTIMS BEFORE SHE PASSED OUT.

GWEN STOOD ON A FLAT PLAIN, MOUNTAINS IN THE DISTANCE. HEAVY CLOUDS OBSCURING THE STARS. A RED LIGHT FLASHED IN THE DISTANCE, SEARCHING. THE RED WAS NOT SO MUCH A COLOR AS AN EMOTION — INTENSE ANGER AND HATRED MIXED TOGETHER, EMANATING FROM A SOURCE SO STRONG IT WAS VISIBLE TO THE NAKED EYE. SHE KNEW SHE COULD NOT ALLOW IT TO FIND HER, BUT LACKED A PLACE TO HIDE. SHE TURNED TO RUN —

JOHANN PRESSED HIS WRIST TO GWEN'S MOUTH, STAINING HER FACE WITH A THICK, COLD LIQUID THAT BURNED HER THROAT AS SHE DRANK LIKE NO SCOTCH EVER COULD AND BARELY SATISFIED A HUNGER THAT PERMEATED HER BEING. "DRINK, DAMN YOU." SHE SWALLOWED A LARGE CLOT THAT HAD POOLED IN HER THROAT WHILE SHE WAS UNCONSCIOUS AND DRANK, UNABLE TO THINK OF ANYTHING ELSE.

SHE KEPT DRINKING UNTIL THE HUNGER SUBSIDED TO A CONTROLLABLE LEVEL AND HER MIND RETURNED TO RATIONAL THOUGHT. THEN SHE SNAPPED HER HEAD AWAY FROM HIS WRIST, STARED AT HIM FOR A MOMENT, AND SLAPPED HIM AS HARD AS SHE COULD. "YOU, FILTHY, YANK BASTARD!" SHE RAN OUT OF BREATH AND HAD TO CONSCIOUSLY TAKE IN MORE AIR. "WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE *doing*?"

HIS NOSTRILS FLARED AND HE SPARLED BEFORE VISIBLY REGAINING CONTROL. "I'M SAVING YOU FROM A PRISON SENTENCE, JUST AS YOU ASKED." HE SPAT EACH WORD AS IF IT WERE A

DAGGER. BLOOD TRICKLED FROM THE CORNER OF HIS MOUTH, WHERE ONE OF GWEN'S RINGS HAD CAUGHT THE SKIN. HE WIPE THE BLOOD WITH THE BACK OF HIS HAND AND STARED AT IT FOR A MOMENT BEFORE LICKING IT CLEAN.

GWEN STOOD, SHAKING WITH RAGE. "WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ME?" SHE COULDN'T FEEL HER HEART BEATING AND DIDN'T BOTHER TO CHECK FOR A PULSE. "I WANTED TO LIVE SOMEWHERE THAT WOULDN'T EXTRADITE ME, NOT GET INTO KINKY... *WHATEVER THIS IS!*"

JOHANN WONDERED BRIEFLY IF HE'D DONE THE RIGHT THING, BUT BULLED AHEAD ANYWAY. "LOOK, I CAN UNDERSTAND YOUR OUTRAGE. I MEAN, SOMEONE DID THIS TO ME ONCE. ANYWAY, WE NEED TO GET YOU A VESSEL — SOME SUSTENANCE BEFORE YOU LOSE CONTROL AND START SNAPPING AT THROATS. CALL ROOM SERVICE."

"AND ORDER WHAT? STEAK TARTARE?"

"IT DOESN'T MATTER IF YOU WANT THE BELLHOP, BUT YOU CAN'T KILL HIM. I LIKE THIS HOTEL AND I WANT TO COME BACK."

SHE LAUGHED AT HIM. "MAYBE I WILL KILL HIM." THEN SHE STOPPED, SURPRISED THAT SUCH WORDS HAD COME FROM HER LIPS. "NO. WAIT. THIS ISN'T RIGHT."

"FINE. I'LL CALL ROOM SERVICE." JOHANN STARTED FOR THE PHONE, BUT GWEN BEAT HIM TO IT.

SHE SMIRKED. "I'LL HANDLE IT, JUST LIKE YOU TOLD ME." SHE PICKED UP THE PHONE AND DIALED. "WHAT'S THE MOST EXPENSIVE ITEM ON YOUR MENU? WHAT'S IN IT? VERY GOOD. I'LL TAKE SOME. AND SEND UP SOME OF YOUR BEST WINE, IF YOU PLEASE." SHE WINKED AT JOHANN AS SHE HUNG UP. "I'M SURE YOU CAN AFFORD IT."

THE WAIT WAS NERVE-WRACKING FOR GWEN AND FRUSTRATING FOR JOHANN. WHEN

THE BELLHOP FINALLY BROUGHT THE MEAL. GWEN BRIEFLY SNAPPED OUT OF HER MOOD AND LATCHED ON TO THE POOR MAN'S THROAT. SHE WOULD HAVE KILLED HIM, LOST IN SLAKING THE HUNGER THAT THREADED THROUGH HER BODY AND SOUL. HAD JOHANN NOT PULLED HER AWAY. "LICK THE WOUND," HE HISSED. TOO STARTLED TO ARGUE, SHE OBEYED.

AS SOON AS THE DAZED BELLHOP LEFT — WITH A HEFTY TIP AND APOLOGIES FOR HIS "UNHEALTHY WIFE" FROM JOHANN — THE

YANK TURNED TO GWEN. "WE MUST LEAVE NOW — WE CAN'T LET QUEEN ANNE CATCH US HERE. ESPECIALLY AFTER THAT LITTLE EPISODE. I'VE ARRANGED TRANSPORTATION FOR TONIGHT. MOVE."

GWEN, REELING UNDER TOO MANY UNNATURAL SURPRISES FOR ONE EVENING AND STILL TASTING HUMAN BLOOD ON HER LIPS, COULDN'T MUSTER THE WILL TO ARGUE. SHE FOLLOWED JOHANN INTO THE NIGHT, AND THE NEW EXISTENCE THAT AWAITED HER.



CHAPTER ONE: AGREED UPON LIES

HISTORY, n. *An account mostly false, of events mostly unimportant, which are brought about by rulers mostly knaves, and soldiers mostly fools.*

—Ambrose Bierce, *The Devil's Dictionary*

Okay, this is what you wanted and it's all I could dig up. Thank you so much for sending us into the middle of India and all those Chinese and Indian psycho-Kindred out for our vitae.

We found the havens you told us about and dug out the journals and artifacts. John and I translated and transcribed it in a stinking hotel room in Calcutta while some fucked-up coterie calling itself the Bone Flowers was looking for us about 200 miles away to the south. I can't promise that any of this will make sense or answer your questions, but I bet it'd make a great summer blockbuster. You know — one of those *really* overblown ones. We could cast Ah-nuld as Zapathasura, the tougher-than-hell bastard who just won't stay dead. Drew Diaz, or whatever Hollywood whore is hot right now, could play the love interest who sticks a knife in his back, the Gangrel progenitor.

We found pieces of the *Karavalanisha Vrana*, though not a complete copy. Clues pointed us

toward a mountain in Pakistan, but when we went there, it looked like pure hell. Something had warped the landscape and fused it into glass. John saw a crack running through a *mountain*. We found nothing useful there and didn't really want to hang around. I swear something was watching us the whole time. Something nasty.

If even half of this stuff is true, I want to get off of this world right the fuck now.

A note about dates: If it happened before the Bronze Age, I don't have much in the way of accurate chronology. The era of Enoch and the *Karavalanisha Vrana* just doesn't exist on the calendar. My best guess is between 10,000 and 6,000 BC, but I have no rational way to narrow that down. You want better specifics, you can come get them. I'm busy holding my bitten-off arm to the stump left after the attack by a flying head with all the guts hanging out, and hoping it will heal.

THE KARAVANISHA VRANA: AN ASIDE

So you're reading this history and wondering, "What the hell is this *Karavalanisha Vrana* crap?"

The *Karavalanisha Vrana*, translated as *Wounds of the Night's Sword*, is an epic poem about the origins and early years of the Ravnos clan. It falls into clear fabrication and fable at points, especially when the author tries to justify the existence of the Ravnos and their holy purpose. It also serves as the basis for the Path of Paradox, a Ravnos code of ethics that sees the Embrace as an investment of duty rather than an excuse to claim jurisdiction over life and death just because those Embraced drink blood.

All evidence indicates that the Ravnos believed Zapathasura him/her/itself wrote the original text, but then Kindred of all stripes are good at the big lie. I suspect the real culprit was a now-forgotten elder with more time and poetic talent than good sense. The *Karavalanisha Vrana* could be based on earlier tales about our origins, or might be a work of fiction some ancient bastard wrote so he could keep his childer in line.

Right now, it's hard to tell either way. The existing text is also the best starting point we have. Against my better judgment, I believe in it. It just... feels right.

INDIAN RECORDS

These records are taken from a half-dozen havens, presumably those that belonged to elders who were destroyed during the Week of Nightmares. Stories in the Americas and Europe describe Ravnos flying into frenzy and suffering diablerie or Final Death. The Ravnos elders showed no signs of violence or even resistance. Their desiccated remains apparently fell wherever the victims were standing, or stayed where they were sitting or laying. Something appeared to have drained all the vitae out of their bodies.

We burned every body we found, or scattered the ashes when too little of the corpse remained.

MARCIA FELICIA LICINIA

Centuries ago, the Ravnos elder Marcia Felicia Licinia, childe of Phaedyne, childe of Marizhavashtri Kali, childe of Zapathasura (as she signed her name) compiled a trove of information on Ravnos history and lineages. Her own journals

LEXICON

Clanbook: Ravnos introduces several terms not seen in other Vampire titles. Many are derived from Hindu words, but their use among Ravnos may differ from usage among mortals. Other words are derived from the Romani language, as spoken by the Roma.

Alexandrites: A lineage of Ravnos formerly centered in Egypt, now scattered.

asuratizayya: "Countless demons"; what the Ravnos called the *siddhi* after their fall.

Bashirites: A Ravnos lineage whose members were apocalyptic Christians. Most joined the Sabbat.

Brahman: One of the original Ravnos *jati*. The Brahman had "second sight" and could perceive the world in strange ways. Known for their gift of prophecy.

Chandalas: One of the *jati*, though not always Ravnos. This *jati* is composed of outcasts and caitiffs, and is considered impure.

jati: A Hindu word, meaning "caste". Among the Ravnos, it denotes lineage. Among Indian Ravnos, lineage and caste are considered the same thing.

Karavalanisha Vrana: *Wounds of the Night's Sword*. An epic poem about the Ravnos clan's history in India. Much of it is metaphorical or allegorical and may make only sidereal reference to real events. Zapathasura is the rumored author, but it's more likely that several Ravnos contributed to the work over time.

Kshatriyas: The *jati* associated with warfare and leadership. They led the war against the *asuratizayya* for millennia.

kumpaniya: A traveling family or company of Roma. Sometimes described as Gypsies, these companies may harbor Kindred among their ranks.

mayaparisatya: From *maya*, referring to illusion, and *parisatya*, referring to truth. It refers to the "paradox" in the Path of Paradox. The word also occasionally refers to the Path itself or to Chimerstry.

Phaedymites: A visionary branch of the Ravnos, this line vanished just after the formation of the Camarilla.

Phuri Dae: Brahman Ravnos who traveled west with the Roma. The word comes from Romani and means "old woman."

shilmulo: A Kindred; the undead.

siddhi: Supernatural beings charged to protect humanity from demonic forces. They failed, becoming demonic themselves, and were cursed for their failure.

Sudras: The most common meaning is "Ghouls", but the title carries other formal connotations.

svadharma: An individual's purpose; her reason for being.

Vaisyas: A Ravnos *jati* concerned primarily with interaction among mortals and covering up any evidence of Kindred existence.

Zapathasura: The Ravnos progenitor. More of a title than a name, this word means something like "Accursed Monster."

indicate concern at the arrival of Ravnos with the nomadic Roma and their disdain — even hostility — for the Ravnos already established in Europe. Much of the following account comes from Marcia's writings.

Lawrence received Marcia's records in an anonymously shipped parcel I refer to as the "care package." I cannot vouch for Marcia's accuracy — some of her writings are downright unbelievable — but I included them for the sake of completeness. Her history fills in gaps that the Indian material could not, especially regarding the doings of the Ravnos once they left India. Also, I can't claim to have been around when much of this happened, so maybe my modern mind just can't wrap itself around what she's describing. Perhaps those older than I can vouch for the veracity of various incidents... oops, no they can't. They're all dead. We may never know, but here you have it anyway.

DEMONS AND THE DEAD

According to the *Wounds of the Night's Sword*, the Ravnos first appeared in India when a group of angelic guardians betrayed their duty and used their powers to spread war and tyranny across the face of the Earth. These beings, called the *siddhi*, were called before the gods to face justice. The *siddhi* stood accused of murder, of using their power to drain the life from the humans they were charged to protect. They also faced judgement for losing track of their purpose — to battle the true demons that encroached upon the mortal world.

The gods cursed the *siddhi*, taking their divine breath from the culprits and cursing them to become one with the darkness. The gods named them *asuratizayya*, or "countless demons." Because the gods could not strip the accursed horde of all its power without greater harm to the world, they chose to create a balance. They summoned the soul of a man more terribly wronged than any other mortal by the *siddhi's* crimes and told him that he was to become like his tormentors, so that he could hound them to the four corners of the Earth and destroy them. Unlike the *asuratizayya*, the man would be able to make more of his own kind and so overwhelm the enemy. Unfortunately, the true demons saw how the gods' chosen warrior was returned to Earthly existence as one of the unliving



and taught the secret to the *asuratizayya*. The fallen angels could not learn the secret of the Embrace, but with this knowledge, they did not need it.

Some of the gods feared that their unliving warrior would turn on them as the *siddhi* had, and cursed him. The gods of fire and the sun especially despised this creation because it drew life not from warmth, but from death. The king of all the gods declared that the warrior would have no true name, that he would simply be Zapathasura, or anathema, as well as a demon like those he fought. I should make it clear that Zapathasura and the *asuratizayya* were never referred to as true demons, despite the meaning of the word *asura*. True demons lived apart from the world and sought to own or devour it. The *asuratizayya* were beasts that chose to emulate the true demons, and Zapathasura's creation is best summed up as, "It takes a thief to catch a thief."

On the brighter side, the gods gifted their *wunderkind* with the ability to command animals, withstand tremendous physical punishment and manipulate *maya* directly. Unfortunately, his undead nature somewhat proved his undoing. Zapathasura envied the living and took far more than he needed to survive. He passed this hunger on to his childer and ultimately to the Ravnos clan.

I want to highlight something here: The *asuratizayya* were bloodsucking demons risen from the dead to feed on the living. Sound familiar? It damned well should! The so-called *asuratizayya* are just another clan of Kindred. My first guess would be the Gangrel, but they're mentioned later in a different context. I think the would-be historian who wrote this poem was confused. I also think the Ravnos created a Sabbat of sorts thousands of years before the Lasombra and Tzimisce thought one up.

THE FIRST BROOD

Zapathasura Embraced five times in the first century or two of his existence. He may have Embraced others later, but we've found nothing to indicate that. All the lineages we've uncovered trace their origins back to these five childer.

The first is called the Black Mother. The Old Lady of the Ravnos clan, she occasionally gets confused with Kali Ma, the Hindu goddess of

death, destruction and the end of the world. The Black Mother was famous for her perception and understanding of all layers of reality and was a renowned prophetess. The Brahman, and later the Phuri Dae, claim descent from Zapathasura through her. The stories say she could sense the *asuratizayya* from hundreds of leagues away, know the deepest inner thoughts of all near her, and kept a list of the sinners and saints among her peers. After the Black Mother abandoned Zapathasura and his war, her sire ordered her name stricken from all records. (Obviously, they missed a few.)

The second childer was the Rakshasa, reputed to possess unequalled skill at deception. According to the stories, he could walk among the most potent of the *asuratizayya* without risk of detection, suckle at a tiger's teat and sell water to a thirsty fish. During the long years when he stood at Zapathasura's right hand, he acted as scout for the Ravnos and learned much about the enemy. In time, he disagreed with his sire's war and made the mistake of telling him so. The two fought bitterly and the Rakshasa barely escaped. According to the *Karavalanisha Vrana*, he turned to Zapathasura's second-greatest enemy. Based on the apocrypha, that enemy might be the so-called "traitor" Ennoia. According to other records, the Rakshasa may have sought refuge in Africa or what is now referred to as the "Middle Kingdom," where the Cathayans prowl.

A WORD FROM DR. MAYHEW

I do not wish to imply that Gwendolyn has a less than complete grasp of the material, but my review of the texts does not indicate that the Rakshasa was Embraced. The specific reference reads, "The Rakshasa drank of Zapathasura's vitae," but that could simply mean he was a ghoul. Of course, this begs the question of how the Rakshasa survived without the Ancient's blood. If the Rakshasa were a ghoul, it would make him the first of the Sudras and buttress the implication that Zapathasura established each of the Ravnos jati. It would also explain the Rakshasa's ability to pass as something other than Kindred.

Zapathasura's third childe was more loyal than the first two. Known as Chandraputra the General, he reputedly led the Ravnos into battle against the *asuratizayya*. He worked with the Black Mother to coordinate intelligence, from which he developed his strategies. He may have ruled over the mortal city-nation of Harappa until it went to war against the *asuratizayya* stronghold of Mohenjo-Daro. The Kshatriyas *jati* traces its lineage through Chandraputra.

The fourth childe, Ravana, allegedly bargained with the true demons for power greater than he could ever earn from his sire. The text is remarkably short on specifics, though it does say he vanished from the world after striking the deal. Later tales describe him using his unearned infernal power to undermine the *asuratizayya* virtues and lure them to his service, as they once lured him.

The fifth childe, Ramessu, is the sire of the Vaisiyas *jati*. He watched mortals for signs of *asuratizayya* activity in their midst and Embraced solely from the merchant class. In time, he also tired of fighting and departed for lands west, where he established another lineage that knew nothing of Zapathasura and his war against the Eastern Kindred. There, Ramessu surrounded himself with the trappings and titles of nobility, rising above the station assigned him in his homeland.

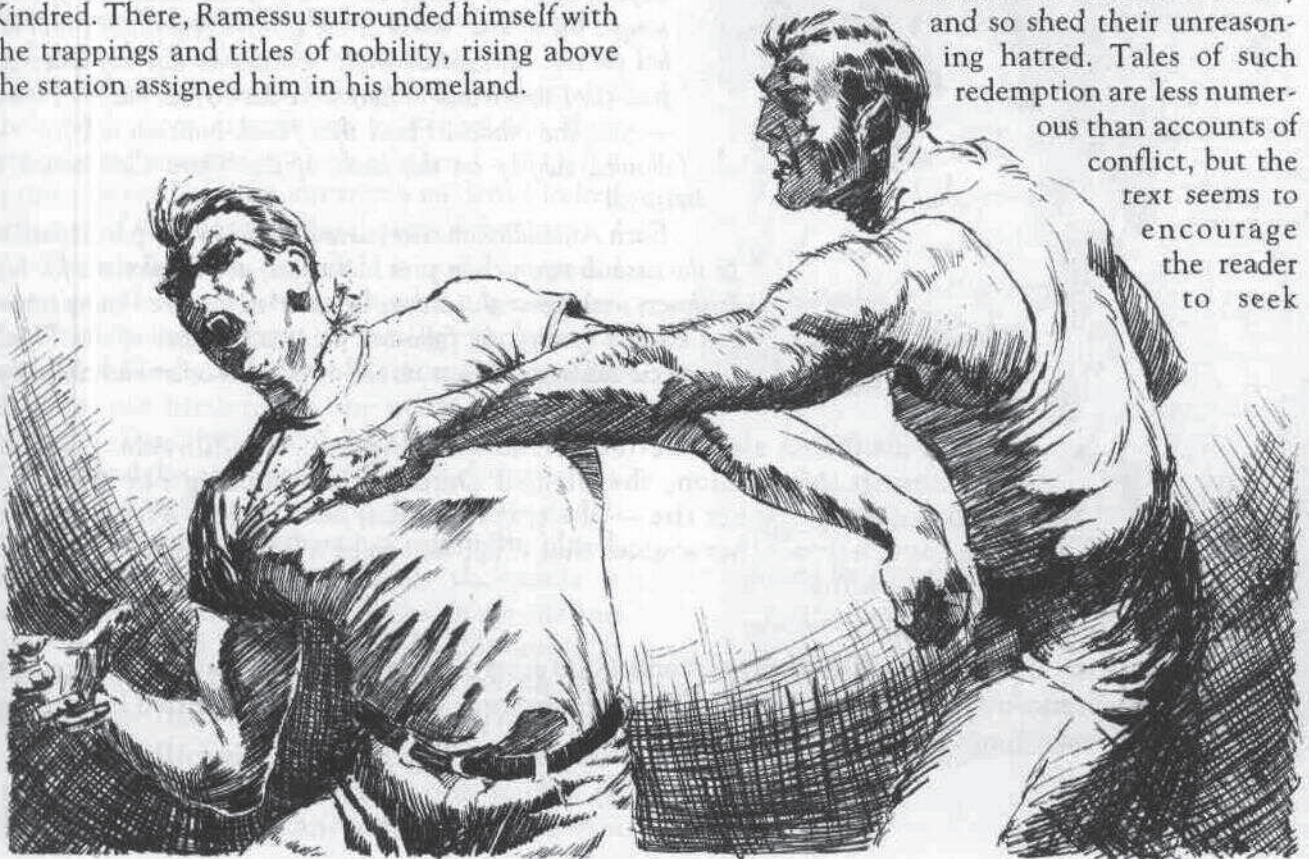
THE GANGREL HERESY

A text separate from the *Karavalanisha Vrana* and given no title describes the creation by the gods of a second undead monster. She is called the most dangerous of warriors, supposedly mastering the art of *shapeshifting* in order to better combat the *asuratizayya*. When the gods told her the price of her existence, she cursed them for making her an unliving beast and turned her back on the duties they had charged her to fulfill.

Enraged, the gods cursed their second creation to "dwell among the beasts and find no safe haven anywhere in the world." They also gave her bestial features, so that no human would be deceived by her appearance. The text names her as Ennoia and her brood as the Gangrel.

Other stories that follow relate how the Gangrel, enraged at their loss of purpose, cannot abide the sight of the Ravnos — who, the text alleges, never backed down from what was required of them. In several times and places, the Gangrel and the Ravnos have come to bitter blows over everything from territorial boundaries to favored vessels.

The Gangrel "heresy" states that the Gangrel can be shown their true destiny and so shed their unreasoning hatred. Tales of such redemption are less numerous than accounts of conflict, but the text seems to encourage the reader to seek





counsel with the Gangrel and teach them their *svadharma*, or true purpose as Kindred.

I'd pay a pretty penny to hear what the Gangrel say about us.

ENOCH

This story came in the anonymous care package. I don't understand half of what it means, but I transcribed it for the sake of completeness.

This is the First City, called Enoch, where Caine Embraced his childer Enosch, Zillah and Irad, who Embraced the Third Generation. Allegedly, at the same time the gods made Zapathasura into the first Ravnos, one of Caine's childer Embraced a man by the name of Dracian, who was the first of the Ravnos. According to this story, Dracian had broken into Irad's haven by day and attempted to steal something of value to him. Irad, awakened by this intrusion, Embraced Dracian in the hope of using this new childe to spy on his siblings and their childer. Irad suspected the other third generation neonates (now there's something you don't hear every night) of plotting against the three members of the second generation and their sire.

Dracian, for his part, took to the plot like a fish to water. He was at heart a selfish man, and becoming one of the typically selfish Kindred only deepened that trait. Before long, he joined the Third-Generation cabal that sought the hearts' blood of the second generation, and he led the assault against Irad. Sources do not say whether Irad (or Enosch and Zillah) were destroyed, but the Flood — yes, the biblical Flood that Noah built an ark for — followed swiftly on the heels of the Third Generation's betrayal.

Each Antediluvian was cursed for his or her participation in the assault upon their sires. Dracian, as punishment for his selfishness and shortsightedness, was cursed to never know satisfaction. In search of that elusive quality, he followed the one member of the Third Generation who had not been cursed into the East, to seek what that other had allegedly found.

This document also describes a feud with another Antediluvian: Ennoia. According to this version, she blamed Dracian for tempting her into the assault, or for attacking her sire — the text is unclear as to which. The language is different enough from other sources that it appears to be a later addition, possibly an attempt at revision.

MOHENJO-DARO AND HARAPPA

Two cities in the Indus Valley, 400 miles apart and 4,000 years old, correspond to two cities described in several places in ancient journals — at least, I think it's these cities. They and the culture that built them are referred to several times in the *Karavalanisha Vrana*.

What is Enoch?

That's a good question. Aside from the documents we've found, we have very little to go on. The material we have implies, as Gwendolyn suggests, that Enoch was the first city where Kindred walked among mortals. Other fragments of Kindred history I've seen state that all the clans originated in Enoch.

I find it interesting that the Ravnos wrote so much to justify their existence as something different from the rest of the Kindred. That these justifications also provide an apparently concrete reason to continue is telling.

I conclude that if Enoch existed – and after what I've seen, I'm not sure I doubt that – the Ravnos Ancient was Embraced in that city. Any other explanation is an attempt to lend unearned legitimacy to millennia of warfare among the undead.

According to the writings, Ravnos princes ruled over several cities in the Indus Valley and nearby, and defended them from encroaching asuratizayya. What this really means, I think, is that they defended their herds from asuratizayya poaching, but their actions are presented as a holy mission. I can't tell if "prince" is used in the context of a modern Kindred prince or if it means the literal ruler of the city.

The civilization described is quite advanced — its people have writing, plumbing, a complex theology and a penchant for getting caught in the middle of Kindred warfare. Warfare, I might add, that was not hindered by the needs of the Masquerade. Descriptions of battles between the Ravnos and the asuratizayya include details of the incredible Disciplines they employed against each other. They caused rivers to run with blood, melted the flesh of hundreds or thousands of soldiers and shattered their bones, made the sun flee the sky and any number of wild claims. If they're true, I'm glad these monsters are dust. Let me rephrase that: I hope these monsters are dust.

The conflict continued for several centuries (as long as 2,000 years in one source, as short as 500 years in another). It ended in a

near-apocalyptic clash between the two cities. General Chandraputra led his army of Ravnos, ghouls and mortals against the asuratizayya who ruled over Harappa. During the battle, the two generals called forth otherworldly aid, forced "the light of four suns" to shine upon each other and turned the river valley red with the blood of thousands of mortals and Kindred. The final battle reportedly lasted for a year and a night, ending when Chandraputra took the head of his millennial adversary and condemned its soul to the most horrible of Hells.

No mortal in either city survived this war. The sites became necropoli, haunted by the spirits of those who died defending them. No Ravnos or asuratizayya ever returned to the cities after the war ended. Ahem.

"Ruled?"

No archeological evidence yet discovered has hinted at such a slaughter in a short period of time as the reason for either city's fall. I also find it difficult to credit claims that Methuselahs ruled the cities in such a manner.

I do not reject out of hand the idea that a war between two Methuselahs happened on such a scale, and Hindu mythology contains several descriptions of battles among various gods and demons that make this account look rather tame. I'm not certain I believe that any Kindred could have ruled openly over a human populace.

Perhaps the Methuselahs gathered childer, supporters and ghouls, and those fought the battle. The nearby mortals may also have served as cattle during the war, or fled from the outrageous displays of violent power. Perhaps the struggle was a relatively minor skirmish, much less epic than the Ravnos painted it.

DIASPORA

In the wake of this confrontation, the accounts portray the surviving Ravnos as shocked at the degree of bloodshed and destruction their war brought to those they had sworn to protect. More realistically, they probably worried about their own asses and covered up the stupidity of the conflict in pretty excuses. The end result was the first crack in Zapathasura and Chandraputra's constant drive to wage war against their rivals. Many Ravnos questioned whose battle they were fighting, and all too often, the answer was "not ours."

Zapathasura's fifth childe, Ramessu, simply vanished from his haven one night — apparently, the Black Mother refused to assist in any search. Just a few centuries later, the Rakshasa turned on Zapathasura and departed after a bitter and bloody combat with his sire. The Black Mother reported to Zapathasura that Ravana had turned to unholy powers to forge forbidden pacts, but he, too, disappeared.

The final desertion occurred on the heels of Alexander the Great's arrival in Northern India.

(I know — force a cynical sigh of relief, as Alexander's appearance in the history constitutes Real History! Unfortunately, I'll have to warn you not to grow too comfortable....) After the conqueror's death, his army returned to the west whence they had come. The Black Mother followed them.

Along with the desertion of Zapathasura's childer, younger generations also left India for lands hopefully less drenched in bloody conflict. They traveled east and west, searching out a place where they could avoid the endless conflict with the *asuratizayya*. Zapathasura himself fell into torpor from despair, leaving the clan in the hands of Chandraputra, his only remaining loyal childe.

The Methuselah Chandraputra tried to restructure the clan in the wake of mass desertions and a complete collapse in morale. He constructed what would later become the Path of Paradox, or the study of *mayaparisatya*. Newly Embraced Ravnos were indoctrinated in *mayaparisatya* tenets, which demanded an understanding of the clan's place in the world and its members' devotion to the war



against those Kindred who could not or would not understand their purpose. Naturally, this included the *asuratizayya*.

RAMESSU

Ramessu turns up in documents that came in the care package, authored by Marcia Felicia Licinia — yes, I know her name is not strictly correct according to Roman tradition. You can tell her she screwed it up.

Ramessu was a powerful elder who existed in Egypt for centuries and Embraced the lineage that later became known as the Alexandrites. These Middle Eastern Ravnos traveled extensively, alone and with the Roma who arrived later. Soon after reaching Egypt, Ramessu carved a bloody chunk out of Setite territory when they tried to eject him. At the time, the Setites were battling Lupine clans also native to Egypt and lacked the resources to fight both. Not long after Ramessu established himself, the Setites approached him with a proposed alliance against the Lupines.

Over time, Ramessu apparently lost himself in reminiscing, to the point that he denied the passing of Dynastic Egypt. He apparently created an “authentic” Egyptian court that survived into the Renaissance, despite routine bouts of torpor. Though I’m tempted to dismiss this detail as conjecture or as proof of Ramessu’s own deranged state, I have seen enough supporting documents penned by those claiming to be Alexandrites to indulge my doubt. Surely, some arid haven somewhere contains the wealth of kings and an undead court to spend it, if only to spite my bitterness.

THE RAKSHASA

The Rakshasa, according to all evidence (which isn’t much) traveled west to Africa and Embraced several childer as he went. He took care to educate them, but didn’t stay with them long — at most, a decade or two — before moving on. At least four distinct Northern African lineages claim descent from a trickster figure with no name or home, who warned against the sins of his father and cautioned them to prepare for the time when “our sire turns his wrath upon us and destroys the world.” The last evidence of the Rakshasa’s presence in Africa is at least 3,000 years old.

If Not the Rakshasa, Then Who?

The accounts about the founder of these African lineages do match closely with what we know of the Rakshasa. But if — as mentioned earlier — he was a ghoul, then how could he Embrace more Ravnos? I suspect the “trickster figure” in question is Ramessu and that some accounts confuse the two — or the accounts lead to erroneous conclusions that references to one are actually references to the other. That sounds characteristic of a “trickster” in my opinion. Alternatively, the trickster may be an undocumented childer of Zapathasura’s, or a member of a later generation.

Gwendolyn has a habit of stating her assumptions with absolute surety when in fact she discusses matters we cannot know for certain. She is her own paradox — doubt fed by certainty. Keep this in mind when reading her history.

THE BLACK MOTHER

The Black Mother was present for Alexander the Great’s arrival. She apparently knew (Rumor? Gift of prophecy? Who can say?) of his arrival well in advance and watched his progress as he led his army into her homeland. She Embraced one of Alexander’s soldiers and followed her childer back to Europe. The Black Mother spent several centuries crossing Europe, ending her sojourn in Southern Gaul. The last anyone heard of her was more than 2,000 years ago, during the Roman Empire’s height.

RAVANA

Rumors claim that Ravana, in the service of infernal powers, led hundreds of *asuratizayya* to their doom, promising them glory and power they could not otherwise gain. According to one apocryphal account, Ravana appeared to Zapathasura and offered him power beyond what even the gods would give. Ravana claimed he could walk in the sun and enjoy mortal delights. Zapathasura struck him, only to hit nothing. As Ravana’s taunting laughter slowly

faded, Zapathasura pondered the offer and what it could mean. Shortly thereafter, he fell into his first prolonged torpor.

THE ANCIENT WORLD

Ramessu's Alexandrites spread throughout Northern Africa, southern Europe and Asia Minor, with at least a few participating in that great Brujah experiment, Carthage. Most tried to avoid contact and conflict with other Kindred, preferring to retain their freedom of movement through stealth rather than fear or respect.

The Black Mother's childer spread throughout the Roman Empire and made their presence known. Though few in number, they got on well with the Toreador and Malkavians, the three clans that made up some of the most decadent of Kindred in that era. These Ravnos eventually became known as the Sybarites and founded the Path of Paradox that has earned the clan so much distrust and outright hatred (though the clan's predilection for vice in general likely also had something to do with it). The eldest Sybarites apparently played a game where they each, in turn, claimed to be the line's founder. On occasion, they also claimed kinship to a famous historical figure — or, if they were feeling extreme, claimed to *be* that figure. The game served to keep the line from losing their most potent elders, as no Kindred could be certain who to look for.

In India, Chandraputra assembled a new order with a stronger commitment to opposing the *asuratizayya*. He'd learned something about Kindred psychology and mixed the philosophical rhetoric with appeals to the Ravnos' selfish character. In other words, he convinced the clan that it was in their best interests to stand and fight rather than leave for parts unknown.

This militancy was helped along by a fresh influx of *asuratizayya* from China, who apparently believed it their holy duty to expunge India of all Kindred influences. At the same time, Kindred of other clans — Gangrel, Lasombra, Malkavians, Tzimisce and Ventrue primarily — arrived in India, probably on the heels of Alexander's army. Some of the new arrivals aligned with the Ravnos against the Eastern Kindred, and in time a few adopted Ravnos philosophy and cosmology.

Others bitterly fought Ravnos and *asuratizayya* for dominion. The end result was a vast diversity in India's Kindred presence.

As an interesting side note, the *Karavalanisha Vrana* is based entirely in mythology from this period, a few thousand years after Zapathasura supposedly had his necromantic apotheosis at the hands of gods who wouldn't be named for a long time afterward. Not that I would *ever* hint that the clan founder was a self-serving bastard intent on making himself look good in front of the clan he created. No more than any other Kindred, at any rate. Give a guy godlike power and he decides he's flawless....

THE ROMAN EMPIRE

The Sybarites' nights of prominence! Chandraputra's teachings filtered into Europe through deliberate action; the ancient Kshatriyas attempted to spread the *mayaparisatya* teachings in hopes of drawing rogue lineages back into the fold. The attempt backfired unpleasantly. The Sybarites took the teachings and twisted them to support a philosophy of unhindered self-indulgence. The Path of Paradox became an excuse for them to do whatever they wanted, whenever they wanted, to whomever happened to be convenient.

Of course, the Path of Paradox didn't really encourage this behavior. The Sybarites were already well on their way down that road. The addition of a codified ethos that justified their hedonism was simply the final straw that ushered in nearly two millennia of indulgence and sin.

It didn't help matters that Chandraputra's messengers slid into the Roman Ravnos' debauchery and vice. In fact, they adopted it wholeheartedly. They drank the blood of children, fornicated like still-living mortals and bought tangible comforts with money they stole from each other, their Kindred fellows and wealthy mortals.

At the same time, the Alexandrites melted further into the shadows, hoping to avoid the reputation their more public cousins were stirring up, and the elder Phaedyne established her own power base in Gaul. This act led to competition with the already present Ventrue and Gangrel — the latter none too pleased

with Phaedyne's arrival or her growing influence. About the only positive side effect of Phaedyne's presence was her and her childer's practice of destroying Sybarites who intruded on their territory. These killings were not acts of philanthropy: Phaedyne's sire simply wanted no intrusions or attacks on her while she lay in torpor. Why she saw other Ravnos — even the decadent Sybarites — as a threat is not entirely clear. I should note here that the Path of Paradox's prohibition against diablerie on other Ravnos was a later addition, probably the work of an elder tired of attempts upon his blood.

THE PATH OF PARADOX

The Roman Path of Paradox was an odd beast. On the one hand, it espoused spiritual purity. On the other, it claimed that its adherents could achieve such purity through diablerie, theft and murder. The path's tenets further laid out an alternative cosmology to Zapathasura's creation and Dracian's self-imposed exile. It taught that the Antediluvians willed themselves into existence. Once they had formed, they realized that the world was filled with energy and so they began to take it for their use. A final Antediluvian created himself in a similar act of will and vowed to stop the others before they froze the world into an unchanging, joyless place with no room for merry activities like cannibalism and unbridled bloodlust.

The Path as laid out in Rome further explained that the only way to stop this spiritual stasis was to keep the energy in motion — release it. This meant that powerful vampires had to be destroyed, preferably through diablerie. The ultimate goal of the Path was Gehenna, at which the Ravnos Antediluvian would destroy the other Antediluvians with the aid of all right-thinking Ravnos.

Of the Ravnos, I know what I've read and I know my sire, his sire, and a few others. Not very many, I admit. As far as I'm aware, not one of us is comfortable with the Beast. No matter whether it drives us to drain a human dry, go utterly insane and kill anything within arm's reach, or simply to grab that trinket that catches our eye regardless of the risk. That last one is the most insidious because it's so subtle. Half the time, I'm following through on the impulse before I realize what's happening. It's enough to make you crazy. It

seems the debased Roman Ravnos, lost in the decadent wonders of the Empire, decided to enshrine that impulse rather than reject it.

THE BASHIRITES

You know that commercial about the candy bar? The one where one ingredient mixes with another to make a better candy bar? Well, this was something like that, only the result probably was not for the better. A Ravnos Paradox-follower happened to be in Israel when a new religion appeared almost overnight. That Ravnos, Bashir, claimed to have seen God — which was fine, until the Revelation of St. John turned up and Bashir ran across it. He took it to heart, melded it with Paradox philosophy, and decided that the Path of Paradox was actually meant to usher in the apocalypse as foretold in the Book of Revelation. Bashir passed this doctrine along to his childer and ended up creating a millennial cult with the fanatical intention to cause the Second Coming and bring about the end of the world.

Bashir's line spread throughout the Middle East and gained momentum as the presumed time for Christ's return approached. Various Bashirites killed pilgrims, Muslims, Jews and anyone else they thought might bring about the Second Coming. In one case, a Bashirite caught a peculiar form of Jerusalem Syndrome and decided she was the Antichrist.

It eventually became clear even to the most blindly devoted Bashirite Ravnos that the Second Coming wasn't happening on schedule. Several committed suicide in the wake of that realization. Others adopted a more relaxed stance toward both the Path of Paradox and Scripture.

THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

The Ravnos clan underwent its last dramatic changes, at least in Europe, during the medieval era. Over three centuries or so, the established lineages clashed with the Ravnos who arrived with the Roma. Indian journals that match closely with the period demonstrate an increased interest in the West, along with strong resistance to the Ravnos *jati* system. Specifically, the Chandalas *jati*



decided they'd rather leave than continue as the equivalent of the few Western Caitiff. In truth, they had it better. Western Caitiff often suffered destruction as soon as they got caught. In India, they were simply treated like valueless chattel.

RROMA RAVNOS

The Rroma slowly filtered into Europe over three hundred years. A few Rroma *kumpaniyi* (nomad/family groups) brought Ravnos along with them. These Ravnos, who had been Chandalas in India, felt themselves superior to the Western Ravnos, who had diluted their pure blood by Embracing those *not* of Indian or Rroma descent. The usual interactions led to long-term feuds, destruction or conversion — the Chandalas were not completely without mercy and would often use tactics such as branding and boiling (and killing mortal relatives and various larcenies...) to recruit Europeans rather than destroy them out of hand.

In time, the overall Kindred perception of Ravnos as Rroma shifted from "newcomers" to "they've always been Rroma." Those who were not became exceptions — curiosities.

The Chandalas, some of whom still gave at least lip service to the *mayaparisatya* teachings, proved susceptible to the Sybarites' version of the Path of Paradox. At first, they tried to teach the Sybarites the "correct" way, but many — especially the neonates and ancillae — ended up converting to the Sybarite view. They already felt poorly served by the Indian *jati* structure. The new Path of Paradox erased such distinctions, and many young Ravnos were enticed into it simply to rid themselves of the "untouchable" stigma they had carried in their former homeland.

THE TREATMENT

This tradition first appeared during the medieval era. European Ravnos, many of whom were not guilty of the crimes for which they suffered, decided to discourage princes from unilaterally exiling Ravnos from their domains or destroying them on sight. These Ravnos spread rumors about the Treatment and told stories to other Kindred about the terrible fate of Prince So-and-so in Such-and-such-berg over the mountains yonder who kicked Ravnos out for no good reason. They followed up with stories of how every deceiver within two or three weeks' travel showed up on the

unlucky ruler's doorstep and turned his domain into a waking hell. With each retelling, the description became more harrowing and bizarre. At some point, the stories became reality. I have no idea where the first real Treatment happened, but it was viciously effective. The princes found the Ravnos no less welcome than before, but were less willing to kick them out *before* they misbehaved.

In a nutshell, the Treatment was a reactionary response from offended Ravnos who felt that if they couldn't get even the minimal respect most clans paid each other, they'd make those clans sorry for the snub. Resentful Ravnos would send out a call for help, and mendicant or indigent (or legitimately blacklisted) fellow Ravnos would converge on the spiteful city. For weeks or months at a time, the avenging Ravnos would run amok, indulging their desires as they saw fit. I'm sure you're well acquainted with our penchant for taboo — now imagine a score of Ravnos, all having their way with a given city. Killings soared, the invaders stole everything not nailed down, they seduced husbands and wives, bread was poisoned or the grain used to make it found curiously infested with ergot... the list goes on.

These kinds of tactics did little to help the Ravnos build a better reputation, but worked brilliantly as a method of bullying others into never letting such things happen again. Believe me, these documents make no bones about how quickly the princes of the Long Night acceded once their domains became dens of sin and iniquity.

THE OTHERS

The Phaedymites reached their height in the medieval era. Many of Phaedyne's descendents chose to adopt the tenets of chivalry in favor of other paths. They were never a populous lineage, but they probably exercised the most self-control among the Western *jati*. The Yoryari, a small splinter faction composed of Sybarites who rejected their fellows' more self-indulgent code of conduct, eventually adopted the "pure" Path of Paradox that the Roma brought with them. The Bashirites met their end as a Western *jati* and largely scattered into the Alexandrites and Sybarites, with a few joining the Roma.

THE INQUISITION

Everyone remembers the Inquisition. At least, many Kindred elders remember, or claim to. It was not a pleasant time to be Kindred, but then, when is? The Catholic Church managed to dig up hundreds of Cainites and put them to the torch — almost as if someone planned it that way. In any event, we weren't spared. Sedentary Ravnos were caught as easily as members of any other clan, and those traveling with the Roma were as likely to be turned in as anyone else. (Assuming the Church didn't see the Gypsies as trouble and investigate them without outside encouragement.)

I can't say the Ravnos never took advantage of the Inquisition to dispose of a few inconvenient enemies — I'm sure every clan did it at some point — but the whole thing usually backfired nastily for those Kindred who tried. The carefree times were, to put it bluntly, over. The mortals knew we were out there and they weren't going to take it anymore. I'm sure more than a few Kindred thought the Inquisition was Gehenna.

THE CAMARILLA

Just as it looked like things would never get better, a few brave, enterprising Kindred stood up and showed the rest of us that we had a better option, that we could survive with only a few sacrifices. As the histories go, Kindred of all clans were invited to join the new social club — the Camarilla — and become a part of a "worldwide society of Kindred," whatever that's supposed to mean. I admit, it looks good on paper, but it's horribly fucked-up in practice.

I want to note here that a few Ravnos elders recorded their experiences at the first conclaves held to decide the form the Camarilla would take. It's true that all Kindred were invited to join, but it's also true that Kindred of certain clans were invited to go to hell (subtly or otherwise). The Camarilla's creators saw it as a club for certain clans; while members of the others were welcome, they couldn't expect the same blessings.

Given some of the behavior attributed to the Ravnos, I can't exactly blame the founders for not wanting our clan in their little social circle. Still,



I can't help but wonder, why *those seven*? In any event, the Setites and Ravnos weren't exactly high on the popularity scale, not with the founding clans. As for the Assamites and the Giovanni, you don't invite cannibals into your home.

Some will tell you their clans chose independence. I think they did, but only because they had no other choice.

AGE OF EXPLORATION

While the Camarilla suffered its growing pains and the Inquisition began to slow down (at least as far as destroying Kindred), the European nations were building empires. Because most of Europe was already explored, "civilization" traveled west and south and established colonies in Africa, North America and South America. Naturally, because exploration involved travel, the Ravnos weren't far behind.

With the Camarilla elders and their steely-taloned claims of dominion choking all life out of Europe, the so-called New World represented a fresh opportunity. Many Ravnos doubtless found the chance to take advantage of the birth of new nations exciting — and dangerous. Still, no matter how bad things got on the new frontiers, the Ravnos who went there probably found their new existence preferable to dealing with stuffy Camarilla princes who had the weight of seven clans behind their proclamations. No, the Camarilla's authority didn't make the Ravnos any more welcome in Europe than we'd been before. In fact, more princes showed a willingness to boot us — especially if we didn't have the clear backing of mentors, Ravnos or otherwise. The Roma had the advantage because they traveled in relatively large groups, big enough to make the princes wary of keeping them out. Instead, local rulers merely "encouraged" the Roma to move on fairly quickly.

In Africa, things were different. The Ravnos had lived there all along, competing with the Setites, Assamites, Nosferatu and Gangrel for territory and existing among civilizations largely forgotten by mortal society. With the rise of colonization and national expansion, things changed considerably. Predictably, the Camarilla followed their mortal counterparts to all four corners of the world and established their petty fiefdoms alongside the newborn colonies.

THE NEW WORLD

I want to make something clear — we're not exactly like the Gangrel. Where a Gangrel will cross a mountain range to see the valley on the other side, her Ravnos counterpart will cross a mountain range to put the mountains between her and any enemies she left behind. I'm not saying the Ravnos set out to make enemies, but it seems almost inevitable. If a Ravnos is in town and something bad happens, the Ravnos gets blamed. Even when we're on our best behavior, we can run into trouble just for being in the area.

I want to establish this point to put Ravnos migration to the New World in the proper context. Not all of the Europeans who came to North America, for example, migrated because they had wanderlust. Many traveled west to leave their respective pasts behind. We traveled right alongside them, for exactly the same reason. The New World had no elder princes with firmly entrenched power structures and support networks built up over centuries. At best, the ancillae princes had only been present for decades, and were often grateful for support no matter the source.

Most Ravnos traveled to the Americas in search of domains where the princes were simply not strong enough to afford the kind of indulgence and arrogance the European elders exuded like sweat. It makes me wonder what happened in the interim.

RENAISSANCE

During this age of exploration, Europe experienced what some later called a "rebirth of the life of the mind." The Renaissance arrived — a time of artistic and literary revolution, a time when science and reason began to triumph over base superstition. Of course, that era also saw the birth of the "divine right of rule" concept. Can't get them all right, I suppose.

To the Ravnos, the Renaissance meant increased commerce. We feed on it — not like the Ventrue, who desire to own it, or the Giovanni, who treat it like a big game (and whoever dies with the most toys... probably still fucks his sister). Where there's commerce, there's vice. Where there's vice, there are Ravnos. No matter how sick

and twisted the hobby you can name, I guarantee some Ravnos somewhere is trying to improve on it. It's what we do. Most of the clan settled for more pedestrian variations, engaging in acts of piracy and highway robbery.

The Sybarites of the Renaissance had a particularly good time. Much of that *jati* were in the process of joining up with the newborn Sabbat, but more than a few continued playing in the same arenas they'd occupied since Phoenicia was a nation. Slaving was one favorite hobby among the Sybarites. Europe and the colonies had made enslaving the less "civilized" members of other racial groups a booming business. Of course, the Sybarites weren't the only Ravnos involved in the slave trade. Several Ravnos had the bright idea of selling their mortal relatives into bondage — just goes to show you how well Ravnos *shilmulo* got along with the mortal Rroma. This practice wasn't widespread; it primarily happened in Eastern Europe, but it lasted for centuries.

THE SABBAT

One of the most common threads in the Ravnos ethos, paths and philosophical thought is the concept of freedom — a peculiar or perhaps oddly appropriate emphasis, given that the Ravnos clan (at least in India) incorporates a rigid social structure that mirrors India's caste system. With such a powerful bent toward freedom — freedom to travel, freedom to take what we want — it's something of a surprise that more Ravnos didn't join the Sabbat when it formed.

More than any other, the Path of Paradox born in Rome lives up to its name. It enjoins its followers not to follow any expression of Kindred society. The Traditions? Screw them. Elders? Ignore them or eat them. Why, then, did the largest group of Ravnos converts to the Sabbat come from the Sybarites — the lineage that most vehemently spread the Roman Path within the clan? The Sybarites were infamous for their vicious and self-serving ways (as if other Kindred aren't more or less the same). Apparently, the Sabbat provided a structure that allowed them to better indulge their baser urges. Interestingly enough, the Path of Paradox is apparently unknown in the Sabbat. It may have mutated into something more acceptable to Sabbat sensibilities, but I couldn't swear to it.

Other Sabbat recruits came mainly from branches of the Ravnos that weren't Roma-dominated, which further reinforced the perception among other Kindred that the Ravnos (as opposed to *antitribu*) were all Roma. The Sabbat's rhetoric, heady stuff for its time, provided an outlet for those Kindred who didn't care for the shape the Camarilla had taken. Not surprising that so many Ravnos opted to follow the Sabbat, even if the freedom it gave them came at the cost of ideological slavery.

Were they right to do so? From what I understand, a large percentage (not population, obviously) of survivors from the Week of Nightmares are Sabbat. Maybe they made the right choice.

INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

The Industrial Revolution brought many changes to the Ravnos. During this time frame, the Roma Ravnos first Embraced *giorgio* — non-Roma — in large numbers, and did so without grave repercussions from their elders.

Among the rest of the clan — well, if you're already into criminal activities, it helps to have a large pool from which to draw idle hands. The onset of industrialization may not have made for many of those, but it did make for hands that preferred being idle — quite apart from people who simply couldn't find honest work. Industrialization also benefitted criminals by increasing the flow of wealth. Manufacturing means more goods and more money to buy them. More money means more chances for corruption.

As organized crime grew like a cancer on the world's industry, the Ravnos took advantage of it. Why? Well, when your blood drives you to steal, it can't hurt to take up thieving as an occupation. That's the obvious reason. I'm sure everyone has his or her individual ones as well.

SECT WARFARE

In the midst of all this progress, the Sabbat built its strength and began lashing out at the Camarilla for wrongs committed against Kindred who had been destroyed before most of the Sabbat Cainites had been Embraced (but revolution is rarely a logical affair). The new Camarilla domains in North America



were ill-prepared to defend against the initial wave of Sabbath strikes, and several cities changed hands (in some cases, several times).

This state of affairs didn't make unlife any easier for the Ravnos. Freedom of movement is hard to maintain when a fanatical sect of apocalyptic sons of bitches wants to recruit or eat you. The threat of the Treatment wasn't enough to keep them off, because they rarely had any qualms about killing those administering the Treatment. On the other hand, it's next to impossible to patrol all of an urban area in hopes of catching a few random Kindred trying to slip through.

Aside from a few skirmishes, the Ravnos managed to avoid the sibling rivalry between the Camarilla and the Sabbath. For once, our independent status proved more of a blessing than a bludgeon for the Camarilla elders to wield against us.

WAR

The Industrial Revolution brought the world many wonders previously unseen, including the mass carnage made possible by modern weaponry. Napoleon's march across Europe was a chilling preview of the destruction to come. The American

Civil War ended some of the Ravnos' most lucrative slaving operations (not that I'm about to shed tears over that). With the advent of the Gatling gun, also during the American Civil War, and aviation in the early 20th century, humanity continued to refine its ability to inflict the greatest amount of bloodshed in the least amount of time. Not surprisingly, human awareness of (and consequently, animosity toward) Kindred declined during this period. It's hard to regard Kindred as the preeminent threat when mortal armies are pumping mustard gas into trenches and burning the faces from strapping young men prepared to die for their countries.

THE FIRST WORLD WAR

It's difficult to describe the effect World War I had on Kindred society. The conflict was largely restricted to one continent, but that continent contained the heart of the Camarilla's power. The Kaiser's army rolled over Europe one country at a time, sowing carnage in the mortal sphere that forced the Camarilla to adapt its accustomed uses of the power it wielded among Kindred. These events didn't affect the Ravnos much, though, as our clan simply moved out of the way. Many of the

Papa Legba

Papa Legba was reputedly shipped to America on one of the many slaving ships, one of the lucky few who survived. As a mortal, this intensely spiritual man was among the more frightening practitioners of voodoo. He had a fearsome reputation throughout the mortal population in the American southeast, and eventually attracted the attention of a Ravnos – the Right Reverend Jebediah Ezekiel Withers, a traveling revivalist preacher. Reverend Jebediah was famous for delivering impressive sermons well into the dark morning hours. He wanted to find this "voodoo man" and prove to him the falsehood of his ways.

When Jebediah met the man who would become Papa Legba, he tried to use the powers of the blood to convince the houngan that his "heathen witchery" was false. Jebediah failed, but before that meeting was over, another Ravnos walked the night.

Papa Legba is rarely seen, but often heard. He uses his natural charm to earn the trust of mortal and Kindred alike, then uses that trust to take whatever he wants. He's a past master at turning others' expectations against them in a way that absolves him from fault – claiming that they didn't consider the full ramifications of their bargain, for example, or suggesting that their own behavior nullified any deal struck. He also travels under many names and faces, preferring not to let anyone know that he is Papa Legba, the trickster loa.

European Ravnos by this time were of Roma descent and traveled with the nomadic families. Princes and elders distressed over the prospect of war coming to their precious domains worried much less about Ravnos travelers, especially those who could bring news of troop movements and warnings of impending attack.

THE SECOND WORLD WAR

The first historical event of the 20th century to have a real impact on the Ravnos was World War II. Travel in Europe became more difficult as the German *Wehrmacht* slowly ground the Continent under *panzer* treads and Stuka-carried bombs. Even so, few Ravnos had any difficulty finding someplace safe to wait out the combat when it caught up with them — at least, not until the Holocaust.

PORRAJMOS

Porrajmos is the Roma word for the Holocaust. To many people in the modern world, the Holocaust happened to the Jews. They forget that it also happened to the Roma. The Nazis carried out their genocidal practices against all the so-called mongrel races or those they deemed “unfit” to breed. For the European Ravnos, *Porrajmos* was a disaster. The Nazis had tracked Roma movements throughout Europe for some time, and rounded up *kumpaniya* after *kumpaniya*. Along with the Roma prisoners, they gathered up dozens, possibly as many as a few hundred, Ravnos *shilmulo* who traveled with the Roma and used them as cover. I could manufacture a conspiracy theory accusing the German Tremere or Ventrue of a secret plot to wipe out the Ravnos — but I don’t think it happened that way. The Holocaust was bigger than the Kindred could ever be. Certainly, some took advantage of it. The death camps probably made great places to feed without undue notice, as much as I hate to say it.

Some Kindred like to take credit for mortal history. Anytime anything significant happens, a Toreador, Tremere or Ventrue will pop up and say “We did that!” I suppose it makes them feel useful. I haven’t heard of any who took credit for the Holocaust, however, outside of a few deranged individuals. Lawrence says he’s met elders who would gladly lay claim to any atrocities they *have* committed, but they will not claim this one.



To mortal perceptions, the Jews suffered more than anyone under the Holocaust. To the Kindred, more Ravnos probably met Final Death in the Second World War than did members of any other clan. Convenient, perhaps. I see it as a lesson, but I haven't figured out what the lesson is yet.

Stories still circulate through the clan about Ravnos who ended up in the camps and Embraced every Roma — or in some cases, every prisoner — they could find. As the tales go, the whole crew then led an assault on the guards. If this happened even half as often as the stories claim, the Holocaust would be a footnote in mortal history. I have no doubt it happened once or twice, and those events were inflated over the decades until half of Poland had Ravnos-infested death camps.

Some Ravnos who survived that time and resided in Europe blame the Tremere for the event, calling the Holocaust a ruse to destroy the Ravnos clan. Kindred are, as I've mentioned earlier, an egotistical lot. I cannot find it plausible that the warlocks would go to the trouble of slaughtering millions of mortals just to wipe out one clan. Well, I take that back. I can see it, but I'm not sure such an act is logistically possible. Kindred are not the predators they claim to be. They're parasites, dependent on the mortals, not the shepherds of the children of Seth.

THE MODERN ERA

After the Second World War, things settled down, relatively speaking. The superpowers snarled at each other while the former Allies carefully defanged Germany and Japan. The eldest Ravnos awakened to find a strange new world, with an India just freeing itself from British rule. In conjunction with the British Empire's withdrawal from India, the *asuratizayya* renewed their efforts to expel Western Kindred from the nation. The elders fought back, initially with considerable success, as the Eastern Kindred were relatively young and unprepared to deal with older and cannier attackers. This conflict escalated as stronger *asuratizayya* came to assist in the war and the Ravnos Embraced more childer to serve as cannon fodder.

THE '60S

For the American Ravnos among the Roma, this decade was an interesting time. The Roma were settling down all over, forcing the Ravnos to settle down along with them or find another meal ticket. By the early 1970s, a large percentage of the itinerant Roma may well have ended their traveling days because of their bloodsucking relatives. This change meant that fewer Roma were available to provide cover for Ravnos who wanted it. The primary alternatives to the Ravnos' vanishing lifestyle were to join the Sabbat, join the Camarilla, or join the anarchists.

Or, in some cases, join the Hell's Angels — though it's hard to join a biker gang if you can't come out by day. These guys do runs night *and* day, and while they won't look at you too strangely if you only come out at night, they won't put their own recreation on hold just to accommodate someone who doesn't want a tan. Many Ravnos who took up the biker look did so in groups, to give themselves decent cover stories. At least, they did until police and highway patrols started cracking down on groups of motorcyclists.

Hippies offered another popular option for itinerant Ravnos — deadheading was apparently a popular pastime for Ravnos well into the 1990s, at least until Jerry Garcia's death. Hippies were already strange enough, viewed with suspicion by the "straight" population and otherwise sufficiently odd that a few additional peculiarities didn't stand out too much. Ravnos and hippies ultimately proved something of a volatile mix. Indulging in chemical recreation became a popular vice among the younger Ravnos, with the expected consequences. I may be going out on a limb here, but I think it's a little unwise to give undead bloodsuckers who can conjure images through sheer force of will access to hallucinogens.

THE '80S

During this decade in India, the conflict with Eastern Kindred started to really pick up for the first time in centuries. The Kshatriyas experimented with mass Embracing as a weapon against the *asuratizayya*, with mixed results. The *asuratizayya* appeared in unprecedented numbers,

for which the Indian Ravnos were often unprepared. Apparently, Eastern Kindred can't just Embrace others, as the Ravnos can — they have some other method of defying Final Death. Still, when faced with swelling global populations, even the more rigorous *asuratizayya* "Embrace" results in foes more numerous than before.

BHOPAL

One account records a plan to Embrace several hundred mortals in a single night and cover the event up in what would *appear* to be an industrial accident. What really happened? In 1984, the Kshatriyas swept into the city of Bhopal and gathered up mortals for the Embrace to send them as a massive Kindred wave against a potent *asuratizayya* who posed a serious threat to the status quo. The plan was to Embrace, force the childer to feed on their families, and manufacture an incident to cover up the disappearances and deaths.

As inevitably happens, someone screwed up. At the end of the day, more than 40 tons of poison gas killed over 4,000 people and injured 50,000 more. On the brighter side, the toxin also polluted the *asuratizayyas'* herds and weakened the Eastern Kindred long enough for the Ravnos and their cannon fodder to destroy them. Hooray for our team. The masterminds who thought this up were aware of Union Carbide's poor safety standards, but underestimated just how bad the situation was when they sabotaged the plant.

THE '90S

In India, the ancients awakened and walked again. Their childer — the elders — prepared the way for them. At the same time, Indian Ravnos traveled east and west in search of those Ravnos who had left or never known India. When they found what the clan had become — the European *shilmulo* with pretensions to mysticism through a false Path of Paradox, the American Ravnos with no knowledge whatsoever of the clan's reason for existence, and so many others who did not even try to resist the vices imposed or facilitated by the Beast — they took action.

In a reversal of events centuries before, when the Sybarites' flawed Path spread through the newcomers, this wave of newcomers converted the Western Ravnos to *mayaparisatya*. Perhaps the followers of the Sybarites' Path of Paradox were no

longer satisfied with an ethos that claimed "all is permissible, nothing is forbidden"? It's possible. I can't imagine an unlifetime of excess as remotely satisfying, never mind centuries of it.

The converts may also have found the alternatives less than desirable. The Ravnos who left India to spread the good word were often quite old, very powerful and extremely intolerant of youthful indiscretions. My impression is that the converts could choose to adapt or die. Even with such a traumatic reason for evolution, it took years for the change to make it as far as America's West Coast or South America. I believe that by 1998, a majority of the Path of Paradox followers had converted to the "proper" path. Timely, no doubt.

Accompanying the conversions were the rumors of powerful Methuselahs of the Fourth and Fifth Generations awakening and tearing a frightening swath of destruction through their enemies in India. In fact, if the journals can be believed, hundreds — if not thousands — of Ravnos were Embraced, sent against the *asuratizayya* and destroyed within a matter of nights at a time, over the final decade of warfare before Zapathasura's awakening.

THE WEEK OF NIGHTMARES

The week of the Ravnos Antediluvian's awakening — by whatever name you want to call it — was a literal week of nightmares. Ravnos Disciplines flew out of control as even the weakest neonates effortlessly produced illusions and skilled elders created images without the conscious intent of doing so. Few Ravnos could take advantage of this potency as visions from the Antediluvian's clash with its enemies overwhelmed them.

I saw my sire and his sire suffer from literal waking nightmares and bring them to "life" before they could get things under control. Lawrence's attempts to explain the appearance of a many-headed monster in battle with a tiger and a dragon in the middle of an LAX-bound airplane were amusing, but they didn't help his reputation. Further evidence, all of it anecdotal, indicates that such incidents happened to Ravnos around the world. At the time, we worried more that someone was slipping PCP-LSD cocktails to our herd, but abstinence didn't seem to help.



On the fourth night, it got really bad. I guess the best “new age” way to describe the event is as if a psychic bomb went off. It happened during the day, but *all of us* awoke when it hit. I didn’t get much rest for that day. Come nightfall, things grew much worse. When I arose, I found Karl, more tense than I’ve ever seen him, sitting in front of the television and flipping channels like it was an Olympic sport. At first, I was annoyed. But as I watched, I realized how wonderfully delicious his blood must taste, as well as how surely he deserved destruction. I can’t explain the loathing that penetrated to my bones and seemed as natural as... well, as natural as anything else we do.

On one level, I wanted *nothing more* than to bite down on Karl and devour his soul. On another level, I knew doing that would be the King Kamahameha of all bad ideas. I don’t know how long I stood there before Karl turned and saw me. He cured me of my indecision — he attacked *me*. Between desperation and serendipity, we managed not to destroy each other, but it was close for awhile. We both left for other places to stay (without telling each other or the good doctor, who’d fucking better not claim this story as his, or Zapathasura’s destruction will seem like Migraine Headache #15, and I hope I make myself perfectly clear) until the fit passed.

The thirst and rage lasted for four nights. I’ve never felt a rage like that before and I hope never to feel it again — a filthy, driven rage, backed by a hatred 10,000 years old and encrusted with enough emotional baggage to sink Asia. Such fury called to mind the end of the world.

Who knew that was exactly what it heralded? By the time we began to suspect, we knew it was big, but until Lawrence got his care package, we didn’t know just how big it was, and is.

Two months ago, I — we, all five of us — stood on the plain in Bangladesh where Zapathasura (or Ravana, or Dracian, or whatever name you care to throw its way) fought its last battle. We found the spot where it was destroyed by the light of four suns, where — by all the evidence we can gather — someone detonated nuclear weapons. We have a scrapbook of news reports from the time, about the worst typhoon to strike this area in more than a century. They don’t tell the half of it.



Looking over the area, it's clear that someone or something swept through afterward and tried to hide the evidence. They were thorough, but not completely so. We found enough to tell us what we needed to know — that at least three or four powerful, or should I say *godlike*, things battled here. That reality, *maya* as some would call it, was torn here.

I wish I could find the words to convey with sufficient gravity what I'm trying to say. In the simplest terms, "this is the first battlefield of Gehenna." I can't begin to convey the profound nature of this fact — the end of the world started here. How could I? It's too big. What keeps me up wondering all day is, "Where next?" Then I wonder, "What the hell can I do about it?"

FALLOUT

In the weeks that followed those days of hell, we learned a few things. First, a lot of Ravnos



apparently went mad for no good reason. We couldn't reach most of the Ravnos Lawrence and Karl kept in touch with (and still haven't managed it). Lawrence consulted some experts regarding Indian mythology and its imagery, from which we learned that people all over had visions of Zapathasura's swan song. The *Fortean Times* was abuzz with stories of weird events during that hellish week and I suspect I'm barely touching the tip of the iceberg.

I know you're wondering about the other clans — how did they react to all this? As far as I can tell, they didn't. That is, most of them don't have a clue. A few have a clue, but it's incomplete. Some Kindred think all of us are dust, but they don't know why. Some know more details than I do. Some might suspect the truth and are afraid to speak of it. In the Camarilla, I don't blame them. Those ostriches aren't about to admit Gehenna's on their doorstep until it's sitting on the sofa, guzzling all the beer and putting out cigarettes on

the coffee table. Even then, they'll probably try to pass it off as their undersocialized geek uncle.

We're the first, but more will follow. When one of the Camarilla clans falls, you can bet they'll take notice. They'll blame it on the Sabbat, but at least they might start *doing something*.

PROPHECY

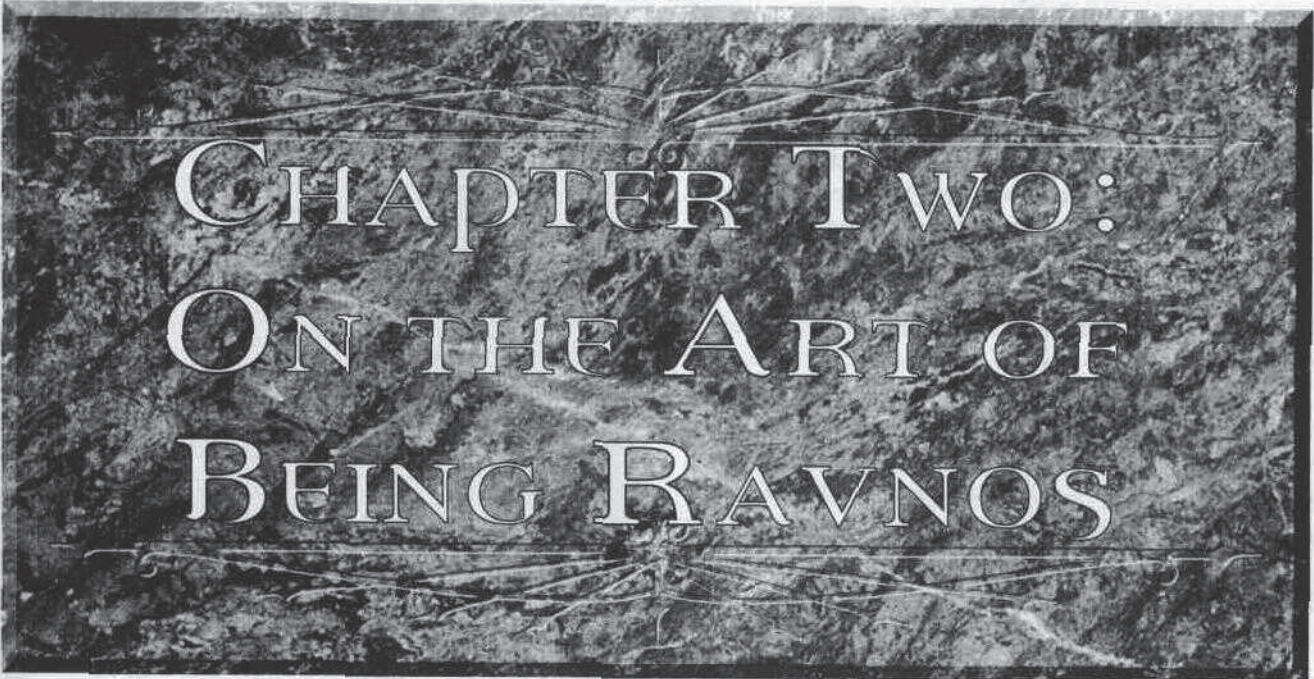
What's next? Good question. Back in India, all our best evidence showed that the eldest Ravnos were destroyed during the Week of Nightmares. All well and good, but now we're not so sure. Stories filter around and a few of us still talk — we have to, to survive. Stories about the legendary Durga Syn pop up every so often, linked to rumors about the Nosferatu. Maybe they're next?

Durga Syn isn't the only one, either. Part of this history was gleaned from work completed 600 to 800 years ago, by a Ravnos who was ancient then. We received it in the mail before we went to India. Why? Who sent it? I don't know, but I have suspicions.

Does the idea make me comfortable? No. The other Grave Robbers and I take great comfort in the idea that all the oldest, most powerful Ravnos bit the dust two years ago. I just don't like thinking that one of those ancient bastards is ready to rise up and start using us in some private war or other, pretending it's a holy duty that comes part and parcel with the blood.

Wake up and welcome Kali. Gehenna's almost here.





CHAPTER TWO: ON THE ART OF BEING RAVNOS

The universe seems bankrupt as soon as we begin to discuss the characters of individuals.
— Henry David Thoreau

The Ravnos really don't fit one tidy definition, not because the charlatans lack common traits, but simply because humanity — and by extension, the Kindred — have come up with so many crimes. That's right, every Ravnos is a criminal of some sort, whether that crime is based in human or Kindred society or both. No one has a reason to sugarcoat that simple truth, no matter how uncomfortable it is. If it seems bigoted or insensitive, it is — because all too often, the Ravnos' crimes are only against the principles of others.

Ravnos usually congregate in small broods or packs ostensibly led by one who has probably Embraced the others. The Ravnos do this for safety in numbers, although many put on a show of blood loyalty. Not all Ravnos believe in this so-called obligation within the clan; many use it primarily to convince clanmates to do favors for them.

In the wake of the Week of Nightmares, however, surviving Ravnos often eschew contact with other Ravnos, fearing a recurrence of the

madness that consumed the clan and destroyed so many. Even those Ravnos who choose to associate with their broods are wary of a recurrence. Few will discuss the matter with other Kindred under any circumstances.

THE RAVNOS EMBRACE

The Ravnos treat the Embrace in different ways depending on which segment of the clan is involved. Indian Ravnos and Path of Paradox adherents see the Embrace as a metaphysical sacrifice to one or more gods so the childe can move on to fulfil her *svadharma*, as well as assist other Kindred in the fulfillment of theirs. Among many of the younger American lineages, the Embrace is usually given without much ceremony — it depends on personal taste and the individual sire's background and preferences.

Ravnos create new childer for a vast number of reasons. Some Ravnos select a criminal mind as carefully as an artist seeks a protégé, while others look for candidates who can assist them in their own schemes. In many cases, a Ravnos sire expects his childer to stay around for a long time — before the Week of Nightmares, many Ravnos structured their broods as families, albeit dysfunctional ones. During the disaster, most such families were wiped out in blood-crazed frenzies. Of the few that survived, many have not been heard from since.

The Ravnos clan as a whole adheres to no single rule that all must follow — everything is fairly informal among most of them. Only those who turn their Damnation into a religion — the Paradox followers — have codified who, when, how and why a childe receives the Embrace. Among the Indian Ravnos, a prospective sire petitions her sire for the right to Embrace. With the permission and blessing of both her sire and the eldest Ravnos in her city, she brings her new childe into the fold.

New childer of Paradox followers are taught the clan's history and duties — a small degree of indoctrination into the Paradox mindset — and typically are released to become full *shilmulo* within two decades, usually much sooner. Neonates aren't expected to turn to Paradox before the first century of unlife passes, nor are they pressed to accept it. They are, however, expected to abide by its tenets when in the presence of their elders.

INDIAN MASS EMBRACES

Sabbat-style mass Embraces are the primary exception to the Indian mode of Embrace. The practice is deemed brutish by those few outsiders aware of it, but some Ravnos feel — prompted by their conflicts with the Cathayans — that mass Embrace tactics are necessary for victory. As the number of Eastern Kindred increases and the fighting becomes more intense, the Eastern Ravnos are more willing to Embrace a dozen or so in a single night to use as cannon fodder. These unfortunates are not expected to survive, and are occasionally destroyed after they've served their purpose. Some elders protest this tactic, stating that it violates the tenets of Paradox and the mortals' own destinies.

JATIAND BLOODLINES

Among the most traditional Ravnos, mortal lineage is at least as important as Kindred. Among the eldest, it defines the Kindred's role in the clan, much to the chafing of neonate sensibilities.



HOW MANY?

How many Ravnos still walk the World of Darkness? In the nights following the Week of Nightmares, estimates range from fewer than 100 to double or triple that. *Time of Thin Blood* states that "perhaps 100 survive, and no powerful elders." *Nights of Prophecy* implies that there may be more, and shows that Durga Syn and her brood clearly survived (and if Durga Syn isn't a powerful elder, who is?).

In truth, there isn't a single gospel answer as to how many Ravnos survived the week, beyond "very few." How many died? Most of them. This leaves a great deal of leeway in individual chronicles for Storytellers and players to determine just how many Ravnos are still around.

WHAT ABOUT THE ELDERS?

Elder survival is another matter. It all really depends on how one interprets "powerful elders." Does it mean that all fourth and fifth generation Ravnos were destroyed? Does it mean that no Ravnos stronger than eighth generation survived the purge? Again, this question is for individual chronicles to determine. *Clanbook: Ravnos* hints that a few powerful elders are up and about in the wake of the Week of Nightmares, but those hints may be misleading.

WHO CARES ABOUT THE WEEK OF NIGHTMARES?

If the Week of Nightmares hasn't happened yet in your chronicle, or the Storyteller doesn't plan to use it, then simply ignore all references to it and its effects. The Ravnos are still at full strength and up to whatever they were doing. It's that simple.

Jati is the Hindi word for "caste," and refers to a Ravnos' lineage within the clan. Several Ravnos *jati* exist, originating from nearly every continent and ranging in age from the most ancient to a matter of decades. Naturally, the eldest lines hold more status than the newer (some would say "vulgar") lines. Few Ravnos agree on what a *jati* should be, let alone whether any given line constitutes a valid caste. Most neonates could care less about the entire question of pedigree.

THE ELDER LINES

The following lineages are the original Ravnos lines and were prominent in India up until the Week of Nightmares. Some probably still exist, but not in

sufficient numbers to make a large difference. Nearly all of the Indian elders were destroyed.

The Ravnos elders in India tried to enforce strict rules about which Ravnos could Embrace which mortals, often in much the same way as the princes in Western cities. For Indian practitioners of the Path of Paradox, however, the strictures carried the weight of the Antediluvian's words, or so the elders liked to claim. Ravnos were forbidden to Embrace mortals who were not part of their own caste — Ravnos Brahman could Embrace only Brahman, Kshatriyas could Embrace only mortal Kshatriyas, and so on. In truth, few Ravnos obeyed the stricture and many elders chose to assume the neonates came from the appropriate castes. With the conflict against the *asuratizayya* a constant threat, the Ravnos were more interested in results.

BRAHMAN

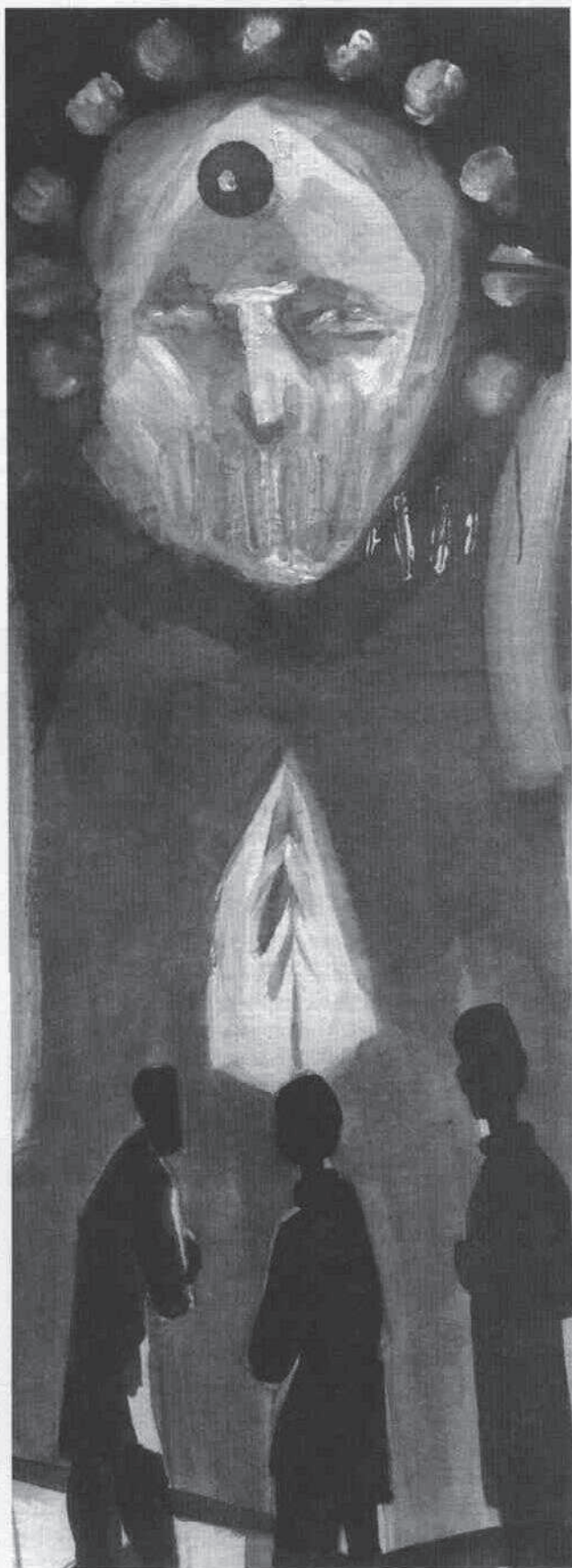
The Brahman Ravnos have a gift of sight that the other *jati* do not, and often use it to divine the future or the locations of their enemies. The Brahman also consider themselves the keepers of the "Way of Mayaparisatya," or the Path of Paradox. Among the Indian Ravnos, the Brahman are the spiritual advisors and philosophers of the clan, and often serve as advisors to other *jati*.

Brahman replace Fortitude with Auspex in their clan Disciplines, and are otherwise identical to other Ravnos.

KSHATRIYAS

The Kshatriyas are the traditional warriors, and most Ravnos in India belong to this *jati*. The elder Kshatriyas traditionally outlined strategy for the war against the *asuratizayya*, and many were among the deadliest Kindred in India. Despite tradition, many Embraced British soldiers and officers while India remained part of the British Empire. After the British departure, many continued to look outside India for competent soldiers to bring into the *asuratizayya* war.

In recent centuries, the Kshatriyas sometimes employed the "mass Embrace" strategy. They swept through a neighborhood or village and Embraced as many mortals as they could, often adding several dozen to their ranks over a single night. Those considered unworthy were given to the fledglings as their first meals. The Kshatriyas conducted such mass Embraces as preludes to massive assaults against packs of *asuratizayya* or individually powerful Eastern Kindred in an attempt to overwhelm them while the truly skilled Kshatriyas made the actual kills.



The Brahman warned against this tactic, but even they could not deny its success on several notable occasions.

Few surviving Kshatriyas remain in India, having chosen to seek their fortunes elsewhere. The Week of Nightmares convinced many that the war itself was futile.

VAISYAS

Traditionally Embraced from the merchant class, the Vaisyas are the Ravnos who traditionally deal with mortal society. Most Vaisyas had many connections and much power in their neighborhoods and cities before the Embrace, and they maintain these ties through their families' wealth and influence. Vaisyas oversee the cities so that the Kshatriyas are free to manage the war.

Typically, the Vaisyas handle Ravnos interactions with mortal governments and businesspeople, cover up any problems that could lead to discovery of Kindred existence (Eastern or Western) on a wide scale and track the movements of Eastern Kindred in the cities. Historically, one of this *jati*'s more frustrating duties was to "clean up" after the Kshatriyas' holy wars, usually with fire or reports of plague or some other means of keeping too many mortals from asking questions. It's impossible to prevent suspicion completely, but with the number of humans packed into a city like New Delhi, the Vaisyas rarely found it hard to keep the wrong people from asking the wrong questions — if nothing else, they could simply shrug and tell others that the night swallowed those who vanished.

CHANDALAS

Chandalas is the lowest-ranked *jati*. Its members are forbidden to Embrace, lest they spread their impure blood and ideals. Indian Ravnos consider any Caitiff to be Chandalas, and any Ravnos caught breaking the tenets of Paradox is likewise demoted to this caste. Members of other clans and bloodlines who come to India are seen as Chandalas, although the Ravnos may offer them more overt respect or consideration to avoid immediate conflict.

Chandalas often receive opportunities to improve their standing through onerous and odious duties — for example, arranging to gather and cremate the bodies of mortals considered likely to rise again as Eastern Kindred. Most Ravnos unlucky enough to be declared Chandalas have simply left India rather than suffer under such a stigma.

SUDRAS

The Sudras are not a true *jati*, and no Ravnos is considered to be Sudra. Ravnos ghouls are considered Sudras and therefore beneath the Embrace. If a mortal was truly worthy of the Ravnos Embrace, he would not be a ghoul and thus a servant. Ravnos rarely treat their ghouls well, nor do they usually keep them for very long. Some Ravnos have kept personal ghouls for decades or centuries, and these servants are quite formidable for their age. A few have been passed from regnant to regnant and suffer from the shifting loyalties of each new blood bond.

Sudras commonly serve as scapegoats. If a Ravnos draws too much attention from the mortals, one of her ghouls will probably suffer in her place.

Among the Ravnos of India, ghouls are considered outside their dharma, much as Kindred are, and so do not receive the same consideration that mortals do, at least according to the Path of Paradox. The longer a Sudra has been a ghoul, the less connected he is to his human life, and the less valuable as an individual to even the most devout Ravnos.

THE WESTERN SHILMULO

In the West, the Ravnos have placed much less emphasis on lineage and pedigree, Embracing mortals for any number of reasons that may have little to do with blood relations or social standing. Such considerations may have been more important several centuries ago, but in the modern nights, Western Ravnos aren't tightly knit. Instead, they tend to find a niche and build it up. It's not unheard of to find a Ravnos acting as *consigliere* to a Mafia family, or working with the Medellín cartels. Lacking a tight social structure like that in India, Western Ravnos drift to whatever interests them most.

Consequently, most Western Ravnos form small coteries composed of neonates with no direct blood connection, or a sire Embracing a few childer to share the night with her, or simply individual Ravnos working with and among members of other clans. In the wake of the Week of Nightmares, most of the Ravnos-only coteries either fell apart or lost the bulk of their members during the frenzies that overtook the clan.

The surviving Ravnos have retreated into hiding, sought out other clan members, or taken the opportunity to approach mortal and Kindred society on their own terms without the influence of other Ravnos, especially elders. Those who form new coteries do so from the need to survive or the desire to



learn what happened — or to keep it from happening to them.

THE RROMA SHILMULO

Throughout Europe, North America and South America, Ravnos traveled with their Rroma families. They traveled in groups, largely for reasons of safety, especially among Kindred who distrusted them on sight (a reputation they brought upon themselves, and to an extent, their mortal cousins). Unlike the *giorgio* Ravnos, the Rroma Ravnos were much more tightly knit and closely associated with each other. This closeness largely stemmed from a siege mentality, as Ravnos who associated with Rroma rarely found welcome in European or American domains; when they did stay, more often than not the established Kindred strongly encouraged them to move on.

Ravnos who traveled with the mortal Rroma did not necessarily enjoy a pleasant relationship with their mortal relatives. Many a Rroma took it upon himself to rid the world of another bloodthirsty monster before it killed another member of his fam-

ily. Others took to traveling by day and leaving the Kindred somewhere unpleasant and alone.

CURRENT SITUATION

During the Week of Nightmares, the Rroma Ravnos suffered more than any other group. In the few nights during which the blood frenzy overtook the clan, nearly all the Rroma Ravnos destroyed each other in cannibalistic rage simply because of their close proximity. The few survivors disdain the company of other Ravnos in reaction to the madness. Before the Week of Nightmares, Rroma Ravnos formed the visible majority of the clan. Now they have dwindled to a shadow of their former numbers and are barely visible to anyone. Outside observers (wrongly) assume this means the Ravnos clan has been destroyed utterly (if they notice at all).

RAVNOS AROUND THE WORLD

The Ravnos Kindred have always traveled. Before the disaster, they lived on every continent —



CLANBOOK: RAVNOS

and probably still do, if one looks carefully enough. Reports of Ravnos casualties from the Week of Nightmares vary from "all Ravnos met destruction" to "maybe a hundred or so survive" to suspicions that the bulk of the clan has gone into hiding. The truth is a bit more complex, and not easily divined. At least 100 survivors exist, some of whom *may* be elders, but if the old ones survived, they haven't yet made themselves known except in rumors.

The following paragraphs provide some context for Ravnos activity before and after the Week of Nightmares, as best as can be reconstructed.

INDIA

India is the Ravnos clan's traditional homeland and has been the center of clan activity for the past several thousand years. Events in India are somewhat confused, considering Ravnos presence there and the purpose for that presence. The *Karavalanisha Vrana*, for example, claims that the Ravnos progenitor was created in India. If the recorded dates are to be believed, gods who didn't exist for at least four thousand years afterward created Zapathasura and the Ravnos. The skeptical might suspect a great deal of "after the fact" rationalizing tied up in the *Karavalanisha Vrana* and its associated texts.

Before the Week of Nightmares, the Ravnos clan in India arguably represented the largest Kindred power base in Asia. Ravnos princes claimed domains in Indian cities much as the Ventrue and Toreador claim that title in European cities. The largest difference between the Ravnos and other clans was the continuing war with the *asuratizayya*, the Indian Ravnos' name for the Eastern Kindred. For centuries, a fluctuating state of war between the two groups existed throughout India and led to brutal battles. This warfare wasn't universal — some Eastern Kindred had better things to do than kill Ravnos and vice versa — but elders on both sides drove the conflict. Ravnos in India had to be careful where they traveled; entering the wrong city could mean painful destruction at the hands of the *asuratizayya*.

In the wake of the Week of Nightmares, several Eastern Kindred took advantage of the sudden drop in Ravnos numbers and moved to claim their own domains in cities formerly held by their rivals. Cities once safe for Ravnos are now death traps for the incautious or unlucky, but thankfully for the Kindred, it's not too hard to hide their existence in cities literally crammed with human beings. Some of the more ancient and powerful Ravnos may survive in torpor; no one knows what will happen when or if they awaken.

Elder havens throughout India sit abandoned, as if their owners had just stepped outside to sup for the evening. Neonates survive throughout the country, trying to avoid ancient enemies intent on purging India of all Ravnos (and other Kindred) influences.

Ravnos of Note: Formerly, scores of elders and possibly hundreds of neonates. Now, *no one knows*. Most of the Ravnos in India suffered the Final Death during the Week of Nightmares, either in cannibalistic frenzies or because such frenzies revealed them to their ancestral enemies. The weakness suffered by the Ravnos across those several nights gave opportunistic *asuratizayya* the chance to destroy their most hated foes with little fear of reprisal.

AFRICA

Ravnos have lived in Africa nearly as long as they have in India, although not as visibly. The Deceivers spread throughout Northern Africa with the Phoenicians and traveled into the interior to other African kingdoms and empires. Few returned to tell the tale, but those who did had some interesting experiences to relate. In modern times, Ravnos can be found in any major city. Such places are easy to blend into, given the presence of international black markets, constant drug and weapon smuggling, and piracy.

Ravnos of Note: One small lineage in eastern Africa claims descent from Anansi, a trickster spider god known for his thievery. This claim is obviously not verifiable and these Ravnos show the same tendencies as their cousins from other parts of the world. Given the proliferation of Ravnos creation myths, the Anansi connection is probably just another cultural malapropism. The eldest surviving clan member seems to sincerely believe the claim, however, and calls himself Anansi. He and others of his line travel continuously across Africa and often try to undermine the power and presence of European Kindred — over a slight from the lips of a Camarilla prince uttered centuries ago.

ASIA

Ravnos have lived in Asia for the clan's entire history. The heart of the Ravnos has always lain in India, and Ravnos have often traveled to China, Mongolia and other nations, frequently disguising themselves as Eastern Kindred for passage. When the Roma began their migrations out of India, some traveled into Asia proper as well as to Europe. Ravnos traveled with them and spread across Asia in greater numbers than before, which led to more conflicts



with the Eastern Kindred. Despite those battles, a few Ravnos still survive in Asia. These rare Kindred must maintain a Masquerade from mortals and their own ancient enemies, and usually have a compelling personal reason to remain.

Outside India, the Week of Nightmares inflicted few losses on Asian Ravnos, as they group together less often than their brethren elsewhere. Even so, fewer Ravnos likely still stalk the night in Asia than on any other continent outside Europe simply because of the difficulty of surviving in the Cathayans' midst.

Ravnos of Note: Unconfirmed rumors place a Ravnos elder known as the Flesh-Eater in the Green Courts of the Kuei-jin.

AUSTRALIA

Despite being established as a penal colony, Australia is about as criminal in culture as the United States. Therefore, the Ravnos find it no more attractive than any other nation and less so than many. Nonetheless, the Australian continent's large size and relative paucity of Kindred makes it a favored

place to cool off if other regions get too warm. Smugglers transport their goods through many Australian ports, and some Ravnos take advantage of that fact. Many have networks throughout Southeast Asia and in Hong Kong, and use Australia as a base of operations away from the Eastern Kindred (who rarely take kindly to Western intrusion).

Ravnos of Note: A small jati, the Seven Phoenix Triad, operates extensively through mortal proxies in Hong Kong, but is actually based in Darwin. The Ravnos rarely entered Hong Kong even before it changed hands from the Commonwealth to China; nowadays, they visit the city only in extreme circumstances.

EUROPE

In the years following the "discovery" of the New World, many European Ravnos migrated to North America. The primary population they left behind was Roma, who had migrated from India only shortly before. Many European Kindred of other clans believed that the "Gypsies" had destroyed those who weren't of proper blood, and the new arrivals had no desire to

disabuse them of this notion. This circumstance, perhaps more than anything else, led to the enduring perception of the Ravnos as a Gypsy clan.

Apart from the Indian Ravnos, the Week of Nightmares struck the European segment of the clan the hardest. The European Ravnos traveled *inkumpaniya*, sometimes with as many as five or six *shilmulo* traveling with the mortal Rroma. This close association led to the clan's virtual annihilation in Europe, leaving *giorgio* and outcasts as the primary survivors.

Ravnos of Note: Despite the near-total destruction of powerful Ravnos elders, Durga Syn continues to survive, surrounded by neonates and ancillae she Embraced over the centuries. In fact, some who know whisper that the Week of Nightmares left her and her blood untouched. A few who know enough to speculate have put forth the theory that whatever blocked supernatural access to Russia somehow blunted the curse that swept the Ravnos. Durga Syn has not stepped forward to offer her opinion.

MIDDLE EAST

Ravnos live throughout the Middle East, some of them descendents of a few *jati* with extreme religious views. Though many were chosen from the Muslim faith, Muslims are not the dominant group among the Ravnos in the area, as Muhammed's followers frequently find the Path of Paradox hard to accept. The predominance of faith and violence in the region makes it difficult for most Kindred to survive here, and the Ravnos are no exception.

Ravnos of Note: An ancient known as *Amaravati* recently awakened from torpor and spearheaded the clan's conversion to the traditional Path of Paradox. She was known to reside in Iraq before the Week of Nightmares, and is reputed among Ravnos who recognized her name to have close ties with the Assamites. She vanished during the Week of Nightmares and is assumed to have met the Final Death.

NORTH AMERICA

North America has possibly the largest surviving Ravnos population — or perhaps *had*. One reason modern Ravnos are less willing to claim their lineage is the fact that many Camarilla elders have an inkling of what happened to the clan and see the

younger Ravnos as harbingers of Gehenna. These elders, in their respective cities, have attempted purges of any Ravnos who enter, and the Ravnos lack sufficient communications or numbers to mount any kind of Treatment (or so they think).

At least a dozen Ravnos have gathered into two or three *coterie*s for safety in numbers. They're trying to find other Ravnos — not necessarily to make contact, but to find out what the hell happened.

Many Ravnos live on the West Coast, where a few elders moved to face the incoming Eastern Kindred threat, and young Deceivers have taken cover among the crumbling anarch domains. Several other young Ravnos survived the clan's collapse, but the eldest have not been seen since then. Without the so-called spiritual guidance of their elders, the survivors have taken to unlife in California with a vengeance, playing up to the clan's degenerate reputation and giving in to their darker temptations.

Ravnos of Note: See the *coterie* described in Chapter Three.

SOUTH AMERICA

Opportunistic Ravnos find South America fertile ground for their needs. Many are attracted to Rio de Janeiro and its allegedly decadent atmosphere. The reality is not always what they expect, but many Ravnos adapt. Others are drawn to Colombia and other parts of the continent where they can indulge their base urges without much fear of reprisal from mortal or Kindred authorities. Unfortunately, many find that other Kindred who got there first have definite and unpleasant ideas about visitors.

As a general rule, the Ravnos avoid the wilderness of South America. The Amazon Jungle is too dangerous to travel, given the presence of Lupines and stranger beasts. This wild region does not easily forgive trespassers.

Ravnos of Note: Rafael Schliemann is well known among the criminals in Rio de Janeiro. Whatever anyone needs, Rafael can provide it. Mortals are his specialty merchandise. He handles a thriving slave trade that serves as the center of a web stretching across the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans into Africa, Asia and parts of America. He reportedly uses the Rio slums as his base of operations. He also provides herds to order for his more selective clientele, and rumor has it that several Ventrue go to him regularly. Rafael makes his haven in a heavily guarded mansion that originally belonged to a Portuguese plantation owner.

BORN CRIMINALS: THE RAVNOS WEAKNESS

In the words of Leszek Kisliewsky

This is the simple truth: Every Ravnos is a criminal. Let me restate that: *Every* Ravnos is a criminal. The Embrace awakens the Beast within every Kindred, but the Ravnos Beast is a bit more cunning, a bit more deceptive and a bit more underhanded than that of other Kindred. This is not an advantage. We are subject to the same psychotic episodes that every other Kindred suffers, but we also have to deal with a little voice in the back of our heads that whispers, "Go ahead. Take it — no one will notice. If they do, they won't think *you* did it." It's persuasive, it knows every dark corner in your soul and eventually you'll give in.

Other Kindred think that Ravnos are thieves. If it were that simple, existence wouldn't be such a pain. Truthfully, our weakness gives many princes and other Kindred valid reasons to distrust or even

hate our clan (though they come to us whenever they need something underhanded done). Ravnos suffer from compulsions that range from the pedestrian habit of kleptomania to the far more exotic and dangerous drive to commit diablerie on fellow Kindred. Fortunately, relatively few Ravnos are driven to the latter.

What I said in the first paragraph sounds a bit metaphorical, so I'll expand. That little voice is not external, it's not like a demon gibbering in the dark places of your conscious mind that you can ignore or argue with. It is part of your own deepest self. Often, you'll find yourself acting on that impulse before you realize what you're about to do. It's quieter than frenzy and less likely to be noticed, but it's no less compelling when it happens. Path of Paradox followers say this destructive inner drive is one of the temptations laid in our path that we must control or direct toward our own needs, but I think they're just rationalizing their own behavior.

The fact is, we Ravnos don't have to give in to every sudden impulse. With effort, most of us can fight down the urge and move on, at least for a while. The Ravnos who ignores it for too long feels a



gnawing ache, like the thirst for blood. She might even seek out opportunities to commit crimes, or else find herself subject to temptation more and more often until she gives in. How often a Ravnos gives in depends on each individual's degree of self-control and strength of will.

In the end, it's not really that we're inclined toward crime. We're simply doomed to prove to ourselves that we are the masters of our own *svadharma*.

THE CURSE

According to old stories, the curse of temptation under which the Ravnos labor was inflicted as a punishment because the clan founder desired the pleasures of the life lost to him. His need to steal life from mortals, as well as his desire to regain what he no longer had, expanded to encompass all aspects of mortal life. Rather than simply seek out what he wanted on his terms, he was compelled to take whatever he could get as a reminder that no matter how much he had or how he got it, he would never benefit from it. I note that the curse did not simply include theft, but many crimes. Some stories say "all possible crimes."

One version of the story goes on to state that the Antediluvian could weaken the curse placed upon him by spreading it to others — his childer, their childer, and so on. The more Ravnos in the world, the weaker the founder's own curse would become.

THE SHAPE OF VICE

For every Ravnos, the crime is different — some bear strong similarities to each other, but the driving motivation and intent usually differs in some key way. Ravnos develop criminal inclinations based on their activities in life, either a temptation they indulged often as mortals or something they especially despised, as the Embrace is an ironic gift. This means that the meticulous serial killer will probably have an even stronger urge to kill, and his murders will probably become more intricate. Or the police officer who loathes the drug dealers she routinely arrests will develop an urge to obtain those same drugs, or partake of them through her vessels (the two urges are not incompatible).

Some Ravnos develop impulses toward crimes they never would have considered in mortal life. The Kindred form and its powers provide opportunities to commit acts that no mortal would attempt, and the Embrace occasionally brings such urges forth. A newly Embraced Ravnos may be unaware of any reason she might be tempted to commit such of-

CHOOSE YOUR CRIME

The Ravnos stereotype is the thief — Ravnos characters are expected to steal things as part of their weakness — but this trait isn't very evocative unless handled in an interesting or different way.

First, when creating a Ravnos, consider his history and personality and use that to establish context for the character's crime. Don't worry about making it perfectly balanced with the compulsions of other Ravnos, because the weakness is different for every one. One Ravnos might have the urge to tempt archons and lead them away from their justicars and the Camarilla; another might be more interested in sparking or exacerbating vendettas among Kindred or mortal power structures. The former is specific and the latter quite general. The two are not by any means equal, nor do they need to be.

STORYTELLING THE WEAKNESS

The Ravnos weakness is mainly a roleplaying matter. When a Ravnos has the opportunity to commit her crime, the player must make a Self-Control roll (difficulty 6) to avoid it. The effects, however, largely come down to her character. A Ravnos who needs to reject and oppose authority figures has to actually reject and oppose such figures in roleplay. The player must be willing to play through the chosen crime when it comes up, or play through resisting it — an act of will in itself.

The image of the happy-go-lucky Ravnos who merrily skips from victim to victim and relieves them of property and prosperity is a vapid stereotype, and should not define the clan. Consider, when creating a Ravnos character, what it would be like to be driven to commit *verboten* acts above and beyond those needed for survival. Some Ravnos may choose to hide their disgust at their own actions with a supercilious demeanor, but few truly are so carefree. Those who are so exuberant tend to lose control of their urges most often and many are destroyed before they get old enough to be much of a hazard in Kindred society.

fenses, but even these derive in some way from the childer's personality.

RROMA RAVNOS AND THE WEAKNESS

Some Ravnos who were Rroma as mortals claim that they are less bound by the weakness, that the thin nature of "*giorgio*" vitae has made us too weak to resist stronger impulses toward specific crimes. They go on to say that they are instead driven to break society's mores and laws, in any way they choose. I

think they're deceiving themselves. Some Rroma may suffer under such a compulsion, and I do mean *suffer*. If you think getting the urge to hold up a convenience store every time you see the cash drawer open is bad, imagine the need to act against whatever society you're in.

The rumor is that Ravnos hang out with Rroma and we're all one big happy family. I don't know about you, but I've looked into Rroma culture, and they have a lot of taboos I don't pretend to understand. Now, if you were part of a culture with a lot of rules about what you do and how you behave, would you want some bloodsucking bastard hanging around who breaks those rules every chance he gets? I wouldn't.

KRIS AND OTHER GATHERINGS

As told by Neel Ramanathan

For a clan whose blood drives its members to break laws and customs, Ravnos are often given to strong traditions within the clan.

SECTS AND SOCIETY

Sects are crap — both of them. They're a con and a lie. Go to any city and try to guess whether it's Camarilla or Sabbat by looking. The answer is, you can't. They spend so much time hating each other they've become mirror images. What can I say? Unintentional irony is the best kind. Or perhaps the worst.

THE CAMARILLA

Sect is a matter of choice, at least if you're dealing with the Camarilla. In truth, most princes and elders don't care if you're a member of their little club as long as they don't catch you breaking their little rules. In fact, it's remarkably easy to get by in a Camarilla domain by claiming membership. Hypothetically, any Kindred can do it and few princes care one way or another unless your presence brings problems or solutions to the domain. It's best to offer solutions.

I would say that, at best, only a minority of the Camarilla's membership has ever seen a Ravnos, and fewer still have ever met one knowingly. That's a fairly low number, but consider who does appear at their Elysiums and garden parties and salons and whatever-the-hell else they call their little soirées. You're lucky to see the prince once a year, let alone continuously run afoul of her. Any primogen will

show his face only if he thinks his presence will let him play a situation to his benefit. Even before they jumped ship, the Gangrel rarely showed their snouts at Kindred gatherings, and while you can expect the Nosferatu to attend, you probably won't see any. The Ventrue appear to see, the Toreador to be seen, the Brujah so they can rail against authority, the Malkavians just smile and nod and the Tremere make carefully annotated reports on it all. Aside from that, they're all ancillae and their childer trying to curry favor with elders who'd rather spend their time chortling over maps of the city and congratulating themselves on their newest scheme to seize control of City Hall or some other bullshit.

THE SABBAT

Back in the ancient mists of history, around the 16th or 17th century, a group of disgruntled Kindred got together and decided they were destined to rule the world. The two major contingents in this little party were the Lasombra and the Tzimisce — go figure. We're probably lucky they both decided to team up in this little plan. Just one of them might have made actual progress by now. As it is, these two clans of manifestly destined Ventrue knockoffs are too busy interfering with each other to make a difference. They take a city, they lose a city. Check out the deal in Manhattan last year.

Don't get me wrong — I'd love to be in a world where Kindred don't have to hide in the shadows like rats. I'm under the impression that the Sabbat's normal *modus operandi* is exactly the sort of thing that triggered the Inquisition and the Camarilla's formation back in the 15th century. It strikes me as a little wrong-headed to try to correct the problems of the past by repeating the mistakes of the past.

THE ANTITRIBU

Okay, okay, you ask, "If the Sabbat sucks so hard, why did so many Ravnos join?" The answer lies in the Sabbat's party line: freedom. Freedom from the elders, from the Antediluvians, from the end of the world, credit-card debt and just about everything else you can toss into the mix. For a clan whose members widely value freedom, the Sabbat looked like the best option around. I don't know how many joined when the Sabbat formed, or how many participated in the Anarch Revolts that preceded the Camarilla — I've heard educated guesses that range from one-third to one-half of the clan in Europe. I don't think it really matters. The end result is that the Ravnos antitribu were one of the larger clans (outside the Big Two) in the Sabbat.

The worst thing about Ravnos Antitribu is that they're like the born-again — they've found something Important and they Must Share It With Us. I'm talking about seriously evangelical behavior here. Within the Sabbat, the Ravnos are relatively relaxed, at least compared to the other anti-clans like the Assamites or the Ventrue. When they come across one of us, that's when they start witnessing. Just smile, nod and take a brochure. Then leave town.

It's worse since the Week of Nightmares. At a guess, one-third to one-half of the Ravnos *antitribu* were in Ravnos-only packs, with the rest sprinkled among the rest of the Sabbat. Sabbat loyalty is an incredible thing — Kindred in a Sabbat pack can get away with near-murder among each other — and when the Ravnos went crazy, most of them were thoughtfully subdued with whatever weapons came to hand and left to sleep off the urge. In some cases, if rumor is true, the blood-crazed Ravnos ended up leading their packs on a wild chase after a few elder Ravnos and sucking down their souls. I'm not sure all of the Sabbat even *noticed* the change in behavior.

The end result is that most of the Ravnos still on the streets are probably Sabbat. Relatively few actually died during the Nightmares, but few is a subjective word. Not many elders were part of the Sabbat, and I'm hoping any elders who were Sabbat died.

ANARCHS

The anarchs can be a Ravnos' most valuable acquaintances. Most of them are too young to give two flings with a dead whore about clan or history. If you've spent any time around the Camarilla, your first image upon seeing the word "anarch" is probably a pack of Hell's Angels rejects who have nothing better to do with their time than toss Molotov cocktails into the Toreador's favorite Elysiums. Thankfully, they're usually smarter than that, or at least not that interested in revolution.

A significant number of North American anarchs spend their time wandering the freeways, byways, highways, back roads and dirt roads of the United States, and more than a few Ravnos accompany them. It's always better to travel in a group, after all, and the anarchs are less likely to place bizarre conditions upon their favors. Anarchs can also be used as camouflage for any less "wholesome" behavior that we might find ourselves engaging in. I mean, it's easy for a prince to blame his problems on the anarchs, but it's not always so easy to attach a face. If you cause trouble likely to bring the prince's wrath down on somebody, leave town and let the anarchs soak it up.

They have sufficient practice at dealing with princely outrage.

Some anarchs have political goals — the overthrow of the elders' power, equality for neonates and other such nonsense. Don't get too involved in this crowd; it can only lead to bloody tears. I see no point to joining a fight you don't believe in, let alone suffering destruction for someone else's beliefs. If you're caught in the midst of a pack of rhetoric-spouting Caitiff anarchs who want to ban the fucking bomb, smile and nod often. When they're not paying attention to you, slip away quietly. You do not want to get into the kind of trouble they stir up. Oh, and never throw in with the "Unbound," or you'll wake one night with the sheriff's fangs at your throat.

THE TREATMENT

Word is that princes who kick Ravnos out of town have "The Treatment" coming to them. Some unwise neonates have been known to use this threat to induce princes to allow them to stay. This is about as stupid as you can get.

The Treatment rarely happens. When it does, it's most often because some elder with more connections than sense decided to wreak unholy vengeance on a prince for some slight or other — usually denying the rights due to all Kindred in the city in question. Now, this is not to say that a prince who kicks us out of a city doesn't deserve a response, but that response need not be obvious, announced or threatened. Don't mention it. If a prince says "Leave town," then leave town, friend. Odds are good that his sheriffs and scourges and primogens and personal bodyguards and whatever else he has handy outnumber you. Hanging around is stupid and you'll be brightening sunsets before too long with that kind of attitude problem.

With that little lecture out of the way, the Treatment is real. It happens. The point is that if the princes expect it, they'll quietly kill us when we come into town rather than escort us out. In fact, this is one of the scourges' assigned duties — quietly killing inconvenient Kindred.

THE METHODS

One of the reasons Ravnos stick together is the potential for mutual support. You didn't think it was the warm, cozy feeling of family on the holidays, did you? No, we have a vested interest in keeping our freedom to go where we want. Of course, walking into a city and getting your sorry ass whacked is not the best way to achieve this. So, to make it work, we have to cooperate.

The first step is to keep in touch with other Ravnos. Maintain e-mail addresses, cell phones, post office boxes, answering services, anything that will get the word through. Then send word when you go somewhere. Leave information about where you're going, when you'll arrive and how long you expect to be there. Be sure to give an idea how often you'll leave reports of your well being. Pick up messages from others and pass them around so that your fellow Ravnos have a general sense of where we all are at any given time.

If you run into or expect trouble, leave a note to that effect. If you lose touch with your contacts, other Ravnos may decide to check it out. This choice depends on how they feel about the prince or other Kindred in the city where you vanished, how they feel about you and whether they care to risk their existence trying to avenge what may be an idiot's well-deserved demise, or just another pain in the ass.

If you do get run out of town, it's a good idea to post a heads-up to the rest of the blood, so they know why or how. If a prince hates Ravnos, avoid his domain. If you're kicked out of a prince's domain for poor behavior, leave. Don't get pissy, don't bitch at the prince, don't make threats and do not, under any circumstances, mention the Treatment. It's what "everybody knows" about us, but we shouldn't mention it to them. Other Kindred get weird when you talk casually about turning their cities upside down. That, and it works better to let them fear it without stooping to churlish threats, especially since you probably don't know enough other Ravnos to call a Treatment worth the capital T.

Of course, you *are* expected to return the favor.

Just a warning: Not all Ravnos care about the Treatment, especially since the Week of Nightmares hit. In fact, since that time, most Ravnos prefer to lie low and avoid notice even from the rest of the clan. I can't blame them. It's hard to get anyone together for a Treatment if you can only find one or two of the blood who will talk to you at all.

THIS MEANS WAR!

Assuming you've got a mob together to inflict the infamous Treatment on a city, it's time to assemble a plan. That's right, you actually have to prepare. Even the Sabbat has a strategy behind their riots. Sure, it looks like a random mess when two dozen blood-crazed mooks charge Elysium brandishing crowbars and zip guns, but that's its charm — it only looks like utter chaos.

Don't go for ineffectual pranks that only make your target look foolish. This is vengeance, not the script for an Adam Sandler movie. Fire for effect at all times. Use every resource you have available and do not — ever — let them catch you. Don't break the Masquerade, your ego isn't worth it.

Part One: Plan

I can't stress this enough. If you walk in with nothing more in mind than causing trouble, the powers that be will destroy you faster than you can say, "just kidding." These Kindred have a lot of ego and effort invested in their titles and power. Even the vampire prince of the smallest town that can harbor Kindred got there because he was mean and ruthless enough to grab hold with his talons and sink his fangs into it. Any rival claimants are either dead or seriously defanged in his domain, assuming they exist. Don't even ask what happened to the previous prince — you don't need the nightmares.

Get a city map — you can buy them at gas stations, so no need to get baroque about it. Read the newspaper — you can buy newspapers for most major cities anywhere. I can walk into a newsstand in Seattle and pick up a copy of the New York Times, after all. Look for trouble spots — youth violence, gangs, drugs, police or political turbulence. These are both the weak spots and likely the areas on which the native Kindred have already focused their attention.

Part Two: Leave Town

Once the Treatment is in motion, leave town and don't come back. You've made your point; there's no reason to hang around to see the results if the local scourge destroys you for your disruptive behavior.

Also, it's great if the prince and his lackeys aren't *sure* whether or not the Treatment just hit or if it was a run of bad luck. The confusion enhances the mystique — trust me on this.

THE OTHERS

You didn't think I was going to let you off the hook without saying my piece about our fellow Kindred, did you?

ASSAMITES

Half of the Assassins are dangerous psychopaths who would just as soon devour your soul as look at you. The other half smile while doing it. I admit, that's a harsh judgment, but these guys got hit with a nasty curse five centuries ago because they couldn't

behave in civilized company. Now they act like polite and cultured, but turn your back on them and they'll have a stake in you faster than you can say "Allahu Akbar!"

All right, so some have overtly rejected their bloodthirstier cousins' nastier habits. But be careful around this pack. For all we know, they could be the front line for another wave of diablerists. If an Assamite is interested in you, be polite and give him every reason to find someone else to bother should he decide to obey his thirst.

BRUJAH

I think the Brujah largely support the Camarilla because it gives them something to bitch about. At length. They're as much a part of the establishment as the Ventrue they're always calling out, unending streams of vitriolic rhetoric aside. Some Brujah go on about the fabled glories of their pet cause and the absolute necessity to strike down the Ventrue with all the fury they can muster. This is why they're one of the six pillars of the Camarilla, right?

FOLLOWERS OF SET

This clan must have stepped out of a bad fantasy pulp. "Okay, we're all dead and we worship an evil snake god! 'Cause he has snakes!" Then they run around promoting pedestrian acts of infamy that are supposed to prove their commitment to their naughty lord. The best thing about Setites is this: The first time is always free. No, I'm not kidding. They figure if they hook you, they can keep you forever. The trick is to hook them. If one of the serpents is dumb enough to give me stuff to do evil things, then I'll take it. Of course, when the shit hits the fan and everything falls apart, he's the one who should take all the credit, right?

GANGREL

Ever since my sire and my sire's sire and my sire's sire's sire can remember, the Gangrel have been at odds with our clan. I don't know what their malfunction is, but I've heard quite a few theories. One says the Gangrel were created to fight an enemy alongside the Ravnos, but that the Gangrel turned tail and ran rather than assume their rightful place. Personally, I think it's more likely we ran into trouble over kine herds. For several centuries, Ravnos were coming into Europe with Gypsy families. Gangrel poached the herds and Ravnos responded appropriately. Eventually, it got so you couldn't introduce yourself

before the Gangrel had his claws in the Ravnos' gut and the Ravnos had imaginary priests shoving illusory torches into the Gangrel's face. In the modern nights, half the fights you see start because one side knows the other side is an enemy, but neither party quite knows *why*.

I hesitate to say that we can't get along with Gangrel. Among the anarchs, it wasn't unusual to see Ravnos and Gangrel side-by-side without either deciding the other one just *had* to go. I'm not saying I saw any bosom buddies in the mix, but I rarely saw any of those vague irreconcilable differences that the elders always went on about. Rule of thumb, though: *when you're around Gangrel, watch your back*. You never know when one might decide your existence is a blight on his world and start waving his six-inch press-ons in your face.

GIOVANNI

I have an odd relationship with the Giovanni I've met. They are a family; we act like a family. They're into money and dead things; we're into money. The Necromancers are among the creepiest Kindred I've had the displeasure to meet. All that aside, they make great business partners. Just keep all interactions on a professional level and don't let them count the money until you're long gone.

Sometimes a Giovanni will come looking for someone to do special jobs for them. They especially like Ravnos because we're not well known to other Kindred and we can cover our tracks. If approached, act according to your conscience and don't give them your name. They have eerie powers over the dead, and they can use your name as a link. Your real name, that is.

LASOMBRA

The Lasombra epitomize the Sabbat's core tenet: The strong prevail, the weak perish. Rumor has it they destroyed their eldest just before the Camarilla formed. I can't confirm that, but the few I've met were hardcore enough to try anything if they thought it would get them ahead. When you're around a Lasombra, give her the respect she thinks she deserves. If you're tired of existence, just start taunting her. Unlike our clan's power over perception, the Lasombra's power over shadows can get downright physical.

MALKAVIAN

The Malkavians bother me, and not just because they know too damned much. Half the time they do

something utterly clever, we get blamed for it. I think most of our reputation for uncivilized behavior comes from a Malkavian's lunacy. They're not stupid or clownish, but that's no consolation. They have a weird ability to see through any deception or trickery. Personally, I'd rather kill one than deal with him. Kindred who like to think in shortcuts will compare Ravnos (because we're "tricksters," right?) and Malkavians (because they're "tricksters," right?) and lump us into the same category. This is plainly stupid. I don't recall when Ravnos became blood-drooling maniacs by default. If you come across that kind of lazy thinking, milk it for what it's worth. Either the Kindred will assume you're a blood-drooling maniac or think you're much more frightening than you have any right to be. Either misconception will be to your advantage if you're on the ball.

NOSFERATU

For such a group of ugly sonsabitches, these guys make my vitae itch just thinking about them. They know far too much for my own good. Sure, it's easy to deal with them — hey, we're outcasts, they're outcasts, we talk to the animals and they talk to the animals. We have a lot in common, right? Sure, but don't count on their goodwill and caring nature to extend to you if they can turn the dirt they have into benefit for them. You haven't unlived until a sewer rat's blackmailed you.

Here's a trick in dealing with them: The Nosferatu know many things about the goings-on in their cities. Better yet, they get together and discuss it. If you feel up to it, you can use your power over animals to get a little of that action for yourself. It's simple — just find a real rat and send him in to spy on the Nosferatu. Okay, it's not that simple. They'll turn that damned rodent against you half the time. So send a few dozen — the Sewer Rats can't get them all. If you have the skill, possess one of the rats. Spend enough time in the sewers and you're bound to learn *something*. The Nosferatu know their game, but they don't always pay much attention to the animals in their warrens. They're used to them, so a few extras don't always set off their paranoia circuits. Hell, don't even use rats. Use roaches.

TOREADOR

If I ever thought there was an underlying cosmic significance to my existence as one of the bloodsucking undead, the Toreador are the best evidence against that foolish belief. I'm not saying that I think all these dry-humpers need to burn in the sun, but I

wouldn't shed any tears if they did. I've rarely encountered creatures so convinced of their importance to the universe and yet so utterly lacking in evidence to support their delusions. I mean, these losers use supernatural powers of charisma to win friends and influence people.

Naturally, if you want to get anywhere with a Toreador, you have to treat him as if he's as important as he believes he is. Anything less and he'll throw a temper tantrum and beg a primogen or the prince to swat your knuckles.

TREMERE

Here we have a pack of paranoid blood witches. What do they want to do? The same thing they do every night. They want to rule the world. Okay, I don't know that for sure, but look at these two-bit special effects rejects. Sure, they can toss fireballs, fly around like a superhero and summon the very elements to strike down their enemies. What's the flaw? Subtlety, or rather, the lack of it. I'm continually surprised that the Brujah have such a reputation for brute force when the Tremere have refined it to an art form. The most important rules when dealing with Tremere: Don't meet their gaze and don't give them your blood. Anything beyond that is up to you.

I've heard rumors that at least one branch of the Ravnos enjoyed positive relations with the Tremere before the Camarilla formed. I haven't seen any evidence of that in my own dealings. Either they have a short memory or my sire was sucking down punks tweaking on crank. I wouldn't rely on the possibility, either way.

TZIMISCE

These guys redefine the words "sick fuck." The Fiends are the walking embodiment of the Sabbat's core aesthetic: They have no human connections. To be more precise, they work really hard at convincing themselves that whatever was human before the Embrace withered away afterward. The psycho protests too much, methinks.

I have never met a Tzimisce I didn't want to shove a stake into and put on a rooftop. Not one. I hate these shapeshifting bastards like nothing else. They're vile, polluted things. I'm not even sure they're really Kindred. Stay away from them if you value your existence. If you're lucky, any Tzimisce you meet will turn you into a carnival sideshow act. If you're unlucky, you'll spend forever as a quadriplegic blood dildo.

VENTRUE

If you put the Toreador at one extreme of behavior and the Lasombra at the other end, the Ventrue fall somewhere in the middle. Your typical Ventrue probably believes that she's owed the world, but she'll do everything in her power to take it. Overall, they do the leadership thing better than the Lasombra and they just aren't as pathetic as the Toreador. They're dangerous as hell. One call from a Ventrue's cell phone and you'll find your bank accounts frozen, a warrant out for your arrest and your haven paved over to make a goddamned parking lot. Don't make them angry — or if you have to make one angry, do it in such a way that she's not angry with you. I don't care how much of a hardcore rebel muthafucka you think you are, when you're in the presence of a Ventrue prince, treat her with the respect she claims to deserve. You'll find it pays off in the long run.

THE RROMA

This topic is a delicate one. Many Kindred believe that all Ravnos are Rroma — what most people call Gypsies. This is partly true. Until recently, most visible Ravnos were Rroma. Roughly 600 years ago, the Rroma spread throughout Europe and picked up a really bad reputation. I suspect it largely sprang from the fact that a few hundred Ravnos traveled into Europe with them.

The Ravnos believed that to maintain blood purity, they should only Embrace from within their families. So the Ravnos who arrived with the Rroma (presumably their relatives) Embraced from among the Rroma. All these Ravnos had a little voice in the back of their minds telling them about all the wicked things they could do to make their unlives easier. This made the mortal Rroma's lives harder, as every time they traveled to a new place, the Ravnos traveling with them would descend on the town and wreak havoc upon the wealthy and the powerful. Invariably, the Rroma were accused of the crimes or forced to move on.

I'm not saying the Rroma were blameless. Every society has criminals. But when the Rroma looked for help in getting rid of the Ravnos who had bled them white and led trouble to their families, the Gangrel were ready to step in and offer that help.

Personally, I think the Rroma who made that bargain traded one devil for another. In the process, the Ravnos and Gangrel clans came to blows on multiple occasions. Kindred in both clans met the

Final Death for no better reason than the Rroma's passage through Europe.

Some basic rules when around Rroma — remember they're mortals. If you tell them you're a bloodsucking undead monster, they'll probably freak or try to kill you. So don't. If you think it would be cool to dress and act like the Gypsies you see in the movies, don't. You'll stand out like a bleeding thumb. If you think it would be cool to relate to a Rroma person because you think she's got the "wanderlust," don't. Rroma traveled because they had no place to stay. You'll find a lot of Rroma living sedentary lives and holding respectable jobs. They're not mortal Ravnos and don't treat them as if they are. It'll probably get you killed, if you're lucky.

One last thing: Traditional Rroma are sticklers for cleanliness. I'm talking seriously so. They won't eat off your table if you put your feet on it. If they know you drink blood, they won't hang around you — blood, as a bodily fluid, is impure. Like most mortals, the Rroma believe fairly strongly that the dead shouldn't get up and walk around. In fact, I think they might be a little more vehement than most about it. Just don't bring up the topic.

FAERIES

I've never seen a faerie and I'm not sure I believe they exist. Sure, I heard about them from my sire, but what does that mean? Anyway, the word is that our illusions might be able to hurt them somehow. I don't understand why, and I haven't felt compelled to go looking for anyone to ask. Besides, I'm not sure where to find a faerie, let alone why I'd want to fuck with one.

THE LUPINE SURVIVAL GUIDE, Y2K EDITION

Author unknown, distributed in hardcopy and, recently, digitally

Every Ravnos ends up in the following situation sooner or later. You're hanging out in town and you've come to the attention of The Powers That Be. The prince, the primogen, the archbishop — it doesn't matter what the power calls itself, it's noticed you. That means you need to move on before whoever it is does something permanent to you.

The best solution is to leave town. Take a bus, plane or train and get the hell out of Dodge. Unfortunately, if they want to catch you, they'll watch the airport as well as the bus and train stations. Sure, you



might slip by, but how certain are you of your ability to do so? Late night in any of these places is generally not very crowded and it's hard as hell to get a flight out of town on short notice that will land before the sun rises.

The problem with traveling between cities, even in our modern world, is the Lupines. These furry bastards live to tear us apart. The odds are good that if you hop onto the Interstate 5 corridor and make a run from Seattle to the Anarch Free States, you'll be able to find good places to stop during the day. You probably also won't run into Lupine trouble — they can't be everywhere at once. Unfortunately, you can't get lucky every time. At some point, Lupines will probably appear from the woods, drop a tree on whatever you're using for transportation and proceed to treat you like a piñata.

If you're going to travel and risk a meeting with Lupines, I suggest packing the following items: Mace and/or pepper spray. Lupines have sensitive noses; if you can screw those up, you're halfway there. Get a crowbar, or better yet, see about getting something electroplated with silver. Silver burns Lupines like nothing else. Don't use this weapon to kill them, only to fight them off. Your goal should be to get

away. Pack a few roadside flares as well. They're not too dangerous for you to use and if you can shove one into a Lupine's eyes and/or throat, that should even the odds a little. Don't forget your fire extinguisher. By law, every car should have one. For us, it's rather more important than for most. You can use it to blind attacking Lupines (lacking anything better), and put yourself out if you have an accident. Remember: Safety first.

Travel in a group. If you're with other Ravnos, this precaution is ideal. If not, find a handy pack of anarchs. If you can get in on their good side, you'll probably run into much less trouble. A pack of Lupines who have no qualms about attacking a single Kindred on the road might — *might* — think twice about attacking a half-dozen Kindred on motorcycles and loaded for bear.

Keep your trips short. Don't try to push all the way from Portland to San Francisco in a two- or three-night haul. Don't use the back roads, the Lupines watch them more closely. Don't stop in small towns — you won't necessarily find Lupines there, but it's best to avoid the trouble.

Before you travel, scout your route. You might not have time to do this, but if you do, at least do it right. Call on the birds of the air and the beasts of the

field and ask them. They won't know what a "Lupine" is, but they'll probably know about "man-beasts." Animals aren't bright enough to be completely reliable, but you should use every resource you have available.

One last caution: Don't drive faster than the traffic around you. The last thing you need is to catch the Highway Patrol's attention.

ANOTHER NOTE

Some Ravnos with more knowledge than good sense spread the word a few years ago that a clan of Lupines called the Striders are related to us. Don't believe it. I don't know what a Strider is, but I've never met a Lupine I didn't have good reason to run away from as quickly as possible.

MAYAPARISATYA: THE PATH OF PARADOX

For centuries, Ravnos in Europe and the Americas followed a Path of Paradox that taught them to treat mortals as cattle and to indulge every whim with no consideration beyond "cover your ass." They used it as an excuse to commit any crime or atrocity imaginable without concern for the consequences of their actions. Most of these Ravnos claimed they were following the tenets of Paradox in order to rationalize their increasingly monstrous activities, and quite a few fell to the Beast over the years.

The Path of Paradox as practiced was a loathsome thing, not discussed outside Ravnos circles. If any Ventrue ever got wind of the practices espoused by Paradox advocates, they'd start a purge to equal the attack on the Assamites in ferocity and efficacy. It's a wonder that never happened in the first place.

THE TRUE PATH RETURNS

In the past decade, elder Ravnos awakened from deep torpor and spread into Europe and the Americas. When they saw what the neonates and ancillae of those continents called "Paradox," they reacted with bloodthirsty horror and destroyed the worst offenders. The rest, they educated in new (or rather, very old) ways of Paradox, which they called *mayaparisatya*.

The word *mayaparisatya* is a Hindu construction. *Maya* describes Chimerstry almost literally — it

means "illusion," with connotations of supernatural power in certain contexts. It also refers to the illusion of the physical world we can all see and touch. *Parisatya* refers to absolute truth. The juxtaposition of the two is a *koan*, or a Zen riddle, like "What's the sound of one hand clapping?" Understanding of *mayaparisatya* leads to true enlightenment. The means of that understanding comes through study and adherence to the Path of Paradox as created by Zapathasura, the Ravnos Antediluvian; at least that's the name the Indian elders used.

This version of the Path of Paradox focuses on the Ravnos' condition as one of the Kindred, on the reasons for being Kindred and how Ravnos fit in the world, especially in relation to the other Kindred — Western and Eastern. This is not to say that Paradox is a peaceful or forgiving path. It demands the destruction of Kindred who refuse to adhere to its precepts, as they damage the world simply by existing. It demands an individualist approach to unlife, with respect — not love — for mortals.

THE SVADHARMA

Paradox teachings state that all Kindred are locked outside the cycle of *samsara*, life and death. The Embrace locks the Ravnos out of natural reincarnation, at least until her destruction. Paradox doctrine teaches that once Embraced, the soul loses all karma and must reestablish its dharma as one of the Kindred.

In order to advance her dharma, a Ravnos must understand and eventually penetrate *maya*. According to the teachings, the clan's continued failure to fully understand this leaves them mired in the curses of undeath — death by fire or the light of the sun, and the unending thirst for blood. Ravnos who are very advanced in the study of Paradox believe that once *maya* is transcended, a Shilmulo can likewise transcend these curses, and no longer suffer from the sun's light, the burning flames or the need for blood. Other Kindred may recognize this as similar to Golconda, and a few of the most ancient Ravnos have claimed in their writings that Golconda springs from the Path of Paradox.

Ravnos who follow the Path of Paradox must learn their purpose — their *svadharma* — and advance it at every opportunity. This is not as simple as it sounds, and no two Ravnos have quite the same *svadharma*. One may decide that he must ignore the temptations the Beast presents to him, while another may decide that she must give in whenever

PATHS OF ENLIGHTENMENT

Ravnos do not follow only the Path of Paradox. The path's tenets make it exceedingly difficult to follow while remaining a constructive part of a sect, especially the Sabbat. The prohibition against blood bonds means that any Paradox follower will find a new set of morals or descend fully into the Beast's grasp through the constant influence of the Vinculum. Ravnos *antitribu* look elsewhere to satisfy their philosophical needs, should humanity wither within them.

Path of Caine: Some of the oldest Ravnos *antitribu* turned to the Path of Caine in direct rebellion against the teachings of the Path of Paradox and their elders. They dove headlong into the Sabbat teachings about Caine and the Antediluvians and denied the Ravnos lore surrounding Cainite origins.

Path of Cathari: Some Ravnos are attracted to this path because it offers justification for their more complex amoral urges (the clan weakness). Ravnos on the Path of Cathari tend to refine and practice their particular vice until it becomes a high art — at least in the eyes of fellow Sabbat. Other followers of Cathari tend to find the Ravnos' innate grasp of vice enviable.

Path of Death and the Soul: Former followers of the Path of Paradox often switch to this path, if only for the common thread regarding the fate of the soul after death. This is not to say that adherents feel the two paths are generally similar, only that their similar notions of the soul's fate serve as a useful starting point. Ravnos whose vice turns them toward murder are also often drawn to this path to better understand their urges.

Path of Evil Revelations: Ravnos *antitribu*, like the Kindred of their parent clan, are strong individualists and find it difficult to give their allegiance to a greater power, no matter how evil or depraved it may claim to be. A Ravnos who finds his own way is admired much more than one who follows in the footsteps of the Devil.

Path of the Feral Heart: Due to the sophisticated nature of a Ravnos' Beast, Rogues find this path difficult to follow. The path is based in the Beast's more primitive urges and needs, and the Ravnos Beast tends to focus on more refined concerns.

Path of Honorable Accord: Few Ravnos *antitribu* follow this path, but those who do are deeply committed to its tenets. Some may find it more difficult to follow because of their addiction to vice, but this path usually strengthens the Rogue's resolve to behave properly.

Path of Lilith: Ravnos typically attracted to this path tend to be those few interested in pursuing rumored connections with the Gangrel and the idea that both clans somehow sprang from Lilith. Others adopt this path simply to wallow in heresy against the Sabbat's doctrines without pledging fealty to a demonic power.

Path of Power and the Inner Voice: Rogues typically do not turn to this path, but those who do pursue it with a ruthless efficiency that even the Lasombra admire (as long as the Rogues' depredations aren't aimed at them). Ravnos *antitribu* on this path most often seek power not for its own sake, but simply to make it easier for them to do whatever they want whenever they want, though they rarely use their power foolishly. While few Ravnos care to give fealty to another, most are willing to accept it when offered.

possible. Whatever the *svadharma*, the Ravnos must spend every waking moment trying to understand and achieve it. A Ravnos who loses track of his *svadharma* — one who falls under a blood bond or gives up his freedom to serve another — will quickly fall to the Beast as he discovers that he cannot find his way on another's path.

Paradox adherents, known as Shilmulo (from another Hindu word for this wretched state), view Kindred who aren't on the path as inferior, misguided or actively dangerous. Since Kindred who don't follow the path can't be trusted to seek out their *svadharma*, let alone

understand what it means, Shilmulo take it upon themselves to find out other Kindred's *svadharma*, so they can guide them to it. Those who refuse to follow are destroyed, if possible. They are simply too uncontrolled and dangerous to be allowed to exist. Those few who learn are taught the basics of the Path of Paradox and may in time become Shilmulo.

This isn't to say that Paradox followers are ruthless murderers of their fellow Kindred. Rather, Shilmulo see their cause as a holy one, and they are more than satisfied to make converts. It takes a long time and great commitment to transcend one's mor-

tal moral code and adopt the one better suited to unlife. And so, as the Shilmulo reason, those earnestly wishing to make the change have forever to enact it.

STARTING ON THE PATH

The beginnings of the Path of Paradox must be taught — as with any path of enlightenment, they do not come naturally to Kindred without tutelage. Unlike many other paths, once the student has taken her first steps, she's on her own. Paradox stresses that each Ravnos must find her own way, and she cannot do that by holding onto the coattails of her elders. A Shilmulo may seek advice from a more advanced adherent, but she should not expect to get an easily deciphered answer.

Very few Paradox adherents survived the Week of Nightmares, and those who did are not easy to find. A Ravnos who finds writings, such as the *Karavalanisha Vrana*, may use those as a guide for study and advancement (assuming he can translate from the original Sanskrit).

DISCIPLINES

As told by Desiree Narayan, anarch historian

Whether combating the *asuratizayya* or weathering the fallout of the Week of Nightmares, the Ravnos are no strangers to the gifts of Caine. Some reason that the First Vampire armed his childer with the weapons to fight the eternal Jyhad, while hardline Shilmulo argue that only through understanding the ways of undeath can an individual achieve *svadharma*.

ANIMALISM

The Animalism Discipline is often underestimated and overlooked. It lacks the flash and style of Disciplines like Chimerstry. So you can summon a pack of dogs or a flock of birds; what's the big deal? For the Ravnos, Animalism is probably their most useful Discipline if applied in an intelligent fashion. It demands subtlety and planning to a degree that even Chimerstry does not require. Many Ravnos consider Animalism an extension of their Beast, which they see as more evolved than that of other clans. It whispers to them in the night and pushes them to commit sophisticated acts of malice beyond those inspired in the frenzy. While this compulsion is by no means an advantage, it gives Ravnos a greater understanding of their Beasts and makes it easier for them to communicate with the Beasts of others. A Ravnos using Animalism can, to a



OPTION FOR DRAWING OUT THE BEAST

The Ravnos Beast, as described on page 49, differs somewhat from that of other Kindred. It is part of the driving force behind the clan's predilection for forbidden activity. Because of this link, some Storytellers may rule that a Ravnos can choose to use Drawing Out the Beast when she is driven to succumb to her weakness. The drawback is that the new vessel might be better at the chosen crime or simply more willing to commit it than the Ravnos was. If this is the case (at Storyteller's discretion), it may be difficult or impossible to regain the Beast. Because of this hazard, Ravnos tend to kill anyone who has served as a vessel for their Beast, no matter what the use.

Players should not use this option to circumvent the clan weakness. After all, any Ravnos who uses Drawing Out the Beast suffers the consequences outlined in *Vampire: The Masquerade*, page 149.

limited extent, perceive another's Beast while using the Discipline on that individual. Rather than an extra-sensory ability like *Auspex*, *Animalism* gives a sense of another's animal consciousness — that part of the mind that drives others to blind rage or unreasoning panic. The Ravnos doesn't really deal with the person or animal, but the Beast within that person or animal.

Consider the possibilities with *Feral Whispers* or *Beckoning*. The first enables the Ravnos to speak with animals and give them instructions. For example, a Ravnos who decides to spy on an elder's haven can call upon nearby animals to patrol the area and return if they find anything unusual — like someone slinking around the haven. There is no guarantee that this strategy will work and it does require a modicum of effort, but the chance for success is probably worth the payoff. *Beckoning* simply summons animals — potentially, all animals of a given species in the immediate area. Uses for this ability include feeding or finding the sentries mentioned previously. Neither of these powers really lets the user communicate well with animals, and never mind trying to discuss complex topics. Nonetheless, the uses within the restrictions of the Discipline are nearly limitless.

Quell the Beast is frequently an effective way of dealing with mortals or noisome animals. If a watchdog gets in the way, use *Quell the Beast* to calm it down. Mortals under this ability's influence are particularly suggestible and none will defend themselves, making *Quell the Beast* ideal for feeding or for convincing irritating people to keep their distance.

Though less versatile than *Dominate* or *Presence*, for what it does, it manages very well.

Subsume the Spirit is the most useful and risky application of *Animalism*. A Ravnos who transfers her consciousness into an animal risks losing her sense of self and identity to the animal's instincts. Some Ravnos are vastly uncomfortable with the loss of control experienced during and after the possession, and so prefer to avoid using this ability unless necessary. *Subsume the Spirit* makes it possible for a Ravnos to personally search an area without physically going there and lessens the need to rely on the perceptions of other animals who are likely to miss what the Ravnos needs to know.

Drawing Out the Beast sees infrequent use, though several Ravnos survived the Week of Nightmares thanks to quick thinking and intelligent usage of this ability. Even more so than *Subsume the Spirit*, *Drawing Out the Beast* is best saved for when you really need it.

FORTITUDE

Animalism has immense utility, *Chimerstry* provides extensive versatility, but *Fortitude* is a literal ass-saver. This Discipline makes it easier to survive the slings, arrows and fires of outrageous fortune. Even better, it might give you that extra edge you need to survive a Gangrel's claws. It's not a cure-all, but it's vastly better than nothing. Learn it, love it and use it.

CHIMERSTRY

Everyone knows our reputation for deceit, not the least of which is our ability with *Chimerstry*. I don't know how it works or what it does, but it's probably the most versatile trick you'll see Kindred waving around anywhere. Unfortunately, we have a reputation for using it in obvious and stupid ways, which probably leads to Ravnos being escorted out of any given domain (often strapped to the front of the sheriff's classic Mustang). If any of you get the urge to run out somewhere and start weaving illusions that look like they belong in the movies, I suggest you write up your final will right now and let the rest of us get on with our unlives. Like we need any more jackasses fucking shit up for us.

Chimerstry is our most useful weapon, if used well. Images of the King of the Monsters stomping all over the city aren't good uses and you shouldn't abuse the power in such a way. Save it for subtler applications — draw a gun, distract others with sudden and unexpected noises or make something

WHAT IS CHIMERSTRY?

Players and Storytellers alike are often uncertain as to what Chimerstry actually represents and how it works. Another common concern is that Chimerstry doesn't readily tie into the vampire mythos.

Bear the following in mind.

CHIMERSTRY IS NOT OBFUSCATE

Chimerstry can't make anything "invisible." Unlike Obfuscate, Chimerstry does affect cameras, motion detectors and other technological sensing devices (but it won't trigger tripwires or pressure plates). Chimerstry derives from the Ravnos' ability to visualize an image and bring it to life and doesn't rely so much on the human mind's tendency to fill in the blanks, at least not to the extent that Obfuscate does.

DISBELIEF

This is a tough one — just because a character knows that a Ravnos can create illusions is not sufficient reason to disbelieve everything a Ravnos does. If the Ravnos draws a *kris* from her purse, it very well could be a real *kris*. Belief is not like a water faucet. Characters can't simply turn it on or off at will. On the other hand, a completely implausible illusion won't convince anyone. Either way, the fact that someone has a good reason to disbelieve a Ravnos' Chimerstry-created images does not mean those images will vanish. The false nature of such images is obvious to any who can penetrate the illusion, but the illusion will remain until it would otherwise disappear.

HOW MUCH AREA CAN CHIMERSTRY COVER?

As much as the Storyteller deems reasonable. If a Ravnos wants to conjure an image of an ancient, chthonic, tentacled deity rising from the ocean, he can. The illusion probably won't convince anyone, but there's no reason the image will fail to appear.

HORRID REALITY VS. HIGH AUSPEX

Auspex and Chimerstry work against each other in the same manner as Auspex vs. Obfuscate (see *Vampire: The Masquerade*, p. 152). If a Ravnos inflicts Horrid Reality against another Kindred who has Auspex at level five, the interaction occurs as described in the core rules. If the victim has more Auspex than the Ravnos has Chimerstry, the power fails automatically. Harsh luck.

CHIMERSTRY ISN'T VAMPIRIC

Some people have strict definitions of what fits into traditional vampire tales. Their views may be as narrow as what Stoker's *Dracula* could do, or perhaps as broad as whatever appeared in European legends. Either way, strict definitions imply that a body of legend is obliged to stop growing at some point and never add anything new. This is not necessary or required. Anyone who's seen *Lost Boys* probably recalls the sequence with the rice disguised momentarily as maggots. This is a good example of Chimerstry in a vampire story — a very recent story, certainly, but how does a story's age invalidate it? Indeed, Chimerstry is a fine way to evoke psychological horror.

It's not that Chimerstry is somehow "not vampiric," but rather that it's rarely used in a manner that supports the themes running through *Vampire*. How can a Storyteller maintain a game of "personal horror" when the Ravnos conjures up stock-fantasy tropes or near-comical absurdities? In the hands of a clever Kindred, Chimerstry is a potent tool — it can be used to cover or prevent Masquerade breaches, to add subtle touches to a scene, to drive mortals (or other Kindred) to their mental limits and the like. It works best when its use isn't obvious. Use Chimerstry to reinforce the mood rather than break it.

look like something else. Make sure your illusions are plausible and in context for the situation at hand.

WHAT IS CHIMERSTRY?

For every Ravnos I've spoken with, I have at least three theories about why we have this knack for

illusions. I'm going to go with material my colleagues have translated from the *Karavalanisha Vrana* and try to establish what it is from that.

The *Karavalanisha Vrana* describes Chimerstry as a way to warp or twist the surface of *maya*. *Maya* is what we call "reality." It's an illusion that overlays

whatever the "really" real world is. Apparently, it extends through several levels from the purely physical to the purely spiritual (bear with me; I'm not an expert on this stuff). What Chimerstry can do is take something from the realm of pure spirit, or thought, and make it appear in the realm of the physical, or "pure illusion." Paradoxically, Chimerstry rarely manifests substance, often giving the appearance of tactile presence. Ravens who have mastered Chimerstry can go a step further and inflict terrible injuries simply by imagining them. This is a draining and costly process that's rarely used, but no one would want to experience it.

Even the truly horrible wounds aren't real — they fade with time. If you convince a mortal he burned to death, he may be in a coma for years. When he awakens, he won't have any scars or other signs of the trauma. Psychologically, he'll probably be an utter mess, but no physical signs remain.

I've come across some hair-raising rumors about the kinds of tricks the elders and Methuselahs could pull off. It's hard to test the stories, though, because all our evidence indicates they've gone into hiding or torpor, or else that something destroyed them during that terrible week last summer. On the chance that some are still out there, I'll pass along what I know. I've heard of elders who could inflict psychosomatic injuries across a crowd of mortals or Kindred. Other rumors include actual physical effects — not illusions, but the real thing. Personally, I'd be pleased as punch to hear these monsters are all dead. I don't like the idea of some elder getting a burr up his ass and projecting violent flaming death at my brain from halfway around the world. The best piece of advice I can give you is that if you meet an elder Ravens, just assume she can do whatever she damn well pleases.

FALSE RESONANCE (CHIMERSTRY LEVEL SIX)

Illusions of living or unliving beings are all well and good until someone decides to read the illusion's mind or its aura. The automatic failure to perceive any sense of the target's thoughts or emotions will usually be passed off as bad luck or simple lack of concentration, or whatever reason any Kindred might construct to explain why he didn't succeed in gleaning information through supernatural means. A Ravens can use False Resonance to overlay auras and thoughts on illusions, as well as leave a trace that other emotionally resonant powers can detect later.

System: This power automatically applies to any other use of Chimerstry as the user wishes. In effect, any attempt to use Auspex or the Dementation power, Eyes of Chaos, that generates five or fewer successes will detect an aura, thoughts, Demeanor or whatever the power would normally detect. Thoughts won't be exceptionally complex, and will relate to whatever is going on around the illusion in a mundane and simplistic way. Auras will consist of colors related to specific emotions (anger, sadness, hatred, love and happiness) and will not show much complexity beyond that. Spirit's Touch can pick up the same emotional resonance until the next sunrise.

MET System: This is an Elder level Discipline. It applies to any illusions the Ravens creates. When another Kindred uses a Discipline like Aura Perception or Telepathy, resolve it normally against the Ravens' current Mental Traits. If the Ravens player wins the challenge, he (or a Storyteller) provides the false information in the illusion. This information can only be something simple as noted above. Any attempt to delve deeper than surface thoughts will reveal nothing — the illusion has only surface thoughts.

FATUUS MASTERY (CHIMERSTRY LEVEL SIX)

A Ravens with Fatuus Mastery has no restriction on how often she may use the first three levels (Ignis Fatuus, Fata Morgana and Apparition) and can maintain or control illusions with minimal concentration or fatigue. Kindred who rely on the high cost of Chimerstry to limit a Ravens' ability to use illusions are in for a very rude surprise when they encounter a Ravens with this power.

System: Fatuus Mastery negates the Willpower and Blood cost for using the first three levels of Chimerstry. In addition, the Ravens may direct movement for a number of illusions equal to his Intelligence without intense concentration. Furthermore, the character can maintain the illusion as long as it remains within his Willpower score in miles (although he may not make it react to events around it if he has no way to perceive those events).

MET System: Fatuus Mastery is an Elder level Chimerstry power. The player need not expend Blood Traits or Willpower to use the Basic and first Intermediate Chimerstry Disciplines. Illusions can engage in complex activities as if the Ravens were concentrating on maintaining the illusion, but concentration is not necessary. The illusion will remain until sunrise, unless the player spends blood to make it permanent.



SHARED NIGHTMARE (CHIMERSTRY LEVEL SIX)

Even though Horrid Reality is visible to all onlookers, it can only inflict "damage" on one victim. With Shared Nightmare, a Ravnos can inflict her tormented visions on a crowd.

System: To use this power, the player must spend one blood point per target and two Willpower points. The player rolls Manipulation + Subterfuge once, but compares the results against each target individually. The difficulty is still each victim's Perception + Self-Control.

Example: A pack of five Lupines have cornered Lizette in a blind alley. She turns to face them, pulls a shotgun out of her tote bag and aims it at the rampaging werewolves. She doesn't actually fire, choosing instead to invoke Shared Nightmare. Her player spends two Willpower points and five blood points to inflict the power on all five Lupines. Since the Lupines are relatively young, the Storyteller assigns them Perception scores of three and Self-Control scores of two, making the difficulty five. The player rolls Lizette's Manipulation + Subterfuge and receives three successes. Lizette's player describes the illusion as "riddling the Lupines' bodies with silver shot," and inflicts three levels of aggra-

vated damage on each of the victims. The Lupines obligingly fly into pain-addled frenzies, buying Lizette a few precious seconds to plan her escape route.

MET System: Shared Nightmare is an Elder level Chimerstry Discipline. To use this power in Mind's Eye Theater, the Ravnos player must spend one Willpower Trait per target, up to a maximum of five. The player needs to bid only one Social Trait against all of the targets and engage in a Social Challenge — everyone throws, this is not a group challenge. Traits are compared individually, and those who lose the challenge suffer the effects of the Shared Nightmare. Mechanics are otherwise identical to Horrid Reality.

FAR FATUUS (CHIMERSTRY LEVEL SEVEN)

This power is the province of the Phuri Dae, who use it in conjunction with highly developed Auspex powers. It allows a Ravnos to project illusions to any area he can see or visualize. Under most circumstances, accomplishing this requires him to have visited the location in question before he can project illusions there. Although more difficult, a Ravnos may project illusions on the basis of a description, a photograph or a television image.

NOTES ON HORRID REALITY

Horrid Reality is an expensive power that is often difficult to use. For two Willpower points, players expect to get something out of it. However, keep in mind that the power continues to work for the entire scene and during that time, the victim perceives the illusion as absolutely real. While a speeding car created with Fata Morgana won't run anyone down, a car created with Horrid Reality is a deadly threat to its "victim" for the scene. A bonfire will burn the victim every time he steps near it for the duration of the scene. An illusionary stake will find the heart unerringly and immobilize the victim throughout the scene.

Illusionary damage inflicted with Horrid Reality can't be soaked — the Ravnos assaults the victim's mind and perceptions, not his body. The only defenses against this power are high scores in Perception and Self-Control, or sufficient Auspex to see through the illusion.

When players use Horrid Reality (or any Chimerstry power), reward creativity. The power demands unusual applications, especially when compared to more direct and physical Disciplines such as Thaumaturgy or Potence. On the other hand, don't reward players for blatantly silly or preposterous uses of Chimerstry. It's best applied in subtle and believable ways. The Ravnos who uses Horrid Reality to say "A flying saucer zips out of the clouds and shoots you with its anti-life ray gun" should probably suffer a penalty unless he's using it on some slack-jawed yokel who's plausibly inclined to believe it.

System: The difficulty for using Far Fatuus depends on the user's familiarity with the location. The player must roll Perception + Subterfuge to affect the location. Once this roll is successful, the Ravnos may then use any other Chimerstry power on that location.

Difficulty Familiarity

- 6 As familiar as one's haven; currently viewing with Clairvoyance or Psychic Projection
- 7 Visited three or more times
- 8 Visited once; viewing on a live feed camera
- 9 Described in detail
- 10 Never been there; seen it on television or have a photograph

MET System: Far Fatuus is a Master level Chimerstry Discipline. To use this power, the character must be familiar with the location in question. In addition, the player must spend one Willpower

Trait and succeed in a Static Mental Challenge against 10 Traits. If successful, the illusion appears in the designated area and performs as the character directs. Players can use this power with any other Chimerstry power. If the location is in the character's line of sight (either through a telescope or an Auspex power like Clairvoyance), then the Willpower expenditure is not necessary.

SUSPENSION OF DISBELIEF (CHIMERSTRY LEVEL SEVEN)

A Ravnos with this power can imbue her Chimerstry with a sense of reality that makes it easier for viewers to believe in the illusion. No matter how strange or surreal the illusion is, an onlooker will accept it as real. If the illusion is wildly unrealistic (fire-breathing dragons, a pack of gray aliens), once it is no longer in his sight, the observer will question what he saw and eventually deny the event ever happened. A Ravnos can also use this power to make something appear unbelievable, whether it's real or not. In this case, observers will write off what they're seeing as some kind of trick or hallucination.

System: The player rolls Manipulation + Subterfuge (difficulty 7). The number of successes determines how many witnesses are affected. If the player uses the power to make something look unbelievable, Auspex will show the thing in question to be an illusion unless the Auspex score is high enough to penetrate the Ravnos' Chimerstry.

- 1 success Five people
- 2 successes 10 people
- 3 successes 25 people
- 4 successes 50 people
- 5 successes Everyone who can see it

MET System: Suspension of Disbelief is a Master level Chimerstry Discipline. To use it, the Ravnos player must spend three Social Traits, and anyone who witnesses the illusion and has a reason to disbelieve it must win a Static Social Challenge (difficulty equals the Ravnos' current Social Traits) or believe implicitly that it's real, no matter how outrageous. The Ravnos may also use this power on something real, causing others to doubt its veracity.

OCCCLUSION (CHIMERSTRY LEVEL EIGHT)

A Ravnos who masters this power can shuffle others' senses around to suit his preferences. He can select one target and inflict a serious, disorienting and all-encompassing case of synesthesia upon her, making it impossible for her to interact meaningfully



with the real world for the power's duration. The Ravnos has complete control over how the target's senses work and can manipulate them to suit. For example, he may decide that she smells all sounds as varieties of nauseating stench, or more subtly, he may exchange pain for pleasure. Against a crowd, sensations are randomly shuffled, so one man will see what the woman next to him sees, but hears what the man 15 feet behind him hears and feels what the child a block away feels. The end result is extremely disorienting for all victims.

System: When used against a single victim, the player must spend one Willpower point and roll Manipulation + Intimidation (difficulty is victim's Willpower). For use against crowds, the difficulty is 7, and the power affects everyone within the Ravnos' line of sight and subtracts one point from Perception per success rolled. Victims whose Perception has been reduced to zero can only sit down and wait for the disorientation to end. Duration against a single victim is determined below. Against a crowd, the power persists until sunrise.

- 1 success One week
- 2 successes One month
- 3 successes Six months

4 successes One year

5 successes Permanent

MET System: Occlusionis an Ascendant level Chimerstry Power. To use this power, the player must spend one point of Willpower and win a Static Social Challenge against a difficulty of 12 Traits. If he wins the Challenge, he must spend one Social Trait per target affected. Affected targets must spend one Willpower Trait to act at all, and must bid two Traits in all challenges. Furthermore, they automatically lose on ties, even if they have a Discipline or other power that grants them the ability to win on ties. This power lasts until sunrise or until the Ravnos voluntarily releases the targets.

MAYAPARISATYA (CHIMERSTRY LEVEL NINE)

Arguably the philosopher's stone for Shilmulo, this penultimate expression of Chimerstry allows the Ravnos to directly alter or create real objects or creatures, although such changes are of finite duration. A Ravnos with this power can transform the air around a rival Kindred into fire or render a locked door insubstantial. A more harrowing use of this power enables the Ravnos to force an object out of existence by transforming it into nothing more than a wisp of its former reality.

NEW DERANGEMENT:
DISSOCIATIVE PERCEPTIONS SYNDROME

Since the Week of Nightmares, Chimerstry hasn't behaved quite the same as it did before. Theories range from the notion that the Antediluvian's death somehow changed the Discipline's nature, or that his existence buffered Ravnos from more extreme effects. Another theory states that the final curse the Antediluvian laid upon the clan as he was destroyed distorted Chimerstry's effects. Whatever the reason, Ravnos who indulge in Chimerstry often slowly lose the ability to distinguish between what is real and what is not.

At first, the Ravnos suffers as if from the Dementation power, *The Haunting* (Vampire: The Masquerade, p. 155). This happens after a Ravnos has completely depleted his Willpower reserves (zero temporary Willpower) to create a Chimerstry illusion. Whenever the player spends all of the character's Willpower, the character suffers from *The Haunting*.

If the Ravnos continues to overuse Chimerstry, he experiences full-sensory hallucinations. These hallucinations can happen at any time, especially moments of great stress. They can range from seeing a friend as an enemy (or vice versa) to seeing a busy street as completely empty. The hallucinations start at relatively low scale and build up over time until they become potentially threatening to the Ravnos' continued existence. If the Ravnos realizes he's experiencing hallucinations, the player can spend one point of Willpower to negate the hallucinations for a scene.

Path of Paradox philosophers point to this power as the only "true" use of Chimerstry, claiming all others are distractions or stepping stones to this profound understanding. Since the Week of Nightmares, it's likely that no surviving Ravnos has mastered Chimerstry to this degree.

System: To use this power, the player must spend 10 blood points and one permanent Willpower point and roll Manipulation + Subterfuge. Difficulty for the roll is 6 for affecting inanimate objects, and the victim's Willpower score for affecting characters. This power can affect anything within miles of the Ravnos, as long as the character is aware of the target in some way. If used with *Far Fatuus*, the effects are centered on the chosen location. This



power can affect a number of conscious targets equal to the Ravnos' Willpower per use.

When dealing with inanimate objects, the number of successes determines how drastic the alteration may be. No matter how many successes the player rolls, the duration is always a scene. This power can affect any objects of a type within the Ravnos' area affected.

1 success Render an object harmless (swords won't cut, firearms won't shoot), create a large volume of obscuring smoke

2 successes Change an object into another object (turn candles into tarantulas, etc.)

3 successes Render the object insubstantial, make smoke solid

4 successes Cause drastic changes (stone becomes highly flammable)

5 successes Cause the environment to behave illogically (gravity twists sideways, rivers stand still as hills flow upward)

6+ successes Delete any offending material objects from existence. This effect is permanent (to use this on conscious targets, follow the system described below).

For example, Marizhavashti Kali is awakened from her centuries-long slumber by the entrance of hunters into her haven. Shaking the cobwebs of centuries from her mind, she sees four hunters approach her with stakes ready. She focuses her full power on the stakes, transforming them into deadly spitting cobras.

When using the power on conscious targets, consult the table above for alterations (such as forcing the victim into another form or transforming her into a different substance). If using the power to negate the victim's existence, the power inflicts two levels of unsoakable aggravated damage per success. If the power doesn't kill the victim, subtract one dot of Strength and Stamina per success. The damage must be healed normally, but the lost Attributes return at the end of the scene. Victims of this power look hazy and insubstantial. Victims destroyed with this power simply vanish.

MET System: Mayaparisatya is a Methuselah level Chimerstry Discipline. The player must spend 10 Blood Traits to activate this power, and succeed in a Static Mental Challenge (difficulty six Traits) to affect an inanimate object, or succeed in a Mental Challenge against conscious targets. If she wins the Challenge, the player may choose to spend one Mental Trait per aspect she changes in the target, or one Mental Trait per level of aggravated damage

inflicted on the target. This damage may not be reduced with any Discipline, armor or equipment short of Methuselah level Fortitude. If used to alter inanimate objects, the power's effects may be applied to every inanimate object within the Ravnos' line of sight at no additional cost. The scope of effect is solely up to the player, but Storytellers are encouraged to veto any effect too outrageous.

COMBINATION DISCIPLINES

Throughout their history, Ravnos have been forced to adapt their Disciplines into new and unusual applications to better fight the *asuratizayya*, Gangrel and other enemies they've faced over the centuries. Prior to the Week of Nightmares, Ravnos elders in India spent decades and centuries first establishing the theoretical underpinnings for their Disciplines and then extrapolating combinations to grant them an advantage in their eternal war. A few of their techniques survived the clan's ruination and include the following powers.

SYMPATHETIC AGONY (CHIMERSTRY ••, FORTITUDE ••••)

The Kshatriya caste of India developed this power to shift the pain of wounds inflicted on them to their enemies. Whenever the target strikes a Ravnos using this power, the target feels the pain instead of the Ravnos. This power enabled Kshatriya to better survive their wounds and more quickly dispatch their enemies.

System: The player spends one blood point and rolls Manipulation + Intimidation (difficulty equals the victim's Perception + Self-Control). Each success allows the Ravnos to ignore the pain from one health level and inflict that pain on the victim. The Ravnos still suffers from the wounds, she simply doesn't feel it for a brief period. This power lasts for the duration of the scene.

Example: Sanjay is in melee combat with an asuratizayya. His player rolls 6 dice against the asuratizayya's Perception + Self-Control and receives two successes. If the asuratizayya inflicts four health levels (Hurt) on Sanjay, the Ravnos suffers only the first two levels (to Wounded, or -1 to dice pools), and the asuratizayya also suffers as if he has taken two health levels (in addition to any he has already taken).

This power costs 20 experience points to learn.

MET System: The player spends one Blood Trait and engages in a Social Challenge (Intimidation retest) against the target. If successful, she may spend one Social Trait per level of damage the target



can potentially suffer in her stead. Endurance does not block the pain inflicted with this power.

Sympathetic Agony costs 10 Experience Traits to learn and requires that the character already possess Basic Chimerstry and Intermediate Fortitude.

HEART'S DESIRE (AUSPER •••••, CHIMERSTRY ••)

With this power, a Ravnos can reach into a target's heart and create an image of her greatest desire. This image always manifests as a material object. For example, if the target desires a specific lover, she'll see a letter from that person professing his love. Phuri Dae and Brahman Ravnos use this power to gain influence over others. Many people, faced with their heart's desire, are likely to do anything to achieve it.

Note that simply creating the illusion does not automatically convince the target. This power grants the Ravnos a potential advantage, but it's up to her to make use of it.

System: The player must spend a blood point and a Willpower point, then roll Intelligence + Subterfuge (difficulty is the target's Willpower) to discern the target's heart's desire and create a reason-

able facsimile. Three successes are necessary for this to work properly. Once the Ravnos creates the object, she can recreate it at will (so long as the player spends the blood point and Willpower point to create the illusion), unless the subject's heart's desire changes.

This power costs 20 experience points to learn.

MET System: To use Heart's Desire, the player must spend a Blood Trait and a Willpower Trait, then engage in a Mental Challenge against the target to discern her heart's desire and create a reasonable facsimile. Once the Ravnos has used this power on a target, he can recreate the illusion at will using Fata Morgana normally.

This power costs 10 Experience Traits to learn and requires that the character possess Intermediate Auspex and Basic Chimerstry.

MASK OF CATHAY (ANIMALISM ••••, CHIMERSTRY ••••)

Ravnos in Asia have had to learn several tricks to conceal their presence among the fanatical Eastern Kindred. One of the more common techniques is the ability to appear as an *asuratizayya*. This mask conceals the Ravnos' nature as one of the Kindred

descended from Caine and makes them appear to be *asuratizayya* for purposes of all tests.

This power does not grant the Ravnos any ability to learn Eastern Disciplines or adopt their Dharmic paths. It simply allows the Ravnos to misrepresent herself.

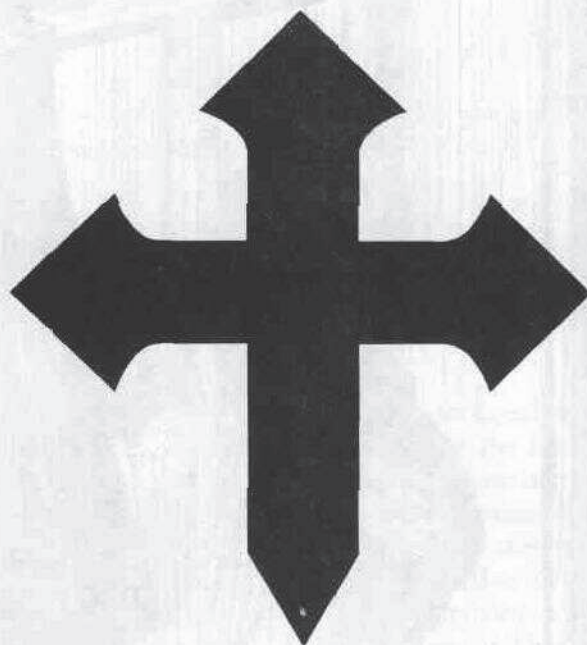
System: The player spends one Willpower point and one blood point and rolls Manipulation + Subterfuge (difficulty 6). Each success the player gains on that roll represents one success an onlooker must overcome with the use of any power (Auspex, Kuei-jin Life sight, Death sight, etc.) to perceive the Ravnos as one of the Western Kindred. Otherwise, senses show the Ravnos to be a yin-aspected Kuei-jin. If no roll is associated with the power, roll

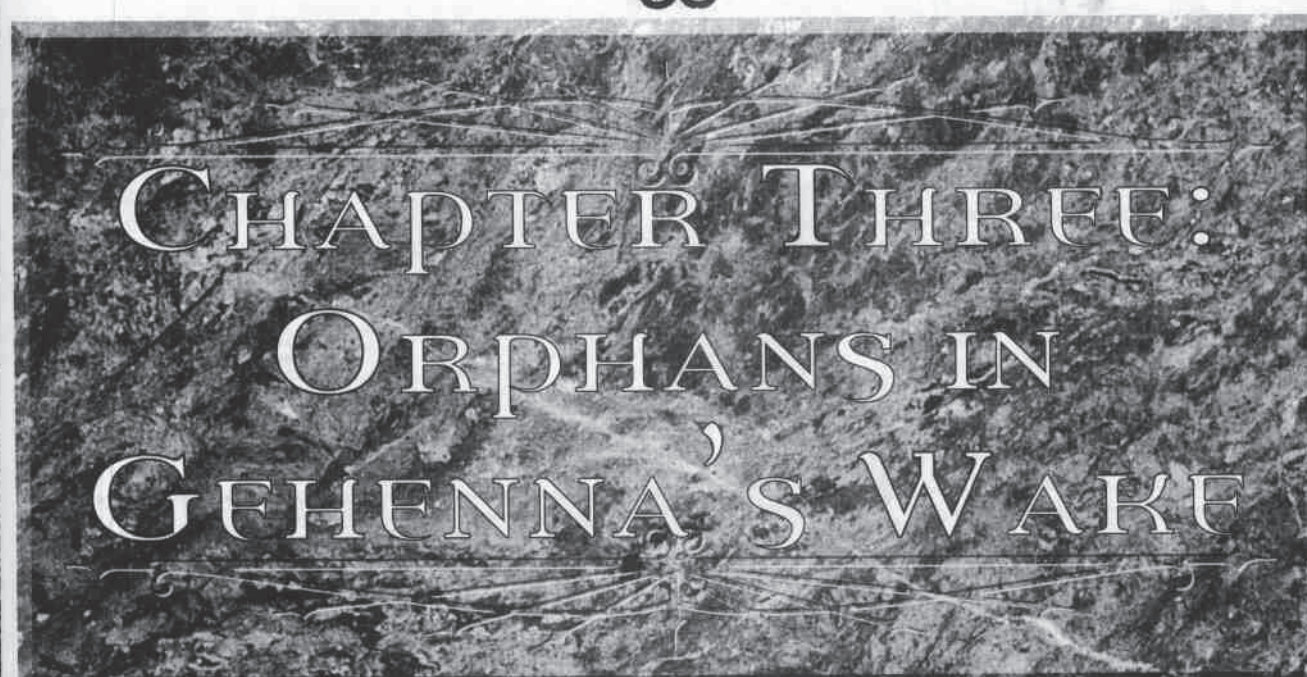
Perception + Alertness (difficulty 6). Eastern Mask lasts for only one night per use.

This power costs 15 experience points to learn. For more information on the Kindred of the East, or Juei-jin, see **Kindred of the East**.

MET System: For a Ravnos to use Eastern Mask, the player must spend one Willpower Trait and one Blood Trait to invoke the Mask until sunrise. During that time, the Ravnos is perceived through supernatural means as a yin-aspected Cathayan (see **Laws of the East**), not as one of the Kindred.

Eastern Mask costs seven Experience Traits to learn and requires that the character possess Intermediate Animalism and Chimerstry.





CHAPTER THREE: ORPHANS IN GEHENNA'S WAKE

Frank and explicit — that is the right line to take when you wish to conceal your own mind and confuse the minds of others.

— Benjamin Disraeli

Among Kindred who know of the Ravnos, many hold stereotypical images of the Deceivers: "They're merry Gypsies," or "They're like Malkavians, but with magic tricks." This is partly because the most visible of the Ravnos often pander to the stereotypes that lead other Kindred to dismiss them as troublemakers. Given the clan's current situation, however, most Ravnos aren't interested in attracting undue attention any longer. Even before the Week of Nightmares, knowledge of their lineage often earned the Ravnos suspicion before they actually did anything, so why make it worse? The fact that others' suspicions are usually justifiable only makes many Ravnos even less interested in advertising their presence openly.

In the Week of Nightmare's wake, with the destruction of most of the Ravnos clan — many of whom were put down by scourges, sheriffs and others who saw them

succumb to Zapathasura's blood-rage — many Kindred believe that the Ravnos have been utterly destroyed. Elders who know that some Ravnos survive fear that their existence will hasten Gehenna, and are more than happy to destroy any they see. The majority of Kindred in the Final Nights don't really know much either way, beyond rumors. Surviving, sensible Ravnos have little interest in taking chances. They're hooking up with each other and trying to find out what happened to them. Most of all, they're trying to avoid Final Death.

The Ravnos on the following pages are survivors — they're not particularly interested in destabilizing the Camarilla (at least not in the near future), nor do they go out of their way to draw attention to themselves. Some are willing to watch each other's backs only because the gesture is reciprocated, but they don't really trust each other any more than they trust anyone else.

Quote: I can remove your target and clean up the scene. No one will find a thing. Yes, my services are expensive, but the investment is worth it.

You found a body in the trunk of your boyfriend's car. When you confronted him about it, he stammered a few excuses until he realized you were suggesting how to dispose of it properly. It turned out he was a professional hitman. Impressed with your ability to clear a scene of evidence and bodies, he let you in on his "business," which also led to better lovemaking—the idea of killing with his girlfriend aroused him.

Of course, it was too good to last. Your lover got the job he couldn't finish, and the target got him. He was hired to kill a newcomer to the local underworld, someone who had established new operations and was impinging heavily on established turf boundaries. Unfortunately, the target was too tough to kill with one shot, and your boyfriend never got a chance for the second. Staring death in the eye, you did the only thing you could — you ran.

For several months afterward, your boyfriend's former boss tried to hire you for more jobs, while you tried to lay low. You *knew* your lover's final target was still up and about and probably knew where to find you. When you saw him nearby every few nights, casually walking past or sipping coffee at the same Starbucks, you knew he was stalking you. When you tried to leave town, he followed you and gave you an offer you couldn't refuse.

Now you know why the first shot didn't kill him and you've developed a taste for killing that you're not entirely comfortable with.

Concept: You've never liked people much, except on a rare individual basis. You've had a string of boyfriends that ended with the hitman, but you never really felt close to any of them. You hate your sire and look forward to destroying him. Your crime is the perfect murder. You prefer targets who are hard to get, but will often stalk

[illegible]

someone who catches your eye simply for the satisfaction of the hunt. You cannot leave the presence of your killing, ever.

Roleplaying Hints: You're a borderline sociopath, balanced somewhere between honest dislike of humanity and actual insecurity. You hide it behind a cool demeanor and like to give the impression you're in complete control. The truth is that you would do anything to give up the unnatural taste for blood and death the Embrace foisted upon you.

Equipment: Sniper rifle, silenced pistol, briefcase filled with tools like surgical gloves, wet napkins from a fried chicken franchise, binoculars, two-shot derringer, executive wardrobe, penthouse apartment, Jaguar and a few gallons of powerful acid.

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NAME	_____	CONSCIENCE/CONVICTION	●○○○○○
CHARACTER	Cleaner	SELF-CONTROL/RESTRAINT	●●●●●
CHRONICLE	_____	COURAGE	●●●●●○
CIAN	Ravnos	BLOOD	●●●●●○○○
GENERATION	11th	WILLPOWER	○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○
AGE	_____	NATURE	●●●●●○○○
DEMONOM	Judge		□□□□□□□□□□

PATH/HUMANITY		BACKGROUNDS	
		Contactsx2 _____ Generationx2 _____ Influence(Streetx2) _____ Resourcesx3 _____	
PHYSICAL Agile _____ Steady _____ Dexterousx2 _____ Tenacious _____ Resilientx2 _____		INFLUENCES _____ _____ _____ _____	
SOCIAL Commanding _____ Intimidatingx2 _____ _____ _____		DISCIPLINES Chimerstry (Ignis Fatuus) _____ Fortitude (Endurance, Mettle) _____ _____ _____	
MENTAL Alert _____ Observantx2 _____ Shrewdx2 _____ _____ _____		MERITS & FLAWS _____ _____ _____ _____	
ABILITIES Crafts _____ Security _____ Firearms _____ Stealth _____ Politics _____ Streetwise _____			

[illegible]

PATH/HUMANITY		BACKGROUNDS	
		Allies x3	Resources x3
PHYSICAL		Contacts x3	
Nimble x2	Vigorous	Generation x1	
Stalwart x2		Influence (Transportation x1)	
Tireless x2		INFLUENCES	
SOCIAL			
Beguiling	Witty x2		
Eloquent			
Friendly			
MENTAL		DISCIPLINES	
Alert x2		Animalism (Feral Whispers)	
Determined x2		Beckoning)	
Discerning		Fortitude (Endurance)	
ABILITIES		MERITS & FLAWS	
Animal Ken	Streetwise x2		
Drive	Subterfuge		
Stealth			

Quote: Yes, I can get this package to Kuala Lumpur inside two hours and no one will know, but it will cost you big time.

Prelude: You started as a bagman for a Mafia family in New York City, but you learned that if you paid attention to where things were sent and to whom, you could assemble a sense of the bigger picture. In fact, you had a talent for deduction that your superiors never spotted. They never thought much of you and paid you little attention beyond sending you to deliver valuables across two states.

You eventually realized that you had no real future in the Mob, so you decided to branch out. With your knowledge of family operations, you figured you had a valuable commodity that your superiors would never know about. You needed to stay anonymous to do your thing, so you decided to sell your information via the Internet. You studied computers so you could do what you had to do, and made a point of getting contact information for other gangs in the city. You knew enough people to spread the information about your new "service" without alerting your bosses, and it didn't take long for you to acquire a regular clientele of satisfied customers.

One of your customers was quite impressed with your initiative and creativity. She came to you in the night and made you an offer you thought was great — immortality. She told you that the family had caught on to your antics and the head had already ordered your execution. You didn't want to give them the satisfaction, so you took her up on the offer.

After your Embrace, your sire introduced you to the Kindred and helped set you up as a courier during the Camarilla's siege of New York City. You helped deliver sensitive information and track Sabbat movements to the Camarilla's benefit, and they're still a little grateful. No one thinks you made a major difference, but every little bit helps.

Concept: You get sensitive material from point A to point B with a minimum of fuss for other Kindred and occasionally a primogen might hire you. Camarilla Kindred treat you as somewhat neutral because you're not a member of the sect, but that means they don't entirely trust you. This means that sometimes you have to submit to uses of Disciplines so you can't reveal what you're transporting or otherwise betray your employers. Not that you would at this point; you know where the food is, and it's not in betraying bloodsuckers who can rip your head off with a thought.

Your personal indulgence is calculated misinformation. You take what you know and build a



VAMPIRE

THE MASQUERADE

NAME: _____ NATION: Conniver GENERATION: 12th
 PLAYER: _____ DEMONIM: Competitive HAVE: _____
 CHRONICLE: _____ CLAN: Ravnos CONCEPT: Courier

PHYSICAL

Strength: 00000
 Dexterity: 00000
 Stamina: 00000

SOCIAL

Charisma: 00000
 Manipulation: 00000
 Appearance: 00000

MENTAL

Perception: 00000
 Intelligence: 00000
 Wits: 00000

TALENTS

Alacrity: 00000
 Athletics: 00000
 Fraud: 00000
 Dodge: 00000
 Empathy: 00000
 Expression: 00000
 Intimidation: 00000
 Leadership: 00000
 Streetwise: 00000
 Subterfuge: 00000

SKILLS

Animal Ken: 00000
 Crafts: 00000
 Drive: 00000
 Etiquette: 00000
 Firearms: 00000
 Melee: 00000
 Performance: 00000
 Security: 00000
 Stealth: 00000
 Survival: 00000

KNOWLEDGE

Academics: 00000
 Computers: 00000
 Finance: 00000
 Investigation: 00000
 Law: 00000
 Linguistics: 00000
 Medicine: 00000
 Occult: 00000
 Politics: 00000
 Science: 00000

BACKBONING

Allies: 00000
 Contacts: 00000
 Generation: 00000
 Resources: 00000
 00000
 00000
 00000

DISCIPLINES

Animalism: 00000
 Fortitude: 00000
 00000
 00000
 00000
 00000
 00000

VIRTUES

Conscience/Conviction: 00000
 00000
 Self-Control/Reserve: 00000
 00000
 Courage: 00000

MERITS/FLAWS

HUMANITY/POWER

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

Willpower

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Blood Pool

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

HEALTH

Bruised ☐
 Hurt ☐ -1
 Injured ☐ -1
 Wounded ☐ -2
 Mauled ☐ -2
 Crippled ☐ -5
 Incapacitated ☐

ESQUIRE

picture of politics and events from that, but you use it to spread rumors that can create strife. You won't be obvious about it, but you might casually mention to the Tremere primogen's childe that you saw an Assamite lurking around the prince's favored nightclub. You walk a thin line between giving too much information and too little, and the temptation to cross that line is always present. Eventually, you'll give in.

Roleplaying Hints: Show deference and respect to Camarilla Kindred. You know they're higher up in the "organization" and that you can't afford to rock the boat. That doesn't mean you aren't planning for the time when you can parlay your work into better standing (and acceptance), or possible betrayal of Camarilla operations to the Sabbat (if they offer the right price). Don't rule out the possibility of using what you know to increase tension among the Kindred and thereby make your own business more lucrative. Just be careful about the controls and safeguards they implant.

Equipment: A 1994 red Ford Taurus, a 9mm pistol with silencer, somewhat shabby clothes and a Pentium III computer system.

DEVIL SLAYER

Quote: *Your existence serves no purpose. Now it ends.*

Prelude: You were born in Nepal and served in the British regiment, the Royal Gurkha Rifles. Your unit remained with the British after India's partition in 1947 and continued to serve Queen and Country as duty demanded. In the early '60s, your unit was assigned to Malaysia during what the government called "confrontations." You certainly got involved in a confrontation — in the middle of the night, no less.

Your unit fought bravely, but it's not always easy to stand your ground when you're facing the supernatural. You held out as best you could while men all around you died. You fought, battling fiends that could twist their bodies into monstrous shapes or even separate their heads to move independently — *penangallan*, the locals called them. Fortunately, some divine power was on your side, as several bloodthirsty monsters joined what remained of your unit and fought off the abominations.

You suffered mortal wounds in the fighting, but one of the new monsters took pity on you and gave you his vitae. The Embrace awakened you to the larger world — a darker world where monsters wage war nightly for the right to exist. Your sire trained you in your new responsibilities as one of the Kshatriyas — a Ravnos warrior, with a duty to destroy monsters that have no reason to walk the Earth.

Not too long ago, your sire sent you along with several other Ravnos to California to meet with an ancilla who was coordinating an investigation into increased *asuratzayya* activity in America. You spent the journey in a locked container in a freighter's hold and in voluntary torpor. Disturbing and bloody dreams punctuated your slumber. When you arrived in California, your attempts to contact the ancilla Vivek Lalji proved fruitless, as did attempts to inform your sire of the situation.

Concept: You're a warrior, but you try not to revel in bloodshed. The Beast would do otherwise, no matter how much you try to deny it. Despite your training, you hate to give in to it, so you try to avoid combat unless absolutely necessary. You resent having been Embraced to fight a seemingly endless stream of *asuratzayya* and would much rather find some other means to deal with them — or even better, ignore them.

Violating the tenets of Paradox satisfies your need for criminality. You

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VAMPIRE			
NAME: _____		NATURE: Masochist	GENERATION: 8th
PLAYER: _____		DEFEASOR: Fanatic	HAVIC: _____
CHARACTER: _____		CLAN: Ravnos	CONCEPT: Devil Slayer
ATTRIBUTES			
PHYSICAL		SOCIAL	MENTAL
Strength: 00000	Charisma: 00000	Perception: 00000	
Dexterity: 00000	Manipulation: 00000	Intelligence: 00000	
Stamina: 00000	Appearance: 00000	Will: 00000	
ABILITIES			
TALENTS		SKILLS	KNOWLEDGES
Alertness: 00000	Animal Ken: 00000	Academics: 00000	
Athletics: 00000	Crafts: 00000	Computer: 00000	
Brawl: 00000	Drive: 00000	Finance: 00000	
Dodge: 00000	Etiquette: 00000	Investigation: 00000	
Empathy: 00000	Firearm: 00000	Law: 00000	
Expression: 00000	Melee: 00000	Linguistics: 00000	
Intimidation: 00000	Performance: 00000	Medicine: 00000	
Leadership: 00000	Security: 00000	Occult: 00000	
Streetwise: 00000	Stealth: 00000	Politics: 00000	
Subterfuge: 00000	Survival: 00000	Science: 00000	
ADVANTAGES			
BACKGROUND		DISCIPLINES	VIRTUES
Generation: 00000	Animalism: 00000	Conscience/Catadictation: 00000	
Herd: 00000	Fortitude: 00000	Self-Control/Inner: 00000	
		Courage: 00000	
FLAWS		HUMANITY/PATH	HEALTH
		Paradox: 00000000	Brained: ☐
		Willpower: 00000000	Hurt: -1 ☐
		Blood Pool: 00000000	Injured: -1 ☐
			Wounded: -2 ☐
			Mauled: -2 ☐
			Crippled: -5 ☐
			Incapacitated: ☐
			Experience: ☐

have adopted the Path of Paradox as your moral compass, but the restrictions chafe you, driving you to act against them. This means that you may never fully master the path, but you do not yet consider it an impossible obstacle.

Roleplaying Hints:

You hate to be defined by your duty and mission, at least by others. You occasionally behave contrary to expectations. If others think you should be a stoic, silent warrior, you will be boisterous and undisciplined. If others expect you to be a thieving scoundrel (a common reaction when they learn your clan), you act as if such behavior is beneath you. You are starting to wonder if you're simply a reflection of others around you and if your existence has become a matter of fighting one expectation after another.

Equipment: Casual clothing, *kukri*, 45 ACP pistol, passport.

[illegible]

GUN RUNNER

Quote: *You want it, I can get it. 9mm, 10mm, black talon, glaser. You name it. Of course none of it's traceable. What do you think I am? Stupid?*

Prelude: Born a minority on the wrong side of the tracks, you didn't have many options for a lucrative career, at least not a legal one. To your credit, you tried to work within the system, but the system didn't care about your competence or skill base, only about quotas. After you finally gave up, "affirmative action" was a four-letter word to you. Not ready to start flipping burgers, you looked up a cousin and told him you wanted a piece of the pie.

At first, he didn't take you seriously — after all, you had a reputation for honesty and following the law. That actually worked in your favor, once you convinced him that no one would expect you to be moving whatever illegal commodity needed transporting, so he gave you a chance. Within a year, you became his best runner. If he had anything important, he gave it to you. Usually, it was firearms.

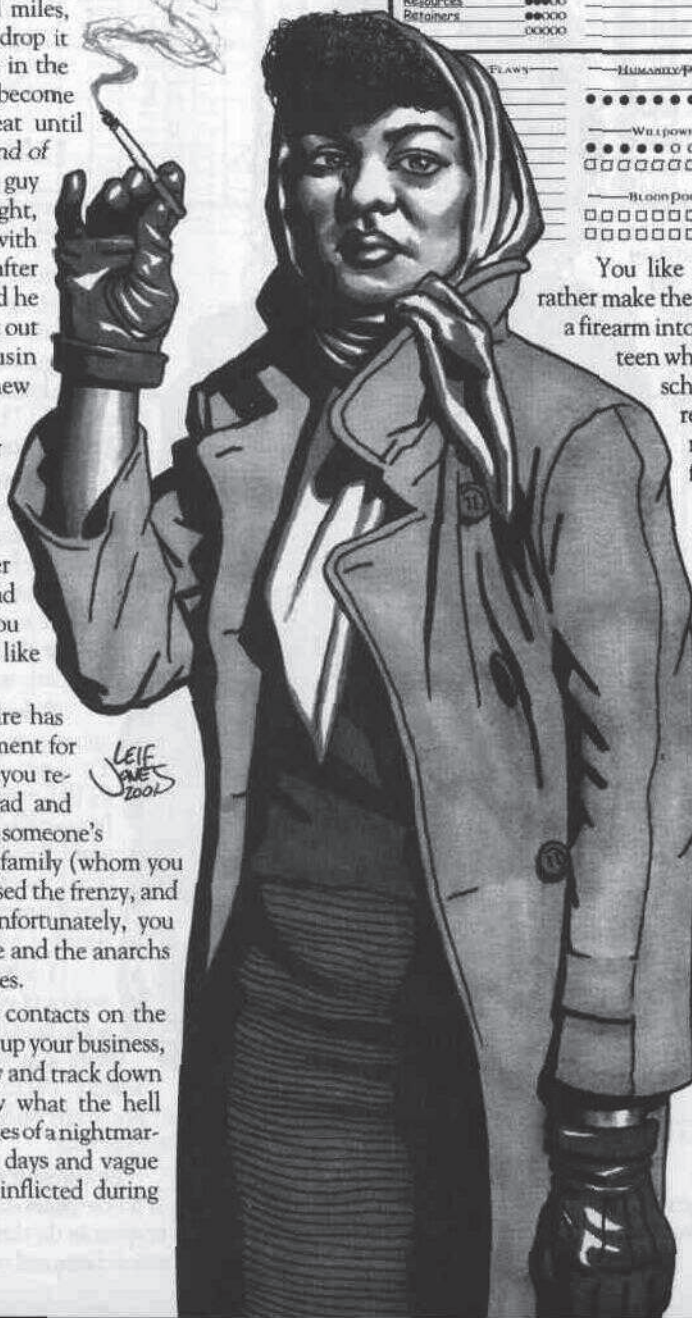
Not that you cared how your cargo was used. You'd just drive a hundred miles, picked up your load, drive back, drop it off, take your money and live life in the fashion to which you wanted to become accustomed. Everything was great until your usual contact at the other end of the pipeline changed. The new guy would only meet you after midnight, and you'd swear he followed you (with headlights off) for several miles after you made your pickup. Convinced he was stalking you, you tried to back out of the business, but your cousin wouldn't have it. He said the new source would only deal with you.

This situation continued for six uncomfortable months before your contact revealed his true nature. He said he had a place for you in his organization, bigger, better and more profitable. You only had to die to join. He didn't give you much choice; fighting back was like beating on a wall.

Since your Embrace, your sire has had you running guns and equipment for anarchs in California. However, you recently flipped out on a back road and found yourself drenched in blood in someone's farmhouse, surrounded by a dead family (whom you killed). You don't know what caused the frenzy, and you'd really like to find out. Unfortunately, you haven't been able to find your sire and the anarchs you met with have pulled up stakes.

Concept: You're using your contacts on the street and the underworld to keep up your business, so you can maintain your mobility and track down other Kindred who might know what the hell happened. You have vivid memories of a nightmarish battle fought through several days and vague impressions of the carnage you inflicted during that time.

VAMPIRE			
NAME: THE HASSQUERABLE		NATURE: Traditionalist	
PLAYER: CHRONICLER		DISPOSITION: Deviant	
		CLAN: Ravnos	
		GENERATION: 12th	
		HUMAN: Gun Runner	
ATTRIBUTES			
PHYSICAL		SOCIAL	
Strength	00000	Charisma	00000
Destiny	00000	Manipulation	00000
Stamina	00000	Appearance	00000
		MENTAL	
		Perception	00000
		Intelligence	00000
		Will	00000
ABILITIES			
TALENTS		SKILLS	
Alertness	00000	Animal Ken	00000
Artistics	00000	Crafts	00000
Brawl	00000	Drive	00000
Dodge	00000	Etiquette	00000
Empathy	00000	Firearms	00000
Expression	00000	Melee	00000
Intimidation	00000	Performance	00000
Leadership	00000	Security	00000
Streetwise	00000	Stealth	00000
Subterfuge	00000	Survival	00000
		KNOWLEDGES	
		Academics	00000
		Computer	00000
		Finance	00000
		Investigation	00000
		Law	00000
		Literature	00000
		Medicine	00000
		Occult	00000
		Politics	00000
		Science	00000
ADVANTAGES			
BACKGROUNDS		DISCIPLINES	
Allies	00000	Animalism	00000
Contacts	00000	Chimerstry	00000
Generation	00000	Fortitude	00000
Hard	00000		00000
Resources	00000		00000
Retainers	00000		00000
			00000
			00000
		VIRTUES	
		Conscience/Conviction	00000
		Self-Control/Inner	00000
		Change	00000
FLAWS			
HUMANITY/POWER		HEALTH	
●●●●●●●●●●		Bruised ☐	
●●●●●●●●●●		Hung ☐	
●●●●●●●●●●		Injured ☐	
●●●●●●●●●●		Wounded ☐	
●●●●●●●●●●		Mauled ☐	
●●●●●●●●●●		Crippled ☐	
●●●●●●●●●●		Incapacitated ☐	
BLOOD POOL		EXPERIENCE	
□□□□□□□□		□□□□□□□□	
□□□□□□□□		□□□□□□□□	



You like to give people guns. You'd rather make them pay for it, but if you can get a firearm into the hands of (say) a troubled teen who's likely to shoot up his high school, you'll do it. This desire repels you, but you can only resist the urge for so long before it becomes overwhelming.

Roleplaying Hints: Keep your distance from mortals and try to find Kindred who can tell you what's up. Don't look too eager or they'll up the ante. You're willing to work with anyone who can pay your price, and you try to present an aura of confidence. Unfortunately, you come across as intensely frantic instead.

Equipment: Ford Expedition, casual middle-class clothing (nothing too stylish — you're trying to project a "normal" image, whatever that means), and an assortment of firearms you'd rather not use.

IMMIGRANT SMUGGLER

Quote: Yes, Señor Esposito, I can get your family across the border and into Arizona and no border patrol will be the wiser. Trust me, I have it all covered.

Prelude: You grew up in a middle class family in a relatively normal neighborhood, but you weren't exactly normal in the eyes of others. You were Rroma, and your grandparents died in the German death camps during the Second World War. Your parents came to America as children; somehow they managed to get a piece of the American dream and even buy a house. Your father teaches anthropology at a major university and your mother teaches physics at the same institution.

You didn't give a huge amount of thought to your Rroma heritage, although your parents made certain you understood just what it meant and how much your people had suffered — and how fortunate you were now. The moment that drove your background home to you happened when you went to a favorite restaurant and saw an INS official going through employee records. The restaurant employed several Mexicans and so came under government scrutiny. When you later learned that more than half of the employees got deported back to Mexico and the business itself was fined, you wondered just what America represented. The inscription on Ellis Island reads, "Bring us your poor, your tired, your huddled masses." How can that mean anything if the United States spends more time keeping people out than bringing them in?

All this reminded you of your family's history — the Rroma and their separate culture have not been welcome anywhere for most of their history and were forced to travel simply to avoid more trouble than they could handle. Not that traveling helped when the Nazis decided to open their extermination camps. You weren't happy, but you weren't sure what to do.

You started by talking to the restaurant owner. Once you convinced him of your sincerity, he introduced you to a few people and they helped you get started in the illegal immigration business. It didn't take you long to become one of the best — you knew the patrols, studied INS strategy whenever you could and were otherwise careful and meticulous. You didn't feel too guilty about charging for your services, since you needed to eat too.

Everything went smoothly for the first year or so, before the government caught up with you. You were looking at prison time and worse, just for helping others find their dreams or escape their nightmares. The small pack of motorcyclists who were right behind you when the agents stopped you turned out to be your



VAMPIRE		
THE MASQUERADE		
NAME: DRACULA	NATURE: Autocrat	GENERATION: 13th
CLAN: Ravnos	DISPOSITION: Conciliator	HAVEN: Immigrant Smuggler
ATTRIBUTES		
PHYSICAL Strength: 00000 Dexterity: 00000 Stamina: 00000	SOCIAL Charisma: 00000 Manipulation: 00000 Appearance: 00000	MENTAL Perception: 00000 Intelligence: 00000 Wits: 00000
ABILITIES		
TALENTS Alertness: 00000 Athletics: 00000 Brawl: 00000 Dodge: 00000 Empathy: 00000 Expression: 00000 Intimidation: 00000 Leadership: 00000 Streetwise: 00000 Subterfuge: 00000	SKILLS Animal Ken: 00000 Crafts: 00000 Drive: 00000 Etiquette: 00000 Firearms: 00000 Melee: 00000 Performance: 00000 Security: 00000 Stealth: 00000 Survival: 00000	KNOWLEDGES Academics: 00000 Computer: 00000 Finance: 00000 Investigation: 00000 Law: 00000 Linguistics: 00000 Medicine: 00000 Occult: 00000 Politics: 00000 Science: 00000
ADVANTAGES		
BACKGROUNDS Allies: 00000 Contacts: 00000 Herd: 00000 Influence: 00000 Resources: 00000 Status: 00000	DISPOSITIONS Animalism: 00000 Chimerstry: 00000 Ferocity: 00000 Ferocity: 00000 Ferocity: 00000 Ferocity: 00000	VIRTUES Conscience/Restraint: 00000 Self-Control/Restraint: 00000 Courage: 00000
MERITS/FLAWS		
HUMANITY/PATH		
HEALTH		
WILLPOWER		
BLOOD POOL		
EMERGENCY		

saving grace... to a degree. They decided to remove the roadblock and didn't care too much about the Masquerade (but didn't leave any survivors). You quit running immigrants after that, but the motorcyclists came looking for you again, this time to bring you "into the fold." Through the Embrace, you discovered a distinctly horrifying part of your Rroma heritage.

Concept: As a Ravnos, you've given up smuggling mortals anywhere, instead applying your skills to aiding Kindred. You help the blood-hunted escape their punishment, get Kindred into or out of Sabbat-controlled areas and otherwise behave in much the same way you did while alive. You don't base your identity on your ethnic heritage, but you don't deny it, either.

Roleplaying Hints: You're in control at all times, even if things are falling apart around you. Two years of running the border and looking out for INS patrols have given you an iron nerve, and little scares you. Of course, you're not yet fully aware of just how frightening older vampires can be, so there are still surprises. Until then, a Camarilla sheriff is no more worrisome to you than a county sheriff.

You hate to see people ground up under the weight of government or bureaucracy, and will act to help them, almost like Robin Hood. This means you will help a blood-hunted Caitiff in defiance of a prince's wishes and you'll give an anarchy a place to stay while she's avoiding her sire's attempts to drag her back.

Equipment: An old, beaten-up van with three sets of license plates and titles; 10-gauge pump shotgun you keep under the driver's seat; clothing appropriate for all social classes and occasions.

NAME _____

CHARACTER Immigrant Smuggler

CHRONICLE _____

CLAN Ravens

GENERATION 13th

Age _____

NATURE Autocrat

DEMEANOR Caregiver

Willpower

Blood

Courage



CONSCIENCE/CONVICTION

SELF CONTROL/IMPETUS

PATH/HUMANITY

PHYSICAL

Dexterous x2

Tenacious x2

Tough

SOCIAL

Charismatic x3

Persuasive x2

Commanding

Magnetic

MENTAL

Rational

Shrewd x2

Vigilant

BACKGROUNDS

Allies x1

Resources x3

Contacts x4

Herd x4

Influence (Transportation x3)

INFLUENCES

DISCIPLINES

Chimerstry (Ignis Fatuus, Fata Morgana)

Fortitude (Endurance)

MERITS & FLAWS

ABILITIES

Animal Ken

Stealth

Drive

Streetwise

Law

Survival

NAME _____

CHARACTER Inside Trader

CHRONICLE _____

CLAN Ravens

GENERATION 13th

Age _____

NATURE Director

DEMEANOR Visionary

Willpower

Blood

Courage



CONSCIENCE/CONVICTION

SELF CONTROL/IMPETUS

PATH/HUMANITY

PHYSICAL

Agile

Resilient

Wiry

SOCIAL

Charming

Ingratiating x2

Diplomatic

Eloquent

MENTAL

Attentive x2

Vigilant

Clever x2

Disciplined

Knowledgeable

BACKGROUNDS

Contacts x1

Fame x1

Influence (Finance x1, Transportation x1)

Resources x4 (Status x1)

INFLUENCES

DISCIPLINES

Chimerstry (Ignis Fatuus, Fata Morgana)

Fortitude (Endurance)

MERITS & FLAWS

ABILITIES

Academics

Performance

Finance

Politics

Law

Streetwise

Quote: Yes, Charles? I have some investment advice for you. Sell Cost-Less.com stocks now. Yes, I'm sure. Apparently, out of work, overweight, singing bald actors can't save them.

Prelude: Your family never had much, a state of affairs that left you very unhappy. While all your friends had new clothes, you wore hand-me-downs and castoffs from thrift stores. Through a string of lucky breaks and honest work, you managed to earn a scholarship to a prestigious university and a degree in business.

Once out of school, you carved a career for yourself in the business sector, quickly working your way to the top (and backstabbing more than a few competitors to get there). That's the way business works, after all. Still, it wasn't enough.

As an executive in a multinational corporation, you had access to sensitive financial information that could be used to make or lose billions of dollars. You had no intention of using that information in such a way or passing it to anyone who did, but someone else had other ideas.

He came to meet you late one night to discuss a business proposition you could not refuse — not because you didn't want to, but because refusal could be fatal. The man simply needed enough information to make a killing on the stock market — nothing important enough for the SEC to know about.

You cooperated, wanting to believe the promise that it wouldn't be necessary again, but the man kept coming back. Each time, he needed a little more. He always seemed to know when you held back or tried to lie, so you gave up.

Within a year, you were a nervous wreck. You'd compromised your career for a man whose name you didn't even know; every time the phone rang, you expected it to be someone from the Securities & Exchange Commission to tell you that "the jig is up." Salvation — in a particularly ironic manifestation — arrived from another corner. Someone else came to you in the night. She reminded you of the first man in a way you couldn't precisely identify, but she made it clear she was there to break him. She told you his name and that he worked for someone else, and that they were about to sacrifice you now that their plan had netted them the money they needed.

She offered you a way out. All you had to do was accept her offer of "immortality."

Concept: You're still a businessman and you managed to hold onto your position thanks to the Embrace — the Ventrue who were set to betray you to the SEC couldn't turn another

VAMPIRE

THE MASQUERADE

NAME: _____ PLAYED: _____ CHARACTER: _____	NATIVE: Director DYSMORPH: Visionary CLAN: Ravnos	GENERATION: 13th HABIT: _____ COWBOY: Inside Trader
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ATTRIBUTES

Physical	Social	Mental
Strength: ●●●●●	Charisma: ●●●●●	Perception: ●●●●●
Dexterity: ●●●●●	Manipulation: ●●●●●	Intelligence: ●●●●●
Stamina: ●●●●●	Appearance: ●●●●●	Will: ●●●●●

ABILITIES

Talents	Skills	Knowledges
Alertness: ●●●●●	Animal Ken: ●●●●●	Academics: ●●●●●
Athletics: ●●●●●	Crafts: ●●●●●	Computer: ●●●●●
Beast: ●●●●●	Deceit: ●●●●●	Finance: ●●●●●
Dodge: ●●●●●	Etiquette: ●●●●●	Investigation: ●●●●●
Empathy: ●●●●●	Ferocity: ●●●●●	Law: ●●●●●
Expression: ●●●●●	Melee: ●●●●●	Linguistics: ●●●●●
Intimidation: ●●●●●	Performance: ●●●●●	Medicine: ●●●●●
Leadership: ●●●●●	Security: ●●●●●	Occult: ●●●●●
Streetwise: ●●●●●	Stealth: ●●●●●	Politics: ●●●●●
Subterfuge: ●●●●●	Survival: ●●●●●	Science: ●●●●●

ADVANTAGES

Backgrounds	Disguise	Virtues
Contacts: ●●●●●	Chemistry: ●●●●●	Conscience/Conversion: ●●●●●
Fame: ●●●●●	Fertitude: ●●●●●	
Influence: ●●●●●		
Resources: ●●●●●		
Status: ●●●●●		
		Self-Control/Restraint: ●●●●●
		Courage: ●●●●●

MERITS/FLAWS

HUMANITY/BEAST

●●●●●○○○

Willpower

●●●●●○○○
 □□□□□□□□

Blood Pool

□□□□□□□□
 □□□□□□□□

HEALTH

Brained	□
Hurt	-1 □
Injured	-1 □
Wounded	-2 □
Mauled	-2 □
Crippled	-5 □
Incapacitated	□

Experience

Kindred over. Your sire set them up, and that game's still playing out. You're less concerned about mortal authorities now and work with other finance-minded Kindred to make as much money as possible. Your next challenge, of course, is to make headway in Kindred society. That will be difficult for a Ravnos, even for one of the Phuri Dae.

You're willing to violate confidentiality if it will net you an advantage. Sell out the primogen who cut a deal to remove a rival? Sure, if the rival has more to offer. You're not very trustworthy when it comes to dealing with others and you never put anyone's well-being ahead of your own.

Roleplaying Hints:

LEAF JONES
2001

You're a predatory businessman; whether you're in the boardroom or Elysium, everyone around you is either off-limits or prey. You started at the bottom in mortal life and you can do it again if you have to. Show deference where necessary, go through the motions and throw any impediments to your upward mobility to the sharks.

Equipment: Cellular phone, pager, European sports car, expensive suits, nice mansion in the really expensive part of town.



Quote: My advice is to watch that primogen. He's planning to move against you and he has a few allies so far. Nip it in the bud now and nobody will think twice. Wait too long and... just stop it. Now.

Within a few years, you ended up as executive secretary to a CEO of a major software corporation. Your ability to watch organizations and understand how they work made you invaluable to your employer, who came to rely on your observations about his subordinates.

You saw him on several more occasions and engaged him in conversation a few times. You didn't understand his arrangement with the CEO at first, but the man eventually came to you directly for information. He asked a few questions and you found yourself unable to work up the energy to resist. You did remember the conversation, however, and used that information to track what your employer was up to.

When you next saw the man, you confronted him. You were convinced he couldn't make you back down again, but then you felt the will to fight drain away. This time, he didn't talk. He Embraced you, saying you were too intelligent to waste as a mortal.

Your personal comfort and status are primary in your eyes; if you can improve what you have, do so. If your gains come at the expense of others, don't stop to worry about it—if they deserved to keep what they have, they wouldn't get in your way.

Equipment: Cellular phone, Mace, BMW, penthouse apartment and fashionable clothes.

VAMPIRE

THE MASQUERADE

NAME: _____ NATURE: **Architect** GENERATION: **11th**
 PLAWELL: _____ DEFENSE: **Curmudgeon** HAND: _____
 CHURCHILL: _____ CLAIR: **Vamos** CONCEPT: **Prince's Advisor**

ATTRIBUTES

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

ABILITIES

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

ADVANTAGES

BACKGROUND	DISCIPLINES	VIRTUES
Allies: ●●●●●	Chimerstry: ●●●●●	Conscience/Conversion: ●●●●●
Generation: ●●●●●	Fortitude: ●●●●●	
Influence: ●●●●●		
Resources: ●●●●●		Self-Control/Insider: ●●●●●
Status: ●●●●●		
●●●●●		
●●●●●		Courage: ●●●●●

Merits/Flaws

Humanity/Path

● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Willpower

● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Blood Pool

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Health

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

Experience

Expression _____ Streetwise _____ Investigation _____ Abilities _____ Observant x2 _____ Knowledgeable _____ Insightful _____ Clever x2 _____ Rational _____ Mental _____ Persuasive x2 _____ Expressive _____ Eloquent x2 _____ Witty x2 _____ Social _____ Graceful _____ Enduring x2 _____ Physical _____ Path/Humanity _____	Merits & Flaws _____ Fortitude (Endurance) _____ Chimerstry (Lignis Fortius, Fata Morgana) _____ Disciplines _____ Influences _____ Transportation x1 _____ Influence (Medic) x1 _____ Generation x2 _____ Status x2 _____ Alles x2 _____ Resources x2 _____ Backgrounds _____
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<u>CONSCIENCE/Conviction</u> ●●●○○ <u>SELF CONTROL/Instinct</u> ●●●○○ <u>COURAGE</u> ●●●●○ <u>BLOOD</u> ●●●●●●●●●●●●○○ □□□□□□□□□□□□ <u>WILLPOWER</u> ●●●●○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□	LAWS Night NAME _____ CHARACTER <u>Prince's Advisor</u> CHRONICLE _____ CLAN <u>Ravnos antitribu</u> GENERATION <u>11th</u> Age _____ NATURE <u>Architect</u> DEMEANOR <u>Curmudgeon</u>
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DISCIPLINES Animalism (Feral Whispers) _____ Chimerstry (Lignis Fatus) _____ Fata Morgana _____ Fortitude (Endurance, Mettle) _____ MERITS & FLAWS _____ _____ _____	MENTAL Creative x2 <u>Wily</u> _____ Insightful _____ Intuitive x2 _____ Observant _____ ABILITIES Animal Ken _____ Firearms _____ Survival x2 _____ Melee _____
INFLUENCES _____ _____ _____ _____ CONTACTS Generation x1 _____ Herd x1 _____ BACKGROUNDS _____ _____ _____	SOCIAL Stalwart x2 _____ Beguiling x3 _____ PHYSICAL Energetic x2 <u>Steady</u> _____ Graceful _____ Stalwart x2 _____ PATH/HUMANITY ○○●●●●

CONSCIENCE/CONVICTION ●●○○○ SELF-CONTROL/INSTINCT ●●○○○ COURAGE ●●●●○ BLOOD ●●●●●●●●●●○○○ □□□□□□□□□□ WILLPOWER ●●○○○○○○○○ □□□□□□□□	 NAME _____ CHARACTER <u>Psychological Warfare Specialist</u> CHRONICLE _____ CLAN <u>Ravnos antitribu</u> GENERATION <u>12th</u> Age _____ NATURE <u>Perfectionist</u> DEMEANOR <u>Director</u>
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PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE SPECIALIST

Quote: The plan is to convince the Kindred that their defenses are useless and our forces are overwhelming. We begin the siege with terror.

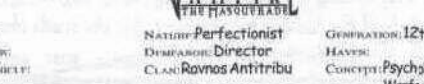
Prelude: In mortal life, you worked for the CIA as a specialist in psychological warfare. Your job was to identify enemy weaknesses in morale and turn them to your advantage, as well as to minimize enemy strengths. You fought with words and propaganda, not bullets or bombs. You softened up the enemy in preparation for physical warfare.

You participated in operations against Manuel Noriega and Saddam Hussein, as well as a score of classified operations the government still hasn't released to the American people. You spent most of your time involved in the so-called "war on drugs," although you were convinced the government had no chance of winning, even before you discovered what you were really up against.

You and your subordinates became involved in actions against a South American drug cartel that either had incredible luck or more military equipment than any civilian should. Your part of the operation went smoothly, but when the soldiers followed up for a midnight raid, they ran into something worse than anything you'd ever imagined. Over the comm, you heard the screams of terror and agony as the men were brutally shredded in battle against god-knows-what. Eerily, you heard no gunfire.

After the screaming finally stopped, someone spoke, saying you were next. You'd never been on the receiving end of such tactics before, but you didn't lose your cool that quickly. You got everyone ready to leave and went straight to the waiting helicopter. You told the pilot to pull out and he flashed you a grin, showing wickedly sharp fangs.

Concept: Your primary weapon is terror, which is why the Sabbat went to such pains to recruit you. You're a member of a nomad pack that's usually the first to scout Camarilla cities about to come under siege. You enjoy the oppor-



VAMPIRE

THE MASQUERADE

NAME: _____ PLAYER: _____ CHRONICLE: _____	NATION: Perfectionist DEMURGE: Director CLAN: Ravnos Antitribu	GENERATION: 12th HAVEN: _____ CONCEPT: Psychological Warfare Specialist
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ATTRIBUTES

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

ABILITIES

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

ADVANTAGES

BACKGROUND	DISCIPLINES	VIRTUES
Generation: ●●●●●	Animalism: ●●●●●	Consensus/Conviction: ●●●●●
Herd: ●●●●●	Chimerstry: ●●●●●	
●●●●●	Ferocity: ●●●●●	
●●●●●		Self-Control/Reserve: ●●●●●
●●●●●		
●●●●●		Courage: ●●●●●
●●●●●		

MERITS/FLAWS

HUMANITY/PATH	WILLPOWER	HEALTH
● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●	Bruised: ☐
		Fluri: ☐
		Injured: ☐
		Wounded: ☐
		Mauled: ☐
		Crippled: ☐
		Incubated: ☐

BLOOD POOL

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

EXPERIENCE

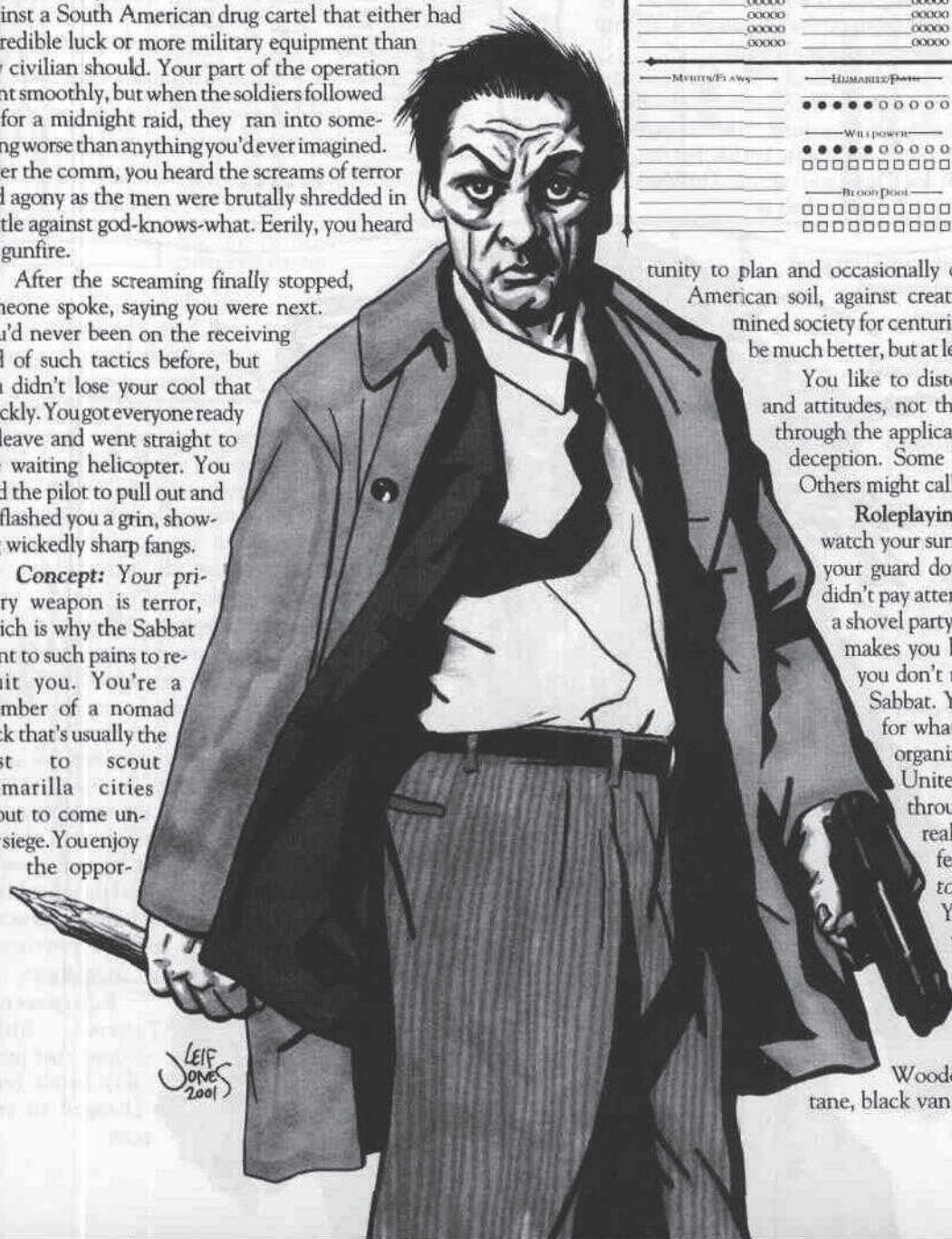
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tunity to plan and occasionally direct shadow wars on American soil, against creatures that have undermined society for centuries. The Sabbath may not be much better, but at least they're on your side.

You like to distort perceptions, beliefs and attitudes, not through Chimerstry, but through the application of psychology and deception. Some might call you a liar. Others might call you a born diplomat.

Roleplaying Hints: Be observant, watch your surroundings and don't let your guard down. The last time you didn't pay attention, the Sabbat set up a shovel party for you. The Vaulderie makes you loyal to your pack, but you don't really care a lot for the Sabbat. You hate the Camarilla for what the "Kindred" of that organization have done to the United States and the world throughout history and you realize that the Sabbat offers you your only chance to strike against them. You're still patriotic and you haven't fully bought into the Sabbat's ideal of vampiric superiority over mortals.

Equipment:
Wooden stakes, lighter, butane, black van, .45 ACP pistol



Quote: The Sabbath was founded in lies and built on deception. It is time for us to lead the Sabbath into victory, for the truth shall prevail!

Prelude: Your life before the Embrace was aimless and without purpose. You drifted from faith to faith and religion to religion in search of *something* you could believe in, something larger than yourself to be a part of. Sadly, no mortal faith could fill the void in your soul. You *knew* there had to be something better, something finer to work toward, but you didn't know *what*.

All that changed the night *she* came to you and told you of immortality and Cain and the coming war against those who would devour their own childer. Her words about Gehenna and the Antediluvians stirred your heart. When she proved she was one of the undead — a *Cainite* — you knew you'd found your faith.

At least, you knew until the Embrace. You were taken in to the Sabbat and subjected to the harrowing Creation Rites. You had your humanity stripped away in front of your future packmates and replaced with a gnawing, driving hunger that nothing could banish. The Embrace was not the promised fulfillment; this was *damnation*! You had traded away your life for a false existence as a parasite.

Your sire laughed at you. As she said, "You should see the expression on your face!" To her, it was a tremendous joke — your faith, your need, your search for something. You snapped, lost control, became a raging monster and tried to kill her, but the pack stopped you and held you down until you calmed. The Vaulderie eased your feelings of betrayal, but you had become a hollow woman.

Then the Week of Nightmares happened. Your pack staked you and your sire until it was over, but you had visions—you saw the Ravnos Antediluvian fall in battle with a dragon and a tiger, you saw him destroyed under the light of four suns. Finally, you felt the Antediluvian's ultimate curse and how it destroyed the Ravnos. When your pack released you, you started asking questions and learned that Ravnos all over the Sabbats suffered similarly. You also learned that the Lasombra and Tzimisce clans had never suffered such a curse.

You *knew* then what you'd
been looking for.

Concept: You have found your mission in life. You must bring the Ravnos Antitribu into dominance in the Sabbat, now that you know that yours is the only clan whose Antediluvian has assuredly been destroyed — the Lasombra and Tzimisce are clearly lying and you can see it as plain as anything. You



Vampire: The Masquerade

NAME: _____

PLAYERS: _____

CHARACTER: _____

RATINGS **Pedagogue**

Myrtir

CLAN: **Ravnos** **Antitribu**

GENERATION: **13th**

HEAVEN: _____

CONCEPT: **Sabbat Heretic**

ATTRIBUTES

PHYSICAL

Strength: ●●●○○

Dexterity: ●●○○○

Stamina: ●●●○○

SOCIAL

Charisma: ●●●○○

Manipulation: ●●●○○

Appearance: ●●●○○

MENTAL

Perception: ●●○○○

Intelligence: ●●○○○

Will: ●●○○○

ABILITIES

TALENTS

Alerness: ●●●○○

Athletics: ●○○○○

Brawl: ●○○○○

Dodge: ●●○○○

Empathy: ●○○○○

Expression: ●○○○○

Intimidation: ●○○○○

Leadership: ●○○○○

Streetwise: ●○○○○

Subterfuge: ●●○○○

SKILLS

Animal Ken: ●○○○○

Crafts: ●○○○○

Drive: ●○○○○

Etiquette: ●○○○○

Firearms: ●○○○○

Melen: ●○○○○

Performance: ●○○○○

Security: ●○○○○

Social: ●○○○○

Survival: ●●○○○

KNOWLEDGES

Academics: ●○○○○

Computer: ●○○○○

Finance: ●○○○○

Investigation: ●○○○○

Law: ●○○○○

Linguistics: ●○○○○

Medicine: ●○○○○

Occult: ●○○○○

Politics: ●○○○○

Science: ●○○○○

ADVANTAGES

BACKGROUND

Mentor: ●●○○○

Sabbat Status: ●○○○○

_____ ●○○○○

_____ ●○○○○

_____ ●○○○○

_____ ●○○○○

DISCIPLINES

Animalism: ●○○○○

Fortitude: ●○○○○

_____ ●○○○○

_____ ●○○○○

_____ ●○○○○

_____ ●○○○○

VIRTUES

Generosity/Coaxation: ●○○○○

_____ ●○○○○

Self-Control/Instinct: ●○○○○

_____ ●○○○○

Courage: ●○○○○

MERTIS/FLAWS

HEAVENLY PATH

Caine

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

Will power

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Blood Pool

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

HEALTH

Bruised: ☐

Hurt: -1 ☐

Injured: -1 ☐

Wounded: -2 ☐

Mauled: -2 ☐

Crippled: -5 ☐

Incapacitated: ☐

Experiences

know that preaching too loudly will bring the Inquisition or the Black Hand, but every revolution starts small.

You want to subvert the Sabbat's social order completely. When you get the chance to break down its structure in some way — converting another vampire to your cause, undermining a Lasombra's authority, etc. — do so.

Roleplaying Hints: Watch everyone around you for signs of possible sympathy to your cause or dissatisfaction with the Sabbath as it currently exists. Be slow to recruit, but once you bring in converts to your cause, vehemently express your beliefs until they're swayed. You know you're right, and they should see the truth in your words and the conviction that drives them.

Equipment: Tattered, filthy clothing that probably hasn't been changed in two years.



Quote: I am a Thug. My father was a Thug. My grandfather was a Thug. But only I was chosen to drink of Kali's blood and become as Shiva. Do not stand in my way — my duty is sacred.

You had to make sure your murders did not attract the attention of the authorities. Most people think the Thuggee were broken nearly two centuries ago. You were taught that the Thuggee allowed them to believe this. Now that you know the true nature of the highest ranks among the Thuggee, you suspect that many more forces are at work than you can understand . . . yet.

One night, three Thuggee came to you and took you to a ritual, where you were stripped and they drank your blood. They returned it to you after transforming it into the blood of Kali, thereby making you into a true Thuggee — a Ravnos.

Ravenous for the taste of blood, you could not stop yourself when your wife and children were brought before you. The others said that to become as Shiva, you must shed the trappings of your mortal life. For a time, you mourned the act but now you understand why it was necessary.

When the Week of Nightmares came, you barely kept control of yourself as the others leapt on one another and devoured each other's vitae. Now, you're the last surviving true Thuggee and the *asuratizayya* you were Embraced to fight have driven you out of your homeland. You seek a way to fulfill your sacred duties in Europe or America, or wherever else you may find yourself.

Concept: You are the divine murderer, given the blessings of your goddess to take life and destroy the undead as you see fit. You are not stupid or needlessly bloodthirsty, but you understand your *svadharma* and do



VAMPIRE

THE MASQUERADE

NAME: _____

PLAYER: _____

CHRONICLE: _____

NATURE: **Conformist**

DEMAND: **Loner**

CLAN: **Ravens**

GENERATION: **11th**

HAVIR: _____

CONCEPT: **Thuggee**

ATTRIBUTES

Physical	Social	Mental
Strength: ●●●●●	Charisma: ●●●●●	Perception: ●●●●●
Dexterity: ●●●●●	Manipulation: ●●●●●	Intelligence: ●●●●●
Stamina: ●●●●●	Appearance: ●●●●●	Will: ●●●●●

ABILITIES

Talents	Skills	Knowledges
Alertness: ●●●●●	Animal Ken: ●●●●●	Academics: ●●●●●
Athletics: ●●●●●	Crafts: ●●●●●	Computer: ●●●●●
Brawl: ●●●●●	Drive: ●●●●●	Finance: ●●●●●
Dodge: ●●●●●	Etiquette: ●●●●●	Investigation: ●●●●●
Empathy: ●●●●●	Fierceness: ●●●●●	Law: ●●●●●
Expression: ●●●●●	Melee: ●●●●●	Linguistics: ●●●●●
Intimidation: ●●●●●	Performance: ●●●●●	Medicine: ●●●●●
Leadership: ●●●●●	Security: ●●●●●	Occult: ●●●●●
Streetwise: ●●●●●	Stealth: ●●●●●	Politics: ●●●●●
Subterfuge: ●●●●●	Survival: ●●●●●	Science: ●●●●●

ADVANTAGES

Backgrounds	Disciplines	Virtues
Generation: ●●●●●	Chimerstry: ●●●●●	Conscience/Conviction: ●●●●●
Resources: ●●●●●	Fortitude: ●●●●●	
Retainers: ●●●●●		
●●●●●	●●●●●	
●●●●●	●●●●●	
●●●●●	●●●●●	
●●●●●	●●●●●	
●●●●●	●●●●●	
		Self-Control/Insinner: ●●●●●
		Courage: ●●●●●

MAY FLAWS

Hemorrhagic Dams

Paradox

● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Willpower

● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Blood Pool

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

HEALTH

Bruised	□
Hurt	□
Injured	-1 □
Wounded	-2 □
Mauled	-3 □
Crippled	-5 □
Incapacitated	□

EXPERIENCE

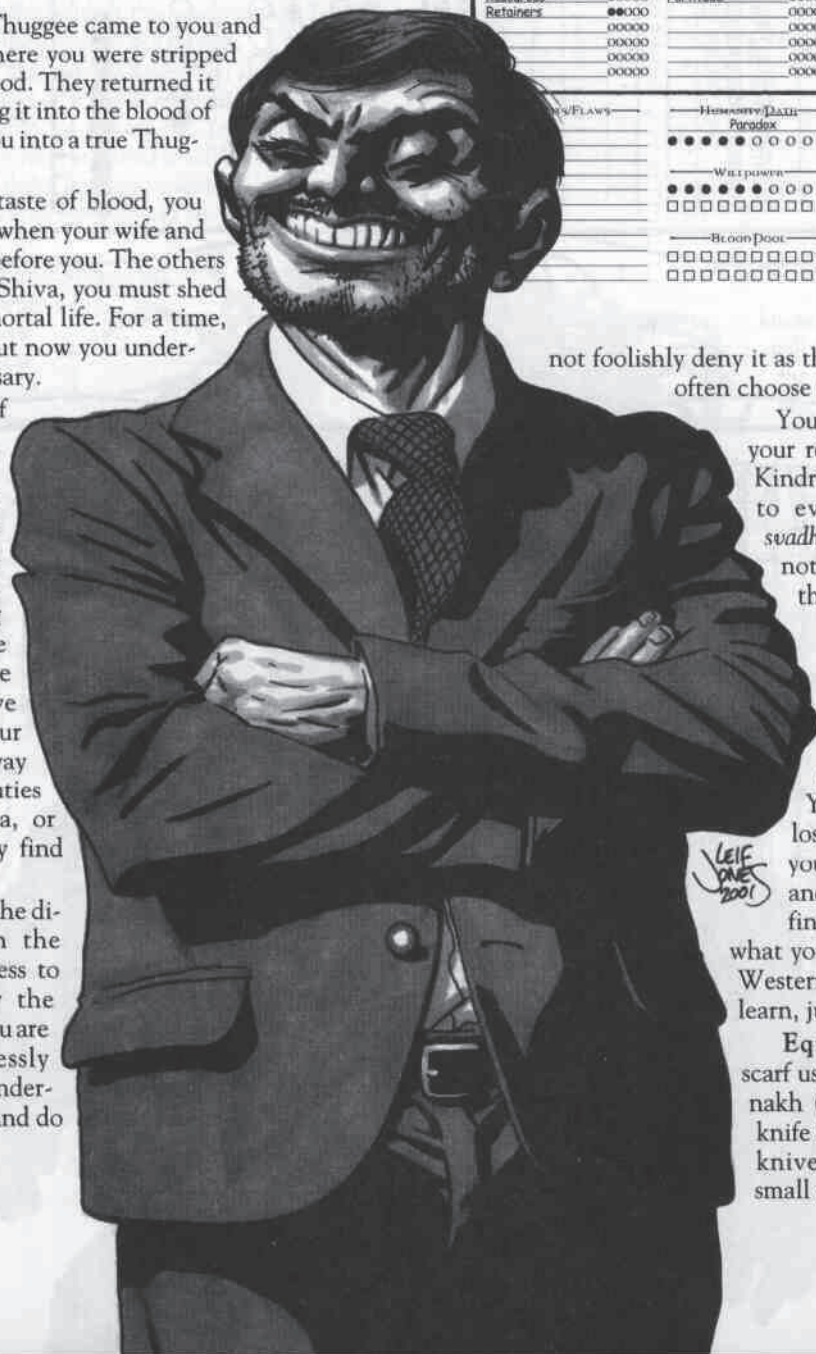


not foolishly deny it as the Western Kindred so often choose to do.

You strangle people, per your religious duty. You kill Kindred who are far too blind to ever understand their *svadharma* so that they cannot harm others through their existence.

Roleplaying
Hints: Despite your self-awareness and purpose, you are not a machine. You can feel and express emotion. You regret deeply the loss of your brethren and your home to the enemy, and you're not averse to finding allies to reclaim what you lost, even if they are Western. After all, they can learn, just as you did.

Equipment: Weighted scarf used for strangling, bagh nakh (tiger claws, treat as a knife in each hand), assorted knives, Western clothing, small apartment.



SAMPLE COTERIE: THE GRAVE ROBBERS

The Grave Robbers are a coterie of Ravnos loosely linked through common interests before the Week of Nightmares. They have formed a more tightly knit group for mutual protection in the wake of the Antediluvian's curse. They intend to find out just what happened and what it means for the world. They have strong reason to believe that the end has already begun, and they think the proper knowledge might enable them to put a stop to it.

HISTORY

Dr. Lawrence Mayhew, archeologist and tomb robber from the previous century, was still recovering from the effects of the Week when he received the first package. It contained the writings of a medieval Kindred historian and an invitation to receive further information. Lawrence, his curiosity piqued, took up the invitation. He didn't find anyone at the listed hotel, but the clerk gave him another package, this one with more history and some information that would eventually guide him to Indian elders' havens.

When Lawrence fully understood what he'd received, he contacted two of his childer, both of whom shared similar interests. They brought in two other Ravnos who could assist. When Lawrence got the other four Ravnos to meet, he presented his plan — to go to India, locate the havens of ancient Ravnos and decipher everything they could. And if possible, to use this information to stop or slow any further disasters.

The other four Ravnos didn't exactly believe everything Dr. Mayhew had to say — the good doctor had trouble with some of it himself — but the opportunity to ransack elder havens without much risk of retaliation proved tempting.

The Grave Robbers debated travel arrangements, as movement is always risky for Kindred and even more so when it takes them halfway around the world. Lawrence's mysterious benefactor came through again, this time offering passage on a cargo vessel that would take them to Calcutta and offload them after dark.

The newly formed coterie debated the wisdom of taking the offered passage. Without any idea as to who offered it, nor a clue as to motive, the risk seemed high. They eventually agreed to go, because they found the opportunity sufficiently tempting and also reasoned that whoever wanted to send them could probably kill them in America as easily as in Calcutta.

The trip to Calcutta was uneventful. The five spent the journey in voluntary torpor to conserve vitae and awoke in a Calcutta warehouse a few weeks later. Again, they were provided for, this time by Dr. Lawrence's own people who had gone ahead and arranged a haven and other necessities for the coterie during their stay on the Indian subcontinent.

Events after the coterie's arrival were not always pleasant. The Eastern Kindred who warred against the Indian Ravnos were much more common than they had been before the Week of Nightmares and had no intention of allowing Western Kindred to stay in their territory. Fortunately, the coterie found it easy to lose themselves in India's crowds.

The coterie started searching with the hints provided and discovered a few havens in Calcutta itself — at least, a few that hadn't already been ransacked by former ghouls or the Eastern vampires. From that starting point, the Grave Robbers found havens in other cities and at least one haven that may have belonged to an ancient Methuselah.

Real success came when the coterie believed they had located the Antediluvian's resting place. Unfortunately, when they traveled to the site, they found a scene literally from Hell. The place resonated with remnants from the vicious battle waged several months before, making any length of stay distinctly unpleasant. The coterie departed shortly thereafter without having made any real investigation.

The youngest member of the coterie, Gwendolyn Brand, has suffered nightmares every night since the visit. The coterie has ceased explorations and are now collating their findings. They're not sure what to do with what they've found, or if it's even half as pertinent as they'd hoped, but it certainly makes fascinating reading.

HAVEN

Lawrence's ghouls purchased a nice manor in Calcutta, away from the center of the city and most of the real problems. Mostly isolated, the haven provides as much privacy as the coterie needs, as well as necessary proximity to the city for the purposes of feeding.

The house was originally built for a wealthy British family during India's colonial period, but the family sold it when India gained independence in the late 1940s. The décor is relatively subdued, although Lawrence did send along several rare art objects he'd picked up over the years.

In preparation for the coterie's arrival, the ghouls had the most advanced security equipment available installed as quickly as possible. The grounds are covered

with security cameras, motion detectors and hidden microphones. The windows are heavily barred and the doors practically require explosives to force open.

The coterie rests by day in the basement, which is divided into smaller areas. The basement door can be barred and locked from the inside. In addition, each coterie member has a personal "bedroom" for appearances, as well as extensive work areas for research.

The house has high-speed Internet access, allowing the coterie to obtain information and news from anywhere in the world as well as research materials that might otherwise be difficult to get.

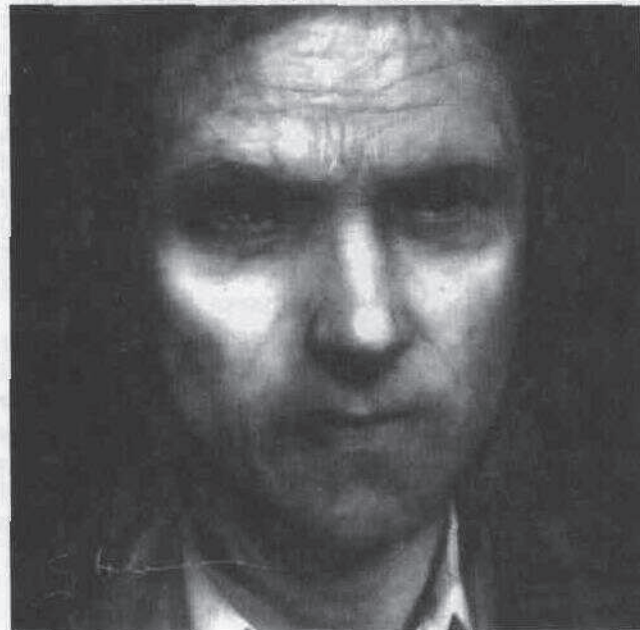
THE VAMPIRES

Four members of the coterie have known each other for decades but have only been working together for a few months. They aren't quite a smoothly oiled machine (and may never be), but at least they have a reason to work together. The coterie's presence has recently become known with their first release of some of the documents they translated to Ravnos in America and Europe. At this point, the coterie as a whole is seriously considering returning to America. After their visit to the site of Zapathasura's destruction, things haven't been quite as comfortable for them as before.

LAWRENCE MAYHEW, THE LEADER

Background: Lawrence Mayhew is an Oxford educated archeologist who followed his family to India in the late 19th century so he could explore India's jungles, temples and other ruins. The subcontinent always fascinated him — its culture, religion and so on.

He spent his years in India digging up anything he could find and learning whatever he could. It was



inevitable that one day he would learn too much. Dr. Mayhew came to the attention of Jayakumar, a Ravnos of the Brahman caste who took an interest in Mayhew's activities. At first, Jayakumar approached him as a fellow scholar and discussed India at length into the evenings and on to the morning. Mayhew often found himself arriving at his family's home an hour or two after sunrise.

It wasn't long before Mayhew's erudition and curiosity convinced Jayakumar that he would make a good Ravnos of the Brahman *jati*. Of course, Jayakumar did not consult Lawrence in advance. *Jayakumar arranged* events to appear that Lawrence had died in a terrible accident. Mayhew himself was brought to Jayakumar and subjected to the ritualistic Embrace favored by Brahman Ravnos.

Lawrence adjusted quickly to his new state, although he bitterly resented the loss of daylight hours. The fact that human frailties no longer troubled him was much more of a boon, at first.

Jayakumar wanted Lawrence's counsel about the West. The Brahman saw the time fast approaching when the Ravnos would have to move out to prepare for the *asuratizayya's* final onslaught. He knew that to do so, they would have to know what to expect.

After Jayakumar got everything he needed from Mayhew, he sent his child away. Lawrence, who had long grown tired of his sire, did not object. He left for America to put as much distance between himself and India as possible. He managed to insinuate himself into Harvard's faculty and spent several decades comfortably ensconced within its halls. During this stay, Lawrence Embraced Johann Matheson and Zachary Carter, his two best students (and partners in crime).

Image: Lawrence Mayhew is a fit gentleman, apparently in his early 30s, with dark brown, precisely trimmed hair and brown eyes. He likes to wear conservative business suits when not digging in tombs.

Roleplaying Hints: You're soft-spoken and unassuming unless you believe you absolutely *must* get what you want or need, at which point you're very intense, driven and likely to run over anyone's objections. You have several decades' experience dealing with unruly students, and you find it easy to extend that experience to others. When around Kindred elder to you, however, you hold back no matter how stupid they sound. Your time with Jayakumar taught you not to toy with those more powerful than you.

Sire: Jayakumar

Nature: Architect

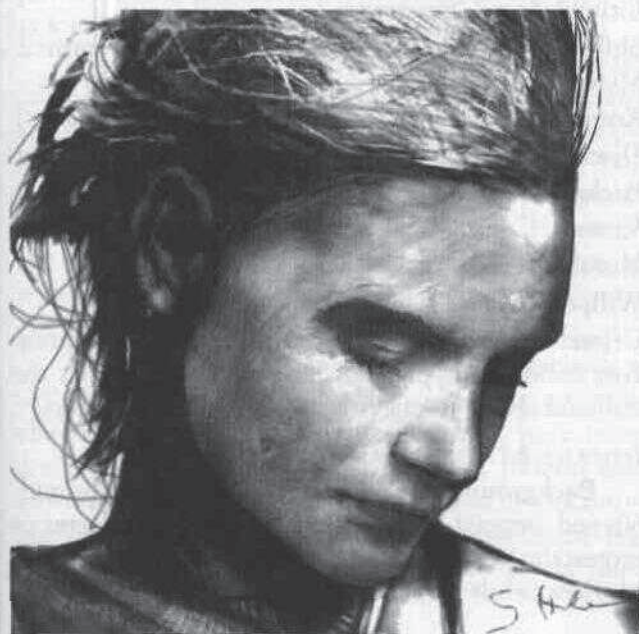
Demeanor: Director

Generation: 9th
Embrace: 1879
Apparent Age: 34
Physical: Dexterity 3, Stamina 4, Strength 3
Social: Appearance 3, Charisma 4, Manipulation 3
Mental: Intelligence 4, Perception 5, Wits 3
Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 1, Dodge 2, Empathy 1, Expression 4, Intimidation 2, Leadership 3
Skills: Animal Ken 2, Drive 2, Etiquette 3, Firearms 2, Survival 3
Knowledges: Academics 5, Computer 1, Investigation 4, Linguistics 2, Occult 4, Politics 3
Disciplines: Animalism 2, Auspex 4, Chimerstry 3, Dominate 2, Fortitude 3
Backgrounds: Contacts 5, Influence 1, Resources 5, Retainers 2, Status 2
Virtues: Conscience 3, Courage 3, Self-Control 5
Morality: Humanity 7
Willpower: 7

Crime: Not a major weakness, although it shames Lawrence no end. He's discovered that he has quite the taste for stealing others' work and making it his own. Plagiarism is an ugly word, and Lawrence prefers not to think of what he does as such, but that's it. He profits from others' work.

GWENDOLYN BRAND, THE VISIONARY

Background: Gwendolyn is a young, ambitious and gifted archeologist. As an Oxford graduate, her career might have led to incredible discoveries in the mortal world, had she not been caught stealing.



Gwendolyn had been on several digs and was involved with Johann Matheson in selling rare art and other items picked up at archeological sites on the black market. The business was lucrative enough to help pay the bills, and Gwendolyn didn't see what she was doing as wrong. After all, she dug up the things in the first place; why shouldn't she decide not to pass everything along?

Unfortunately, one of her colleagues found out what was going on and reported her. As a result, she was suspended from access to university resources and only avoided arrest because she thought quickly enough to get away from her usual haunts and call Johann.

Johann, who already intended to Embrace Gwendolyn, did so right then and there. He took her back to America, where she met Johann's sire, Lawrence. Lawrence, for his part, was enthralled to find another Oxford scholar in his circle, even if she was a woman.

Not long afterward, the coterie departed for India to research some leads a benefactor had passed along to Lawrence. Gwendolyn's skills served her in good stead during the sojourn on the subcontinent. She assembled much of the historical text shortly after visiting the site of Zapathasura's destruction. She has since suffered from daily nightmares about the event and occasionally awakens babbling in Sanskrit, a language she could barely manage to translate before. Gwendolyn suspects that whatever remains of Zapathasura's spirit has entered her body.

Image: Gwendolyn is a tall, slender, blonde with dark eyes. She's always smoking a cigarette and dresses as casually as possible. She rarely smiles and then usually at another's misfortune.

Roleplaying Hints: Bitter, cynical and resentful of your Embrace, you're torn between wanting to get back at Johann for taking your mortality and forgiving him because he got you out of England before the police carted you off. To everyone else, act abrasive until you're convinced they're not as bad as you initially thought. Don't tell anyone about your suspicions regarding Zapathasura — they'll think you're crazy. You think you're crazy.

Sire: Johann Matheson

Nature: Rogue

Demeanor: Curmudgeon

Generation: 11th

Embrace: 1999

Apparent Age: 28

Physical: Dexterity 2, Stamina 2, Strength 2

Social: Appearance 3, Charisma 2, Manipulation 3

Mental: Intelligence 3, Perception 5, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 2, Empathy 2, Expression 3, Intimidation 3

Skills: Firearms 1, Survival 3

Knowledges: Academics (Archeology) 4, Computer 2, Investigation 3, Linguistics 4, Occult 3, Science 2

Disciplines: Auspex 3, Chimerstry 1

Backgrounds: Contacts 3, Mentor 1, Resources 3

Virtues: Conscience 2, Courage 3, Self-Control 5

Morality: Humanity 7

Willpower: 8

Crime: Gwendolyn steals. She's not a kleptomaniac; she only takes valuable things. She may sell them or keep them afterward, but if she sees something she wants, she'll try to get it.

MARION FRENCH, DACOIT

Background: Marion's father taught her how to shoot before she was 12 and she learned how to fight and defend herself before she turned 16. When she graduated from high school, she joined the Army for four years before going to university on the GI Bill.

This isn't to say Marion was a killing machine on two legs — far from it. She was, however, quite competent. While attending university, she put her fighting skills to use and hired herself as a bodyguard to supplement her cash. Her most lucrative job, and the one that changed her life the most, was the night Johann Matheson hired her.

Johann stressed that anything she saw "never happened" and took her along to meet some people about a shipment. The situation broke down, the people got offended and one drew a gun. Marion did her best to



handle the situation, but it ended in gunfire. What disturbed her was the fact that Johann took two bullets to the chest during the fighting and didn't look as nearly dead as he should have been.

After that night, Johann took Marion along whenever he needed backup. He convinced her to continue despite the bad first experience. While she was good at her job, it was inevitable that something would go wrong eventually. The bullets would have killed her if it hadn't been for Johann's vitae.

Image: Marion has black hair, dark eyes and pale skin. She wears clothing that gives her maximum range of motion and restricts or catches as little as possible.

Roleplaying Hints: You don't trust anyone other than Johann, and him you trust enough to get you into trouble. You stick with him anyway because without you, he'd be brightening sunsets by the weekend. You're curious about the investigations but don't have the expertise the others do — a degree in Western literature isn't a big help when it comes to excavating ancient Ravnos havens. In a fight, you use Chimerstry — sparingly — to create distractions.

Sire: Johann Matheson

Nature: Survivor

Demeanor: Gallant

Generation: 11th

Embrace: 1987

Apparent Age: Late 20s

Physical: Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Strength 3

Social: Appearance 2, Charisma 2, Manipulation 2

Mental: Intelligence 2, Perception 3, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 3, Brawl 4, Dodge 3, Expression 3, Intimidation 2, Streetwise 2

Skills: Animal Ken 2, Drive 2, Etiquette 1, Firearms 2, Melee 2, Stealth 2

Knowledges: Academics 3, Computer 1, Linguistics 1

Disciplines: Animalism 2, Auspex 1, Chimerstry 3

Backgrounds: Contacts 2, Resources 3

Virtues: Conscience 2, Courage 5, Self-Control 3

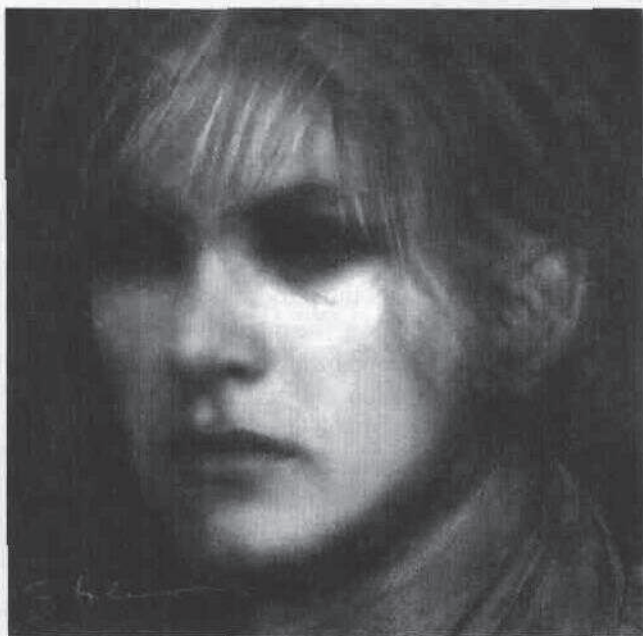
Morality: Humanity 5

Willpower: 7

Crime: Marion has taken up mugging and other unsavory habits to supplement her resources. She has the skill and ability to take what she wants from others.

JOHANN MATHESON, FAITHFUL STUDENT

Background: Johann attended Harvard in the mid-60s and dropped out a year before earning his degree to protest the Vietnam War and dodge the draft. Lawrence Mayhew, while part of Harvard's faculty, never actually



taught classes. He did, however, keep track of promising students and offer them the opportunity to attend private discussions. He was about to offer Johann that chance when the young man dropped out. Not deterred at the apparent loss of one of archeology's future brilliant minds, Lawrence convinced Johann to at least attend his private sessions.

Johann's grasp of archeology and related topics greatly impressed Lawrence, to the point that he decided to Embrace Johann years before he actually followed through. Unfortunately, Johann had a predilection for chemical experimentation of which Dr. Mayhew disapproved. He tried to convince Johann to stay away from pot and LSD, but Johann laughed it off as something "everybody else was doing."

Lawrence primarily opposed Johann's drug use because he liked to use his "advanced students" as a herd, and the presence of drugs in Johann's system made the Ravnos uncomfortable. Nevertheless, Johann's brilliance made up for any shortcomings Lawrence perceived. He Embraced Johann when he did mainly out of loneliness. He found the prospect of someone with whom he could openly discuss his experiences extremely tempting.

The Embrace didn't cure Johann of his fascination with drugs. He regularly feeds on mortals who are under chemical influence, especially those who have taken drugs Johann never tried. In addition, Johann used Lawrence's connections to get a foothold in a lucrative black market in stolen antiques and archeological treasures. Lawrence disapproves, but learned to keep quiet

after Johann's efforts dropped several unique and interesting items into the archeologist's possession.

Image: Johann is a young-looking man with sandy blond hair and green eyes. He dresses appropriately for the situation at hand. When meeting customers, he wears business suits and ties. When feeding, he usually dresses in counterculture styles. In India, he's taken to khakis and pith helmets, much to the coterie's amusement.

Roleplaying Hints: You act young and cocky and give the impression you can do anything and are willing to try—even when you're wrong. You're not stupid, but you are extremely overconfident. The fact that you've Embraced twice within 30 years of unlife shows your lack of restraint.

Sire: Dr. Lawrence Mayhew

Nature: Thrill-Seeker

Demeanor: Rebel

Generation: 10th

Embrace: 1971

Apparent Age: Early 20s

Physical: Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Strength 3

Social: Appearance 2, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2

Mental: Intelligence 4, Perception 3, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 2, Dodge 2, Expression 3, Leadership 1, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Animal Ken 2, Drive 2, Firearms 1

Knowledges: Academics 4, Computer 2, Investigation 3, Linguistics 3, Occult 4

Disciplines: Animalism 3, Auspex 2, Chimerstry 3

Backgrounds: Contacts 4, Herd 2, Influence 1, Mentor 2, Resources 4, Retainers 1

Virtues: Conscience 3, Courage 3, Self-Control 2

Morality: Humanity 5

Willpower: 7

Crime: You traffic in stolen artifacts, but your actual vice is drugs. You'll try anything once, usually many times more often. You try to get your herd hooked on your favorite drugs (currently MDMA and cocaine) and then feed on them while they're high.

ANJALIKA UNDERWOOD

Background: Anjalika is the daughter of a Brahman woman and an English lord. Born in India but raised in England, she grew up speaking both her mother's and father's tongues, and shifts between the two with startling ease. She entered Oxford for a formal education and studied literature, focusing primarily on Indian writings. After graduation, her Indian relatives invited the family to come to India for an extended stay.



Anjalika was excited because she wanted to see the places she'd read about and better understand her heritage.

The stay wasn't all that she'd imagined. Her mother's family, being Brahman, was wealthy by Indian terms. But the city was crowded with people and animals, and Anjalika found the sheer poverty overwhelming. She was accustomed to England and Europe, where population density was much lower and the standard of living much higher. Certainly, she'd seen her share of homeless people, but not camped out on every square foot of sidewalk.

Anjalika found some things about her stay enjoyable. She had access to Calcutta University's library and met a few scholars whose work she'd studied closely. Things remained pleasant until the final week, when her relatives took her to meet an "old friend of the family" named Jayakumar. Jayakumar did not look very old, but he spoke with Anjalika well into the night about India's history. At least half the time, Anjalika thought he was speaking from experience. Before the night was through, Jayakumar Embraced her and forbade her to return to her family.

The Ravnos elder told Anjalika that he would tell her family she'd died in a terrible accident, and that he wished her to remain with him to learn about her duties and responsibilities as a Ravnos of the Brahman *jati*. Anjalika tried to leave several times, but on each occasion Jayakumar and his retainers prevented her escape. He kept Anjalika with him for over a decade before he deemed her ready to assume the duties for which he'd Embraced her.

Anjalika was prepared to argue with her sire over these duties. She had spent years applying herself to work that she did not enjoy, existing from night to night in a constant state of despair. Jayakumar ordered her to go to Boston and find an itinerant child of his, Lawrence Mayhew, and convince him to return to Jayakumar as soon as possible.

Jayakumar cautioned Anjalika that this task was only the first part of her duty and that failure to return could mean disaster. Being the modern woman she was, Anjalika did not believe him. Leaving India was like dropping a heavy burden and setting it on fire. Once back in Europe, she had no intention of returning to the subcontinent. She did intend to meet Dr. Mayhew, who could probably tell her more about what Jayakumar had refused to explain, especially if he was one of Jayakumar's older childer.

She stopped in London with a vague thought of visiting her parents, but couldn't bring herself to actually walk in and greet them — the Embrace and the ten years that had followed it were too great a barrier for her to surmount. She traveled on to America and met with Lawrence Mayhew, to whom she told everything about her experiences with Jayakumar.

Dr. Mayhew invited Anjalika to remain in Boston with him and help him place certain events in Indian mythology in context with the Ravnos history they had both picked up from their sire. After the Week of Nightmares and Lawrence's receipt of packages from an anonymous source, Anjalika agreed to travel to India with him to learn what happened. She fears that Jayakumar still walks and will take her freedom from her when he sees her again.

Image: Anjalika is a small, slender woman, with long black hair and green-flecked brown eyes. Her skin is a dusky brown with ashen undertones if she hasn't fed recently. She dresses conservatively, preferring a businesslike demeanor to avoid drawing attention to herself.

Roleplaying Hints: You're quiet and subdued around people you don't know, but that can change in a second if conversation shifts to a topic you know well. You can spend hours discussing a few passages from the Upanishads or the Rg Veda if given the chance. You hate to discuss or think too much about your undead state — you feed when absolutely necessary, but you refer to aspects of Kindred existence with euphemisms. The only aspect of being Ravnos you don't loathe is the ability to talk to and relate with animals.

Sire: Jayakumar

Nature: Pedagogue

Demeanor: Penitent

Generation: 9th
Embrace: 1975
Apparent Age: 24
Physical: Dexterity 3, Stamina 2, Strength 2
Social: Appearance 3, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2
Mental: Intelligence 4, Perception 3, Wits 3
Talents: Brawl 1, Dodge 1, Empathy 2, Expression 4, Subterfuge 2
Skills: Animal Ken 4, Drive 1, Etiquette 3
Knowledges: Academics 4, Computer 1, Investigation 2, Linguistics 3, Occult 3
Disciplines: Animalism 5, Auspex 1, Chimerstry 2
Backgrounds: Mentor 2, Resources 1, Retainers 1
Virtues: Conscience 4, Courage 3, Self-Control 3
Morality: Humanity 7
Willpower: 6
Crime: To draw attention from your faults, you point out and exaggerate flaws you see in others. If you get rolling, you will thoroughly humiliate anyone who irritates or offends you. If this other is Kindred, you might push it until you trigger frenzy.

USING THE GRAVE ROBBERS

The Grave Robbers are presented as having a semi-permanent base in Calcutta and a more permanent base in Boston, Massachusetts (specifically, Harvard). As of 2001, the coterie is likely in America considering their next project. The next endeavor could take them anywhere and involve them in nearly any plot, especially if it somehow relates to the Final Nights.

In their investigations, they might disturb a powerful elder or Methuselah of any clan, or they might accidentally stumble across information of more contemporary use. Because they're Ravnos, any prince may decide to deny them entrance into his domain, which could cause problems (and lead them to contact characters for assistance, especially if something they need is in a museum or library within the forbidden domain).

Alternatively, Johann's black market dealings might net him something important to an elder local to the characters, which could lead to intrigues as the elder tries to get the coveted item. The characters could get involved on either side.

The Grave Robbers are not stereotypical Ravnos — none are "Gypsies," and all have goals beyond swindling, lying or stealing. They're all concerned about the apocalyptic rumors and events that have occurred in the past few years. Some of them can see the red star quite clearly, all survived the traumatic Week of Nightmares and they've stood at the site where the Ravnos

Antediluvian fought for its existence and lost. They're not necessarily pivotal to events, but they have a good idea of what's going on — perhaps better than many others do.

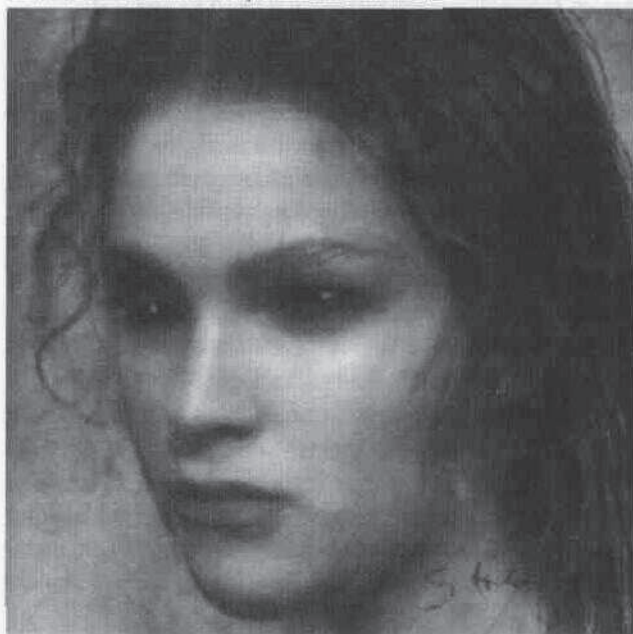
There's also the question of their benefactor. The entries for Marcia Felicia Licinia and Durga Syn hint that one or both are involved somehow, but that's not necessarily the case. Whoever is the coterie's benefactor might just as easily bring the characters into similar investigations to increase opportunities to gather more information. Finally, what happens when the benefactor steps in to gather the fruits of her proxies' labors?

SURVIVORS

TATIANA STEPANOVA, ALASTOR

Background: Tatiana Stepanova was the daughter of a Russian noblewoman who dallied with an itinerant raconteur. After her birth, her father sensed something not quite right with her and never really liked the girl. As Tatiana grew older, the feeling became mutual. She grew up a disobedient child and did whatever she could to vex her parents.

When Tatiana discovered that her parents intended to marry her off to another family to cement an alliance, she was angry. When she met the filthy old man who was to become her husband, she became enraged. She decided to leave before the arranged marriage could sap all freedom from her existence. In the years following her departure, she had to learn to survive on her own, often disguising herself as a man to avoid unwanted attention and taking up robbery when she had no other way to feed herself.



One night, while burglarizing a merchant's house, she saw a man bite another on the throat and apparently *drink*. Frightened, she tried to hide before he noticed her.

The next night, Tatiana saw the man again, but only for a moment. In the following weeks, she caught glimpses and hints of his presence, but nothing definite. Her thieving excursions also became trickier, almost as if someone were putting obstacles in her path. Times got leaner, although she managed to survive despite the increased difficulties.

Within six months, the man presented himself to Tatiana. It was a cold, winter night, with snow piled high on the ground. The first thing she noticed was that his breath didn't steam. Knowing legends of vampires, she turned to run, but found him waiting behind her. She barely got away. The following night, the scene repeated itself. For two weeks, this bizarre apparition haunted her. Before long, she could only huddle in her room and wonder when he would simply kill her.

The moment came soon enough. When he took her blood, she thought she would die; she did not suspect he would make her one of the Ravnos. Her sire, Vasiliy, taught her little of the Kindred and primarily used her for her talent at burglary. He didn't fully realize how strong her knack for deception was.

Tatiana deeply resented the Embrace — the thirst for blood violated her sense of humanity on a primal level, and the strong compulsion to conceal her true self bothered her in a way she didn't fully understand. She had concealed herself from others for years before the Embrace, but now she felt as if she had no choice. Vasiliy believed that the Ravnos blood manifested in a desire to steal, a compulsion he tried to exploit.

It took Tatiana three decades to break free of Vasiliy's hold, after which time she used the few tidbits of information her sire had dropped to wend her way into Kindred society. She made a point of being useful to the other Kindred she met, rather than antagonizing them. Their power frightened her at first, but she came to realize that such power could be hers. Through the careful application of prestation and the ability to make herself useful as needed, she exchanged her services for lore and teaching in Disciplines that didn't otherwise come naturally.

After learning more of the other clans, Tatiana traveled across Europe, meeting and dealing with Kindred and building up the information she needed to more fully conceal her true self. Eventually, she settled on a Brujah identity she had manufactured from experiences in Russia and France. Tatiana participated with

several other Brujah during the French Revolution, but chose shortly afterward to move on to the relatively young United States of America.

Tatiana moved frequently, establishing identities as a Gangrel and a Malkavian as well as her original Brujah alter ego. She quickly learned to avoid the Sabbat and spent her time within Camarilla-aligned domains. In her routine efforts to make herself useful, she fell in with the Ventrue archon Lucinde and worked with her on several occasions.

In the 20th century, Tatiana has also fallen in with anarchs and associated with Lilith Storm, a prominent Brujah anarchist in Seattle, when Petrodon was destroyed. Tatiana had heard of a plot against one of the Justicars but had not yet discovered enough evidence by the time Petrodon was ash. She contacted Lucinde to warn her about rumblings among the anarchs, only to receive an invitation to work for the new Ventrue Justicar as one of her archons. Her first official mission was to assist Lucinde in the capture of Genina, a Samedi who was under a global bloodhunt from the Camarilla.

Tatiana knows of Danya, the Ravnos art thief on the "Camarilla's Most Wanted" Red List, another Kindred under global blood hunt. She sees Danya as a rival and strongly desires Danya's destruction.

When the Week of Nightmares struck, Tatiana barely managed to fight off the frenzy. She held on to her self-control mainly because few Ravnos were nearby. The violent images and feelings drove her into hiding until the event ended, further insulating her from any potential consequences. She doesn't know what happened to the rest of the clan and is very disturbed about what she perceives as an attack aimed at her.

Image: Tatiana Stepanova is a mildly attractive black-haired woman. As one of the Kindred, she has pale skin, but she offsets the effect with cosmetics and Obfuscate. She cultivates a formidable image and presents herself as much more dangerous than she truly is. Her steady gaze has unnerved more than one primogen or prince who sought to dissuade her attention from their domains.

As an alastor, Tatiana bears the identifying tattoo on the palm of her left hand, and wears gloves or uses Disciplines to conceal it.

Roleplaying Hints: Allow none to see your true self; keep it hidden under layers of deception. Manufacture identities as needed to deal with any level of mortal or Kindred society to get what you want. If you must masquerade as an anarchist one night and a Camarilla elder the next, do so. Everyone you meet is a potential tool — do not hesitate to recruit those who can help you

get what you want, or to repay them what they are owed. Project a sense that you are honorable to neonates (who are still young enough to believe such foolishness) so that you can exploit it at your leisure.

All your self-assuredness conceals massive paranoia that someone will learn something about you. Anyone coming close to the truth must be neutralized or destroyed if necessary.

Sire: Vasilij Vasilevich

Nature: Survivor

Demeanor: Judge

Generation: 8th

Embrace: 1764

Apparent Age: 22

Physical: Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Strength 3

Social: Appearance 2, Charisma 5, Manipulation 5

Mental: Intelligence 5, Perception 4, Wits 5

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 2, Brawl 2, Dodge 3, Empathy 3, Intimidation 4, Leadership 4, Subterfuge 5

Skills: Animal Ken 3, Drive 1, Etiquette 3, Melee 3, Stealth 3, Survival 3

Knowledges: Academics 2, Investigation 5, Law (Camarilla) 3, Linguistics 2, Occult (Vampire Clans) 4, Politics 3

Disciplines: Animalism 2, Celerity 2, Chimerstry 5, Fortitude 2, Obfuscate 3, Potence 2, Presence 4

Backgrounds: Allies 4, Contacts 5, Resources 4, Retainers 2, Status 4

Virtues: Conscience 2, Courage 3, Self-Control 5

Morality: Humanity 5

Willpower: 8

Crime: Infiltration. Tatiana uses her skills at disguise and deception to assume other identities and claim membership in other clans. She won't try to impersonate a Tremere or a Ventrue, but no other clan is off-limits. She especially delights in manipulating those who perceive the concept of "clan" as more binding and fraternal than is the norm. This compulsion stems from her need to conceal her true identity from others, to the extent that she will do her best to dispose of any who learn too much about her.

SANJAY CHAKRABARTI, RENEGADE KSHATRIYAS

Background: Sanjay Chakrabarti was born in New Delhi to a family living on five by five square feet of sidewalk. Sanjay resented his position in society as a member of the lowest caste and blamed his parents for bringing him into the world. Instead of adjusting to his role, he fell in with several others also less than thrilled



with their assigned lots in life, and began a lucrative career mugging tourists.

One night, Sanjay and his companions chose a target who looked like a wealthy European, not realizing that the man's pale complexion stemmed from something other than his racial background. When they confronted the man with their knives and threats, he laughed at them. The largest boy, Ekaja, moved to attack the man and fell screaming after his second step. None of the other boys could see what had hurt Ekaja so badly, but he sounded as if he'd been ripped open. A second young thug moved and he, too, fell screaming. The rest ran, except for Sanjay. Always the opportunist, Sanjay said, "Teach me your magic."

So the man taught Sanjay his magic. He was a Ravnos of the Kshatriyas ("warrior") caste, Embraced over a century before to fight against the *asuratizayya*. He coached Sanjay in presenting the proper attitude and behavior to fit in as one of the Kshatriyas. Five years passed before Sanjay met another Ravnos, and another 10 before Vivek, his sire, felt he was truly ready to battle the Eastern Kindred. Sanjay enjoyed his new existence to a point — he had all the money, fine clothes and women he could ever want — but as one of the undead, he could no longer truly *enjoy* these benefits. He learned the gifts common to the Ravnos and he learned to fight, but he also indulged other, less pleasant, pursuits.

Sanjay loathed the fact that his condition made it impossible to enjoy mortal activities. He recruited his mortal friends to help him as necessary and made Ekaja his ghoul. Ekaja also served as his proxy for worldly pleasures. The ghoul brought women to bring to Sanjay's

haven and thoroughly degraded them under Sanjay's appreciative gaze. Once a woman had suffered sufficient indignities that Sanjay no longer enjoyed the sport, he would drain her to death and have Ekaja dispose of the remains. Vivek knew of Sanjay's excesses and tried to limit them, to teach Sanjay to resist such temptations, but Sanjay did not listen.

When rumors swept through India that the *asuratizayya* had begun their long-rumored and oft-propheesied invasion the West, starting with the state of California in the United States of America, Vivek was among those who went to investigate the matter. He took Sanjay with him to keep an eye on him and tutor him further in the Path of Paradox.

Upon arrival in Los Angeles, Vivek and Sanjay made contact with local Kindred and began the process of locating the *asuratizayya* for destruction. Before they and the other Ravnos managed to accomplish much, the Week of Nightmares struck. Vivek fought the frenzy and attempted to inflict his Beast on a ghoul to maintain control. Sanjay did not try to resist. Instead, he fell upon his distracted sire and drank his soul. In this horrific act, Sanjay discovered a joy that transcended all he had regretted, and wished to experience it again.

Since the Week of Nightmares, Sanjay has decided he'd rather indulge his urges than fight a war he doesn't care about. Los Angeles is the perfect city for him — America's decadence is distilled and reproduced for mass consumption in the City of Angels, and he's more than happy to partake. He regrets diablerizing Vivek, but he also desperately wants to experience that sensation again.

As for the mortal world, Sanjay has moved on to drug dealing and prostitution. Along with Ekaja, Sanjay has slowly solidified his influence with a few mortal gangs. He doesn't realize yet that he's stepping on other Kindred's territory and that only the chaos sown by the Eastern Kindred's invasion has kept him safe so far. That chaos is passing quickly.

Image: Sanjay is a young Indian male, with short, black hair and dark skin. He wears the most stylish American clothes he can afford. He tries to present a quiet and respectful front when dealing with American Kindred, but his contempt for the Western vampires occasionally spills forth.

Roleplaying Hints: You're the man! You'll rule the streets within two years if you play your cards right, but you don't want to bring the native Kindred's anger down on your head, so you won't move too fast. Play their games when you have to — respect the princes,

primogens and archons when you must, but mark time until you can devour them as you devoured your sire.

Sire: Vivek Lalji

Nature: Monster

Demeanor: Deviant

Generation: 10th

Embrace: 1958

Apparent Age: 17

Physical: Dexterity 3, Stamina 3, Strength 3

Social: Appearance 3, Charisma 2, Manipulation 3

Mental: Intelligence 3, Perception 3, Wits 4

Talents: Alertness 2, Brawl 3, Dodge 3, Leadership 1, Streetwise 4, Subterfuge 2

Skills: Animal Ken 2, Drive 3, Etiquette 1, Firearms 2, Melee 2

Knowledges: Investigation 1, Linguistics 1, Politics 2

Disciplines: Animalism 1, Chimerstry 3, Fortitude 2

Backgrounds: Contacts 2, Fame 1, Herd 3, Influence 1, Resources 3, Retainers 1, Status 1

Virtues: Conscience 1, Courage 2, Self-Control 2

Morality: Humanity 4

Willpower: 5

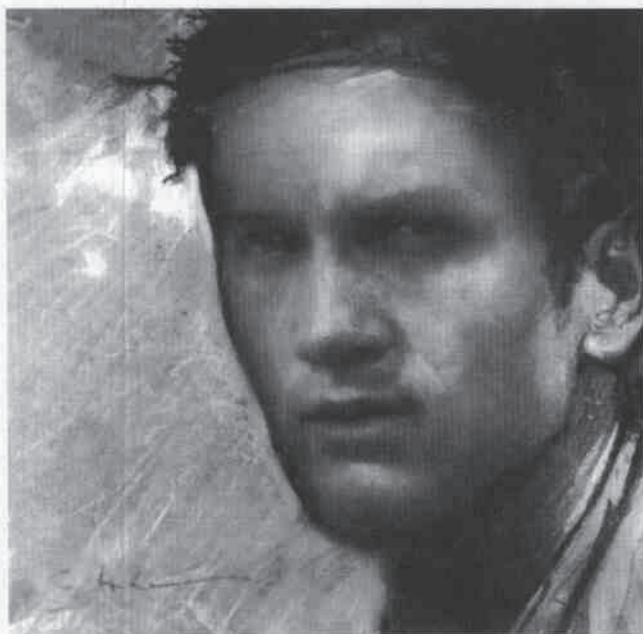
Crime: Initially, Sanjay's preferred crime was to use women and kill them. Since discovering diablerie, he's lost interest in killing mortals, but he still does it on occasion to see if he can invoke the same rapture he experienced before. He doesn't do it often, in the wake of one murder that nearly brought a police investigation to Ekaja's doorstep (and thus to him).

BRIAN THOMPSON

Background: Brian grew up listening to the blues. He spent half his life wishing he could play, and the other half actually learning to. As a teenager, he took whatever jobs he could to pay for a Gibson Les Paul guitar and Marshall amplifier stack, as well as for lessons.

Despite all that, something was missing from his music. Brian couldn't put his finger on it — it was something he could hear when he listened to Stevie Ray Vaughn, but nothing that existed in his own music. He may simply have been his harshest critic, or he may genuinely have lacked the ability to truly play the blues.

Brian tried to join a few bands, but he never got very far, and each try led to greater disappointment. The night after his final rejection, after deciding to give up the music and try to make a "serious" living, he got one final chance. He received an invitation to meet a man at a blues club in New Orleans called The Crossroads. The invitation's wording implied that the man felt



Brian had potential and could help where Brian had failed.

Brian went to The Crossroads. After all, what was one more disappointment piled atop so many others? No one else was at the club when he arrived, only the man who'd sent the invitation. The man offered Brian a drink and asked him to play a few songs. The drink hit Brian like a sledgehammer and the music flowed freely as it never had before. Brian felt as if the strange man had reached inside him and pulled out the deepest parts of his soul.

"I can help you play the blues, but you have to do something for me in return," the man said. Brian accepted the offer and for ten years, he played as few others ever had. The fact that the man — named Legba — needed him to do things every so often didn't bother Brian too much. At first he did little things, like quick delivery jobs. As the years passed, the tasks became more difficult and dangerous. Within five years, Legba had Brian disposing of a corpse. The young musician found he could not refuse Legba's requests, no matter how hard he tried.

Brian's musical career didn't exactly skyrocket, but he was no slouch, either. He had a recording contract with BMI and released six albums within ten years of making his deal with Legba. He'd just received his first offer for a major United States tour when Legba came to him and said it was time to pay in full for the music. Legba then Embraced Brian.

Needing to come to terms with the Embrace and the hungers it awakened, Brian turned down the tour

and retreated from the public. He's rumored to be working on his next CD, but no one knows for sure.

A year ago, Brian and Legba fought as Zapathasura's curse drove both to frenzy. Brian recovered several nights later and has seen no sign of Legba since. He does not know if Legba still exists or if he was destroyed, but he would like to know the truth.

Image: Brian is a youngish white male, often dressed in denim and leather. He occasionally emulates the fashion preferences of his blues idols, but hasn't yet established his own image. His hair is shaggy and unkempt, and he was cultivating a beard when Legba Embraced him.

Roleplaying Hints: You're standoffish; you don't want to let anyone near you as long as you want human blood. You are trying to work on your next album, but the creativity that existed before Legba Embraced you seems to have drained away. You have to fight every inch to write a song, which drives you to utter distraction. When you're around others, you try to hide your frustration and put on a good act.

Sire: Papa Legba

Nature: Bon Vivant

Demeanor: Gallant

Generation: 10th

Embrace: 1997

Apparent Age:

Physical: Dexterity 4, Stamina 3, Strength 2

Social: Appearance 3, Charisma 3, Manipulation 2

Mental: Intelligence 2, Perception 2, Wits 3

Talents: Athletics 1, Brawl 2, Dodge 1, Empathy 2, Streetwise 2

Skills: Animal Ken 2, Drive 2, Performance (Blues) 4, Survival 1

Knowledges: Academics 1, Computer 2

Disciplines: Animalism 2, Chimerstry 1, Fortitude 2

Backgrounds: Contacts 3, Fame 3, Herd 3, Resources 2

Virtues: Conscience 3, Courage 3, Self-Control 2

Morality: Humanity 6

Willpower: 6

Crime: Betraying trust. Brian hasn't had a chance to do this yet, but as soon as he gets close to someone, he'll be driven to turn on her at the worst possible moment. Since he needs to build a relationship before he can destroy it, this vice is unlikely to come up often.

KHALIL RAVANA

Khalil Ravana recently emigrated from India to the United States and expanded his horizons from stealing wallets to stealing souls. He's sold information

to the Sabbat, played hostage negotiator for a Setite neonate and became entangled in a Ravnos elder's schemes for a time.

Khalil had the luck to survive the Week of Nightmares, despite his proximity to the site of Zapathasura's destruction. He encountered the Setite elder, Hesha Ruhadze, and after a shaky introduction negotiated a deal with the Setite to smuggle him into America. In exchange for passage to the West, Khalil gave Hesha information about the Eye of Hazimel, an artifact the Setite desired.

Once in the United States, Khalil hitchhiked to New York City. Before and during the trip, he experienced and resisted telepathic compulsions from an unknown elder. Once in New York, he was guided to a young Setite — Hesha's former ghoul. Khalil held the neonate hostage to bait the Setite elder. During this time, the Ravnos met the Gangrel Ramona, who had experience with the Eye of Hazimel and had seen the curse it carried — hideous wounds and stigmata that could not be healed, even with the powers of Caine's blood. Khalil learned how to heal the wounds from the elder who had led him to New York.

Khalil traded this knowledge to Sabbat and Camarilla Kindred in New York City, as members of both sects had suffered Eye-inflicted injuries. In exchange for teaching them how to heal the wounds, the Ravnos asked for information on Hesha's location. Unfortunately, this information didn't help much. Khalil traded the location of the Eye of Hazimel to the Sabbat in exchange for potent blood. In exchange, he received

information about the recently Embraced childe of the Prince of New York City.

Unfortunately for Khalil, dealing with the Sabbat is never safe. He learned that simply being of Ravnos lineage was more dangerous than ever — one of the Kindred with whom Khalil had dealt, a Ventrue traitor, discovered the Ravnos clan's current situation and decided it would be simple to dispose of Khalil Ravana. The Ventrue miscalculated and suffered the fate he'd intended for Khalil when the Ravnos consumed the Ventrue's heart's blood.

After this act, Khalil became addicted to diablerie, and his previous patience with his Setite hostage wore thin. However, he soon found his alliance with Ramona coming back to haunt him. Ramona had built up sympathy for his hostage and freed her. Worse, she had then found Hesha and led him straight to Khalil. The hapless Ravnos barely escaped the trap set for him.

Now, Khalil has perhaps more enemies than anyone else in New York because he betrayed the Camarilla and the Sabbat. Worse, his addiction to diablerie led him to diablerize one of his own clan, a fool named Ghose, and turn his mortal family into ghouls. Subsequently, Khalil left New York for Chicago. He remains controlled by his addiction, haunted by the manipulations of an elder and with no real allies.

Image: Khalil, despite his greatest efforts to the contrary, can never really escape his urchin's origin. Even in a three-thousand-dollar suit, Khalil looks like little more than an Untouchable in a three-thousand-dollar suit. His hair is just shorter than his shoulders and his features are fine, almost to the point of being feline. Khalil was Embraced with two days growth of facial hair, which he shaves when he needs to be presentable but otherwise ignores.

Roleplaying Hints: Survive. You know you can, you know you will; it's just a simple question of doing whatever it takes. One night, you'll manage to turn things back around, but until then you're going to need to make a few sacrifices, and your *humanitas* may be among them.

Sire: Unknown

Nature: Bravo

Demeanor: Autocrat

Generation: 9th (presumed Embraced at 11th Generation)

Embrace: 1878

Apparent Age: late 20s

Physical: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 3, Appearance 3

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 2, Wits 4



Talents: Alertness 3, Brawl 1, Dodge 3, Empathy 2, Intimidation 2, Streetwise 5, Subterfuge 3

Skills: Animal Ken 2, Drive 1, Performance 4, Security 3, Stealth 4, Survival 5

Knowledges: Investigation 3, Law 2, Linguistics 2, Occult 2

Disciplines: Animalism 2, Auspex 1, Chimerstry 4, Dominate 1, Fortitude 4, Obfuscate 1

Backgrounds: Contacts 4, Fame 1, Resources 3

Virtues: Conscience 2, Self-Control 3, Courage 2

Morality: Humanity 4

Willpower: 9

DURGA SYN

Durga Syn's long history is intertwined with the Nosferatu Methuselah, Baba Yaga. In her mortal life, Durga Syn was a priestess of a pre-Christian religion that venerated nature. Her understanding of the mysteries and mastery of the rites gave her a reputation that spread far beyond her home. Supernatural and mortal beings alike came to her for counsel and assistance. It was only a matter of time before the hag, Baba Yaga, learned of the young priestess' reputation.

Baba Yaga came to Durga Syn and offered her more power than she could ever have as a mortal, and an eternity in which to perfect it as well as to study and understand nature. Durga Syn turned down the offer. The hag then cursed Durga Syn and her homeland for all time. The curse turned the young woman into an ancient, brittle caricature of her former self.

Crusaders swept through Durga Syn's homeland shortly thereafter and nearly killed her. As she lay dying, Baba Yaga came to again offer the Embrace, but found unexpected competition. Ravnos who had come to make the same offer distracted Baba Yaga with illusions as one of them Embraced the priestess against her will.

Repelled by what she had become, Durga Syn distracted herself by warring on Baba Yaga and her servants at every opportunity, if only to pretend she had not fully lost her soul. After Baba Yaga fell into torpor, Durga Syn spent much of her time trying to locate the hag's haven and also countering the Russian Nosferatu's schemes.

For a time, Durga Syn advised the fiend Vlad the Impaler and assisted him in his ongoing quest for Golconda. She is rumored to have foretold many of the disasters that have befallen the Kindred, from the anarch revolts to the fall of the Giovanni's predecessors. She also developed rituals that would enable her to temporarily banish Baba Yaga's curse, but no final cure.

In the final decade of the 20th century, Durga Syn seemingly vanished. She was in Russia when a supernatural force apparently imprisoned all Kindred in that nation. In truth, she was actively warring against the newly arisen Baba Yaga. The Week of Nightmares interrupted her efforts; her childer were forced to stake her during that terrible time so that Zapathasura's curse would not bring her (or them) terrible harm. Afterward, just when she had her forces ready to strike directly against Baba Yaga, an unknown Kindred destroyed the hag with little effort.

In the wake of the Week of Nightmares and Baba Yaga's destruction, the curse has weakened considerably, to the point that Durga Syn has banished it for nights at a time with little effort. She expects it to dissipate within a year or two, but still maintains a frail appearance to disguise her true strength.

Durga Syn strongly suspects the cause of the Week of Nightmares, but fervently hopes she's wrong. She knows that if she is correct, Gehenna has already begun. She actively searches for other signs of its arrival. Baba Yaga's destruction only strengthened her conviction — she believes that the Nosferatu Antediluvian may be awake and walking the land.

Concerned that direct action will attract the attention of powers she's not prepared to face, Durga Syn prefers to guide others to find what she needs. She recently gave a Ravnos coterie enough information to find elder havens in India and hopefully shed more light on the Week. The coterie members believe they're dealing with a ghou.

MATA HARI

The woman called Mata Hari is best known for the accusation of espionage leveled against her, for which she was executed in front of a firing squad. What is not known is that in her younger years, while studying Eastern dance styles, she came to the attention of an Indian Ravnos. Mata Hari's exotic dance centered on Shiva, one of the gods this Ravnos had worshipped during his mortal life, before the Embrace stole his faith along with his mortality.

Mata Hari's dance reminded him of his days in the sun, and so he followed her career. To his disappointment, it never got far; she ended up dancing nude simply to make ends meet. He lost interest shortly thereafter, believing she had tainted the purity of her chosen art for the sake of illusory gain.

A decade and a half later, he saw her face again. Mata Hari had been accused of committing acts of espionage for the Germans and was to face the firing squad. The Ravnos visited her in prison and offered her

the strength of his blood to support her through the ordeal, with gift of immortality to come soon after. Mata Hari accepted his proposal, and he lent her his durability for the execution. Though she appeared dead, she remained very much alive.

The Ravnos' ghouls procured Mata Hari's body and returned her to their master, who promptly Embraced her. In exchange, she danced for him whenever the mood struck him. She had also developed considerable cunning and caution thanks to her experience during the First World War and her close brush with true death. She has no desire to repeat the experience.

Eventually, the two traveled to America. Those who are aware of Mata Hari's Embrace believe that she and her sire assumed new identities once they arrived in the United States. Rumors have also placed her as working for archons, princes and other Camarilla and independent luminaries, applying her skill at espionage to good effect.

MARCIA LICINIA

Marcia Felicia Licinia was among a small lineage of Ravnos who tried to exist according to the virtues of chivalry in medieval France. Marcia vanished during the Inquisition, her sire several decades before that; the rest of the lineage reportedly fell to the Beast or turned to other, less strict moral guidelines throughout the swiftly changing times. Before her disappearance, Marcia spent a lot of time researching her Eastern cousins from India and trying to discern their purpose in coming to Europe.

After her third expedition, she returned to Paris in the mid-15th century mere nights before her elaborate haven was burned to the ground. From that point forward, most Kindred assumed that Marcia had met Final Death. Her studies on the Path of Paradox and its permutations, along with extensive discussions of the clan's history, were also believed destroyed. Theories as to who or what caused the fire range from anarchs to the strict Roma Ravnos who believed none outside their families should receive the Embrace to the Inquisition and its witch-hunters, but no one ever discovered the truth, or cared much after a time.

Shortly after the Week of Nightmares, Marcia's writings turned up in the hands of a few Ravnos who

were trying to unearth the Nightmares' cause. While no direct evidence exists pointing directly to Marcia as the source, the writings have been updated with a few modern observations.

It seems unlikely that an elder of Marcia's power could have survived the Week of Nightmares. On the other hand, rumors abound of powerful elders and even Methuselahs who lay in torpor before the Week, were awakened by the battle and ensuing curse, and who may have survived simply because they were too weak to succumb to frenzy. If the rumors are true, a handful of potent Ravnos elders may indeed have survived. If any did, they could become dangerous wild cards in the Final Nights.

SPIRIT CREEK

The *kumpaniya* known as Spirit Creek may not be a collection of Ravnos at all, but rather a coterie of other Kindred led by one of the few remaining Deceivers. The group's leader, Doug Schoeneck, is the only known Ravnos in the coterie, which has three other members.

Under the guise of a guitar band, Spirit Creek plays a dangerous game, traveling between the tenuous Camarilla domains of Milwaukee and Chicago and the Sabbat-infested city of Detroit. To outside observers, the group leads a sort of "Radio Free Domain" unlife, taking their underground music wherever they can play for the evening. Others suspect the group's goal is not so straightforward, however. Rumors run rampant, linking them to nomadic Sabbat packs, a band of Gangrel archons last seen active outside of Chicago, or even as the eyes for an unknown Inconnu Monitor. Perhaps more likely, the group has made no secret that they communicate with other Ravnos, using their tours as opportunities to find out what Doug's fellow Ravnos know about recent events in the clan's history.

If anything is certain about Spirit Creek, it's that the group has access to an enormous network of contacts, with members ranging from black marketeers to the owners of safe havens. Spirit Creek traffics in information primarily, and can almost certainly offer something in return to anyone who knows something that they do not.

Ravnos™

NAME:

NATURE:

GENERATION:

PLAYER:

DEMEANOR:

SIRE:

CHRONICLE:

CONCEPT:

HAVEN:

ATTRIBUTES

PHYSICAL

Strength ●0000
Dexterity ●0000
Stamina ●0000

SOCIAL

Charisma ●0000
Manipulation ●0000
Appearance ●0000

MENTAL

Perception ●0000
Intelligence ●0000
Wits ●0000

ABILITIES

TALENTS

Alertness 00000
Athletics 00000
Brawl 00000
Dodge 00000
Empathy 00000
Expression 00000
Intimidation 00000
Leadership 00000
Streetwise 00000
Subterfuge 00000

SKILLS

Animal Ken 00000
Crafts 00000
Drive 00000
Etiquette 00000
Firearms 00000
Melee 00000
Performance 00000
Security 00000
Stealth 00000
Survival 00000

KNOWLEDGES

Academics 00000
Computer 00000
Finance 00000
Investigation 00000
Law 00000
Linguistics 00000
Medicine 00000
Occult 00000
Politics 00000
Science 00000

ADVANTAGES

BACKGROUNDS

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DISCIPLINES

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VIRTUES

Conscience/Conviction ●00000

Self-Control/Instinct ●00000

Courage ●00000

MERITS/FLAWS

HUMANITY/PATH

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

WILLPOWER

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

BLOOD POOL

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

HEALTH

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

WEAKNESS

Addicted to vice

OTHER TRAITS

[illegible]

RITUALS

[illegible]

EXPERIENCE

TOTAL: _____

TOTAL SPENT: _____

spent on:

DERANGEMENTS

BLOOD BONDS/ VINCULI

BOUND TO	RATING	BOUND TO	RATING

COMBAT

[illegible]

ARMOR



RavnosTM

EXPANDED BACKGROUND

ALLIES

MENTOR

CONTACTS

RESOURCES

FAME

RETAINERS

HERD

STATUS

INFLUENCE

OTHER

POSSESSIONS

GEAR (CARRIED)

EQUIPMENT (OWNED)

FEEDING GROUNDS

VEHICLES

HAVENS

LOCATION

DESCRIPTION



AGE _____
 APPARENT AGE _____
 DATE OF BIRTH _____
 RIP _____
 HAIR _____
 EYES _____
 RACE _____
 NATIONALITY _____
 HEIGHT _____
 WEIGHT _____
 SEX _____

VISUALS

COTERIE CHART

CHARACTER SKETCH